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7,000 Children  
In Her 'Family'

FEB 14 1960

Thomas 103

By AUDREY FECHT

The young widow said she wanted to make children's care her life's work, but she did not want to begin her career that day, Friday the 13th.

Her services as a baby's nurse at the Louise D. Shugard Shelter and Day Nursery were urgently needed, however, and she began immediately. That was 35 years ago. Now superintendent, Mrs. Florence M. Elwood considers Friday the 13th a wonderful day.

She recalled with a smile, "I was younger and sillier then."

Since 1925 Mrs. Elwood estimates that she has helped care for at least 7,000 youngsters. Superintendent for 15 years, she lives at the agency's headquarters, 317 Elm St. in the Ironbound.

**SHE IS USED** to being called any hour of the night to welcome a youngster, often abandoned or neglected and brought by the police to the shelter. The shelter can serve up to 18 children ranging in age from infancy through 3 years.

The shelter is separate from the day nursery which serves 65 youngsters aged 2 through 10 from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. five days a week. Depending on how early the children arrive, some are given breakfast. All receive a hot lunch and afternoon snack. The older youngsters attend Ann Street School two blocks away.

Many children "grow up" at the nursery, as Mrs. Elwood explains it, and never forget either the agency or her. One alumnus who became a minister insisted that the kindly gray-haired superintendent attend his wedding in Massachusetts. When she had to refuse because of the long and difficult trip, the young man had his parents drive her there. He introduced Mrs. Elwood to everyone as his "second mother."

**ONLY A FEW** weeks ago a lonely Marine wrote from Okinawa recalling the thrill he used to get as a youngster when Santa Claus called out his name to receive a present at nursery Christmas parties.

Alumni with families of their own still turn to Mrs. Elwood for help with personal problems. But they also do their best to help her and the agency.

For example, Miss Elizabeth

Nessler, now a teacher and daughter of a past president of the agency's Mothers' Club, helped form the Junior Auxiliary and has become its first president.

**IN 35 YEARS** of service Mrs. Elwood has had little time to herself, because of family matters.

"The children," she explains, "have become my family."

# 200 Join in Program Marking Shugard Nursery's 50th Year

By JOSEPHINE BONOMO

Children and grown-ups joined yesterday in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Louise D. Shugard Shelter and Day Nursery at an open house program.

Two hundred persons visited the institution at 317 Elm St., which provides day care for children of working mothers and temporary shelter for homeless youngsters.

Mrs. A. Edward Zellers, president of the board of managers; Miss Grace Groom, president of the auxiliary and Mrs. Florence P. Elwood, superintendent, greeted guests and conducted them through the building.

Among those present was Mrs. Carl A. Giese of 537 Prospect St., Maplewood, who was one of the board members when the agency was founded.

The visitors inspected the newly decorated quarters and watched the children at play.

An oil painting of Miss Louise B. Shugard, president of the board for 34 years until her death in 1951, was placed in the reception room. The agency was renamed four years ago in honor of Miss Shugard.

## First Fee 5 Cents

Third oldest day nursery in Newark, the institution opened Oct. 17, 1905, in two small, rented rooms at 555 Market St. It was first known as the Market St. Day Nursery. On the opening day, three children were enrolled at a fee of five cents a day.

The enrollment grew rapidly. In 1907, a frame house at 71 Merchant St., large enough to accommodate 25 children, was bought. This became known as the East Side Day Nursery, a name it retained for the next 43 years.

By 1913, the daily attend-

ance had increased to 52 children and ground was bought in Elm St. Four years later, the first of the present buildings was completed.

The fall of 1918 the influenza epidemic changed the nursery's program almost overnight. The disease took the lives of many young mothers and there was desperate need for a home for orphaned tots. The nursery reorganized its program and the shelter for homeless children was established.

## House Purchased

In a short time, the shelter was caring for 41 motherless children ranging in age from a few weeks to eight years. An additional house at 315 Elm St. was purchased to serve as a nurses' home for the increased staff.

The need for the shelter continued after the epidemic subsided and it remained a permanent part of the institution. A separate building was constructed in 1927 on

the site of the nurses' home to provide more space for care of the children. A new nurses' home was purchased at 313½ Elm St. It continues to function both as a shelter and a day nursery.

The nursery opens at 7 a.m. to care for 68 children from 18 months to 10 years old. Breakfast is served to some and all receive a hot meal at noon and an afternoon snack. The younger children remain at the nursery all day, playing and resting under the supervision of trained workers. School-age youngsters are escorted to and from school and are cared for at the nursery after school until their parents call for them at 5:30 p.m.

The shelter is open 24 hours a day to receive children under six who need emergency care. It has been designated the official shelter to which children are taken by police at any hour of the day or night.

**TIP-TOP TODDLERS**—Nursery school tots at the Halsey Street division of Newark Day Center romp with teacher during play time.

**PRE-SCHOOL R & R**—It's time for rest and recreation for these youngsters at Shugard Elm Street branch of the Newark Day Center.

MAR 23 1969

# Newark Day Center Emphasizes Unity

By EILEEN SNYDER  
Newark News Staff Writer

When the Kinsey Street nursery class of the Newark Day Center makes its daily afternoon hike to the Halsey Street headquarters to meet the children's parents, it is a united project. Each child holds a section of a large, knotted cloth and, thus attached, amidst amused stares from passerby, they proceed together.

This united approach is not unique—it is more basically the underlying philosophy with which the whole NDC views community problems.

Within its role as a single, privately funded community organization, the center focuses on a total spectrum of community needs with an in-depth approach to the many facets of each problem.

The center's services include divisions of a day nursery for pre-school children, a summer program for boys and girls and year-round services for senior citizens.

**Dates to 1843**  
Headed by Miss Catherine M. Gardner, as executive director, the center is a hybrid organization. It administers the Newark Female Charitable Society, the Evening News Fresh Air Fund, the Newark Day Center for Older People, and the Shugard Day Nursery, with the first dating back more than 150 years.

The center's forerunner was founded in 1843 by Rev. Edwin A. Griffin, pastor of Newark's Old First Church, "to devise some means for caring for the poor and distressed persons in the village." It was the first of its kind in New Jersey and the second social agency to be incorporated into the country.

The center's staff has grown to more than 40 workers and has expanded into four buildings as new services have been added and more agencies merged to meet contemporary needs.

At the heart of the program is the day care service for youngsters from two to five years whose mothers find it necessary to work away from home.

"In the past," explained Miss Gardner, "day care meant mindless children while their parents were at work. Today we provide a pre-school educational experience for these children which prepares them for entrance to elementary school."

She said that 172 youngsters are currently enrolled at the East Kinsey Street, Halsey Street, Broadway and Elm Street locations. Here, among an array of pin-tables, brightly colored tables and chairs, crayons, charts, and the usual variety of toys, classes meet between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. each day.

The nursery is more than just a baby-sitting service. Under the guidance of a teaching team—usually consisting of one regular teacher, an assistant from the community, and possibly a trainee from a Rutgers University child care program—the youngsters' day includes a schedule packed with educational, cultural, health and recreational events, in addition to eating and sleeping.

Mrs. Millicent Greenaway, director of the center's nursery services, explained that since most children are enrolled at the nursery nearest their home, teachers and counselors at each branch operate with special emphasis on special community needs.

"We do have different approaches between the Halsey classes and those at Shugard," she admitted. "Discipline was the biggest difference when Mrs. Greenaway said that the Shugard youngsters, who primarily come from more culturally enriched backgrounds, find a particular less of a novelty and this in very less of a novelty and this in teachers find it more difficult to hold their interest."

**New Experience**  
"Many of the Halsey children, for example, have never been exposed to books before," the nursery director continued, "and therefore they are fascinated when the teacher reads a story." She added that lessons as elementary as toilet training and as basic as good eating habits must be included for these youngsters.

"We had one little boy who would refuse to eat breakfast—until we got him interested in a class pancake-making project," recalled Mrs. Greenaway, detailing NDC nursery efforts to motivate children from deprived backgrounds.

According to Miss Gardner, the fee varies according to parents' income. "They range from \$4 to \$15 per week," she stated, "but it costs us about \$24."

The two women cited two important developments from the total approach of the nursery program.

"The sense of stability for the children is important," offered Miss Gardner. "They develop regular habits and a sense of belonging since they come here a full three or four years."

Mrs. Greenaway felt the parent-teacher group were the most significant development. "We've really got the parents involved," she explained, citing fund raising projects, time taken off from work for special nursery events, and a clothing exchange as examples. Again, family counseling is offered as part of the total approach to community problems.

The second largest center project is the Newark Day Center for Older People. Also housed in

the large brownstone building at 305 Halsey St., about 280 senior citizens between 60 and 90 from Essex and West Hudson are members.

"We prove age isn't chronological," smiled Mrs. Roberta Brown, the center director. "For every activity, including everything from rug braiding to shuffleboard are offered daily, she explained.

"Dancing is by far our most popular activity," Mrs. Brown

continued, "but many just like to chat—many live alone and need companionship."

**Varied Offerings**  
In addition to the social side of the Older People Program also offers many health, nutrition and counseling services. A daily 80-cent lunch is well attended by both physical and emotional needs.

Mrs. Ruth Clark, NDC social worker and member of the clinic team, explained that check-ups,

**ON THE BALL**—Albert Pasucci of Newark lines up shot with pool table buddies, while ladies browse at street center for senior citizens.

flu shots, eye examinations and diabetes screenings are part of the "formerly amnet" needs now being met" by a nurse, nutritionist, volunteer doctor and herself.

The third NDC program is the summer camp program which each year sends several hundred underprivileged boys and girls from seven to 14 away from the city for two weeks.

The center uses funds contrib-

uted by readers of The Evening News and The Newark Sunday News to finance the camp, while the NDC pays administrative costs and is responsible for interviewing each family.

**United Fund Aid**  
According to Miss Gardner the NDC supports its activities through a combination of private and United Community Fund monies. She explained that lack

of funds imposes the biggest limitation on activities and growth. "I think the most significant conclusion from our program is that it demonstrates the amazingly important role private groups and organizations play in our community," the executive director concluded.

"We try to supply a satellite of services and it is this commitment to total community needs that is important."

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