

PHONE J.1270

ADULT DEAF AND DUMB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

(Incorporated)

Patrons:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR COL. THE RIGHT HON. LORD SOMERS, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., M.C.
THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE

President: MR. E. R. PEACOCK, J.P.

Chairman: COUNCILLOR N. ARMSTRONG, J.P.

Hon. Treasurer: MR. L. A. CLEVELAND, 20 Queen Street, Melbourne.

Hon. Secretary: MR. R. J. OHR, F.I.C.A., F.C.I.S., 59 William Street, Melbourne

Hon. Physicians: DR. W. J. CRAIG and DR. F. MAY

Board of Management:

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MR. M. J. HOATH, COUNCILLOR E. L. MORTON, MR. J. McLEAN, MR. G. NEWNHAM,
MR. EDGAR H. PEACOCK and MR. S. WATKIN

Principal and Chaplain: MR. ERNEST J. D. ABRAHAM, Adult Deaf Mute Centre, Jolimont Square, Melbourne

Assistant Secretary: MISS E. EMPSON

Residential Officer: MR. J. M. JOHNSTON

CHURCH, CLUB HOUSE AND ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING,
Jolimont Square, Melbourne East.

HOME FOR AGED, INFIRM AND BLIND DEAF MUTES AND FARM FOR MENTALLY DEFECTIVE,
Central Road, Blackburn.

GEELONG BRANCH: Rotary Club, Moorabool Street, Geelong.
Hon. Chaplain: Rev. J. J. Booth.

OBJECTIVE

To bring into existence conditions that will, so far as is humanly possible, open to our Deaf and Dumb citizens the opportunities already available to the normal citizen.

Dear Sirs,

It has come to the knowledge of the Management of the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society that a letter containing certain statements calculated to affect the income of the Society has been sent to subscribers by an unfortunate person who has developed a bitter hostility towards the Superintendent.

To reassure subscribers, it may be stated that the Society is controlled and managed by a Board of Directors, comprising upwards of 20 persons, including leading business and professional men—Municipal Councils are represented by Councillor E. L. Morton, of the Melbourne City Council, and Councillor N. Armstrong, ex-President of the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham. There are several deaf mutes on the Board. The whole Management was elected at a public meeting of friends and subscribers, held in the Town Hall, under the Presidency of the Lord Mayor of Melbourne.

As a result of misrepresentations of the unfortunate individual referred to above, the Government directed an investigation to be made by the Charities Board, and its Inspector reported:—

"Careful enquiry and personal investigation failed to reveal that other than proper, considerate and sympathetic treatment is accorded the inmates. All those with whom I came in contact expressed themselves as happy, content and well treated. The Home, in my opinion, is a credit to the Society."

The Rev. Absalom Deans, B.A., President of the Council of Churches and ex-Chairman of the Congregational Union of Victoria, together with Mrs. Deans and a Member of Parliament in his private capacity, paid a surprise visit to the Home, and after thorough inspection and enquiry, said:—

“I fully endorse the report of the Inspector of Charities.”

The public is cordially invited at all times to visit and investigate the work of the Society.

While, in all ordinary cases, little notice would be taken of such attacks, and it is farthest from anyone's desire to say anything about the unfortunate, it does seem necessary to explain that the writer of the letter mentioned is not a deaf mute in the usual sense. He was a regular hearing and speaking person, being engaged as a school teacher, but became deaf through malaria in India; when he came to Victoria some years ago, he was received by the Society and helped in every way possible. The following are extracts from his letters to the Superintendent:—

“I went to the Centre yesterday for the express purpose of talking over things with you in reference to your kind letter of the 12th ult., but was too sensitive and nervous, and could not pluck up enough courage to face you, as I do not like to be continually applying for help. I have had nothing but consideration and sympathy from you at all times, yet, like a coward, I ran away. In the meantime, it would relieve me a great deal if you can allow me £1 to pay my board from Monday”

“I have been out of work for nearly one month; I have spent all my savings trying to get something to do. I knew if I had come to you, you would have met me with sympathy and kindness, and have done your best to put me on my feet again, but after the shabby way I have acted towards you in leaving the Farm and my work, I was too ashamed to come to you for help.”

He dictated a letter which he desired should be written on his behalf:—

“Could you find it in your heart to try and get me a position in Myers? Yes! Myers' Emporium! Don't have a fit.”

(Here followed a long laudation of himself, his ability and his integrity.)

“If you can send that letter direct, or get it typed and signed, I will send it myself with a covering letter and add some more blarney, too. I shall be grateful to you if you can get me a £5 a week job by the above.”

Owing to the refusal to send this letter he declared open hostility to the Superintendent, and has ever since sought to injure him and indirectly the Society.

Extraordinary patience and sympathy has been extended to him, until ultimately, on the unanimous decision of members of the Board, he was excluded from the social privileges of the Centre. This exclusion was afterwards removed on the understanding that improved behaviour would result.

Further letters were received, and the Deaf Committee passed the following resolution:—

“Having had a letter of one read to us, in which he claims to speak for the Adult Deaf and Dumb, we beg to say that is not a member of the Society, and the views he expressed are not ours, nor is he authorised to speak for us. We are the selected representatives of the Adult Deaf and Dumb members of the Society, and we believe that the work as at present carried out is in the best interests of the members.”

A further resolution was passed by the Deaf Committee as follows:—

“That a letter be sent to the Secretary of the Charities Board asking him not to receive any further letters from because he is doing great harm to our Society in making statements for which there is no foundation.”

The general attitude of the Deaf and Dumb is shown by the accompanying document which was presented by the Deaf and Dumb to the Annual Meeting of the Society at the Town Hall, when the Lord Mayor of Melbourne was in the chair.

Naturally, we very much regret that an incident such as this should occur, especially at the present time, when every constructive effort is necessary in the interests of the afflicted, many of whom are unemployed, and increased funds are so sorely needed.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors,

N. ARMSTRONG,
Chairman.

TO THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ADULT DEAF AND DUMB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA.

The Deaf Mutes of Victoria desire to express their grateful appreciation to the public of Melbourne for their generous financial support, which has enabled the Society to secure for their benefit the Farm and Home for Aged, Infirm and Feeble Minded Deaf Mutes, and Recreation and Sports Grounds at Blackburn, and the property at Jolimont, with facilities for religious, educational and social purposes. They also acknowledge the services rendered by the hearing and speaking officers and members of the General Board, both past and present, who have devoted so much time and effort voluntarily during so many years in directing the management of the Society through the Principal and paid staff. They consider the present is an opportune time to give testimony of their loyalty and devotion, and pray that the blessing of Almighty God may continue to attend the efforts of the Society in the interest of the Deaf and Dumb of this State, and from this Centre to render service and counsel to Societies in other States throughout the Commonwealth.

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| A. E. Beard | M. Dow | E. Smith | A. F. Smith | W. A. Paterson | Katie Lawrence |
| A. J. Tyzzer | R. Dow | J. M. McLean | R. Thaw | D. Calder | Gracie Coghlan |
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| G. Vicary | J. Elwin | T. Donnellan | L. M. Fisher | M. Oakley | Agnes Barrie |
| C. Lyfield | L. Elwin | D. Sharpe | E. Noble | S. Hodges | Emma Chambers |
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| G. D. J. Turnley | G. H. Oakley | Les. R. Owen | I. Newnham | W. T. Vivian | Jessie Bragg |
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| Thos. Bennett | L. Williams | S. Mitchell | E. Leber | R. Kemble | G. B. Anderson |
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| J. Dickinson | E. O'Gorman | Emily Stephens | A. W. S. Sutherland | M. Rees | E. W. Leber |
| I. Halliday | M. O'Gorman | W. R. Anderson | T. E. Darragh | W. P. Monahan | E. Quantock |
| R. White | W. H. Wood | T. Tonkin | Thelma Stephens | M. A. Monahan | G. V. Quantock |
| O. H. Tyzzer | W. A. Chapman | B. Davies | A. M. Foster | D. J. Hood | R. Marks |
| D. M. Tyzzer | I. S. Guthrie | A. Stiff | E. Sellen | E. R. Hennessy | J. Marks |
| M. Harris | Donald Johnston | C. Stiff | M. W. Box | John Gibson | J. H. Goddard |
| A. C. Ashby | L. Sutton | M. Gibson | Joseph Leber | William O'Keefe | J. W. Harris |
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| J. Murphy | T. Newton | D. L. Reynolds | R. Essing | T. Smith | A. Tyzzer |
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| M. Wright | T. J. Peters | W. V. Tyzzer | G. Fawcett | R. Gilbert | C. Hood |
| W. Henry | H. Angas | G. D. Newnham | D. Lindsay | W. Skews | L. A. Ashley |
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| G. Edwards | A. D. Aird | S. Moss | V. Paterson | F. Johnson | |

