



Media Release

Saturday 13 December 2008

SPECTRUM MULTICULTURAL CHOIR OF 60+ TO CHEER UP NURSING HOMES

Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (SMRC)'s senior citizens Multicultural Choir will cheer up elderly people living in nursing homes in the northern region Monday 22 December from 1pm. Concerts will be held at Aberdeen Aged Care Centre in Reservoir, Arlington Private Nursing Home in Thornbury, and Kia Ora Private Nursing Home in Reservoir.

With the eldest member aged 82 and an average age of 60, the choir was created in 2006 by **Spectrum's Aged and Disability Services Manager Ms Nirmala Abraham** as a way to engage elderly people with an activity that makes them feel confident and valued. "The decision of going to sing at the nursing homes is led by SMRC's mission of bringing cultures together and extending love and goodwill over the festive season," said **Ms Abraham**.

"The choir is for them an important way to socialise," explains **Shemiran Gevergizyan, Coordinator of the Choir** "they have fun and enjoy each others company. Coming from different countries, and with limited English knowledge, it is sometimes difficult to talk with one another. But watching their body language while they sing expresses their joy and happiness!"

The 45 members of the choir, with nationalities that include Assyrian Chaldean, Chinese, Vietnamese and Macedonian, meet for rehearsal once a month. In the choir repertoire church hymns, traditional songs in several languages, as well as Australia's favourites like Waltzing Matilda. **Choir Conductor, Mr John Edgar**, accompanies the choir with the organ, guitar and drums.

"It is their moment of stardom and I hope it will not have to stop," said **Ms Abraham**, "the choir operates on a voluntary basis, and we are seeking funding towards choir expenses and continued operation. It would be a pity if this innovative successful community building model came to an end. Most importantly," added **Ms Abraham**, "the elderly participants love coming together to sing and share in this great cultural exchange through singing. The choir gives these elderly participants an identity of their own and they really look forward to participating."

EVENT DETAILS & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY:

EVENT: Multicultural Choir of senior citizens to sing in Nursing Homes

DATE & TIME: Monday 22 December from 1pm

VENUES: Aberdeen Aged Care Centre in Reservoir, Arlington Private Nursing Home in Thornbury, and Kia Ora Private Nursing Home in Reservoir

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