

Bayswater Boys' Home No. 2., The Basin.

On 24.8.65 a visit was made to the above home by Mrs. D. Jaggs and Mrs. R. Lipsys. Following a discussion with the Manager, we were shown over the buildings and had a brief look over the adjoining school. Six of the boys were interviewed.

CAPACITY. At the present time there are 63 boys in this Home, 50 of whom live in two large dormitories while 13 reside in the neighbouring family cottage. All the children are Wards of State, with ages ranging from 7 to 15 years. The Home is filled to capacity and there are no plans for extension. Most of the boys have been in trouble with the Police and are educationally or mentally retarded. There are five boys who suffer from epileptic attacks. The Manager, Captain Kirkham said that the Home will not be able to admit any more epileptics as the staff is neither skilled nor adequate in number to handle such problems.

STAFF.

Captain Kirkham is the Manager and has been at this home for about 3 months. Before his transfer to Bayswater he worked as an administrative secretary to Col. Stevenson. He admits that he really prefers administration to managership. He is in his late 30's, a short, active and talkative man who impressed as an able organizer and administrator. He is getting to know the children and seems to be a shrewd observer. Together with his wife and their two children he resides in a cottage next to the main building.

Assistant Captain Swift assists Captain Kirkham in the general running of the Home.

Envo^{can}y Collins is a single man in his sixties who befriends the boys has been at Bayswater for many years being "part of the place". He seems a simple, kindly man, himself an ex-institutional boy.

Matron Major Carmichael is an elderly woman-impressed as rather colourless and dried up spinster.

Assistant Matron - Mrs. Moyer.

Cottage parents - are Mr. and Mrs. Hutchins who look after the cottage of 13 children. In addition there is Mrs. Morse the cook, Mrs. Seville the cleaner and Mrs. Dunn with Mrs. Harrison who do the laundry. Some voluntary helpers come in during the day to help with general duties. Only one person is on night duty.

Staff turnover has been fairly great in recent months and Captain Kirkham is experiencing difficulty in finding suitable staff.

Leave arrangements seem, by our standards, to be insufficient. The staff get one day and one weekend off per month.

ACCOMMODATION. The Home is rather isolated from the community and situated in scenic surroundings at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges.

The main building contains the reception area, interviewing room, a spacious kitchen with an oil stove. The dining room is quite pleasant. The recreation room is very depressing and cheerless, with rows of uncomfortable chairs used for Church services and T.V. watching. A small gym has no playing equipment except for a few balls. A "hobbies room" contains an enormous and magnificently laid out train set which is not to be touched by an

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authorized person. There is little the boys can do there, except watch the trains.

Toilet facilities are ample, but there is no privacy. The dormitories contain two long rows of 25 beds each. There is practically no space for private belongings and these are kept in lockers next to the bathrooms. There does not seem to be any private space where a child can be alone. There are no facilities for studying or reading.

The cottage was not seen.

RECREATION. There is ample space room for recreation outside, but no organized sports are played. A newly constructed open swimming pool is greatly appreciated by the boys and is used even in winter. As stated before, there is little organized activity for the boys after school hours.

EDUCATION. Across the road from the Home stands the Special School where nearly all the boys attend. Mr. Spencer, the Headmaster has been working there for about 13 years. He is very interested in the boys and does an excellent job. The school is divided into 4 classrooms which have boys of all ages who are classified according to their abilities and needs. There are hobby rooms, good gym equipment and organized activity sessions which probably make up, to some extent, for this deficiency in the institution itself. Gardening is done by the boys themselves and the school recently won the prize for having the best kept garden. Three brothers attend the Basin High School.

RECORDS have been neglected in the past but Captain Kirkham has started a file for each child. There is also a card index on his desk for quick reference. A visitors book has been in operation for about 3 months.

MEDICAL. The institution relies on the school medical and dental services and a local doctor is used for emergencies. There is no sick room as it is at present being occupied by three brothers. Anaesthetic consent is understood.

DISCIPLINE, according to Captain Kirkham has not been a problem and there has only been one absconding in the past three months.

CHORES. Do not appear to be excessive and all the boys make their own beds and are rostered for small duties.

LAUNDRY. is done on the premises by two women.

FOOD supply, in variety is hard to assess and none of the children made any complaints. They all looked well fed and healthy.

POCKET MONEY has not been given in the past, but Captain Kirkham is pressing for this and only recently the boys have been getting 1/- per week.

VISITING by parents is most welcome and encouraged. Visiting day is once per week and most boys spend monthly weekends at home or with holiday hosts. There is considerable flexibility to suit the parents. There are no means of keeping closely in touch with siblings in other institutions.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENT appears to be most cordial and we were cordially received. The functions of the Department are well understood. Captain Kirkham has been in agreement with the few home releases that have been effected since he became the Manager.

IMPRESSIONS. The Salvation Army Boys' Home serves well its function as a short-term correctional institution, with good educational facilities for the mentally or educationally retarded child. Physical conditions are satisfactory though there seems to be a lack of a relaxing - homely lounge and a few spaces where a boy can be alone. A larger and improved hobbies room seems necessary.

Captain Kirkham impresses as an able administrator and has a hard job running the institution on a small staff. He badly needs assistance with secretarial work.

Lipsys
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(R. Lipsys),
Social Worker,
Children's Homes Section,
27.9.65.

Mr. Hughes:

*Seen W R Hughes
14/1/66*

The Director

*Seen AB
25/1/66*

Mr Hughes