

VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

hail



WVS/WRVS ASSOCIATION

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

NEWSLETTER No.12

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL MAY 1980
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

WVS/WRVS ASSOCIATION

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

17, Old Park Lane, London W1Y 4AJ - Tel: 01-499 6040

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

President

THE BARONESS PIKE OF MELTON

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

Chairman

MISS KATHLEEN HALPIN, C.B.E.

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

Hon. Secretary

Mrs. Isola Wren

Hon. Treasurer

Miss Freda Cooper

Members of Committee 1979-1980

Miss Enid Cubitt, O.B.E. Miss Margaret Hamilton, M.B.E.

Miss Jose Duke, M.B.E. Mrs. Doreen Harris, O.B.E.

Mrs. Dilys Gloin Miss Rita Lewis, M.B.E.

Mrs. Doris Moss, O.B.E. Mrs. Mary Wilkinson

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

Area Representatives are "ex officio"
members of the Committee

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

Editor of Newsletter

Mrs. Doris Moss, O.B.E.

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE
MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, LADY PIKE,
CHAIRMAN WRVS

1979 was an eventful year and in spite of many difficulties, both WRVS and WVS/WRVS Association made very encouraging progress.

At the beginning of the year severe weather and industrial disruption tested our Service to the utmost, and the fact that we came through with flying colours made us all the more determined to look critically at our weak spots and to learn from any shortcomings that were revealed. The result is that our services to the community are now even more firmly based and ready for any emergency.

Recent international events have highlighted the need for constant vigilance and we are determined to continue to build up the strength of our Emergency Services. This will be our main pre-occupation in 1980.

1979 was the International Year of the Child and so we put particular emphasis on our work with children. Scotland was very successful with their increased number of camps for handicapped children and once again they led the way in the expansion of this side of our work.

1979 was also a year in which many new schemes of work were started but, as ever in WRVS, we were not too surprised to find that nothing was really new; someone, somewhere had already been quietly developing a similar scheme for years!

The year ahead will not be easy but the Service has never been in better heart to live up to its watchword "Not why we can't but how we can."

Mervyn Pike

THE CHANGING FACE OF VOLUNTARISM

Mrs. Lynda Chalker, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Security, recently spoke at a WRVS Advisory Council, in place of the Secretary of State who was unable to be present. We think that members will be interested in what she said with regard to the place of voluntary organisations in society today.

The transition from the 1970s to the 1980s was much more than a change in the calendar. She thought that when we looked back in a few years time we would recognise that it marked a watershed in our attitudes to the growth of the public sector and the relative roles of the public and voluntary sectors in the social field.

The WRVS had itself played an indelible part in the history of voluntary service in this country in both war and peace; and the bodies on its Advisory Council represented virtually every sphere of community service. Many of these bodies had reached out to people who were lonely and we should not underestimate the contribution of friendship from involvement in community service.

In a time of great economic difficulty the Government was forced to cut back on public expenditure. The social services could not be totally exempt from these cuts. In fact central Government grants to Social Services projects totalled over £6 million this year and would be over £7 million next year. A great deal of good came from our being forced to look again at our social services. The enormous growth in public services during the late 1960s and early 1970s did not cure our ills. Poverty remained. Homelessness, alcoholism, drug addiction persisted. Disquiet grew about our education system. Crime increased.

More and more people were saying that we could not look to the State to solve our problems for us, and that in a democratic society the citizen should be able to play a more active part in the community. In some of the most difficult social fields the greatest successes had come from the pioneering efforts of

voluntary bodies. For instance, on Merseyside combined Church groups were doing effective work in the field of alcoholism.

Mrs. Chalker said she should perhaps have called her talk 'The Changing Faces of Voluntarism'. One was struck not only by the size of the voluntary sector, but also by its diversity. She could identify at least four faces of voluntarism and wanted to say something about each of them.

1. The Major National Voluntary Bodies: many of them operating nationwide and increasingly sustained by grants from central and local government. They should be thinking seriously about increasing their professionalism, their accountability and their operational efficiency generally. Those who invested in them were not looking for a profit, but they were looking for a good investment and responsible use of public money. A good service could save money and make better use of resources.

Secondly, these national voluntary bodies had to be prepared to work more closely with each other and the statutory authorities, and had to plan their services so as to involve more people and not just their pockets. All this meant that they must provide basic training. Above all they must keep their innovative capacity and avoid becoming an alternative bureaucracy.

2. The Individual Volunteer: volunteers working in hospitals and community health services, in social services departments and in the probation service. This form of volunteering was growing fast, but it was a delicate plant which required nurturing. We must try to attract an ever wider cross section of the community into voluntary service, and we must cut down on wastage among volunteers by increasing 'job-satisfaction' and fulfilment. We must be prepared to switch volunteers between jobs and give them guidance as to the job they were to undertake so that they did not become either bored or disheartened. This was not easy but we might begin by moving those who were plainly square pegs in round holes.

Mrs. Chalker was impressed by the work of the

Volunteer Centre and their Bureaux in this context. They really did try to match the volunteer to the task.

3. The Local Voluntary Agency: some of them attached to a national body, some unattached, but characteristically providing support for a particular client group. Many of their problems were the same as those of the national voluntary bodies, but their finances were often more precarious and they often depended on the leadership of one or two outstanding individuals.

A new source of support was to be found among people who had retired early or older employees seconded by their firms, which thus demonstrated a corporate social responsibility and often avoided having to make redundancies. This could be an untapped source of expertise and business efficiency. Sometimes firms lent or gave equipment rather than personnel.

The Government hoped that local authorities would not withdraw support from local voluntary agencies, which were helping some of the most vulnerable people in the community. Local authorities could help not only with grants but in a practical way with premises, with professional advice etc.

4. Local Informal Groups: neighbourhood groups, self-help groups, groups based on Churches, on clubs, on pubs. Examples were legion. For instance, there was Diana Law and her work for stroke sufferers. Some self-help groups were banding together for research, fund raising etc.

The Government's task was to facilitate these movements, to provide a climate in which they could flourish. This was not an easy task. Her Department would continue its high level of grant-aid to voluntary bodies. It could do more by way of research and disseminating information. But at the end of the day the future of voluntarism was in our own hands.

REPORTS FROM ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES

London Region

There have been no Association meetings held during the winter months. In November Mrs. Kaye Barker from HQ was

appointed Regional Administrator in place of Mrs. Shirley Becke who is, however, remaining as Vice-Chairman of WRVS. It may be of interest to know that London Emergency Services, augmented by other members, fed 35,000 people and members of the police, who were taking part in the Lord Mayor's Show. London Boroughs are still busy settling in Vietnamese refugees but the main clothing store for them in Kensington Church Street has now been closed.

Northern Area and
East Midland Region - Southern Area - Joint Meeting

A buffet lunch was held on 26th March 1980 at the East Midlands Airport Castle Donington, followed by a tour of the National Westminster Bank Computer Centre at Kegworth.

Derbyshire's Annual Meeting is to be held on 2nd July in the Pavilion Gardens, Buxton from 2-5 p.m. Tea will be served. It has been suggested that members might like to come in the morning when there will be an opportunity to take advantage of the many and varied facilities available.

South Eastern Region met only once last year but the prospects for 1980 are good. The next "get-together" will take place on Thursday 22nd May. Mrs. Swingland of Igham Warren, has offered the use of her house. Further details can be obtained from Miss J. Barnard, Glebe House, Goudhurst, Kent -

Southern Region

There is no Area Representative at present but Mrs. Simpkins and Miss Hilda Gammon are building up a Hampshire Group.

South Western Region - Eastern Area

Twenty-four members of the Avon County Group of the Association attended a "get-together" on 4th December at the Area Office in Bristol. A showing of the film strip "40 Years On" was much appreciated. After a ploughman's lunch, the meeting was given over to the usual WRVS "chatter" as friends met friends to talk about experiences past and present.

Gloucestershire's meeting was held on 5th February

at the County Office. The County Home Help Organiser gave an enthralling talk on "Home Helps Internationally". She took her audience into the homes of people in foreign countries and helped them to understand domestic problems, so like those experienced in this country. This was contributed to by the members themselves, who were delighted to welcome Dame Frances Clode and the South Western Representative, Mrs. K. Barker.

Somerset members held an informal meeting on 24th March, arranged by Mrs. Wigfield.

WALES

South Glamorgan This group had five meetings in the second half of the year including a visit to St. Fagan's Folk Museum, a meeting at the County Office, when the County Organiser gave an interesting talk on "WRVS TODAY" and in December a lunch was held at the Bluebell Hotel, St. Mellons.

Mid-Glamorgan are aiming at having monthly "get-togethers", the first of which took place in August at Howells, Cardiff, when members met for morning coffee and a chat. The September meeting followed the same pattern but in October South Glamorgan group were invited to join in a meeting at County Office. In December members met for a pub lunch.

Clwyd

Wrexham Maelor Group meeting in October heard an account of his year of office from Councillor Wright, ex-Mayor, followed by songs from soloist, Mrs. Jarvis.

West Midland Region

Members in Birmingham attended a coffee morning when suggestions were made for future outings. These included a Christmas lunch, trips to the Potteries and Glass Works and even a trip down a disused mine. (Editor's comment: It would be interesting to hear more about these, please.)

North Western Region

Areas 1, 2 and 3 held a joint meeting on 4th March, the first since the Region has been divided into Areas.

Mrs. Linton, Organiser for Area 3, after giving details of the reorganisation, said that Mrs. Mary Preston had been appointed Representative for Area 3, i.e. Cheshire and Merseyside, and that it was hoped to appoint representatives for the other two Areas in the near future. Although similar meetings are to be held, probably at District level, it was decided that all three Areas should get together annually, preferably in early March.

All the District Organisers have been asked to remind members, especially those long-serving ones, of the Association and encourage them to become members. They were also asked if they could arrange for active members to visit the retired and to report back to the Representative any action they think should be taken.

SCOTLAND

Mrs. Veronica Crabbie, Chairman of the Scottish Section of the Association reports a membership of over 100 members and that two Regional Reunions, one in Tayside and the other in Strathclyde have been held. She feels that these meetings should be encouraged for two reasons: (i) the cost of ever increasing travel and (ii) when members attend Reunions they like to hear from active members about present day and local activities, as well as WRVS as a national body.

She wonders what steps are taken South of the Border to publicise the Association. The Scottish Chairman sends a leaflet about the Association to everyone resigning a Headquarters appointment (unless they are already members). Regional Organisers are encouraged to do the same to people resigning local appointments, although it is realised that information will not get through to the member who holds no appointment.

Mrs. Crabbie, who as most readers know, was the Chairman of Scotland, adds that she strongly recommends the "Open University" to anyone who wonders what to do on retirement. She says, 'Age does not matter and after three (successful) years, I find my powers of concentration are not diminishing and my memory is improving. I started when I was 66 and know of one of our members who has just completed her first year at 76! It takes 6 years to get a Degree but for those with lesser ambitions there

are many Associate Student Courses which are exactly the same as the Degree Courses with the same tutorials etc. but which can be done in one year.'

The addresses for further information are: for Undergraduate Courses: The Undergraduate Admissions Officer, The Open University, P.O.Box 48, and for Associate Students: The Associate Students Central Office, The Open University, P.O.Box 76 - both at Milton Keynes MK7 6AB.

AMENDMENTS TO LIST OF ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES IN NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 1979 - PAGE 24

LONDON REGION

Mrs. J. Sanderson,

ADD -

NORTH WESTERN REGION - Mrs. M.J. Preston,

AREA 3 - CHESHIRE AND

MERSEYSIDE

(New Area Representative)

"GREENSLEEVES"

As a result of the sale of this book by Mrs. Bentley Beauman, a donation of £100 has been made to the WRVS Benevolent Trust.

"MYSELF WHEN YOUNG"

A selection of Lady Iris Capell's writings, together with notes on her fascinating life has been published privately.

Lady Iris was Vice-Chairman in WRVS from 1941-1943. Miss Halpin has a few copies of the book "Myself When Young" which she will gladly lend to any members who may care to read it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We should welcome some letters to the Editor. Kindly send -

c/o WVS/WRVS Association Newsletter,
WRVS Headquarters.

AT RANDOM

Shankar's International Children's Competition

Vanessa Goodfellow of Coquet County High School, South Broomhill, Northumbria, not content with her success last year, won a prize again this year for her composition. The Competition Committee had decided to mark the International Year of the Child with all winners being taken to Delhi to receive their prizes from Miss Shankar herself. London Region escorted Vanessa, who was one of only two prize winners from Great Britain, across London.

Challenges Accepted

Prescription Service

When the local chemist's shop, which had served Halstead and Badger's Mount (Sevenoaks, Kent) was closed, it became obvious that someone should organise a Prescription Service for elderly and urgent cases. The Lions Club donated £10 towards making a start and the local WRVS Organiser accepted the challenge. Twenty volunteers were recruited which meant one duty per four weeks. Prescriptions which have to be left at one of the two Post Offices by 12 noon are collected by the volunteer, taken to the chemist and delivered back to the patient. A collection box is available in the Post Office if anyone wishes to contribute towards petrol expenses.

Welfare for the Disabled

An exciting new project mooted in 1978 came to fruition in 1979 when a Day Centre for the elderly and disabled was opened in Ysalyfera, Lliw Valley East, West Glamorgan. This was an area where membership had lapsed for many years and it was a great challenge when WRVS were asked by Social Services to set up and "man" this centre. With the help of an experienced member from another District and a male member of County Staff acting as chauffeur, this project got off to a flying start.

Meetings of the members of local chapels, churches and Women's Institutes were called; wonderful assistance was given from one particular chapel and the Women's Institute. The centre has gone from strength to strength, now having thirty five members and a lengthy waiting list.

The chapel members involved have received their membership talks and together with a rota of W.I. members are undertaking the responsibility of running the club. Main meals are supplied from a nearby Old People's Home. Entertainment and talks are arranged, outings organised and the general atmosphere is one of great happiness and contentment.

Follow Up to Reports given in April 1979 Newsletter

York Floods

Great demands were made during the floods on York District which have been handsomely recognised for their work by the Lord Mayor's Flood Relief Fund. They have recently received a van and £2,000 of emergency equipment so are well prepared for the future. It is amazing how an emergency or interesting exercise inspires enthusiasm and encourages training.

Victim Support Schemes

Several of these clubs, based on a successful scheme started in Hampshire at the request of the County Constabulary, have now been opened.

In all cases help, whether practical or the provision of a friend, is given only at the request of the police. Gloucestershire's scheme has been featured in recent press cuttings; the Daily Telegraph reported that Mr. Charles Irving, M.P. for Cheltenham and Chairman of the County Social Services Committee and Inspector Jack Critchley, County Crime Prevention Officer, had both welcomed the scheme. The former, who is also the Chairman of NACRO, the body which helps to rehabilitate offenders said, 'For a long time we have been offering assistance to the people who commit crimes but not to the victims. I think it is a long overdue move.'

Speech After Stroke Clubs

There are now three Speech After Stroke Clubs in Newcastle-upon-Tyne Metropolitan District - two first-stage, where their programme is based on Therapeutic Word Games, reading from the local Newsletter and exercises in the morning followed by table games in the afternoon. In the second-stage club the club members read from the National newspapers and debate on same; this is followed

by exercises before lunch. The afternoon is reserved for hobbies which include Tapestry, Cane Work, Soft Toy making, Typing, Gardening and Oil Painting. One club member with no previous experience in the Arts has made so much progress that he has orders for his paintings and regularly attends Evening Art Classes.

Unusual Gifts

Southern Area reported that the British Hovercraft Corporation has built for WRVS a fine collapsible light-weight trolley which can be carried upstairs and folded away, so enabling patients to have a new Trolley Shop.

A Town Clerk gave WRVS £25 to spend on the town's adopted frigate "HMS PHEOBE". They delivered a parcel of goods and were invited to join the ship for a day's sea trials. An exhilarating experience they casually said - with Force 9 gales in the Channel.

Family (and School) Support

One of our clothing team - Wolverhampton Met. District - spent a great deal of time in getting a good uniform and smart shoes for a boy with school phobia. Knowing the boy's problems, members were surprised to hear him say, "Smashing - can I wear the shoes for school tomorrow?". As the Education Welfare Officer said, these efforts had done the boy more good than weeks of work at the Child Guidance Clinic.

LORD KEEP ME IN MY WITS

My useless hands, though perfect tools
For writing, drawing, knitting, yes and planting things
Lie idle in my lap, because my eyes shrouded in grey
can no longer guide and direct them

so be it

But for my useful mind, I thank thee Lord
For sense of words and wit and memories to tell
For love of lovely sounds of music
For laughter and kind friends who bring me food
For scent for sun-warmed roses by the door
So much is still left to be thankful for,
But keep me in my wits Lord, till the end.

Contributed by a blind 90 year old meals recipient.

OBITUARIES

Mrs. Merle Houghton (Erickson)

A great many WVS/WRVS members will be saddened to hear the news of Merle's sudden death last December. Merle had been a close friend of our family since before the war but I nearly lost her to WVS. She rang me up in 1939 asking to join, but knowing she had an American passport, I said that she might not be eligible. She assured me that through her marriage to an Englishman she had dual nationality. From 1941 to 1943 she worked for WVS in London as Assistant Group Administrator. She became London Regional Administrator from March 1947 to July 1963 and later transferred to Headquarters where she served in several capacities, first as Personnel Officer and finally as Secretary to the WRVS Advisory Council. She had great charm and the valuable power of infecting others with her enthusiasm. After her husband's death she returned to the United States and later married an American, Eric Erickson. Merle was in England last August, when she met a number of her old WRVS friends but soon after her return to the United States she suffered a fatal heart attack.

Doreen Harris

Miss B.H. Pollen

Beanie, after a long illness bravely borne, died in January. Many members will remember her for the capable and kindly service she gave in London Region for 20 years (1947-1967) first as Transport Organiser and then in the Clothing Section and later in the Childrens Department at Headquarters, working with Joyce Meekins, her staunch and devoted friend for so many years. Our sympathy goes to Joyce for her great loss.

We are sorry to learn since the publication of our last Newsletter of the deaths of the following members -

Miss D.M. Beaton, M.B.E.,
Blackburn.

Miss O.D. Clarke, Huntingdon.

Mrs. P.M. Davies, Abergavenny.

Mrs. A.B.M. Drake,
Westcliff-on-Sea.

Miss D. Favell, Leamington Spa.

Mrs. W. Higginson, Manchester.

Mrs. Mills, Strensall,
N. Yorks.

Mrs. A. Rees, Macclesfield.

Mrs. E.C. Smith, Farnham,
Surrey.

Miss L.M. Turner, Devizes.

NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST

Congratulations are extended to the following -

- O.B.E. The COUNTESS of FEVERSHAM - Headquarters
WRVS Vice-Chairman, County Organiser -
North Yorkshire.
- M.B.E. Mrs. Enid CHANDLER - South Western Region,
Area 2. Chairman - Belmont Residential
Home.
- Mrs. Margaret HARRISON - North Western Region,
Area 1. Organiser - Stockport Metropolitan
District.
- Mrs. Muriel HARRISON - East Midland Region,
Northern Area - District Organiser, Derby.
- Mrs. G.T. SCOTT - Scotland - lately Organising
Secretary, Strathclyde Region.
- B.E.M. Mrs. Winifred Ann HARWOOD - West Midland Region,
Southern Area - Member Hereford & Worcester.
Lately Food Organiser, West Midland Region.
- Mrs. Ivy KELLETT - East Midland Region, Southern
Area - Co-ordinator, Emergency Services,
Leicester and Leicestershire.
- Mrs. Nancy MILBURN - Northern Region, Northumbria
Area. Clothing Organiser, Newcastle District.
- Mrs. Doris Mary O'MAHONEY - Eastern Region,
Northern Area. Member, lately District
Organiser, Great Yarmouth.
- Mrs. Mabel Valerie READ - London Region -
Assistant to London Borough Organiser,
Camden and Islington.
- Mrs. Ellen WHITTLE - Headquarters Staff,
Assistant, Statistics Department.
- Mrs. Mona WILKINSON - North Eastern Region, N.
Yorkshire & Humberside Area - Local
Organiser Cleethorpes, South Humberside.

VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1980

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

The Annual General Meeting and Reunion

Holy Trinity Church Hall, Brompton Road, London SW7

Wednesday, June 4th

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

Invitation with full details enclosed

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE