



Fun for everybody at settlement house.

Where Neighbors Meet

Charles House, located at 445 Jay Street, an agency of the Catholic Charities serves an area outlined by Main Street West, Mt. Road Blvd., Lyell and State Street.

Charles House was founded in 1917 by a group of Catholic women under the auspices of the Catholic Diocese of Rochester and was dedicated as a community center for the Italian immigrants who were concentrated in the area.

The name "Charles House" was taken in honor of Charles H. Barry, father of Miss Harriet Barry, founder and first president of the House.

The objectives of Charles House today are similar as those stated by the founders "to offer recreational, educational and spiritual assistance to the community" but the present day program has changed to meet the needs of the times.

In the beginning the settlement served as a medical clinic, until St. Mary's and General Hospital provided this service as a chapel until

the neighboring St. Francis Church was built in 1929. The program emphasized English and citizenship classes, Nutrition and Homemaking classes to help the newcomers adjust to their new community.

During the past year Charles House offered a well rounded program of activities and services to 799 individuals, 184 adults, 635 children and teen-agers. A total of 217 boys and girls through 15 years of age attended a seven week Day Camp.

The settlement serves through a program of clubs, classes, and interest groups to help its members achieve their greatest potential for growth and development. These groups provide opportunities for their members to grow socially, to gain experience in planning for themselves and others, to develop new interests and skills, to work with people of different backgrounds through programs of common interest.

For the boys of grade school age Charles House offers club groups, where friends learn to get along with others, to make plans

and carry them out and to have fun. Woodshop, handicraft, pottery classes, sports and camping trips are also a part of the program.

For the grade school girls there is the fun of learning to do many things with their friends, to belong to a club or Girl Scout Troop, to at-

tend after-school classes which include handicraft, papercraft, pottery, cooking, tap and ballet dancing.

For teen-agers there are club groups, an activities program which this year has included public speaking, drama, workshop, crafts, photography.

A Typical 'Settlement' Day

Reports of activities at Genesee Settlement House, a Community Chest agency submitted for this special section are unique and informative.

One was titled "The House at No. 10" — Duke St., that is located at Duke and Niagara Streets, formerly a rectory, the House is now given over to Settlement work.

The report covers a day's activities. It tells of the cleaning early in the morning and of the arrival of the staff.

Related in the first person as told by the House itself, the opening day's activity is a call from a family telling of their home being cold and the landlord's reluctance to correct the situation. After much eating and conversation with the landlord, the family is told repairs will be made.

The report tells of boys building bird houses and planning overnight camping trips. At noon one worker has to go in Day Camp committee meeting at the Chamber of Commerce to plan the summer for children of the

city at day camp. Another must go to Family Court to check on a boy found sleeping in the bus terminal.

In the afternoon girls are busy in the kitchen and boys in the gym throwing balls around, wrestling, playing ping-pong and learning to be "good sports." Craft classes are conducted and boys and girls are taught to become good citizens.

The big boys come at 7 p.m. and a basketball game, with another Settlement House is scheduled. The fact that one boy hates to play with kids who are different from himself brought about handling the boy in a special manner and the boy had to learn that in this House, people sometimes have different looking noses, or different color skin, but that they are human beings too and this is what counts.

The other report is a letter to Sharon from Barb. The Barbara mentioned is writing as a new member of the Genesee Settlement House staff.

In her new job, Barbara finds "no self glory in this role. Instead, there is challenge, delight, frustration and sometimes failure. But most always there is hope."

The excellent supervision she receives from the staff is most fortunate, she extolls and says she often must turn to the professional workers for guidance and help with problems.

Activities in arts and craft groups, the letter said, brought problems in a mixed racial group with a majority of Negro boys. The boys, difficult at first, came around and became interested in the worker's guidance in the various projects.

"These children have to know what it is that is expected of them," the letter said. "Otherwise they will not grow into responsible and intelligent adults." Barbara found that some children exposed to order at home do not react the same way when they are away from home.

Sharon was told that a settlement house, in a way, is

very much like a higher institution of learning. The group leaders are teaching and learning at the same time.

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Friday, April 10, 1963

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Mr. and Mrs. Gerard Klein of 231 Lux Street with four children of their own find room for two more whose own parents can't care for them. Foster home arrangements are one of Catholic Family Center's services to community.

A Home for a Child

A record number of children — ninety-one in all — were placed in adoption through Catholic Family Center during 1962.

Bringing together children in need of parents with couples wishing to make their lives more complete through adoption comprises a major part of the focus of the Catholic Family Center's adoption department.

What does this process involve? Couples interested in applying for adoption generally begin by attending a monthly group meeting. Here the procedure is outlined for them and many of their initial questions are answered. If they wish to pursue their interest, the next step is an interview in which the couple discuss their own particular situation. On the basis of this interview an application is given.

There is an interval of a

few months until the couple is contacted by a caseworker who begins with them what is commonly called the "home study."

During the home study (four to eight weeks), the couple is seen both together and individually, and participate in sharing with the caseworker aspects of their individual lives — family, education, employment — plus their life together as a married couple. What part religion plays in their lives is an important area since this would have a profound effect on a child placed in their home.

The health of prospective adoptive parents, their everyday living situation, and their financial ability to care for a child are also considered. Various experiences a couple has had with children and also what they consider and hope for in a child for

themselves are also factors to be considered.

The children available for adoption range in age from infancy to children of "pre-school" age, the majority of these being infants.

After the completion of the home study a decision regarding the couple's application is made by an administrative adoption committee. When the application is accepted there is generally a wait of a few months before a child is available for a couple. During this time the caseworker considers available children from the viewpoint of nationality, physical, emotional and intellectual background — in an effort to "match" a child to a particular couple.

Once a child is placed in an adoptive home, six months to one year must elapse under New York State law before a child can be legally adopted.

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