

**The following adjournment speech was delivered by the Hon. Shane L. Stone MLA, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory in the Northern Territory Parliament on 23 May 1995:**

The formation of International Red Cross was conceived originally in Europe in 1859, and the first Code of Conduct was ratified in Geneva in 1864. In 1949, the principles of Red Cross were extended and adopted by 166 nations. Last week, on 19 May, we celebrated 80 years of Red Cross service to the Northern Territory community.

In 1915, Dr John Gilruth, the Administrator, was busy defending his position with the citizens of Darwin prior to the Darwin rebellion. His wife, Jeannie, was also busy working to improve the position of Northern Territory soldiers who had volunteered to fight in the Great War. Jeannie Gilruth formed the Northern Territory Branch of the Red Cross Society in Darwin and, per capita, she and her dutiful members and volunteers raised more money than any other part of Australia. The huge amount of £11,500 was raised from card parties, concerts and race meetings and, as the contributors of the day were publicly recognised in the *Northern Territory Times*, it was easy to pressure the local population to make a matching donation.

Jeannie Gilruth was an outstanding individual who achieved amazing results for Red Cross. From its humble origins in 1915, Territory Red Cross has developed considerably. Today's Red Cross is more advanced and better equipped to deal with the natural disasters that occasionally impact on our community. Red Cross Australia-wide has a commitment to provide a wide range of community services. It provides meals on wheels to senior citizens, community housing, kiosks manned by volunteers at hospitals, library services at hospitals, cosmetic care for those who have been hospitalised over an extended period, opportunity shops and health and safety classes for education and first aid training. The blood transfusion service is also a major part of Red Cross activity, and Junior Red Cross completes the circle of service to the community. In a disaster, such as an earthquake or cyclone, Red Cross works closely with the police and undertakes an international tracing service for concerned relatives.

The level of service being provided requires a tremendous effort on the part of administrators and the hundreds of volunteers who work to raise funds for the many Red Cross projects. The unsung heroes are the



**Hon. Shane L Stone MLA,  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory**

volunteers across the Territory who work tirelessly and without complaint. In recent years, it has been customary to involve His Honour the Administrator as the president of the society, and the present Administrator, the Hon Austin Ashe, is the President of the Northern Territory Division.

On this 80th Anniversary of Red Cross, let me offer my personal congratulations to those who serve their fellows with such energy, dignity and dedication. Indeed, I recall seeing in the newspaper recently a photograph of Mrs Arthur standing at the gates of the Administrator's residence, with the by-line: 'It was her gift to the Territory: 50 years of service'. That someone should commit 50 years of their life to an organisation like Red Cross demonstrates that these truly are the unsung heroes and heroines of the community in which we live.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek leave to have incorporated in *Hansard* the names of those currently on the Board of the Northern Territory Division of Australian Red Cross.

Leave granted.