



VICTORIAN BRANCH REPORT

The year 1977-78, although starting somewhat slowly was a very active one. The Victorian Committee chose for its theme "Juvenile Justice" and this has proved extremely successful. The programme was as follows:—

- October — Mr. Bill Newton, Administrator, West Heidelberg Community Welfare Centre. *Problems of disadvantaged people in the community, from children to the elderly:*
the concept of powerlessness and the Centre's attempts to deal with it.
- November — Mr. Chris Goddard, Social Worker, Children's Hospital. *Child Abuse* - the need for education for both the individuals involved and the community at large.
- December — Visit to Allambie Reception Centre and barbeque in Wattle Park for some of the children from Allambie.
- February — Ms. Cheryl McKinna, Lecturer, Melbourne State College. *Schools and Delinquency* — schools should be accountable for their actions, and look at what they do which might contribute to student's delinquency. Commentary by Mrs. Nettie Jenkin, Psychologist, Victorian Education Department.
- March — Full day seminar — La Trobe University.
Mr. Dennis Challenger, Criminology Department, Melbourne University, *Statistics about Young Offenders in Victoria.*
Dr. John Seymour, Australian Institute of Criminology, *Juvenile Aid Panels in New Zealand, Scotland and Australia* — their advantages and disadvantages.
Dr. Richard Griffin, Psychiatrist, Wellington House Youth Centre, *Services required for pre-delinquent young people.*
Senior Sergeant now Inspector W. Horman, Victoria Police Force, *Police/school liaison and police youth work in the U.S. and Victoria.*
- April — Ms. Sue Bothmann, Fitzroy Legal Service. *The Youth Legal Service in Melbourne.* — its establishment and subsequent failure.
Mr. John Finlayson, Community Worker, Pines Forest Estate. *Young people and their dealings with officialdom.*
- May — Mort Stamm, Legal Studies Department, La Trobe University. *Childrens Courts and their formalization.* — the Kentucky experience related to the situation in Victoria. Commentator the Honourable Haddon Storey, State Attorney-General.
- June — Mr. Bruce Anderson, Superintendent, Malmsbury Youth Training Centre — *Problems of Institutionalized Youth — Who is to Blame?*

These papers are currently being printed and will be available in bound form for \$5.00, very shortly.

The year 78-79 has been a satisfactory one, but not our best. The theme for the year "Institutions — Their Role in Crime Prevention". In choosing the word "institutions" we sought to use the term in its widest sense and not confine our speakers to aspects of physical containment.

Our programme for that year was as follows:—

- 17 July, 1978 Annual General Meeting
Speaker: Mr. Ward McNally
Topic: Making Good
Mr. McNally is a reformed offender and his address was both moving and humorous, but left us with much food for thought.
- 25 September, 1978 Screening of the film Attica.
A documentary about the uprising in the Attica State Prison in New York in 1971. Introduced by Governor H. Buckley, Pentridge Prison who also led discussion afterwards.
- 16 October 1978 Mr. B.D. Bodna, Director-General of the now Department of Community Welfare Services.
Topic: Trends in Correctional Systems.
Mr. Bodna's address dealt with developments in Correctional Services in Victoria in more recent years also some aspects of future developments.
- 16 November, 1978 Dr. Jacob Sokol, Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine, University of California.
Topic: The psychological, medical and pathological aspects of sniffing solvents.
Dr. Sokol drew on his experience in the USA has his address very forcibly brought home to those present, the seriousness and very real dangers associated with what we tend to call glue sniffing.
- 11 December, 1978 Miss Pat Brown, Senior Psychologist, Melbourne Children's Court Clinic.
Topic: A Model of delinquency — treatment and prevention issues.
Miss Brown who has had a long experience with the Children's Court presented some refreshing views on the work being done with children. She was also able to make some interesting comparisons with China, a country she had visited shortly before addressing us.
- 19 February, 1979 Mr. George Madden, Public Solicitor.
Topic: Problems of Remand Prisoners, Now and in the future.
Mr. Madden's address highlighted many problems in this area which are not generally known. Problems not only for the remandee but also for those who have contact with the unconvicted prisoner.
- 19 March, 1979 Governor H. Buckley, Pentridge.
Senior Prison Office, P. Hannay, Pentridge, Chief Youth Officer, R. Sevier, Turana.

Topic: Working in a Correctional Institution.
These three very experienced officers briefly addressed themselves to the changes that have occurred in both inmates and their treatment. Then they formed a panel and completely answered many questions from those present.

19 April,
1979

Mr. J. Armstrong, Security Officer, Correctional Services Division, Department of Community Welfare Services.

Mr. D. Payne, Project Architect, Public Works Department.

Topic: Secure Detention — The Philosophy and Problems.

Both speakers have closely associated with the design and construction of the new security complex at Pentridge. Both gave a very comprehensive resume of needs both of prisoners and the people responsible for their secure custody.

2 & 3 June,
1979

Ballarat/Ararat Excursion/Seminar.

Forty six members and friends departed by bus from Melbourne on Saturday morning and travelled to Langi Kal Kal. After lunch at the Centre the Deputy Superintendent, Ross Ford, addressed the group and later a number of trainees escorted groups through the centre and explained the various functions and activities.

On Saturday evening David McKenzie, now Superintendent at Malsbury Youth Training Centre, addressed the group. His address included comparisons between the resources and facilities available to young offenders in Victoria and those in various parts of the USA. David felt we compared very favourably.

On Sunday morning we travelled to Ararat Prison. Governor Kearney kindly arranged for his staff to give us a guided tour of the prison which allowed us to see the wide range of activities and industries undertaken by prisoners.

21 June,
1979

Topic:

From the prison we travelled to J. Ward where through the courtesy of Dr. Currie, Psychiatrist Superintendent our group was able to see the hospital and learnt of its functions and roles. Before seeing the hospital we were addressed by Mr. Jocelyn and a senior member of the nursing staff.

Our weekend concluded with a most enjoyable luncheon arranged by the Ararat Branch of the Probation Officers Association of Victoria.

Mrs. Pauline Butler, Senior Social Worker, Mont Park Psychiatric Hospital.

The Institutionalisation of Psychiatric Patients. Advantages and Disadvantages.

Mrs. Butler drew on her 16 years work at Mont Park and traced developments and improvements during that period. The average period of hospitalisation is much shorter and the percentage of returns less. Our speaker left us with the thought that there is still much to be done, particularly in the area of public acceptance of psychiatric illness.

The branch continues to grow, our current membership standing at 71 and we are financially sound. Hopefully the sales of our Juvenile Justice Report will improve our financial position further.

While we had some problems with the lack of a Secretary over the past year, we have now both a Secretary and an Assistant Secretary and we are looking forward to another successful year. Our programme for the coming year is to be based around the theme "Crime Prevention — Whose Responsibility?" On 20th October, the Branch is running an all day seminar at La Trobe University on the proposed New Remand Centre for Victoria, while it doesn't fall in within the overall theme, it commitment left over from the last year's programme.

*Sybil Hardie
Victorian Representative
National Executive*

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