

HELEN RICHARDS

HELEN RICHARDS IS A NATIVE OF NEW ZEALAND WHO ADOPTED FLORENCE AS HER HOME AND PROMPTLY WENT TO WORK TO MAKE IT A BETTER PLACE FOR FLORENTINES AS WELL AS FOR VISITORS.

MRS. RICHARDS WAS ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE WHICH WAS ORGANIZED TO EXTEND FRIENDSHIP AND HOSPITALITY TO FOREIGN VISITORS TO THE MUSCLE SHOALS AREA. HER LEADERSHIP EFFORTS INCLUDED RECRUITMENT OF HOST FAMILIES, ORGANIZATION OF CALLERS TO ARRANGE ENTERTAINMENT FOR VISITORS, AND BUILDING A FINANCIAL BASE FOR THE PROGRAM.

SINCE 1965 MRS. RICHARDS HAS WORKED IN THE AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE PROGRAM. HER ACTIVITIES HAVE INCLUDED SERVING AS HOST FAMILY COORDINATOR, PROVIDING INFORMATION TO LOCAL STUDENTS WHO WANT TO GO OVERSEAS, AND ORGANIZING AN ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DINNER TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE AFS PROGRAM.

SHE HAS ALSO PARTICIPATED IN A CITY SCHOOL PROGRAM TO PROVIDE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION FOR REFUGEES.

MORE RECENTLY, MRS. RICHARDS HAS BECOME INVOLVED IN A PROGRAM OF VISITATION AND COUNSELING FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES WHICH IS AIMED AT HELPING THEM MAKE THE MOST COMPLETE ADJUSTMENT POSSIBLE.

FOR THESE AND MANY OTHER ACTS OF SELFLESS SERVICE THE FLORENCE EXCHANGE CLUB BESTOWS ITS BOOK OF GOLDEN DEEDS AWARD ON HELEN RICHARDS.

MAY 2, 1978