A study of program techniques used by the adult area of the recreation-education department of Union Settlement, Manhattan, New York, from October 1948 to February 1950

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of Study

Group Work, according to Henry Bush, is a leisure time educational process carried on by a social agency to aid individuals in social groups, under trained leadership, to acquire, through recreational activities, knowledge, skills, and attitudes which enrich personal experience and promote social cooperation and responsibility.¹

Social Group Work as a method in social work, recreation, and informal education has achieved increasing importance during the past decade. Clearly showing to-day is great evidence of the dawn of a new era for this relatively new profession. With the growth of its acceptance in all walks of life, there comes the necessity of a more critical and exact analysis and evaluation of it in its entirety, but particularly in the area of programming.

Simply stated, program in social group work had come to mean anything and everything the group does toward satisfying its interests. At one time there was a tendency to think of program as being synonymous with activities or events. In order to have a program there had to be evidence of activity that was of a visible nature at all times. Now we see that

program is a concept which when broadly concerned, includes the entire range of activities and relationships. These activities and relationships may include group interaction and experiences. For example: a festival the members have been working on for many weeks is a part of the program, but everything they have done in getting ready for it is likewise to be considered as program for the group for that period of time.\textsuperscript{1}

To-day many Social Agencies are making a conscious re-examination of their existing program to determine its worth relative to current trends and present every day life. The time is ripe for a thorough, honest criticism along these lines in order to judge where improvement is necessary or where change is needed. The yard-stick for analysis includes recognition of assets and liabilities which offer clues as to what forward steps, if any, the agency should take. Realism in measurement requires decision; such decisions should not be avoided merely because they might disturb existing patterns.

Purpose of Study

This study purposes to show the nature of the Adult Area's program in meeting some of the needs of the members. On the other hand it will attempt to show where methods and techniques used are actually helping individuals and groups to gain satisfaction from constructive use of leisure time. The general

purpose of this study is to show how program techniques are used in the Adult Area of the Recreation-Education Department to improve relationships between the Ethnic groups represented in the agency.

Scope

This study is concerned with the Adult Area of the agency which is composed of thirteen club groups. These groups are divided into three sections - Evening Adult Program, Old Age Program, and Summer Camp Program. The period covered in this study is the eighteen months beginning October 1948 to February 1950 inclusive. This study will cover the Winter-Spring and Summer programs.

Method of Procedure

The data for this study were obtained through:

(1) Personal observation covering a six month period
(2) Reading of club group records and attendance records
(3) Reading of group and individual summaries
(4) Use of administrative records
   (a) Annual Report for 1948-1949
   (b) Summer Camp Report for 1949
   (c) Project Evaluation Reports
(5) Surveying of literature written on the agency
(6) Surveying of literature written on similar group work agencies
(7) Personal interviews with:

(a) Former Headworker
(b) Present Headworker
(c) Director of Recreation-Education Department
(d) Supervisor of Adult Area
(e) Agency Staff Members
(f) Group Leaders
CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Early History of the Agency

Fifty-five years ago a far-seeing leader had a dream. He was Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall, then President of Union Theological Seminary. Dr. Hall wished the students to have first-hand associations with people living in an underprivileged neighborhood. Union Settlement is the embodiment of that dream. However, the students of the Seminary have played a minor, although an important, part in its life. It soon became a non-sectarian neighborly institution for the social advancement of one of the neediest areas of New York City, taking care of many of the social and economic needs of the people. In addition to this much was done toward improving poor health conditions within the area. Its constituency has changed markedly throughout the years. As one group became more prosperous it moved out, and its place was taken by others. Throughout the period of change the Settlement remained a friend of the newcomer. ¹

In the year 1895, successive waves of immigration poured thousands of families - Irish, Germans, Polish, Italians and Russians - into the district, from 90th to 116th and 5th Ave.

¹Fifty Years of Union Settlement (Union Settlement Publicity Staff Publication), Union Settlement, Manhatten, New York, June 1945, p. 1.
to the East River, known as East Harlem. Herded together under unhealthy living conditions and existing on sub-standard wages, these people were faced with a dark future in a new and seemingly alien world. Their plight was unheeded and without guidance they had little chance of becoming good Americans.

In her report on Adult Education Jane Adams said:

In all our work with the foreign born we have found that our own attitude toward them as aliens is most important. We may make their foreign birth a handicap to them and to us, or we may make it a very interesting and stimulating factor in their development and ours. We all know how the interdependence of men in modern life complicates the condition of their thinking, especially when they are facing a social situation in which certain values are but dimly emergent. Diverse social groups may fail altogether to tap the resources of such a situation, whereas a socially unified group might have found it comparatively easy. It is possible, on the other hand, for groups to find clues to a new life pattern in such situations of tension, for it is when old values are at hazard that new values get their attention. The foreign born through their very diversity have it in their power to unify American experience, if we accept John Dewey's statement that general intelligence is dormant and its communications broken and faint until it possesses the public as a medium.

This, I think, is what the Settlements are trying to do. They are trying to increase the public that shall be the medium for social development of great moment to us all. They are trying to draw into participation in our culture large numbers of persons who would otherwise have to remain outside, and who, being outside, would not only remain underprivileged and underdeveloped themselves but would largely cripple our national life and our general development.

The day by day struggle of these underprivileged people in the East Harlem District concerned the Alumni Club of Union

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Theological Seminary. Fired by the conviction that only by living among people can one understand and help them, William E. McCord and William T. Holmes, two of its young graduates, moved into the area and occupied a second floor flat at 202 East 96th Street, on May 26, 1895. The services they rendered were of such a nature that people frequented the place in large numbers, thus creating a need for larger quarters. Within two months after occupying this site they were forced to move to a larger place located at 210 East 104th Street.

William McCord was the first headworker of Union Settlement. Much was accomplished during his administration. The first summer children were sent to the country through the cooperation of the Tribune Fresh Air Fund. Two vacant lots were donated to the agency by interested persons. These lots which were located on East 101st Street were later developed into a playground supervised by the Settlement until 1912, when the city took it over. Another development in the early days, largely due to the work of Mr. McCord, was the establishment of the 109th Street City Baths. After six years of continuous service Mr. McCord resigned as headworker and was succeeded by Mr. Gaylord S. White.\(^1\)

For twenty-two years Gaylord White served as headworker. During this time the club house was erected, the property on

\(^1\)Our Fiftieth Anniversary (Union Settlement Publicity Staff Publication), Phil Rosen Press, June 1945, p. 4.
105th street acquired, and the work at the House-by-the-Sea and boys' camp inaugurated. During this time the Church of the Son of Man was also organized and much neighborhood work was undertaken. This work included the opening of a health clinic and the establishing of a scholarship fund which enabled neighborhood children to further their education beyond the high school level.¹

Under the leadership of Mr. White Union Settlement continued to grow in rendering a helpful service to its neighbors. The residents devoted much of their time to this work. They were supported in their effort by a larger group of non-residents who contributed to the movement with thoughts, efforts and generous gifts. The Settlement has been an outstanding example of splendid team work, in which the residents and people in the surrounding area have lived and planned together for the good of their neighborhood.²

Mr. White served as headworker until 1923. When he resigned to become Dean of Students at Union Theological Seminary, Mr. Max Nelson succeeded him. Under the administration of Mr. Nelson the Settlement added to its program a social music demonstration under the auspices of the National Federation of Settlements, sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation. In 1930 Mr. Nelson resigned and was succeeded by Miss Helen Harris.

¹Op. cit., p. 3.
Then came the depression bringing with it unemployment and destitution. Government agencies aided this situation somewhat and by 1940 things were brighter. It was during this time that the nursery school was started at the agency by the New York Kindergarten Association. Other events under the administration of Miss Harris are the organization of the Alumni Association, the establishment of the Young People's Clinic, provided by a special grant from the Greater New York Fund, and successful local drives for public low cost housing projects. Miss Harris resigned in 1940 to become administrator for New York City of the National Youth Administration.¹

Mr. Clyde E. Murray came to the agency in 1940 and guided it through the years of the second world war. During his administration many worthy projects were done. Among these were the extension program to the East River Housing Project, organization of the Defense Council of East Harlem, beginning of the Old Age Program, Consumer Education Program started, School Age Department opened for children of working mothers, and Neighborhood Advisory Committee started in agency. Mr. Murray was instrumental in the reorganization of the East Harlem Council of Social Agencies into the East Harlem Council for Community Planning.

Intensification of work for interracial unity and community

organization was also fostered. Mr. Murray was keenly interested in Social Action and led the agency into one of its most successful projects - "Social Action through Block Organization". In his paper "Successful Techniques in Social Action on a Local Level, Union Settlement, New York City" he reports the project:

In October, 1945, Union Settlement began an experimental extension project in block organization. The project is being conducted in an area covering twenty block immediately adjacent to the Settlement. It is an interracial area of more than 26,000 people who are of predominantly Italian, American Negro, Puerto Rican and Irish backgrounds. It is a low income tenement area with all the social problems of delinquency, neglect, unemployment and apparent apathy.

The purpose of the experiment is to determine to what extent people in such a deprived area can be enabled to grow individually, as well as in groups, by taking responsibilities together to affect change in their environment.

On one block, Negro and Italian mothers organized to protect their children from speeding traffic. They petitioned the Police Department and were able to close the block to traffic. The people on the block raised money to employ a trained recreation worker for their block last summer and petitioned the city to buy some empty lots on the block for a playground. They are now conducting a campaign against rats, peeling plaster, and leaking plumbing.

An informal house to house survey by a committee on another block revealed more than 750 building code violations. Although the landlords as a group took no action, considerable painting of walls and extensive repairs to windows and plumbing were soon begun.

On a third block the residents, largely Puerto Ricans, are setting up a playground for their children. They obtained permission from the owners of five empty lots on the block and secured the help of the Department of Sanitation in leveling the ground and cleaning it of rubbish. They are now raising money for playground equipment.

On the fourth block organization is fairly new. The
the people are working on the Police Department to erect a "Drive Slowly" sign at the entrance of the street and are trying to get day care service for pre-school children whose mothers are working.1

Mr. Murray served as President of the National Federation of Settlements. He remained as headworker of Union Settlement until June 1949, at which time Mr. William Kirk succeeded him.

That is Union Settlement - its beginning and steps in its development. The agency serves all ages from two to ninety-six. There are some 210,000 people living in the area of fifty square blocks. Membership in the agency is predominantly Italian, Puerto Rican and American Negro. They seek the Settlement as a refuge from crowded home conditions and for wholesome recreation under friendly and trained supervision.

Union Settlement has kept its finger on the pulse of human needs in a crowded area. Its pioneering and neighborhood plans, developed for the welfare of the people of East Harlem, have inspired city-wide improvement and reform. East Harlem's first Neighborhood Playground, first public baths, first infant feeding station, first maternity care center, were all started by Union Settlement. Only after the need for such essential services was clearly demonstrated were they taken over by appropriate public and private agencies. It was Union

1Clyde E. Murray, "Successful Techniques In Social Action On A Local Level, Union Settlement, New York City", (Union Settlement, Manhatten, New York, 1945), pp. 1-8.
Settlement that initiated the city-wide investigation of malpractice by midwives that resulted in Board of Health Regulations which were copied by other cities.

The extension of the Settlement's services to the East River Housing Project, its alignment with other agencies for better interracial and intercultural understanding among all people, the very interest of its alumni in helping the Settlement and in applying what they have learned there to other neighborhoods, all reveal that the influence of Union Settlement extends beyond its doors. Its sphere of activities is not only confined to the neighborhood. It serves as a training center for students who carry its policies back to their respective schools.

Present Structure of Agency

The present structure of the Settlement is composed of a Board of Directors, Women's Auxiliary, Honorary Vice-Presidents, Advisory Committee, and a Headworker. The agency is divided into six departments each with a Director. The Departments are: (1) Residence and Apartment House, (2) Health Department, (3) Publicity and Fund Raising Department, (4) Nursery School Department, (5) School Age Day Care Department, and (6) Recreation-Education Department.

Over the Residence and Apartment House are House Managers. Each member of the residence contributes five hours of his time per week to the Settlement Program. Most of these serve
as group leaders, others serve in clerical departments.

The Health Department is open daily for membership. Special days are designated for regular clinic visits. Prenatal, Planned Parenthood and Birth Control Clinics are held for mothers. Complete physical examinations are given annually to each member of the agency directly before the Winter Program begins. There is one full time Registered Nurse in this department and visiting part-time physicians.

Publicity and Fund Raising has been combined into one department under the supervision of a Director with a competent clerical staff.

From small crowded flats with no room for creative play, parents bring their nursery and school age children to the Settlement where they find stimulating opportunity for growth. Acceptance in both of these departments are limited to situations in which both of the parents work. "Prep" clubs such as singing, pottery, supervised play, eurythmics and painting are held. The Health Department works very closely with these two departments. Frequent examinations are given the children. Immunization against communicable diseases, and planning with parents toward child's normal growth and development is stressed.

In the Recreation-Education Department there are four areas. Over each of these areas there is a supervisor. The first area is the Afternoon Program with an age range of seven to fourteen years. For this area the agency is opened five
days a week from three to six in the afternoon. Some of the activities utilized are: pottery, library, operettas, newspaper groups, game room, rhythm band, bamboo pipe making and playing, folk and modern dancing, playground activities, cooking, sewing, story telling and story acting. Club groups are organized among the older children.

In the Afternoon Program activities are geared from spontaneous ideas from the members of the group worked out with leaders during meeting. Basic among these are projects, trips and parties. Three categories of group programs are used, (1) In-group, (2) Out-group, and (3) Between-group. Great use is made of resource personnel and specialist - music specialist, game room specialist, gym specialist, and craft specialist. Group programming is limited to the three older groups in the area. Use of standing facilities is limited to sex on certain days. Activities in these areas are usually on an individual basis. Total membership activities are centered in the auditorium, structured by the staff, with a conscious effort in mind that the membership assumes the responsibility of carrying out the execution of the games. The three levels of activities for programming are: (1) Group, (2) Open Area, and (3) Mass Activities.1

Evening Program is the second area of the Recreation-Education Department with an age range of from fourteen to eighteen years. In this area great emphasis is place on the club group. Adequate leadership help the individuals to channelize their energies and find outlets for their emotional needs. There are open areas for individual participation such as the game room, lounges, and the art shop. There is a basketball

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game going on in the gymnasium, a dance or movie in the assembly hall, a play or variety show in the little theatre, or open group to join.

Throughout these two years almost all emphasis was placed on the club group. This had effect on the scheduling of the Supervisor's time, on program, and on the membership. Program was built around each club group. With the clubs, it was obvious early, that for many, the obligation to have a life of their own without dependence on outside program support was novel and somewhat difficult, consequently the leaders has to take considerable responsibility for stimulating program. Beyond this it was felt highly desirable to involve teen-agers in assuming responsibility - at their own level - for their own program planning and execution. The outgrowth of this was the organization of the Social Committee and the Athletic Council.

Basketball continues to be the most popular activity for the boys' groups. Attempts to get the girls interested in gym games met with some success. The use of the art specialist and art facilities improved during the year by recognizing that most teen-agers will participate in this activity initially only for a specific purpose such as dance posters.

In the Evening Program emphasis has been placed in three areas: (1) To help groups build program out of their needs, (2) To give continuous leadership so that continuous help can be maintained in program building, and (3) To switch from individual to group participation in use of agency facilities.

There has been a conscious effort on the part of the Supervisor and Staff in this area to get a greater balance of the three major ethnic groups represented in the program. Encouragement has been given to all groups to attend the Friday Night dances and general interpretation to help the members to relate with one another.1

The third area of the Recreation-Education Department is the Young Adult Program. The age range in this group is

1Ibid.
eighteen to twenty-five. This area was added to the agency program for the first time in the 1949-1950 year. This area covers those young people whose interests are assumed to be a little advanced for the average teen-ager and at the same time not advanced enough for the Adult Area. Some of the ideas stressed are: (1) Vocational Guidance and Jobs, (2) Family Life, (3) Pre-marital Relations, and (4) Dating. The focus in this area is to other activities instead of just basketball and social dancing.

Programming in this area has been rather difficult in that there is a lack of leadership and a lack of consistency in leadership. There is one graduate student in the area and several volunteers.

One group has made two trips away from the agency—one to Chinatown and the other to a Night Club. Social dances are being planned by three clubs for the general membership. One club has organized itself into a choral group and plans a presentation soon. One group saw the movie "Intruder In The Dust" and held an open discussion on it. Good attendance is shown by the Young Adults at Tuesday Night Musical Lounges. Three male groups have organized basketball teams and are participating in the House League. These groups are active in the Activity Council and its sub-committees. The Chairman of the Council is a young adult.

Interracial and intercultural understanding is stressed in this area, particularly in supervisory conferences with leaders of the groups. Suggestions are made and pressure used where necessary and possible.¹

Structure of Adult Area

The last area of the Recreation-Education Department is that of the Adult Program. The age range in this group is twenty-five to ninety-six. This area is divided into three

¹Ibid.
sections: (1) The Evening Adult Program, (2) Old Age Program, and (3) Summer Camping Program. The staff is composed of one supervisor, one full time staff worker, one part time worker from the Department of Public Welfare, two paid part time workers, three residents, and one volunteer.

Goals of the Adult Area

The general goals of the Adult Area are: (1) To further the enrichment of lives through the relationships established among clubs and club members and leaders, and through participation in programs which emphasize interracial and intercultural relationships, (2) To encourage the participation in social action groups in the community relating to family problems.

The specific goals are: (1) To work toward lessening prejudices by (a) using all possible means to increase understanding among cultural, racial and national groups, (b) cultivating an attitude of acceptance of those who differ in views and habits of living, (c) by social programs in which all groups participate, and (2) To foster a program which tends to meet the needs of all the adults connected with Union Settlement, (3) To encourage active participation by groups and members in all Adult Programs, and (4) To encourage larger participation by groups in program planning.¹

¹Interview with Mrs. Antoinette Schiavoni (Supervisor, Adult Area, Union Settlement, Manhatten, New York, March 10, 1950).
CHAPTER III

DISTINCTIVE ASPECTS OF PROGRAM TECHNIQUES USED IN THE ADULT AREA

Evening Adult Program

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Modern American Community is the multiplicity and complexity of its organized life. Associations of every variety arise and gather together individuals from the setting that comes within range of their activity. They more or less form themselves into a pattern of relationships with certain processes and functions and in time perhaps, dissolve again into surrounding seas of the community. For the individual member such organizations provide one of the chief instruments of participation by which he shares in and creates the social life around him. It is in the course of such participation that much of personality is formed. Certain powers grow in response to group needs, others are suppressed or waste away from disuse, habits of adaptation are developed to meet the demands of the group and the individuality of the members; values emerge out of the necessity for choice.¹

The Adult Area of Union Settlement is an aspect of that organized life which permits individuals through participation to help create his social life about him. This area permits

the freedom of expression which lends much toward the molding of individual personality.

The Adult Area is divided into three programs. These programs are: (1) Evening Adult Program, (2) Old Age Program, and (3) Summer Camping Program. In discussing the Evening Adult Program three sections will be stressed. These areas are: (1) Club Groups, (2) Mass Activities, and (3) Adult Council.

Club Groups.— Aims and Objectives of club groups in this area correlate closely with those stated by Trecker. These are: (1) To foster and develop friendship and comradship among individuals, as they need the satisfaction that comes from being loved, wanted and accepted by others. (2) To give individuals opportunity to participate in worth-while collective enterprises where they have a part in achieving a goal outside of themselves. (3) To open avenues of self expression and situations in which they may be socially creative. (4) To widen the interests of individuals and increase his skills and abilities as he compares himself with others and learn from them.¹

In the Adult Area there are a number of club groups whose members are of varied national origin and racial backgrounds. For these groups there is a three-fold program: (1) Educational,

(2) Recreational, and (3) Social. Recreational and Social are self explanatory but some interpretation as to what is included in the Educational aspect is needed. "By educational we mean individual growth within the group in relation to those vital areas in life with which the individual is not familiar".¹ This type of education derives from participation in activities purposely planned for constructive use of leisure time. An example of this growth is shown in the case of Mrs. F. which follows:

Mrs. F. is a member of an adult group and she has taken active part in the activities of the Settlement. Out of these experiences she has broadened her mental horizon as to include other interests within the scope of her function in her neighborhood. Now she is active in various committees to improve the living conditions in East Harlem. We would like to quote her statement: "By coming to Union Settlement and participating in activities there, I have been taken out of my little shell where I have been living for a long time. I am happy to say now that not only have I become interested in the welfare of my neighborhood, but I have decided to go back to school again to improve my education."²

Creative activities in this area have given many of the participants an engrossing leisure time interest. They have also been useful in the promotion and growth of personality. In the larger aspect of adult education there are two objectives. First, it must try to reach the individual at a time when his curve of possible growth and accomplishment is still


²Ibid.
rising and give him new power and ambition. If adult education functions as it should, there should be, fifty years from now, a noticeably greater number of persons whose curves of ability will still be rising at forty. The second objective of adult education is the preservation of open-mindedness, of plastic sympathies, of elastic temper to a much later period than is now customary with the great mass of mankind.¹

The following statement by a club member show how activities in this area are helpful in enabling growth of personality:

Mrs. M. says: "By taking part in activities of Union Settlement, not only have I learned many things but I have been greatly inspired to do greater things myself. I had been on relief for many years, but the time came when I thought perhaps I could support myself and my children by securing employment. This I did, and now I find that from a feeling of self pity I have passed on to a feeling of pride and self respect".²

In the past club groups in this area met on different nights throughout the week. It was deemed advisable to assign one evening exclusively to adult groups for club meetings. Thursday evening was chosen. This plan proved very successful as satisfactory work resulted. Activities were better coordinated and more attention and adequate supervision was given groups. It also provided an opportunity for inter-group activities and helped groups to establish better relationships

Mass Activities.-- Wilson and Ryland list a number of reasons for the enjoyment of activities. The aims and objectives for mass activities of the adult area are based upon these findings. These are: (1) To provide fun and relaxation for individuals, and to give them the sense of freedom through participation. (2) To release physical and emotional energy. To obtain release through expression of feelings of aggression, fear, hope and joy. (3) To give the individual a sense of power through gaining control of the movements of the whole body. To give him opportunity to show his skills to others. (4) To give the individual a chance to escape from himself and the reality of the moment, to make use of imagination and to express fantasy, to have experiences not possible in real life. (5) To give the individual an opportunity to find adequate adventure through activities which require daring and provoke thought. (6) To give security to those that like activities that are familiar, definite, and governed by fixed procedure. (7) To instill the element of sociability, the opportunity to meet new people, to make new friends. (8) Pleasant associations with past experiences.¹

The activity that has proved to be very unifying and democratic in its nature in the adult area has been the Annual

¹Gertrude Wilson, Gladys Ryland, Social Group Work Practice (Boston, 1949), pp. 212-213.
Bazaar. On May 5, 1949 the Fourth Annual Bazaar was held. This activity was sponsored by the Adult Council which appointed a committee composed of representatives of each adult group in the agency. This committee, under the leadership of a chairman, had the responsibility of the planning and execution of the entire project.

Some of the activities presented at the Bazaar were the Fish Pond Booth, Fortune Telling Booth, Specialty Booth, Apron and Waffle Booth, and a quaint booth called "Ye Olde Sweete Shoppe". There were refreshments for sale such as coconut candy, coffee, cakes, pizzo, and punch. An outstanding performance of the "Evolution of the Filipino Woman's Dress" in costume, dance and song, was presented by the Filipino Folk Dance Group of New York City, under the direction of Mrs. Bruna P. Seril.

It was generally felt that this project contributed much toward the understanding of the different groups in the agency. As expressed by the supervisor in the Annual Report:

This activity proved to be highly commendable, in-as-much-as those who took part in it seemed to have forgotten differences of race and culture. They united in the common purpose of sharing the responsibility both in planning and later in the carrying out of the plans that insured the success of the project.¹

The Bazaar climaxed the activities of the Adult Area for the program year. It engaged the cooperation of all the adult

¹Op. Cit.
groups in the agency, the business people in the neighborhood, the schools and churches in the community, and the Women's Auxiliary of the Settlement for its planning.

Community Night is another outstanding event of the Adult Area. It was organized in December 1941 and was first planned by the supervisor and staff. Later it was taken over by the Adult Council. The chief objective of community night has been to develop a friendly feeling among the people of the community, to improve social relations, and to work toward acceptance of people of different views and backgrounds. On Community Night the entire family is brought together and programs that are of interest to family groups are presented. Program activities on this night are an outgrowth of discussions held in the Adult Council. The council discuss topics like housing, consumer education, social action, health, nutrition, and international affairs.

Out of the discussion on international affairs the group felt that there should be a better understanding between people of different nationalities. Toward this end the Council decided to take one country as its theme for community night and build its complete program around it.

In November China was chosen as the subject for Community Night. The group invited Miss Helen Harris, Executive Director of United Neighborhood Houses, and former Headworker of Union Settlement, as its guest speaker. Miss Harris was in China for more than a year as Child Welfare Consultant for UNRAA. She
gave a vivid picture of the country and its people.

Later an excellent film called "This is China" was shown.

Following the film, a group of twenty boys and girls gave a performance of "Chee Lai" – the well known song of New China.

In conclusion the group was pleased with the presentations of Mr. Liu Liang Mo of United Services to China, who sang several Chinese Folk songs in the native tongue. Mr. Mo., later, led the children in singing the "Chee Lai" in Chinese.

The interest aroused through these activities on China led to a fund raising campaign for contributions to the Settlement House in China.

Many other activities were held which helped to bring about some of the realizations of the objectives of the adult area. As expressed in the Annual Report:

In these activities are seen the Irish sipping coffee with the Germans, the Puerto Ricans with the Italians, the Negro with the White. There is dancing together, eating together, and playing together. As expressed by one of the members "This is real United Nations in action; we should have more of this". These activities have been effective in bringing people of various races and nationalities together. For instance in discussing the problem of housing the White person learned that the problem faced by the Negro was no different from his own and the Negro realized that the one on high cost of living was no different from his. By and through discussion these people have been drawn closer together with a resulting better understanding of one another.1

Adult Council.— The Adult Council is the governing body of the Adult Area. It is an outgrowth of the Neighborhood

1Ibid.
Affairs Committee. The Council is composed of two representatives from each adult group and is therefore interracial and intercultural. The present chairman is a Negro woman who was elected by unanimous vote. Its membership include Jewish, Italian, Puerto Rican, Irish, Negro and Hungarian people.

The function of the Council is: (1) To report and discuss conditions and needs of the people in the neighborhood, (2) To plan program for mass activities within the adult area, (3) To make suggestions in regard to Social Action, and (4) To make suggestions concerning the formulation of policies governing the activities of the Settlement.

The Council sponsors activities for persons served by the agency. It fosters Social Action through sending representatives to public hearings, and petitions to legislators, local, state, and federal. An example of its Social Action Program is shown in its delegation sent to Washington to the Second National Conference of Unfinished Business in Social Legislation, sponsored by the National Federation of Settlements on February 6th, 7th and 8th, 1949.

Six representatives were selected by the adult council, two from the staff and four from the membership, to attend the conference. The group visited the Department of Labor and sat in on the following discussions:

(1) "Fair Labor Standards" - Maurice J. Tobin, U. S. Secretary of Labor

(2) "Social Security" - Arthur J. Altmeyer, Commissioner of Social Security
(3) "Rent Control" - William T. Wood

(4) "Health Insurance" - Andrew J. Biemiller

(5) "Inflation and Price Control" - Leon H. Keyserling, Vice Chairman of Council of Economic Advisors

Meetings planned by the National Federation of Settlements included discussions as follows:

(1) Ways and Means of Building Stronger Neighborhood Life, which makes for better Nations and World. - Franklin I. Habach, President of National Federation of Settlements.

(2) History of Settlements, and How Settlements can effect City and State Administration. - Stanley M. Isaacs, City Council.


(4) Welcome Address - Lydia A. Burklin, Director of Friendship House, Washington, D. C.

The council offers suggestions to the agency regarding policy. As an example: It was the policy of the agency to send children to camp one day ahead of their parents. This caused quite a problem as the mother was not back in the home to receive the child. This matter was taken up by the council and thoroughly discussed. Recommendations were made to the agency that arrangements be made so that the parents could leave for camp on the same day as the children and return likewise. Recommendations were accepted and the practice was changed.
Old Age Program

The old age group call themselves "The Happy Meeting Club". This club has a membership of one hundred and sixty-five, one hundred and eight women and fifty men. Of this number at least ninety-five members visit the agency once a month, about thirty-five attend regularly - three times a week, and the rest are seen once or twice a week. Included in the represented nationalities are Italian, Spanish, Puerto Rican, Hungarian, German, Irish, Polish, Russian, American and West Indian Negroes.

The age range for this group is from sixty-five to ninety-four. The larger number of the members live between 90th and 116th street and 5th avenue and the East River. Preference is given to those living in the immediate area but membership is open to all.

The club has an executive committee, elected annually by the general membership. Service on the various committees is by volunteering. There are committees such as welcome committees, entertainment committees, visiting committees and serving and cleaning committees.

Aims and Objectives.— In working through aims and objectives with this group the staff takes into consideration three factors: (1) These people have been rejected because of social and economic status, (2) Their potentialities have not been recognized, and (3) Because of their age they might have lost faith in themselves and the will to try again. Therefore the
aims and objectives put forth by the Annual Report for the older people are: (1) Giving them a sense of their own worth, making them feel useful through specific responsibility, (2) Utilizing their old skills and teaching them new ones, (3) Educating them to recognize the needs of the community, and (4) Encouraging the individual to relate to the community through service to it.

Activities.-- The members had an active year. They planned and participated in Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine, and Easter parties. Monday is craft day for the club. Small groups gather for weaving, knitting, crocheting, sewing, and embroidering. Wednesday is devoted to music. The group engage in community singing, social dancing, and take great pride in their rhythm band. Friday is recreation day. Interesting and educational films are shown. Magazines, books, cards, and table games are available to the members at all times. A luncheon for a nominal fee is served daily, cafeteria style.

Spirit was high and cooperation great among the group during the preparation of events for the Settlement's Annual Bazaar. During their craft days they made articles that were sold at their Speciality Booth at the Bazaar.

The group participated in the Annual Hobby Show, for older people, sponsored by the New York City Welfare Council. Their exhibit was colorful and varied. It consisted of artistic articles made by the group at the Settlement and at home.
during the year. The group took pride in its exhibit and shared responsibility in its attendance. The rhythm band performed one day and was well received.

An important activity in the group is the monthly birthday party. All members celebrating birthdays during the month are seated at a separate table beautifully decorated with flowers and candles. Birthday cakes are made for these individuals and ice-cream and cake is served to all.

One of the outstanding events of last year was the romance of two of the members that resulted in marriage six months later. The couple met in the club and were married at the agency. The group was very enthusiastic in the decorations and preparation of refreshments for the reception after the wedding.

Summer Camping

Camp Ellen Marvin is located in beautiful Palisades Interstate Park, high in Bear Mountain. Camp Nathan Hale for boys and Gaylord S. White for girls are also located in this area. Ellen Marvin's present location dates back to 1934. Every summer 360 persons including mothers and small children, two to six years of age, live in the rustic beauty of this spot. A staff takes care of the children so that the mothers have a real vacation.

Aims and Objectives.— The main objectives at camp are those set forth in the manual — namely — that campers have a good vacation and grow through the process of the following
areas:

(1) Developing new interests
(2) Physical, emotional, mental
(3) Knowing himself and his potentialities
(4) Adjusting himself more easily to group living
(5) Understanding the child and family relationship
(6) Appreciation and understanding of out-of-door life
(7) Developing a better understanding of people culturally, religiously, and individually.¹

Activities.-- The women are active from morning to night. They engage in rowing, swimming, hiking, chatting, singing, dancing, and doing craft. They spend many hours planning programs for the evenings. The children are divided into small groups, each of which is assigned a counselor. They engage in various activities. The older children spend some time each day in the doll play room, their craft room, swimming, and on the playground. Once a week a visit is made to the Nature Museum. The little ones stay on their own playground, where they paddle in their wading pool and play with their toys.

The waterfront is one of the most popular areas at camp. The time allotted for waterfront activities during the day was an hour and a half in the morning and one hour in the

afternoon. Swimming classes were held in the morning for mothers according to American Red Cross standards and twelve of them were awarded Beginners Certificates and one received her swimmers certificate. All of the mothers were very proud of their achievement and proudly displayed their cards. There were many other mothers who had never been in the water before. These were able to become accustomed to it and lose some of their fear. They learned the basic skills such as floating and sculling. It is hoped that next year these women will work for certificates and gain real confidence in their potential abilities in the water.

The boating program was carried on simultaneously with the swimming program so there was very little time devoted to rowing classes.

Those mothers who knew how to row before coming to camp were given a simple yet thorough test to find out if they were capable of handling a boat alone. If they passed this test, they were permitted to take other mothers out rowing and in that way more mothers were able to enjoy the water. These mothers were called boating counselors. Often they would take other mothers who were standing on the dock out with them. In this way the mothers mingled and separated from their small groups of city friends and met new people. They were able to get acquainted with cultural patterns and learned to understand and appreciate other people that are different from them.¹

The mothers that knew how to row were happy to share this knowledge with the others. There were a few evenings that boats were taken out for a short while by the campers. They

¹Ibid.
seemed to enjoy this very much, even more than day time rowing. Boating was particularly popular during the cooler days when swimming could not be engaged in. The music counselor served as assistant to the waterfront director - this was an additional safety measure.

The campers attitude toward the craft program was one of eager enthusiasm from the beginning. They wanted to learn new skills in working with their hands. They also wanted to bring something tangible home to display. In planning the program the making of practical objects like wooden plates, textile painted cloths, and copper jewelry were emphasized and encouraged. The teaching of abstract aesthetic principles in creative art was played down. There was, of course, some guidance in the developing of the creative imagination. The learning of new craft - painting, block printing, wire working, stenciling, carving - developed a certain amount of physical coordination. Most of the campers, at first, had little confidence in their abilities as to craft work. They were quick in learning however, but by the end of each trip there were some who intended to continue their crafts as a hobby in the city.

Evening programs, which the mothers themselves planned, included games, camp fires, trips to museums, folk dancing, social mixers, treasure hunts, staff shows and talent nights.

Each camp trip is highlighted with a banquet as its climax. These banquets are structured and carried out by the
campers themselves. The role of the staff is one of guidance. Each banquet has a theme. Some of the themes used were "One World", "The Open Door To Democracy", and "Brotherhood".

"Brotherhood" was the theme of the last banquet. This was symbolized in a very unique manner. Before dinner a wedding was held. Ellen Marvin married Mr. Brotherhood. The bride was Spanish, the groom Jewish, and the officiating clergyman was a Negro. The entire skit was very well done and all felt that this was an excellent expression of the theme.¹

"Candle Light Service" is the final activity of the camping session. The purpose of this ceremony is to crystallize and solidify the experiences of the campers during their stay at camp. It is conducted as follows:

The campers gather around a large fire, sing songs learned in camp, and read poems appropriate for the occasion. Then each camper lights a candle from the fire and make a wish. This being done, all the campers march in procession to the dock where there is a floater with two large letters on it - E. M. - symbolizing Ellen Marvin. The candles are placed on these letters. The floater is attached to a boat which pulls it gradually to the center of the lake as "Taps" is being sung by the group. Slowly the floater is allowed to sink until it has completely disappeared from sight.²

Camping offers definite advantages in building the qualities of good citizenship which a person may gain in no other way. Camp is not a place; it is a way of living that stimulates mind and body, enriches life, and builds the habits of happy, cooperative living.

¹Ibid.
²Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Summary

The East Harlem District is an area in which health and welfare problems are great in number and most critical in nature. Prevalent among these problems are the relatively low economic status of the area, an abnormal density of population, inadequate housing and medical facilities, a high rate of crime and delinquency and a great lack of recreational facilities.

This study is primarily concerned with the recreational program as carried out in the adult area of Union Settlement and techniques used in attempting to improve relationships between the ethnic groups represented in the agency. It is well to be cognizant of the fact that the treatment of any one category alone cannot provide the panacea for all of the ills in the area.

Union Settlement, founded in 1895, is the outgrowth of far-seeing leaders of Union Theological Seminary. It has grown from a mere dream to a non-sectarian neighborly institution for the social advancement of one of the neediest areas of New York City. The agency serves all ages above that of two years. Present membership is predominantly Italian, Puerto Rican and American Negro.

There are six department in the agency. They are: (1) Residence and Apartment House, (2) Health Department, (3) Publicity and Fund Raising, (4) Nursery School Department,
(5) School Age Day Care Department, and (6) Recreation-Education Department.

There are four divisions in the Recreation-Education Department. These are: (1) Afternoon Program, (2) Evening Program, (3) Young Adult Program, and (4) Adult Program.

The Adult Program is divided in three sections. These sections are: (1) Evening Adult Program, (2) Old Age Program, and (3) Summer Camping Program.

The general goals of the Adult Area are: (1) To further the enrichment of lives through the relationship established among clubs and club members and leaders, and through participation in programs which emphasize interracial and intercultural understanding, and (2) To encourage the participation in social action groups in the community relating to family problems.

Findings

The following findings show indications of growth in various areas, brought about by the conscious effort of staff through guidance in programming toward a desired end.

(1) Activities such as the mock wedding of Mr. Brotherhood to Miss Ellen Marvin, which was planned and executed by the campers themselves, indicated some understanding and acceptance of people of different racial, cultural and religious background.

(2) Another instance of racial acceptance and understanding was shown in the record of a unanimous election of a Negro
mother to the chairmanship of the Adult Council, which is the governing body of the Adult Area.

(3) A good group experience, exemplified in the case of Mrs. F., tended to broaden her mental horizon as an individual, as well as consideration in the welfare of others. This was shown in her work with committees to improve living conditions in her neighborhood.

(4) The sharing of knowledge and experiences as in the record of the boating program at summer camp was basic in the establishment of new and warm relationships between inter-racial campers.

(5) In the "Block Organization Project" Italian and Negro mothers were able to unite in the establishment of playgrounds, as a solution to a common problem effecting their children.

(6) The Annual Bazaar was an example of a conscious effort in programming in the Adult Area. Through the use of committees all the ethnic groups participated in the planning and execution of this project. Greater understanding resulted. The Annual Report for 1948-1949 (page 20) cited this activity as being highly commendable since those who took part seemed to have forgotten differences of race and culture.

In the planning and execution of its interracial and inter-cultural programs, the settlement has utilized services and materials from the Education Division of the New York State Commission Against Discrimination. Flexible, assuming
leadership when necessary, ever alert to the changing temper of the community and needs of the people, Union Settlement is a dynamic force for the neighborhood and a proving ground for social progress.
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