



WVS/WRVS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter No.7.

40th ANNIVERSARY OF WVS/WRVS

The date and place of the Service of Re-dedication which the Queen Mother has graciously agreed to attend has had to be changed. It will now be held in St. Paul's Cathedral on April 25th, 1978 at 12 noon. This will be followed by a meeting at which it is hoped Mr. Callaghan, the Prime Minister, will speak. A limited number of seats will be allocated to this Association for which there will have to be a ballot - further information will be sent to Association Members later.

WVS/WRVS ASSOCIATION

The next Annual General Meeting and reunion will be held on Wednesday 24th May at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Brompton Road, London, S.W.7.

Invitations and Agendas will be sent to all members.

REPORT ON ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1977

Another happy and very successful A.G.M and Reunion was held in London on 24th May, 250 members of the Association were present at the business meeting in the morning when Miss K.M.Halpin was enthusiastically re-elected Association Chairman with Mrs. Harris and Mrs. Haines as Hon.Secretary and Hon.Treasurer.

A delicious cold lunch and glass of wine was then served and the only criticism of the arrangements heard was "that not enough time had been allowed to find old friends and colleagues and have a good 'natter'!

The Chairman and Officers received many letters of thanks and appreciation after the meeting, to quote from one "These meetings grow bigger and better every year. It is so good to meet old friends as well as to hear what W.R.V.S. is about these days and in such very pleasant surroundings!"

OBITUARIES

We announce with regret the deaths of the following Association Members:-

The Dowager Countess Alexander of Tunis, G.B.E.

Lady Alexander joined WVS as a member of the Under Fives Section of the Evacuation Department where she remained throughout the war years. Despite her anxiety about her husband General Alexander, during the days of the evacuation from Dunkirk, she continued to work daily at WVS Headquarters.

VOLUNTARY
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SERVICE

Obituaries (contd.)Lady Alexander:

One day I was passing the lift and out came General Alexander, direct from Victoria Station and covered with mud. He just said "Where is my wife?" and you can imagine how happy I was to take him to her.

After the war Lady Alexander went to Canada when her husband then, Earl Alexander, was made Governor General, and on her return she became Vice Chairman of WVS from 1951-1953. Those who knew Maggie Alexander will always remember her as a charming person and a dedicated worker who just got on with the job in hand, and managed to smile through all difficulties of evacuating children under five, unaccompanied by their mothers, to residential nurseries in the country.

Doreen Harris.The Lady Iris Capell

Lady Iris joined WVS in 1938 as Head of the Transport Department. From 1941-1943 she became Vice-Chairman of WVS with special responsibility for transport.

During her service with WVS, Lady Iris was responsible in 1939 for the organisation of volunteer transport, to help in the evacuation of patients from London hospitals on the outbreak of war.

In 1940 she was involved in the formation of the Queen's Messenger Flying Squad Canteens and in 1942 she organised the Volunteer Car Pool (VCP), which operated throughout the war.

Obituaries (contd.)

The Lady Iris Capell (contd.)

She loved the operational side of our work but her high standard of organisation, lucidity of mind and integrity of purpose was always manifest in the administration for which she was responsible. Some London members may recall the "Revue" depicting the work and personalities in the London Region, which she wrote and produced in November 1942.

Miss C.C.Crombie, M.B.E.

Miss Crombie was the first Organiser for Camberwell where her valiant efforts during the war, and for many years after, will be remembered by many who knew and worked with her in London. When she retired she moved to Sussex where she is also remembered with affection and admiration.

Mrs. J.Curtis:

Joined County Staff, Dorset 1949 and in March 1952 was Centre Organiser for two years. In July 1957 returned to County Staff, Dorset and acted as County Organiser during several periods.

Mrs. Barbara Pearson, M.B.E.:

Mrs. Pearson was a dynamic and successful C.B.O and Regional One-in-Five Organiser until her retirement on leaving Sheffield for Brixham.

Miss Constance Marx, M.B.E.:

Miss Marx joined WVS in Bournemouth in 1939. She was a valued member of the County Borough Staff until she moved to London in 1953 and was appointed an Area Organiser for the County of London.

Obituaries (contd.)

Miss Constance Marx, M.B.E.(contd.)

She transferred to Headquarters in 1956, and worked for many years in the Personnel Department, where her conscientious welfare work was greatly valued by all members of Headquarters Staff. She was awarded the M.B.E. in 1965 and resigned owing to ill health in July 1971.

Mrs. A.I.Partington.

Mrs. Partington was Regional Clothing Officer, Region 7, and will be particularly remembered for her work in the Lynmouth floods.

Lady Carew Pole - Region 7

Lady Carew Pole was one of the original members of WVS and County Organiser for Cornwall for many years.

SILVER JUBILEE ACTIVITIES.

All Regions have been involved with Jubilee activities, in towns and villages special WRVS activities were:-

Northern Region

Northumbria Area.

Regional office organised a Jubilee Camp for Childrens Holidays.

South Eastern Region

As a contribution towards the Queen's Silver Jubilee, WRVS decided to expand the work already done for young families.

Silver Jubilee Activities (contd.)South Eastern Region (contd.)

For many years caravan holidays had been given to families under stress, but on one sight at Pevensey Bay, two of the older caravans had to be replaced. With the proceeds from the sale of these two vans, a fund was opened for the purchase of a new six-berth caravan to be called "Silver Jubilee". The response and support to this project from WRVS members was tremendous. Contributions large and small have been received, including some from Darby and Joan Clubs. During the holiday season, 21 families stayed in the "Silver Jubilee".

Through a WRVS member in London, a Southwark Charity heard of this work and purchased a second six-berth caravan and named it "Silver Birch"; this was placed alongside "Silver Jubilee", and it has been used to give holidays to needy families from London.

East Kent

Here three more Caravans were acquired and named "Celebration", "Jubilation", and "Silver Queen", and as a first priority, helped single parent families.

Southern Region

Regional Office held a Jubilee Garden Party for members of the Regional Staff, when £11.29 was raised for the Silver Jubilee Appeal.

Buckinghamshire

The County Council asked the WRVS to join a four day Exhibition, the theme of the display was "Elizabethians - the last 25 years."

Silver Jubilee (Contd.)

Hampshire

Held a Publicity Day in the County Office, with a visit from the Mayor and the Display Stands fitted up with special Jubilee items. The WRVS Riding for the Disabled Group in the New Forest, held a special Gymkhana in June.

South Western Region

Avon

An amusing incident happened during a Silver Jubilee Demonstration staged by H.M. Auxiliary Coast Guards, St. John's Ambulance Brigade and WRVS on the sea front at Clevedon.

With a large number of people watching, a maroon was duly fired. This was the signal for "man over cliffs". Auxiliary Coast Guards quickly went into action. Then another - "Two drowning" (off the famous pier with the gap in the middle). Two casualties were brought ashore and carried protesting loudly up the slip-way to receive First-Aid from St. John's, have information taken and hot tea from WRVS. At last the two bewildered men were able to make everyone understand that they had strayed into the scenario of an Exercise. WRVS had rescued the wrong casualties! Our WRVS Information Team thought "maybe illegal immigrants"? However, a good time was had by all and we were able to exercise our Information Teams and publicise our Service as well as help the Jubilee Fund.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE

NEWS FROM REGIONS

LONDON REGION

A Buffet lunch is being planned for Association members living in London.

During the year there have been many demands on WRVS and the London Boroughs have helped with the following "large feeds"

April

200 Maundy Money recipients were served with coffee and biscuits in the Chapter House after the Westminster Abbey Service.

Later that month 700 Old Age Pensioners of Westminster London Borough were served tea, sandwiches scones and cake in the Cloisters following a Service in the Abbey.

May

600 members of the Dunkirk Veterans Association and their families, were served tea, sandwiches, scones and cake in the Drill Hall of the Honorary Artillery Company, following the annual reunion.

June

On Jubilee Day 250 packed lunches were prepared and distributed to members of the St. John Ambulance Brigade on duty on the route in the City.

At the end of the month, 2,000 packed boxed lunches were prepared and served to members of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, in Smithfield Market, prior to their Centenary Service in St. Paul's Cathedral.

London Region (contd.)

July

A cold supper of meat, salad, sweets, cheese and biscuits was prepared and served in the Westminster Abbey Cloisters for 700 persons, who were attending the Musical evening in the Abbey, arranged by Women's Caring Trust.

August

Two contingents of the American Youth Band, 120 at each session, were fed with tea, CocoCola, biscuits, scones and cake from our Mobile Canteen Van. At lunch-time we were at the rear of St. Paul's Cathedral, and after a quick replenishing of stocks at the Regional Office, we were in Hyde Park at tea-time.

SOUTH EASTERN REGION

Held a Silver Jubilee Reunion in July, sixty Association Members were present, including five new Members and Members of the Regional Staff, who served wine, cold buffet and coffee. After lunch, the R.A. told Association members of the National Plans for our 40th Anniversary and gave Regional news. Members then enjoyed a short entertainment given by two Tunbridge Wells members. Unfortunately the Regional Representative had to leave in the middle of the party, and so could not discuss (as she had intended) the place and date of the next meeting. Somewhere in East Surrey has been suggested, which would be near enough to East and West Sussex and West Kent members. Please send her your suggestions and ideas.

WALES

Twelve non-active members of Rhyl WVS were invited to join active WRVS at the Rhyl Centre for tea and entertainment. Transport was laid on and as each individual arrived they were welcomed by the present members and taken to their special seat next to their colleagues. As each one arrived it was a touching scene, many had not met since their active days. Tears and smiles and reminiscences seemed to be the order of the day. Many members brought along old photographs and one member produced a diary of events that were held at the start, to start the 'Club for the Elderly'. Prices were mentioned, how they knitted dish-cloths and sold them to buy the first tea-pot, and a few items of crockery. What a happy chatting time they had - What had become of so-and-so, and what a difference they saw in the "Service", and they were so pleased that the WRVS Trolley paid them a call and kept in touch.

The Members of the Rhyl Club for the Elderly brought a lovely cake with "Welcome WVS Ladies" on it in green and maroon icing. Mrs. Wells, of Wales Staff, spoke on the WVS/WRVS Association and Mrs. Edwards, County Organiser, explained how they could join the Association. After tea, a special entertainment was given by the Club Choir and Keep Fit Team. Everyone joined in the community singing. A good time was had by all and 18 new members joined the Association.

Mrs. D. Hughes, the County Personnel Officer, thanked everyone for coming and many of the guests spoke of their sincere appreciation.

REUNIONSSouth Western Region.

A Reunion of Association members was held in Gloucester County Office on October 10th, by kind invitation of Mrs. Morris, the County Organiser, she and Mrs. Littlewood were responsible for providing a Ploughman's Lunch. This was a delightfully arranged repast, and included a choice of wine or cider.

Mrs. Littlewood has taken over the Association County Administration for Gloucestershire and, due to her efforts, the membership has increased from seven to twenty. Seventeen members attended the "Get-together" and we were honoured by the presence of Miss Halpin, the Chairman of the Association. One and all expressed their appreciation of the decision to hold meetings at County level.

The Regional Representative gave a report on the Annual General Meeting held last May and Miss Halpin spoke on future projects for the Association and gave details of the forthcoming fortieth Anniversary celebrations.

It is proposed to arrange another "Get-together" in the early Summer - hopefully a 'garden-based' one.

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS.

There can be no set pattern for Association Meetings but it would help Regional Representatives in planning meetings if members would suggest (a) time of year, (b) day of week, (c) time of day, (d) venue for Regional "Get togethers". Also ideas as to the form the meeting should take.

Association meetings (contd.)

Please write with your good ideas to your Regional Representative as they are apt to get discouraged when only a few members are interested despite much careful planning and hard work!

COMPETITIONS

1. 'Competition without a Prize'

There were seven entries, and the winner was Mrs. V.Hanson, born 1880 - 97 years. Joined at Seaford, Sussex in 1939. Also worked in Camberwell and Cirencester. There was a prize after all! Mrs. Hanson says "I hope you will thank the Association for doing me such an honour and tell them that their first Hon.Life Member will try to do them credit".

The entrants ages were 97, 91, 87, 82, 81 and two of 79 years.

2. New Competition.

A suggestion from a member: "The members who actually served with WRVS in the war are now a small percentage and will obviously get smaller. Younger members are interested in hearing some of the amusing incidents that happened to us."

If you have a Wartime WVS Amusing Incident that happened to you, write it down and send it in to the Hon.Secretary by the 1st March 1978.

The winning entry will be published in the next Newsletter.

WOMEN'S ROYAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS 1977

O.B.E.

Mrs. Beryl Maxwell,
Co-Ordinator, Welfare Services. Headquarters

M.B.E.

Mrs. Elizabeth Piddock
Metropolitan District
Organiser, Dudley Region 9

Mrs. Edith Block
London Borough Organiser London
Southwark Region

Mrs. Marjorie Edge
Metropolitan District
Organiser, Salford Region 10

Mrs. Peggy James
County Organiser, Humberside
North, North Yorkshire and
Humberside area. Region 2.

Mrs. Joyce Hooper
District Organiser,
Hove, Sussex. Region 5.

B.E.M

Mrs. Jessie Battersby
Head of Supplies Dept. Headquarters

Mrs. Caroline Mary Cangley
Clothing Organiser, Bootle Region 10

Mrs. Kathleen Eves,
Local Organiser, Workington,
Cumbria, Durham & Cleveland
Area. Region 1.

Mrs. Vivienne Johnson,
Borough Staff, Westminster. London Region.

B.E.M.
(contd.)

Mrs. Joan Peachey
Local Organiser,
Buckingham Rural

Region 6.

Mrs. Joan Mabel
Phillips
Member, Bideford County
Area, Tottridge District Region 7

Mrs. Elsie Muriel Sale
Old People's Welfare
Organiser, County of
Warwickshire. Region 9

Mrs. Mary Vick,
District Organiser
Welwyn/Hatfield,
Herts,
Southern Area Region 4.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Mrs. Betty Hartnoll, who will be remembered
by WVS/WRVS in Tavistock, Devon, has now moved
to the following address:-

She would welcome letters from any of her
colleagues as she is most anxious to keep in
touch with her old friends and also to be kept
up-to-date with the present activities of
WRVS.