

HISTORY OF BELLWOODS PARK HOUSE

BY JEAN LAUDER

During the years of 1937 and 1938, the high school teacher of Wellesley Orthopedic School would often discuss the future of the more severely handicapped teenager and adult. It was a real source of concern. It was during just such discussions that the teacher, Mr. J.M.Henderson, first planted in the mind of Jean Lauder, one of the pupils, the idea of a residential sheltered workshop. In later years, Mrs. Karin Roon, Jean's mentor from New York, fostered the dream and Jean's family encouraged it to the point where something realistic had to be done.

Mrs. Roon's advice to Jean was to start in a small way – to form a social club for adults with cerebral palsy. The aim of such a club was to help eliminate the isolation, loneliness and boredom which these people were experiencing. With the aid of family, friends, Red Cross, the Riverdale Branch of the Kiwanis Club, newspapers and radio, the first meeting of the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association was held December 2, 1948.

At this time, too, parents were becoming aged or dying. Many were lying awake at night asking themselves over and over, "What will happen to my son (or daughter) when I am no longer able to take care of him?"

This is an excerpt from a letter which served to emphasize the urgency of the situation: "I am just past 70 years of age and I have a daughter of 42 who was born with terrible disease (cerebral palsy). Now my worry is this: 'who will take care of her after I pass on?' And from another parent: "I have almost gone my limit, but what can we do? We cannot get help that we can afford to pay for, and do not know what to do."

Soon after the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association began, representatives from the Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity of the University of Toronto went to see Mr. Reginald Hopper, Executive Director of the Ontario Society for Crippled Children, to ask him what they could do to help those who had cerebral palsy. Their American counterparts were

working among C.P.'s Mr. Hopper replied: "Go over to Carlton Street Church and see what you can do for the young C.P.'s there." Fraternity members Mrs. K.V. Heyland and Miss Irma Pattison (Irma had a sister with cerebral palsy) carried out his suggestion. Thus began an association which, in the future, utterly changed the lives of many disabled adults in this area. The ladies of the fraternity provided and served refreshments at each monthly meeting for well over twenty years. They quickly came to know the C.P.'s personally. They were our friends and still are.

Many names will be mentioned in this history, and, inadvertently, some may be left out. However, no one can speak about adult cerebral palsy work without mentioning Mrs. Muriel Heyland. She was a dynamite, I am sure there were times when her family heard about us at breakfast, lunch and dinner. While all of the "Alpha Gamms" were true instigators of the finest type, Mrs. Heyland was the spark. When she arrived, whether it be to an important meeting or to a party, the action began. This vivacious lady could sit down at a piano and play, by ear, almost any song, thus making our many sing-songs a delight. If we had a problem or just needed a "friendly ear" Muriel Heyland always took time. She was our firm support.

When the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association was about a year old, Mrs. Heyland phoned Jean Lauder to say that the Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity would like to do more for the group. This was the moment for which Jean had been praying! A subsequent visit to Jean's house found them chatting about the possibility of a residential sheltered workshop. It was felt, at the time, that they could not take on both a residence and a workshop, so the Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity decided to start with the workshop. The Alpha Omegon Pi's and the Alpha Chi Omegon joined forces with the "Alpha Gamm's" to form the Interfraternity Cerebral Palsy Association.

The results of their labour is now known as the Corbrook Workshop. It began in a basement room of St. Paul's Anglican Church on Bloor St. It started one half day a week as a craft and recreation centre. About twelve adults with cerebral palsy were in

attendance that first morning. It is now a full-time operation in a factory-like setting with a payroll for over a hundred persons with various types of disabilities.

The members of the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association and the ladies of the Interfraternity Cerebral Palsy Association were seeing more and more clearly the urgent need for residential care for adults with cerebral palsy.

Mrs. Heyland consented to meet with three members of the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association on May 5, 1956. This meeting was a first step toward discovering something definite which could be done to make their dream come true. Among the many things discussed were the type of home needed and the advisability of having it for the cerebral palsied adult only. Mrs. Heyland suggested that there be a small committee consisting of the Workshop Advisory Board and one or two other interested persons.

At a meeting on May 11th, Dr. H.V. Cranfield recommended that statistics be obtained which would support the claim for a need for a residence. It was agreed that government financial aid should be sought. It was felt that parents of the cerebral palsied would wish to take part in this project, and a meeting was arranged with them.

Accordingly, members of the Cerebral Palsy Parent Council, the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association and the Interfraternity Cerebral Palsy Workshop met at Carlton Street United Church, October, 1956. Among those present at that and subsequent meetings were: Mrs. K.V. Heyland, Mrs. Doris Griffiths, Mrs. T. Lamb and Mrs. Empringham of the Cerebral Palsy Parent Council, Mona Winberg and Misses Christine, Marie and Jean Lauder. Also, at this meeting, the mother of a retarded girl told of the successful efforts put forth by parents to establish a residence for retarded girls in Port Hope, Ontario. This was the closest comparable project of which we could learn, for a residence for the disabled adult was unheard of at that time. Under some circumstances they were still being hidden away.

The Auxiliary of the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association, as the group was named, held six monthly meetings during the winter of 1956-57 and was accredited by the Ontario Federation for the Cerebral Palsied. Letters were written by Miss Mona Winberg to some twenty individuals and government representatives, informing them of the aims of the Auxiliary. Some helpful counsel resulted from this correspondence. Mrs. Heyland and the Executive Director of the Interfraternity cerebral palsy workshop, Mrs. Wilma Brown, assembled detailed information to be used in discussions with government representatives. The sixth meeting of the Auxiliary was held on April 26th, 1957, and was attended by three representatives of the Bloor-Toronto Kiwanis Club. These gentlemen assured the meeting of the interest of the club and requested a brief which the workshop and parent council were asked to prepare.

The Auxiliary for the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association ceased to meet at this particular stage. It was now time to have the benefit of representatives from other agencies whose knowledge and experience could bring a broader base to the group. Those present were: Miss M. Clarke, of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Miss E. Manning, of the Canadian Red Cross, five members of the Interfraternity Cerebral Palsy Association and representatives of the Bloor-Toronto Kiwanis, the Polio Foundation, Paraplegic Association and Ontario Society for Crippled Children. Dr. Cranfield was appointed Chairman per term. It was agreed to seek incorporation under the Ontario Companies Act and to apply for a charter as the Adult Cerebral Palsy Institute of Metropolitan Toronto. The charter was drawn by Mr. Donald Keith of Keith, Ganong, Carruthers and Rowe. Mrs. Heyland, Dr. Cranfield, Mr. W. Malaniuk, Mr. J.A. Campbell and Mrs. W. Anderson comprised the first Board of Directors. Dr. Cranfield became the first President. Miss Christine Lauder was asked to be secretary and served on the board for twenty years.

The Board of Directors, increased by a number of advisory members, searched intensively for a year and a half for suitable property for a residence. They looked at houses for sale; they looked at houses for rent. Finally, late in 1958, they found a suitable house for rent at 718 Kingston Road.

The house was owned and had been occupied by a mother and her son. The son lived in a wheelchair. It was a fairly low-set house and front, side and back doors were gently ramped. There were two bedrooms on the ground floor- a double and a single. There were five bedrooms upstairs – two for staff and three for residents. Both floors had a three-piece bath.

It is impossible to name everyone who helped make the dream of “718” as we lovingly called it, a reality. To quote Dr. H. V. Cranfield from his annual report at that time. “Access to this house was ours from January 1st, 1959 and after alterations and furnishings, it was ready for occupancy by February 14th. I must specifically mention Mrs. Ralph McDowall whose taste and judgement is evident throughout the residence”

The residents of “718” paid what they could out of the humble Disabled Persons Allowance. The maximum room and board rate at that time was \$100.00 a month. The writer believes that, when “718” was opened, most of the girls paid about \$45.00 a month. Of course as costs have risen down through the years, so has the rate of room and board.

From three different sources, valuable financial assistance came in 1958. First, in January, an anonymous friend set up a loan account of \$5,000.00 as a safeguard. The loan was duly repaid. Second, through the interest of Controller Jean Newman, Metropolitan Toronto gave \$5,000.00. Third, the Atkinson Charitable Foundation gave \$7,500.00. In addition, interested individuals added their financial support.

To quote the report of Mrs. Ruth Martin, Chairman of the House Committee: “In December, 1958, Mrs. Heyland and I inspected the furnishings of 718 Kingston Road. Arrangements were made to purchase some pieces of furniture and several electrical appliances. In January, at an augmented House Committee meeting held at 718 Kingston Road, the house was inspected and necessary structural changes were looked after by the Property Chairman, Mr Alex Campbell. The interior was painted throughout. Electrical fixtures and a night alarm were installed. Linoleum was laid in the front and rubber

carpeting on the ramp leading to the side door. Necessary furniture, curtains and draperies were purchased. Letters were sent to several firms requesting support for this undertaking. As a result merchandise and merchandise credits were received with a total retail value of \$2,016.00.

During the spring, six open house receptions were held at the new residence. Interested individuals and supporting organizations were invited.

Our garden at "718" was a great joy to us. A gently sloping ramp from the house to a paved driveway made access easy.

Miss Helen Kippox, a horticultural architect gave professional advise and the Scarborough Horticultural Society faithfully tended the garden the whole eight years the residents were at that address.

In 1962, Mr. Gant Frost was President of the Institute.

By 1962, the girls were well settled in, and "718" was a delightful home. The girls and staff had their joys and sorrows, highs and lows as folk do in any other busy household. Busy it was and busy it continued to be, until we moved into the large residence. The girls attended workshop, attended church, did household duties, and the many other things which constitute day to day living. The community took the girls to their hearts and how good this made life feel!

I recall a cute incident which took place when we were living at 718 Kingston Road.

Kareen Clarke, who walks with difficulty, was out for a stroll when a little boy stopped her and said: "Lady, are you old?"

Kareen, swallowing a chuckle, answered, "Well, no. Why?"

He eyed her up and down and then replied, "You aren't new, anyway!"

A financial change had to be faced by the Board of Directors when the Atkinson Foundation and Metropolitan Toronto found it necessary to withdraw their support. This necessitated heavier reliance on other means of financial aid such as membership in the project and private and public donations.

The search for a suitable site for a residence continued, and was conducted by a committee set up for this purpose. Another committee was set up to study means of financing such project.

The President in 1963 was Mrs. M.G. Hogarth. The following is taken directly from Mrs. Hogarth's annual report of that year: "Social Planning Councils throughout North America are directing their communities attention to the tragic lack of facilities for the disabled of over the age of 16 or 17. Our own communications with the Toronto Social Planning Council, the Ontario Departments of Health and welfare, the Toronto Mayor and Board of Control and the Metropolitan Council have yielded a recognition of our efforts on the part of these agencies which has hitherto been lacking. The most dramatic result of this development has been lacking. The most dramatic result of this development has been negotiations, in the past year, for a piece of city-owned land in west-central Toronto and concurrent plans for a new building on this site.

The residents preferred the wet-central area as it was nearer the workshop and the downtown core.

The residents continued their busy and enjoyable lives. There were many laughs and a few tears. Workshop was attended regularly and the modest pay the girls earned from that was well received. Most of all, the girls appreciated the fact that institutional life, as it was experienced then, was over.

There was about one party a month at "718" with, of course, most Christmas. Volunteer groups such as Scarborough Horticultural Society and the Kiwanis Ladies Auxiliary gave Christmas parties and gifts. Kingston Road United Church played a large part in the lives

of the residents. During the whole eight years, Mr. John Morrison drove the girls to and from church each Sunday. He would lift us in and out of the car and up and down steps. One of the residents was an assistant leader in the Girl Guides. This was also made possible, in part, by the yeoman service of Mr. Morrison.

Mrs. Bessie Field, a member of the church, was a staunch friend of the girls. She conducted Bible study groups at the residence, arranged outings, had church groups come to "718" to put on programmes and was just generally active on our behalf.

At its 1964 annual meeting, the President of the Board, Mrs. Mary Hogarth, announced the resignation of two very active members, Mrs. K.V. Heyland and Mr. H.G. Colebrook, who had to leave for reasons of health. The writer has previously spoken of Mrs. Heyland. Mr. Colebrook was a leader in the search for a site for the larger residence which was so badly needed. In fact, it was at that meeting that it was announced that negotiations had been completed with Metro Toronto for the property on the northwest corner of Shaw and Dundas. The cost: \$1.00.

Mr. H. G. Colebrook was President of the Board of Directors in 1960. During his presidency much time and energy had been given by him to the search for a site for our larger residence. Mr. Alex Campbell and many others assisted. When he felt negotiations for the Shaw and Dundas site were dragging, he sent a personal telegram to Mayor Summerville. The site was given to us! Mr. Colebrook just wouldn't give up when working for his C.P. friends. His daughter-in-law, Mrs. Grace Colebrook, is a lot like that, too. She has served on the Board of Directors, and assisted for many years, with the Interfraternity Cerebral Palsy Workshop and the Cerebral Palsy Adult Association.

1965 was the year that the Board of Directors and the six residents became fully submerged in the fund raising campaign for the larger residence. The total amount to be raised was \$700,000.00.

To say it was a mammoth task is to put it mildly. It was a task of, love, borne, in the main, by a faithful few.

A large group of canvassers was organized. They were mostly family or friends of directors, parents or friends of residents or members of the Institute. With the combined efforts of many wonderful people, the Chairman of the Building Fund Campaign was able to announce that, by November 12, 1965, the total collection was \$551,448.65. This included the generosity of many individuals, corporations, businesses, foundations, and directors, together with the increased support of the Ontario Government.

Perhaps part of the success of the canvassers was due to previous discussions in techniques. These included the tongue-in-cheek suggestion that, before Mrs. Hogarth goes out to fulfill speaking engagements she secure a few new hats for platform appearance! She is well known for her beautiful hats and they have often been introductory conversation pieces for her.

In 1966 Mrs. Mary G. Hogarth was both President of the Board of Directors, and Chairman of the Building Campaign Committee. She has given a large part of her life to improving the lot of the disabled and Bellwoods was indeed fortunate to have her expertise, her enthusiasm and her caring. Her love, down through the years, has been shown just where and when needed.

One must mention Mrs. Addy, too; her first concern was the comfort of the residents and that they live in a cheerfully decorated home and comfortable atmosphere. She was well loved on the Liaison Committee (more of that later), for she had the ability to walk in the shoes of these residents.

Tuesday, March 29th, 1966, Mayor Philip Givens, with the aid of a bulldozer, turned the first sod in the building of Bellwoods Park House. What an exciting day that was for those of us who were privileged to attend! Another great day was Tuesday, September 20th, when the cornerstone was laid. It was laid by Mr. Allan F. Lawrence, M.P.P. in the

absence of the Hon. Lewis P. Cecile. The prayers dedication were recited by His Grace the Right Reverend F. Wilkinson. The cornerstone contains a newspaper of the day, a coin of the realm and a history of the Adult Cerebral Palsy Institute, written by Miss Jean Lauder.

The writer wishes to quote the following from the 1966 report written by Mrs. Hogarth. "Since the formation of the Adult Cerebral Palsy Institute, Mrs. R. Martin has been an active and enthusiastic director of the Institute. It is with a feeling of great loss that we have accepted her resignation from the Board. Her dynamic and tireless efforts helped to insure the success of the pilot residence, and on the general committee of the fund raising campaign she has been a tower of strength to us all. I cannot express in words how deeply we miss her wise counsel."

Mrs. Hogarth welcomed Mrs. H.G. Colebrook as a Director of the Board, and stated: "As the daughter-in-law of a former President of this organization, she is familiar with our aims and needs and is an invaluable addition to the Board."

To further quote from Mrs. Hogarth: "I would like at this time, to pay tribute to all members of the Board but especially to those who have shared responsibility for the Adult Cerebral Palsy Institute Building Fund Campaign, as Chairman of its various committee . To Dr. H.V. Cranfield, Chairman of the Corporations Committee and Medical Director of the Institute, whose cheery smile and untiring efforts have never flagged and have carried us well on the way to success. To Mr. Grant Frost, our inveterate treasurer and Chairman of the Service Clubs and Charitable Foundations Committee, who has spent many hours balancing the budget. To Miss Elvira Manning, convenor of the General Committee, who, with Mrs. R. R. Martin, has brought that committee over the top as well as guiding the activities. To Mr. Alex Stoddard, Chairman of the New Building Committee, whose tireless efforts and constant attention to details are producing a splendid residence – Bellwoods Park House – which is nearing completion. Last, but far from least, our affectionate thanks to our beloved Board Secretary, Miss Christine Lauder, who has held that post since the founding of the

Institute, and without whom we all would be completely lost. Nothing is ever too much trouble for Miss Lauder, who always responds with warmth and cheerfulness to all our many demands. We are indeed grateful to her and for her”.

It was announced at the 1966 Annual Meeting that the Adult Cerebral Palsy Institute of Metropolitan Toronto had been accepted as an agency of the United Appeal for 1967. The President states: “The members of the staff of the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto have given us invaluable advice and help in many areas of our work, and we do most sincerely appreciate their aid.

Meanwhile, as if the ladies on the Board of Directors were not busy enough, they and their friends were meeting every moment of their spare time at the home of Mrs. Hogarth to sew drapes. For months Mrs. Hogarth could not use her dining room table as it was padded for cutting and sewing drapes. Every drape in the large Shaw Street building was hand done, and no more than two bedrooms had the same pattern. How pretty they were and how beautifully made! The lovely curtains, or drapes, were a practical witness to the interest and co-operation of the many friends of Bellwoods. Our blanket covers were made by a group of ladies who attended St. Paul’s Anglican Church.

In her report for 1967, the President announced that the Ontario Government had contributed a total of \$310,000.00. At that point it was just necessary to raise a further \$55,000.00 to pay the bank loan, and complete the Building Fund.

It was announced that Mr. Grant frost, Mr. Lewis Rogers and Mr. John Curran retired from the Board of Directors.

Special mention was extended to the Honourable Mr. John Yaremko, Minister of the Department of Social and family Services. He was thanked for his understanding of our problems.

We, who were the girls who had lived at “718” for eight had mixed feelings about leaving for the larger residence. We were glad that a larger number of handicapped would have the opportunity for a security such as we had. However, we had become so accepted by the community and we wondered about the future. Karen Clarke states its best when she says: “The old house, sitting back from the street as it does, looks a little sad, I think. It knows that our interest in it does looks a little sad, I think. It knows that our interest in it wanes as we look forward to our new residence. When that day comes we shall hurry away and the house shall stand silent. We will have lived here for more years than we expected. We shall recall our days here with many a laugh and a few tears. Yes, we have lived here and have lived well, and God grant that we have grown a little in the living.”

Moving day came on February 27th. When we reached 300 Shaw Street, Mrs. Hogarth, the Honourable Mr. John Yaremko, and Mr. Douglas Seaton, our new Administrator were at the door to greet us. Mr. Yaremko pinned a beautiful corsage on each of us.

We were really impressed with the whole building when we were taken on a tour. It seemed so big after “718”! There were 55 bedrooms for residents and 6 rooms for live-in staff. Although the residents’ rooms were small, they were lovely with their drapes and bedspreads, and basins with running water. Four lounges, offices and an administrator’s apartment completed the three storey building. A year later, a beautiful garden was made which the residents have enjoyed to the full. The kitchen and dining rooms were also well appointed.

I failed to state earlier that the architects of Bellwoods in 1966 and engineers were Giffels Associates Ltd. The builders or contractors were Belmont Construction Ltd.

For those who had worked so hard and for those who had dreamed long of a home for disabled adults, this was a triumphant day. The first residence for disabled adults in North America was a reality!

A special vote of thanks went to Miss Edith McAdam at the annual meeting of that year. Miss McAdam was the office secretary during the time of the Building Fund Campaign. She worked in the campaign offices which were donated. When Bellwoods Park House opened, she became our first receptionist-secretary. We all loved her!

For those of us who were already in Bellwoods it was exciting to see other residents coming in and our numbers gradually swelling. A lot were friends from workshop, camp, club, or even as far back as school days. The biggest thrill, though, was to see those coming from hospitals for the chronically ill or nursing homes. Little by little they shed past experiences and became the people they were meant to be.

The official opening ceremonies of Bellwoods Park House took place June 7, 1967. Even though it was a cloudy day, there were many interested friends present. The residence was opened by the Honourable Robert Welch, due to the illness of the Honourable John Yaremko, and Dr. James Finlay of Carlton Street United Church offered the prayer of dedication.

The first Residence Council was formed by Mr. Seaton six months after the first residents went into Bellwoods.

Ada Higginson joined the staff that opening year, and she still with us. She had been so helpful and loyal all these years. Many times the residents do not know that what they would have done without her.

In the 1968 Administrator's report, Mr. Douglas G. Seaton reports that there were nine residents comprising the Council of Bellwoods Park House. He says that they also serve as the Administrator's Advisory Committee and that the residents are involved in a meaningful way with the operation of their home. At that time Bellwoods Park House was operated under the Charitable Institutions Act and the Department of Social and Family Services, and there were 55 handicapped adults living there. The great majority, if not all at that time, had cerebral palsy. The per diem cost was \$8.50.

There were 147 applications for admittance into the residence received that year. Ninety per cent of the residents came under the Family Benefits Act, receiving a pension of \$105.00 monthly. Out of this, the government set the rate of room and board at \$90.00 monthly. Therefore, it was a relieved group of residents that heard Mr. Seaton announce that the department under Mr. John Yaremko would include the cost of drugs and taxi fare to and from Corbrook Workshop in their allowance.

To quote Mr. Seaton in his 1968 annual report: “Our residents are encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves and to assist, according to their ability in light housekeeping duties.”

To further quote: “Through our social worker, Miss Valerie Wallace, we have consulted with, and used the services of the Ontario Branches of Social and Family Services, the Metropolitan Toronto Departments of Public Health, and relevant social agencies.”

This was the year that the Toronto Board of Education began the programme of upgrading learning skills in Bellwoods. Two teachers, a primary and secondary, came twice a week and 26 residents took part. This programme continued for fifteen years and was discontinued because of our switch to apartments setting. More of that later.

The Toronto Public Board responded to the request to begin a core library in Bellwoods. A librarian came in weekly, distributing books to many eager residents. Later books on tapes were introduced which proved to be great blessing to those who had weak eyes. This service is still continuing.

Mrs. Ada Higginson organized a craft programmed at this time. Twenty-seven residents took part the first year and many more have done so during the more than fifteen years in which it operated. Crafts were learned according to the ability and interest of the resident. Some crafts were sold during the year, while others found a ready sale at our

annual bazaar. The resident received, in most cases, one hundred per cent of the selling price. A number of the residents assisted at the bazaars.

“Approximately forty volunteers and fifteen service clubs assist in meeting the social and welfare needs of our residents,” says Mr. Seaton.

Social programmes, both inside and out of the house were a vital part of the life of the resident and were assisted by such groups as the B’nai B’rith, the Junior League, the Trident Club of Timothy Eaton Memorial Church, and Mr. W. Rath who showed films loaned to us by Warner Brothers and Seven Arts Limited.

Mrs. E. Chip began that year to visit the residents once weekly and she has remained our loyal friend through the years. Her visits are regular and so looked forward to. The fact that she is in her eighties is quite incidental to her.

When Bellwoods Park House first opened, Miss Anne Small and Miss Margaret Armour looked after the hairdressing needs of the ladies but as the numbers grew, the Marvel Beauty Schools took over this responsibility.

1968 saw the birth of Bellwoods’ first newspaper with resident, Lewis Blanchard as editor. This was another activity which carried on down through the years. As one editor left or became involved in something else, another took over. It was an outlet for would-writers to express their talents, appreciation, and “beefs”.

As President of the Board of Directors for 1969, Mrs. Hogarth stated in her annual report that a Liaison Committee had begun. I quote from Mrs. Hogarth for the best explanation of this committee.

“The forming of a Liaison Committee consisting of three members chosen by the residents from their group, and three directors of the board, to discuss and resolve problems which arise from time to time and to consider both sides of questions, has

proven an excellent vehicle for better understanding on the part of resident and Board. This committee was dissolved a number of years ago when a resident went on the Board of Directors. The residents soon learned that much had been lost and were happy when the former system was reinstated. Our Liaison Committee is active to this date and has never had a stronger voice.

When Bellwoods Park House first opened, it was expected that there would be six rooms for staff who wished to live in. These rooms were larger with a bathroom off each room. However, it was not possible to implement this, so these rooms were occupied by residents. This increased the resident population from 55 to 61. All the rooms were filled in 1969 and continued so for many years. In 1969, eighty per cent of the population had cerebral palsy. As years went by, and other facilities opened this ratio changed. The average age of residents that year was 33. There were 42 women and 19 men.

Forty-one residents participated in Mrs. Higginson's craft programme in 1969, and twenty different service clubs and church groups were involved in the programme schedule that year.

Approximately 200 persons took guided tours of the residence in 1969 and Mr. Seaton stated in his report of that year that "we were always pleased to stress the important part the Community Fund plays in making possible the operations of Bellwoods Park House."

Gary Stoddard, whose father, Mr. Alec Stoddard, was Chairman of our Building Committee, headed up a walk for Bellwoods. He was aided by the students from Woodlands Centennial Public School and Frenchman's Bay Junior High School. This netted \$3,415.21.

The Canadian Cerebral Palsy Association was born that year. Both the Board of Directors and Residents Council were represented at the founding conference. That organization has since grown in strength and purpose.

At the annual meeting for 1970, three disabled told of a special activity in which each had been engaged that year. Miss Mona Winberg told of her trip to the Maritimes with another friend who has cerebral palsy. Mr. Robert Simpson, a former resident, who was a successful competitor at the Pan-American Wheel Chair Games in Argentina in November, told of his exciting experience. The writer wrote of her trip to London, England in September of that year, and it was read by Miss Mary Richardson.

In his report, Mr. Seaton felt that the inauguration of a morning and afternoon coffee break was a major innovation. This was looked after, and served by Miss Norma Yake. It proved so successful that Norma continued this until she left Bellwoods in 1982. This provided many relaxed hours for the residents as they discussed such earthshaking items as clothes, sports, wheel-trans and food.

No less than 20 candidates offered to serve on a nine-team Residence Council that year. Now, 13 years later, the same groups are obliged to run year after year. Mary Richardson succeeded Kareen Clarke as President of Council for 1971.

Among many others, the Trident Club, the Don Mills Lions Club and the B'nai B'rith provided many hours of entertainment.

Five or six residents were called for once a week in a van for there was no wheel-trans then. They were taken to Yorkdale Shopping Centre where they could shop a bit or look to their heart's content. This was a new and valuable experience, for many had never shopped on their own before. For some it was even a frightening experience and they needed to be encouraged "to try their wings.

Our August garden wedding was something we shall not soon forget, when Ken Lippert and Joanne Hughes were married. Our bride and groom never looked happier, nor did our garden ever look lovelier. Mr. Seaton gave the bride away. It was a beautifully, sunny day.

Jean McKim and Lew Blanchard were married in a neighbouring church in October. Mary Richardson was Jean's bridesmaid.

The canopy was built over the front door in 1970 and five residents, (3 of them in wheelchairs) took part in the Miles for Millions walk-a-thon, and earned \$301.00. They did the same thing for Participation House.

Mr. Yaremko announced an increase in the comfort allowance. This is the amount of money a resident is able to keep when room and board is paid. It was increased to \$30.00 a month for those requiring a wheelchair and \$15.00 for those who didn't. The writer believes that the rationale for those requiring a wheelchair was that many of those in chairs had to hire a private van each time they went out.

In her 1971 report, Mrs. Hogarth tells of the death of Miss Elvira Manning and states how much she will be missed.

The President of the Board of Directors announced that Mr. Seaton took part in the International Congress in Arnheim, Holland and also in the International Rehabilitation Conference in New York City.

The Ontario Federation for the Physically Handicapped was formed that year. This organization comprised of some 26 representatives in the field is a worthy organization to this day.

Mrs. Hogarth retired as President at the end of the year.

Mary Richardson, President of the Residents Council states that eight residents received their Grade 11 certificates in English that year.

Mary also reports on another successful Garden Party. Thanks to the hard work of Mrs. Higginson and the Residents' Social Committee, we have had many of these. One year

we had the 48th Highlanders while another year we had games of chance, including such a daring item as a fish pond! One year Valerie Wallace, our social worker, did a balloon dance!

Most of the residence attended the second annual meeting of the Ontario Federation for the Cerebral Palsied in September. The banquet was provided by the Department of Citizenship, Province of Ontario. Mr. John Yaremko was responsible for our invitation.

Over half the resident population traveled to Windsor, Ontario in October to attend the annual convention of the Ontario Federation of the Cerebral Palsied.

On May 1st, two residents, Joyce Barchuk and Ted Lamb were married. Helen Gardiner married a non-resident.

We had quite a parade to celebrate Cerebral Palsy Week. The aim was to acquaint the people of the area regarding cerebral palsy.

We had a polling station in Bellwoods and have had one for almost every election ever since.

Mrs. Seaton stated that a Study Committee was set up to discover whether the real needs of the residents were being met. The committee made a number of recommendations to the Board. These were implemented.

In telling of Mrs. Hogarth's retirement, Mr. Seaton says: "Mrs. Mary G. Hogarth has announced her intention of relinquishing her position as President of the Board of Directors. It is my privilege to have had her as President since I became Administrator five years ago. Her gifts of leadership and administration, her unstinting, self-sacrificing service transformed a dream into Canada's first residence for the disabled. Yet the crown of all of the achievements of this gracious lady, in my opinion, is the empathy which she has with the physically disabled. It has been, for me, one of the great experiences of my

life to have been associated in this work with our President. I have learned a great deal from her and for this I am grateful. In the days ahead I will endeavour to show my thanks by continuing to make her concerns for the residents my concerns.”

In 1972, Mrs. Elizabeth Addy was President of the Board of Directors.

The President states that Central High School of Commerce adopted us as their United Community Fund Agency in 1972 by presenting us with a cheque for \$2,500.00. With part of the money a power wheelchair was purchased. This was used for shopping trips or while a resident's chair was being repaired. It is still in use today.

Mary Richardson said, in her residents' report, that this was the year that residents of the opposite sex were allowed to visit other residents in their rooms during visiting hours.

Council and Board together petitioned the government to remove the ceiling of fourteen nights out of the residence during one year. This took some time to have granted.

Barbara Oullette and Elaine Ricker (both residents) held an art exhibition. Over 250 guests signed the register and the artists almost sold out.

On June 7th, residents received certificates from the Department of Education. They were given for Grade V mathematics, Grade X history and Grade XII English.

The Ichthius Club came once a month to lead residents in table game, and a Saturday morning sports programme was inaugurated at a gym.

We had another wedding when resident Ronald Brown married Frances Hayward.

The Public Library began its cassette service that year. For the first time, those with eye trouble could listen to books on tape. The writer can attest to the joy of this medium!

Extended Care also began in 1972. It meant that the government paid a higher rate for those requiring more assistance in their acts of daily living.

Mrs. Addy resigned as President due to greater responsibilities at Bloorview.

Eric Burke was President of the Board of Directors in 1973. In his report he thanked Mr. Lawrence Crawford, former Director for the Homes for the Aged Branch, for his attention to suggestions made on behalf of residents.

Our friend, Mrs. Heyland, died that year. Her friends and family donated the cabinet in which we display our crafts. We still think of her with much love. Mrs. Heyland was Honourary Director of the Board of Directors up until the time of her death.

Louise Turtle, as President of our Residents Council, thanked no less than eighteen groups who came to the residence, or assisted those outside of the residence, in recreational activities. How fortunate we were at that period?

Our Administrator in his annual report stated that the per diem cost for 1973 was \$11.63. Only three residents left Bellwoods that year.

Twenty-four residents were employed on a part-time basis.

Miss Valerie Wallace left after being with us for five years. She was a well loved social worker.

Mr. Seaton stated that Bellwoods was no longer categorized by the government under "Home for the Aged" but under "Group Homes". This was one more giant step forward.

Mr. Seaton involved himself in what, as we look back, can only be considered an amazing project. Eight of our residents (some were not lightly handicapped), went to London, England. They stayed at the Spastic Centre in London, England. They were

accompanied by two house mothers and while over there, even had a van and a driver at their beck and call. While there, they attended a Conference in Reading. The Secretary of State of our Federal Government gave a grant to cover the cost of “The Flying Chairs” as they were called.

The Honourable Marc Lalonde, M.P., Minister of Health and Welfare for the Federal Government as well as Mr. Peter Stollery, member for the riding, paid a visit to Bellwoods Park House. They toured the building and met with the Council. We thanked them for advances that have been made for the disabled and outlined those still needed. They listened attentively.

In 1974 Mr. C.P. Hodgson was President of the Board of Directors. Mr. Seaton resigned as Administrator of Bellwoods Park House as of September 1st of that year. He had been with us for eight years. As time progressed we realized more what a capable Administrator he had been.

Mr. Charles Reid came to us as of September 18. Our Comptroller and Assistant Administrator, Mr. G. Y. Majid resigned and Mr. A. Mandami filled his post.

Our artist resident, Barbara Oullette died in April.

The President thanked all the members of the Cerebral Palsy Institute of Metropolitan Toronto, asking them to be missionaries in recruiting more members.

Mr. Reid, in his report, spoke of the early board members as true pioneers. He stated the need to educate the public regarding cerebral palsy.

Mary Page, President of the Residents Council for 1974 advised that resident Judy Knapton left Bellwoods to “try her wings” at McLeod House. Our many outings included more malls. The cost continued to be subsidized.

In February Mr. and Mrs. Seaton gave us their annual party, complete with strolling minstrel, candlelit dining room and punch.

Mary Page states that “the ladies of Timothy Eaton Memorial church brought their Silver Anniversary celebration to share with us. Big money bingo - delicious refreshments – everything to make us wish for Silver Anniversary Parties more often!”

We took part in the wheelchair races at Moss Park Armouries in May. Bellwoods won the big cup!

Mary Gilbank, our cook, voluntarily gave up her proper day off to see that those residents who had no place to go on Christmas had a special dinner at Bellwoods.

In his annual report for 1975, Mr. Hodgson, the President of the Board of Directors, tells of the gift of a microwave oven. This meant that residents could prepare a snack. Sometimes we even had the fun of preparing a simple meal.

With Dominion Store tapes we obtained two new front loading washing machines. That meant an increased number of us could do our own laundry, thus adding to our independence.

The Administrator, Mr. Charles Reid said in his report that 37 applications for admittance into the residence were considered; eleven were admitted. The per diem rate was \$15.26.

We attended the wheelchair races and again brought home the cup!

Wedding bells rang again for two of our group in the Autumn. Isabel Buchanan married David Graham in Wesley United Church.

Some of the more hardy went snowmobiling in February. They loved it!

Mr. Hodgson resigned as President of the Board of Directors.

Mr. Roger Wilson was President of the Board in 1976. I wish to quote the following from his annual report: “We have lost the services of one of our dedicated friends. It is he I wish to honour on behalf of all friends and residents. Dr. Harold Cranfield was the first President of the Board of Directors. It is he who largely set the course followed by Bellwoods. He not only raised sums of money from his friends and donated his gifted, administrative services on top of making his mark as a physician, but he continued to serve Bellwoods as Honourary Medical Director until the Spring of 1976 when he took a well deserved break. We shall all miss his devoted and conscientious service to the handicapped adults associated with Bellwoods.”

Mr. Reid left in June. Mr. Arthur Walker filled in until a replacement could be found. Miss Margaret Graeb came to us as Administrator in the fall. She had a background of social work.

The per diem rate increased from \$13.50 to \$16.00.

In her report, the Administrator spoke of Bellwoods’ role in the first decade of its operation and its role in the changing community at large. She says: “We must have a dream of Bellwoods which stirs the young adults among our residents to the changing community about us. The disabled are spearheading a legitimate concern for their right, not to special treatment, but to equal treatment. Equal access to a range of housing alternatives, and equal access to educational and employment opportunities.”

The writer was president of the Council that year.

Tuesday night swimming was still very popular, with a volunteer continuing to subsidize the transportation costs. Bellwoods would be bereft, indeed without its volunteers, who simply add the icing on the cake!

In January we saw the “Ice Follies”. Some of our more courageous types returned to

Georgetown for a snowmobile ride. The hosts invited us to return for a hayride. It still stands out in my memory. We went to a farm near Georgetown. It took two carts to accommodate us all. It was one of those hot days, and as the horses pulled us along lanes, with farm animals and ripening produce on either side, we looked up into the blue sky and were filled with a feeling of God's peace.

In February our Bellwoods square dancers were invited to attend a square dance Marathon in Belleville, Ontario, to raise money for the Chelshire Home which had recently opened in that area. Our group was invited by the March of Dimes to put on a demonstration to encourage the disabled of that area to form a group of their own. The television cameras were busy and the Bellwoods dancers were doing well until Scott McArthur and Donna Lemmond had a rear end collision in the middle of a do-si-do.

Again the Coaster's Athletic Club invited us to their wheelchair rally. Each year the competition was stiffer. We surely wanted to win the cup because if we did, it would be ours for posterity. Besides, the table in our foyer would look lonesome without it! We were determined to return it permanently to that table, and we did! Bellwoods took first, second and third in the sixty metre dash for power chairs. Mary Richardson came third, Ethel Batho came second and Ruth Quinn came first. Ruth's chair was old indeed. It had just come back from the repair shop the day before and returned to the same shop two days later. Two months later, it just gave up the ghost and died. It had experienced its moment of glory!

Allan Kay, Scott McArthur and Harry Halpern won six medals, including two gold at the Ontario Games for the Physically Handicapped.

The Board of Directors made funds available for transportation so that we might attend the World Wheelchair Olympics, held in Etobicoke. None of our residents took part, but we were sure interested spectators.

In September , 1961, in the early years of the Pilot Residence on Kingston Road, the Board of Directors introduced memberships in the Adult Cerebral Palsy Institute of Metropolitan Toronto. This was both a means of raising needed operating funds and making this whole project more widely known.

There were four classes of membership with annual donations of from two to twenty-five dollars. Letters were sent to friends and family by individual Directors and the response was encouraging. By July, 1963, 115 members were enrolled who contributed \$2,070.00 annually.

Since the lowest category of membership was almost ignored, it was decided to eliminate it and raise the upper one to \$100. The details were:

Participating Members	\$ 5.00
Contributing Members	\$ 10.00
Sustaining Members	\$ 25.00
Supporting Members	\$100.00
Group Members	\$100.00

This nucleus of interested and concerned persons grew. By July, 1964, there were 222 members, whose donations provided \$5,445. This established a supporting group and gave confidence and encouragement to both residents and those who carried responsibility for the project. This was especially important during the months of fund-raising and planning for the larger residence, the need for which was now so evident.

The membership secretary reports that in 1976 two hundred and seventy-three members contributed \$8,250.00 to help maintain Bellwoods Park House.

The opening ceremonies and subsequent Open House occasions brought many of the Institute's loyal supporters to see the Residence and meet those disabled adults for whom

it was home. On the tenth anniversary celebration, a great many of the memberships were again a part of that very happy event, held in the garden on a beautiful day.

In the year 1979-80 there were 256 members who contributed generously to Bellwoods and the membership in 1980-81 was 268.

Since the inception of the Cerebral Palsy Telethon, the response has been most generous in support of the advance canvass contributing 47% of the total funds raised in 1982.

Our loyal friends, some of whom have been members for over twenty years, have provided, through their donations, many of the good things which have helped to create a home-like atmosphere at Bellwoods. Their support has been deeply appreciated by both the Board of Directors and the residents. Continuing support of the membership is increasingly important in the implementation of the new plans.

In his report for 1977, Roger Wilson, President of the Board of Directors, speaks of his delight that the residents requested that one of their numbers go on the Board. This request was granted and Hazel Dilworth was the representatives chosen by the residents. She remained for two or three years. It was felt by the residents that we had a more effective voice with our Liaison Committee.

With Mona Winberg as Chair person, a committee was set up to discuss how best to serve handicapped adults in this changing decade. The committee consisted of the Administrator, two residents, two or three members of the Board as well as the chair person.

Miss Christine Lauder resigned from the Board of Directors, and Roger Wilson resigned as President.

In her Administrator's report, Miss Graeb speaks of 1977 as a year of change. She states that an ad hoc committee of residence and staff re-examined the role and purpose of Bellwoods and formulated this statement of purpose:

"The purpose of Bellwoods Park House is to provide residential accommodation to physically handicapped adults who have the capacity and interest to participate and contribute responsibly to the life of the house.

The goal is to provide a sense of belonging and the opportunity to accept responsibility for them selves and others while achieving their potential and becoming as independent as possible."

As a guideline to accomplish the above, a New Directons Committee was formed. This was comprised of representatives from Board, residents, and staff.

Miss Ophelia Beltrand joined our staff as social worker.

Six residents left Bellwoods for independent living in the community. Two returned to their families and one had to go to a nursing home.

Mrs. Graeb said, "New applications are from those needing more extensive care. Extensive support services will be needed to achieve our goals. Good Programs need good funding."

Mrs. Margaret Crouse was President of the Board of Directors for 1978. In her annual report, she stated, "two board members, Mr. Kelley and Mr. Moore, spent many hours writing our by-laws so that we may be in line with the changes that we have come about during the past ten years.

Mrs. Crouse outlined the responsibilities of the Board and complimented Miss Graaeb on the fine job she was doing as Administrator.

She thanked the more than 250 members of the Adult Cerebral Palsy Institute who contributed so generously to the support of Bellwoods.

In her report for that year, Miss Graeb said that we had a full house in 1978, with an occupancy rate of 99.75%. Of the residents, 53.5% were extended care people; the rest resident care.

Miss Graeb also reported that Bellwoods had an admittance waiting list and that the trend of former years had reversed. Male applicants outnumbered female three to one.

To quote Miss Graeb, "In August 1978, Mrs. Joan Dixon, B.Sc.N., with a background of public health nursing, joined our staff on a part-time basis. In a very real sense, she may be considered to be continuing an overall public health responsibility restricted to the smaller community of Bellwoods Park House."

Miss Graeb stated, "I wonder if anyone if anyone fully realizes just how different a task we have embarked on. We have taken sixty-one adults with a generation range, at present, from 18 to 71 years of age, a span of 55 years. They have sixty-one assorted states of physical disability, not one of which is exactly identical with another, but which, in various ways, affects the motor and speech functioning and which are accompanied by extreme degrees of frustration. We have thrust these adults into close association with each other with minimal privacy and with restricted access to main stream community life because of problems of accessibility and costs. And we have said, "Now that we have got you all together here, be happy – be a family'. Well, it doesn,t work that way. Not that easily and certainly not that automatically. It is essential that we take in the whole person."

Hazel Dilworth, President of the Council for 1978, reports a very active year. In her annual report, she tells of a very successful Christmas play in which a number of the

residents took part. Mrs. Wild was in charge, assisted by her fellow teacher, Mrs. Sylvia Naldrett. It was so humorous and was a howling success.

January to March – 1979 ...

I shall quote the President of the Board of Directors, Mrs. Margaret Crouse. “This meeting is necessary because of the change in fiscal year provided by by-law #5 which was passed at our March 5, 1979 meeting.”

To quote the President further, “Bellwoods’ physical structure is now somewhat obsolete. While architects and designers were improving the physical surrounding of the handicapped, society was changing its concepts of the types of environment best for the handicapped. Realizing that the integration of the handicapped and the able bodied in apartment complexes results in a healthier, more realistic society, governments have channeled funds into several projects. This has resulted in many residents leaving Bellwoods to capture independence and freedom by living on their own in apartments in various parts of the city. This new-found freedom has given many residents another chance. We wish them much happiness.”

The President also commented that it was much younger group that was coming in to take the place of those who had left. She asked how much supervision can or must the Institute have over this “now” generation who want to “do their own thing.”

To further quote the President: “the sad change that has come about this year is the loss of some of the original Board members who have decided that they will no longer remain on the Board of Directors. Mona Winberg was part of the original cerebral palsy group that formed back in the 1940’s. Mona has been a hardworking, ever-faithful Board member. Anyone who has seen the new Bellwoods brochure or was part of the Future’s Committee knows that she worked hard and contributed much to Bellwoods. Mrs. Mary Hogarth and Mrs. Elizabeth Addy are synonymous with Bellwoods. It was they who spent years raising funds for this building and hours and hours sewing drapes when this residence first opened. They are leaving the Board of Directors but they can never leave

Bellwoods for they are, to a very great extent, responsible for its existence. Such people, as these three women, are very rare indeed. Although it is not possible for us to tell them how grateful we are for their dedication to Bellwoods, we extend our sincere thanks to them.”

Mrs. Crouse retired as President.

In her Administrator’s report, Miss Graeb felt that the fiscal year 1979-80 had seen the greatest change of all in the population of Bellwoods. Eighteen residents left – more than the combined totals of 1977 and 1978. One-third left for institutional settings due to age or increased disability. Slightly more than one-third returned home after a relatively short stay. Only three left for independent living. Nevertheless, the occupancy rate remained at 97%. Miss Graeb reported that the average age of the new resident coming in was 25.

Louise Turtle was the President of Council for 1979. In her report she says, “Independence, growth and change now seem seem to be what Bellwoods is all about. Independence, growth and change are difficult masters demanding painful sacrifices. Perhaps the short term of our 1979 Council was just one of these sacrifices.”

Mr. Bruce Heyland was President of the Board of Directors for 1980-81. In his annual report he states so clearly what the future course of Bellwoods must be, that we will quote his report here.

“In 1980 we experienced vacancies in the house for the first time and this indicated that perhaps Bellwoods was no longer the preeminent care facility in Metropolitan Toronto. In a word, competition for the physically handicapped has improved in quality and quantity. Critical self-analysis has taken place and Bellwoods is facing significant changes. For the past 12 months, we have experienced defecits every month, which, if allowed to continue, would mean the end of our house. Our present funding is neither adequate nor realistic.

Independence is the goal of the handicapped. There have been a growing number of alternatives for living. Bellwoods in its present form meets many needs, but not the most worthwhile one of quasi-independence.”

To learn further from Mr. Heyland’s report:

“The Board of Directors have set about to do two things: 1) To redefine the objectives of Bellwoods Park House in a new concept of independent living called ‘communal living in a residential setting’. The purpose is to provide quasi-independent living and attendant care services, health protection opportunities and facilities for communal socialization, recreation, crafts work and continued education and, for these individuals whose goal is community living, maximum activity to prepare them for living in the wider community.

This will require a new basis of funding from the provincial government. With that in mind, we have been working with the Department of Community and Social Services. We will begin working sessions with them shortly to formalize the future direction of Bellwoods. We have been very encouraged by COMSOC’s help.

Finally, the changes that we foresee will call for a new infusion of capital, and significant changes in the way we have been operating.

For Bellwoods the message is clear. There is no other course to follow but that of a new beginning. Bellwoods has a history of being on the leading edge of experimentation, beginning, of course, with the Interfraternity Cerebral Palsy Council just after the Second World War. The development of workshops, the Kingston Road operation, and finally Bellwoods itself, were bold new steps. It is time for another bold new step. We ask for your help, guidance and support as we proceed to achieve this goal.”

In the Administrator’s report for 1980-81, Miss Graeb reports that almost one quarter of the total resident population left Bellwoods that year to live in apartments. Twenty-one

residents entered Bellwoods, which represents about triple the average amount. Some came in on a temporary basis. Our occupancy rate stayed at 90.21%. Half were residential; half were extended care.

For the sake of fire prevention, the more disabled were moved to the first floor. This meant a re-shifting of many to accommodate those who were moved. All floors had both men and women in residence.

Miss Graeb felt that this might affect the number of 'heavy care' applicants accepted in the future.

To quote Miss Graeb: "It would be a very great mistake to overlook the Core of stability which we have in our long-term residents. Nineteen individuals have been in Bellwoods since the opening year, 1967. We feel a primary responsibility to this substantial group who, by their words and actions, demonstrate their loyalty to the founding concepts of Bellwoods as their home. All planning for future development must reckon with the legitimate interest of our long-time settlers and must find a creative balance the new and the old, between emerging needs and continuing needs."

As President of Council, Mary Richardson tells of our many social activities.

Mary states that "the biggest highlight, if you will, still whispers along the hall 'changes'. The old order changes, giving place to the new with all its uneasiness, frustrations and challenges."

Mary thanks the Pilot Club of North Toronto for coming monthly to mend our clothes and thanked the Hustlers for the monthly bingos.

She says that the Liaison Committee was reinstated during 1980-81. It was felt that a stronger voice could be heard in committee than a single voice on a Board.

Mary states, "Council gained the right, as yet untested, to live here, be gainfully employed outside, and still pay the same daily rate as though we were on Gains or Family Benefits."

She continues, "Council is a vital link in the administrative system. Once we have accepted and understand the sense of the new direction of changes, once we have stabilized our instability, so to speak, the Residents Council will become a strong communication link between residents, administration and government."

In the year or term of 1981-82, Mr. Bruce Heyland became Chairman of the Board of Directors, which was a new office for our Board. Mary Horan became President of the Board of Directors.

In his annual report for that year, Mr. Heyland tells of further plans for the "New Bellwoods".

At the June 8th annual meeting he reported that "considerable progress has been made. In September 1981, the Board appointed Peter C. Crichton and Associates Inc. to conduct a review of the Board's objectives and to formulate a plan for its implementation. After consultation with staff, residents and government agencies, a renewal and revitalization plan was presented to the residents and staff on March 23, 1982. Summaries of the plan were sent to the members of the Institute, relatives and friends, elected representatives and the press.

This representation was made by Miss Graeb, Peter Crichton, Jim Murray, Bob Robertson, Ed Tyityan and yours truly. It was made March 23rd. Another meeting was called March 26th to answer any and all questions. The plan was received enthusiastically.

Jim Murray is the principal member of the firm of architects, James A. Murray and Murray Marshall, who are appointed architects.

The plan would be to pretty well gut the interior of Bellwoods Park House and build 32 apartments. It will have built-in training and rehabilitation programs in 12 units.”

Mr. Heyland continues, “While all residents will have an opportunity to take part in the developmental programming, a specific number of units will be designated as developmental. Each unit will be equipped with standard appliances and a fully accessible washroom.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has agreed in principle to provide capital funding and the Ontario Ministry of Housing have agreed to provide rent supplements for the planned units. Individual residents will then be responsible for paying rent under the rent geared to income program of the Ontario Ministry of Housing.

The Honourable Frank Drea, Minister of Community and Social Services, has agreed in principle to priority funding for our renewal and revitalization proposal. Support will be funded under the Ministry’s existing support-care program. But for the first time the ministry will be funding transitional rehabilitative living for the physically handicapped. This is a very significant move for the disabled and for Bellwoods Park House. I would like to commend Mr. Drea and his staff for their decision in this respect. It is one for which the disabled consumer in Ontario will be forever grateful.”

In preparation for the forthcoming change, assessments have been carried out under the direction of Mr. Crichton and staff.

Mr. Heyland stated the awareness of the Board that at present there were more residents that could be accommodated in the apartments. His observation is that the average of ten residents a year leave Bellwoods. At this rate the numbers would be no problem. Assurances have been given, many times, that no resident will be left without a suitable place to live.

In the administrator's report, Miss Graeb notes that "the prospect of 'the change' has been stimulating to staff and residents. Nine residents were admitted to Bellwoods and 15 left."

Increased fire safety hardware and fire doors were added to the building.

In his report, Mr. Heyland says that "we have made significant strides towards our goal. During the summer and fall of last year, our consultants, Peter Crichton and Members of your Board worked constantly toward getting the various approvals into legal agreements completing working drawings, tendering the work and arranging the financing."

The Board conducted an intensive search for suitable accommodation for the residents while the renovations were in progress. This was no easy task. To quote Mr. Heyland, "In late November, a proposal was put forward to the Metropolitan Housing Authority for temporary accommodation at 389 Church St. just below Carlton. This proposal was accepted by the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority giving us a temporary home from March to September of 1983 for all our residents.

"By early January, 1983, everything was in place; an undertaking to ensure from Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation for the amount of \$1,386,651.00, mortgage commitment from Dominion Life for five years at 14 1/8%. A signed agreement was obtained from COMSOC to fund Bellwoods under the Ministry Act as of January 11, 1983, and to subsidize the transitional costs in the 1981-82-83 fiscal years; and finally, a signed agreement with the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority for the use of 389 Church St."

The residents moved out of Bellwoods Park House and into 389 Church Street on two different days. Those needing less care moved March 7, 1983; the rest on March 9. The preparation for this move was enormous. Imagine, each resident had to sort an accumulation of perhaps nearly sixteen years for some. They had to decide which was

“junk” and which was “treasure”. The staff had to do the same for each department in which they worked.

Some residents, especially the younger ones, were excited by the prospect of change. Some of the older people were very apprehensive and frightened. Although it was explained many times, the question still arose, “Why must it be! Why can’t the building stay as it is?” As explanations were given again, sometimes by staff, sometimes by a fellow resident, reason took over and all was well.

Miss Graeb left Bellwoods Park House in September 1982, and Mrs. Karen Robinson came to us in January 1983 as Executive Director. To quote Mr. Heyland: “She has been an indefatigable leader from the very moment she set foot inside 300 Shaw St.”

Mrs. Karen Robinson, in her report, says: “As of the end of January 1983, we had a total of 41 residents in the house.”

As she assessed the Bellwoods situation, she set two main goals.

They are:

1. “To assist the residents in making the transition from an institutional model of living to a more independent style of living wherein they will learn as much as possible to satisfy their own needs with the assistance of Support Care Services and community resources.
2. To provide improved public relations both inside and outside the house through developing:
 - a) A co-operative and working relationship between residents and staff
 - b) A good communication network between the staff, the residents and the outside community
 - c) A well-maintained and smoothly-operating physical environment.”

Mrs. Karen Robinson is Project Manager of the renovations with the assistance of Mr. Ed Tyityan, Vice-President of the Board of Directors.

Mary Richardson was President of Council for 1982-83. She says, “RENOVATION was the word: worry and planning and meetings. Meetings were the action. The Liaison Committee met regularly and, in June of 1982, came under the chairmanship of one of your Board Members, Lyle Kersey. Most, if not all, of the troublesome worries and highlights of the CHANGE were discussed at committee level, and subsequently taken by Lyle to Board level. It is hard for everyone to measure the value of this Liaison Committee, but truly it is a strong, vital link between the residents and Board of Directors. Residents concerns from management to manners, from advocates to windows were given equal attention by the chairman.

Mary continues, “Peter Crichton, our Project Manager, set up an ‘office’ in one of the empty rooms on the first floor and quickly gained our confidence and respect as the days went by. Peter always had time to listen to each individual whether by appointment or just ‘dropping in’. Every resident was assessed mentally, physically and functionally, and asked to explain their immediate and future goals in life. Help was promised to try to fulfill these goals. Advocates were recommended for the needs in this area. Handicapped adults need advocates in the same way as handicapped children do, but advocates are harder to find for adults.”

We had a wedding in 1983! Resident Donna Edwards married Arthur MacAuley in August. It was a beautiful and touching ceremony held in Our Lady of Lourdes church. A number of residents and staff attended the ceremony. Mary Swailes, a resident, was a bridesmaid.

In speaking of 389 Church St., our temporary quarters, Mary comments, “We are a little cramped for space but we are managing, and quite well too. There have been some inconveniences such as sharing one toilet with 13 people for a short period of time. We have had the water shut off completely for 12 hours, and the hot water for four days. The

elevators have refused to let us off at our floors. And our Attendant Care staff got lost for a week within the seeming maze of units!”

The staff, all of them, have been wonderful throughout this period of change. It has been hard on them, too, and yet they have been so patient with us all.

I can do no better to conclude this history than to quote the final paragraph of Mary Richardson’s 1982-83 Resident’s Report.

“This change at Bellwoods to apartment living has forced some serious thinking about the style of accommodation for disabled adults. Serious thinking by people who have never had to think seriously in over thirty years! Change for the sake of change is of benefit to no one. Change for the better benefits all. Some of us will be going back to Bellwoods in a new capacity as a tenant in a self-contained apartment. Some of us will be entering chronic care hospitals as our level of care has reached a new plateau. Some of us will be entering another, smaller, group home. Some of us will be striking out on our own. Who can truly say who needs what? The truth is that all types of accommodation are needed for the physically handicapped. We must have the freedom of choice if we are to live up to our potential.

“Are the choices there for us? Is society ready?”

“We, the residents of Bellwoods Park House, have so many people to thank for the fact that we have had a good home all these years. We cannot even pretend to name all of you; however, we do wish to thank all the past Board of Directors as well as the present Board. A very warm thank you to all the members of the Adult Cerebral Palsy Institute of Metropolitan Toronto. Some of you have never even seen us; through your insight and caring, you have caught the vision of our need in the early days. Your contributed support through the years has meant so much to us. To our volunteers, past and present, we say thank you. Our staff, present and past, have walked beside us through rough and

smooth waters. God bless you. Without all of the aforementioned groups and many more, most of us would be living in very different circumstances.”

As the resident who was the first to enter the little pilot project at 718 Kingston Road, and has had the outstanding opportunities which Bellwoods Park House has offered, the writer has solid faith in a bright future. We are going back to our own apartments with 24-hour support care and we are oh, so fortunate and grateful.

