Guides Can Do Anything

The Guide International Service
1942 - 1954

Foreword

Within these pages you will find a remarkable story, a story of the outstanding work carried out by those adult members of the guide Movement who joined the Guide International Service. Working together in teams, these leaders went into the countries that had been devastated by the Second World War (1939-1945) to assist with the huge task of re-building shattered communities, shattered lives, shattered and scattered families.

The concept of the G.I.S., as it became known, was born in 1941 long before the end of that terrible war. Members in Britain, despite the hardships they themselves were experiencing, began to recognise that considerable help would be needed in Europe when hostilities ceased. It was thought that guiders with their many practical skills, their expertise in working with children and adults of all walks of life, their ability to turn their hands to any situation that may confront them, and their ability to work together as a team, could be trained in relief work and be ready to move into Europe when the war ended.

In those days the bond between Britain and the Commonwealth countries was strong and Australia was quick to promise support to the newly-formed G.I.S. in Britain. It was not long before G.I.S. (Aust.) came into being. Contributions started coming in and a program for the selection, training and testing of volunteers was established. The wonderful contribution made by each and every one of the 24 Australians who became members of the G.I.S. teams is now recorded in this book.

Whether your involvement in guiding extends back to those troubled years of the Second World War and its aftermath, or you are a comparative newcomer to our world-wide guide family, you cannot help but be deeply moved by this stirring account of Service-before-Self and what our Movement, through the G.I.S. program, was able to accomplish when the *"chips were down"*.

May all readers draw inspiration, pride and a fuller understanding of all that our Movement stands for from this incredible, heart-warming story.

Peg Barr

Prologue

Guides Can Do Anything

Did you know that teams of British guide leaders (including 24 Australians, 7 New Zealanders, 2 Canadians, one each from Ireland, Kenya and Holland) did relief and welfare work in Egypt, Greece, Holland, Germany and Malaya after the war?

Did you know that the first **five** G.I.S. teams were in Holland **three months** before the war finished with the fighting only one day ahead?

Did you know that the mobile hospital team was led by an Australian?

Did you know there were over 300 Nazi concentration camps uncovered throughout Europe at the end of the war? Did you know 11 million died in these camps?

Did you know there were over 9 million displaced persons in Germany at the end of the war all in urgent need of food, clothing and medial help?

Did you know that our Australian team in Malaya saved over 3,000 lives with arsenic injections paid for by Australian guiding?

Guides can do anything. These leaders were prepared.

To share this thrilling story with you, I have had to take much of the information from *All Things Uncertain* written by Phyllis Brown. The book has long been out of date and few people have a copy. The G.I.S. work covered twelve years so none of the Australian volunteers knows the full story. With the help of *All Things Uncertain* and stories from our Australian volunteers, I have done my best to give you an overall picture of those twelve years. British guiding was magnificent and our Australian volunteers felt it a privilege to be allowed to join their teams. We are very proud of our own team in Malaya.

Nancy Eastick

Contents

Acknowledgement

The official record of the Guide International Service was published by The Girl Guides Association (UK) in 1966 (reprinted 1967) in a book entitled All Things Uncertain *by Phyllis Stewart Brown. As copies of this excellent book are no longer obtainable, Nancy Eastick MBE, a G.I.S. volunteer and well-known guide trainer, undertook to compile an additional record to ensure that the contribution made by the Australian volunteers was fully documented for all time. Warmest thanks are offered to these two writers and to the Australians for their stories.*

Sincere thanks to Joyce Price for her encouragement and to Guides Victoria for their very generous offer to print the book.

1

Guide International Service

What a tremendous contribution Australian guiding made to the Guide International Service, both British and Australian, at the end of the Second World War. We remember with deep gratitude the invaluable Service given by the twenty-four leaders who joined British teams in Holland and Germany and the one Australian team in Malaya. New Zealand provided the second team for Malaya.

We can be very proud of the enormous efforts made by so many members of the Movement, both in Great Britain and Australia, who supported those volunteers over many years by raising money, collecting food and clothing and other necessities, to help in the re-building of a war-shattered world.

The full story of the G.I.S. is a thrilling one and can be read in *All Things Uncertain.* The following is a short account to give guides of today an overall view of the G.I.S. and to include some experiences from Australian volunteers.

Miss Gwen Hesketh of Tasmania who served in Germany from June 1945 until the close of work in Germany in March 1952 became a leader of RS136 (Relief Service) and later G.I.S. Advisory Officer and then G.I.S. Commissioner for Germany. Two of the last three volunteers left in Germany in March 1952 were Australian; Gwen Hesketh, and Peg Edmondson of Victoria and the third was Sue Ryder of England (now Baroness, wife of Group Captain Leonard Cheshire). He witnessed the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan. He was so distressed at the awful result that when he left the Air Force he founded homes for crippled soldiers. Then he married Sue Ryder and together they persuaded various countries around the world to build homes for handicapped people. When welfare ceased at the end of 1950 in displaced persons' camps in Germany, and all voluntary Societies returned home, the G.I.S. was asked to supply fifteen volunteers to remain and work as welfare officers in the I.R.O. (International Refugee Organisation) resettlement camps for 1951 and seven of those who remained were Australian.

In March 1953 Mrs Fairbairn, Chief Commissioner of Australia, received a letter from London Guide Headquarters, from the Chief Commissioner and Chairman of the Executive Committee, Lady Stratheden, saying:

I am sending by sea a replica of a plaque that we have hung in our Headquarters to commemorate the work of the Guide International Service.

We have had this made for your Headquarters because the Australian guides played such a very large part in the Service and we would like you to have something to show how much we appreciate your very warm-hearted response to our call.

We also want you to have something by which you can remember the magnificent women who went from your country to so many parts of the world to do such a wonderful work of mercy and love under most difficult and hard conditions."

Well - what is the Guide International Service and how did it all begin?

2

"Enrol only those who are prepared to specialise in the impossible"

When the World Flag was lowered on the last day at the Guide World Camp in Hungary in August 1939, many of the 4,000 guides from 32 countries sadly said goodbye to their new friends, knowing they may never meet again. Already the icy winds of invasion had swept into Czechoslavakia and Austria and less than three weeks after the camp closed, the Nazi armies marched into Poland. Europe was at war!

Refugees fled to Britain bringing with them dreadful stories of suffering, endurance and sacrifice of people in Europe, many of them guides and scouts. Who will ever forget the story of fifty boy scouts shot on the step of a cathedral in Poland? Letters from guides all over Britain poured into Headquarters in London. One came from a guide of twelve who asked *"Can't we do something now, so that when the war ends we will be able to send help to our sister guides who will want to re-build their country?"*

Mrs Mark Kerr, a pioneer of international guiding wrote in *The Guider*, (the British Guide magazine) *"We must look to the future and prepare ourselves for the time to come. More important than winning the war, is the question of winning the peace. Whatever happens, Europe will be left weak and exhausted and will need an army of goodwill - an army mostly composed of women. If we can begin now to collect our army of goodwill, what could they not do to bring healing and comfort to a stricken world?"*

Guide Headquarters in London made a very bold and brave decision, showing their enormous faith in members of the guide Movement. They offered to the government teams of trained, adaptable and fully equipped leaders to give service where the need was greatest when war ended.

In April 1942 the Guide International Service (British) was formed, with Miss Rosa Ward as chairman. She agreed to be a temporary chairman until a more suitable person was found, but when the G.I.S. Committee was disbanded twelve years later, she was still chairman - a truly remarkable woman.

The G.I.S. was registered with the British government as a voluntary society, one of the first team-making societies to form the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad (C.O.B.S.R.A.). Among the eleven societies, which provided fifty teams (thirteen G.I.S.) to register were the Quakers, Save The Children Fund, Salvation Army, Catholic Relief, Jewish Relief, etc. All came under the umbrella of the British Red Cross, Civilian Relief HQ. Teams were often called *Red Cross* regardless of their Society. C.O.B.S.R.A. teams were numbered from 100. All had to work in close cooperation with the military authorities and U.N.R.R.A. (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration). Board, lodging, transport, uniform and equipment were supplied from government sources. Relief stores and amenities from military sources, and from B.R.C.S. and U.N.R.R.A., were shared with other teams and the G.I.S. fund was able to supplement these and fill many other needs. B.R.C.S. funds and G.I.S. funds were also used for German and Rumanian refugees. G.I.S. volunteers were unpaid but received pocket money of ten shillings a week.

Although the war was going badly for Great Britain and the Commonwealth, at no time did anyone think we would not win out in the end. Every able bodied person in Great Britain was

involved in some type of war work, but when volunteers were called for, the G.I.S. Committee was overwhelmed by the number and quality of leaders who applied. The Committee knew it would be a big struggle to get permission for those in restricted work to be allowed to leave their jobs if or when they would be needed for a team.

So the enormous job of interviewing, training and testing volunteers began. Sound advice was given by a Quaker friend, Miss Alison Fox, who said *"Enrol only those who are prepared to specialise in the impossible."* She also said *"There is only one thing certain about relief work, all things will be uncertain! Volunteers will have to rely on their own resources. There can be no* ifs *or* buts, 'I'll do anything BUT first aid', 'I don't mind how hard I work IF I can have a good night's sleep'. *Volunteers must prepare themselves to be jacks of all trades and master of at least one, preferably two. Experts will be useful only if they are adaptable; in relief work things are done as they CAN be done, not as they SHOULD be done."*

One of the G.I.S. Committee, Mrs Olga Malkowska, Founder of Guiding in Poland, herself a refugee to Britain, said *"Volunteers will have to improvise, give them practice in this, work them hungry, or thirsty, or dirty, or short of sleep. Individuals react differently in times of stress, some are at their best in emergencies. Get to know your people, then you can send out balanced teams."* Good health, good camping, being able to adapt and to get on with people were considered first priorities.

While the adult members of the Movement began training, the children did their part in raising money. The British target was £100,000. When the G.I.S. Committee was disbanded in March 1954 in London, £168,980 had been raised. This enormous amount was in addition to thousands of pounds raised at the same time for a number of kitchen and canteen vehicles, an air ambulance, a launch *The Guide of Dunkirk*, and hundreds of other war efforts. British guiding was magnificent in their hour of great need!

Australia launched its G.I.S. (A) appeal and £11,144 was raised. This money was used to pay volunteers fares to Britain and Malaya, their maintenance, leave allowance of pocket money (10 shillings at first and 30 shillings by the end) and to pay for clothing, sheepskins, food, medical supplies that were sent to people in Malaya, India, Malta and Germany.

It was not only money the guides worked hard to raise. Thousands of parcels were sent to volunteers as well as many thousands of garments, shoes, soap, sewing materials, kindergarten equipment, from the G.I.S. office in London and from New Zealand and Australia to India, Finland, France (including two lorries) Germany (to all volunteers for both displaced persons and German refugees), Poland, Rumania, Malta, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Greece. From a G.I.S. report in 1950 *"From August 1947 to January 1950 goods to the value of 24,640 pounds and weighing approximately 101 tons have been sent from the G.I.S. office in London. These included 34 cases of clothing, toys, etc. from the Dominions (including Australia and New Zealand)."* Truly a mighty effort by members of the guide Movement.

The G.I.S. supplied thirteen teams. The first team left England in June 1944 and the last three volunteers withdrew from Germany in March 1952. Teams went to Egypt (while waiting to go to Greece), Greece, Holland, Germany and Malaya - Australia and New Zealand providing a team each for Malaya. From 1950 to 1952 the G.I.S. provided fifteen volunteers as welfare workers in the I.R.O. (International Refugee Organisation) resettlement camps in the British Zone of Germany and was the last society to leave Germany after eight years of relief and welfare work for both displaced persons and German refugees.

Many volunteers worked in restricted jobs and could only get six to twelve months leave, so other volunteers were sent out to replace them. The final number of volunteers was 192 women and 60 men attached to teams. Twenty-four volunteers came from Australia, seven from New Zealand, two each from Holland, Canada and Ireland, and one from Kenya, a White Russian refugee joined the hospital team and later, two other teams, and the rest came from

Great Britain.

As well as relief and welfare work, British guide leaders were sent to Germany to run summer camps for German children. There were also two guide training teams which visited all the displaced persons camps in the British zone to run courses for the guide leaders who had been leaders in Poland or the Baltic countries. Through the efforts of these trainers, Great Britain, Holland and Switzerland took groups of young German women to train as guide leaders and so helped to establish guiding in Germany.

In January 1944, C.O.B.S.R.A. was asked to provide a number of teams to go to the Middle East where advanced training would be given by the U.N.R.R.A. teams and the army. The proposed destination was not mentioned but Greek interpreters would be needed. Within eight days of 12 January 1944 Miss Ward had her team assembled! C.O.B.S.R.A. had advised that the team must have a man as leader or deputy, no more than four women. Miss Ward took no notice - sent in her team's names. The leader and deputy were women, plus seven more women and only two scouters! The team was accepted! So the Relief and Rescue Unit No. 7 began training as a team, waiting for embarkation orders which came right on D Day! The teams travelled on a huge R.A.F. troopship and after two weeks zig-zagging through the Mediterranean, they reached Cairo. Here they were given further training, as civil war had broken out in Greece. The army and U.N.R.R.A. had planned to make up teams from the volunteers but C.O.B.S.R.A. societies had all been formed as teams, and maintained they should be left as such. The G.I.S. team was unique as it had been training as a team for months. To prove the point, the G.I.S. team was given a special job with refugees at Moses Well. The success of this work proved the point and from then on this method was adopted for the whole of the relief program.

On 8 January 1945 the teams crossed to Greece. Conditions were chaotic. As well as having been occupied by the German army, there had been civil war. The team had to distribute food, clothing and medical supplies. Some rode mules up into the hills with their supplies and brought back hostages kept there by the Communists. They organised hostels for refugees in buildings without windows, sanitation, water, heating!! They were responsible for relief work in an area of over 200 villages, many of them devastated, and conditions were appalling.

There was a heart warming part - a number of Greek guides, seeing the World Flag on the G.I.S. uniforms, came forward to help. In April 1946, the Greek government considered it could take over its welfare work and so RR7 and the other society teams embarked for London. There were no Australians in the Greek team, but Miss Elizabeth Roberton, a New Zealander, who spoke Greek, joined the team after it had been a few months in Greece.

3

In Australia

Before the war the British magazine *The Guider* was widely read in Australia and articles on the G.I.S. brought home to many the urgent need to do something to help and inspired some to volunteer. In January 1943, New South Wales formed its G.I.S. committee. It already had six keen volunteers training with Miss Mary Mills, who through ill health was not accepted as a volunteer. Other states quickly followed, with the exception of Queensland which was involved in various war efforts, and at the Federal Council meeting on 23 November 1943, the G.I.S. (A) committee was formed. Miss Merlyn Attwater, New South Wales, was chairman, with Miss Beatrice Ford Smith of South Australia and Miss Sheila Macleod, Victoria, as committee. Miss Merle Deer, New South Wales, shortly afterwards replaced Miss Ford Smith as secretary, when she became a volunteer, and Miss P Cooper of South Australia became treasurer. New Zealand asked to be kept in touch with Australian plans. States appealed for funds, for food and clothing. War depots were set up in states for packing and despatching to Great Britain or to wherever the need was urgent at the time.

It was thought that Australian volunteers may be needed in the Pacific, or China, or may be accepted into British teams. No-one was sure what we could do or where we could go, so trainings were very varied indeed.

Volunteers remember some of these trainings. *"They were strenuous and aimed at trying out our stickability, temper, patience, consideration of others, teamwork and reaction to emergencies. We had to get rid of bad habits, overcome food fads, sleep three weeks on the floor beside our bed; learn to row a boat, ride a horse and bicycle, drive a car and truck. Good health and good camping were vital. Many a weekend was spent with pack (including tent and food, etc.) on our back, compass in hand, finding our way through the bush, cooking meals in the pouring rain, pitching little tents and trying to keep dry; opening sealed orders the next morning and being directed to a children's home or hospital to cope with feeding, bathing and keeping the children happy all day!*

What a surprised thrill one volunteer got when she had to put her foot through a pane of glass so that three of us could get into a smoke filled room! It was so dense and dark we could not see, but we could hear awful moans coming from all parts of the room. Down on hands and knees and with wet handkerchiefs tied around our mouths, we crawled round feeling for the victims, bumping into buckets of water which spilt, of course, and wet coils of rope until we found six scouts. We tied their wrists together and with our heads under the ties, pulled each one on his back to the door which one volunteer had found. We tried ju-jitsu, delousing heads and cutting hair, worked all day scrubbing floors at a big hospital without any food at all; worked one night a week for months at the Casualty Department of Sydney Hospital; taught first aid to deaf children; asked to pitch tents but the poles had disappeared! We listened to people from China and Poland and tried our hand at cooking some of their food.

So much of the training and testing resembled the present day Outward Bound courses. In fact, when the first course on Outward Bound was planned in 1956 in England, the leader of the Greek team, Miss Margaret Pilkington, was a member of the staff. From 1942 the G.I.S. volunteers in Great Britain and later in Australia had been doing similar courses adopted by the Outward Bound.

Four tests were held in Australia. The first was in Victoria in 1945 with thirteen volunteers;

the second in South Australia in 1946 with sixteen; and two in New South Wales, in 1947 with thirteen, and 1948 with six.

Some memories from volunteers. The first test. *"With five assessors following our every move and word, the thirteen volunteers felt like guinea pigs. In our packs we had everything we would need for the week including a tent and cooking gear! Those assessors did not inspect our gear until the last day! Little unwelcome notes labelled* General Instruction No. so and so *kept popping up at very short notice as volunteers were given different jobs to do, ie* 'Move the party to . . . . . at 0630 hours.' *Oh dear, what time is THAT? One whole day was spent at Janefield, a mental hospital. Some volunteers had to bath and feed adults, some went to the nursery. I remember small children slobbering all over my uniform and getting into my pockets and sitting on my feet. Others worked in the laundry or cleaned windows. Most of us had never seen such a tragic group of humanity before! Another afternoon was spent at Kew Mental Hospital. We had to report to Victoria Barracks to be interviewed by a colonel but instructions to find him were given fast and only once! Some of us found him! We spent two days at Britannia Park campsite, pitched our tents on the lower part of the site, dug trench for lats, erected store tent, etc. It was a lovely spot with snow capped mountains all around, it was mid winter! We were woken at 4am by a volunteer saying that floods were coming (arranged by the assessors) and that we had to move to the top of the campsite. Stores had to be carried, the tent taken down, the ropes were frozen stiff, my feet were frozen, my fingers wouldn't stretch out, I dropped my torch, it broke, I slithered up and down that site half a dozen times. My little hike tent was frozen stiff. I was told to go and get the horse. I couldn't see him, I was not on speaking terms with a horse. I waved my arms about and nearly collapsed when he huffed in my ear. The horse and I were rescued by another volunteer.*

The volunteers at the first New South Wales test remember being sent on an overnight hike and getting lost. They had their bedding, the assessor with them didn't. Hers was in the car they should have met! They didn't like carrying mops and buckets on trams through Sydney to a large store that had to be scrubbed. As there were only six for the 1948 test, they joined a general training camp. At 10.30pm when they were all asleep in their tent, they were told to get up, pack up and were driven from the campsite some miles out, dropped and told to get back in a hurry! Luckily they met a kind driver in a little Morris who took two plus all their packs and they were back before dawn, but sad to say, not to sleep. Off to a chicken farm where they had to scrub coops all day. They also had to catch a rabbit, skin it and cook it. They were more than pleased when they saw a man with a gun!

In South Australia, the sixteen volunteers worked for the first three days in a mental hospital, washing, feeding and caring for the patients, but sleeping in a small wooden shed only just big enough to fit sixteen sleeping bags. The shed was filthy and had to be cleaned first and it was not weatherproof, it was a freezing few days. On the third day they were told to get themselves to Port Adelaide to board a steamer, the *Karatta*. No English was to be spoken during the voyage but few could, they were not good sailors! They arrived about midnight and little notes passed around told them to get to a certain point on the map seven miles inland. They heaved packs on backs and set off, only to find on arrival another little note telling them to report straight back to the ship as they would be leaving at dawn! Straight to a boys' home where the staff had been given the weekend off. Forty boys, between five and fifteen, were waiting for their evening meal! After the weekend they went to Victor Harbour where they were asked to make a survey of the town to find out how many refugees could be billeted. Then they had to arrange a garden party!! Many volunteers wondered if these tests were necessary. It did prove whether they could live under difficult conditions and still get on with people. Many volunteers found themselves in these conditions in Germany. Some did sleep on floors! Mental

homes were an introduction to similar homes and shocking conditions of concentration camp victims in Germany. Self control was vital - many volunteers felt sick when trying to eat a meal,
while dozens of little starved faces peered in through a window - but what use was an undernourished volunteer?

Some Australians were so fired with enthusiasm that they did not wait for testing but got themselves to England.

The first to leave was Dr Meredith Ross from Melbourne. In 1943 she was Officer-In-Charge of a R.A.A.F. hospital in Melbourne. She wrote to Miss Ward in December 1943, offering her services and, when an enthusiastic reply came back in February 1944, she then had the almost impossible job of getting out of the R.A.A.F. and on to a ship! After much letter writing and with the help of the State Commissioner for Victoria, Lady Chauvel, the wife of the Governor, Lady Duggan, and Lady Gowrie, wife of the Governor-General, Dr Ross finally got her discharge and berth on an American troopship, the former luxury liner, *ss Mariposa.* Dr Ross says *"It was something of a triumph for the Movement to win the support of officialdom. This was probably the first civilian woman to get to the United Kingdom at that stage of the war."* The ship's complement were American servicemen and Australian R.A.A.F. going to Canada en route for Great Britain. Meredith remembers *"We wore slacks all the time and carried life jackets in case we were torpedoed. There were twelve in what was a two bed cabin."* She got herself across to New York and, while waiting there, spent the time at Maryland University with Americans who had joined U.N.R.R.A. and were being trained for relief work in Europe. She said there was such a difference in attitude - she was travelling with one suitcase, sleeping bag and a tent, but the women were taking cosmetics for a year!

Eventually Meredith got a berth from New York on a British ship. They arrived in Liverpool on 4th August amidst the flying bombs. What a welcome she received from the G.I.S. in London! She was the first to get to England from *"outside"*. Although she had impressive qualifications, she still had to do the training and testing for volunteers. She was finally interviewed by the Chairman of C.O.B.S.R.A., Lady Louis Mountbatten, and accepted.

During that time, the G.I.S. office was asked to provide the personnel for a second mobile hospital (the British Red Cross provided the first), to consist of two doctors, a deputy, four trained nurses, eight assistant nurses, two caterer-cooks, two transport drivers and five male orderlies, as well as a mobile laboratory team of three. This was a great challenge but with Miss Ward nothing was impossible and so a team was gradually assembled, with Meredith Ross as leader, and Dr Phyllis Croft in charge of pathology.

On 24th February 1945, three months before the end of the war, the team, together with other Society teams, embarked for Europe on a tank-landing craft with their three two-ton Red Cross army ambulances, two fifteen hundredweight trucks, one three-ton truck, equipment for a fifty bed hospital and the mobile laboratory. They landed in Ostend and then drove in an eighty vehicle convoy to South Holland, which had only just been liberated. After several short stops to give help, they crossed the Rhine on an army bailey bridge (no others left standing) and followed the British Army into North Holland. Meredith says *"What a marvellous experience it was to drive through flag-decked streets and cheering crowds on V.E. Day, 8th May 1945."* They worked in a concentration camp at Amersfoort where two more G.I.S. teams caught up with them - the KS1 and CS1 (kitchen and canteen). An urgent call came from the military - an epidemic of typhoid had broken out at Rotterdam so the hospital was packed up rapidly and set off. Meredith writes *"We found a school at Gorinchem near Rotterdam which we felt would take 100 beds and within forty-eight hours our hospital and laboratory were ready to receive patients. One of the team, Barbara Hughes, got hold of hordes of Dutch collaborators and an equal number of guards, who flaunted Sten guns at precarious angles, and got 300 desks taken*

out and stacked, and she found another lot of women collaborators who did the preliminary cleaning, which gave the team a good start to do the real cleaning needed for a hospital. Three houses nearby were requisitioned for team billets."

Then began a strenuous and unremitting struggle as typhoid is one of the most difficult illnesses to deal with. None of the team had dealt with typhoid before. All the patients were in very poor health, almost starving and suffering from other illnesses as well. Their fifty bed hospital stretched to eighty-eight, and sometimes more. It was so heartening to receive practical help from Dutch guides and scouts, and even Dutch brownies came some evenings to lend a hand with vegetable preparation. Rations for the team came from the military authorities depot some forty miles away and had to be collected by the team drivers. The team lost twelve of its one hundred and seventeen patients and none of the helpers or team members caught the disease.

Dr Phyllis Croft and her assistants in the laboratory section never stopped from the moment their first patients arrived. In four months, over one thousand investigations were carried out as well as an almost overwhelming number of checks from the community. Through the work of these G.I.S. volunteers the epidemic was stopped. Then the team was moved on into Germany and, from 8th October 1945 to February 1946, they ran a hospital at Dickholzen near the Russian border (East Germany) for young displaced persons, mostly Ukrainians and Poles suffering from advanced pulmonary tuberculosis. They also combined this work with a maternity unit. Finally, they completed their work by taking all their equipment to Paris and handing it over to the French guides, on Thinking Day 1946. *A Hospital On Wheels*, written by members of the team many years later, tells the exciting story of this team in much fuller detail.

Meredith has two very precious memories to share. *"The team was invited to Buckingham Palace. We marched to the Palace preceded by a mounted police escort. Lady Somers presented us to the Queen (now the Queen Mother). She spoke to each one of us and wished us God Speed. She then took us out on to one of the balconies at the back of the Palace and arranged for us to be photographed with her."* Meredith's other personal highlight was a visit, one November evening in the blackout, to Windsor Castle. *"I was met at Windsor station by one of the ladies-in-waiting, and practised my salute and curtsey in the waiting room! (I was in G.I.S. uniform.) The Princess Elizabeth came in wearing Sea Ranger uniform. We went into a small drawing room and the Princess and the Sea Rangers sat on gilt chairs. I gave them a talk on what I imagined would be the work of the G.I.S. in Europe with displaced persons. (We had not known of the unspeakable horrors of the concentration camps then.) This visit was kept a secret for security reasons."*

There was one evening in Holland the hospital team won't forget. They had just got into bed in their billet when there was a loud knocking on the door and a man saying ***"BOMB"!*** They let him in, he went upstairs and put his hand up a chimney bringing out a black round bomb. He had put it there when the SS troops occupied the same billet, hoping they would light a fire and blow themselves up.

Gwen Mann (Vic), Florence Couper (WA), Marjory Taylor (Vic), Correa Atkinson (Tas)
Arriving at Southampton on the "Orion", en route to Germany.

4

More Teams for Holland - and on to Germany

It was feared that the retreating Germans would flood North Holland, so more relief teams were urgently required. Fast on the heels of the hospital team was a G.I.S. relief team, RS107, sent to the dockyard in Rotterdam. The people, including Indian and Chinese workers who had been caught there when war broke out, were living in bombed out shelters, with no heating, sanitation, or water. They had very little clothing left, and had been existing on raw beet and small potatoes for many months. RS107 organised local people into community groups to help with the distribution of food and clothing; they helped with the evacuation of children and with moving sick and mentally ill to hospitals. It was not long before the morale of the people improved - they might be starving but they were FREE - and so they began to take over more responsibility and the team was sent on into Germany.

In July 1945, RS107 went into Belsen. A quote from *All Things Uncertain: "Belsen had been a forced foreign labour camp. When the Allies advanced, thousands more people from other labour camps and concentration camps were herded into Belsen, bringing with them the dreaded typhus. From then on the Nazis had left this overcrowded, disease-ridden camp, isolated, neglected and without any supplies. By the time the Army of Liberation arrived, conditions had become unspeakable. Thousands were dead or dying from typhus and starvation. There were 14,000 people of 21 nationalities only just alive in Belsen."* The British Army set up hospitals, and a tented camp was erected at a nearby village, called Bergen-Belsen. So much had to be burnt, including the victims' clothing. RS107 gave out clothing and food, helped to establish medical clinics and started occupational therapy such as hairdressing, handcrafts, teaching English, and encouraging national songs and dances. RS107 was thankful it was not the first team into Belsen - they had followed a Red Cross team some weeks after the camp had been found. Did you know there were over 300 Nazi concentration camps uncovered throughout Europe after the war? Over 11 million people died, 6 million were Jews, others were gypsies, Russians, Poles, resistance fighters, anyone caught hiding a Jew or an Allied soldier/airman, anyone who was anti-Nazi.

Back in Holland the KS1 G.I.S. (kitchen service), CS1 and CS2 G.I.S. teams (canteen service) were busy in the Rotterdam area and Amersfoort concentration camp. In the Rotterdam area there were thousands of starving Dutch people. Some seventeen thousand of these people had been made destitute from bombing, so had been given shelter in three temporary housing areas. These were the people the teams had to feed. They were so weak from hunger that they could only eat one small meal a day at first. The food was heated in six soyer boilers and forty-four gallon drums filled with sand and kerosene at the teams' billet, and had to be delivered to the centres. The food was dried peas, army biscuits, small tins of evaporated milk (one can per twenty-five people), and small tins of meat (one per ten people). The teams served thousands of meals before conditions improved.

The two teams then set off for Germany where they joined together as RS11 in the Ruhr area, which had been shockingly bombed. Here they were responsible for the supplementary feeding of thousands of starving German children. In nine months the work entailed the distribution of 1,500,000 meals and the handling of 96 tons of foodstuffs. RS11 stayed on in the Ruhr doing German welfare work until it moved up to Schleswig Holstein. Let's go back to Australia before we go into Germany with new relief teams. Kath Baird of Western Australia was fighting hard to get permission to leave for London. She finally enlisted the help of Senator

Tangey, who, together with the G.I.S. (A) committee, persuaded the authorities in Canberra to give exit permits for Kath, for Gwen Hesketh of Tasmania, and Beatrice Ford Smith of South Australia. They sailed on the *ss Rangitiki* from Sydney in April 1945, via the Panama Canal, crisscrossing the Atlantic and crossing the dateline on V.E. Day. As no shipping movements were broadcast, they arrived unheralded at Liverpool but were quickly collected and welcomed with open arms by the G.I.S. committee.

In June 1945, C.O.B.S.R.A. had been asked to supply more teams for Germany. The G.I.S. already had its hospital team now in Germany, and RS107, and the new RS11 doing German welfare. Miss Ward had two teams ready waiting, with twelve members in each, RS131 and RS136. Gwen Hesketh became deputy to Mary Bailey (an ex policewoman from Liverpool), and this team plus its Red Cross ambulance and trucks, left in June 1945, followed six weeks later by RS136. This team had been without a leader, as possible British leaders could not get their release from their restricted jobs, so Beatrice Ford Smith was asked to be the leader. "Ford" accepted the challenge and was grateful to have Kath Baird in her team.

Let me tell you a little about Germany at the end of the war. The country was in chaos. Constant bombing for many months had reduced many cities to rubble; hundreds of thousands of Germans were living in bombed out buildings or cellars; most were very hungry and without clothing or bedding. There were many German refugees fleeing into Western Germany from the Russians. As well as all these, it was estimated that at the end of the war there were some nine million people in Germany who were not Germans (displaced persons), two million of whom were in the British Zone. They were prisoners of war; forced labourers brought into Germany to work in mines, factories, on farms; concentration camp victims; and many thousands who had fled the Baltic countries to Germany for fear of the Russians. Most were badly undernourished, almost starving, badly clothed, many were ill. All had suffered traumatic experiences in the war years. All were terribly afraid of what would happen to them. So many roads were unusable, bridges down, railways and rolling stock bombed. The first concern of U.N.R.R.A. and the military was to get these people into camps, provide some food, clothing, bedding, and medical attention, so that order could be brought about and also to prevent epidemics and reprisals. The military authorities requisitioned large army and air force barracks, forced labour huts, schools, and also some villages, to house these people as well as billets for the relief teams. These large buildings were to be transformed into transit camps for the displaced persons and the German refugees, administered by the relief teams and U.N.R.R.A. teams. U.N.R.R.A. provided the bulk food and clothing, supplemented by supplies from the British Red Cross and voluntary societies. The military provided rations for the relief teams, which had to be collected by the teams from the nearest army centre.

These camps were to be transit camps. It was thought that as people recovered from their shocking experiences, and roads and railways restored, all these people would return to their homelands. Many thousands did, in 1945 and 1946.

"Ford" remembers that RS136 was sent to Brunswick. This lovely medieval city was in ruins. The military told them they were to run a transit centre for Yugoslavs, about six miles out of Brunswick, and they were to get the buildings ready for the first thousand expected in a few days! They were horrified when they saw the condition of the buildings. They were filthy - broken furniture, no windows, no water, no sanitation, cooking to be done in a huge shed, and no fuel. With good organisation and much scrounging from the army and German authorities, the buildings were ready when the first men came. Trouble came with the men. Some were royalists for King Peter. Some were supporters of Marshall Tito, and some were not, but all were at loggerheads with each other! In a few days the first group was moved on their way home, but day after day more came and went. They had trouble with the drains and, on

inspection, found them blocked with corpses, human and animal! After some hectic weeks (NO team ever had an eight hour day!), the work was taken over by an U.N.R.R.A. team and the G.I.S. team was sent into Brunswick where enormous camps of Poles were being set up. Here they took over the registration of all displaced persons, distribution of the U.N.R.R.A. food and clothing, set up clinics, started kindergartens, taught English, encouraged national crafts and dances; set up sewing rooms etc, and drove people to and from hospitals and mental institutions.

Living conditions were deplorable. Many families were squashed into one barrack with dividing walls of paper or blankets, windows sealed against the cold, each family with a tiny room heating stove to do their cooking on; toilets and showers without dividing walls, and water and electricity that worked spasmodically.

In September 1946, "Ford" was transferred to the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees and Gwen Hesketh took over the leadership. The team moved to Hanover and were faced again with large Polish camps and conditions equally bad. When Gwen became G.I.S. Advisory Officer, Florence Couper of Western Australia became leader. A number of Australians served with RS136 - Barbara Godson (who had already served in Malaya for six months) and Margaret Sullivan from South Australia; Frieda Barfus from Victoria; Correa Atkinson and Ishbel Hogg from Tasmania, and Joy Stacy from New South Wales.

RS131 eventually found itself at Einbeck, having had to sleep on racks in a cigarette factory while waiting for instructions from the military. This team also found thousands of Poles in a number of camps in the area which had to be administered, food and clothing distributed, etc. Living conditions were just as bad as those in Brunswick, and morale was very low.

RS131 also found a large camp of Rumanians in Einbeck. During the war, these people had been evicted from their village by the German Army who wanted the village, and the people had been transported to Germany. They were classed as "non United Nations nationals", which meant that no U.N.R.R.A. food or clothing could be given to them. They were a German responsibility, but the German welfare societies were non-existent at this stage. The people were in a very bad way. However, C.O.B.S.R.A., Red Cross and G.I.S. stores were released for them and RS131 helped them in many ways. Nancy Kemp's first job in April 1947 was to run a holiday home, together with another volunteer, for some of these T.B. Rumanian children, in a village house close to Einbeck. The menu was very simple and always the same - brown bread, a little salted herring, bread pudding, Norwegian "crisp" biscuits, a little margarine, and sometimes a few carrots and potatoes, if the nearby German farmers could be persuaded to exchange them for something. There was no milk, sugar, butter, meat, flour or fruit, but as the children had not had any of these things for years, if at all, they did not miss them! However, cod liver oil and rosehip syrup were in good supply from G.I.S. stores, and the children always lined up for a Horlick's tablet as "lol lol" to follow.

The winters of 1945, 1946 and 1947 were very bad indeed. Most displaced persons and refugees had the minimum of clothing, many had no underwear at all and, of course, very few had any shoes. Sandals were made from old car tyres or felt hats. Sacks were unravelled and, from the thin cottons, jumpers knitted on old spokes from bicycles. There were no cottons, no needles, no scissors, no materials in Germany available for people to use. U.N.R.R.A. and voluntary societies supplies provided what materials they could for sewing rooms and shoe-making shops. Much of the G.I.S. money was spent on cod liver oil. Adults seemed to recover from semi-starvation but many children were permanently injured by malnutrition. One team, when taking over a camp, was shown the bodies of two babies who had died the day before. Their mothers could not feed them, they had tried pea soup, there was nothing better in the camp, so an S.O.S. was sent to London (one of hundreds of urgent calls), and in a short time,

back came parcels of tinned milk, collected by British guides. It was still on ration!

5

First "Free" Christmas

The first "free" Christmas for six years in 1945 was celebrated in all camps. There were many interesting traditions and customs new to G.I.S. volunteers. All teams had made an enormous effort to provide little gifts for all the children and as many adults as possible - the first real Christmas that the young children had ever known. RS131 remembers *"A stable was converted into a chapel in the biggest Polish camp. Midnight Mass was celebrated with simplicity and devotion. It was noticeable that the old people led the carol singing. There were no books and the young had not sung any carols before. Team members spent two full days and almost two full nights visiting all their camps. Father Christmas wore a costume made from hospital bedjackets!"*

Four Australians served with RS131 - Gwen Hesketh from Tasmania, Nancy Kemp from New South Wales, Gwen Mann from Victoria and Jean Corrick from Tasmania. Nancy became leader for the team's last year.

Kath Baird remembers the fun of that first "free" Christmas. She also remembers the long chilly drives in old vehicles over muddy and frozen roads. She will never forget the only time she was frightened. *"We had set up a camp for Ukrainians and White Russians near the Russian border (to East Germany). The people would not return to Russia under Communist rule. An U.S.S.R. Army officer visited the camp to try and persuade the people to return. They were terrified and locked themselves into the barracks and would not come out. When his car turned to go, the men rushed out with stones but I stood between them and the car. I was glad to see him go."*

Des Cohen of Western Australia joined RS11 doing German welfare work for refugees. She remembers having to abandon their vehicle and walk home some miles through snow, up to their thighs. For two separate weeks that December 1946 the team was snowbound and their emergency rations consisted of tinned turkey and Christmas pudding. She also remembers the difficulty and the funny situations that occurred through language, even Australian. She had to report loss by theft from an ambulance to the British Military Police in Kiel. *"I was asked what unit I came from. RS11, I said. The M.P. said* 'I've got the Iris part, how do you spell "seleven"?' *My English team mate translated for me."*

Lysbeth Thomas, who was with RS107 for eighteen months, remembers a Polish school teacher saying *"This day I am become a sausage"* - she had received one. Jean Corrick is probably still laughing after one of her students at her English class wrote on the board *"To-day"* and *"To die"*, which do we use when saying hello?

Des Cohen moved from RS11 to RS107 and later became its leader. When the new team RS22 was formed for displaced persons welfare at Meppen, Des became its leader. Anne Kerner served with RS107.

While the immediate relief work was going on, people were being encouraged to return to their homelands. All teams had a busy time registering those who wished to go, and fitting them out with extra food and clothing for the trip. In three months RS107 sent off over three thousand to Poland. The people travelled in railway trucks, no windows, but they decorated them with Polish flags. They were packed like cattle but were going HOME!

Many people would not go home. They were afraid for their lives as Russia had annexed the Baltic countries, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Albania. Many more thousands were fleeing into Western Germany from the east as they realised their countries

were no longer free. The military and the United Nations realised they had a big problem which was growing worse day by day.

In June 1947 immediate relief work ceased. The military authorities formed the Control Commission for Germany and set up offices called D.P.A.C.S. (Displaced Persons Assembly Centres), staffed by British officers who took over the administration of all camps. They were now responsible for the distribution of the I.R.O. (International Refugee Organisation set up by the United Nations) food, clothing and amenities. U.N.R.R.A. and the British Red Cross withdrew their teams as relief work had ceased and some of the Red Cross volunteers joined G.I.S. teams. Many relief societies returned to Great Britain and those few who remained were asked to become welfare officers in the displaced persons camps. German welfare was also to continue.

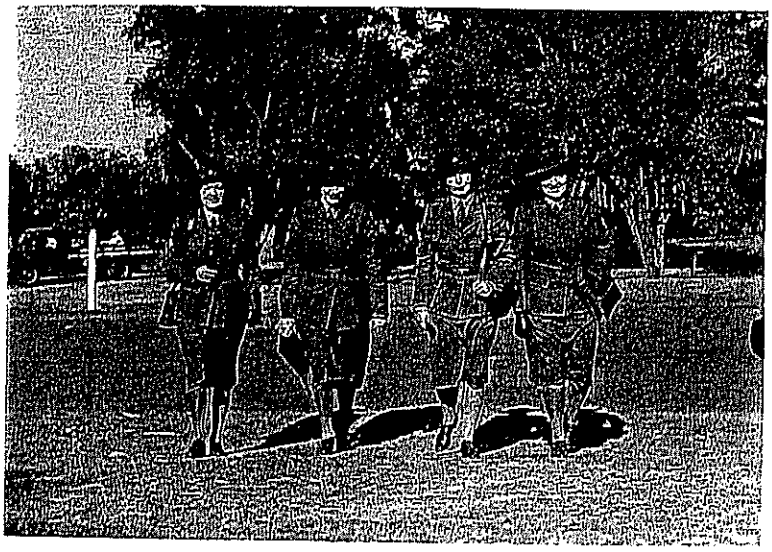
All vehicles were recalled and teams were issued with German Volkswagens and German drivers. This was a great relief, as volunteers had had to drive their old vehicles in all weathers and keep a very close eye on them in case they were stolen or "milked". Also, uniforms changed from the army khaki to navy blue (Civil Defence skirts and jackets).

Many small camps were closed down, bringing the people into large ones and those living in German villages had to move into barracks. RS131 moved to Osterode in the Harz, RS136 to Hanover, RS107 to Gebhardshagen, RS22 commenced work in November 1947 in Meppen, RS159b in Lubeck where Jean Gardner of Tasmania served until she went to Fallingbostel and Gluckstadt, where she became leader. RS11 with German refugees, had left the south for Heide in Schleswig Holstein in the north, where RS159 had been working until it closed down. Their billet and stores were in Busum, a little fishing village, war-devastated, numbing cold and guarded from the North Sea by dykes. Thousands and thousands of German refugees had fled into Schleswig Holstein from Silesia, East Prussia and Poland. These people were destitute, living in camps. Some of the huts they were in had been used by men guarding the Kiel Canal. The team worked through local German authorities, German Red Cross and local doctors. Jean Tucker (known as Tommy) remembers. *"People were in rags, old and young of both sexes packed into small rooms like sardines, shocking sanitation, little food, no wood for heating and so many ill. Children had to share footwear to go to school and those with no shoes and little clothing stayed in bed! In one children's home I discovered 45 children sharing the same comb. Normally honest people stole food for survival. In one camp a baby was born and wrapped in newspaper, but thank goodness the team came to the rescue".* Tommy also remembers going in a very small German Red Cross boat to Pellworn in the Friesians. *"To my sorrow I went in lieu of Des Cohen. We took food and clothing to the old refugees from East Prussia living in awful conditions. Only straw for cooking, the fourteenth century W.C. was revolting to extreme. Seasick both going out and returning, perishing cold with snow and biting wind."* Tommy also says *"Having a sense of humour was so important - even though the work was harrowing at times, there were light hearted moments, but always the* 'intense thrill of the work' *kept us going. It was said of the G.I.S. by displaced persons and German refugees alike, that if they asked the G.I.S. for help, they always did something about it."*

Ishbel Hogg of Tasmania was in RS11. *"While working with RS11 I discovered that only two thousand refugees in my area were living in camps, the twenty thousand were living in every house or barn or hut in the farming district. To deliver the little supplies that I had, I had to work through the German welfare authorities. I attended their welfare meetings which at first I found difficult to follow because of their platt deutsch. I attended the first meeting of the newly formed German version of our C.W.A. and persuaded their President to assist the refugees Old People's home, which they did. To my delight and astonishment at my last meeting the Mayor attended and presented me with a beautiful book of the famous silver work*

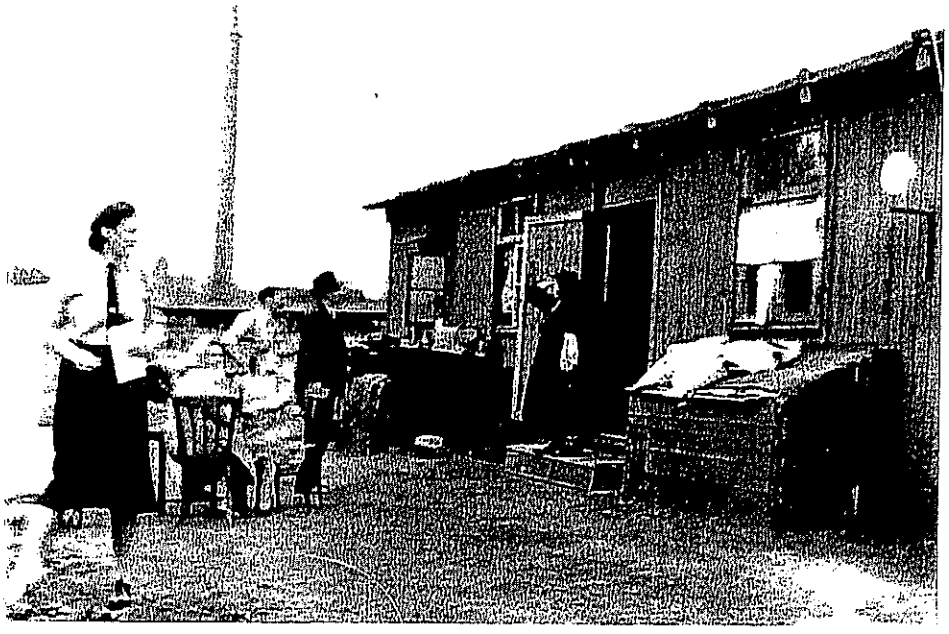
Dr Meredith Ross (Vic) leading the second hospital team
out of Buckingham Palace, May 1945

Ishbel Hogg (Steche) Tas

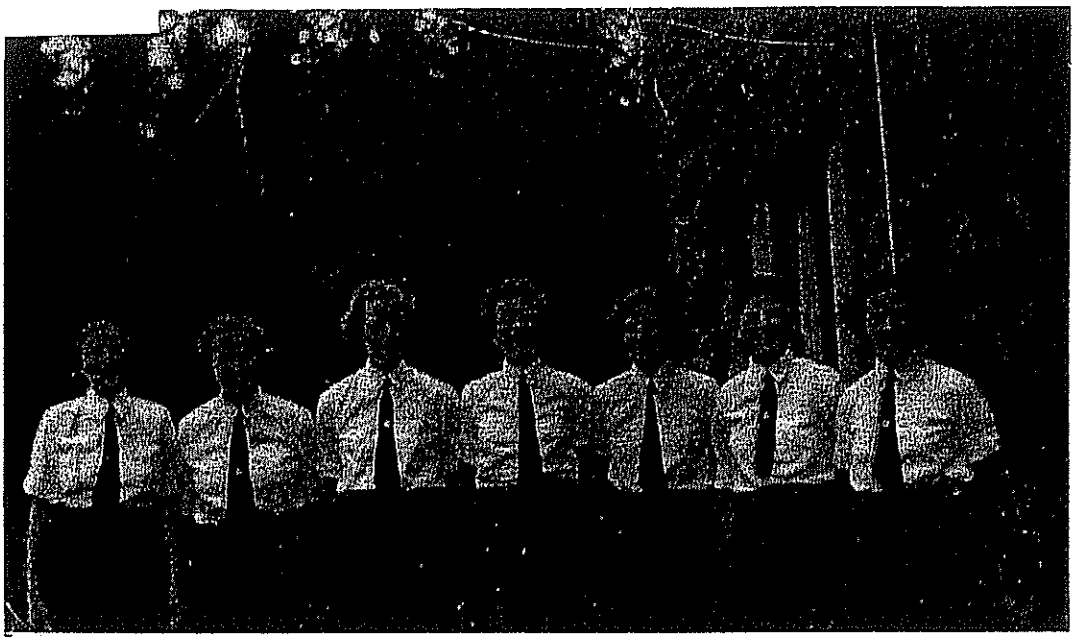


G.I.S. Team in Malaya in 1946.
From left - Del Hayman (Vic)
Barbara Godson (SA)
Eleanor Manning (NSW)
Pat Richards (WA)

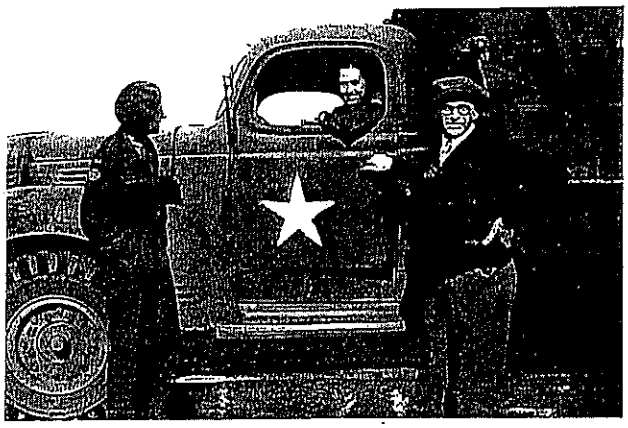
RS136 at their billet Schloss Ludersen,
Hannover 1948.
From left - Barbara Godson (SA)
Gwen Hesketh (Tas)
Correa Atkinson (Tas)
Frieda Barfus (Vic)
Florence Couper (WA)



Joy Stacy (NSW)
In a displaced persons
camp, Germany 1950.

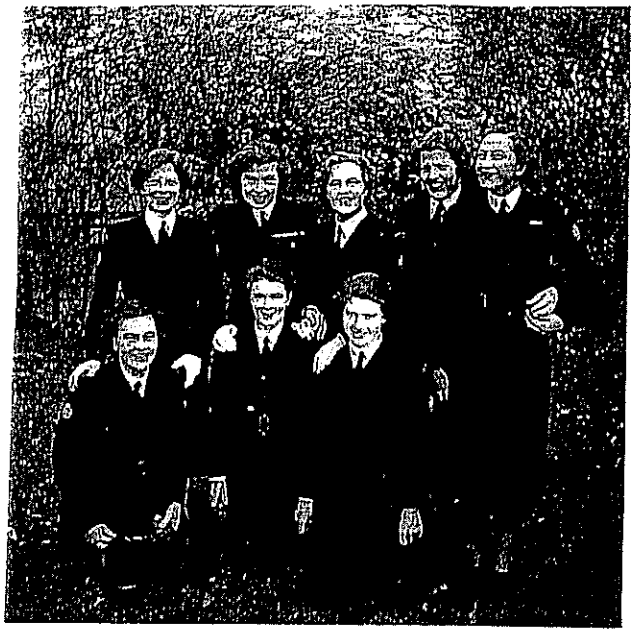


28 August 1949 - Osterode RS131 Billet
Seven Little Australians
From left - Gwen Hesketh (Tas), Marjory Taylor (Vic), Jean Gardner (Tas),
Correa Atkinson (Tas), Gwen Mann (Vic), Margaret Sullivan (SA), Nancy Kemp (NSW)



Kath Baird (WA) driving 3 ton truck borrowed to take DP's for a picnic.

Marjory Taylor (Walkowski) Vic
Lysbeth Thomas (Turnbull) Vic
Des Cohen WA



April 1951 - Lubeck, Germany

Some of the 15 volunteers asked to stay on and work in the resettlement camps.

Left: Gwen Mann (Vic), Yolande Innes (NZ), Peg Edmondson (Vic), Mary Bailey (UK), Gwen Hesketh (Tas).
Kneeling: Nancy Kemp (NSW), Peg Gosling (UK), Beryl Robinson (UK).

From left - South Australians
Barbara Godson, Beatrice Ford-Smith
Jean Tucker, Anne Keoner

G.I.S. plaque at Girl Guides Commonwealth Headquarters, London. (Signs indicate the military authorities under whom the Teams worked. U.N.: United Nations, I.R.O.: International Refugee Organisation.)

of Schleswig Holstein."

German welfare teams also had to cope with returning German prisoners of war from Russia. The Salvation Army relief team worked at Friedland, a small town near the German/Russian border. The team invited RS131 to spend a day and give a hand. Three times a week German P.O.W.s were returned from Russian labour camps. These were men who could no longer do any work. The Salvation Army had a transit camp and reception centre near Friedland. Major Mitchell, a wonderful lady, said that so often they would be given wrong numbers of people to expect, so they never knew how many to prepare for. Nancy Kemp remembers *"I could smell the men before I could see them. They had had to walk the last eleven miles of 'no-man's land' on foot. Their feet were tied in bags or hessian or wooden clogs and they could only shuffle along, many being held up by their companions, how, I do not know! The teams had hot cocoa and bread. The men's cups were any type of tin they could find. They even licked up the drips that ran down the side of those tins. They kept saying 'God be thanked'. Major Mitchell would quickly collect the first very ill ones and whisk them off in her car to the hospital, and be back for more. The others were gradually loaded into buses and taken to the transit centre. None of us from RS131 will ever forget that scene."*

The G.I.S. German welfare teams were withdrawn in March 1950. From *All Things Uncertain* - a German newspaper commented *"As we see it, the G.I.S. did more for fostering understanding than all the platonic talk of statesmen."*

So from June 1947 G.I.S. volunteers were finding out what an enormous challenge welfare work could be in displaced persons camps. Most members had five or six camps to visit each week. Many camps were more than an hour's drive from their team billet. Each camp had its own national camp commandant. Living conditions were still shocking. "Ford" remembers finding a family of four all sleeping on a single bed. In another room *"five or six men were sitting at a long narrow table playing cards and smoking. At one end of the room a woman was washing a small child, several women sat near the middle talking. Amidst all the noise and smoke, a tiny girl, clad in a white shift that just reached her tummy, was kneeling saying her prayers."*

In most camps welfare committees were established and team members met them regularly to hear their problems. A very common complaint was clothing. The official issue of women's clothing had come, but all the one size! The G.I.S. would have to interview those without dresses, measure them up and try to find something that would fit from their own stores. Giving out clothing could be a frightening experience. People queued and pushed and pushed, and sometimes the flimsy walls between the volunteer and her clothing and the queue would shake! Jean Gardner remembers one such experience and at the end she did not have a long black skirt that one old woman wanted. She finally gave her a small cake of soap. The old woman grabbed her hand and kissed it, soap was far more precious than the skirt!

Many children were terribly undernourished. Many had tuberculosis. Could extra milk be found? A mother was ill- could the children be taken by the volunteer to the team's children's home for a couple of weeks? An old couple were celebrating their wedding - did the team have something nice for them? A camp wedding, first Communion, a funeral - please come but could you bring . . . . .? There was something wrong with the margarine, could the volunteer check? A man had left his defacto wife plus child and gone to work in Hamburg but he didn't send any money to her, will the volunteer write and ask him to do so?

Many old people were alone and so unhappy. They had lost their families. They had nothing to live for, and, like all displaced persons, had lost all hope for a future and all trust or faith in anyone! Volunteers would sit for hours just listening to people, trying to understand, but all they could do would be to bring a pair of warm socks, or a little piece of material for a curtain or some underwear. Just listening, giving a smile and cheery word, and treating people as

human beings was one of the most important jobs of the welfare officer.

Many people wanted to find their lost relatives. The G.I.S. would take all particulars and send them to the International Red Cross who had set up a Tracing Bureau. Nancy remembers an old Polish woman who could neither read nor write. She had been brought into Germany as forced labour and had not seen her family since 1939. A letter was written for her to the mayor of the village in Poland, asking for his help.

Many children were orphans. If those caring for them wanted to adopt the children, this had to be done through the German court. Many trips were made in G.I.S. vehicles for this purpose.

It was so necessary to get the people to start doing things for themselves. Sewing rooms were set up. There were no official supplies of things for a sewing room, only what came through G.I.S. stores - scissors, cottons, needles, materials. One large kilt turned into five pairs of small boys' shorts. There were no supplies either for kindergartens but these had to be established too with materials coming from guides in Great Britain and Australia. Trying to get a room for a kindergarten was always a big problem. There were so few to spare, but once obtained it had to be de-loused, cleaned, painted and from somewhere or other, tables and chairs had to be found or made. G.I.S. volunteers became first class scroungers! People had to be persuaded to run their kindergarten without pay. Schools were started, books and pencils found. Some vocational classes also commenced. Nancy remembers finding an old car engine for some boys. Most camps started watch repairing, doll making, hairdressing, etc. All camps ran sports days, dance and song evenings and handcraft displays. In all camps English lessons were very much appreciated, many G.I.S. volunteers surprising themselves teaching English!

Displaced persons were issued with a few small amenities each month, and one was a tiny piece of soap like sandsoap! These amenities were very precious and many displaced persons in hospital, mental homes or prisons, would never have received their treasures if the G.I.S. volunteers had not delivered them.

6

Healing the Wounds

People who had been scouts or guides in their own country before the war, came forward and started camp groups. The G.I.S. did its best to provide uniforms of a sort, or materials to make them. The scouts and guides had to make their own Promise badges from any material they could find. Some of the groups held camps to which volunteers were invited and often provided the bulk of the food necessary! Nancy Kemp remembers buying red and white material in Switzerland in 1948 when she went to Our Chalet, for a Polish camp to make national flags. Clothing and material were still on coupons in England and G.I.S. volunteers were not allowed to buy off the German economy. What a thrill it was at the Thinking Day ceremony in Limmer displaced persons camp in 1949, when the scouts and guides presented her with a banner with their Polish eagle, made from material left over from the flags! There were 250 scouts and guides, and all were thrilled to listen to a message from Lady Baden Powell sent specially for them.

People who realised they could not get out of Germany because of illness, wanted to get a job, so many trips were made in G.I.S. vehicles to German labour offices.

Most teams had a children's home to supervise. Margaret Sullivan remembers going with the Matron of a home to the camp larder to check the meat. They both decided to take the labels off the new tins of meat in case people would not eat it, it smelled good but it was horse meat.

Gwen Mann and Jean Gardner both remember times when camp rules were broken. Gwen said *"The camp ambulance was stopped as it had not been authorised to leave the camp. Despite the frantic efforts of many inhabitants to guide us away from it, on all sorts of pretexts, we insisted on investigation, and upon opening the back door (it was the old ex army British ambulance), there was a large live cow with a boot on each of its four hooves, stolen from a nearby German farm and obviously intended for slaughter. It must have been lifted in bodily!"* Jean said *"On going into a room, I was shocked to see a man with no legs - his waist was level with the floor. But no - he was standing in his incubator, where with the aid of a light bulb or two, he was raising chickens. And the pigs! Some camp inmates had acquired a pig or two. The British ex army man supervising our area, made periodic visits to find them. He was an Irishman and suspected there were pigs - how could he not, when the smell wafted to meet you as you approached the camp? His secretary always rang through to the camp in time for the pigs to be spirited away!*

Nancy Kemp found an old Russian Count and his wife living in a German farmhouse. They had been upstairs in a room for over two years and had been too afraid to go out. They had fled from Russia during the Revolution to Estonia and, when the Russians were coming through during the war, they fled into Germany but this time the Count was badly crippled with arthritis and confined to his bed. Nancy got a stool made with ball bearings for wheels on to which the Count could slide off his bed, and then propel himself about the room with a stick, then she got him into a hospital. He wanted some special mud from Czechoslovakia which he felt would help his arthritis, so RS131 arranged to get this and paid for it, but his arthritis was beyond help. He had a cousin in England and the G.I.S. worked hard to get permission for the Count and his wife to join the cousin. Eventually, permission came and he went to Fallingbostel staging camp where Gwen Mann and Yo Innes (from New Zealand) took over his welfare until the great day

when he and his wife left for England. Nancy remembers giving the old Count some of her weekly cigarette issue. He used to cut each one into three, push a wire through one piece and smoke it to the very end!

Another old Russian was a professor of English, who had been working in an East German university, to which he and his wife had fled during the Revolution, but as the Russian Army came west, they had fled again into Western Germany. They destroyed all their papers (as so many others did), and said they were Latvians. He was in a Ukrainian camp living in a bathroom, when Nancy Kemp found him - he was a wonderful interpreter! When the first offer of work came for single women from England in 1946, he insisted that his wife apply, so as to get her out of Germany. She was accepted and got away. Now in 1947 he wanted to join her, but it took many months of talking and writing letters to convince the authorities that he did have a wife in England! Eventually, RS131 got him there to join her.

These were but two of the many hundreds of individual cases that the G.I.S. fought hard for, against almost impossible hurdles, to help people get out of Germany.

Marjory Taylor was the only Australian nurse to go to Germany. She worked with RS107 for three years. At first she was responsible for the supervision of hospitals, health and sanitation in four camps, but of course her work increased to include four institutions which she had to regularly visit. She encouraged the men in a T.B. hospital to learn to knit, and gave them a wonderful supply of Australian khaki wool which they turned into hundreds of pairs of socks for a nearby camp. Guides from Geelong sent felt, so the men made soft toys which Marjory sold to British Army wives, and so was able to buy from the British Army N.A.F.F.I. stores, playing cards, chess sets and other amenities for the men.

Another experience Marjory had, was not such a happy one. The International Red Cross was asked to return to Poland all the Polish children whom the Nazis had taken into Germany at the beginning of the war, for families to rear. Marjory was asked to find eleven of these children, take them from the German families and put them on the train for Poland. This was a traumatic experience as the children had been babies when brought into Germany and knew no other parents, spoke only German and were dearly loved by their "parents". Nancy Kemp also remembers a similar dreadful experience with three children, but when she returned to the villages to collect the children the families had disappeared! She was glad.

Marjory and a Latvian nurse set up a training school near the Ruhr for nurse assistants. There were about twenty women each two months, and the course and examination were conducted in German, which was not the language of any! An "impressive" diploma was issued to successful candidates and Marjory said what a wonderful reunion she had when, years later, two of these assistant nurses applied at her hospital in Geelong for a job!

Florence Couper, leader of RS136 whose team had moved into a castle just outside Hanover, said *"I never dreamed there was so much misery in Europe and the sooner these people are given the chance to emigrate the better."*

This is exactly what all displaced persons wanted to do - to start a new life in a new country. So the International Refugee Organisation (I.R.O.) set up processing centres where people were sent to be politically screened, medically examined, etc and those who passed were sent to holding camps to await ships to their new homeland. Great was the rejoicing when a family was accepted. But the heart-breaking frustration and hopelessness of those families who were turned down because of T.B., mental illness, or crippled, or an elderly parent unable to read or write. No country would take these people. Many had destroyed their papers, they could not prove what qualifications they had. Nancy Kemp remembers a Yugoslav who said he was an ear, nose and throat specialist but he had nothing to show that he was. The authorities had written to the Vienna University, which was in the Russian sector, asking for copies of his

degrees but had had no reply. It was pure luck that Nancy met an English girl on the military train returning from leave, who worked in the British sector of Vienna. She agreed to go across to the university and ask about the man's papers, which she did and she got copies of them all. RS131 paid for the papers and so the man emigrated as a specialist. This man and his family would have been accepted as a labourer without those papers.

Many families had to make awful decisions - whether to leave their mentally ill child behind in a home and take their other children, or all be condemned to stay; whether to leave old granny in an old people's home - she could not read or write - and take the children to a new land of freedom and opportunity. Worse still was when father or mother had T.B. and none of the family would go and leave them behind.

The many families who were turned down had to return to their hardcore camps. They had had to vacate their room and give everything away before going to the processing centre, so they came back to nothing. Now they had to start again and also try to find a home and work in the German community. The G.I.S. tried hard to help these families with clothing, bedding, utensils, food and transport. It was a dreadful time for so many.

In 1949, 1950 and 1951, many thousands of people were able to emigrate to the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South America and so on, and many had already got into England which was the first country to offer to take people.

At the end of 1950, all displaced persons camps became the responsibility of the now improved German welfare groups. All voluntary societies had to return to Great Britain. However, there were still people who were being processed for emigration, so the I.R.O. set up five transit centres for resettlement in the British Zone and asked the G.I.S. if they could supply fifteen volunteers to do welfare work in these centres. It was a tremendous feather in the cap of the G.I.S. and they remained until the holding camps gradually emptied through 1951. All camps closed down at the end of 1951 and from then on displaced persons were on their own and had to apply through the High Commissioner for Refugees for emigration.

Gwen Hesketh was now G.I.S. Commissioner in Oldenburg with Joy Stacy of New South Wales, Peg Edmondson of Victoria, and Sue Ryder from England.

Peg remembers *"One of the first jobs I was asked to do was to see several camp leaders in regard to children who were selected to go for a holiday in England, organised by the Ockenden Education Centre. Miss Joyce Pearce from the Centre had visited the G.I.S. camps and been horrified at the health of the children, so offered holidays for them. We were involved in getting them off to England and getting them back."* This scheme grew into one of the biggest refugee organisations in England and Peg was able to work there for a year after she left the G.I.S. and kept in touch for some years.

Peg remembers the last few months of 1951 as "operation heartbreak". She said *"A pathetic stream of rejectees has been coming to the office. There had been a desperate rush to get as many people away as possible before the U.S.A. scheme closed down. Many families were rejected because of illness, applying too late, no bond from relatives in U.S.A. for those who could not work, but worst of all was the plight of the 100 families who had to return their visas because the American officials had given out too many! Now there was nothing left for them but to return to their hardcore camps, without a penny in their pockets, without food and very little clothing, because the I.R.O. stores had naturally dwindled towards the end of its work. So they come to the G.I.S. for whatever we can give them."*

However, this was not the end of the G.I.S. Most volunteers knew many families left behind in Germany who still needed friendship and help. It was decided to start an adoption scheme whereby guides, districts, local associations or individual leaders could adopt a family and keep in touch with them through letters and parcels. Frieda Barfus, who had been working in the G.I.S. office since she had left RS136, undertook to supervise the scheme. Hundreds of

families were adopted. One of Nancy Kemp's special families she had worked for from 1947, was adopted by Goulburn District. For some years they sent food, clothing, money and toys for the four children. This helped to improve the children's health and, finally, the High Commissioner for Refugees accepted them for Australia, Goulburn paying for visas and clothing for the trip. What rejoicings there were when the family was sent to Port Kembla close to Goulburn.

Gwen Hesketh fought very hard to get the parents of the son and daughter who had got to Australia. The lad passed a state railway examination at a high level and became a sub-station master. His old father in Germany had a T.B. shadow on his lung. The son and daughter saved every penny they could to bring their parents out but the Australian doctor would not pass the father. He told Gwen it would be necessary for the father to have some elaborate X-rays which the family could not afford. The G.I.S. paid for those X-rays and finally the doctor agreed to let him go.

A number of the volunteers have been back to Germany or into Poland to visit their friends. Kath Baird went into Poland to visit her Polish friends; Gwen Mann saw hers in the U.S.A. as they had been lucky enough to finally get there; Marjory Taylor visited her hospitals in 1965; Lysbeth Thomas' daughter called on her mother's friends in Germany; Ishbel Hogg has been back to Germany. Nancy Kemp went back in 1983 and called on her badly crippled Polish friend in an old people's home in Hanover. Her first words were *"You gave me a sewing machine and I have been able to earn my living until now, but now my hands are too swollen to work any more."* Nancy also called on her Rumanian family in Einbeck.

Australia welcomed many thousands of displaced persons and our country has been greatly enriched by their culture and traditions. Migrant ships were met on arrival in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne by guide leaders holding the World Flag aloft. Great was the excitement aboard when scouts and guides recognised the flag their G.I.S. friends had worn in Germany.

Tommy Tucker said *"G.I.S. was the widest game I ever played and I value highly the lifelong friendships formed over that period."*

The volunteers gave much, worked hard, but gained so much more.

In Miss Ward's last letter, she said *"that in endeavouring this great matter we should know that it is not the beginning that counts so much as 'the continuing of the same until it be thoroughly finished'."*

There is still the extraordinary story of the G.I.S. in Malaya to come.

7

Guide International Service in Malaya

In 1945 the G.I.S. office in London was asked to provide two teams of four volunteers to feed the starving people in Malaya. The committee cabled Australia and New Zealand as it knew both countries had volunteers trained and ready. The request came just as the first test was being held in Melbourne in July 1945. Two of the assessors, Miss Del Hayman of Victoria and Miss Eleanor Manning of New South Wales, were chosen with Barbara Godson from South Australia and Miss Pat Richards of Western Australia to complete the team.

Del had just returned from three years as a trainer in India. During this time many refugees from Malaya had gone to India and she had also seen the arrival of the Polish children at the end of their appalling journey across Asia from their homeland. Eleanor, the deputy, had just been discharged from the Australian Women's Army as major. Pat was a trained nurse and Barbara a policewoman.

The G.I.S. (A) committee then began a frustrating period of trying to persuade the Australian Government that the need was urgent for a team to go to Malaya! They turned a deaf ear to all application and it was not until March 1946 that eventually exit permits were issued! In the meantime the team started on Malay lessons, which paid back when in Malaya. The committee bought a secondhand army utility with World Flag painted on its side, and collected food, clothing, kitchen and household equipment which was packed into the utility.

New Zealand quickly had a team ready. Their government gave them exit permits and the team of four came through Sydney in December 1946 en route for Singapore. They were very fortunate to get on to a R.A.F. transport plane returning to Singapore. They were sent to Kuala Lumpur to the British Red Cross, where Miss May Abraham, the dietitian was to remain and the other three were sent on to Malacca for relief work. They found a very sad picture - the Japanese had occupied Malaya for four years. They had sent thousands of men into Siam (now Thailand) to work on the railway. Thousands had died. Immediately on liberation those still alive started coming back home, all very ill. Food and clothing were practically nil! There had been no medical assistance for anyone during the occupation and so many people were suffering from malaria, beri-beri and other deficiency diseases.

One of the team's main jobs was to distribute food and clothing, working through the local village headmen. The Australian Red Cross had sent a shipload of food and clothing for the relief of prisoners of war, but the ship had been held up and the P.O.W.s had gone, so this truly wonderful gift was available for the Malay people. Also the New Zealand G.I.S. committee had been able to obtain shipping space, and had sent over 18,000 garments, supplies of sewing materials, pencils, etc, carpentry and woodwork tools, toys, soap, dried milk, gardening tools and seeds. What joy this gave the team, and the recipients! The team worked for nine months. Several members stayed on for a short time to help with guiding and eventually three members reached England and joined British G.I.S. teams.

The Australian team left Perth in March 1946 on board the *ss Charon* for Singapore. Their arrival was unexpected as the military authorities who had asked for a canteen team were no longer in charge! Malaya was now under civil control. However, they were made welcome by the St John Ambulance and Red Cross service. The urgent need now was for a mobile medical team to work in the far north in Kelantan near the Siamese border, where smallpox had broken

out. Would the team be prepared to do that? It was a challenge, only one was a trained nurse, but of course they agreed!

Pat and Barbara flew up to Koto Baru while Del and Eleanor had a hair raising adventure driving their utility over old army tracks through bandit-infested jungle! The fact that they were four women heading north to help sick Malays, probably saved them in many a frightening situation and encouraged the village people they met to help them on their way. It was well over a week before they reached Koto Baru.

Del Hayman reported *"Koto Baru is in the State of Kelantan, a triangle of jungle country lying between the borders of Siam and the broad waters of the Kelantan river. It was in this region that the Japanese first landed and for four years the people had been existing in conditions of dire privation."*

The team was given a small bungalow in the hospital grounds and drew their rations from the hospital. All the beautiful household and kitchen equipment packed into the truck in Sydney had vanished before the team got it, so it had to make do with camp stretchers and a little primus.

The team was given a day's tuition in recognising some of the horrible diseases prevalent in the area - malaria, yaws, syphilis, hookworm, ringworm, tropical ulcers, scabies and leprosy. They had a quick course in giving injections with ancient Japanese syringes and then set to work!

Barbara Godson remembers *"A smallpox epidemic was raging in Siam and was now moving south into Kelantan. Hundreds were already stricken and dying. Mass vaccinations were vital to stop the epidemic. 100,000 people had to be vaccinated. We joined the various ones going out from the hospital - Malay dressers, British Red Cross girls - and learnt to vaccinate 'on the job'. One had to, there was little time for 'private tuition' when 1,000 people were assembled for the first day waiting for us. After about three weeks the numbers were down to about 100 a day, so we concentrated on more general work, and gradually established a weekly routine."*

The team's area was to cover some twenty-eight villages for vaccinations, inoculations and various treatments using six villages as treatment centres, each centre to be visited once a week. They left their billet by 7.30 each morning and travelled in their little truck, their driver following jungle tracks. They were always covered with dust and bruises by the time they reached their first village about two hours' journey away. Some villages were over the river, which meant a motor launch trip as well, and then transferring into an aged hospital truck.

Eleanor Manning wrote *"On our first visit to a village the people would stand back, afraid of us, for they had had much ill-treatment from the Japanese, but we would be welcomed by the village headman and gradually we won their confidence. We would set up a sort of temporary hospital in one of the village huts, first having to shoo out the hens and goats! The people live in small houses and are terribly poor, but they are some of the nicest people I've ever seen and nowhere in the world have I met such natural courtesy. They are very clean too, but it is hard to be clean when you are dressed in one rag and have had no soap or clothing for four years. Many of the babies and children are suffering from yaws. This is a disease akin to syphilis although not a venereal infection. The sores are just terrible and children lose their noses, ears or bits of their faces, or their limbs get twisted and deformed if they cannot be treated. They are so undernourished and with no medical treatment the disease has got the upper hand.*

We open up our trunk in the little hut with its dirt floor, cover a bench with oiled silk, take out our bottles of boiled water and syringes and start work. People are now losing their fear of us and coming forward with their babies. We cannot hope to deal with them all as we have not enough drugs. The only thing that will heal yaws is an injection of arsenic and there are no more available in Malaya. The Director of Medical Services visited us and he was most

impressed, and we showed him things he had not had a chance to see before. He managed to get us another hundred ampoules of arsenic so now we have to pick out the few cases we can treat - the babies and only those who have a chance to survive, the others we must turn away! It is the most heart-rending thing I have ever known and the greatest emotional strain to turn them away. They just thank us and smile and go quietly away. One old man, nearly blind, walked miles and miles to see us and we had nothing for him. He thanked us and walked off, he will be blind soon."

The team worked on Sundays, but on Fridays (the Muslim day of rest) they did not go out to the villages. This was their day of "rest" but there were reports to do, letters to be written, etc. Del remembers *"One day we worked for seven hours, as well as the four hours travelling. In this climate it is really impossible to do anything strenuous. But the hardest strain is not the amount of work covered but the work that could not be done. We have not enough drugs. The most prevalent and terrible disease is yaws. Arsenic is the perfect cure but we have only 50 ampoules left. Half an ampoule will completely cure a tiny child slightly infected. All we can do for the rest is to clean out the sores, put on a dressing which soothes the wounds but does not cure - only arsenic can do that. So we have to refuse treatment to people who know that we could save them. We need the arsenic injections, and hypodermics and needles, forceps (we are using our scissors as substitutes), instruments for extracting ulcerated teeth; something to cut out bits of ulcers, and lots and lots of soap for scabies. We only have a little disinfectant left."*

The team wired Australia for the arsenic drugs. The G.I.S. committee accomplished the impossible by procuring 10,000 ampoules of arsenic (acetylarsan) at the cost of four hundred and eighty pounds and airfreighting them for one hundred pounds to Singapore. Here they were taken over by friends and safely delivered to the team. They were overjoyed. They estimated that over 3,000 lives were saved with this wonderful gift from Australian guiding. After one injection only, the awful sores being to heal and after three, the disease has gone! Pat Richards remembers *"We have one man with hardly any face left with all his neck and shoulders rotting away. I got such a shock when I first saw him. He will never get his face back but Dr Evans thinks we can make him healthy. He is young and is about 20 years old. He used to wait by the side of the jungle track and each time we would have to say 'no drugs yet'. He was waiting in his usual place the day after the arsenic arrived. He could hardly believe it when we asked his friends to help him into our truck - the first of our arsenic went to help this man. He had ghastly sores and his one garment was in an appalling condition. We got him a pair of old trousers and a piece of bandage for a belt. Next week he was waiting again, and the next week as well and by then he did not need our help to get home. He said 'I can walk home'."*

Del reported *"I never thought I would gloat so much over arsenic."*

In the midst of all this work an outbreak of cholera occurred. Hundreds of people had to be inoculated. Barbara reported *"We couldn't leave our villages - they needed the inoculations as much as anyone else - so we would go out again as soon as we had finished and help inoculate in various other places. Travelling was hard work also. Our furthest village on the borders of Malaya and Siam, was only 14 miles away, but it usually took us two hours to get there."*

Pat was asked on several occasions to take charge of the hospital and she was there during one of these epidemics. A murderer was admitted, having been shot and captured by police and his condition was bad. After he died, Pat asked for him to be moved to the morgue but this could not be done. The morgue was full!

The total number of treatments given by the teams for the first four months were

Vaccinations 9,684

Inoculations - cholera 7,933
Treatments - scabies 6,659
Injections - Arsenic (Yaws) 2,509
Vitamin B. 75
Other treatments 7,042

Other treatments - dressings for ulcers, sore eyes, septic sores, fevers and worms. All this by a team of four volunteers who had gone to Malaya as a canteen team!

In June the team was asked if it could remain until December. The Red Cross was closing down in August and all relief workers would come under Malay Government control and would have to sign a contract with the Government and become salaried workers. This the team did not want to do. Also by the end of six months, the team's health was deteriorating, mostly from overwork, tropical heat, shocking travelling conditions, and the handling of arsenic injections. So in September they sadly said goodbye to their driver and staff who had given them such loyal service and to their many friends in the villages, and returned to Australia.

The following is a letter received from the Chief Medical Officer at Kelantan.

"Dear Miss Hayman,

It is with the deepest regret I realise the day is nearly here when you and your team must leave Kelantan.

A letter like this is no place for eulogies. You know yourselves the value of the work you have done for tens of thousands of poor village folk in this country, so let me say the only bad thing I can think of, and that is that the way you have worked will set too high a standard for us to keep after you have gone.

I hope you will be able to convey to the people of your country the thanks of the half million people for whom I speak. The gift of 10,000 dozes of Acetylarsan to enable you to fight their enemy yaws was truly magnificent. I know these people well enough to be able to assure you that although they are ignorant, uneducated and unsophisticated, they appreciate to the full what you have done for them and I can see in the future that particular area of Kelantan will echo with tradition of 'Missi Negri Australia'.

Yours very sincerely,
(signed) W. Glyn Evans
Chief Medical Officer, Kelantan"

Post Script

Fifty years after the end of the Second World War Australia remembered. It was also time to remember the work of the G.I.S. Guides Victoria organised a re-union of Australian volunteers in September 1995.

Sadly many volunteers have passed away but thirteen of the fifteen left were able to come to Melbourne and enjoyed three days of reminiscing. We were delighted to have Dr Meredith Ross, who was our first volunteer. She flew out from England to join us. We were also pleased to have Bruce Mallowes, an ex New Zealander who had been attached to our teams.

Those who were unable to attend were Jean Corrick (Mrs Baulis), and Pat Richards (Mrs Knight). Enjoying the re-union were Kath Baird, Des Cohen, Barbara Godson, Tommy Tucker, Margaret Sullivan, Gwen Mann, Lys Thomas (Mrs Turnbull), Peg Edmondson, Marjory Taylor (Mrs Walkowski), Jean Gardner, Joy Stacy and Nancy Kemp (Mrs Eastick).

Thank you Victoria for three very happy days.

At the re-union it was felt there should be a new book written on the G.I.S. and the job fell to me. So, with the help of *All Things Uncertain* and stories from our Australian volunteers, I have done my best to give you an overall picture and I am sad that so much has to be left out.

The volunteers were asked to send down to Victoria photographs, etc for the re-union. You will remember in the book I told you about buying material in Switzerland for Limmer Scouts' flags.

I found a photo of the dedication of the Polish flag and scout standard. There was a large group of scouts/guides and I was sitting next to the scouter, Mr Kuropka. There was Polish writing around the photo which I could not read, so I asked my neighbour if he would ask his mother, who is Polish, if she would translate it. She said that there was a prominent Polish scouter in Brisbane by the name of Kuropka. She asked him if he had been in Limmer Displaced Persons camp in Germany, and he had! What a grand re-union we had. The last time we had met was when he and his wife Cecylie, were in Sengwarden Holding camp, where I was the welfare officer, waiting for their ship to Australia in 1950.

The Polish flag and the scout standard, made from my material, are now in the Polish Headquarters in Brisbane.

This is guiding history and history of women of Australia.

Let's be proud of it. Guides and leaders of today - could you accept the same challenge those leaders coped with so many years ago? I am sure you could. We don't need another war to find exciting challenges. Make guiding your way of life. It will give you the confidence to tackle a challenge.

Guides can do anything.

Nancy Eastick

Australian Volunteers
Guide International Service

Tasmania	-	Miss Gwen Hesketh (deceased) Miss Jean Gardner Miss Jean Corrick (Mrs T Baulis) Miss Correa Atkinson (deceased) Miss Ishbel Hogg (Mrs Steche) (deceased)
Victoria	-	Miss Del Hayman (deceased) Miss Frieda Barfus (deceased) Miss Lysbeth Thomas (Mrs Turnbull) Miss Marjory Taylor (Mrs Walkowski) Mrs Gwen Mann Miss Peg Edmondson Dr Meredith Ross
South Australia	-	Miss Beatrice Ford Smith Miss Barbara Godson Miss Margaret Sullivan Miss Jean Tucker Miss Anne Kerner
New South Wales	-	Miss Eleanor Manning (deceased) Miss Nancy Kemp (Mrs Eastick) Miss Joy Stacy
Western Australia	-	Miss Kathleen Baird Miss Desma Cohen Miss Pat Richards (Mrs Knight) Miss Florence Couper (deceased)

It is worth recording that almost all these women continued to serve the guide Movement long after the G.I.S. was closed down. This list of names includes a former Chief Commissioner of Australia, two Australian International Commissioners, a State Commissioner, at least two Assistant State Commissioners, several State Section Advisers, a number of Diploma'd Trainers, three former State Secretaries, and so on.

Warmest congratulations and thanks to you all.