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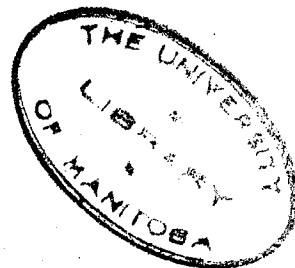
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

A STUDY  
OF LEISURE-TIME SERVICES  
FOR SENIOR CITIZENS IN WINNIPEG  
WITH AN ACCOUNT  
OF A GUIDED GROUP EXPERIENCE  
IN RECREATION FOR THE AGED  
IN THE C.P.R. - NOTRE DAME AREA

by  
Margaret Mary Louise Kelly  
B.A., Dip. Ed., B.S.W.

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## FOREWORD

One of the outstanding phenomena of the twentieth century, particularly from the point of view of those concerned with welfare, is a growing awareness of the needs and problems of the senior population, those over sixty-five years of age. As this population increases in volume, problems relating to employment, health, housing and recreation can increase in direct proportion, and are receiving a great deal of attention as a result of the concern of government officials, both elected and employed, medical practitioners, professional social workers, and volunteers.

Following a summary of the present situation and its causes and effects with reference to the social and emotional needs of the aged, it is the intention of this thesis to study and evaluate leisure-time services available to the senior population in the Winnipeg area. A report will be made on a questionnaire survey sent to a group of churches in Winnipeg as well as on clubs providing leisure-time services for the aged. There will also be an account of a model project undertaken in a neighborhood house, with special emphasis on the role of volunteers and a comparative study of the difference in focus and service when no professional guidance is given and when professionally trained and supervised personnel is provided.

It is hoped that an account of study and an evaluation of experience in this field will result in a contribution toward an understanding of some of the factors involved in provision of organized recreation services for senior citizens.

## CHAPTER I

### A REVIEW OF THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF THE AGED

"Aging is continuous... It may be defined perhaps, as those changes which are introduced by the factor of time in living." <sup>1</sup> It must be emphasized that chronological or physical age and psychological age do not necessarily coincide, that there can be wide variations in alertness and activity and that actual age alone cannot be used as the measurement of usefulness or ability. Because of wide variations it is difficult to define specifically by age the concept of a senior citizen. For this study, we will for the most part use the term senior citizen as applying to those people sixty years and over unless otherwise specified. The term senior citizen is generally used by practitioners in the fields of recreation and group work as one which underlines the potentialities rather than the limitations which the terms 'old people', 'the elderly', 'aged citizens', 'old folks', or other names to describe this group infer. It is interesting that many senior citizen groups themselves prefer this definition, putting the emphasis on the golden age rather than the sunset or declining years.

This thesis will examine the extent and nature of recreational services for senior citizens in Winnipeg proper. In so doing an account will be given of a survey of recreational services for senior citizens provided by the churches of Winnipeg, a description of services provided by community and service clubs for senior citizens, and a description of the development of the programme for senior citizens at Logan Neighbourhood House in the C.P.R. - Notre Dame area of Winnipeg, including an examination of the role played by volunteers in this specific programme. The study of the city-wide programmes and of the group in a specific area of the city was made by the writer during her

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<sup>1</sup> Edward J. Stieglitz, M.S., M.D., F.A.C.P., Geriatric Medicine, "The Care of the Aging and the Aged", ch. I, sec. 1, p. 5

placement as a second year student for the period from October 1952 to May 1953.

However, before the programmes in Winnipeg are examined, the social and emotional needs of senior citizens will be discussed in order to see more clearly the purpose and need of the programmes to be described.

Recreation services for senior citizens have been defined by A. G.

Brailey:

Senior citizen recreation should be that which leaves them with the deep conviction: I still belong to this community. I have friends here and I am needed here. I am respected by the members of this community both as a person and for the things which I do to make it a better community in which to live. 1

The above implies that our efforts to help senior citizens must focus on their capacities, their ability to broaden their scope of interest and to make use of the wealth of experience which in many cases is the sole profit of a long life.

#### The Extent and Nature of the Senior Population and Its Problems

Dr. Edward J. Stieglitz has suggested a reason for longevity in the world today and has presented it as a problem. According to Dr. Stieglitz:

The gradual control of infectious disease, the better understanding and application of nutrition as related to health, more science in agriculture, and the better transportation and storage of foods, rendering good foods more generally available, all contribute to the prolongation of the human life span, so that today, in our own and other equally fortunate lands, the percentage of men and women in our population from sixty to eighty years has become an important social, economic and medical problem. 2

Medical interest has been evidenced by the formation of geriatric committees, throughout Canada and the United States, to make studies of old age in

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1 Allen G. Brailey, M.D. "At Sixty Plus", Recreation, March 1952

2 Edward J. Stieglitz, M.S., M.D., F.A.C.P., The Second Forty Years, Foreword, p. ix

hospitals and university medical colleges. The increased financial assistance given to older people in Canada in 1950 and 1951, and the Social Security programme in the United States, indicate government awareness that it is advisable to increase the resources available to our senior population.

Concern around welfare service for the aged is indicated by the number of pamphlets on the subject which have been prepared and circulated. A great number have been issued by volunteer organizations such as the National Council of Jewish Women and public agencies like the Hennepin County Welfare Board in Minnesota. Records show that social agencies are confronted with thousands of senior citizens who need help in one or all areas of human relationships and endeavour.

This growing concern has been aroused by constantly increasing numbers of elderly citizens and the situation has been complicated by compulsory retirement which results in a large proportion of our population withdrawing from the competitive field and becoming economically dependent on the younger workers.

According to research in the United States, by Jerome Kaplan, as set forth in his book, "A Social Programme for Older People", it was discovered that:

At the time of the Roman Empire, the average life span was 23 years. In 1900 it was still only 47 years, but by 1940 it had attained 63 years. By 1960, the estimated average life expectancy should reach 75 years .... Between 1940 and 1950, the total population of the United States increased 14.5 per cent while the number of those 65 years and older grew 36.1 per cent. 1

In Canada too, we have evidence of an increase in our senior citizen population. In 1901, out of a population of 5,371,315, statistics show that

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p. 4 1 Jerome Kaplan, A Social Programme for Older People, ch. 1,

413,379 were 60 years of age and over. In 1951, of the 14,009,429 people in Canada, 1,592,425 were 60 years of age and over,<sup>1</sup> as shown in the following breakdown:

POPULATION IN THOUSANDS AND IN PER CENT OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN CANADA  
BY AGE GROUPS FROM 1901 to 1951<sup>2</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>60-64</u>	<u>65-69</u>	<u>70 and over</u>
1901	5,371	2.6	2	3.1
1911	7,207	2.5	1.8	2.8
1921	8,788	2.7	2	2.8
1931	10,377	3.8	2.2	3.3
1941	11,507	3.5	2.7	4
1951	14,009	3.6	3.1	4.7

In England, according to a survey published by the Nuffield Foundation in 1947:

. . . it is estimated that by 1989 the number of persons of pensionable age will equal the number of children, while, by the same year, 1989, the number of persons of working age will be approximately 3,000,000 less than in 1941.<sup>3</sup>

In Winnipeg today, there are 23,542 people over sixty-five years of age.

The following is a breakdown of population figures in Winnipeg, taken from

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<sup>1</sup> Dominion Bureau of Statistics, "Population by Age Groups", Bulletin I-II, Vol. 1, Ottawa, 1951, Introduction

<sup>2</sup> Dominion Bureau of Statistics, "Population by Age Groups", Bulletin I-II, Vol. 1, Ottawa, 1951, Introduction. Based on "Numerical and Percentage Distribution of the Population by 5 year age groups and Sex, Canada, 1901 - 1951"

<sup>3</sup> Seebohm Rowntree, C.H., LL.D., "Old People", Report of a Survey Committee on the Problems of Ageing and the Care of Old People, ch. I, p. 2

<sup>1</sup>  
the 1951 Census. Since one of the programmes to be examined in detail in this thesis serves a particular area, figures are included for this specific area, which consists of census tracts numbers nineteen, twenty-two, twenty-three and twenty-four.

Table 2

POPULATION BY SPECIFIED AGE GROUPS, FOR CENSUS METROPOLITAN AREAS, 1951<sup>2</sup>

	<u>WINNIPEG PROPER</u>	<u>C.P.R. - NOTRE DAME AREA</u>
Total population	235,710	17,553
65 to 69 years	10,241	746
70 years and over	13,301	1,021
65 years and over	23,542	1,767

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In spite of the growing number of senior citizens and early retirement programmes the services and facilities for occupying the abundance of leisure time of these people have not kept pace with the medical advances or the increasing population. The field has been one of experiment rather than of experience. Experiments to try and find an adequate leisure-time programme for senior citizens in Canada and the United States have been carried out, notably in Toronto, with the "Second Mile Club", in Vancouver, at Gordon Neighbourhood House, in New York, at "Hodson Centre", in Chicago, Cleveland, and Minneapolis, by organizations of all kinds, public and private, such as the Hennepin County Welfare Board in Minnesota, and the National Council of Jewish Women who sponsor Golden Age Clubs throughout North America.

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<sup>1</sup> Ninth Census of Canada, 1951, "Population, General Characteristics" Vol. I, Table 25, p. 25-4

Dominion Bureau of Statistics, "Winnipeg", Bulletin CT-8 Ottawa, 1951, Based on Table 1, pp. 4-5

<sup>2</sup> Dominion Bureau of Statistics, loc. cit. p. 5

A large proportion of the world population is involved when we speak of senior citizens. This group comprises many people whose waking hours are spent in idleness, loneliness and boredom, rather than in useful occupation. This growing minority group can no longer be ignored, nor can it be pretended that because they have reached the age of sixty or sixty-five and have been forced to retire they may also be forgotten. It has become a group which by virtue of its size alone demands our immediate and serious consideration. One writer puts it this way. "The numerical power of a rapidly aging population in our country with its attendant sociological warning signals is forcing us to change our thinking." 1

As a contribution to one aspect of the problem, we are concerned primarily in this thesis with leisure-time and recreational activities for our senior citizens. Provision for these activities is a vital need for a large percentage of this group, who have an almost unlimited supply of leisure time, and who need a particular kind of recreation if they are to be reasonably useful, happy and content in their declining years.

In order to understand the emotional and social needs of senior citizens more clearly and how a certain type of recreation may enable the individual to be happier, it is necessary to consider the development of the normal personality and point out how any deviations from such normal development can cause permanent emotional disturbances that may carry through life and become exaggerated in the period of old age. The viewpoint summarized below represents thinking upon which there is fairly wide agreement among social workers, who have taken over these concepts from allied fields of psychiatry and psychology.

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1 Jerome Kaplan, "The Role of the Public Welfare Agency in Meeting the needs of the Older Person", Public Welfare, November 1951

### The Particular Needs of Senior Citizens

Common human needs exist from the moment of entrance into this world. The satisfactory or the neglectful fulfillment of these has a lasting effect on the development of personality. A brief review of the development of normal personality may contribute to an understanding of how so many difficulties of the older person are symptomatic of flaws in personality structure.

The first stage of development is one of dependence, where the individual must be completely reliant on the love, affection and protection of the parent for survival. From this gradually develops, in approximately the second year of life, satisfactions which at this age are purely physical and not inclusive of sexual activity per se; these are the primary sensuous satisfactions. As these two threads develop the child develops a degree of aggression, a desire and ability to make an impact on others. These phases do not appear spontaneously but develop gradually and strengthen with age. The important factor, however, is that unless any specific stage, involving certain needs, has become developed to the point where the individual feels safe operating at that level, he cannot proceed to the next stage of development. Although we are all dependent to a certain extent, we are able to assume a great deal of independence if we have been able to be self-reliant sufficiently long and in a strong enough relationship to be secure in taking on new experiences that involve more responsibility on our part. Some people have never been able to actually enjoy a sufficiently long or strong enough period of dependence, sensuousness or aggression and therefore, because of a basic insecurity have had to employ one of several defence mechanisms to be able to operate in a competitive world. An article in the Journal of Social Casework states that some of these mechanisms may be repression, turning against

self, projection, regression or sublimation.<sup>1</sup> Other writers include also rationalization, aggression, identification, over-compensation, day dreaming or symptom formation.

Involved in the development of the individual is the organization of the ego and the super-ego. The process of suggestibility and identification at an early age contributes to the development of a strong or weak ego and super-ego. When the development at these different stages is unhealthy the result unless corrected will be an unhealthy personality throughout life. Any of the defence mechanisms are able only to compensate partially and for only a period of time. When the mechanism fails to work or life circumstances place too much stress on the personality the individual is unable to carry on in a normally acceptable manner. Then the individual regresses to a period of development where he has felt security. When this happens the result can be the exhibiting of immature and irrational behaviour which in the case of an adult and especially a senior citizen presents a very unhappy situation leading to complex problems.

According to Dr. Hollender:

Physical and mental limitations, retirement, and the loss of relatives and friends most often produce their effects in two important emotional areas; self-esteem and dependency (one's needs for emotional sustenance). When latent but intense conflicts about self-esteem or dependence are mobilized by stress, a serious emotional upheaval may result. When, on the other hand, these areas are not unduly vulnerable, the reaction to the stress may be appropriate and relatively mild. 2

If the senior citizen has been able to develop normally and strongly in early life at these different stages he will be able to with-

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1 Rosemary Reynolds, Amy S. Powell, Morris Zelditch, "Symposium: Casework and the Aging Population", Journal of Social Casework, Vol. XXX, No. 2, February 1949

2 Marc H. Hollender, M.D., "Individualizing the Aged", Social Casework, October 1952

stand the stress of old age. If however, he had insufficient security in these areas he will only be able to obtain security by regressing to an early stage of development, through, for example, becoming a hypochondriac, as only in this dependent relationship of being cared for can he be in any way secure.

There is a considerable emphasis at the present time on needs of senior citizens in the emotional realm. Conditions in the modern world have changed radically in the last fifty or seventy-five years. Half a century ago, particularly on this continent, the foundation of society was primarily agricultural; overflowing cities and modern industry were only beginning to develop. At that time people were individuals rather than "cogs in the wheels" of modern mechanized society. There was a greater opportunity for independence in seeking a living, with less dependence on salaries and less competition. With the development of the fast moving modern age with its emphasis on competition and desire to get the greatest possible production from the most skillful workers available, living conditions changed. Retirement age limits were arbitrarily determined as it seemed that industry could not wait for the older person's necessary gradual slowing up. Experience was discounted in favour of output, leaving many who still had the capacity to contribute to society and the working world without jobs and with only time on their hands.

In former times, especially in rural or semi-rural communities, the family home was a large one and the grandparents had a place to live and retained an honourable position in the home. They were still useful, needed and wanted. With the general exodus from rural to urban living the family home became smaller, there was no room in the home for the

grandparents and a situation arose tending to produce a feeling of rejection and of being unneeded. These two sociological factors have contributed to putting a great number of senior citizens in a regrettable position of dependence and have contributed to great loss of self-esteem. Those whose working days may have, in addition to their economic function, provided substitute satisfactions as a compensation for unhealthy development, suffer greatly and are unable to carry on happily in their old age. It is with this latter type of individual that the thesis is concerned particularly.

Writers discussing the problems of old age are constantly using these terms to describe the unhappy lot of many of our senior citizens; that they are lonely, feel unwanted, lack interests and new experiences, bored with idleness, dejected and depressed.

Our world is a 'youth-minded' one. Concentration of problems and needs of youth has left a great deal of preparatory fact-finding still to be done in investigating the real needs of senior citizens and in finding adequate ways of meeting them more fully.

An apt definition of basic human needs has been given by Florence Vickery when she writes, "By needs, we mean those human experiences and relationships with our fellows which must be satisfied in a measure if we are to be happy in our social relationships."<sup>1</sup> A senior citizen has the same basic needs as a member of any other age group, with the probable unfortunate addition, that they can easily become exaggerated and intensified once he has been set aside by busy society.

Based on the conclusions of leading authorities on the subject in a variety of articles and pamphlets, the following is a discussion of

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<sup>1</sup> Florence E. Vickery, "A Place in the Sun for the Aged", The Group, January 1952, Vol. 14, No. 2

the suggested principal needs of senior citizens in the social and emotional area.

A primary need is one of security, not only of finance and health, but of social life. Our older people need to feel they have a place in a group, a feeling of belonging to give them the status so necessary to retain their sense of human dignity. They also need recognition, for their physical and mental accomplishments, for contributing to their community, and for still being able to plan and care for themselves. They do not want to have the right to make decisions taken completely out of their hands. Society today seems to want to provide completely for senior citizens rather than to allow them to participate responsibly in planning their lives. This tendency has been well described by Allen Brailey, who says:

It (society) has tended to adopt a viewpoint that the most delectable state for any man is one of idleness, that the goal of one's active years is finally to be supported in idleness, that a grown, mature adult can again be happy in the condition of the infant wherein he receives all of his needs from society but no longer makes any contribution thereto. <sup>1</sup>

Senior citizens want and need new experiences. It is wrong to say that they are incapable of growth or that they are too old to learn new things or revise their opinions. They are not necessarily rigid and inflexible.

Senior citizens' need for an opportunity for self-expression is a universal need. It is an emotional satisfaction which might perhaps become exaggerated because so many satisfactions may be taken away from them upon retirement. The time formerly spent at work is now simply time to be filled.

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<sup>1</sup> Allen B. Brailey, M.D., op. cit. p. 2

Leisure time has become a twenty-four hour a day problem, as many of our senior citizens, in their younger days, did not take time or realize the need to plan for the advent of a completely idle old age. As a result, they are at the mercy of the community or interested people to help them fill in their time and feel important again by making a useful contribution to society. Many writers stress the need for study, research and planning for a fuller life for the senior citizen and the value of self-expression as a result of planned recreation is one aspect of the problem on which there is general agreement.

Another important need is the universal desire to love and be loved. Older people may need more open manifestations of this because they may be haunted by feelings of rejection, both by the competitive world and by their families. No longer allowed employment, many are still able to make definite and valuable contributions if they are given the opportunity. The three-generation home unit has almost disappeared, and grandparents have to seek housing on their own rather than remain with their families. In such circumstances they often feel rejected and unhappy and so need understanding and friendliness.

Under these conditions, senior citizens may suffer a great deal from loss of dignity as a member of society. He may no longer be able to maintain his place in the mainstream of life due to lack of finances. His attitudes and opinions are often ridiculed. He can so easily lose his self-respect and let his appearance and temper slip with the resulting loss in respect and deference by those around him.

The centre for satisfying human relationships is a social group, and without positive relationships, which such groups can provide, the personality shrivels up and life does not seem worthwhile.

According to the current practice in our society, the majority of employees are expected to retire at a definite age, usually at sixty-five years. Until this stage in their lives, their business, family and neighbours have provided the natural social groups from which they derive the necessary satisfactions to be happy. After retirement they are often robbed of this natural outlet by no longer being employable; they no longer have the regular daily routine of their job; they are often forced to live away from their families; their old friends die or move away. It is often necessary therefore, deliberately to produce a group to supply what has been taken away. This responsibility may be assumed by the community and the church. Social clubs and organized recreational activities for older people are now appearing in many communities. The indications are that this trend will increase in the future.

Churches have and to a considerable extent recognize a responsibility towards their senior congregation. "The stake of the Church in this national problem is high because those of older age have an increased sense of the importance of spiritual values."<sup>1</sup>

This study is of guided group experiences for senior citizens, of attempts to provide for senior citizens on a planned basis an opportunity for the kind of social satisfactions that are a necessary part of social living.

In view of the importance of social groups and guided group experiences, let us look briefly at what group work is and what it can do to help old people to be happier. According to Alan F. Klein, a noted authority on the subject:

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<sup>1</sup> Charles E. Reed, "America Alerts Her Senior Citizens", Recreation, May 1952

The group work method is steeped in human relations. The group worker is concerned with what happens to people when they are in groups, usually in leisure time programs. He wants consciously to help people to achieve an increased enjoyment through more satisfying human relationships. He wants to help those who are unable to enjoy themselves to learn how to use their leisure enjoyably and constructively. He wants to evoke growth and personality development as a significant by-product of a recreational experience. 1

In a guided group experience, an integral part is the presence of a trained group worker, who understands the purpose and function of a group. Wilson and Ryland state:

The success of the social group work method depends upon the worker's wisdom and discretion in developing the inter-personal relationships within the group and with other groups. 2

The worker should have an understanding of the background of the individuals in the group, and be able to see and interpret behaviour in terms of needs and desired satisfactions which the individual is seeking. The interaction between the members in the group is the indicator which tells about the growth and development of the members in regard to relationships and security. It is the function of the trained person in the group to watch this and guide it into constructive channels. A group with a trained group worker operating within it can help the individuals and the group as a whole to have within the group satisfying experiences which will give the security necessary to go out to the community and use and enjoy the resources provided for the happiness of all.

The need to find friends is an extremely important one to the senior citizen. Social group work consciously plans to introduce people who have never had such an experience into the friendly constructive atmosphere

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1 Alan F. Klein, "Group Work in Recreation Programs", Canadian Welfare, January 15, 1950

2 Wilson and Ryland, Social Group Work Practice, ch. 3, p. 85

of positive relationships in a group, and to refine still more the experience others have already had.

One of the prime functions of a group experience is to stimulate co-operation among its members. This can only be accomplished if the members themselves are allowed and encouraged to participate in planning activities along the lines of their interests.

Older people are often accused of not being co-operative; they cannot get along with their family, friends and younger age groups. Having been rejected by them as 'difficult' people, it is no wonder they do not seem to be cooperative. A good group experience can help them to understand the other's point of view and through co-operation between members of the group there can be carry-over to the life situation.

In some quarters there is a tendency to look on old people as a burden on society rather than to take a positive view of what they can contribute, but we do not have to look very far to realize that some older people are able to do and are doing a job in government as well as in the arts and in the professions. We have the outstanding examples of our own Prime Minister, Louis St. Laurent, Sir Winston Churchill, Arturo Toscanini and George Bernard Shaw, and in a different field Connie Smythe, who has continued to be so active in the sport world.

Retirement and idleness, coupled with lack of friends and outside activity may reduce our senior population to a crippled physical and mental state. "The boring, tedious life of those with 'nothing to do' sometimes manifests itself in illness for which there are no physiological reasons."<sup>1</sup> Many incidents have been related where group members have either entirely

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<sup>1</sup> Recreation, "What's the Next Move for our Elderly?"  
March 1952

stopped or have lessened their visits to clinics and hospitals because of a new found interest at the "club" where they are given attention, friendship, recognition for their worth, and a little bit of love. They no longer feel that they have to resort to physical ailments to get some attention. "A sound recreation program for this age group was found to be a positive factor in reducing the need for medical care."<sup>1</sup>

Our aim must be to help our senior citizen population to accept old age as a stage of life, an outgrowth of earlier years. With help from the community and from trained and lay persons, it is felt that a great deal can be done through guided group experiences to meet this end.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles E. Reed, op. cit. p. 13

## CHAPTER II

### A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS IN A GROUP OF CHURCHES IN WINNIPEG PROPER

With this review of the social and emotional needs of senior citizens, and having summarized the extent and nature of the senior population, an introduction has been provided for a survey of leisure-time services available in Winnipeg. The first step was to obtain information with reference to programmes offered by a specific group of churches in Winnipeg, as churches have shown considerable interest in the problem. The Central Volunteer Bureau made available its current list of Winnipeg churches. This list was compiled from among churches of known or expressed interest and activity in community and social welfare matters. Numerically this is a comparatively small sample of the total churches in Winnipeg proper, but in view of the way the list was compiled it is assumed that the churches studied have, at the very least, an average interest in this field. These churches were approached through a questionnaire.

The questionnaire was compiled to cover the principal points of concern. (Appendix A) Care was taken in its preparation in order to reduce ambiguity in the questions asked and to simplify resulting answers. Before mailing, it was discussed with the Executive Secretary of the Central Volunteer Bureau, and with a group of second year students at the School of Social Work. It was mailed to all the churches on the information lists of the Central Volunteer Bureau. This comprised fifty-four churches in Winnipeg proper, with representation from all major denominations. In response to the first questionnaire twenty-two replies were received. Two months later, the same questionnaire was sent with a second letter requesting replies from those churches which had not responded. This time there were five replies. The

picture was still far from complete, so a telephone call or visit was made to those ministers who had not replied. With the information obtained, it became possible to draw some general conclusions.

The following is a breakdown of the response to the questionnaire and the contacts made.

I Is there, in your Church, a club primarily for Elderly Citizens?

Of the fifty-four churches, only five answered this in the affirmative. As a result, only these five were able to answer the next eight questions.

1. a) Are both men and women members of the group?

Two of these churches had a club for men and women separately, catering respectively to approximately seventy-five and one hundred and seventy people.

b) Approximately how many men?

Church (1) 45

Church (2) 100

c) Approximately how many women?

Church (1) 30

Church (2) 70

The other three churches included both men and women with no definite membership.

2. Is there an admission age?

Our next question was designed to discover if the programme was offered to groups of the same age as those defined in this study as senior citizens. Except for one group of men whose admission age was sixty-five years, the other three groups were not necessarily senior citizens according to our definition:

Church (1)	Average age for men 74	For women 50
Church (2)	Average age for men 50	For women 50
Church (3)	Average age for men 55	For women 55

3. How long has the Club been in existence?

The one group which is composed exclusively of senior citizens according to our definition had been in existence for four years, although the other groups which contain some older people were founded many years ago, one being in existence as long as fifty years.

4. a) When does the club meet?  
b) How often does the club meet?  
c) Where do they meet?

In order to find out how concentrated an effort was being made, we questioned how often the club meets and where. The senior citizen group referred to in three above, meets weekly in the church for lunch and for a short programme. The others meet either weekly or monthly.

5. What accommodation and equipment is there for the Elderly Citizens' Club?

- a) reading material  
b) piano  
c) kitchen equipment  
d) games  
e) any other

A club programme must have tools to keep it going. It was necessary to know what equipment was at the disposal of senior citizens. The one senior citizen group had the use of reading material, a piano, kitchen equipment and games. The others had adequate equipment for the type of programme offered.

6. How is the programme financed?

We asked how the projects were financed in order to discover how fully the members participated in the club in a very practical way, so we could ascertain how deeply they could consider it theirs. The one group of senior citizens contributed a small yearly fee of one dollar to give them a real sense of belonging. Two of the other groups also had some type of due or membership fee.

7. What does the club do?

- a) Special religious services or studies?
- b) Provide a programme where the whole group participates?  
Example -- sing songs, movies, games, etc.
- c) Organize special interest groups?  
Example -- study groups, crafts, sewing, carpentry, etc.

To find out whether the group actually was enjoying a good group experience or a passive 'spectator type' we inquired about the activities of the club. The senior citizen group had both mass activities and an interest group of arts and crafts. However, the arts and crafts group had been difficult to initiate. The older people, according to the clergyman interviewed, seemed disinterested in it, apparently feeling they were just "playing around" rather than doing anything constructive. Two of the other groups were mainly carpet bowling clubs with occasional socials throughout the year. One club was of a dinner type followed by recreation afterwards. Included in this club was a sewing group for the ladies.

8. a) Approximately how many volunteers assist in the Elderly Citizens' programme?
- b) Is there any paid staff engaged in working with Elderly Citizens?

The one senior citizen group has the services of eight volunteers. The church staff as well as the minister have a responsibility in the programme for senior citizens.

Subsequent questions were of a type that could be answered by those churches who did not have a programme specifically for senior citizens, but did have some services which could include this age group.

9. Is there organized provision for visiting the hospital or homes of old people who are confined temporarily or permanently?

In response to our inquiry about sick visiting, nineteen out of fifty-four churches replied that they arrange for a member of the congregation to visit senior citizens who are ill, confined to their homes or in hospitals.

II To what other Church clubs do the Elderly Citizens belong?

It was necessary to know whether, if there were no specific clubs or programmes for senior citizens, there were other groups composed of different ages that the senior citizens could join. Only twenty-eight churches reported such outlet for senior citizens.

III Does your Church offer other services to Elderly Citizens?

a) Referrals to hospitals Twenty churches reported that they arranged referrals to hospitals for senior members of their congregation.

b) Referrals to welfare agencies Twenty-one made a practice of guiding senior citizens to the appropriate welfare agencies.

c) Donation of clothing Eight helped the senior citizens when they needed clothing.

d) Provision of meals Four churches supplied occasional meals.

IV In what way are elderly citizens encouraged to attend other Church Clubs?

We felt that perhaps too often senior citizens were reluctant to join clubs of age groups other than their own and wondered what effort was made to assist the senior citizens to join other groups. Twenty-one churches reported special efforts, with no further detail.

V Do you feel your programme for Elderly Citizens is adequate?

Hoping for expressed interest in senior citizen programmes, we inquired as to whether the churches felt that they were offering an adequate programme for senior citizens. Six of those who answered the questionnaire gave a direct negative answer. The rest failed to answer this at all.

VI Do you envisage any changes or development in the near future?

Nine churches reported making such plans.

The indications from the survey are that of the fifty-four churches questioned, ten are making no effort to provide recreational services for senior citizens; that thirty-seven of them do little more than occasional sick visiting, the barest of referrals, or are giving some encouragement to join other clubs; that four are attempting to provide some small positive services such as clothing, occasional meals, hospital and welfare agency referrals, as well as providing a more positive effort to have a type of senior citizen group recreation programme; and that three churches are making a definite attempt to recognize the wider needs of the older members of their congregation.

The survey indicates that the amount of planned recreational opportunity provided under church auspices for senior citizens in the city of Winnipeg is limited.

### CHAPTER III

#### LEISURE-TIME SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS IN EXISTENCE IN THE CITY OF WINNIPEG

In the previous chapter we attempted to make a survey of the leisure-time and social services available for elderly citizens through a specific group of churches in Winnipeg. Our survey seemed to indicate that the extent of such programmes is quite limited.

The present chapter is a study of organized club services offered by various other groups in the city. The same questionnaire (Appendix A) was the basis for collecting information, and this was supplemented by a personal interview and a visit by the writer to the clubs. Contact with the clubs was established through the Central Volunteer Bureau which has been initiating work in this field. The Central Volunteer Bureau issued a report of its work with regard to senior citizen recreation and submitted it to the Welfare Council in June of 1952. This report recommended that leisure-time services for senior citizens be developed and improved, and that trained leadership was essential to these services.

Previous to this report, the Central Volunteer Bureau was instrumental in the establishment of four clubs for older people, "The Pioneer Social Club", "The Happy Senior Club", "The Happy Hour Club", and the North Branch Y Senior Citizens' Club. An explanation of set-up and programme of the first one, "The Pioneer Social Club" should be sufficient to give a picture of all four groups which operate with only minor differences in place of meeting, time and programme which do not alter the picture or emphasis. The first three clubs mentioned operate in Community Club buildings which were established and built through the Board of Parks and Recreation of the City of Winnipeg. The assistance provided by the Board of Parks and Recreation is limited to the provision of buildings; ways of using these are left

to the initiative of volunteer citizen groups in each community.

The Pioneer Social Club

The first club visited by the writer was "The Pioneer Social Club", of the West-End Memorial Community Club. "The Pioneer Club" had its beginning three years ago as the first of its kind in Winnipeg. The other three clubs were formed shortly after this with the Central Volunteer Bureau, a department of the Welfare Council, being the initiating organizational body. It proposed the clubs or was approached by these organizations and provided consultation services and assistance in piloting these efforts.

"The Pioneer Social Club" which is similar in composition, programme and purpose to the other three mentioned, is composed of men and women, with a membership of approximately 150, a development from the fifteen who joined when the club began. There are slightly more women than men members in all four clubs. The admission age is sixty years and over, and the average age of these four groups is approximately seventy years.

The clubs meet once weekly in the afternoon except in the summer months when they are closed. They meet in the club houses of the Community Clubs or in the Y, and are able to make use of such facilities as a piano, canteen and library.

Some groups issue membership cards, though no membership fee is charged. The senior citizens are able to contribute financially to the Community Centres, raising their own funds through contributions by the members, donations, raffles and bazaars, and meeting their own expenses.

The programmes follow a fairly regular pattern each week, guided by volunteers. A few prefer cards but Bingo is the popular game and the afternoon programme is usually started with this activity. Once a month the Board of Parks and Recreation shows a movie. The "Happy Hour Club" and the

North Branch Y Club hold monthly birthday parties for their members. In all the clubs the senior citizens help with serving and preparing tea and clearing up. Tea is usually followed by a sing-song and dancing to music, supplied in some cases by a four piece orchestra of senior citizens.

Throughout the year, there are occasional special parties, such as the Christmas Tree and Party, when the members exchange gifts; a St. Patrick's and St. Valentine's Party, and occasional outings. The closing for the year is in the form of a picnic. The volunteers try to arrange special occasions as often as possible to vary the programme.

There are no special interest groups in existence except the orchestra, which is shared by two of the senior citizen clubs. At one time the "Happy Senior Club" had two interest groups, a choir and a discussion group. However, due to lack of leadership they are no longer in existence.

Regular volunteers assist in the programme throughout the year, the numbers varying with the different clubs. In all, fourteen volunteers assist in these programmes. There is no professional staff nor any other paid staff working with any of these clubs.

The main project in which the senior citizens themselves carry full or partial responsibility is the sick visiting committee, in some cases organized by and completely composed of senior citizens.

The clubs are not oriented to an individual service basis. Large group activities are the area of concern. There is no referral service in existence, although cases have been referred by volunteers to agencies through the Central Volunteer Bureau. The volunteers working in these programmes feel they are helpful to the senior citizens but also feel that improvement could be made and more individual work done. In all approximately 435 senior citizens are served by these four clubs.

Good Neighbours' Club

This, in contrast to the previous four clubs described, is a club exclusively for men. It is operated on a service basis. The "Good Neighbours' Club" situated in the downtown area, near the corner of Portage Avenue and Main Street, came into existence twenty-one years ago under the auspices of men interested in the welfare of those who seemed to need a day shelter. The membership comprises men who are unemployed, pensioners, war veterans and disabled. There is no admission age, though a large proportion are older men. According to the twentieth annual report of 1952, one hundred and ninety-five members are from seventy years of age to seventy-nine and thirty-six are<sup>1</sup> eighty years and over. At the time of this study there is a membership of approximately 600 men.

The club is open all year round, seven days a week, except in the very warm weather when it closes for the evenings as there is no available space outside for the men and the buildings are unpleasantly hot. The club rooms are in a building which belongs to the city. The "Good Neighbours' Club" keeps the building in repair in return for its use. The accomodation consists of a board room, kitchen, clothing room, and large auditorium on the main floor; shower rooms in the basement; two large club rooms upstairs. There is a library in a clubroom for the use of the members. The piano in the auditorium is a helpful aid for the concerts provided for the members on Sunday evenings by visiting entertainers. Large kitchen space and kitchen equipment are essentials in providing the lunch served Sunday evenings by the Federation of Women who provide this meal for the men before the concert. Card games seem to be popular with the old men here as in other clubs.

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<sup>1</sup> "Good Neighbours' Club", 20th Annual Report, 1952, p. 14

The members are issued membership cards yearly, free, and all services provided for the men are free of charge. The club is financed by a special tag day and by donations from various firms, business men and interested people, including forty-five different organizations.

The club rooms are open from 9 a.m. until about 9 p.m. The men are free to come and sit, chat, read, doze, or take a shower. The only formal programme is the one provided on Sunday evenings in the winter time by outside entertainers, and special occasions in the form of a Christmas dinner and a summer picnic in the park.

The club is operated by a salaried manager and a staff of six members who are paid a nominal wage. Volunteer work is also done by the Federation of representatives of ladies' organizations. The Federation ladies have also formed a sick visiting committee from their own members.

Service is rendered to the men in several ways. Odd jobs are procured for those able to work and at times the "Good Neighbours' Club" finds rooms for those in need of them. Clothing is donated by friends of the club and distributed to the needy, free of charge. Special donations in the form of food are given to the men from time to time.

This club is apparently meeting a special need of a specific group of men in this city as indicated by the membership. It is well known and highly commended by some of the elderly people contacted by the writer. However, it is concentrating its efforts on serving its members rather than allowing them any initiative in helping themselves; there is an element in its programme dangerously close to the dole, the soup kitchen and the hand-out, an untenable position according to our modern concept of good welfare service, which enables the recipient of charity to retain his self-respect, improve his own condition and repay his debt to society by helping others in his turn.

The salaried manager is operating on the basis of policy determined by the governing body, but has neither time, training nor facilities to initiate a guided group experience which might meet some of the deeper social and emotional needs of the club members.

#### Second Mile Club

Another senior citizen club in Winnipeg is the "Second Mile Club" sponsored by the Soroptomist Club of Winnipeg. The Soroptomist Club, whose function is to serve the community, was started in Winnipeg ten years ago. When the group was formed here, it chose work with lonely old ladies as its project. Visiting older women, whose names were provided from several sources such as welfare agencies, or who were known to the members, was initiated. Each Soroptomist took care of one old lady, visiting her and providing for her needs. When funds were raised by the club, two rooms were rented. With the nucleus formed through individual contacts, the "Second Mile Club" was established five years ago.

The present membership consists of sixty elderly ladies, and there is a long waiting list due to the small size of the club rooms. Although the members are generally past middle life there is no specific age requirement, but members are admitted on the basis of loneliness and need for social contacts. The average age of members is in the early seventies. The club is open every afternoon, Monday to Saturday inclusive, from 2 p.m. until 9 p.m. They meet in the two rooms which are nicely furnished and comfortable looking, with handwork made by the ladies adorning the chesterfields and coffee tables. There is a small library for the use of the ladies, from which they can take books to read at home. The kitchen is in a small corner of one of the rooms. Though they have no piano, they do have a radio and games of all types.

The Soroptomist Club finances the whole undertaking through individual contributions and a big Fall tea, at which the senior citizens give their help, especially through the sale of their own handwork. The Soroptomists also obtain funds by sponsoring one evening of the Hudson Bay Company's fashion show. The ladies do not pay a membership fee, but are issued membership cards each year.

The programme is a varied one, including singing, movies, cards and Bingo. Twice a week, Wednesday and Saturday evenings, Soroptomist volunteers come down and conduct a special evening's programme and provide a lunch. The purpose of the lunch is to supplement the ladies' diet which the Soroptomists feel is inadequate. Every afternoon there is tea and refreshments. There are no special interest groups as such, but many of the ladies do handwork and are encouraged in this. Occasionally birthday parties are held for special birthdays, such as the oldest in the club. The members themselves remember each other on their birthdays.

Twenty volunteers actively participate in the programme, of a total membership of thirty-five Soroptomists. There is one paid person who is at the club every afternoon and sees to the women's needs, giving birthday cards, lunch, and talking over their troubles with them. There is no organized home visiting, though the members often visit each other when they are ill.

As the Soroptomists are a club of professional women, they have valuable contacts with welfare agencies. As a result, the "Second Mile Club" has the advantage of proper referral procedure to hospitals and welfare agencies when necessary. The members are also well supplied with good clothing which is donated to the club and given to the women.

A novel project the Soroptomists are undertaking for their second milers is providing a camp experience for them. For the past two years the

members have gone for a ten day to two week stay at Lakeside Camp. This costs neither the members nor the Soroptomists anything as it is a donation. It is reported that the women find the experience interesting and stimulating. For some of them it is a completely new one. There are two other big events during the year. The first is a Christmas party and tree with a gift for each member. The other is a motor ride and garden party once a year at a Soroptomist's home.

We have discussed four general programmes for senior citizens in Winnipeg planned for both men and women, and two clubs which serve one or the other. All are on a volunteer basis without any trained leadership. The final example is a club which, until recently, was guided by the help of a part-time paid professional person.

#### Golden Age Club

The "Golden Age Club" programme in Winnipeg, is a project sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women. The club opened in Winnipeg four years ago with fairly slow growth at the beginning, but has been developing rapidly ever since. Both men and women are members of the club whose total membership is 425 people, with an average attendance of 200. The club is composed of more men than women. The admission age is sixty years and over and the average age is over seventy years.

The club meets twice weekly, Monday and Wednesday, from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., in the basement hall at the Hebrew Sick Benefit Association.

The "Golden Age Club" is a very well equipped one, including such amenities as a piano, public address system, radio, three-speed phonograph, large library composed of two hundred Yiddish books, a large record collection, adequate kitchen equipment and facilities, games, newspapers and frames, checking equipment, first aid equipment, arts and crafts equipment with supplies

for leathercraft, sewing, plastercraft, paper sculpture and felt work. The club rooms consist of a large hall, seating two hundred people, a music room, library, kitchen, checkroom, washrooms and cupboards, all on the same floor.

The club is financed by a grant from the Jewish Welfare Fund, as well as a one dollar per year membership fee. Once yearly a bazaar, in which the older people participate, is held for the purpose of supplementing the budget. The last year's expenditure of the club was \$2,135.80.

The programme has been planned with a view to providing sufficient variety. Though there are no religious services, occasionally a Rabbi is invited to speak or a Cantor to sing. The Monday programme is planned for small interest-activity groups, such as bingo, cards, games, reading, record listening, arts and crafts, choral reading, or executive meetings. With this there is also a lounge programme, tea and refreshments.

Wednesday's programme is more of a 'spectator' type with little leadership by the members. This includes a lounge programme, bingo and a formal programme, composed of guest artists and talented members. This is followed by a general sing-song, tea and refreshments.

There is a fairly active executive of senior citizens which holds meetings, makes reports and announcements, takes up matters of business with the members, works with the volunteer women on special projects, such as the bazaar and the monthly birthday parties, and controls its own treasury. They are responsible for and may use the dollar membership fees and donations as they see fit as this is outside the formal budget. This year they financed and purchased a public address system, some kitchen equipment, a piano, and stationery, as well as donating substantially to the Welfare Fund drive.

There are eight regular volunteers who operate the programme, with fifty others who rotate in giving their time. At one time this year there was

a part-time paid professional group worker. However, this service was no longer available at the time of the study.

A sick visiting committee of senior citizens has been organized, but, according to the professional person interviewed, is not functioning too well, due to difficulties of time and health of its members. Get-well cards and condolences are sent out regularly to all sick members or to the families of deceased members.

When the professional person was on staff, there was a referral system operating which included the handling of problems such as housing, finance, and family, which were referred to the Jewish Family Service. Though the club does not provide clothing and meals, it does provide transportation for some thirty to fifty members to and from the club Wednesday afternoons.

An analysis of the club programme by the group worker was made upon his retirement. Four recommendations were sent in which might be helpful in solving the problems existent in the programme and preventing the accomplishment of the aims of the club, which have been stated as being:

. . . . the provision of recreation for members of the Jewish community over the age of sixty. It has long been recognized in the recreation movement, that recreation should provide, in addition to entertainment, opportunities for self-directed growth, enrichment of personality, and democratic group experience. It is also a well-known fact that these can best be provided in the setting of the small group rather than in the mass. 1

The recommendations stated:

1. Emphasize small group activities. Try to bring about the formation of a choral group in addition to the arts and crafts group. Try to recruit volunteer leaders who can give leadership to small group activities.

2. Establish new system for membership intake. New application forms should be printed, with a proper schedule to obtain adequate information. Membership intake should be a joint responsibility of the registration Chairman and the Director.
3. Consideration should be given to the placing of some kinds of limits and controls on membership. The elected executive of the club should have a large share in the formulation of these limits.
4. Attempts should be made to recruit more volunteers who can serve on a regular basis, as well as persons with special skills who can lead small group activities. 1

When the writer asked the professional group worker who had been working with the present programme if he felt that the programme was adequate, he stated that it was not. "It doesn't meet the psychological needs; it provides entertainment; it doesn't give the people a chance to do things for themselves."

#### Evaluation

The account of leisure-time services for senior citizens in Winnipeg is a cursory one as the writer was unable to make an intensive study of them. These groups were composed of people who seemed more able to take advantage of services set up for their use and perhaps their need for a programme based on group work principles was not as necessary as it would seem to be to the group about to be studied. However, these programmes do not provide the opportunity for the individual or the group to grow, to assume responsibility for carrying through projects, or to make a contribution to the community on a social basis at least. The heart of the matter lies in participation by the senior citizens in planning for themselves, and it is the encouragement of such participation which is one of the major objectives of the trained group worker. In Chapter I it has been suggested that elderly people do not want to remain non-

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1 H. Rosenthal, Ibid., p. 32

contributing members of society, but rather need the chance to gain security among themselves and then go out to the community and operate on a contributing basis. Merely providing recreation for them will never accomplish this.

The list of clubs just described was obtained from the Central Volunteer Bureau and is complete for the City of Winnipeg. It covers about 1520 senior citizens in Winnipeg. There are 31,636 senior citizens in Winnipeg, according to the 1951 census figures.<sup>1</sup> It is obvious then, that this service is very limited in relation to the need.

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<sup>1</sup> Dominion Bureau of Statistics, loc. cit. p. 5

## CHAPTER IV

### A REPORT ON THE PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR CITIZENS CONDUCTED AT LOGAN NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE IN 1952 - 1953

The description of the foregoing seven programmes and the work being rendered by a group of churches, serves to indicate the extent of the activities being carried out for senior citizens in the recreation field in Winnipeg. However, according to the picture presented of the social and emotional needs of senior citizens, and the necessity in a modern community for conscious planning to provide for some of these through guided group experiences, as outlined in Chapter I, it seems obvious that there is much yet to be done to meet the leisure-time needs of senior citizens. The field has been pioneered by the clubs described above. A further attempt has been made at Logan Neighbourhood House to provide a guided group experience, and what has happened in this project may now be examined. The following chapter will outline the situation in the C.P.R. - Notre Dame area. This particular district is bounded on the East by Main Street, on the West by McPhillips Street, on the North by the C.P.R. tracks and on the South by Notre Dame Avenue. This chapter will also summarize the purpose of the programme, describe the initial stages in organizing the programme for senior citizens, and suggest the role of the professional staff.

#### History of Logan Neighbourhood House

The present project at Logan Neighbourhood House was made possible through interested volunteers and welfare workers who became concerned about conditions relating to juvenile delinquency in the C.P.R. - Notre Dame area. As a result, the Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg formed a committee to undertake a survey of this particular area and reported its findings in 1950.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg, "The C.P.R. - Notre Dame Report", 1950

The purpose of the survey was to assemble facts about this one area of the city to see if the recreation needs were being met; to discover if it was necessary to extend existing programmes; or whether it was advisable to start new ones in the area.

In September of 1950, the Welfare Council brought to the attention of the Junior League, who were looking for a project, the idea of a Neighbourhood House in the C.P.R. - Notre Dame area. The Junior League was interested in the idea but felt it to be too big a financial responsibility for them to undertake alone. The Welfare Council then approached other groups to solicit support, finally interesting the Rotary Club. Assured that further support would be forthcoming, the Junior League granted \$25,000 to the project.

In October 1951, the Kindergarten Settlement Association with assistance from the Welfare Council, conducted a study of its services in the C.P.R. - Notre Dame area. This survey had been initiated by the Kindergarten Settlement and the Community Chest, to examine the function of the Kindergarten Settlement and to determine whether it was meeting a need in the particular area it served. One of the recommendations included in this report was that the Kindergarten Settlement be developed into a Neighbourhood House.

The Welfare Council then arranged for these three organizations viz., the Junior League, the Rotary Club and the Kindergarten Settlement to meet to discuss the possibilities of some working arrangement which might result in a Neighbourhood House. The planning committee was composed of representatives of the Welfare Council, the Junior League, the Rotary Club, the Kindergarten Settlement, the Community Chest and the Winnipeg Foundation.

As a result of subsequent deliberations, the Kindergarten Settlement pledged the use of their building at 294 Ellen Street, and \$25,000 for improvements. The Junior League voted \$25,000; \$10,000 as capital and \$5,000 per year

for three years. The Rotary Club subscribed \$25,000 over a four year period, for staff and current expenses. The Community Chest agreed to support the agency on a deficit basis.

#### Purpose of the Programme

One main function of a Neighbourhood House is to strengthen family ties and relationships, and all age groups are generally included in the programme. Furthermore, it was believed from the beginning that there was a heavy concentration of older people living in rooming houses in this part of the city. Consequently, a programme for senior citizens was part of the planning. Church and recreation groups working in the district reported that leadership and initiative seemed to be lacking in the neighbourhood in all age groups. The district was partially industrial with a heavily populated residential area as well. It would be a major project to determine the economic, psychological and sociological factors which operate in the senior population, but it was assumed that many of the senior citizens were living in this area because the cost of accomodation was within range of their limited incomes. Their lowered economic standard, implying restricted opportunities, has probably contributed to a decrease in ability to socialize. As a result, the senior citizens in this area were harder to reach and needed more encouragement to participate than did groups in other areas of the city.

It was decided to open the House five afternoons a week for the purpose of serving senior citizens. Under the supervision of the executive director, the writer, as part of her experience in a second-year student field placement, was given responsibility for assisting this group to organize and plan their activities.

Before analysing the programme and method of working, it would seem

important to examine in more detail why it was necessary to have a special programme for senior citizens in this district.

The living conditions and morale of most of the senior citizens in this area were poor. Many were living in crowded, unsanitary fire-hazardous conditions. In some cases, it was found that two, three, or more shared one room, where they slept, cooked, ate and spent almost all their time. It was not exceptional to find men sharing a room upstairs, with a heater in the middle of the room, stovepipes dangerously run from there to the chimney, one drawer of the dresser being used for food, another for cooking utensils, and a third for clothing. The room, clothing and bedding of these people were often found to be undesirable as far as health standards were concerned. Lighting in the hall was nil in many cases, and often broken steps presented another hazard. This coupled with inadequate funds, (as many had only the old age pension on which to exist), an insufficient and unbalanced diet, certainly did not lead to self-respect or ability to provide leadership or take any responsibility in the community.

When the programme for senior citizens was organized its purpose was not to provide only recreation or entertainment in a passive manner, but rather to develop a programme in which the individuals and the group could get a sense of belonging to an organization, feel important as part of an agency, and be given a chance to participate in planning and programme. Belief in the principle of ability to change, as discussed in an earlier chapter, was the basis of the whole programme.

The writer, in planning and setting up the programme at Logan Neighbourhood House, consciously established aims to be striven for and hopefully accomplished. The goals set up were in accordance with those which underlie any

group work programme of recognized standards. The following is an outline of the principles of social group work discussed by Harleigh Trecker. The aims suggested were pursued by the agency and by the writer who, as part of the staff, was fulfilling agency policy, for the programme for senior citizens at Logan Neighbourhood House.

1. An opportunity to develop satisfying human relationships and modify attitudes in an atmosphere of fun, enjoyment and relaxation which comes from the warm human associations of a peer group in order to develop and to arrive at a better social adjustment of every individual in the group.
2. An outlet for the expression of interests and emotional needs.
3. An opportunity to achieve status and to feel important.
4. An opportunity to have the feeling of belonging, of being wanted and needed.
5. An opportunity to carry responsibility, to release individual capacities, to acquire new skills, have new experiences and develop self-confidence.
6. To receive and feel the sensitive acceptance and understanding of their own age group, other age groups, community people and professional persons.
7. An opportunity to achieve personality development through the necessary give and take in a group situation, in an atmosphere of freedom and acceptance and in a group and agency where the members and professional staff are understanding persons and are willing and able to help the individuals effect personality growth.
8. An opportunity to work and play together under conditions consciously planned to meet their social and emotional needs.
9. An opportunity to develop a spirit of cooperation and a chance to practice a democratic way of making decisions.
10. An opportunity to belong to a group which may become self-directing and self-governing and which leads to an active participation in inter-group activities and community living and planning.

11. A partial substitute for experiences which were once an accepted part of home life but due to sociological changes are often no longer a part of everyday living.<sup>1</sup>

The writer's concern in this group work and family agency was to be in the programme for senior citizens and was developed with these aims and objectives as the principles of operation.

#### Initial Stages

October was spent by the writer in home visiting, preparatory to starting the programme, November 1, 1952. A list of names of senior citizens in the area was obtained from the City Welfare Department, the Victorian Order of Nurses, the General Hospital out-patients department, and the West-End Memorial Community Club which is situated on the western boundary of the district. The writer then concentrated on visiting as many of these people as possible, explaining what and where Logan Neighbourhood House was, why it had opened and in what way the senior citizens could be involved.

November 1 was Open House for all age groups and a special effort was made to welcome and encourage the senior citizens to look around and come back for their programme which was to be started two days later.

November 3 was the first meeting of the Logan Neighbourhood House senior citizen club, and six people came. All but one already belonged to one or two other clubs, four of them going quite regularly. All were concerned about how few people arrived. November 4, three senior citizens came; November 5, one person arrived and November 6, no one came.

The executive director and the writer tried to analyse why results were not more positive. It was noticed that during the home visiting the

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<sup>1</sup> Harleigh B. Trecker, Social Group Work, Principles and Practices  
ch. I, IV, VI

people were not only quite curious about Logan Neighbourhood House, but suspicious too. It seemed that they questioned why suddenly anyone should be interested in them and their welfare when for so many years nothing had been done to help them. They despised charity and were afraid of what they might be getting into. It was also felt, however, that a fuller understanding of the group to be served and persistence on the part of the staff was the main answer. It was also realized that too few home contacts were being made, and that it would be necessary to reach everyone in a small area as a start. One person was unable to do this alone. The Junior League was therefore approached to supply volunteers in a house-to-house canvass in a seven square block area immediately surrounding Logan Neighbourhood House, which included the area bounded by Henry Avenue on the North, William Avenue on the South, Princess Street on the East and Isabel Street on the West. The executive director and the writer solicited the help of the Central Volunteer Bureau, who compiled lists of names and addresses of every householder in this seven block area. These lists were broken down into workable groups and twenty-five Junior League Volunteers spent three days going from house to house, and room to room in each house in this small area, locating and visiting all the senior citizens possible, explaining the purpose of Logan Neighbourhood House, telling what had been planned for the older people, and inviting them to an open house and birthday party for senior citizens on November 25. The results were gratifying. Seventy-five people came to the Open House Birthday Party, and showed interest and enthusiasm for the project.

#### Survey Results

The survey revealed that there were at least 134 people sixty years of age and over in the seven block area. These were actual contacts, so it was safe to assume that there were even more. The age grouping of these 134 people is indicated in Table 3.

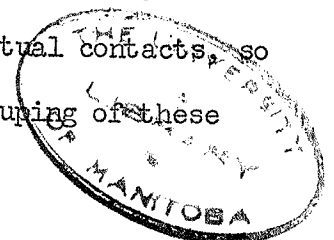


Table 3

NUMBER OF SENIOR CITIZENS OVER 60 YEARS IN THE SEVEN BLOCK AREA IMMEDIATELY  
SURROUNDING LOGAN NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

AGE IN YEARS	NUMBER
60 ---- 64	16
65 ---- 69	25
70 ---- 74	19
75 ---- 79	13
80 ---- 84	7
85 ---- 89	0
90 and over	2
No age given (but considered in the age range	52
Total	134

The dense population of senior citizens in this small area made a senior citizen programme not only advisable but necessary. As Logan Neighbourhood House serves a large district, it followed that there was a good chance the proportion of senior citizens in the whole area was high. A study of the census figures for 1951 showed that there were 1,767 people age sixty-five and over in the C.P.R. - Notre Dame area.<sup>1</sup>

It was further discovered that fifty-nine people showed definite interest in a senior citizen recreation programme; twenty-eight said that they were not interested; forty-seven did not give any answer to this question. This indicated again that there was a felt need for a programme for senior citizens.

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<sup>1</sup> Dominion Bureau of Statistics, loc. cit., p. 4

Only eighteen already belonged to other clubs, the majority being service clubs or lodges. It was discovered that thirty-six senior citizens lived alone; twenty-six owned their own homes; twenty-six lived with their family or friends; twenty-two were married people.

#### Programme Development

A tentative programme was then planned for the future. It consisted of:

1. A special party each Tuesday of the month, with a birthday party on the fourth Tuesday of every month.
2. Monday - a special interest group day.
3. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday - days when the senior citizens could come and use the facilities with a minimum of leadership supplied.

In the beginning, the Tuesday programme consisted of larger group activities, including movies, sing-songs, dancing and bingo. Several people who were avid card players kept mainly to this activity. One member, a violin player, tried to inspire some interest in an orchestra, but this idea did not materialize.

The Monday interest group was unsuccessful at first. Although the group expressed a certain amount of interest, they did not carry through with any definite plans. The worker proposed suggestions for interest groups such as carpentry for the men, sewing for the ladies, or whatever they wished. However, when the group worker took the men to the manual shop, they enjoyed looking at the tools but expressed the opinion that they were too old to start that or that they had been away from their trade too long. There was evidence of a great deal of insecurity. The worker did not wish to push them too fast. It was felt that more time should be given the members to feel secure with one another and make friends before beginning some project. The group worker recognized that it was premature to pressure for too-rapid action and did not intend

to be authoritarian. As a result, they were not urged to undertake the proposed project and the idea was tabled for the time being.

On December 2, the worker initiated a discussion about the coming Christmas party. Interest in this event was evident in the group. The worker then encouraged them to talk the idea over together, which finally resulted in two senior citizens being elected by the group to act on a house committee to assist in planning the party for the Christmas season. One volunteered and one other was nominated. This was the first step the group had taken in adopting the democratic process. This was difficult for the group, yet at that time the group worker recorded that the group seemed to reveal possibilities of more intensive work now than was possible before. It was also the first time that the group had participated in a total house programme. At first they seemed to feel that the younger people would not want them around, and the worker encouraged the group members to bring out their feelings. At the party on December 10, they were disabused of this idea as the other age groups encouraged and accepted them and all groups joined in and helped decorate the Christmas tree and the rooms in the House, and finished the evening by square dancing.

Because of the success of the first small committee organized, the worker suggested that two other people be elected to form a committee to plan a Christmas birthday party for senior citizens. A meeting of the four members was held on December 12. In interpreting the programme that day, the worker commented in her record that she had to push them somewhat, and conduct the business meeting, yet the group showed interest and was able to express a few ideas. The worker recognized the present limitations of the group yet the "spreading" of responsibilities gave the group an opportunity to bring more people in and become more self-directing. The group also participated in

helping with refreshments and cleaning up, and was able to carry on alone, enjoying the afternoon, not needing stimulation by a programme, which formerly had been planned and executed by the worker.

December 16 was the Christmas birthday party to which ninety-one people came, a further indication of the senior citizens' interest and need for such a programme. This was followed by a Christmas dinner on December 25 for members who would be alone on Christmas Day. Twenty-seven senior citizens arrived. While waiting for dinner, the group met in the lounge and spontaneously had a sing-song, one of the older men playing the piano and others leading the singing.

In January, the worker had a discussion with a group of women in the club, trying to find how ready they were to assume more leadership. The worker asked them for programme ideas but they replied that a good job was being done and they would prefer to leave this to the worker, that they liked to sit and enjoy things and that their time for organizing was over. They were actually opposed at this time to the idea of taking some of the responsibility of planning a programme. One objection was that in this manner quarrels usually started and people became jealous about the other person running the Club. They felt all this could be avoided and everyone remain happier if things continued the way they were with the worker doing everything. This strongly indicated their very deep sense of insecurity in being able to handle responsibility and their fear of having to encounter anything unpleasant again. They seemed afraid to risk losing the few friends and fleeting moments of happiness. Yet, the worker felt it to be a good group meeting. The members had automatically broken into sub-groups according to interest, such as cards or music, or friendship. Yet the worker felt the group was also strong as a whole. Some members were telling jokes and it was evident that all were listening as the total group laughed and

went on to tell more or even stopped their activity to listen. There was a sense of loyalty and group feeling, indicated by their participation in the group discussion around programming. This seemed to indicate that some of their skills could, with help, be renewed. It meant a reappearance of ability which could be used at some future date. Their willingness to help in a material way by serving tea and washing up showed they were coming to a point where they could take some positive action. In their appreciation of the performance of an eighty-four year old member who entertained them by singing, the worker recognized their tribute to one of their numbers who performed well. In actual fact, they recognized and brought to light latent ability which had been submerged and almost forgotten.

On January 19 members of the group were invited and several attended the Annual Meeting of the Welfare Council of Greater Winnipeg, where the story of Logan Neighbourhood House was featured. The next day their interest and growing concern about themselves and their neighbourhood was exhibited in a lively discussion, initiated by the senior citizens and guided by the worker. The value of this discussion lay in the fact that they were allowed to criticize existing institutions, such as the Community Chest, the City Welfare Department and the City Police. Here again the group worker felt they were beginning to show some positive action in an expression of repressed hostility. The feeling the worker tried to convey was that it was safe to express negative feelings here without any fear of retaliation, while at the same time she tried to present to them a realistic picture of what was being done through the Welfare Council in the field of rehabilitation in which they were concerned. The worker also pointed out that concern over juvenile delinquency had led to the establishment of Logan Neighbourhood House and that the Community Chest were helping carry the financial burden. The group's greater feeling of security was evident

in the fact that they listened to the worker yet retained their own views and said so. This was an example of a worker's necessary role as a resource person, in explaining and describing but allowing criticism and hostility to emerge in a controlling setting.

At the January birthday party, the worker felt that there might soon be a possibility of electing an executive of senior citizens and starting interest groups. The members were presented with these ideas by the worker and asked to think them over during the week. On February 3 the group was strong enough to elect officers to assume the major part of the responsibility of handling club affairs. Nearly the whole group participated in this, offering suggestions and discussion, one being a recommendation of setting up a sick-visiting committee. The group worker was able to begin to withdraw a little here as the group showed ability to make its own decisions. However, the worker suggested the idea of a fund, to which all could make voluntary contributions for covering the cost of refreshments. The idea was accepted by the group.

The first big business meeting of the club was held February 10, the president in the chair and the worker acting as secretary. A strong group feeling shone through this meeting and practically every member contributed to the discussions on programme, Family Night, the sick-visiting fund and a Valentine party. The group felt free enough to criticize and express their strong feelings about Family Night -- a programme which was held monthly in the evening for all the members of Logan Neighbourhood House. The whole meeting indicated that the group felt ready and willing to assume responsibility for the club.

Because the group was as a whole now reasonably well formed, secure, confident and progressing, the worker recognized it would be possible to intro-

duce interest groups to develop a more specific individual breakdown of interests. As a result on February 24, the idea of forming an art interest group was discussed. The worker had mentioned the possibility of several interest groups many times earlier in the year and art seemed to be the most attractive to them. Two Central Volunteer Bureau volunteers came and presented the possibility of art sessions with the group. A good deal of enthusiasm was shown, and one member actually brought some art books with her. Plans were made to have art classes every Tuesday except on the birthday Tuesdays. At first there were several who went to the art class. Then the numbers attending declined until a core of about five eagerly interested persons attended each week. In spite of the small number of members, this group showed eager interest, sufficient to cause concern if the art classes had to be cancelled for any reason.

On April 21, the group held a very interesting executive meeting to plan the birthday party. All members offered suggestions and seemed to feel a responsibility and an obligation to do so. Each executive member was given some responsibility for the day of the party. They then brought forth the matter of membership, being concerned that so few were joining. They discussed reasons why people might not be coming and finally decided that they should do some home visiting. The worker promised to prepare names and addresses for them. It was felt that this was a peak in the whole year, for they were now concerned about their club and took the initiative in doing something about it. The worker had been relegated to the position of a resource and information person only and the group seemed to be self-sufficient, independent and democratic.

#### Indications of Growth in Individuals through Participation in the Group

In order to see more clearly how individuals benefitted by the group work programme it might be well to describe how certain individuals grew and developed in the light of the various aims set forth for the programme and listed

earlier in this chapter.

Mrs. J. came to the club a very introverted person, extremely shy and lonely. For two months she simply sat, refusing even to take off her coat and unable to converse with other members. She was allowed to continue in this way, not being forced to come forward, but during this time the worker made a point each time she came, to sit and speak with her. Gradually Mrs. J. was able to enjoy a conversation with the worker. When this point was reached and the worker had discovered some of her interests she was asked to help the worker with the dishes one day. She readily agreed and seemed to enjoy it. The next time she was encouraged to help a member, a little further along in ability to socialize, yet not too secure herself. These two ladies began to enjoy each other's company, always encouraged by the worker and given recognition for their contribution to the club. Finally, they became a necessary part of the club, the other members relying on them for their specific contribution. This led to the eventual ability of Mrs. J. to converse with others and to begin to relax and enjoy the programme, though she would enter into no activity other than dishwashing.

When the time came for the formation of the art interest group Mrs. J. seemed to show some interest. The worker encouraged her to sit on the fringe of the group and listen to the plans. This she did and evidenced a great deal of enthusiasm in her own quiet way. When the group met for the first art class Mrs. J. was one of the first to go. Her interest was so great that she began through the following weeks to encourage others to join and made sure that those who had joined attended regularly.

By now she was an accepted and active member of the total group, continuing in her role as dishwasher, being an active member of the art group and now making vocal contributions in business meetings. She had really begun to

take her membership seriously and one day mentioned to the group worker that she wished her friend, who used to attend but was no longer doing so, would come back. She talked at great length to the worker and was encouraged to help her friend take the step of returning which, for her own reasons, she was finding so difficult.

By the time the group worker had finished her student placement, Mrs. J. was a fully contributing member of the club. Though she was not a leader she was a stable helpful member, able to carry her share of responsibility in the club. She had made new friends and had developed enough self-confidence to be able to embark on learning a new skill, art. She had become interested enough in her fellow members to try and encourage them to continue coming.

When she had first come to the club her sole interest was in her rooming house and her daughter. Now she was able to quickly pile her dishes in the sink at noon and come to the club rather than bury herself completely in housework, as she had formerly done. She had definitely been able to benefit from her association with Logan Neighbourhood House and the members of the senior citizens' programme.

Mr. W. had joined the club about a month after its initiation. He belonged to a minority national group and seemed to need to protect himself and assert his rights. His appearance was dishevelled which corresponded with his usual moody self. At first he would not participate in activities and just sat brooding. This inactive state did not remain for long, however, as the worker learned that he enjoyed cribbage and knew that another member, a lady, also played the game. The worker encouraged these two to play a game and this led to a steadily growing friendship between the two. Mr. W's appearance gradually improved and now he always appeared at the club freshly shaven. His acceptance by the club members, and especially by the ladies who were beginning to take

quite an interest in him since his appearance had improved, gave him a great deal of status. The group worker recognized that he had leadership abilities and began asking his advice about programme and ideas about recruiting. The results of this were two-fold. The group, because of the worker's confidence in him, began to respect his ideas and look to him for leadership and Mr. W. in turn, thrived on this recognition and was able to contribute constructively to the group. Upon request of the worker he undertook the job of greeting people when they came, helped them remove their coats and brought them into the clubrooms. He took his responsibility seriously which led to his beginning concern over members who were unable to come due to illness. One day he came to the worker telling about a member who was ill and whom he had visited. As the monthly birthday party was to be held that week and the member was unable to come on her own, he wondered if transportation could be arranged for her. This was done and he escorted the lady to the club. The worker, feeling now that he was pretty secure and having noticed that he lived near another member, Mrs. B., suggested that as Mrs. B. was nearly blind and found it hard to walk he escort her to and from the club. Mr. W. seemed to get a great deal of satisfaction from the worker's good opinion and from being needed by Mrs. B.; he continued faithfully to take care of Mrs. B. This revived interest and chivalry was recognized by the club members who elected him vice-president.

Participation in the group has led to many changes in Mr. W. Though still touchy on certain subjects, he does not seem to need to state his rights, feeling now that the group has accepted him as he is and likes him. He also has achieved high status in the group and feels needed and important now. Because he has been able to develop satisfying human relationships he is now freed from certain inner tensions which allows him to contribute responsibly to the group and which in turn can lead to a more responsible participation in community affairs and social relationships.

Mrs. P. had been deserted by her husband a month before the opening of the senior citizen programme. Almost penniless and in an extremely depressed state, she came to Logan Neighbourhood House. The staff's sincere interest in herself and her problems eventually led to her being able to talk about her troubles. After some time she was able to say and seemed to mean it that when she came to Logan Neighbourhood House she could forget her worries. A reconciliation between husband and wife was accomplished and both seemed quite happy. Mrs. P. began mixing more with the group and even contributed vocally at business meetings. Her appearance improved. However, her great need for undivided affection and attention made it almost impossible for her to share the worker or the executive director and she threatened never to come back. Here was a situation where great understanding, caution and patience had to be used to help this individual share and be happy in a group, but with such help she was able to continue her membership in the group, and although she remained a needful person it is believed, on the basis of such indications as the above, that the positive satisfactions she gained from it helped her to function more adequately in other areas of her life, such as her marriage. When she later became ill and was obliged to enter a nursing home she kept contact with the group and the members with her.

Miss T., also one of the first members of the Logan Neighbourhood House senior citizens' club, came to the club a very unhappy individual. Her main interest in life was in describing her many illnesses and the poor care she received, and criticizing in a bitter manner the way the community had neglected and abused her. She was incapable at that point of helping others or showing consideration for them. She needed a great deal of time and attention from the staff particularly. This was given to her by the worker who

sympathized with her in her troubles but at the same time tried to build up her strengths. In trying to direct her interest outside of herself, the worker helped her find a specific function in the group. She was asked to help with preparing afternoon tea and responded well, to the point where she soon took almost sole responsibility for this. The worker, at the same time, got her interested in playing cards with the group. This led to her being able to ask one of the other members to help with making the tea. This he did, assuming as part of his responsibility the duty of putting the kettle on. By the end of the year there were four involved in the preparing of afternoon refreshments and cleaning up. They were organized into a committee in charge of this phase of the programme. Each one had a specific duty to fulfill and took his responsibility seriously and without complaint, but rather with a feeling of being important to the club. This led to a growing ability on the part of Miss T. to cooperate with others and to think of others.

From the status gained from her position in the club she was able to receive recognition and began to assume responsibility for making new members feel "at home" at the club. It was gradually noticed by the staff at Logan Neighbourhood House that Miss T. referred to her ailments less often and complained less about her "hard lot" in life. As she was so important to the club she seemed to feel some sense of responsibility in the art group. This was furthered by her genuine interest in art. It was soon noticed that she had definite talent in this field which gave her increased status in the group. By the end of five months after initiation of the club, Miss T. showed considerable change from a lonely, unhappy self-seeking individual to one with a much better integrated personality, able to give to others and receive from them without feeling that life owed her something special.

### Referral Procedure

One of the values of a guided group experience lies in the security it affords the group and individuals in the group, in their relationships with others and in obtaining help. An extremely important element in working with groups is the necessity for the trained person to know the individuals in the group and to understand the meaning of the behaviour of each member as well as of the group as a whole. With this knowledge the worker is able to give the help the senior citizen so often needs in finding a positive solution to his emotional and material problems.

In the Logan Neighbourhood House senior citizen project, referrals to and from the programme have been carefully considered. The following examples may serve to indicate the need for such a service and the results proper referrals could accomplish. One of the senior citizen members asked how much he had to pay us to work at the Logan Neighbourhood House Day Camp. Such interest in house activities could not be left unanswered. Although a handy man was not the answer to our Day Camp problems, his desire to be helpful must not be ignored. As a result, he was referred to the Y.M.C.A. where he was hired for the summer at their resident camp. He was very pleased over this and when asked if he might work at our resident camp next year, said he might not have time as he would probably be busy working at the Y.M.C.A. all next year. It took just that incident to restore his pride and his belief in himself!

Mrs. F. was on relief and found it hard to exist on her minimum income. Consequently, the loss of her rubbers at one of the programmes was a major catastrophe to her and had to be recognized as such by the staff. Contact was made by the worker with the Home Welfare Association, the situation

explained and Mrs. F. referred to the agency which in turn met this need.

Mrs. F. was a person who had a great deal of negative feeling about accepting material assistance. Discussion of this referral helped her to recognize that this was not charity, or a hand-out, but legitimate use of a special agency established for the purpose of helping people materially when such help was needed.

#### Emphasis of the Programme

Logan Neighbourhood House senior citizen programme is not presented here as a success story, but rather is one of effort, experiment and slow development. It must continue to be this, as it is dealing with human beings, not machines that can be turned out completely perfect and at a regular pace. The human personality is the complex factor to be considered; and each personality is different and develops from different stages and at various speeds. The programme must be designed to meet the needs of each individual at his own level. This necessitates continued change of activity and emphasis in the overall programme, guided by the sensitivity and skill of a trained staff person.

The foregoing indicates that progress was made in the five months the group was operating, and that the group worker played a conscious part in the changes effected in the individuals and the group as a whole. It is important to analyse what role the group worker plays in a group in contrast to the spontaneous contribution of volunteers.

The group worker conceives his role as being:

1. A helping person doing things with the group rather than for or to the group, influencing and directing indirectly rather than in an authoritarian manner, enabling the group to become self-directing and capable of determining its own objectives and limiting and encouraging individual and group capacities.
2. A resource person for programme, agency and community contacts.

3. An aid in developing cooperative inter-group and community relationships.
4. Able to accept group and individuals at their particular stage of development and help them to grow and achieve success by their own efforts, at the same time willing to listen and encourage the group to express feelings, both positive and negative.
5. Able to bring a sense of timing and an ability to recognize group readiness to move forward. Involved in this is the skill of the group worker to plan and anticipate what is involved in developing a satisfactory programme in relation to the present needs of the group.
6. Trained to bring a conscious and controlled use of self and a capacity to accept all members with equal warmth and understanding.
7. Able to bring a special understanding of human behaviour and an understanding of group relationship and skill in making conscious use of this understanding to help the group realize its objectives.
8. Able to help individuals to discover, create, and maintain relationships with other people which can be increasingly satisfying, constructive and personally productive.<sup>1</sup>

These are the main areas in which a group worker can help individuals and groups to grow and change. The worker in the Logan Neighbourhood House project developed the programme with these objectives consciously in mind, and as illustrated, was able to accomplish specific changes in individuals and in the total group.

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<sup>1</sup> Harleigh B. Trecker, op. cit., p. 40, ch. III

## CHAPTER V

### THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER IN THE LOGAN NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

In professionally guided programmes, such as the one at Logan Neighbourhood House, the volunteer does not carry the same kind of responsibility as he does in the other clubs described. In the non-professionally guided groups the volunteer has sole responsibility for planning, carrying out and evaluation of the programme. At Logan Neighbourhood House, where the trained person has the major responsibility for the group, the volunteer acts as a specialist in a particular skill, a link with the community and a helper to achieve the aims being consciously developed by the trained person. Therefore, the role played by volunteers in the Logan Neighbourhood House senior citizen programme is a very limited aspect to be examined. Volunteers have undertaken a wide variety of service, particularly home visiting, participating in the programme, and acting as teachers of skills.

#### Home Visiting

The original plan for the senior citizen programme was a general one, covering five afternoons a week, with special emphasis on small interest groups. As the area served was large, and the numbers of senior citizens calculated to be many, it was expected that eventually the programme would be quite extensive. However, when the programme began, the attendance on the first four consecutive days dropped from six to none.

Logan Neighbourhood House has stressed home visiting and made it an integral part of its senior citizen programme in order to invite residents of the area who had not already attended the programme, and to visit members, who through illness or for other reasons, had not been attending. The first logical role of the volunteers was home visiting in order to recruit members. Sporadic home visits had been made, but this time a concentrated effort was

planned for a seven block area. The staff member was unable to do this alone so the Junior League of Winnipeg was approached and asked to help. The Junior League complied by sending twenty-five members to assist in the canvass.

A half-day orientation programme was held for the volunteers to help them in this project. Several important points were stressed. It was advised that as the area was of a low economic standing, the people visited would not appreciate home visitors being expensively dressed or riding up to their homes in cars. Volunteers were asked to dress simply, dispense with jewelry and not use their cars. They were also warned that landladies would seldom be helpful, stairways and halls would often be very dark and that the senior citizens would be suspicious of them and of Logan Neighbourhood House. Some of the volunteers expressed the wish to do the visiting in pairs. It was pointed out that this was time consuming and not too helpful. They were advised rather to visit separate families in the same house.

After the first half day of home visits, the volunteers met as a group with the director and the writer to discuss and evaluate their progress and to hear and to use any suggestions. This was made a regular practice after each half day. Opportunity was thus offered for the volunteers to express their fears and amazement concerning the conditions they discovered. One volunteer reported that she had burned her gloves as soon as she went home. Several reported that they felt badly in need of a bath as some of the living conditions were so unsanitary. However, there was general enthusiasm expressed for the job and realization that living conditions should be improved if possible. Their conviction was strengthened that a programme such as Logan Neighbourhood House was able to offer to senior citizens could be very necessary in the lives of these older people.

It developed that question forms which had been drawn up for use in home visiting were quite unrealistic, since they attempted to gather too much

information. (Appendix B) The volunteers therefore, were advised not to follow the forms too closely but rather to elicit all the information possible without pressing any points.

The twenty-five volunteers covered the whole seven block area in three days. Every home was visited. However, not all the people were contacted, as some refused admittance, or some were not home. These calls were followed up later.

The volunteers explained the function of Logan Neighbourhood House, described the proposed programme for senior citizens, and then issued an invitation to an open house birthday party on November twenty-fifth. The response to this party was excellent as seventy-five people came. However, attendance dropped off after this. This indicated that one home contact did not provide sufficient incentive to keep the people coming to Logan Neighbourhood House. It was also realized that as other senior citizen programmes in the city were held once a week, more explanation of our daily programme was necessary. It was decided then, that six regular volunteers to do weekly home visiting were needed. Since they had now become interested in the programme it was not difficult to obtain regular volunteers. Home visiting twice a week continued throughout the time the programme was in operation.

After the volunteer made her home visits, she recorded what had taken place and sent this to the writer. This was discussed before the volunteer went home visiting again.

From time to time the volunteers met situations where they felt that a staff person could handle the case better. They made note of these and referred the individuals to the staff.

The culmination of the volunteer home visiting programme was a meeting of the volunteers to discuss the progress of the programme and to make

recommendations. As was to be expected, the volunteers reported that home visiting could be frustrating at times. They said that often they expected an expression of gratitude from the clients and this was not always forthcoming. They asked to be told what floor or suite the senior citizen was occupying, as many of the rooming houses were poorly lighted and landladies were not always helpful. A more compact record form was suggested, with a space to put the geographical layout for reference by future visitors.

#### Participation in the Programme

The birthday parties have always attracted a considerably larger number of people than other days. One person was unable to cope with such a large group so volunteers were asked to help. There were four types of service opportunities at the birthday parties. Two volunteers took complete responsibility for ordering, preparing and serving the food as well as clearing up afterwards. Two volunteers acted as receptionists, one remaining at the door to greet the people and to direct them to the lounge, one upstairs to welcome them, write down their names and take down their birthday dates. Three volunteers acted as hostesses to circulate, help the people to feel welcome and to talk with those who sat alone and found it difficult to enter into group discussions. These volunteers also helped in serving food, participating in and leading the sing-song as long as the group needed this help. One volunteer helped in the programme by acting as pianist.

Before the programme, a short printed job description was given to each volunteer, who then discussed this with the social worker.

At a volunteer meeting held in March, the volunteers suggested that the senior citizens could take more responsibility for their birthday parties, in planning and acting as receptionists. This recommendation was later carried out successfully.

### Teachers of Skills

Volunteers assumed the responsibility of introducing an art class. Two volunteers came to a group meeting, discussed with the members what might be done in art and felt out the receptiveness of the group to art classes. With the social worker's assistance they undertook the responsibility of conducting the art classes. The volunteers later discussed with the social worker the programme that had just been held and in this way it was possible to ensure that the class was geared to the needs of the senior citizens.

The art volunteers reported that the art class did not appeal to a very large group, but they felt that it was important to a few. It was agreed that a notice be posted indicating the topic for the following week, and that the art class make posters announcing the art programme and advertising special events.

An increase in the number of interest groups was suggested. However, it was realized that the senior citizens needed to make the final decision and each new proposal was first discussed with them.

The volunteers approved the programme as a whole but realized that it needed review from time to time. In the process of working with the several aspects of the Programme the volunteers have acquired a strong interest in the senior citizen programme, and have learned a great deal about working with older people.

### Evaluation of the Role of Volunteers

We have stressed the importance of having trained professional staff working in a recreational programme for senior citizens, but we have also seen that volunteers can contribute an essential part. Three important reasons for this stand out clearly. The first of these is the spontaneity and freshness that a volunteer can bring to the programme. Trained workers are so orientated

to observing behaviour closely and analysing its meaning that their contribution to the process is of necessity a conscious and deliberate one. A second important role volunteers play which is extremely important to the senior citizen is that of being a liaison person between the senior citizens and the community.

So often we have forced the older person out of the living picture of the community. The volunteer can bring a spark of the live community and take back to the community some of the feelings and thinking of the senior citizens. This leads to the third role of the volunteer, a role which provides the life blood of any agency, and that is of interpreter to the community of the function of the agency and its programme. Public interpretation can be aptly done by volunteers who work within agency programme. They have first hand touch with the programmes and individuals in the programme. With this close contact, they become sensitive to the feelings of the people involved and are more able then to tell their fellow citizens why an agency is needed and whether it is successful.

Volunteers are making a real and valuable contribution to the Logan Neighbourhood House senior citizen programme. Without them the programme could not provide as varied or as stimulating situations for the older people to enjoy.

It should be kept in mind also, that Logan Neighbourhood House is, in essence, a product of volunteer interest and support; that the programme at the House is dependent on volunteers for financing, policy-making and continued service. In the course of its development, there has been to a marked degree, co-operation between professional social workers and volunteers. The programme could not continue without the volunteer workers, who have recognized the contribution that is being made by the professional staff.

In the senior citizen programme, the volunteers learned the needs of the senior population, became convinced of the value of the service being

offered by this agency, and gave their full co-operation to the staff. Under the guidance and supervision of the trained workers, the particular skills of the volunteers provided a real contribution to the programme, and in the course of their experience they expressed their growing appreciation of the problem and this method of solution.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing two chapters are an outline of the services being rendered to senior citizens in the C.P.R. - Notre Dame area, served by Logan Neighbourhood House.

At the outset, the basic purpose in forming a club for senior citizens was to develop a programme that would have as its aim the development in the senior citizens of a sense of worth and productivity. The original method proposed was to set up a programme which would provide an opportunity for enjoyment, participation and recognition. The programme was organized on this basis. (See chapter 4) The people were invited to come, but a simple invitation proved to be unsatisfactory. This initial failure was probably due to the natural inertia of many senior citizens, as well as the fact that in this district they have not been encouraged to embark on any new adventure. They were probably suspicious of the whole programme and did not wish to be forced into the unknown, while at the same time there may have been an understandable fear of their own social inadequacy. To overcome these difficulties, friendly visitors went to their homes to reassure, to encourage them and to invite them to participate in this new venture. The result of home visits was an attendance of seventy-five people for the big open house senior citizen birthday party.

This proved to be only a temporary success, so it became necessary to institute a programme of regular home visiting, in order to supply the human touch which counted so much, to give the senior citizens a sense of worthwhileness. Here was someone who went out of her way to talk with and visit them, and as a result, they felt that they were no longer insignificant.

The regular home visiting encouraged a sufficient number to attend so that there was established a core group of about eight to twelve members coming daily, about twenty-five each Tuesday and an average of sixty to seventy people coming on 'birthday Tuesdays'. This is not a high figure and almost certainly represents a selected group who can more easily take hold of a new experience such as this programme offers. Logan Neighbourhood House must decide whether it will study new methods of reaching more isolated individuals who find it difficult to take the step necessary in joining a group. However, the group is well established and if successful with small numbers, it would seem that Logan Neighbourhood House could be able to find ways of working with the more reluctant people.

In a seven month period, a slowly but steadily growing number of senior citizens has been involved, so that in June 1953, the club had a paid-up membership of fifty-three people. This, however, is reaching only a small percentage of the senior citizens resident in the C.P.R. - Notre Dame area.

The first attempt at forming interest groups failed; the fear of new experience and loss of physical capacities seemed to be the source of the difficulty here. The worker did not press the point but rather waited until the members were more secure in the group and in the agency. The second attempt was fairly successful with interest by the whole group and maintained by six or eight regular attenders.

At the present time a good core group has been established and is ready to begin a more self-directed programme. The group records show that a sense of worth and competence is being developed. The fifty-three members have developed a strong loyalty to the house and to the programme. Their disappointment in lack of numbers is a strength that can be built on successfully. Their

feeling that it is unfortunate that more are not availing themselves of the opportunity provided for senior citizens to get together, to chat, to entertain and be entertained, to do things together, and receive friendly attention and affection from the staff and members, is an indication that the programme has meaning and value for the senior citizens now participating.

If this programme is evaluated in the light of participation by members and personal growth of members, then it will be seen that a successful beginning is being made. We believe that senior citizens are not useless, incapable beings, simply living through a second childhood. Rather, we believe that they are capable individuals, endowed with years of experience and wisdom that can be put to good use. It is recognized that both social and physical skills have become rusty through disuse, and that our community is partly to blame for this. Society too often sets the senior citizens aside when they begin to 'slow up' and in so doing hastens the process of decay. Looking at it from the senior citizens' point of view, they do not want to be useless, do not feel useless, but are frequently considered to be a non-productive burden on society, and their resentment is probably as intense as their feeling of rejection.

The programme at Logan Neighbourhood House has been designed to bring the senior citizen back into the daily stream of life in the community. It is not based on a desire merely to entertain him but rather to provide him with opportunities of taking the reins back in his own hands, to enable him to help himself, and help him contribute to the community life again, if only with reference to the social aspect. Progress, therefore, has been understandably slow. Having become unused to doing things, one does not suddenly resume activity; it takes a great deal of encouragement and experiment in a protected setting before a man will again take chances on open competition with other

people in the community. This is particularly true of a group of people in an area such as that served by Logan Neighbourhood House, who tend to be economically and socially disadvantaged in comparison with other groups in the community.

The other clubs described earlier in this research project, have given enjoyment and entertainment to several hundred senior citizens in our city. This has been a worthy effort. Furthermore, in such programmes as those developed through the Community Clubs and other groups, a number of older people whose social skills have been fairly well developed and have not become too "rusty" through disuse, are able to make use of facilities without special help. However, in the opinion of the writer, comparatively little effort has been made to gain the fullest possible participation of the senior citizen members, either in the planning, in the programme itself, or in the responsibility for recruiting new members. The primarily "spectator" type of programme that is offered does not provide for the building up of the individual to become a more complete and actively functioning person again. In a programme which is to be considered successful in accordance with the aims of social group work as previously outlined in this thesis, opportunities must be provided that progressively require more responsibility so that the senior citizen can move steadily through the process in order to function as fully as possible, limited only by individual intellectual and physical capacity. That is why no programme catering to the mass, per se, can possibly provide this individualized opportunity for progressively enriching experiences. This implies two things: (1) That there is flexibility and variety in the programme to enable development, and (2) that there is an individualized approach. There must be a group small enough so that the leader and the volunteers can learn to know the people, to ascertain their stage of development and

to present them to the next situation when they are ready for it.

It is in these two respects, the writer suggests, that a programme should be evaluated. The amount of variety offered in the programme is important. By variety is not meant movies, or sing-songs or dancing, but rather the type of programme that makes different kinds of demands and is suited to varying degrees of development. This can be done most effectively in smaller groups, such as committees and executive groups. The lack of provision of these small groups and the large numbers of people with so few volunteers to work with them are factors tending to make the other clubs described an insufficient challenge to the senior citizens.

Experience has shown that the "spectator" type of programme is a necessary first step to the type of programme offered for senior citizens at Logan Neighbourhood House. It is a necessary step because older people who have been living a restricted, disadvantaged sort of life need time to gather their resources, to gain courage and confidence from the group and staff before they can take a first step on their own. However, it can be seen that with patience and understanding, they can be helped to move on from this first step to fuller participation and self-direction.

An essential part of the process of individualization is the guidance by personnel who are trained to be perceptive of group development. With the exception of one part-time professional person who served for a short period in one programme, no trained person was working in the seven other programmes operating in the city at the time of the study. At Logan Neighbourhood House the newly established programme was guided by two trained workers, one with previous experience with aged people. The professional group worker can see the value of people doing things themselves rather than being provided with plans, ideas, and ready-made solutions to problems and has the patience to wait

for those who are slow to take responsibility. To the inexperienced lay person, the programme can be a failure if membership is small, or if everyone is not participating in the same programme. A day's programme can be a success to the professional if nothing happens except that one individual who has hitherto spoken but a few words privately to the staff, that day enters briefly into a discussion which a group of senior citizens are having.

The Logan Neighbourhood House senior citizen programme is not the answer to all the problems of the elderly people in the area served, but it has made a valuable contribution in relieving some of the stresses of old age and preparing those older people who need help to meet some of their other difficulties more positively and constructively.

An attempt has been made to illustrate, in describing the programme at Logan Neighbourhood House, the value of trained leadership, and the writer is convinced that this is the fundamental difference between this programme and those described in Chapters II and III. In the writer's opinion there is a grave need for expansion of recreational services for senior citizens in Winnipeg. If this problem is to be met in an intelligent manner, the development of further leisure-time services should include provision for professionally trained workers. Their knowledge and skills in working with groups and individuals, with volunteers, with other agencies, and with the community will insure that senior citizens will gain the maximum benefit. Senior citizens deserve no less, and the community cannot afford to deny them the right and opportunity to retain their self-respect, their dignity, and their usefulness to society.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

- I Is there, in your Church, a club primarily for Elderly Citizens? \_\_\_\_\_
1. a) Are both men and women members of the group? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Approximately how many men? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Approximately how many women? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is there an admission age? \_\_\_\_\_
- a) If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) What is the approximate average age of the group? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How long has the club been in existence? \_\_\_\_\_
4. a) When does the club meet? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) How often does the club meet? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Where do they meet? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What accomodation and equipment is there for the Elderly Citizens' Club?  
(Please Check)
- a) Reading Material
- b) Piano
- c) Kitchen equipment
- d) Games
- e) Any other
6. How is the programme financed?
7. What does the club do? (Please Check)
- a) Special religious services or studies?
- b) Provide a programme where the whole group participates?  
Example -- sing songs, movies, games etc.
- c) Organize special interest groups?  
Example -- study groups, crafts, sewing, carpentry etc.
8. a) Approximately how many volunteers assist in the Elderly Citizens' programme?
- b) Is there any paid staff engaged in working with Elderly Citizens? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Is there organized provision for visiting the hospital or homes of old people who are confined temporarily or permanently? \_\_\_\_\_

II What other Church clubs do the Elderly Citizens belong to?

III Does your Church offer other services to Elderly Citizens?

a) Refer to hospitals \_\_\_\_\_

b) Refer to welfare agencies \_\_\_\_\_

c) Donate clothing \_\_\_\_\_

d) Provide meals \_\_\_\_\_

IV In what way are Elderly Citizens encouraged to attend other Church Clubs?

V Do you feel your programme for Elderly Citizens is adequate?

VI Do you envisage any changes or development in the near future?

VII Further Comments:

## APPENDIX B

### SCHEDULE OF LEISURE TIME ACTIVITY OF OLDER PEOPLE

- . Name \_\_\_\_\_ M( ) F( ) Address \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_
- . Family and Living Arrangements. (Underline)
- A. Lives in own home, apartment, rooming house, hotel in \_\_\_\_ number of rooms  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Lives with husband or wife, husband or wife and children, children only,  
alone, parents, relatives, friends. (Underline)  
Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Sees relatives or close friends never or rarely, several times a year, about  
once a month, every week or oftener. (Underline)
- . Age... Was \_\_\_\_ years old on last birthday Date \_\_\_\_\_
- . Health Problems (underline. Through observation only)  
Has poor sight, hard of hearing, blind or nearly so, crippled hands, crippled  
legs, general rheumatic stiffness, no physical problems. Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- . Church affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

### LEISURE AND RECREATION

- . Free Time (Underline)  
Has all day, half day, a few hours, almost none
- . What do you do for enjoyment? (check one or more)
- | Do: Would like to<br>do      | Do: Would like<br>to do          |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Read _____                   | Work in and around the _____     |
| sew, crochet, knit ... _____ | house _____                      |
| visit or entertain ... _____ | Write letters ..... _____        |
| friends _____                | Attend club meetings..... _____  |
| play cards or other _____    | Attend theatres, lectures. _____ |
| table games..... _____       | concerts.... _____               |
| play sports..... _____       | Dramatics (acting)..... _____    |
| attend movies..... _____     | Listen to music..... _____       |
| discussion groups..... _____ | Work on some hobby..... _____    |
| dancing..... _____           | model clay..... _____            |
| group singing..... _____     | Painting..... _____              |
| watch athletics..... _____   | work in garden..... _____        |
| visit or entertain _____     | carpentry..... _____             |
| relatives..... _____         | read books or magazines _____    |
| play musical instru- _____   | what kind?..... _____            |
| ment..... _____              | Other..... _____                 |
| listen to the radio... _____ |                                  |
| take rides..... _____        |                                  |

- . To what kind(s) of organizations do you now belong, or wish to belong? (check one or more)

	Do belong:	Would like to belong:		Do belong:	Would like to belong:
Social Club	_____	_____	Men's club	_____	_____
Study Group	_____	_____	Lodge	_____	_____
Club for	_____	_____	None	_____	_____
elderly people	_____	_____	Other (specify)	_____	_____
Church Club	_____	_____			
Women's Club	_____	_____			

4. Preference for group organization (check)

- A. Do you believe there should be other facilities made available for elderly people to get together? Yes ( ) No ( )
- B. Would you be interested in attending if a neighbourhood group were started? Yes ( ) No ( )

COMMENTS BY INTERVIEWER

Relate the degree of ability to get around, to see, to hear, desire to belong to a group, intensity of wish to make other friends, to get out of their room, housing conditions etc,)

## APPENDIX C

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