

WVS/WRVS Bulletin/Magazine

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WVS BULLETIN

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Evening News

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LINCOLNSHIRE'S DAY

WVS Bulletin

H.R.H. The Duchess of Gloucester paid a visit to Lincolnshire to see something of the work of WVS in Horncastle and Gainsborough. The Duchess was received at Horncastle by the Lord Lieutenant of the County, the Earl of Ancaster, and with him were the Dowager Lady Hillingdon, Vice-Chairman of WVS, the Regional Administrator and the County Organiser for Lindsey. The Chairman of the Urban Council welcomed the Duchess on behalf of the town. Members of the County WVS staff were presented. Civil Defence workers at the Gainsborough WVS Services Club prepared lunch in a field kitchen, with dustbins as ovens. Later Her Royal Highness visited Riseholme Rectory, near Lincoln, where she watched clothing for refugees being sorted and met the Clothing Officer for the Welton Rural District (owner of the Rectory), the Centre Organiser, and the County Clothing Officer. Tea was taken at the home of Sir Weston and Lady Cracroft-Amcotts. Sir Weston is Chairman of Lindsey County Council, and Lady Amcotts is a member of the WVS County Staff.

Keeping them Happy

on Christmas Island

CHRISTMAS ISLAND in the Pacific Ocean—two degrees north of the Equator—trade winds blowing—blue lagoons, waving palms. How idyllic it all sounds! True, the vivid green water of the lagoons is very beautiful, but lagoons can be treacherous—a cut from the coral is likely to cause a coral sore, called by the men 'the Gunge'. The waving palms have been imported, as has the Gilbertese labour to work the coconut plantations!

There are lovely sights though—the reef flats at low tide, the infinite variety of multicoloured life. Turquoise damsel fish can be seen in the shallow coral pools—and sea urchins. Further out, where the surf crashes on the reef shelf, the strange purple sea porcupines cling to the coral—giant clams, too. We use the shells of the baby-sized ones for ashtrays in the clubhouse! The hermit crabs live under the scrub and salt bushes, and make good bait. The scavengers of the island, the land crabs, can be quite frightening. WVS members Doris and Joy often find them in the bungalows!

Here on Christmas Island the most urgent need is to make available as many outdoor amusements as possible. During the weekends the men gather round the lagoons and bays, and WVS tours the island to chat with enthusiasts messing about in boats. Other times our destination is the Bay of Wrecks; the largest sharks are caught here. The men bivouac overnight, taking camp rations and plenty of Grapple Juice (the watery liquid made from issue lemonade powder) as well as 'Peggies', a NAAFI line in lager beer. For shark

fishing a strong rope with a shark hook baited with high meat is used. Most of those caught are sand sharks—the Hammerheads keep out in deep water. After landing the catch, the head is severed and the jawbone removed, then boiled in the billy-can to release the teeth. These are highly prized and used to make necklaces for girl friends, though the largest is usually kept and hung on a string round the men's own necks—proof positive of 'sharksman-ship'.

Great skill and daring is needed in water ski-ing! The men who participate have facilities equal to those in the South of France. Basketball creates a rivalry between the units equal to football. Football injuries are common, there being no pitch—just hard coral! The stalwarts are not deterred; battles are hard fought for top positions in the League. Cycling enthusiasts have their races, crowds gathering along the road-side to cheer. Tennis courts are well used, and cricket is played, the Gilbertese challenging the Royal Navy, with the District Commissioner as umpire! Body-building is popular and Judo has a strong following, particularly among the naval personnel. Could anyone ask for a more ideal setting than a palm-fringed lagoon of warm water for a swimming gala? There are plenty of spectators cheering madly, getting so carried away that they inevitably end up in the water themselves!

All these sports are splendid for the men on the island, but is it any wonder when night closes in they drift towards the NAAFI Club? Although not luxurious, there is a cosiness about the

clubroom with its gay colour scheme and choice of amusements. The easy chairs and sofas are always filled; our library is immensely popular. The plastic flowers—gladioli, iris, delphinium, and apple blossom—arouse more interest than anything else in the room, believe it or not! Models of sailing vessels, tanks and aeroplanes have been given to the Club by the lads who have made them, and stand on top of the bookcase and elsewhere. The men's chief delight seems to be in telling the most fantastic tales to WVS—the fish story to end all fish stories!!

How grateful we have been for the bundles of magazines from our Adopters; and the Puppets, a new innovation, sent to us from WVS Southern Region, have given hours of pleasure. Among the many interesting jobs the most popular, so far as WVS are concerned, has been arranging barbecues—usually for 21st birthday celebrations. The men look so gay in their Tahitian shirts from Honolulu—or just a sun-bronzed skin and gaudy shorts, dashing around helping with the

coco-nut fire. Thanks to our friends in the cookhouse, the good old British style packets of fish and chips has been a winner.

In the clubhouse we have only two dartboards, so the men prefer a game with their mates rather than a tournament. Jigsaws, and all the table games—draughts, cards, etc.—are in constant use. We are thankful for all the wonderful games that have been donated by WVS at home. Not only has the Club benefited, but also the units we visit regularly, and the Naval week-end Leave Centre at the far end of the island. We always endeavour to have five evenings free each week to spend with the men of the various units. The hospital at Main Camp has been another of our regular tours—there we have been of service by purchasing little items from the NAAFI gift shop—or even sewing. Requests broadcast over the island's radio have been done by us, and we feel our stay of nearly a year and a half on Christmas Island has been truly worth while.

Mr. Luck is 100

Mr Luck, whose photograph appears on the cover, is one of our Meals-on-Wheels old folk. Celebrating his 100th birthday on March 2nd, Mr Luck had a very exciting day. A car full of WVS members visited him and took him presents, including a large birthday cake which was made and iced by two of them, a tablecloth, a bottle of whisky and a pot of azaleas. Mr Luck was recently seen by television viewers in the I.T.V. programme 'Life Begins at Eighty' series, and in January his voice

was recorded for transmission on the B.B.C.'s North American network. He told reporters that he attributes his century partly to the 'kind ladies of the WVS who take him hot lunches every day'. Mr Luck's old regiment recently gave a dinner in his honour, and one of our members was invited to accompany him.

We are very proud of our centenarian, and hope to serve him for many years to come.

DEEPLY INVOLVED

Boy Scouts collect for Refugees

*Lining up with
their Saturday
morning's booty,
Beaconsfield*

*Overloaded
at
Penrith*

Carlisle Collection

HOME PAGE

Sauce Woostaire

by

Virginia Graham

THE only way to enjoy abroad is to leave home behind. As far as Dover you can go on wondering if you left the bath-tap running, you can go on fretting about whether your mother will feed your dog properly, you can even remember you forgot to stop the milk. But then you, too, must stop. As you get into the boat or the plane you must shed not only your worries, but all the dear enchanting things that go to the making of your motherland. For the moment you start comparing home with abroad you're bound to become disgruntled about something, and this is no way to enjoy a holiday.

Take food, for instance. It is extraordinary what an important part this seems to play in our holiday lives. Indeed, when confronted on one's return with all those jolly snaps of churches and castles and lakes, one usually can't remember ever having seen any of them until somebody says: 'Oh yes, that was where we had those marvellous pancakes', or: 'That was where we thought the trout was a bit off'.

The British stomach is terribly conservative and becomes considerably startled when faced with dishes which it considers 'messy'. But, honestly, it is too foolish to allow a lack of Yorkshire pudding to detract from one's enjoyment of Rome. Prunes, brussels sprouts, cabinet pudding and Worcester sauce must be expunged from the mind, or else every meal is a misery.

There are a lot of other minor inconveniences which vex the British abroad. The siesta is one of them. On the Continent every public building of note shuts at noon and doesn't open till

about four. It is pointless to cry: 'This is absurd! You can get into the British Museum at any time!' We know that. Forget it. If you don't want to sleep, you can sit in the square and think about the mutability of earthly greatness or admire the pigeons or something. Being furious won't open the church doors. Relax, too, about buses and trains, which don't go either when or where they're supposed to. Nothing mars a holiday so much as carrying in one's bosom, as it were, a Green Line bus.

Plumbing, too, can be very bizarre abroad, not to say primitive, though it must be admitted that our own has its eccentricities. Those little notices in our bathrooms which urge us to Pull Sharply or Press Hard don't point to perfection. But, of course, anything can happen in a continental bathroom, and it usually does too. When it does, the best thing is to remember the windows in Chartres, or think of the Alps, or even the sun. None of these occur in England.

There are language problems, too, for foreigners seem to be extraordinarily badly educated, and a good half of them don't speak English. As a nation we dislike making fools of ourselves, and it goes against our grain to gesticulate. But if we can erase a mental picture of ourselves waving our arms about on a street corner in, say Horsham, we are much more likely to get somewhere. We may even be led there, for foreigners suffer fools, particularly tourist fools, gladly. Have no shame of reading sentences out of phrase books straight into people's faces, but try not to encourage your-

self by shouting, as only the usual proportion of foreigners are deaf.

In fact the perfect way to enjoy abroad is to have left one's inhibitions behind along with the Sauce Woostaire. Nowadays quite a lot of English people do this, with surprising results. They are seized with a most refreshing feeling of irresponsibility. They let their hair right down. The chance of meeting Aunt Dorothy when they are dancing the can-can through the streets of Perpignan is small, and if they do see a compatriot—a ghastly type, of course, as are all one's compatriots abroad—they still feel invisible.

Reliable bank clerks suffocating in

tweed jackets can be found in every Spanish gipsy encampment; on every Riviera beach the staid housewife in a floral print (British national costume) can be seen flirting with some bogus Count. The pursed lips of solicitors relax into curving smiles, and the dowdy spinster paints her toe-nails and laughs. This is as it should be. Not for them the grouch about the food, the moan about the plumbing, the ever-odious comparison. For eleven and a half months they have been looking forward to leaving their homeland, and left it they have, good and proper, every bit of it—beetroot salad, punctuality, inhibitions and all.

WHITSTABLE HOUSE


ON February 24th a house at 106 Whitstable Road, Canterbury, purchased and converted by the Local Authority, was opened by the Mayor, accompanied

by the Mayoress. The house will be run by the WVS Housing Association in co-operation with Canterbury County Borough staff. It consists of eight bed-sitting rooms, with kitchen units for elderly people selected from the Council housing list.

The parish vicar blessed the house, and a large gathering, including members of the Old People's Welfare Committee, attended. The Organisation very kindly supplied all the curtains for the house as a gift. Tea was served by the eight tenants in their own rooms. The tenants received several gifts, including free milk from a local dairy, a load of logs from Toc H, and a gift of flowers from a local nurseryman. The house was much admired,

Interior of one of the Flatlets

particularly the kitchen units, which are very complete and enclosed and yet small enough to be unobtrusive in the not very large rooms.



**From Derby comes this excellent selection
of photographs illustrating some of the
work of WVS**

ROYAL
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*Never
too many
magazines
for the
Forces*

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

Hospital Reception Service

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

Don't throw your milk bottle tops away!

For an Adopted Refugee

For a Middle Eastern Cinderella

Reading to Blind Club Members

ORDER out of CHAOS

ONE afternoon the Westminster Centre was telephoned by a rather hesitant almoner from the Westminster Hospital, who said she did not know if this was the sort of thing in which WVS would help. She was confronted by the problem of Evan Swan, an elderly man over 70 years, who had had both his legs amputated. Mr Swan is at present in a rehabilitation centre and is fitted up with the latest in wheel chairs, and we hear is managing things very well. He is expected out any time now.

Mr Swan had previously earned a living by tinkering with old bicycles; he liked playing his mandolin and working on his stamp collection, valued at several hundred pounds. During his absence in hospital, hooligans had broken into his home and stolen *everything* he possessed. One of our members went with the almoner to see what, if anything, could be rescued. It was as pathetic as any blitzed home during the war: his clock had been torn from its case, pictures smashed, books and filth, broken furniture and parts of bicycles were in wild confusion; his mattress had been ripped apart and strewn over the room. We groped round in the half light and chalked an 'X' on a few items which

the Westminster Housing Department had agreed to move to the one-roomed L.C.C. flat to which he was to go.

We have searched our clothing store and have achieved a complete bed, with eiderdown and bedspread, two towels, duster and curtains, which, after some adjustment, and the help of the contractor's carpenter, are now up. We have plans to equip the kitchen fully with basic utensils.

The bed itself was another example of providential coincidence. Earlier in the week we had had a caller, a Welshman in the timber trade, who said he would willingly give us his divan bed and two mattresses, as it would encourage him to get himself a new one. We were able to fetch this bed on a Saturday morning (while it was still warm from use!). Fortunately it was not raining and the whole lot travelled comfortably on the roof of our member's car. We had been particularly asked for a low bed to accommodate Mr. Swan's disability.

On either side of Mr Swan in his new home are two single old ladies, and we think a good deal of help and friendship will swiftly be offered, and that his remaining years may not be so desolate as he may fear.

HOSPITAL PROFITS AT STOKE-ON-TRENT

THE Head of WVS Health and Hospitals Department went to Stoke-on-Trent to hand over a cheque for £2,500 to the Vice-Chairman of the Hospital Group Management Committee, the profits from the shop, trolley shop and canteen at the City General Hospital and the North Staffordshire Infirmary during the last two years. A canteen for visitors and staff has recently been erected in the grounds. Although it is a pre-fab hutment, the inside has been treated with imagination

and the room is a most bright, pleasant and convenient place in which to rest or work; but the key with which it was to be opened proved temperamental! The rest of the work done by WVS in the hospital was visited, and then it was suggested by the Chaplain that the WVS present, about 40, should go to the Chapel and join in the service that was always relayed to the wards on that day of the week. It was a good end to a very happy day.

REPORTS FROM SCOTLAND

Chief Scout's Appreciation

During the week of the Boy Scout House-to-House Clothing Collection for Refugees, the Chief Scout, Sir Charles Maclean, Bt. of Duart paid a visit to the Scottish Headquarters Baling Dépôt in Edinburgh. He toured the departments accompanied by the Scout County Secretary of Edinburgh, and chatted with the duty-teams which, on that day, were drawn from Roxburghshire. 'The Chief' was interested in all he saw and was impressed by the efficiency of the organisation. In fact, so smoothly did the teams work as to suggest that 'there was nothing to it'! He tried conclusions with a finished bale to assess its weight and, as one would expect, made an excellent guess.

WVS members felt very honoured that Sir Charles had found time to identify himself personally, both with the combined Scout 'Good Turn' and also with WVS work for World Refugee Year.

W.R.Y. Chairman's Visit

Baroness Elliot of Harwood, D.B.E., Chairman of World Refugee Year, United Kingdom Committee, visited the WVS clothing dépôt at Inverness recently. She met all clothing teams and saw both the operation of processing and the finished bales. Lady Elliot spent about 1½ hours in the dépôt, took tea with the members, and talked to everyone.

At Midnight!

A Cinderella story with a difference. Substitute blankets for the glass slipper; the Centre Organiser, Peterculter, contacted by the police at midnight, for the Fairy Godmother; passengers who were snowed up in rural Aberdeenshire for Cinderella, the police for the Prince

and there you have it! No coach and horses, certainly, but a Black Maria, which, though doubtless a pumpkin in disguise, did not disappear upon the stroke of twelve, but collected the 80 blankets to be dropped by helicopter if snow ploughs did not manage to release the train. Fortunately the passengers were released, but we still think that it was all done by magic!

Another Success Story

Another snowy journey was undertaken from Edinburgh to Inverness to convey an old woman, a Meals-on-Wheels recipient, to a Home there. Her nephew drove her, accompanied by a WVS escort, and an adventurous time was had by all. The party left Edinburgh at 9.30 a.m. on a Monday morning, lunched at Dunkeld, and arrived safely at Aviemore. Then they ran into a blizzard; three times they had to be dug out by snowploughs and were advised to proceed no further. However, they continued, and finally arrived at Inverness and deposited the old lady. The driver, who was on holiday near Glasgow and had to return home later in the week, was most anxious to press on, and the long drive back started at 9 p.m. The return journey was accomplished by Loch Ness and Glencoe, and it was snow and ice all the way. The WVS member had to keep the driver awake and to insist five times during the night that he should rest. They ran out of petrol once and the car had to be pushed back on to the road after refuelling. The only sustenance they had during the night was a carton of milk from a slot machine in Fort William in the 'wee sma' hours'. On arrival in Glasgow our member caught a train to Edinburgh and arrived home at 11.30 a.m. on Tuesday morning.

The Monks' Gratitude

How a little Blantyre Kirk acquired its Communion Cloth

THIS is a wonderful story of how a WVS member became possessed of a magnificent altar cloth woven by scores of monks in a monastery in North Africa, which is now the treasure of High Blantyre Baptist Church.

The saga begins in the winter of 1944, when the Eighth Army was locked in battle with the German Army in Italy. The enemy had occupied the monastery, which was now a shambles, and the starving monks were trapped in the cellars. The British finally cleared the Germans out; they were ordered to consolidate and hold on—they stayed there for weeks. The soldiers gave up part of their battle rations to the monks, shared their brews of tea, and even handed over their blankets.

When the order came to pull out, the Abbot went down to the basement and returned with a masterpiece. Woven into the altar cloth were scenes from

the life of Christ, and there was also a reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's famous picture 'The Last Supper'. This the Abbot handed over to the British officer as a token of gratitude, and the cloth started on its strange journey.

The officer sent it to our member in Britain who had sent parcels to his men. One day her son came on leave bringing with him a friend—Andrew Reid of Blantyre, Lanarkshire. He greatly admired the altar cloth, but was puzzled when his hostess said, 'One day it will be yours, Andrew.'

On the death of the owner last year, it duly became Mr. Reid's property. 'There's only one place for this,' he thought, 'and that's my wee kirk.' So this splendid symbol of generosity reposes today in a little Blantyre kirk.

It has come a long way from the Italian monastery—a long, proud journey.

Hospital work, Cambridge

CAMBRIDGE CITY recently held a meeting of WVS Hospital Helpers to celebrate their ten years' service in the Out-Patients' Canteen at Addenbrooke's Hospital. This very modern and up-to-date canteen was equipped from the profits which have shown a continuous upward trend since WVS took over full responsibility. The latest gifts from these profits are a television set for the Children's Ward, 160 trays, one carrying chair, and two geriatric chairs.

A 'Patients' Helpers Service' has also been started in the Out-Patients' Department, Addenbrooke's Hospital,

and members are kept very busy. The hospital secretary wrote to say: 'It has become increasingly apparent to us how much we do depend on the WVS ladies; so much so that if the scheme were to end the loss to the hospital would be greatly felt.'

A new hospital is in the process of being built in Cambridge and it is a big compliment to WVS that our County Borough Organiser was invited to attend a meeting of the Hospital Committee to discuss and also to help to design a canteen for this hospital, which they hope will be finished in July 1961.

REPORTS

FROM EVERYWHERE

Meals in the Bathroom

Some people in Hastings seem to eat their meals in strange places. When the door was opened at one house we were greeted with the words: 'Please take it straight up the stairs, dear, and you will find my table in the bathroom.' Another has a table all laid ready for her meal just inside the front door.

Problem Solved

An elderly widower came to Ramsgate Centre in despair as to how to hang his curtains in his new bungalow. He was suffering from severe chest trouble. A member immediately offered her help and he went off feeling very happy and relieved.

Meals-on-Chains

Terrible weather made many difficulties for members in Darwen, who got to the office by clinging on to garden walls or window sills, but no meals were missed. In the van were kept a

spade, sacks and pieces of carpet, and there were chains on the wheels. The recipients in outlying villages were astonished when in spite of the terrible conditions their dinners arrived.

An Energetic 'Joan'

At Flixton Darby and Joan Club, one 'Joan' teaches patchwork handicraft to other members whom she invites to her home. Hundreds of squares have been knitted by both the Flixton and Urmston Clubs, to be used for cases recommended by Health Visitors.

WVS 1st Bn. The Black Watch, Dhekelia

Our adopters at Paisley would have been gratified if they had been with us when six pairs of hand-knitted socks which they sent to us were raffled at a games evening with the corporals. The winners were delighted with their booty.

*Shop window
at
Alfreton
in connection
with World
Refugee Year*

*Edmund Spencer,
Alfreton*

A solemn choice at the newly opened Crèche, Peterlee

Northern Daily Mail

Twelfth Anniversary

During the first week of February, York County Borough celebrated the twelfth birthday of their Meals-on-Wheels service and were visited by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, who accompanied them for part of a round. During this period approximately 35,234 meals were served.

20,000 Garments

WVS are providing from their stocks about five tons of clothing, numbering some 20,000 garments, for Mauritius.

Another Job for the List?

After a busy day wrapping up magazines for the Forces at the Derby office, a member decided when she got home to cut her garden hedge. She did

not change out of uniform, and was clipping away when she was surprised to hear a strange voice saying: 'Well, I didn't know you could get WVS to cut your hedges for you.' The elderly gentleman was informed that, as yet, hedge trimming was not on our list of services.

Old into New

Several hundred garments have been made through the efforts of our Clothing Officer in Swindon, many from used material such as an old surplice, old nightshirts and knickers, coats and skirts faded or damaged in parts. Soiled jumpers have been unpicked and washed and knitted up into squares for blankets, vests, babies' coats and children's pullovers.

TATTOO DUTY, LISBON

WVS MEMBERS everywhere will be interested in reading of the magnificent job done by WVS Lisbon for men taking part in the Anglo-Portuguese Military Tattoo during the Trade Fair there last year.

Two canteens proved to be necessary, one at the barracks of the Guards Nacional Republicana at Ajuda, where the troops were stationed; the other, half a mile away, at the Restelo Stadium, where the Tattoo performances took place. In all the WVS had to cater for some five hundred men of the Brigade of Guards, the Scots Guards, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, the Army Physical Training School, the Marines, and the Royal Air Force.

Normally five daily shifts had to be worked from 9.30 a.m. until after midnight, three at the Barracks and two at the Stadium, over a period of twenty days (for rehearsals, the performance days, and the final clearing period). As each shift was worked by a supervisor, treasurer, housekeeper, team-leader, and four helpers, some idea may be formed of the enormous preparatory work involved and the number of volunteers required; twenty \times eight = eight hundred worker-shifts! There were one

hundred and fifty volunteers in all.

In addition to these and many other routine orders, the ladies, in the traditional WVS manner—that is, in the most imperturbable imaginable—provided baking tins, fly-killers, forty-five wash-basins, postcards, sweets, dusters, detergents, drinks for the sergeants' mess, a silver cigarette-box and lighter, and—strangest of all—coco-nut matting for horses nervous of entering the arena; developed films, made car runs to Estoril and to Fatima. They took everything in their stride, as Lady Reading would want them to do; they advised for or against meetings suggested in the *billets doux* they translated for handsome troops; they explained to eager enquirers that they had not been sent out by the NAAFI in England, had not "ditched" their husbands, would not be found later in other parts of the globe; they listened to tales of misunderstanding, comforted the lonely, and one WVS member noticed the imminent collapse of the stage "Castle" under the assault of the north wind and provided "char the wad" to rally the emergency squad working at repairs.

[NOTE: WVS, Lisbon, sent £50 to WVS Headquarters towards the World Refugee Year Fund.]

INFORMATION UNLIMITED

AS usual, with the coming of summer **WVS** undertake to staff information desks at Wimbledon and some of the many international conferences which are held each year in London. The United Nations Congress on Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders, and the International Conference on Safety of Life at Sea, are among two of the most interesting and are represented by about 800 delegates each; so that the all round knowledge of WVS in charge of information desks must be comprehensive and varied.

Complications so easily arise through

mispronunciation. On one occasion two Germans asked for seats for the 'Aldvich' Theatre. These were duly bought. On receiving their tickets that evening a look of dismay crossed their faces. Investigation proved that they had wanted tickets for the Old Vic!

Information is asked about anything, ranging from medical attention to trips on the river; the simplest route to Wimbledon to the Queen's relationship to the Stuarts. This WVS service is a very interesting one and has proved to be popular with our members.

A Personal Effort

A splendid job is being done by a member in Formby, Lincs., who calls for an old lady and pushes her at least a mile in her wheel chair to have tea with other people in her, the member's, home.

A Child's Thoughtfulness

One is always being surprised and very touched by the attitude of people towards World Refugees. A small child had obviously been watching her mother sort out some clothes to bring to the Westminster Centre. When they arrived the child handed in an envelope with some sweets enclosed. On the envelope was printed in childish writing: REFUG. These have been sent out to the WVS representative in Germany for her to give to some small child.

Service Wives Help Too

Our WVS member in Aden was successful in recruiting wives of Service

men to machine cut-out dresses for the poor children of Aden. Forty-two dresses were completed.

Action Urgent

One cold and snowy afternoon the telephone rang in Ely Centre. A luncheon had been given for buyers at a local agricultural engineering works and there was a large amount of food left including almost a whole ham on the bone and a boar's head—could we dispose of it? As the food was perishable, action was taken at once, the food being shared out into twenty-two equal parts for the Almshouses and the remainder divided between the Old People's Home and the Children's Home. Although there may have been other equally deserving cases, it was a case of 'speed in a snowstorm'. There was no member with a car available and the rather pleasing touch to the afternoon was that the taxi owner who hired the taxi for collecting the food would accept no payment.

*H.E. The Governor of
Guernsey, Vice-Admiral
Sir Geoffrey Robeson, K.B.E.,
C.B., D.S.O., D.S.C., with
some of the 1-in-5 speakers
at WVS Headquarters,
St. Peter's Port*

The Guernsey Press

A Smoke caused Smoke

WVS had an S.O.S. call for blankets from an elderly lady in Cheltenham whose own had been destroyed by fire the night before. There was no transport available, but as the matter seemed urgent the Centre Organiser started off with one blanket in her bicycle basket and another draped over her arm (which caused many smiles on the faces of passers-by). She arrived at the flat to find a burnt bed in the drive; a poor old man, who had only left hospital three days before, sitting on the couch hugging a hot-water bottle; the room quite chaotic, and the poor wife almost in a state of collapse. However, with the arrival of bedding everyone began to feel better. The moral of all this is: don't smoke in bed. The old man had fallen asleep while smoking and woke, choking, to find his bed alight.

*Mrs. McCormack
aged 95
christens the new
WVS bus
at
Welwyn Garden City*

Hertfordshire Mercury

Striptease for Refugees

Snowploughs were working outside to keep the road clear, the pavement was piled high with snow, when into the WVS office walked a man flourishing a copy of a paper giving an account of the dreadful needs of the refugees. He proceeded to hand his hat, coat and very nice pullover to the WVS member (who wondered how much more he was going to take off), and marched out in his shirt sleeves and dungarees, saying he would get others to follow his example.

Idea

Barnet Centre have a poster in their window explaining about the two refugees they have adopted, and have aroused much interest by the idea of giving excerpts from their letters.

An Enthusiastic Visitor

A young official from Northern Rhodesia, who is in England to learn something about our Local Government system, expressed a wish to hear details of our Meals-on-Wheels service and the King George VI Club in Maidenhead. He spent several hours watching the serving of the meals and inquiring about the 'Hotlock' containers, and looking over and hearing about the Club—finally joining the old people at lunch. They made a great fuss of him and he thoroughly enjoyed himself, especially when one of the old ladies reminded him that it was leap year, and when this was explained he roared with laughter. He was most impressed with all he saw, and when he returns to Northern Rhodesia he is confident that the Government will help to establish similar schemes for the many old people left behind in the village when their children and grandchildren go to their work in the plantations. He asked many questions about the financial aspect of such schemes.

Fish-and-Chip Treat

A man and his wife in Cleethorpes who own a fish restaurant thought of cheering up some of the old age pensioners by inviting 100 of them to a fish tea party. WVS were asked to bring along 70 and the rest were brought from old people's flats with their warden. It was a happy crowd who were served with piled-up plates of crisp fried fish and chips, and peas, with plenty of bread and butter. What a meal they all had! Something to talk about for weeks after—and all free. What a gift, and what friends to remember.

Generosity of a Manager and his Staff

We have the most wonderful offer by a Luton firm who have agreed to take and clean free of charge any garments for refugees brought in by customers to the shop or any we

already have in the office. To get the work done their staff offered to stay late on Thursday evenings. This is a marvellous offer and we are very deeply appreciative of the manager's generosity and kindness.

She Longs to Belong

An old lady living in Bedford, a cripple and almost blind, asks if she may be an honorary member of WVS. She takes a great interest in our work and has given us clothing and various other items. She cannot do anything physically but would like to think she is one of us.

Toffee for All

A member from Morpeth, Northumberland, made a large batch of toffee to take up to the hospital as one old person had expressed a longing for home-made toffee; the member knew the trouble it would cause if she only took enough for one.

Magazine Appeal, Aden

THIS extract is from a newsletter just received from WVS, Aden—not an appeal from a WVS Centre in Great Britain, though it might almost be one!

'The demand for magazines remains inexhaustible, their date being immaterial. Pictorial publications are especially appreciated. Although a fairly regular supply of women's periodicals is being received for distribution, there is an acute shortage of suitable material for male patients in hospital, and for the inmates for the Old Folks' Home. Arabic papers and magazines are very urgently required.

'It would be appreciated if all AWVS members would endeavour to collect their own and their friends' magazines, enlist the help of newcomers to the Colony and ask Arabs with whom they come into contact to collect Arabic publications. There may be a potentially large untapped source of supply in the various Arab Clubs and similar institutions; any periodicals which they have finished with could be used most profitably.

'Magazines are distributed (as often as the supply permits) to the Merchant Seamen's Institute, to the Red Sea Lighthouses, to the Old Folks' Home, the Prison and to all the wards of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. They give great pleasure to the sick and the old, and in particular to the T.B. and Chronic Skin Disease patients, who of necessity spend lengthy periods in hospital. The aim is to provide each patient with at least one magazine. This is not always possible but it is hoped that a concentrated drive by all AWVS members in Magazine Collection will result in an increased supply, which is essential if this aim is to be fulfilled.'

Other activities reported include the distribution of milk to children, work in the Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic, collection and distribution of empty bottles and tins, help to stranded persons with clothing and transport, visiting the blind, meeting children, interpreting and helping with Poppy Day.

*Bridlington WVS
has given two
bird-tables to a
local hospital and
the patients very
much enjoy
watching the birds
feeding*

Bridlington Free Press

Christening

Poole Centre has opened a new club, to be known as the 'WVS Darby and Joan Club (Newton)', as this area is a long way from the town clubs. The membership after four weeks is already seventy. The Leader of the Hamworthy Club created much amusement by arriving with a very nice hand-made tray. This she presented with the words: 'You do not go to a christening without a present for the baby, so here is my present for the new baby.' The gift was much appreciated.

PETS IN THE HOME

Photographic Competition

THE *Bulletin* is offering three prizes, one of £1 1s. and two of 10s. 6d., to the winners of the three most attractive photographs of their Pets. Any favourite animal from a Gun Dog to a Goldfish is eligible for the competition, so take out your cameras and 'snap' away during the next few weeks.

Photographs (which are not returnable) should reach us not later than July 8th, and the results will be announced in the September issue. Envelopes should be addressed to: The Editor, Home Page, WVS *Bulletin*, 41 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1. Names and addresses should be printed on the back of the photographs; also any caption which may be thought suitable.

Classified Advertisements

'Which?' reports impartially on the goods you may wish to buy. 'Which?' is published monthly by the Consumers' Association, an independent, non-profit-making organisation which anyone can join. All members of the Consumers' Association receive 'Which?' posted direct each month. Annual subscription only £1 to Dept. 53, 333 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

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