

"A Mighty Flood" is a fascinating tribute to one of Waterloo Region's most revered institutions. This fifty-year chronicle of House of Friendship is a richly detailed account of its development from tiny mission to major community service. In its honest treatment of those years, the book also offers the reader spiritual, historical and sociological perspectives on our community and its people.

House of Friendship is a caring, creative, responsive and I think, unique Christian organization. "A Mighty Flood" depicts, through the use of interviews, minutes, records, photographs and anecdotes how "The House" was founded, grew and prospered. Now as it prepares for the future, House of Friendship can reflect on this history and be justifiably proud of its past.

Phil Johnston,  
Commissioner of Social Services  
Region of Waterloo

This history of House of Friendship of Kitchener Ontario documents the response of a community to the physical and spiritual needs of strangers and disadvantaged individuals within their midst--regardless of race or creed. The author traces the development of a fledgling rescue mission started in faith by a Jewish Christian immigrant, supported by a local inter-denominational group of dedicated Christians, to its present stature as a vital component in the Kitchener-Waterloo social network. This engaging account of compassionate men and women as they ministered to the needy these past fifty years will motivate the reader to continue supporting "a torrent of doing good".

Lorna L. Bergey  
Secretary  
Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario

From its humble beginning, House of Friendship has weathered difficult times in its role as "Big Brother" to many less fortunate members of our community. The tireless efforts of a multitude of volunteers, with the initiative of concerned directors, have accomplished many projects with a faith that has left an indelible mark on those they have unselfishly served.

A heart warming, inspiring Christian account depicting characteristics that are beacons for those who will continue to serve on behalf of House of Friendship.

Dominic Cardillo  
Mayor  
City of Kitchener

A MIGHTY FLOOD

# A MIGHTY FLOOD



THE HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP STORY

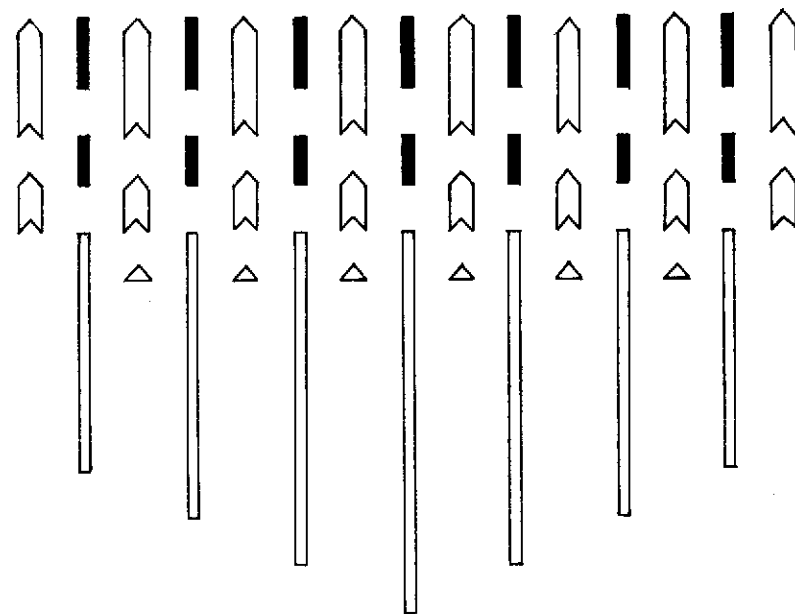


FERNE BURKHARDT

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THE HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP STORY



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# **A MIGHTY FLOOD: The House of Friendship Story**

**By Ferne Burkhardt**

The history of the House of Friendship in Kitchener, Ontario is sponsored by the board of directors to mark the 50th anniversary in 1989. The board expresses appreciation to the author and to others who provided assistance.

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House of Friendship, Kitchener

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*"I want to see a mighty flood of justice,  
a torrent of doing good." Amos 5:24*

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To my mother, aged 91,  
who understands human dignity  
and cares for people



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## Author's acknowledgements

When I was invited to consider writing the 50-year House of Friendship story, I knew almost immediately that I wanted the job. The project held the excitement and intrigue of discovery, the delight of story, the fascination of interesting people, the challenge of communication.

It also promised the daunting task of writing a "popular history," which seemed a contradiction in terms. How could the documented history of an institution have popular appeal? The words themselves seemed designed to send dozens of potential readers out to jog in the rain or even to clean the garage. But any notions that this book could simply be a story that side-stepped facts and figures quickly faded when I was gently reminded that "it will be the only history that we have."

Even story would not be simple since confidentiality and respect for the right of anonymity play a major role in the House of Friendship scene. Furthermore, many of the original lead players could not give an account of the earliest days since they lived only in records and memories.

I knew about House of Friendship for most of my life. I have childhood recollections of reports of transients, chapel services, Jewish evangelism, and street meetings. I have clear images, however, of bushels of produce from our garden, and of filling rows of gleaming glass sealers, some of which my mother always set aside "for the House of Friendship."

Years later my own family became part of the Mannheim Mennonite Church where there are many links to the agency – staff, board members, volunteers, as well as financial support.

I felt that I had more than a passing acquaintance with House of Friendship, more than superficial familiarity. But this project gave me the opportunity to walk through the doors, explore the rooms, throw back the curtains, and let the world look inside. It allowed me to introduce the wonderful people who breathed life into the agency during half a century.

I spent many delightful and richly rewarding hours listening as people dug into the attics of their minds, dusted off long-forgotten images, anecdotes, and emotions – sometimes with joy, sometimes with pain – and shared them with me. The

most difficult task was choosing, as one must, which to include and what to leave out. Some of the choices may be wrong, and for those decisions I take full responsibility.

But the book itself is the product of the efforts of many people – as is typical of things that get done around House of Friendship. I only regret that I cannot name them all.

Some must be identified, however. My profound thanks is due first to Melissa Miller, John Harder, and David Kroeker who read several drafts of the manuscript and struggled with me to complete the final copy. Only the writer can fully appreciate the value of their editorial skills.

I wish to thank Martin Buhr, who was always accessible and ready to assist in more ways than can be listed, for his encouragement and support at many points along the way. Robert Shantz, Brice Balmer, and David Kroeker deserve much credit for guiding the project through production within critical time constraints, as does Kevin Jutzi for designing the cover and assisting in overall design of the book.

Mary Little's organizing of all kinds of office services and particularly her computer coaching (she even made house calls on weekends) are greatly appreciated. Mary and members of her staff – Jan Bowman, Pauline Buhr, Patricia Shields, and June Weigel – compiled and photocopied much research material and transcribed hours of taped interviews for which I am deeply grateful.

I wish also to express sincere thanks to House of Friendship residents – at the hostel, Cramer House, Kiwanis Youth Residence, and "174" – to other clients, volunteers, staff members, and program directors for allowing me to visit, to share meals, to sit in on activities, to observe the House of Friendship community in action, to feel its pulse. The experience was a privilege.

Finally, thanks to my husband and family, my church family, and many friends for tolerating great intrusions on time that might otherwise have been devoted to them. Also to fellow staff members at *Mennonite Reporter* who gave me the freedom to take time out and to juggle work schedules when necessary.

I hope and pray that the efforts of all who made this book possible will in some small way contribute to an ongoing flood of justice, a torrent of doing good.

Ferne Burkhardt, January 1989.

## Introduction

Driving by the House of Friendship's Charles Street complex, as I often have in the past decade, brings a mix of emotions for me.

Part of me wants to shout "alleluia." Here, at least, is an institution that cares in a concrete way for the poor and disenfranchised of Waterloo Region.

But another side of me wants to cry out in anguish at a way of life in this province that creates so many victims – single parents who have to spend their food money on rent, working poor who just can't make ends meet and families with small children on social assistance who can't save a dollar for those unexpected emergencies.

A recent study of the social welfare system of Ontario showed us that half a million people in this province are suffering from the effects of sub-standard housing, poor diet and less than adequate clothing. Just about half of these people are children.

As a community, we ought to hang our collective heads in shame over these kinds of statistics; and we ought to wield some political clout to change the plight of many of our poor people – the so-called "losers" of our society.

Few of us do, of course. We wring our hands in anger and then go about our insulated daily lives--dining out at our favourite restaurants or relaxing in our comfortable homes, perhaps throwing an extra dollar in the collection plate from time to time to ease our consciences.

Amid the contrasting images of rich and poor in our community, House of Friendship sits as a model of consistent, practical religion at work.

This broad network or community of churches, municipalities, service clubs, staff and volunteers understands better than most of us the conditions suffered by many of our hurting brothers and sisters.

It is a realistic approach that this multi-faceted agency takes. As executive director Martin Buhr puts it in these pages, "The House of Friendship work will never be done. The challenge will be to maintain a holistic model of Christian ministry that is

sensitive, responsive, and adaptable to however the future social context unfolds."

A few years ago, when I was writing for the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, a very proud Martin Buhr took me around the Charles Street complex. It had just been renovated and everything shone – from the sleeping quarters to the kitchen. I was struck that day by the amount of time and energy that had been given to making the surroundings amenable. His concern for the dignity of the clients of House of Friendship has stayed with me ever since.

This concern is come by honestly. The first director of House of Friendship, Joseph Cramer, was a generous man. We learn in these pages that "he was known to share the only sandwich he has with a hungry man and to give his own socks or coat to someone who has none."

House of Friendship has logged 50 years of dedication; dedication that comes alive in this book under the inspired pen of Ferne Burkhardt. I'll repeat little of that history here so as not to rob her work of its freshness. But suffice to say, you will find in these pages a very different House of Friendship in 1939. It has grown and adapted with every new social wrinkle. It is an agency of practical love that has never stopped really listening to the ever-shifting hurts and hopes of its community.

House of Friendship is far more than the complex of houses on Charles Street in Kitchener, perhaps its most visible manifestation. It is a myriad of programs reaching out to single parents, alcoholics, transient men, unemployed young people, ex-psychiatric patients, the working poor and families on welfare.

It runs a program of social service and its own brand of gentle spiritual assistance.

I first heard of House of Friendship soon after my sister moved to Kitchener from Toronto. She was a single parent with two small children. She had ancient appliances and couldn't get one of them to work. A friend told her about the House of Friendship's minor repair program. She was delighted to get her stove working but was even more impressed with the dedication of the fellow who came to do the work.

That's the way it has always been with House of Friendship. As Burkhardt tells us, the move over the years to a professional staff, a million dollar budget and the diverse programs has not changed the environment at this house for the disenfranchised.

In the beginning, House of Friendship was part evangelism and part social service. I have to confess to some discomfort in reading about the early mission to the Jews in this area, well intentioned as it may have been. But has House of Friendship moved so far from evangelism today? A story I heard recently may help answer the question.

Campus minister Tony Campolo of Pennsylvania was visiting a late night restaurant when he overheard a prostitute telling her friends that the next day was her birthday. "So what," they told her. Campolo was so moved that he set about planning a full-scale birthday party for the prostitute for the next night. After it was all over, the restaurant owner came over to Campolo and said: "I bet you belong to some church." Tony Campolo's response was one we who call ourselves Christians should not forget. He said: "I belong to the church that throws parties for prostitutes at three in the morning." The restaurant owner's response was equally critical. "If I could find that church, I would join it in the morning."

The churches of the Region of Waterloo have been the spirit behind House of Friendship for the past 50 years. It was the Mennonites who got it started but, as it has been with so many of their projects, they soon invited their sister churches to come aboard. Churches, like Highland Road United where I attend, are involved by collecting food for hampers, sending volunteers to befriend transient men or by just plain taking their stewardship seriously by giving regularly from their budgets.

House of Friendship, then, is better than holding an evangelistic rally at the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium 365 nights a year. House of Friendship says: Here is a community of churches that truly cares about the poorest of our community. House of Friendship is our community, both its churches and its secular groups, at its best.

It's no wonder people are flocking here from Toronto and elsewhere. It's more than just our house prices. And, I believe, more than one family has found its place of worship here by watching to see how that congregation reaches out to the disadvantaged through places like House of Friendship.

I dream of a day when House of Friendship won't be necessary; I dream of a day when as a society we decide that all will have equal opportunity, when we move from charity to justice. That would eliminate a good amount of House of Friendship's work, though perhaps not all of it. However, that

day does not seem to be around the corner. We don't possess that kind of political will.

So we must continue to have the House of Friendship in our midst. No, we must continue to **be** the House of Friendship, reaching out to hurting people in our midst. We can do no less as a compassionate people. As the prophet says, "Let justice flow like water and integrity like an unfailing stream."

Congratulations to House of Friendship on its first 50 years of ministry. Shalom!

John Asling  
March, 1989.

(John Asling was the religion writer for the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* for nine years ending in 1988. He is currently Mission Action/Communication Officer for the Hamilton Conference of the United Church of Canada.)

## PART I



# The First 50 Years

## Building partnerships: A flood of justice begins



"Nobody."

"Next of kin?" repeats the caseworker, pen poised over the form on his desk. He doesn't look up.

"I don't have any," comes the reply. Mario\* is in his twenties, clean shaven, wearing worn blue jeans and a T-shirt. His feet, inside boots that have travelled many miles, shift under his chair.

"No mother or father? Brothers or sisters?" asks the caseworker.

"No."

"Uncles or aunts?" His pause draws no response.

"Friends?"

"No."

The cigarette, concealed in Mario's awkwardly curved fingers, slips from his hand. He quickly covers it with the other, looking steadily at the caseworker.

"It would be helpful to have someone's name and address," continues the caseworker. "In case of emergency."

When his suggestion brings only silence, the caseworker tries once more. "You've been in group homes. Maybe you remember a social worker."

Mario's gaze moves to the office window. His eyes look far beyond the louvered slits of morning sky.

"Yeah. There was one," he replies. "When I was about 14." He remembers her name. She might still be in the city where she had worked seven years earlier. She might even remember Mario, but would she care about him anymore? Would anyone care?

*Mario wasn't the first person, alone and destitute, to come to the House of Friendship. They had started coming 50 years ago.*

The caseworker completes the routine paperwork, sketching in details of Mario's recent moves, jobs, and means of support. He reviews the basic services of House of Friendship, requirements for temporary residence, and suggests counselling. After inviting Mario to join a spiritual discovery group, the caseworker hands him a few quarters – coffee money for the day. As Mario opens the office door to leave, the caseworker reminds him to pick up a job search form at the front desk. A map of the city identifies the industrial areas – the most likely sources for work.

Mario is one of about a dozen men to see a caseworker at the hostel this morning. Now, at nine o'clock, most of the men who have slept there the night before have left for the day.

In the basement kitchen, head cook Sandra Wall studies the carefully crafted menus on her desk, making adjustments to accommodate banquet leftovers dropped off late the night before. Next to the kitchen, in a cool storage room housing several large freezers, a volunteer packages doughnuts from a huge bag of "day-olds" from a doughnut shop. He adds some to emergency food hampers that he is assembling from standard stock on the shelves lining the room. Requisition slips for the hampers come from the office two floors above where the food hamper worker takes the calls. The telephone is seldom silent for more than a few minutes.

*The first House of Friendship, on King Street East in Kitchener, Ontario had no well-stocked freezer to draw from when hungry people entered its open door. It did not even have a refrigerator or a telephone.*

### **Covering the gap between cheques**

Now, 50 years later, the House of Friendship telephone provides a direct link between the needy and a source of help. Calls for food hampers peak two days before family allowance payments are due to arrive. For some families groceries and cash never quite stretch to cover the gap from one cheque to the next.

A social worker from another agency calls on behalf of some clients. The family has nothing to eat. Would House of Friendship provide a hamper for two adults and five children, two of whom are teenage boys? They can come to pick up the food if the hostel will supply it.

Valerie,\* a young mother in a subsidized apartment, needs formula and diapers. A warm, friendly voice on the House of Friendship phone assures her both are available and can be delivered that afternoon.

Another family has only a little money, no food, and an overdue phone bill. House of Friendship will not pay the phone bill, the worker tells the caller, but it will send a food hamper. The family can use what money it has to pay the phone bill, thus keeping the service while it attempts to sort out other problems.

Emergency food hampers alone are not adequate help for Sara,\* a struggling single parent. The roof on Sara's house leaks. It needs replacement to prevent even more extensive damage and expense. But a roofing company's estimate is far beyond what Sara can squeeze from her welfare cheque.

House of Friendship's loan officer had explained to her earlier that she could not authorize a loan for the amount Sara needed. Repaying such a loan, even interest-free, would simply compound her financial problems. That wouldn't help. But there might be another way.

A breakdown of the costs identifies the actual price of materials. Together the officer and Sara work out a plan. A careful analysis and tightening of Sara's budget will free a few dollars a month. Those dollars could eventually repay an interest-free loan for the materials.

Sara's next challenge is to find friends willing to remove the rotting roof and clean up the mess. If she can organize that phase of the job, House of Friendship will buy the materials and find experienced volunteers to help put on the new roof. Sara will repay House of Friendship's direct cost at an agreed upon monthly rate. A few days later she calls to report that she has completed the first phase of her part of the bargain.

### **Motorists don't notice**

The phone keeps ringing as motorists whizz down Charles Street from Kitchener's core, past the buildings in the Benton to Eby Street block. Few pay attention to the "House of Friendship" sign on the large hostel building with its well-manicured front yard. Nor do they appear to notice five other buildings blending into the streetscape, all serving a particular purpose in this many-faceted ministry to disadvantaged persons. They would be surprised to learn that besides the hostel for transient men, food hampers, interest-free loans, various community development

and support programs, House of Friendship operates homes in Kitchener for ex-psychiatric patients, for men who can no longer work, and a youth residence for teenage boys.

In the heart of the city of Waterloo, many are unaware that they are passing by two homes for carefully selected inhabitants operated by House of Friendship. The residents are alcoholics at various stages of recovery. One building is a halfway house for men whose lives have been troubled by alcohol abuse, but who have chosen to try the path of sobriety. Successful residents graduate to the other, a three-quarter house offering independent community living with a degree of support.

These homes, like all House of Friendship residences, offer counselling, recreation, and spiritual discovery programs besides food and lodging.

*There were no sophisticated programs or professional counsellors for the "drunks" and "bums," as they were called in earlier days, who wandered into the first House of Friendship in Kitchener's King Street business district. Many of these visitors – almost always men – were outsiders with little hope of entering society's mainstream, but at House of Friendship they found people who cared, people who gave them food and offered spiritual help. Others, like the immigrants from war-ravished Europe, many of them Jews who had come for a variety of reasons, were outsiders too.*

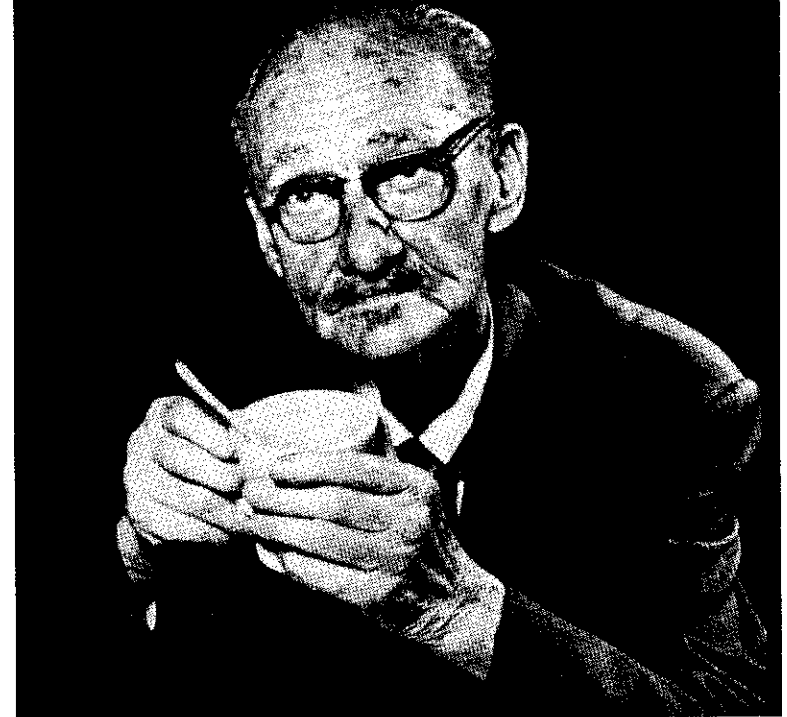
Five decades later, House of Friendship clients, including alcoholics and transients, continue to be society's outsiders. Having experienced shattered dignity and self-respect, they scarcely dare hope that change is possible.

For some it is possible. Amy,\* a young mother, reflects on her life and how one House of Friendship program provided a turning point for her:

Somehow, if you let it, life can really take away your confidence. It usually doesn't give it back. You forget how to recognize it and you blend into the scenery. You don't notice until you are trapped. Being always ordered or blamed, rightly or wrongly, destroys your trust in yourself. If your opinion doesn't matter, you feel hopeless.

One day I noticed people in my Live and Learn group were asking me for my opinion. Someone with a problem thought I could help. I started to feel I had some self-worth after all. I counted for something!

# 30 years of concern.



*Elderly men were the most frequent guests in the early years. K-W Record photo.*

For 50 years House of Friendship has helped disadvantaged persons take small steps to regain a measure of self-esteem. It has also logged impressive statistics of meals served, beds filled, time volunteered, and dollars contributed. Workers support clients, pointing them in a direction that holds promise but recognizing their right to make choices – even self-destructive ones. They endeavour to respect each individual's dignity. Such respect and



freedom to choose place a measure of responsibility on the House of Friendship client. Worker and client, in effect, enter into a kind of partnership.

Through the years volunteers have been an essential component in this partnership. They wield considerable influence because they are not professionals. They gain neither wealth nor prestige from their work, nor do they represent powerful government agencies. As ordinary people they are less threatening and from their position of relative weakness they can often more easily win trust. At times they find "Welcome" signs on doors to people's lives while professionals need to work hard to get the "Do not enter" signs taken down.

Why does the House of Friendship community pour so much time, energy, and care into serving the socially disadvantaged? What motivates its people, from the chief executive officer through the ranks to volunteers, board members, and constituent supporters?

Simply put, it is the love of God and the biblical command to love others that makes them want to share that love and to try in whatever way they can to bring justice to humankind. Individually, their efforts bring small successes like little springs bubbling up in scattered corners of a parched desert. In partnership, the springs become streams, and the network of merging streams begins "a flood of justice, a torrent of doing good," to quote the Old Testament prophet Amos.

At the half century mark, there are many partners in the network besides the people who work at House of Friendship and the board to which they are responsible. Churches in the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo and many others – particularly Mennonite churches – in towns and rural areas throughout the Region of Waterloo and beyond have a long history of support. More recently, public and private schools have collected mountains of canned foods in special drives, and have even come up with creative ideas like calling for cans of beans or fruit juice for House of Friendship as admission to a school party.

The partnership also extends to local service clubs, social agencies, and federal, provincial, regional and civic governments.

*Some of these alliances would have been unlikely, even unwelcome, in the institution's early days. At that time Mennonite leaders cautioned their people about links to government and secular organizations; their churches were the primary supporters of House of Friendship. A few other churches in the downtown area, several businesses, and scattered individuals also made contributions.*



*Students at local schools help collect food. K-W Record photo.*

It is somewhat surprising that the committee first appointed by a Mennonite conference to investigate assisting the fledgling House of Friendship went immediately, hat in hand, to city officials. At its first meeting on October 18, 1939, the committee passed the following resolution:

Ten days later, the "Advisory Committee," which became the founding board of House of Friendship, was in place and "Brother Derstine reported a very favourable interview with the Mayor." By the committee's November 4 meeting, it had received the city's cheque for \$110. It took two more weeks for a church, Kitchener's First Mennonite where C.F. Derstine was pastor, to chip in with \$15.00. By December 2, Bethany Mennonite Brethren in Christ (now Missionary) promised \$5.00 a month toward rent. The Sunday school at Erb Street Mennonite – J.B. Martin's church in Waterloo – pledged \$5.00 a month toward the support of Ilda Bauman, a House of Friendship worker and an Erb Street member.

The story began in 1938 ...

Names marked with an asterisk (\*) in this chapter and throughout the book are fictitious, but the stories are true with real or composite characters.

## Welcoming the stranger : The Cramer years (1939-1949)



It is too early for office workers, but they seldom pass his door anyway. Victoria Pelz, a claims adjuster at the Economical Mutual Insurance Company, comes for lunch sometimes, but she is the exception. Nevertheless, he stands at the door ready to welcome all who need acceptance, a place to belong.

Some transients begin arriving for lunch shortly before noon. They come early to talk or to spend time in the reading room. Here magazines like *National Geographic*, Bibles, books, and pamphlets in nearly a dozen languages are available. For those who have come to Canada recently, finding reading material in Russian, Hungarian or Polish or finding a person who can talk to them in their own language is comforting in this country where they are still strangers.

The pattern is repeated in late afternoon except that some men come as late as they dare. They want to eat, but some also hope to miss the evangelistic service that always precedes supper. There are veterans of the Boer War and World War I who count on getting handouts at homes they know well along the road. But in Kitchener in 1939, instead of money or a plate of food at somebody's back door, transients often receive a ticket to a meal at this mission in the city's core. The mission director has warned citizens through the local paper not to give money to transients because they will likely spend it on beer or liquor. These wanderers always find a welcome at the mission unless they arrive intoxicated or cause a disturbance. Then the director will call the police.

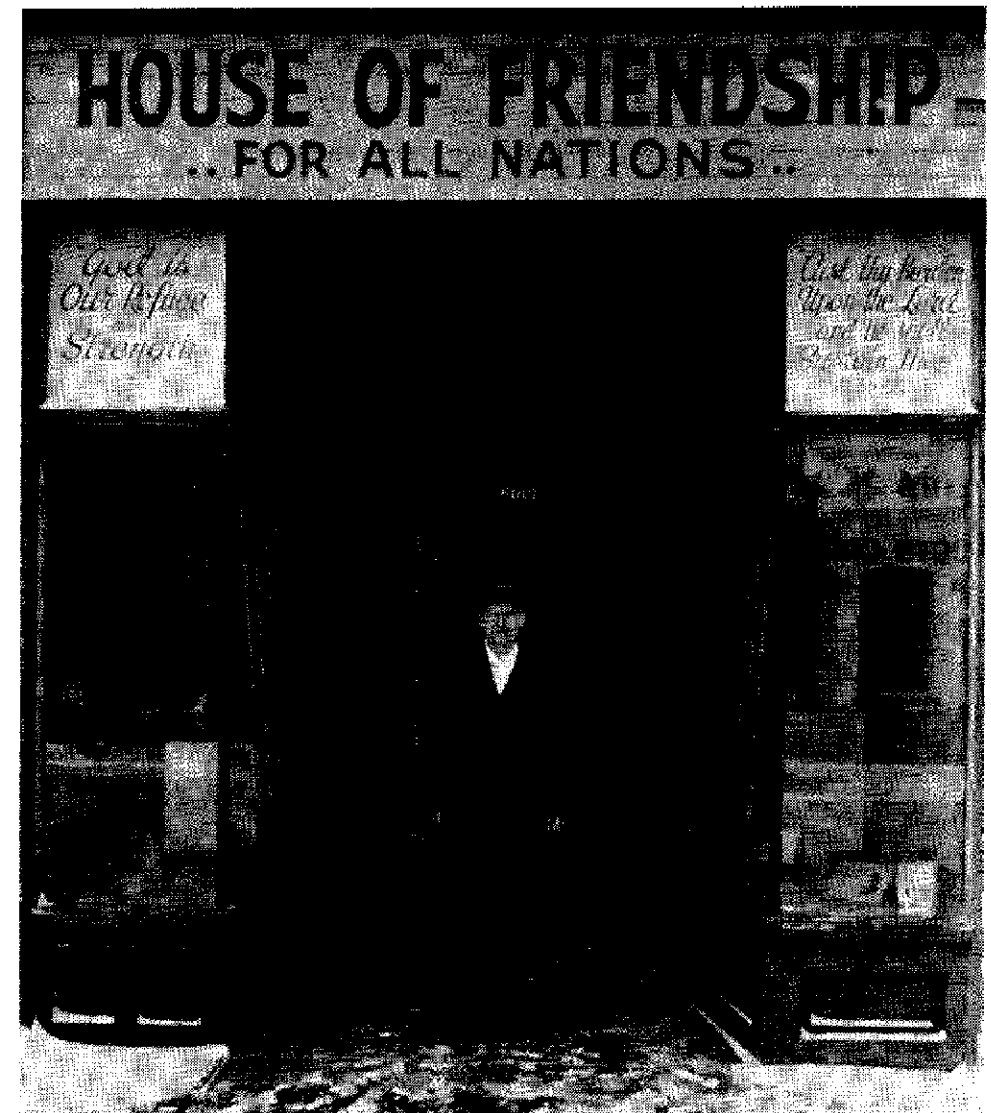
But the transients like this man. They feel his kindness and compassion despite the penetrating black eyes that seem to look right through them. He believes religion "should be doing first and talking afterwards." He is known to share the only sandwich he has with a hungry man, and to give his own socks or coat to someone who has none. He has little enough himself. In fact, when he started the mission he was almost as destitute as the first callers who came from across Canada and from the other side of the ocean.

The sign above the mission door reads, "House of Friendship For All Nations." Director Joseph Cramer stands in the doorway ready to greet everyone warmly, regardless of race or creed.

### Native of Russia

Joseph Cramer was born on July 13, 1892, in Kiev, to a wealthy Jewish family. His father, a druggist, also owned a mill. Although glimpses of his personal past are exceedingly rare, he once told a co-worker at House of Friendship that, as a child, his feet were hardly out of bed before a servant was there with his slippers. Young Joseph reportedly studied at universities in Austria and Romania, graduating in philosophy. He spoke at least eight languages ("But none good," he said later in his heavily accented English).

Joseph went on to medical school in Russia and had only one year of study left to complete his degree when the Bolsheviks revolted against the Czar. The Cramer servants had been treated well and they tried – unsuccessfully – to protect the family from the anarchists. Joseph fled to Europe after he saw his father killed by the Bolsheviks. He refused to elaborate on those painful days



*Joseph Cramer stands in the House of Friendship doorway.*

whenever Ilda Bauman or other friends questioned him. But the horrors he had experienced seemed to come alive again with stories of the holocaust and Hitler's Jewish victims.

"I could feel with him the suffering of the Jews at Hitler's hands," recalls Lucinda Reist (Martin) who cooked at the mission in the early 1940s.

The effect on him of seeing suffering had convinced Cramer that he could not work in the medical field. So he apparently took up religious studies sometime during the next decade. According to reports, he served as a rabbi in a Toronto synagogue for awhile after immigrating to Canada in 1932. But

officials in the Jewish community, like Rabbi Philip Rosenszweig in Kitchener, question the authenticity of the reports.

Had he been a rabbi, says Rosenszweig, his conversion to Christianity would have caused a greater stir in the Jewish community than it apparently did. Steven Steisman, archivist at the Canadian Jewish Congress in Toronto, concurs, pointing out that many Jewish teachers and cantors who migrated from eastern Europe in the 1930s were called "rabbi." That Cramer was a learned Bible scholar is clear.

It was in Toronto, Lucinda Martin remembers, that he attended some kind of Christian meeting. During the preaching of a gospel message, someone disturbed the service, but the speaker did not get angry. This impressed Cramer. The incident apparently was a factor in his eventual conversion to Christianity. Still, he kept a deep love for many Jewish religious traditions long after he became a Christian. He sometimes took his co-workers at House of Friendship to a synagogue for the most significant Hebrew services and occasionally he bought meat from a Jewish butcher. When he was a Sunday dinner guest at the Harold Schiedel home on Albert Street (now Madison) in Kitchener, he sometimes asked jokingly, "Is the meat kosher?"

Cramer left Toronto for New York to work in a mission called "God's Power House." As a representative of that mission he came to several Ontario cities including London and Guelph. In the course of his travels he met a Mrs. Motz, a missionary and relief worker among the Jews in Toronto. She knew of an interdenominational prayer group in Waterloo which had a particular passion for Jewish evangelism. Some of its members, alumni of Toronto Bible College (now Ontario Bible College), were praying for a leader. Mrs. Motz firmly believed that Joseph Cramer, the Hebrew scholar, could be that leader.

### **Cramer comes to Waterloo**

Motz encouraged Cramer to go to Waterloo. He agreed to do so if he felt it was God's will. After visiting the bi-weekly meeting, he decided to stay. The group felt its prayers had been answered.

One of the prayer group members was Ilda Bauman, a 1933 Toronto Bible College graduate. A member of Erb Street Mennonite Church, she lived in Waterloo. Ruth Dahmer, secretary for the group, belonged to Bethany Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church on Lancaster Street in Kitchener. The Dahmers lived at 30 William Street in Waterloo with their six children, but

they made room for Joseph Cramer. "Mother just took him in. He didn't pay board or anything," her daughter Betty Carlaw recalls. A young girl at the time, Betty remembers that she didn't like Cramer much. "He was terribly skinny and had no teeth."

The Dahmer home became the temporary headquarters for the mission which began in the summer of 1938. The group had no money, but through Cramer's friends in New York they received books and tracts in different languages valued at \$400. They visited Jewish people in their homes and in King Street stores, explaining that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Although many in this Orthodox Jewish community considered Cramer a traitor, some found common ground by conversing for hours, in Yiddish, about the one true God and Old Testament prophecy. Despite the disapproval of his conversion to Christianity, many respected him as a sincere, caring human being.

Since the prayer group members had not gone to far away countries as missionaries, they considered the foreigners among them their mission field. If the new arrivals needed food or clothing, they tried to help. Betty Carlaw remembers her mother making gallons of soup. Within the first year, in addition to serving hundreds of meals, the group – particularly Joseph, Ilda and Ruth – made 500 hospital and home visits, distributed 10,000 tracts, and gave away more than 300 books.

Soon the mission moved to downtown Kitchener near a large population of new Canadians, many of whom were Jewish. Dr. Marshall O. Bingeman, new owner of a dairy business, purchased the large brick building on King Street East from the Mutual Life Company in the fall of 1938. There he set up shop, including a modern storefront with a dairy bar. He rented the section on the east side to Joseph. (There were no documents, just a handshake, says Jonas Bingeman, son of the veterinarian who owned the dairy.) The "House of Friendship For All Nations" was dedicated at a Sunday afternoon service on January 15, 1939.

### **Struggle to survive**

For months, the mission struggled to survive on the donations of its supporters. Nearly 50 years later, Victoria (Tory) Pelz recalls, "At one point he [Cramer] asked me for money. 'Schwester [Sister] Pelz,' he said, 'if we don't have money for the next rent payment, they'll put us out of this store.'" Tory Pelz was offended. She had thought Christians never asked for anything

except from the Lord. She was a new Christian and had adopted the habit of giving 10 per cent of her wages to her church. Only 23 years old, she was also paying the mortgage on a house for her parents and she could scarcely afford the extra \$35 dollars Joseph requested. But she gave it, in \$15 and \$20 payments.

Bishop C.F. Derstine, pastor of First Mennonite Church, lived on Cameron Street, a few blocks from the mission. When he sat down to dinner at home with his seven children, his wife and her parents, he often talked about "the Cramer problem." Popularly known as "C.F.," the flamboyant evangelist drew huge crowds in cities across Canada and the U.S. He also supported the small storefront mission, and he realized Cramer was having trouble.

Derstine was keenly interested in the Jewish people. As editor of a Mennonite monthly paper, *The Christian Monitor*, he frequently addressed the plight of the Jews around the world. His columns paid a good deal of attention to the movement of Jews to Palestine, an indication, he believed, of the fulfillment of prophecy and of God's eternal purpose for the "Nation of Israel." His features on Jewish evangelism included a series in 1936 by Martin Z. Miller of Pennsylvania.

At the time, evangelization of the Jews was a hot issue among Mennonites and fundamentalists in other denominations. It fit into the popular "dispensationalism" teaching. Basic to this idea was the belief that history was divided into seven periods or dispensations, the final one beginning with Christ's return to earth for a 1,000-year reign. To prepare for this millenium, fundamentalists believed they needed to spread the gospel "to the Jew first" as well as to all the unconverted.

But as Ruth Hostetter, C.F. Derstine's daughter, and his son Clayton Derstine remember, the Jewish thrust was not the primary impetus behind their father's support for House of Friendship. "He would not have chosen this [mission] as a good method for such a cause," says Ruth. The immediate concern, they believe, was to take care of transients knocking on local doors, including their own which seemed to be "marked" in a particular way. They constantly had men stopping by – professional "hobos" and job-searching transients. Kitchener's many industries and its somewhat generous welfare funding during the hungry 1930s (11 per cent of the city's budget in 1934) attracted the unemployed from other areas.

The Derstines always gave them food – in summer using a table in the backyard, in winter the garage. But for the homeless, jail provided the only place to sleep. This state of affairs so upset

C.F. that he talked to city officials, who, he discovered, were also distressed at putting people in jail simply for being homeless.

### Derstine gets involved

"When Bishop Derstine saw a problem, he found a way to solve it," recalls Andrew Shelly, the pastor of the Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church just around the corner from First Mennonite. This was one of those times. C.F. saw in this new struggling mission a potential solution to the transient problem. But the mission needed a broader support base – the city, businesses and churches of all denominations. C.F. had clout in all those circles. Still, the place to start, he felt, was in his own denomination.

Two years earlier, in the fall of 1937, probably as a direct result of the exposure Derstine had given him in *The Christian Monitor*, Martin Z. Miller was the guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Mennonite Mission Board of Ontario. Miller had turned back his \$65 expense allotment to be used for Jewish evangelism in Ontario. More than a year later, in November 1938, the *Mission News Bulletin* reported that the board had decided "to give \$30 of this fund to ex-rabbi Joseph Cramer and his workers to help them carry on his work," an effort which they perceived as a mission to the Jews. Then at its July 1, 1939 meeting, the executive committee of the Mennonite Conference of Ontario heard a request for help from Joseph Cramer. Was C.F. Derstine behind that request? There is no evidence to prove that he was, but 10 years later, in the *Gospel Herald* (the official Mennonite Church periodical published in Scottdale, Pa.), he wrote about what he had said at that meeting:

Here are a few women, several men, and one Jew, struggling, while the average church bypasses the foreigner. What will we tell the Lord at the judgment seat of Christ if we by-pass these foreigners, fail to assist these workers, and let this lone Christian Jew nearly starve as he bears witness to the Messiah, the world's Saviour?

The conference executive committee delegated Derstine, J.B. Martin, pastor of the Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo, and Oscar Burkholder, president of the Mission Board, to interview Joseph Cramer. On July 25, 1939, the three men reported on their interview and brought a three-point recommendation: that Cramer receive financial help, that he be given material aid such as food and clothing, and that an

advisory committee be set up. The committee accepted all three of the recommendations and appointed the same men to be the nucleus of an advisory committee.

### **Mennonite Conference support**

The executive committee showed some nervousness at launching this new venture with its financial implications, directing the secretary to send a letter to all the congregations. He was to report the committee's actions regarding gifts of food and clothing and annual offerings for House of Friendship, but at the same time to remind the churches to contribute funds also for conference expenses at their earliest opportunity.

At a Stirling Avenue Church board meeting, shortly after the inaugural meeting of the "House of Friendship Advisory Committee" on October 18, 1939, Marshall Bingeman, a Stirling member, urged that church to support the "Kitchener Mennonite Mission on King Street." Bingeman's perception was wrong. The mission was not "Mennonite" but independent, with Mennonites and a few others offering leadership and a base of financial support.

At its first meeting the Advisory Committee directed Derstine and J.B. Martin to approach the mayor and other officials about beginning a dining hall and providing for sleeping quarters at House of Friendship. At the second meeting, 10 days later, the delegation reported a favourable interview. The committee drew up a list of equipment needs for presentation at the next visit. By the third meeting, on November 4, the city's first cheque (\$110) had arrived and rent and equipment bills were ordered paid. First Mennonite Church's first offering (\$15) paid \$5.00 toward rent, \$2.50 for bread, \$2.00 to Cramer for personal expenses, and a bill from *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, probably for advertising. By the end of the year, Bethany and Erb Street Mennonite pledged \$5.00 per month each.

In January 1940 rent and operating costs projected for the next few months, along with some equipment and furnishings, totalled \$508. Once again C.F. spelled out the agency's needs to city officials who approved payment for all that he requested. In addition, the Public Utilities Commission agreed to install and supply gas, free of charge, a practice that continued for some time.

Also by January, ministers from Stirling Avenue, Kitchener Mennonite Brethren, Bethany, Steinmann (Amish) near Baden,

along with several laymen, had expanded the Advisory Committee to 14 members. Gradually others joined from a variety of churches – mostly evangelical.

The first executive committee, elected in February 1940, included Bishop C.F. Derstine, chairman; Rev. U.K. Weber (Stirling), vice-chairman; Bishop Oscar Burkholder (Breslau Mennonite), secretary; Joseph Thaler (a lay member at Bethany), treasurer; and Bishop J.B. Martin, fifth member. There were no changes until 1942. At that time the executive was expanded to seven members: Rev. H.H. Janzen (Mennonite Brethren) replaced

**Kitchener, Ontario  
October 28th, 1939**

**The Advisory Committee to the House of  
Friendship met in the Reading Room on Sat-  
day, October 28th, 1939, at 9 a.m.**

**Bro. J.B. Martin led in opening prayer.**

**Bro. Derstine reported a very favorable  
interview with the Mayor of the city.**

**It was decided that Bro. Derstine present  
the list of equipment for the proposed Dining  
Hall to the Mayor.**

**The secretary was then instructed to prepare  
two tentative letters, one to be presented  
to the Mennonite congregations; one to be  
presented to any other congregations interested  
and that these letters be presented to the  
Executive Committee of the Mennonite Confer-  
ence for consideration.**

**Adjournment followed.**

*Oscar Burkholder*

**Secretary pro tem.**

*Record of October 28, 1939 meeting.*



Weber; Rev. C.N. Good (Bethany) replaced Martin; and Rev. M.O. Jantzi (Steinmann) and Rev. Andrew Shelly (Stirling) became second vice-chairman and assistant secretary respectively. The structure remained the same until the mid-1970s when several subcommittees were established. Derstine continued to chair the executive until 1963, when he was named honorary chairman, a position he held until his death in 1967. While a new treasurer was elected in 1954, Thaler stayed on the Advisory Committee, attending his last meeting in January 1963. He died two months later at the age of 89.

### The program grows

The Advisory Committee decided to add a staff person in March of 1940. It hired Lucinda Reist to do the cooking so Ilda Bauman could devote more time to hospital and home visits, a major element of the mission program. From the start, Ilda and Joseph Cramer had worked together as a team. However, she could hardly keep up the visiting and also feed the men who came to the new dining room in increasing numbers. During her first month, Lucinda prepared nearly 1,200 meals.



*1940s House of Friendship guests finish their dinner in the "diningroom."*

A further decision by the committee, only after considerable discussion, gave each worker a weekly allowance of \$2.00. In June 1940 Deldon Snider, a board member who owned an appliance store, replaced the stove at no charge, Mennonite women's groups from Floradale and Elmira made curtains, and the committee ratified the purchase of an icebox for \$15. Things were going well. In the fall, a telephone was installed. But there were additional costs each month--\$1.75 for ice and \$2.25 for the telephone. By November, Thaler reported a deficit. The executive asked M.R. Good, a banker and treasurer for the Mennonite Mission Board of Ontario, to audit the books. A special meeting to deal with the deficit was called two weeks later. Thaler and Derstine were directed to prepare a complete report for the city.

When the Advisory Committee met in January 1941 and learned that the deficit had reached \$106.31, they resolved "that this committee go on record as favouring the increase of interest in the work of the House of Friendship throughout the churches." The resolution even went so far as to say "that a



*Advisory Committee (left to right) C.N. Good, Joseph Thaler, Ervin B. Shantz, Oscar Burkholder, Simon Swartz, Woldemar Dyck, Angus Weber, Noah Bender, C.F. Derstine, Joseph Cramer and Andrew Shelly.*

JOHN L. HOBBS, EDITOR

PUBLISHERS  
MENNONITE PUBLISHING  
HOUSE  
BOOTHMAN, PA.

## CHRISTIAN MONITOR

A Monthly Magazine for the Home

C. F. DERSTINE, "WORLD NEWS EDITOR"  
100 NORTH CALDWELL STREET  
KITCHENER, ONT., CANADA

DEPARTMENT EDITORS

S. F. COFFMAN, BIBLE STUDY  
VERMILION, ONT.  
J. R. SHANK, Y. P. MINISTRIES  
VERMILION, ONT.



January 13, '41

Hon. Mayor and Aldermen,  
Kitchener, Ontario.

Dear Sirs:

Accept our thanks for your kind co-operation during the past year, in caring for transients, and many unfortunates in our own municipality. We shall be glad to serve the same needy group, and will appreciate your assistance in the task.

Last year from Nov. 1939 to November 1940, inclusive, some 3727 meals were served in the dining room, apart from some hand-outs. 177 beds were given in the same period of time. There also were rooms provided for many of these men, who suffered from the cold during the winter months. A reading place was also provided for the balance of the year.

The year was closed with a \$105 deficit. This we felt was quite agreeable considering that the work was taken over with a considerable debt. This debt was also paid.

In dividing the expense for the year 1941 we will gladly pay \$300 towards the rent, pay the Director, Mr. Cramer, provide the meat, butter, milk, and all the other food necessities.

We would appreciate your paying the expense of the two cooks and workers, who keep the place in clean shape, worthy of our own homes. \$250 each. The same amount towards the rent as last year, \$20 a month, \$240. And \$385 towards the sleeping quarters, and necessary chairs, utensils, and other improvements. Eight hundred and sixty-five dollars in all.

If there are any questions you would like to ask about the conduct of the "House of Friendship", and its general operation, we will be glad to do so.

Cordially Yours,  
Bishop C. F. Derstine  
House of Friendship Committee,  
Chairman.

January 14, 1941

Bishop C. F. Derstine,  
22 Cameron Street South,  
KITCHENER, Ontario.

Dear Bishop Derstine:

Confirming your interview with the City Council at a Finance Committee meeting held last evening, relative to the continuance of the House of Friendship for the year 1941, I beg to advise you that this matter was heartily endorsed by the entire Council.

A resolution was also passed thanking you for your humanitarian work done at the home and your kindness in providing unfortunates with such comforts.

Yours very sincerely,

*C. F. Derstine*  
CITY CLERK.

CGL/GE

change of pastors by special arrangement might help to stir enthusiasm to this end." Given that several executive members were bishops in the Mennonite Conference, this resolution carried considerable weight.

More money did begin to trickle in. Soon back rent for five months at \$35 a month, was paid. In May the workers' allowances were raised by 50 per cent - to \$3.00 a week. Ilda and Lucinda also received streetcar fare and Cramer got the cost of

clothing covered. By the summer of 1942, money had actually piled up and a \$400 emergency fund was approved. The treasurer invested half of it in a Victory Loan Bond and the rest in the Waterloo Trust Company.

Meanwhile the staff continued the work of the mission. Joseph and Ilda reported visiting people in the hospitals and in their homes, recording anywhere from 25 to 75 hospital visits each month. Home visits climbed from about 50 a month in the early days to 306 in August 1944. When Cramer, who was later diagnosed a victim of Hodgkin's disease, fell ill for awhile early



in 1946, the visits dropped to only 30 per month. They rose slightly to about 40 per month, but then Ilda was hospitalized for surgery at the end of 1947. Aside from these times of illness, the pair recorded at least 100 visits per month.

"At the start he'd visit mostly Jewish homes," recalls Tory Pelz. "He took Miss Bauman and marched her along. She was rather stout, and once, Mr. Cramer told me, she was so tired she had to sit on the curb to rest."

Phoebe Sanders, then a member at First Mennonite, lived in an upstairs apartment on Elgin Street (now Duke). Her Jewish landlord lived downstairs. He often visited with Cramer on his walks downtown past House of Friendship. Although the landlord was a devout Jew, he did not oppose the mission. His children, however, refused to discuss it, recalls Sanders.

Derstine asked Phoebe and her sister to get the names of all the heads of Jewish families in Kitchener from her landlord. He gave them a list of about 60 names, which helped Cramer identify families to visit. He tried to visit every Jewish home once a year, according to Harold Schiedel, who spent a lot of time at the mission with Cramer. Schiedel often took care of music for the services, bringing in his family, his choir, or other special groups to sing.

Cramer visited other homes also. Pauline Kozak Pascoe remembers him visiting her family frequently and enjoying the Ukrainian food in particular. Her father, Jacob Kozak, a mechanical engineer, had come from Poland. Her mother, Anna, was born in Czechoslovakia but had gone to the USSR as a child. In Kitchener, Jacob fell ill with tuberculosis and spent five years in the Freeport Sanatorium. No one expected him to survive. His daughter remembers Cramer visiting him in the sanatorium and saying, "We will pray that you will not suffer." Not only was he freed from suffering; Kozak lived another 25 years.

The Kozaks were not practising Christians. But with Cramer's encouragement after Jacob's remarkable recovery, they visited C.F. Derstine and began attending First Mennonite Church. Soon the parents were baptized and joined the church, where they remained members until their deaths. Later, Pauline, their only child, was also baptized and joined the church.

The Kozaks were somewhat exceptional in that they were integrated into the church family. Other House of Friendship contacts also joined First Mennonite or other churches, but few of them ever became actively involved. Most stopped attending before long and the churches soon lost contact with them.

## Many church services

Cramer never failed to invite people to turn to Christ. Always before the last song at House of Friendship services, he said, "I would say this to you, if you want to accept the Lord, now is the time. Now, not tomorrow. NOW!"

There were lots of religious services at the King Street chapel in those early days. The following announcement in the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* was typical of many that appeared regularly:

Sunday	10:00 a.m.	Sunday School for children Ukrainian, Russian, Polish
	11:00 a.m.	Service in Ukrainian
	3:00 p.m.	Speaker, Rev. S.H. Swartz
Monday	3:30 p.m.	Women's meeting Ukrainian, Russian, Polish
Tuesday	8:00 p.m.	Gospel message, Ilda Bauman
Wednesday	3:00 p.m.	Meeting for children
Friday	8:00 p.m.	Old fashioned prayer meeting

Cramer was in charge of most of the services, but he invited ministers from churches in the city and the surrounding area to speak on Sunday afternoons. Speakers, soloists and singing groups swelled the numbers in the "pews" (rows of old ice cream parlour chairs). The congregation usually included a few people from supporting churches, particularly First Mennonite and Stirling, and at times as few as two men off the street. The street people were often less interested in the service than in a sheltered place to rest.

When the Boettger family, members at Bethany Mennonite Brethren in Christ church, heard that House of Friendship would appreciate an organ to boost the singing at the services, Alvina Boettger donated hers. The old pump organ had been a birthday and Christmas gift from her parents before she was married. Her daughters Hilda (Farrell) and Violet (Weber) often attended the services and sometimes Hilda played the organ. Later, Helen Critchison from Stirling Avenue served as the regular organist for many years.

Grace Weber (Ogram) also played the organ during the mission's first year. Occasionally Cramer dropped in to have dinner with her family, she recalls. "There were seven of us children and I was the oldest. It was still during the depression, so if we had some food we were lucky." Cramer noted that



*Helen Critchison at the organ and Joseph Cramer, ready to begin a chapel service.*

Grace, a teenager at the time, could play hymns and gospel songs on the organ in her home, so he asked her to play at his services.

"I was scared, but anything for the Lord I was willing to try. But I just didn't know what he was driving at, really. I remember the adults were kind of leery and wondered what was back of all this, you know. This was something new, a mission to the Jews. And he was wanting money. Not for himself – he lived very frugally – but for the mission."

House of Friendship was never strictly a mission to the Jews, although that was the primary intent of the little prayer group that invited the "ex-rabbi" in the summer of 1938. Cramer described some of his Jewish contacts as "seekers," and he did all he could to help them. Some Jewish people who turned to Christianity tried to keep their conversion a secret from family and business associates. Cramer understood. In a rare glimpse of his personal past in a speech at First Mennonite, he told how members of his family had staged a "funeral" for him when they learned of his conversion to Christianity.

David Roseman, a Jew who operated a furniture business close to House of Friendship, often got into vehement arguments with Cramer on the sidewalk outside House of Friendship. Eventually Roseman decided to become a Christian. He was unable to sustain his new-found faith without the support of his

mentor, however, and soon after Cramer died, Roseman abandoned Christianity. At Cramer's funeral, Roseman was one of the few people close enough to be considered "family."

### **Not just a mission to Jews**

Cramer's vision was broad, reaching out to anyone in spiritual or physical need no matter what race or creed. A Ukrainian Catholic woman gave this testimony:

A year ago, when we were in dire need, my husband had no work and there was no food in the house for several days. I was in despair and almost out of my mind. Suddenly there was a rap at the door. A man came in and spoke to me in my own language. He gave me words of comfort and told me that if I would believe, God would help me. I felt as though God had sent an angel to visit me. When he left, he gripped my hand and said, "God bless you. We will pray for you." He gave me \$2.00 and I knew he was a poor man and that it was a sacrifice for him to give it. I bought groceries with the money and when my children came home from school, they had food to eat. Here is where I first came to believe in God and that God truly answers prayer. I am now a Christian and try to witness to my friends.

A 70-year-old transient who got into trouble for forging a signature to get benefits became a Christian at the mission. Later he got sick and while in hospital in St. Thomas, led a dying man to Christ. This gave him such a thrill that he wrote a letter of thanks to House of Friendship, saying that he was so glad that God had saved him at the mission and that he wanted to win others to Christ.

Stories like these along with items for praise and prayer appeared regularly in a monthly House of Friendship newsletter mailed to supporters. The newsletter also reported statistics on visitation and meals served.

Each month from 1942-1949, workers and volunteers went from door-to-door in the city dropping off up to 800 copies of *The Way*, a religious pamphlet. Sometimes young people's groups and Ontario Mennonite Bible School students helped. These young people also held Saturday night street meetings. Fred Erb, Ilda Bauman's nephew, led the group of a dozen or so who gathered with Joseph Cramer at House of Friendship on

ANNUAL REPORT  
of  
HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP  
TO ALL NATIONS.

From Dec. 47 - Nov. 1948.

Hospital Visits	--	387
House Visits	--	1297
Meals	--	3220
"Ways"	--	9800
Outside Appointments		15
Professed Conversions		29
Meetings held in Hall		485

Bibles Requested

Polish	9
Ukrainian	5
Hebrew	1
Hungarian	1
Russian	1
Yiddish	1
English	3

New Testaments Requested

Ukrainian	1
Hebrew	1
French	6
Russian	2
Chinese	2

Gospels Requested

Ukrainian	4
English	5
Chinese	3
English (psalms)	10
Tracts Distributed	1519

Respectfully submitted Jan. 8, 1949.

*Rev. Joseph Cramer*  
*Ilda Baumann*

Saturday evenings at about seven o'clock for a warm-up service of singing, testimonies and prayer. Then they took to the streets in twos and threes, with bundles of tracts. When all the tracts were distributed, they regrouped at House of Friendship to prepare for a street meeting in front of the city hall at the intersection of King and Frederick. Fred and brothers James and Paul Martin took turns preaching. A crowd of a hundred or more would soon gather from the streets and nearby hotels.

All three of the young street preachers later became ministers in the Mennonite Church. Paul Martin reflects on his experience:

The radical idea of street preaching was not very well accepted in our church, but we found a few supportive people like my father [Simon Martin] and Joseph Cramer. Cramer not only encouraged us, but opened his facility for us to use. House of Friendship was the centre from which we moved. Sometimes drunk fellows would interrupt the service, asking questions, and we'd answer. Fred, particularly, thrived on this kind of interchange. Our basic philosophy was not just to see how many tracts we could distribute, but to make personal contact with people. Cramer taught us that. Sometimes, if there was someone genuinely interested, we'd take him back to the House of Friendship to talk and pray. Cramer was always there when we needed help.

The fact that they were connected to House of Friendship, which the city supported to some extent, probably gave these young preachers some credibility with officials.

### Support from Kitchener officials

After C.F. Derstine's personal appeal to the city for \$865 early in 1941, Alderman Henry Strum said: "The House of Friendship is doing wonderful work. I think it would be a good stroke of business to see that it is continued." Mayor Meininger agreed, noting that when people who could not be added to the city's welfare rolls applied for help, he sent them to House of Friendship. The mission was always ready to care for them. In 1940, the first year after the Advisory Committee was formed, House of Friendship served 8,727 meals. C.F. pointed out that since the city allowed 25 cents a meal for destitute people to be fed at local restaurants but had given the House of Friendship only \$500, the taxpayers had been saved more than \$2,000. Although it was not yet equipped with beds, House of Friendship also provided overnight shelter for 177 persons that year.

Most of the time, Cramer himself slept at House of Friendship in a small room furnished with little more than a bed. (He did have a room at the Ed Witmer home on Eby Street at one time.) Ilda lived at home with her mother and sisters. Lucinda and later Ruby Dettweiler (Roth), cooks at House of Friendship,

roomed in homes nearby. All the workers ate at a table the size of a desk in the corner of the House of Friendship kitchen after the men were served. Meals were substantial, built around the meat and produce donated by local farmers, and leftover food from church suppers. There was always lots of bologna – sliced cold, fried, ground up and made into meat loaf. The Schneider Corporation would donate one or more eight-pound pieces every



*Ilda Bauman (left) with Ruby Dettweiler (Roth), who came to cook in 1945, and occasional helper Mary Shantz.*

week for most of the next 50 years!

Joseph didn't eat very well, partly due to poor health. He sometimes marvelled at the appetites of others. Tory Pelz recalls that once when she told him that a businessman had bought dinner downtown for one of the House of Friendship regulars, Joseph said, "But that man ate dinner here. To think that somebody has such a healthy body that he could eat two dinners!"

Tory and some friends conjectured that Cramer's health problems resulted from inability to eat properly without teeth, so at one point they collected money for false teeth. However, Joseph gave the money to someone he felt needed it more than he did. He gave away most of what little money he received, his

friends discovered after his death. Among his personal papers they found numerous receipts for small donations amounting to several hundreds of dollars given to charities from New York to Palestine; to Bible colleges; and for care packages to Poland. Once he paid \$5.00, his allowance for nearly a week, to get a boy's bicycle back from the local police station.

When Joseph's fragile health finally broke in the summer of 1949, he refused to go to the hospital. Ruby Dettweiler ordered a hospital bed to be set up in his room. Records of the Advisory Committee's July 9 meeting mention Cramer's illness with a decision that his doctor bill again be paid. The secretary, Andrew Shelly, remembers finding Joseph extremely ill when he stopped by for a visit. On leaving the mission, Shelly happened to meet Dr. Leavine, a prominent Kitchener physician. He persuaded the doctor to see the sick man even though Joseph was not one of his patients. Deeply concerned about the man's condition, Shelly asked the doctor if friends couldn't put Joseph in hospital even though he didn't want to go. "That would be kidnapping," the doctor replied. So Cramer stayed at House of Friendship. Before the committee met again he died of Hodgkin's disease on July 28.

While Ilda Bauman and David Roseman represented "family," people from all walks of life, many nationalities, races, and religions gathered for Cramer's funeral at First Mennonite Church. He was buried in the adjoining cemetery although he had never become a member of First Mennonite or any other church.

Cramer brought almost nothing with him when he came to Kitchener. Shortly before he died a decade later he drew up this list of all personal belongings:

1 iron bed	1 pair pillows
1 steel wardrobe	2 pair pillow cases
1 studio couch	1 comforter
1 library table	2 sheets
2 chairs	1 pair flannel sheets
1 electric heater	electric shaver (not working)

Clothing (not completed; shall do so later):

4 sweaters	1 winter coat
1 fairly good suit	1 spring coat (at Brown's
1 bathrobe	to repair sleeve)

His advisors knew Cramer as a humble, deeply committed Christian who lived simply, but they were amazed at the extent

of his generosity and self-sacrifice. After his death they discovered envelopes containing \$200.50 besides receipts for the many charitable donations he had made. They offered the cash to Ruth Dahmer who had provided a home free of charge for Cramer when he first came to the area. She declined to accept the money, so it was applied to the cost of a monument to mark Cramer's grave. His death also marked the end of an era for House of Friendship.

He was called Rev. Joseph Cramer, but his ordination remains a mystery. He was not ordained as a minister in the Mennonite Conference of Ontario which did not then ordain ministers except "upon the recommendation of a congregation where the need for an ordained man exists." Several persons declared, however, that C.F. Derstine had ordained Joseph Cramer at First Mennonite Church. Oscar Burkholder, the first Advisory Committee secretary, once told Andrew Shelly, who succeeded him, "Derstine does a lot of things we wouldn't do, but he also does a lot of things we couldn't do." This may have been one of them.

C.F. Derstine no doubt had discerned that if Cramer were ordained, the title "Reverend" would give him more status, and that such status would probably translate into better support for House of Friendship. He was likely right. Support for House of Friendship, by then a well-established institution with a 10-year history in the city, continued after Cramer's death.

The Advisory Committee carried on with business as usual. Its first problem when it met in August 1949 was to find a director. It apparently did not occur to them that Ilda Bauman, who had been there from the start and, according to one observer, had really managed the place, could take over. Within a month, Derstine suggested someone else. The committee called a new director early in September. During the next few years House of Friendship took some turns few if any of the committee members had anticipated.



## Evangelizing Jews: The Goodall years (1949-1957)



Before Joseph Cramer died in the summer of 1949, the Advisory Committee of House of Friendship faced moving the mission to a new location from the site on King Street East where it had been for 10 years. Now the committee also had to find a new director. Once again C.F. Derstine took charge.

First he brought in Orlie Schwartzentruber to maintain the program at House of Friendship for the summer. Orlie was a student minister assisting C.F. at First Mennonite Church. Adeline Snyder (Schiedel) came to relieve other staff persons and the House of Friendship program continued almost as usual.

In early September Derstine found a candidate for the position of director and, on his own initiative, arranged for J. Ross and Shirley Goodall from Toronto to come for an interview on September 10. Derstine's endorsement was all that was required for the committee to accept the Goodalls for the job.

From the moment they arrived, the Goodalls provided a clear contrast to Cramer. They were an attractive middle class couple with two teenagers – Martin and Jeanette. Shirley, friendly and vivacious, was Jewish, and Ross, aggressive and visionary, also had some Jewish ancestry. Like Cramer, they had converted to Christianity and wanted to share their new faith with other Jewish people. But the Goodalls' evangelistic approach differed from Cramer's.

Ross Goodall had been a successful contractor in the Toronto area where the family lived a comfortable life as a result. A few years before their contact with Derstine, Shirley and then Ross had become Christians. Ross then sold the business and for two years the couple devoted their time and energy to mission and

relief work, operating out of their own home. They bought a cottage in the Muskoka region where they hosted friends in the summer, giving them a break from the city. Bible study was a part of the vacation routine for guests.

The committee hired the Goodalls on September 10 and before the end of the month they had moved, temporarily, into a vacant city-owned house near the courthouse in downtown Kitchener. From there they began directing the work.

Meanwhile Marshall O. Bingeman, who had been talking about expanding his dairy for some time, served notice to House of Friendship to vacate its King Street location by October 31, 1949. During the previous year the Advisory Committee had considered relocation and had investigated several properties, but found nothing satisfactory. Now the committee moved quickly, putting down \$500 and on October 8 signing an offer to purchase a house at 23 Alma Street (now Charles) for \$13,000.



23 Alma Street (now Charles). Photo by Wilfred Ulrich.

Terms included payments of \$1,500 on taking possession (October 18) and \$3,500 by January 1, 1950. House of Friendship would take over the \$7,500 mortgage at five per cent interest.

# Offer to Purchase

—B. SHORE CL—

I, House of Friendship of the Kitchener, Ont. City, as purchaser, hereby agree to and with Alma Williams of the City of Kitchener, Ontario, (as vendor), through L. Feik, Real Estate Broker Agent, to purchase all and singular the premises situate on the South side of Alma Street in the City of Kitchener, Ontario known as House number Twenty-three (23) having frontage of about fifty feet more or less, by a depth of about one hundred feet, more or less, as per deed being Lot No. 22272 according to plan No. Registered in the Registry Office dated Mar. 6/48 in Book A-89 at Kitchener, Ontario at the price or sum of Thirteen Thousand Dollars (\$ 13,000.00) as follows: Five Hundred Dollars (\$ 500.00) cash or cheque to the said Agent on this date as a deposit, and covenant, promise and agree to pay

Fifteen hundred dollars (\$1500.00) on the date of possession. Three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500.00) on or before January first, 1950. The Purchaser is to assume the existing mortgage in the amount of \$7500.00 (Seven thousand five hundred dollars). The rate of interest to be calculated is at the rate of five percent (5%) per annum. An Agreement of Sale is to be arranged and signed before October 18, 1949, on the date when full possession is given.

All light fixtures, blinds, window screens, storm doors, two gas stoves fully connected, stair carpet, oil cloth floor coverings (but not to include the rugs) (nor the draps in the living room), but all the drapes on the smaller windows are included in the Purchase Price.

All buildings and equipment upon the real property shall be or remain at the risk of the Vendor until closing.

Permission to be granted to commence alterations Oct. 10th 1949.

PROVIDED the title is good and free from encumbrance, except local rates, and except as aforesaid; said title to be examined by me at my own expense, and I am not to call for the production of any title Deeds or Abstract of Title, Proof or Evidence of Title, or to have furnished any copies thereof, other than those in Vendor's possession or under my control. The purchaser accepts the property subject to the restrictions and covenants that run with the land. The purchaser to be allowed 8 days from the date of acceptance hereof to investigate the title at his own expense, and if within that time shall be unable or unwilling to remove, and which purchaser will not waive, this agreement shall be null and void and the deposit money returned to the purchaser without interest. This offer to be accepted by October eight day of October 1949, otherwise void; and sale to be completed on or before the eighteenth day of October 1949, on which date completion of the said premises is to be given; me, or I am to accept the present tenancy and to be entitled to the receipt of the rents and profits thereafter.

UNEARNED Fire Insurance Premiums, Taxes, Interest, Rentals and all Local Improvements and Water Rates to be proportioned and allowed to date of completion of sale; Deed or Transfer to contain covenant on part of Purchaser to pay off said assumed Mortgage, to be executed by Purchaser and prepared at the expense of the Vendor and Mortgage at my expense.

Each party is to pay the costs for registration and taxes on his own documents. THIS offer, if accepted, shall with such acceptance constitute a binding contract of purchase and sale. TIME shall be the essence of this agreement.

Dated OCT 8 1949 W. G. G. Dornier Signature

WITNESSES: J. Goodall Signature

I hereby accept the above offer and its terms, and covenant, promise and agree to and with the said above-named purchaser to duly carry out the same on the terms and conditions above mentioned.

Dated Kitchener, Ont. 5th 1949 W. G. G. Dornier Signature

WITNESSES: L. Feik Signature

I hereby agree with Agent in consideration of the said Agent having procured an acceptance of this Offer, dated the day of 1949, for the purchase of my property, known as

for the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ Dollars, to pay to the said Agent a commission of \_\_\_\_\_ per cent on the sale price of said property, and I hereby authorize the said Agent to retain the said commission or any part thereof out of any deposit paid to him by the purchaser on account of the purchase price.

Dated 1949 Signature

WITNESSES: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature



## From King Street to Alma Street

Ruby Dettweiler, the cook, was happy to move. She had appreciated improvements to the King Street kitchen like the hot water on tap installed in 1944. But she didn't like to retrieve vegetables and preserves – which were stored in the cellar – through a trap door in the chapel floor. And keeping ahead of the cockroaches was an ongoing battle. (Lucinda, the other cook, recalls that once a cockroach fell from the kitchen ceiling, landing squarely on a freshly-iced cake.) At the old location transients ate their meals at a table in the corner of the kitchen which had only one tiny window. Because of the crowded conditions – and the fact that the men seldom had a chance to shower – Ruby preferred to have them leave the kitchen as soon as possible after their meal.

When renovations were completed at the new location, the basement had a waiting room, washroom, dining room, and a separate kitchen. The chapel, which the men entered through the Goodalls' front door, took up most of the main floor. The rest of that floor, plus the second, provided living quarters for the Goodall family.

Later, a new side entrance gave direct access to the basement waiting room, ending the invasion of the Goodall's privacy. But it created a new problem. Now the men wandered up a driveway shared with a neighbour who complained vehemently not only to the director but also to city council. Trying to make peace with that neighbour proved to be a challenge for years.

The people who lived in the gracious homes that lined both sides of Alma Street at that time had anxieties about the clients their new neighbours might attract, but they also felt some relief. Now they could send vagrants, who often came to their doors asking for food, to the place down the street whose business it was to care for the needy.

The Goodalls lost no time in getting on with that task. During their first three months at House of Friendship, the number of meals served more than doubled, reaching an average of over 900 a month. They began a men's Bible class and evening English classes for new Canadians, besides conducting two Sunday and several weekday worship services. They shipped off care packages and Yiddish Bibles to Palestine, mailed thousands of tracts regularly, handed out food and clothes to the poor in the city, and gave away dozens of Bibles in several languages to all who asked for them.



*Ruby Dettweiler (top photo) and Shirley Goodall prepare dinner in the new basement kitchen. Two gas stoves and large pots were essential to cook the 11,000 meals served to guests and staff in 1950. Top photo by David L. Hunsberger.*



### A new style

Ilda Bauman had been at the centre of everything at the mission for the previous 10 years. She had cooked and helped in whatever way she could. She had looked after Cramer, particularly when he was ill. Besides making numerous hospital and home visits, she had spoken at churches, to women's groups, and at services at the mission. Yet she was not a part of this new flurry of activity. Cramer's death had been a great personal loss. Despite her grief she continued at the King Street mission through the summer. In October she accepted the board's paid leave of absence for one month. She never made the move to Alma Street.

The Advisory Committee had given Ilda time off when she was sick and had paid her medical bills on previous occasions. Now, with the Goodall team in place, and apparently backed up by a doctor's report, the Advisory Committee decided that for Ilda to continue at House of Friendship would be too great an emotional and physical strain. Committee members lauded her faithfulness, assured her of their prayers, and unanimously agreed to "release" her. They decided to give her half her salary for two months, about \$65, as "some help toward your waiting on the Lord for your next move."

No doubt Ilda's health was a factor in this action. But it also seems clear that the committee rightly discerned that she did not fit the style of the new administration. Ilda herself may not have wanted to stay on, her passion for the work having been so strongly linked with her deep feelings for Cramer. But there is no record that Ilda requested to be "released." In fact, a friend recalls that Ilda admitted years later to harbouring hard feelings about her termination at House of Friendship.

When she suffered a stroke more than a decade after her departure, the House of Friendship board recalled her faithful work and sent her a gift of flowers. Paralysis after her stroke kept her a patient at Scott Pavilion for 13 years. Then she moved to Sunnyside Home where she died in 1974.

Almost immediately after the Goodalls took over, problems began that would plague the Advisory Committee for the next several years. Often these centred on finances.

Ross Goodall was named director but, in effect, both he and Shirley were hired at a starting "family salary" of \$130 a month. (Joseph Cramer and Ilda Bauman had each been paid \$65 a month after 10 years of service.) After the Goodalls arrived, the

Advisory Committee authorized the treasurer to pay moving costs and rent for their temporary quarters although no action to do so had been taken earlier. At the end of the first month under a new director, no one seemed to know what bills were outstanding or how the rent was to be paid. Already it was evident that operating costs were rising. In December, the treasurer cashed a \$300 bond – emergency money – to meet current operating expenses. By January the required capital funds for the Alma Street property were in place, but renovation costs, now \$3,000 instead of the projected \$2,000, remained unpaid.

Despite a financial squeeze, the Goodalls requested and got approval at the 1950 annual meeting to hire an additional worker. At the same time, the committee showed its approval of Ross's work by granting him a licence to preach.

### Charter secured

Two other significant actions at the 1950 annual meeting included changing the name of the Advisory Committee to "Board of Directors," and beginning work to secure a charter for the organization. The charter, adopted later that year, noted the following as purposes of the institution: interdenominational and evangelism work, reaching transients and foreigners, assisting the relief of poverty with food and clothing, and working to rehabilitate those who were incapacitated.

There was one significant omission in the new charter. It did not cite work among Jews in particular, when, however, such work was precisely what the Goodalls felt called to do. They tried to cultivate friendships with Jews in the community, planning special parties on Jewish feast days and also at Christmas. Their most successful contacts were with displaced persons, particularly Hungarian Jews who came after the war and who had not yet been integrated into the local Jewish community. Established Jews in the Kitchener area were for the most part a tightly knit Orthodox community and tended to keep the Goodalls at arm's length. Later, as the Goodalls reported actual resistance locally, they began regular trips to Toronto to follow up on former contacts. They organized rallies there and invited people from Kitchener to come. Once Derstine solicited cars and drivers from First Mennonite to taxi the guests to Toronto. After the rally Ross turned in a bill of \$75 to the board.



Even though it was not an anticipated expense, the board approved payment.

This method of operating became a pattern. Bills for car repairs, new tires, rent for a garage for the new car (the board made a \$250 grant after Goodall purchased the car instead of making more repairs), luggage for deputation trips, a clothes dryer, domestic help for Shirley when the family moved to a new home, all came for approval without prior clearance. At one point the director reported building alterations which had been made with the consent of only C.F. and the secretary, Frank Peters, pastor of Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church and later president of Waterloo Lutheran (Wilfrid Laurier) University. The board objected to the procedure but approved paying for the alterations anyway. The pattern was even more pronounced at the summer camp operated by the the Goodalls.

### Summer camp mission

In 1950 the board agreed that Shirley should spend the summer at the Goodall cottage as she had done in the past. The cottage became a summer camp for Jewish families, mostly from Toronto with a few from Kitchener. Each summer there were more guests, so a second nearby cottage was rented and additional staff hired for camp chores and programs. Alice Good, Martin



*Jeanette Goodall (left) with summer camp visitors.*

Goodall's fiancé, and Ted and Margaret Montgomery, a young couple who had given up farming to enter pastoral work, came in the summer of 1953. Ross arranged with Mennonite Central Committee for the Montgomerys to serve as MCC volunteers.

Margaret remembers cleaning the cottages before the guests arrived, washing mountains of dishes, and scouring huge cooking pots. Shirley did most of the cooking and her soup and cabbage salad always tasted good, recalls Margaret.

That summer 115 people visited the camp. One weekend a noisy crowd of 54 caused some disturbance, but C.F. visited and managed to appease the angry neighbours.

All of the people who came, many of them ethnic rather than religious Jews, knew that attending daily Bible study was mandatory at camp. Most of the guests during the first month were displaced persons from eastern Europe who spoke a variety of languages. But all of them spoke Yiddish. Campers who had been at Bible studies the previous week (even though they themselves were not Christians) tried to explain the lessons in Yiddish to newcomers. Ross Goodall usually taught the Bible classes, beginning with familiar Old Testament material, then moving to the New Testament, explaining that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Some campers responded to Christian teaching with, "We'll have to think about it." Others summed up the experience by saying, "I am a different person for having been here."

Before they came to camp, most of the vacationers, some with concentration camp numbers still tattooed on their arms, thought "Christian" and "Gentile" meant the same thing. Here they saw a difference. They were amazed that Ted carried their suitcases for them when they arrived and that he cleaned up after them when a flu epidemic struck. "They did not expect Gentiles to do such things, but they learned that Christians did," reflects Margaret. She remembers that all the camp staff, including the Goodalls, worked very hard.

About half the campers were children. They had their own activities: crafts, games, hikes, Bible stories, singing, and praying. One 12-year-old boy decided to become a Christian – and immediately chose to eat bacon with his breakfast eggs! His mother did not oppose his decision but wanted him to keep his conversion a secret until after his bar mitzvah. She knew his Orthodox grandfather would be very upset if the boy did not follow that Jewish custom.

The board recognized the camp as a significant arm of House of Friendship's ministry to Jewish people as the camp's popularity grew each summer. The costs, too, kept growing. Staff had to be increased to keep both the camp and the Kitchener operation going in the summer and each year brought a new list of upgrading needs.

In the summer of 1954 "Camp Shalom," as it was called, was moved to larger facilities at Kearney just east of highway 11 between Huntsville and Burk's Falls. Rent was \$700 for the summer with an option to buy. The following March the board approved purchase of the camp over a four-year period at a cost of \$8,800. It designated several of its members as camp trustees. After the purchase, in May and again in June Goodall presented lists of repairs and upgrading that were required at the camp before it could open. Each time the board approved spending up to \$300. In July Goodall reported that the kitchen had also been remodelled. (There is no record that work on the kitchen had been authorized.) The treasurer reported a bank deficit of just over \$1,000 at the end of June, and in September he reported he had taken out a \$1,500 bank loan to cover outstanding accounts.

### **Balancing the budget**

Goodall's record-keeping was careless at best and his spending habits resulted in frequent deficits. The board typically responded by directing the secretary to send letters appealing for funds to supporting churches. Meanwhile Ross and C.F. made plans – and then got board approval – for deputation trips to promote Jewish evangelism. Once or twice the two of them travelled together, but usually Ross went alone or took Shirley with him, travelling to western Canada, to the American midwest, to the eastern states, and to Florida. Some of these visits were to General Conference Mennonite churches after October 1951, when the General Conference officially recognized the House of Friendship's work with Jewish people as one of its home mission programs.

Goodall always dressed well for these trips, planning his wardrobe carefully, remembers Wilfred Ulrich, who was secretary at the time. "He bought nylon tricot shirts so he could wash them and let them drip dry in his hotel room." (Most men wore shirts that were starched and ironed.) He also learned ahead of time what was the approved dress code in the various Mennonite pulpits so he wouldn't risk offending anyone.

After these trips Goodall submitted his food and hotel bills to the treasurer. Usually his expenses amounted to about one third and sometimes as much as one half of the donations he received. His Mennonite colleagues on the board normally stayed in homes as guests rather than in hotels when church business took them travelling. They were troubled by what they considered Goodall's misuse of contributed dollars. They eventually set a mileage allowance and ceilings for expenses before approving deputation trips.

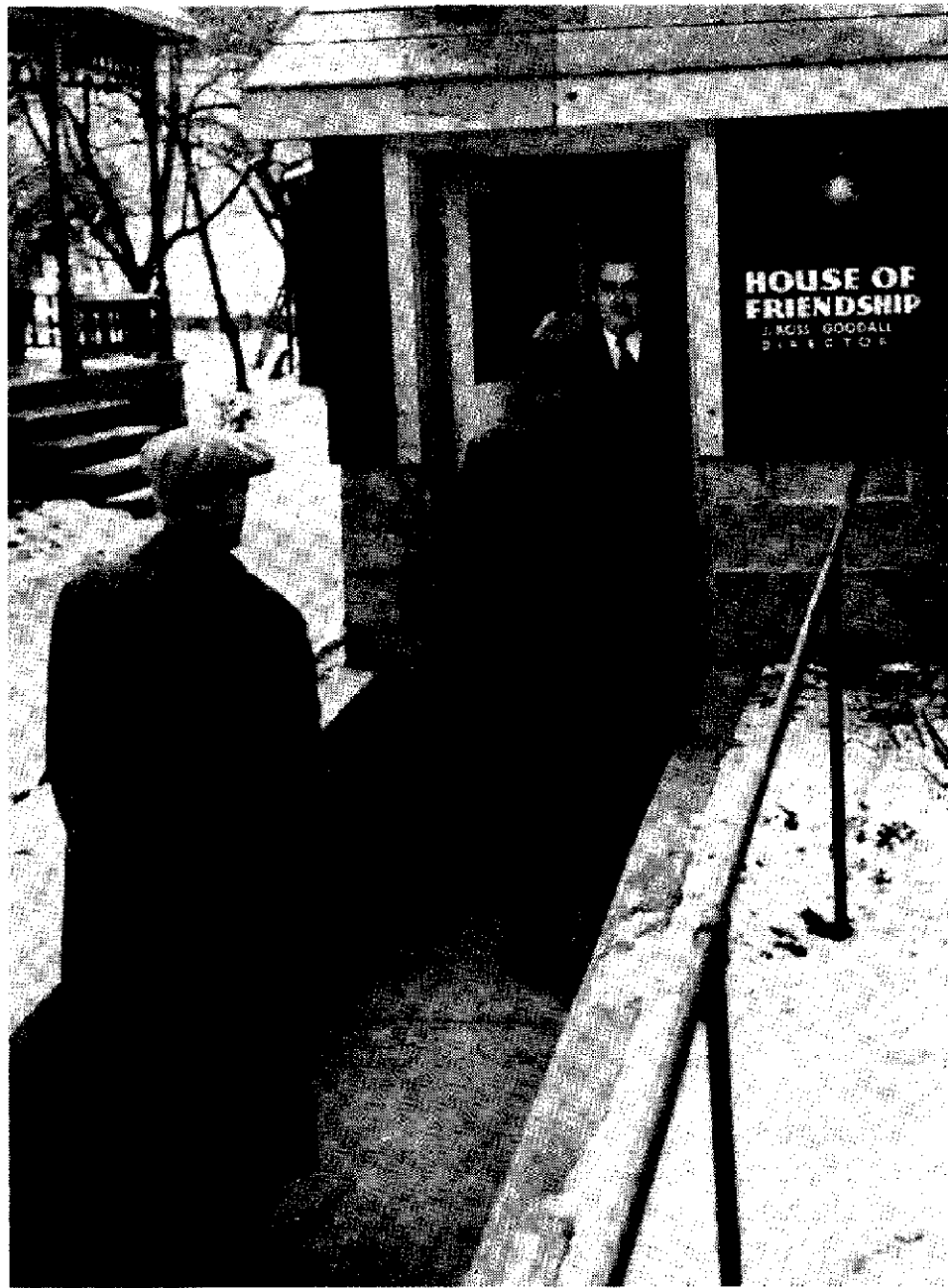
"Ross was a very emotional person and we had some pretty stormy board sessions," recalls Orland Gingerich, a Mennonite pastor and farmer who also set up a cheese-making business to support his large family. He remembers that at one meeting Goodall vehemently opposed a promotional letter and became so agitated that the board laid the letter aside. When Orland brought the same letter back to the next meeting, Ross, now calm and rational, insisted that the letter had been rewritten since he could no longer find any fault with it.

### **Lives changed**

Working with transients seemed out of character for Goodall who usually wore a suit and tie when he opened the House of Friendship door. He greeted men who were unwashed and unshaven, who frequented garbage-strewn alleys and smoky bars, whose clothes told a tale of poverty and neglect. But he managed to help some of them turn their lives around. Dave Osborn was one.

Dave was a vagrant and an alcoholic who drank anything – even a mixture of shaving lotion, hair tonic, and liquid shoe polish. He had slept in almost every mission and jail in Ontario. Sometimes he was so violent it took three police officers to restrain him, Andrew Shelly recalls. When Dave wandered around town, he frightened people. Shelly told the police to call him if Dave needed a place to sleep and he would take Dave to House of Friendship. There he always found a welcome and good food.

One day Andrew met Dave on the street. He hardly recognized him. Dave, hair neatly combed and wearing a suit and tie, exuded confidence and joy. His life had been totally transformed after Ross had led him to Christ. He was baptized, joined a Mennonite church, and registered as a student at Ontario Mennonite Bible Institute in Kitchener.



*Director J. Ross Goodall welcoming guests to House of Friendship.*

A year later when Shelly returned to his former congregation for a special service, Dave was there. Proudly holding a new Bible, he told Shelly that this day was his birthday, the first anniversary of his conversion. Sadly, Dave had abused his body for so many years that he died soon after that special day.

### **A home of their own**

The Goodalls continued to minister to men like Dave Osborn at the Alma Street mission. They also lived there until the fall of 1953. In October, at a special meeting of the executive committee, the Goodalls sought approval to purchase a home of their own so that they could entertain their friends, conduct Bible classes, and have a place of retreat.

When the board met in November they learned that the Goodalls had already bought a home on East Avenue in Kitchener. No plans had been made on the use of the Alma Street apartment or regarding changes in operations when the Goodalls no longer lived on the premises. The board immediately struck a special committee to work at these details.

In December Goodall suggested to the executive committee that the new home, called Beth Shalom, could be a headquarters for Jewish ministry in the city. Purchased for \$13,800, the home had monthly carrying charges of \$100 plus heat and utilities. While board minutes are sketchy, it would appear that the Goodalls expected financial assistance from the board in paying for their "private" home. The executive acted to pay the January carrying charges but deferred further action. No subsequent board action on the issue is recorded. One is left to wonder, however, why the pattern of positive treasury balances almost every month throughout 1953 changed to equally consistent overdrafts from March through November 1954.

Meanwhile, Martin Goodall, Ross and Shirley's son, assumed increasing responsibility at the Alma Street mission. He had stayed on after the board had hired him as summer staff in 1951. Within a few years Martin was conducting teen Bible clubs, holding special services at the Freeport Sanatorium, at Kitchener's House of Refuge, and at the Galt Training School, besides running established House of Friendship programs.

In 1954 Martin married Alice Good. The young couple moved into the Alma Street apartment which the senior Goodalls had vacated nearly a year earlier. Alice helped out at the mission in the evenings and on weekends. She soon gave up her job as a teacher for one that was less demanding so she could devote more time to the House of Friendship.

The need for shelter for the homeless was almost as critical as the need for the food House of Friendship supplied. The Goodalls had provided crisis accommodation in the large house on Alma Street for a variety of people. They had sheltered a few

families, a homeless Native woman, several delinquent girls, and Shirley's sister had stayed for awhile after her marriage failed. Sometimes the Goodalls found beds elsewhere for homeless people.

Men, like Dave Osborn, came to House of Friendship in increasing numbers. Those who came were mostly older, single men. Some were veterans, so emotionally scarred by war that they were unable to work. Many were alcoholics and a few were drug addicts. Alice (Goodall) Brubacher remembers her former husband's great concern for these men.

### Beds needed

In November 1954 Martin Goodall reported to the House of Friendship board that the police would no longer allow transients to sleep at the police station on weekends. The board suggested that metal beds be purchased for emergency accommodation. It instructed Martin to get prices and to explore making alterations, including necessary plumbing, to provide sleeping quarters at the mission. Board minutes show no action on getting approval from city officials to run a hostel. Ross then reported that he had already bought springs and a mattress to set up on the third floor and he presented the bill. Once again the board approved payment for an unauthorized purchase.

There was definitely a need for beds for transients. Although House of Friendship was not yet a hostel, statistics for 1954 record 68 beds provided that year. The figure jumped to 187 a year later. In 1956 almost 50 men a month slept there during the winter. The city tended to turn a blind eye to the fact that people slept at House of Friendship. The city had nothing to offer. Then in May 1956 the fire department approved "limited sleeping accommodations" at House of Friendship, a turning point in the history of the institution.

### The ministry clarified

The Goodalls worked energetically, but clearly the elder couple directed most of its efforts toward Jewish evangelism. They gave Martin almost total charge of the Alma Street House of Friendship. The focus there narrowed from Joseph Cramer's "for all nations" theme to serving mostly transient and alcoholic men.

Whether the impetus for change in the House of Friendship ministry came from the board, from the Goodalls themselves,



*Guests enjoy Christmas dinner. Standing are J. Ross (left) and Martin Goodall. K-W Record photo.*

from C.F. Derstine – their mentor and loyal supporter – or from elsewhere is not quite clear. But in April 1955 the board began planning to separate the Jewish work from House of Friendship's ministry to the disadvantaged. The separation was accomplished on January 1, 1956 when the Ontario Hebrew Mission was formed with its own charter. Ross Goodall was named its first director and was no longer associated with House of Friendship.

Just before Goodall assumed that position, C.F. Derstine requested that the board approve ordination for Ross. Despite the objections of some members, C.F.'s strong influence won the necessary approval not only from the board but also from Mennonite Conference of Ontario officials. Goodall was ordained to the ministry in December of 1955.

The Goodalls soon moved to Toronto and then to Tampa, Florida for the winter, returning to the Ontario camp for several more summers to continue the work they felt called to do. On March 31, 1959, the Ontario Hebrew Mission along with all its

assets and liabilities was turned over to Mennonite Board of Missions in Elkhart, Indiana.

Martin Goodall continued managing the work at Alma Street; the board appointed him director of House of Friendship beginning January 1, 1956. It also hired Alice Goodall (Brubacher) as a staff member. Martin was saddled with an operating deficit from the start and, with spending habits similar to his father's, the deficit climbed steadily, reaching about \$2,500 by April. The board had earlier approved an appeal to the supporting constituency for help. As he had done several times in the preceding few years, treasurer William Shuh secured a bank loan for \$1,000 to pay outstanding bills until the Federated Appeal grant came through. At about the same time, Shuh also resigned as treasurer.

Martin, too, presented a letter of resignation to the board within a few months, to take effect in June the following year. He indicated an interest in training for the ministry. Instead, he and Alice moved to Toronto where Martin got a job with the Department of Immigration. Both he and Alice helped the senior Goodalls with the work of the Ontario Hebrew Mission, working particularly with young people in Toronto for several years.

During Martin's last year at House of Friendship, renovations at Alma Street, including fixing up the back porch, created more sleeping accommodations for transients. The number of beds and meals House of Friendship supplied both increased sharply, setting a new pace for the institution.

The board appeared rather weak during the Goodall era, allowing the directors too much control, then scrambling to find funds for unplanned expenditures. The directors, on the other hand, at best demonstrated considerable fiscal irresponsibility.

The board made another appointment in October 1956 which, according to one member, was the secret of the institution's success for many years. The person appointed was not high-profile like the director or chairman of the board, but to many of the men who passed through the House of Friendship's doors in the next 26 years, no one person was more important. Mabel Steinmann took over the kitchen, working miracles with food. But she was more than a cook. Dozens of staff and board members and a whole generation of street people grew to know and respect this quiet, unassuming woman who modelled the best of what the House of Friendship stood for.

## 4

### Offering hope to drifters: The Jantzi years (1957-1961)



"Drifters find food, comfort at House of Friendship," declared a headline in the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* on March 23, 1960. "To many people they're human derelicts," said the writer, who went on to explain that to the House of Friendship staff they were lonely men without much hope.

Twice every day the new House of Friendship director, Orval Jantzi, welcomed about 30 of these men for meals. About half slept at House of Friendship, bedding down after supper in the 10 bunks or in blankets on the floor. Before supper, Jantzi conducted a service with a message of hope in the chapel upstairs. He ran House of Friendship like a rescue mission, a decidedly narrower focus than that of previous directors Joseph Cramer and J. Ross and Martin Goodall. By this time the institution no longer worked with eastern European immigrants, many of whom were Jews, as it had done in the previous 17 years. But alcoholics and transients kept coming.

When the House of Friendship board invited Orval Jantzi to become the new director in the spring of 1957, he and his wife, Doris, needed little time to decide. Orval had graduated from seminary the year before, but instead of becoming a pastor he had joined the Red Rose Tea Company as a salesman, settling his young family in Kingston, Ontario. He dreamed, however, of entering some form of ministry. Orval seized the opportunity House of Friendship offered. By the middle of June he had moved his family – including sons Luke, David, and Peter, aged 6, 5 and 2 – into the upstairs apartment at 23 Alma Street.

Mabel Steinmann, the cook, already lived in one of the rooms there. She had joined the staff the previous November after a trip

to western Canada with Ruby Dettweiler who had cooked at House of Friendship for more than 10 years. At that time, Mabel was looking for a job. Ruby wanted to quit hers to be home with her ailing mother, but she felt she could not leave the hostel without a cook. She talked to board secretary Wilfred Ulrich who offered Mabel the cooking job, one that she was to keep for the next 26 years.

"She was a jewel, a tremendous asset," he remembers years later. The clients appreciated her. Even after she retired, former House of Friendship residents would recognize her on the city's streets and – much to her embarrassment – call out loudly, "Hi, Mabel."

### **Dramatic rise in food program**

Mabel managed a kitchen where activity in the late 1950s escalated sharply to handle the increasing numbers of men who came to eat. Before the end of 1956 the monthly meal figures had seldom reached 500, except in December when House of Friendship provided special Christmas dinners. After that, records report more than 500 meals served almost every month, with December figures rising to nearly 800 in 1957, 1,100 a year later, and over 1,200 in 1959. By 1960 more than 1,000 meals came from that basement kitchen in every month except August (966) and September (912). The total for the year reached 14,491 meals. The men ate in shifts, with staff setting the tables up to three times for a single meal.

The number of food hampers, which the staff also assembled and delivered, increased dramatically at the same time – from 168 in 1957 to 609 four years later. Sometimes church youth groups helped with the extra hampers at Christmas. One year they packaged a large donation of powdered milk. "The young people got a little happy with it," Doris Jantzi, Orval's wife, remembers. "I cleaned off powdered milk from everything for weeks afterwards."

Food donations flooded in all year but especially in the summer and fall: chickens, beef, and eggs from area farmers; fruit and vegetables from various growers and vendors at the Kitchener Farmers' Market; bread and pastries from several bakeries; pails of applebutter from Enoch Horst of Linwood; a "shower" of jam from Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church; bacon, cold cuts, and the weekly eight-pound chunk of bologna from J.M. Schneiders; dozens of cases of canned soup and



*Orval Jantzi was appointed director of House of Friendship in 1957. Photo by Wilfred Ulrich.*



*Mable Brubacher (left) and Mabel Steinmann fill bowls in the kitchen for a family-style dinner. Steinmann cooked at House of Friendship for 26 years. K-W Record photo.*



non-perishables from the Knechtel Corporation; hundreds of cases of government surplus canned meat; and leftover cooked food from local restaurants as well as from numerous church suppers and wedding feasts.

"I remember one night we got three big batches of mashed potatoes and a lot of vegetables. Another time a restaurant sent four dozen cold, fried eggs," recalls Mabel. Some of the eggs she reheated in steam and others she chopped and added to sausage served with fried potatoes. Mabel almost always found a way to use what arrived in her kitchen.

The goose eggs were a bit of a challenge. When the men balked at eating the big eggs fried, Mabel scrambled them with lots of milk. "They were powerful strong," says Stan Sauder who helped make breakfast when he worked at House of Friendship. "But a lot of the men liked strong stuff."

Some food gifts Mabel could have done without – like the 400 quarts of strawberries the producer just couldn't throw out. After hours of sorting and cleaning, Mabel salvaged about 50 quarts of fruit. And there were the "New York dressed" chickens – nearly 100 scrawny birds with nothing missing but the rough feathers. (After removing them by hand, what does one do with the entrails from 100 birds in the heart of a city?) A quarter of a century later, Mabel's memory of that day is provokingly vivid. "It was a mess. I've often had nightmares about it."



*Cooks and volunteers filled hundreds of jars from donated produce.*

Every fall, the kitchen resembled a small canning factory. Groups of women, mostly from area Mennonite churches, came when Mabel called for help. The year 1958 was no exception; September donations included 10 bushels of tomatoes; seven of pears; 12 of plums; and 30 of peaches, seconds and windfalls that required much more work than first-class fruit. And there were always many bags of apples for applesauce and loads of corn. Mabel and her helpers canned more than 700 quarts of fruit and vegetables that September. In addition over 500 quart jars went out to area churches for women to fill at home with produce from their own gardens.

Other gifts in kind came too: pastry from the Dutch Pantry and Calvert's Bakery; chickens from Emmanuel Bauman; shoes from Bata Shoe Stores on Frederick Street; a set of snow tires for the station wagon from Hardy Klassen; free gas from the Public Utilities Commission; free carpentry work from Edmund Bauman and electrical repairs from Gehman Electric to name a few.

### **A crowded hostel**

The number of beds supplied, including spaces on the dining room floor to roll up in a blanket, climbed steadily from under 200 a month when the Jantzis first came to a peak of 450 in October of 1958. The total for that year was 3,774. The following year the figure climbed to 4,257. Board members, concerned about fire codes and bylaws, criticized Orval for allowing such overcrowding. He reportedly silenced his critics with the suggestion that he would gladly refer the extras to their homes. Actually, extras were often sent to the local jail, which accommodated up to 15 men per night on thin mattresses spread on the floor.

Orval found appalling the increasing number of youths "hitting the skids" and showing up at House of Friendship. "In many cases the only difference between them and older tramps is a difference in age," he told a *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* reporter in 1960. But most of the "knights of the road" were "men living in the past, veterans of the wars unable to readjust to the workaday world." Many were alcoholics who had lost jobs, homes, money, and self-respect. (House of Friendship prepared for increased service in August 1959 when Kitchener hosted a Canadian Legion gathering.)



*House of Friendship kept homeless men off city streets. Photo by Allen D. Martin.*

Where alcoholics were concerned, some people felt House of Friendship was more a part of the problem than the solution, and they said so in letters to the local newspaper. They clung to an 1870s attitude that social ills were not native to the community, but that outsiders brought them. (In 1876 Kitchener City Council had struck a special committee on "the tramps nuisance." Their solution was to require "tramps to cut 20 sticks of firewood before breakfast." Then they were given a free ticket to the next stop on the railway line.)

Police chief John Patrick was part of this mindset. In July 1960 Jantzi informed the board that Patrick reportedly told City Council that "the House of Friendship does draw quite a few of these men [transients and alcoholics] to the city, which would include also professional racketeers." Chief Patrick's views apparently influenced city councillors to reduce the city's grant to House of Friendship to \$2,000 from the previous year's \$4,000. Board chairman C.F. Derstine once again went to city hall; he also had a talk with the police chief. But this time his influence was not enough to restore the grant to its former level.

### **Hostel proves its worth**

In the summer of 1960 circumstances proved Patrick's perspective to be flawed. Because of staff shortages, sleeping facilities at House of Friendship were closed during August. Homeless men began sleeping in boxcars, parks, and doorways, setting off a rash of complaints from citizens. Most of the men turned out to be from the twin cities, proving that the services House of Friendship provided did not attract outsiders so much as it kept the city's own derelicts out of the public eye. Without House of Friendship, Jantzi pointed out, begging in the streets, petty thievery, minor crime and pestering of householders for handouts would probably increase.

Despite the fact that House of Friendship was clearly an asset to the city, Jantzi would have preferred not to accept any municipal funds, fearing that such grants might automatically bring some measure of local government control. He resisted any interference with his carrying out of the 1950 House of Friendship mission statement which cited a twofold purpose: to carry on evangelization work and to feed, clothe, and rehabilitate the needy.

Jantzi wanted no part of the welfare system either, believing that such secularized service was the state's job and had nothing to do with the church. House of Friendship, he felt, was to be a Christian mission with all support coming from churches.

In fact, less than half of it did. Orval reported the following breakdown of support for 1959, the middle of his term as House of Friendship director:

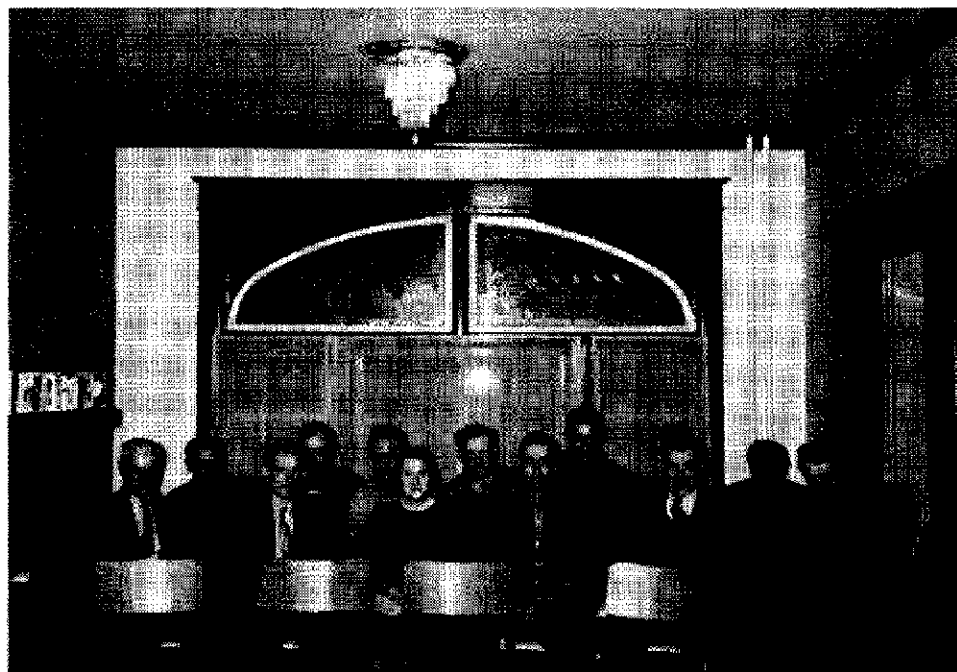
Mennonite Conference of Ontario churches	13%
Amish Mennonite churches	4%
Other churches, individuals, businesses	20%



### Emphasis on religion

In the 1950s Sunday afternoon services and a chapel service before supper each evening marked the explicitly religious nature of the institution. Doris Jantzi says attendance was not mandatory but her son, Luke, remembers his father sometimes refused to let men in for the evening meal if they arrived after the service. According to Luke, Jantzi was willing to spend hours in his office after he had gained a man's trust, listening to him "pour out his soul instead of his anger." But if he considered a man totally unrepentant and unwilling to change his life, Luke explains further, his father sent the man on his way. "He forced the men to see the consequences of their actions." He also refused to admit men who were obviously drunk, a rule that is still in effect.

At one point a young man who had stayed for a month, the maximum allowed at the time, defied Orval when he was asked to leave. He had learned that the Legion had made a donation to House of Friendship. As a veteran, he believed it was his right to stay as long as he wished. "By the grace of God I was able to



*Chapel services were held each evening and on Sunday afternoon.*

stand my ground, and before he left, the chip had fallen off his shoulder," reported Jantzi.

Despite the sincere efforts of Jantzi and those who conducted services at House of Friendship, few men responded favourably to the evangelism attempts. The following director's report to the board in January 1959 reveals Orval's discouragement:

This month we registered 10 decisions. Of the seven which were made through invitation at the meeting, five [men] were not able at a later date to explain what happened and four of the five are worse than they were before. Two men thought they had received a blessing, but made no further progress with the Lord so far as we can tell.

Of the three decisions made by interview, one appeared to be a soup confession from the start, one had a good start and was interfered with by a local Christian, and the third one actually confessed his sins to Jesus and thus far is doing well.

The one man who came through received persecution at the hands of former seekers and from organized religion.

Sometimes Jantzi told "good news" stories. In 1959 he reported that one man was baptized and had joined First Baptist Church. Another got a job with Ball Brothers Construction and also picked up correspondence studies. A third, a professional landscaper who had successfully operated his own business until alcohol bankrupted him, found God's forgiveness. Within days he voluntarily quit smoking and drinking and later was baptized and became a member of Erb Street Mennonite Church.

In 1960, when a resident found a lady's wristwatch, he searched "lost and found" columns in back issues of *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* until he found a possible owner. He got Jantzi to phone the number given. The person answering gave a perfect description of the watch, a graduation gift of great sentimental value. The owner picked up the watch at House of Friendship and left a reward for the finder. Apparently the media found such an act by a House of Friendship client so surprising that it was "news," and the story appeared in the *Record*.

Some residents at House of Friendship helped Mabel, the Jantzis, and occasional volunteers with some of the hostel chores - washing tables, scrubbing the dining room, and keeping the waiting room tidy. One young fellow started to clean up the

garage which was used mainly to store donated clothing. For some unexplained reason he suddenly became extremely upset. "He just turned the garage upside down," recalls Doris. "Every bit of clothing was taken out of its place and strewn all over the floor and outside." Luke remembers the incident, too, adding, "He stood by and watched as my mother and I cleaned it all up. Two hours later, my mom fed him. It really hit him that it was actually us that he was hurting."

The Jantzis had no fear for the safety of their young children despite such irrational outbursts. "I didn't ever feel that our children were in danger. I think the men would have protected them," says Doris. Once, she admits, they were a bit anxious when four-year-old Peter was missing from the apartment. They searched yards and streets without success. Meanwhile Peter was enjoying a game of checkers with one of the men in the basement waiting room where they finally found him. The older boys, Luke and David, liked to peek in on chapel services from a perch on the stairs; they mingled freely with the men, but they knew the line was drawn at entering the sleeping quarters unattended. They learned a lot, sometimes from the men themselves. Luke recalls:

I often saw the men picking up cigarette butts off the sidewalk and I decided one day that this [retrieving and smoking cigarette butts] was a societal norm. I got a long lecture from one of them and I never forgot it. And I remember a drunk whom I knew coming in and putting his arm around me and making me promise not ever to touch hard liquor because, he insisted, "there's a devil in the bottle."

### Helping families

Occasionally families in trouble found help at the House of Friendship. Mabel recalls a car loaded with a family of 11, including a teenage son and his pregnant wife, arriving one Sunday afternoon. In no time the youngsters were upstairs with the Jantzi boys, jumping on their beds with terribly dirty boots. For several days the family slept in the only available space – the chapel floor – and ate the extra meals Mabel provided for them after feeding the men. Meanwhile Orval hurried around town finding living quarters for the family and registering the children

in school. Just when he got them all settled, the family simply disappeared without a word.

And there was Mary who loved her wine. After a drinking binge she would show up at the House of Friendship front door, needing food and wanting to talk to Doris. Sometimes, if she happened to be living with her husband at the time, they would both come. The woman was thrilled when the Jantzis named their new baby Mary Beth. She loved to hold the infant and to talk about the baby she once had. Doris never found out whether Mary gave up her baby for adoption or whether it died, but holding Mary Beth seemed to have some healing effect for this alcoholic woman. There was little more that anyone at House of Friendship could do for her since the institution was set up to serve men.

A new dimension of service came about in the spring of 1961 when a parole officer asked Jantzi to sponsor a prisoner about to be released. While it was not unusual to have men at House of Friendship who had done time, this was the first official link between the institution and parolees, a connection that continued into the 1980s. A halfway house for federal male parolees was established at 67 Charles Street in 1982 and operated by House of Friendship until 1988.

By the spring of 1961, Jantzi had directed House of Friendship for nearly four years and was exploring a switch to pastoral ministry. He began commuting fairly regularly to Zurich, Ontario where the Mennonite church needed a pastor. In July Jantzi submitted his resignation to the House of Friendship board, effective in September.

"Luke didn't want to leave," Mabel Steinmann remembers. He told her years later that his days at House of Friendship were some of his best. There were fun times – like going off to a Vineland fruit farm with his dad and packing 27 bushels of peaches into the station wagon. There was the excitement of people constantly coming and going – interesting, strange and even dangerous people. (Some men, Luke says, weren't allowed into the kitchen because they couldn't be trusted with knives.)

Despite the fact that his father was around the house a lot since he worked out of their home, Luke remembers that he was always too busy, especially in the evenings. "Dad couldn't take time off and he didn't have cash [for extras]," Luke says ruefully.

Mabel tells the story of young Peter who took scissors and slashed a new tablecloth in half. "I'm mad at my dad," was his explanation.

Luke, now a financial planner in Kitchener, harbours mixed feelings about his life at House of Friendship as a young boy and about House of Friendship in the 1980s. He feels it has abandoned his father's ideals. While help is being given to needy people – and to many who don't deserve help, he strongly believes – Luke sees the institution as a monstrous, impersonal bureaucracy with an insatiable need for money. He contends that the message given out is "neutral" rather than explicitly Christian as he feels it was 20 years ago.

The Jantzis moved to Zurich where Orval served as pastor at the Zurich Mennonite Church until his death in 1979. Doris resumed her nursing career a few years later and eventually became administrator and director of care at Queensway Nursing Home in Hensall, Ontario.

After the financially troubled Goodall era, Jantzi's term at the helm of House of Friendship provided welcome breathing space for the board. From the records, it seems the board was overly anxious to cling to control once it had regained it, making decisions on even such trivial matters as the purchase of an additional set of sheets or an electric heater for the kitchen.

Orval never went off on expensive fund-raising endeavours or taxed the budget with his personal lifestyle as his immediate predecessors had done. At the same time, he did not deprive himself and his family to the extent that the first House of Friendship director had done. While his starting salary of \$125 a month plus housing and food was considerably lower than his income as a salesman, Doris claims the family's needs were always met.

### Debts cleared

At the end of 1959, House of Friendship was debt free for the first time in years, a situation that called forth a prayer of thanksgiving from the board.

A year and a half before all the debts were cleared away, the rapidly rising numbers of House of Friendship guests raised the question of expanding facilities, a recurring theme for the next several years. Immediately upon retiring the mortgage on the 23 Alma Street building in 1959, the board set up a capital reserve fund, budgeting \$500 in 1960. That was the year the city slashed in half its grant to House of Friendship, an action the House of Friendship board interpreted as a move to control the mission's expansion.

By the end of that year the board learned that the property immediately to the west of the hostel might be for sale. The board was interested, but in no position to buy. Furthermore, the future of Alma Street was uncertain with expropriation of some property likely as the city made plans to rename the street and to change it to a one-way traffic artery going east. The board had no way of knowing what a large part House of Friendship would play in the changes coming to Alma Street in the Benton to Eby block. Relocation from King Street to 23 Alma Street had set the stage. The board's request for first refusal to the realtor handling the sale of 19 Alma Street lifted the curtain. The next scene was about to begin. But first, the board needed to find a new director.

## Expanding the ministry: The Vandeworp Years (1961-1978)



Gerry Vandeworp was surprised to get a phone call from a bishop one summer day in 1961. He didn't know any bishops. The only ones he had ever heard of were in the Roman Catholic Church and he was Dutch Reformed. When Gerry picked up the phone a man with a voice like rich, dark chocolate pouring out of the wire identified himself as Bishop C.F. Derstine from Kitchener. He began talking about House of Friendship. Gerry hadn't heard of that either. From what the man said, Gerry concluded House of Friendship was a rescue mission something like the one in London, Ontario where he had spent two summers. The "bishop" said House of Friendship needed a new director and Gerry had been recommended for the vacant post. Derstine, chairman of the board, invited Gerry to meet with the board of directors the next week.

A recent graduate of Briercrest Bible Institute in Saskatchewan, Gerry Vandeworp planned on some kind of ministry. He had not yet settled on a job, so he accepted the invitation for an interview. He guessed correctly that Stan Sauder of the nearby Mennonite church where Vandeworp had helped with Bible school that summer had contacted C.F. Derstine. Sauder, it turned out, was a House of Friendship board member.

Before meeting the board, Gerry met C.F. The two quickly discovered that in addition to their interest in rescue missions they shared common fundamentalist views on the end times. The interview with the board was, therefore, little more than a formality. As Gerry recalls, "The board met and that same day I



*Board of directors 1962-63.*

*Standing (left to right) Alvin Jutzi, Orton Koch, Orie Bender, Hugh Logan, Elmer Brubacher, Clayton Moss, Stan Colclough, Joe Thaler, Gerry Vandeworp, Woldemar Dyck. Seated: Wilfred Ulrich, C.F. Derstine, William Schmidt.*

knew that they had hired me. It was so fast that I didn't have time to think."

A short time later Vandeworp moved from his parents' home in Exeter into a second floor room at 23 Alma Street. He began his new job on October 1, 1961 at a starting salary of \$125 a month plus housing, food, and the use of a car. He was 25 years old and single (which the board viewed as a problem). Furthermore he had little education and almost no experience. On meeting him for the first time a welfare official gave him a vote of no confidence. Gerry heard her mutter to no one in particular, "Is that kid going to run that place?"

But Vandeworp believed firmly that God had called him to the mission which he had heard critics in the community say served "bums." He had an affinity for the poor, an attitude dating back to his childhood in the Netherlands. There, as he recalls, "all the poor kids went to public schools." He did too, although most children from middle class families like his

attended private schools. Vandeworp told a *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* reporter that he was ready to assist anyone who truly wanted help to regain self-esteem and to build a new life. He naively thought that if he preached enough good sermons, all the men would listen and be changed. If they hadn't responded by the time they prepared to leave, Gerry gave the transients some of the 1,000 tracts the board had agreed to purchase.

### **From evangelism to social action**

Vandeworp, at the time a self-confessed radical conservative, did "a fair amount of preaching" before every meal and each evening during the first few years. On Sundays, church groups continued to come to lead evangelistic services, almost invariably basing their message on the prodigal son story. Gerry often became upset by "preachers [usually laymen] who couldn't preach," believing the men at House of Friendship deserved better than that. He didn't like seeing fashionably dressed young women come along to help with the singing either. Early in 1965 Gerry convinced the board to approve a set of guidelines in pamphlet form for the benefit of those coming in to lead worship services.

During the next decade, Gerry was to make a complete turn from evangelism to social action.

What I saw happening was that some men would be "saved" two to three times a week. Groups would come in and hold services and say to me afterwards, "Gerry, Gerry, two men were saved tonight." I was supposed to act excited, but I knew those men had been saved the week before and that really bothered me. I reread the New Testament, especially the Gospels, and I came to the conclusion that one of the ministries of the church was simply doing good. Jesus went about doing good; change wasn't a condition he demanded. For the next 15 years or so that was my call, I felt, and if people drastically changed, that was a bonus.

Sometimes there was a bonus, as in the case of the convert who turned his life around and settled into a permanent job with the Kitchener Public Utilities Commission. Malcolm Griffen was another. Badly injured in the war and on a disability pension as a result, Mal often drowned his troubles in alcohol. His family had cut him off completely. Mal seesawed from a few months sobriety, when he would help with chores at House of

Friendship, to drunkenness, when he would hole up in a hotel room and drink around the clock.

One day Mal went with Gerry to pick up some food at the Knechtel Corporation warehouse. Ed Knechtel, in his characteristically straightforward style, asked Mal if he was a Christian. Mal remained silent for a time, and then answered, "Yes." He began working as night watchman at House of Friendship in August 1967, the month when 714 beds were provided, breaking all previous records. Mal stayed sober and kept the night watchman job until, one day in 1970, emphysema hospitalized him. He died a few days later.

Vandeworp learned that ongoing relationships established between counsellors and the men, following crisis intervention, proved more successful in producing lasting change than mandatory attendance at evangelistic services. At his suggestion the board agreed to abandon Sunday and then weekday services for several years. The board accepted Gerry's philosophy, rooted not only in the Gospels but also in the words of the Old Testament prophet Amos: "I [God] want to see a mighty flood of justice - a torrent of doing good." The quotation began to appear on letterheads and other printed pieces, and it stuck long after Vandeworp left House of Friendship even though the pendulum on formal religious services swung back again, settling somewhere between the two extremes.

From the time he arrived, the country-style full-course meals at House of Friendship had impressed Gerry. "It was never a soup kitchen," he says, describing the thin gruel and stale bread he had heard about at other missions. But he was distressed at the sleeping arrangements: one small room (about 10 by 12 feet) where up to 20 men slept in eight bunks and on every available inch of floor space. He was also concerned that the hostel closed down completely for a month in the summer, while staff took a much needed vacation. With extra staff, Gerry was able to keep the mission open all summer his first year there.

Not all the men who kept appearing at the House of Friendship door in increasing numbers were transients and alcoholics. Many, especially from Quebec and the Maritimes, came simply to look for work, having heard that job opportunities were good in the area. Some preceded their families and stayed only a few days while looking for a place to settle.

So that Mabel Steinmann could have some time off from cooking chores at House of Friendship, the board occasionally



This K-W Record photo brought the following response:

*The other year my husband took in two quilts (single comforters) and it was rather a coincidence to see in "Lifestyles" (Feb. 9) the fellow sitting on his hostel bed on my quilt. Our two daughters phoned and said, "Mom, did you see your quilt?" They had given me some of the patches!*

*You are doing a great work.  
God bless you.*

*Alice and Moses Martin  
St. Jacobs, Ontario*

*Enclosed a cheque for \$50.00 for wherever you see the need.*

engaged several young women students from Ontario Mennonite Bible Institute in Kitchener to help in the kitchen. Students David and Esther Hershberger moved into the upstairs apartment at House of Friendship in October 1961, working part time in exchange for living quarters. In July 1963, when the board purchased the house at 19 Charles Street, the Hershbergers moved into an apartment there. The board appointed David assistant director on a voluntary service basis until March of 1964 when the Hershbergers moved to Red Lake, Ontario to do mission work. Then Lloyd and Marie Fretz moved into the vacated apartment. A student at Emmanuel Bible College in Kitchener, Lloyd served as part-time assistant director at House of Friendship for the next two years. Stan Sauder followed him early in 1967, becoming full-time assistant for two years beginning in September 1968. There were two more assistants during the Vandeworp years: Leroy Shantz (1970-1973) and Linda Worth (1976-1978).

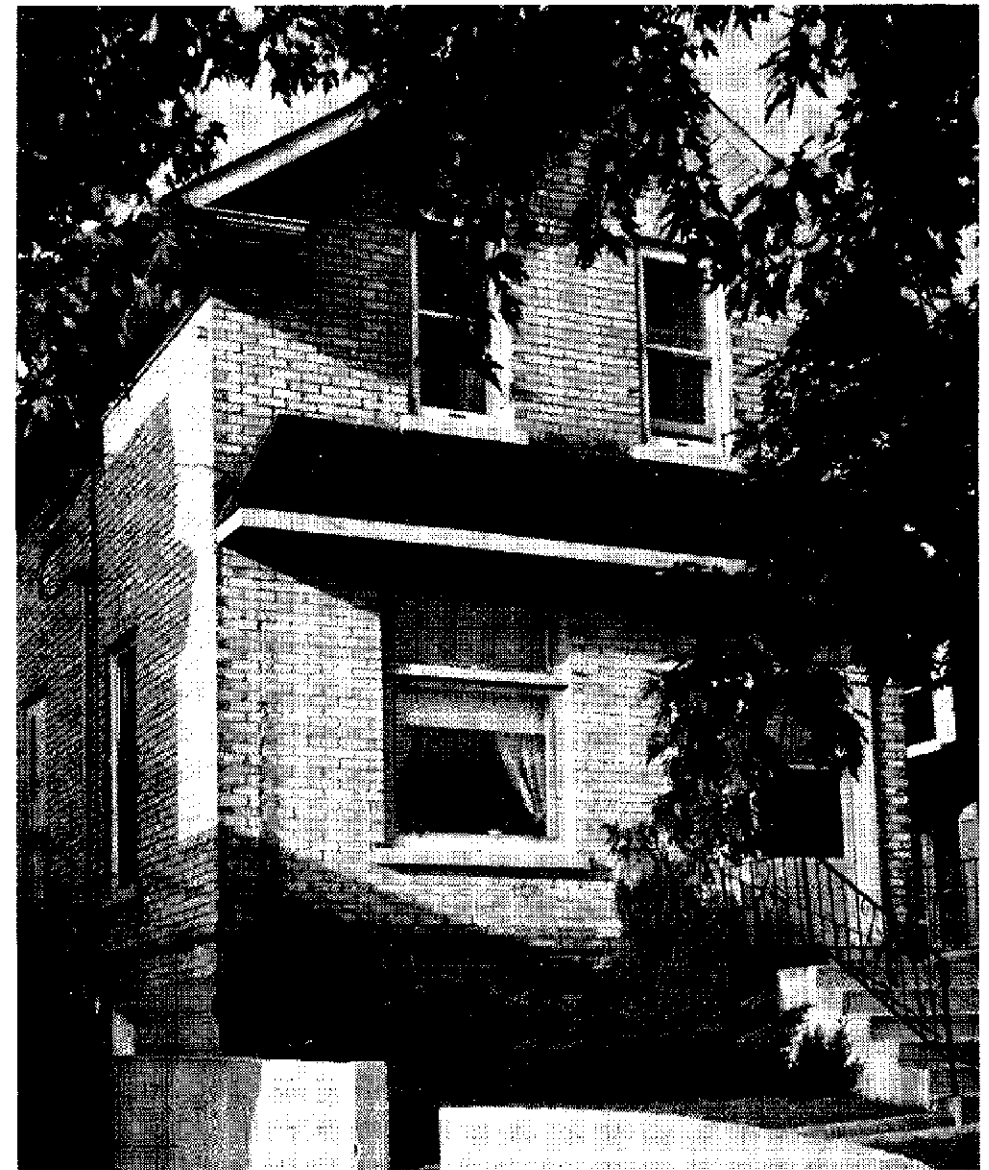
In the meantime Gerry got married. Mal Griffin and John Simmonds, another House of Friendship resident, were among the guests at Gerry and Sandra's wedding in July 1963. The board graciously offered Gerry the use of the House of Friendship car for his honeymoon after which the young couple moved into the upstairs apartment at House of Friendship. Sandra had often visited on weekends so she knew what she was getting into, Gerry claims. She worked at another job for the first five years, helping at House of Friendship in her spare time, delivering food hampers, cooking Christmas dinners, as well as being in charge of the kitchen on alternate weekends. She wasn't paid. After four years, the board recognized its oversight, sending her a letter of apology and a cheque for \$250. Later she became a paid staff member and worked in that capacity for about 10 years.

### **Second building purchased**

In September of 1963 Alma Street was renamed Charles Street and turned into a one-way multi-lane traffic artery with no street parking allowed. Now the issue of the shared driveway, which arose when a side entrance was built for the transients during the Goodall era, became even more contentious. The next door neighbour poured out verbal abuse not only on the men who loitered in the driveway but also on people who parked there to drop off food donations. Even gracious gentlemen like Ed

Knechtel and Ion Weber, both of whom frequently brought food, were not spared although they quite deliberately parked as close as possible to the House of Friendship building when unloading their gifts. Once Ion Weber left the angry neighbour somewhat speechless when he interrupted her tirade by giving her one of the plump chickens destined for the House of Friendship kitchen.

Gerry recognized that the neighbour had some legitimate complaints, but despite every effort, reconciliation seemed out of reach. In December of 1962 the board had even explored the



*19 Charles Street, the second House of Friendship property, provided staff housing, office and storage space.*



possibility of buying the property. However, the \$35,000 asking price was exorbitant.

Instead, by July 1, 1963 the board purchased the house on the opposite side of the hostel for \$10,500. It provided staff housing, an office, and additional storage space in the basement for food. Mabel, who had moved to an apartment when the Jantzis needed more space for their growing family, took up residence in the house along with the voluntary service workers. The Vandeworps had the second floor hostel apartment to themselves, the former office was converted into more sleeping accommodations, and showers for the men were installed for the first time.

The board had several thousand dollars available in savings when it purchased 19 Charles Street, leaving a mortgage of only \$7,000. That amount dropped rapidly as special donations came in. By June 1967, with only \$1,500 left to pay and bank interest climbing, a board member loaned money to House of Friendship at low interest to pay off the mortgage.

### **The first halfway house**

With expanded hostel facilities in place, Vandeworp felt the next move should be a halfway house for longer term alcoholic guests and persons "halfway into an institution," who were waiting for the red tape to be cleared away. About a year later property at 51 Charles Street went on the market. Another private loan of \$4,000, along with a bank loan, made possible a \$22,000 cash purchase by House of Friendship in August 1968.

That purchase underscored House of Friendship's clear intention to stay in the neighbourhood and opened the door to serious negotiations with the unhappy neighbour on the east side of the hostel. The two parties finally agreed on a cash price of \$26,000 for the property at 27 Charles. Resale of #51 at a slight profit made the purchase possible. (In December 1983 House of Friendship again added #51 to its greatly expanded portfolio of Charles Street properties.)

The city planning department at first refused permission to establish the anticipated halfway house since it fell outside of zoning regulations for that area. It was the kind of situation that would have sent C.F. Derstine straight to city hall. But he had passed away in the fall of 1967, still carrying the title of "honourary chairman" of the House of Friendship board at the time of his death. Even without the persuasion of the old House

of Friendship champion, town planners reconsidered and agreed to change the zoning at city expense. In November, when residents began moving in, the house generated some of its own operating income from fees paid by the clients. They wanted to be independent, doing their own housekeeping. The board agreed but wasn't at all sure that men could keep the place tidy. It felt it would have to hire a woman for a couple of hours a day to do the housework.

### **Celebration marks 30 years**

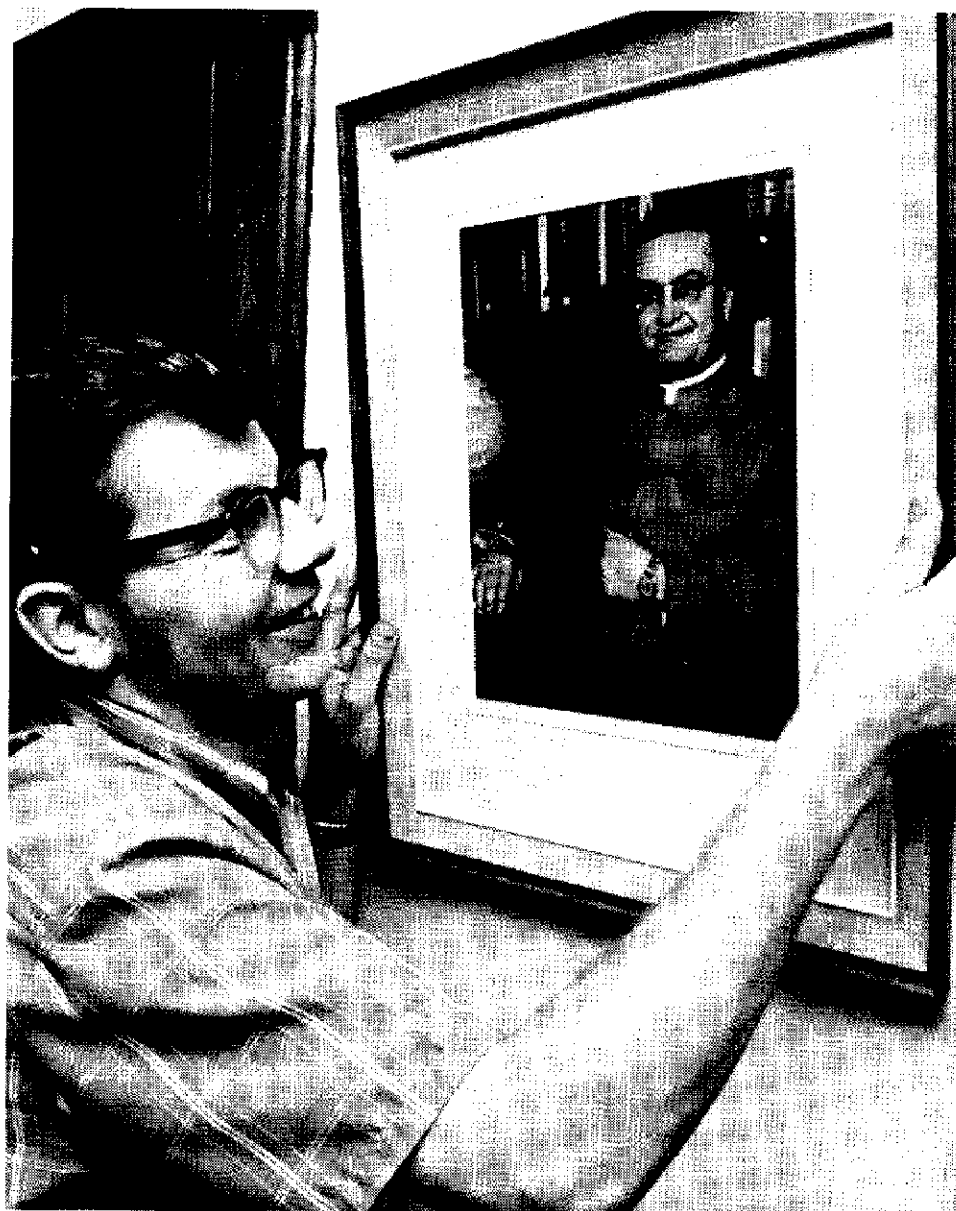
The paperwork took about a year to complete with the official opening for the new facility coinciding with the 30th anniversary of the beginning of House of Friendship. The big celebration on September 14, 1969 attracted almost 400 people. Guest speaker was *K-W Record* publisher Sandy Baird who had strongly disagreed with previous director Orval Jantzi on House of Friendship philosophy. Paul Frey, a singing truck driver from St. Jacobs who later became an opera star in Europe, sang several solos.

Presentation of a portrait of founding father C.F. Derstine marked the anniversary. To the delight of the board, contributions that day reduced the capital debt by \$1,000.

The halfway house was Vandeworp's biggest addition to the program until that time, but there were other smaller ones. In 1963 he had tried helping 15 people with small emergency loans totalling \$75.50, but nearly half the borrowers could not repay the money. In November the board repaid Gerry, and the loan fund idea died until 1971 when donated seed money launched a successful revolving interest-free loan program. Several years later the director began handling the welfare cheques of some residents as an authorized trustee. Also in 1963, brown-bag lunches for residents who had jobs were introduced and in 1968 church youth groups began coming in for regular games nights with a film night scheduled each week. A few years later a summer drop-in centre proved so successful that it carried on year round.

More community work began to develop when Stan Sauder joined the staff as assistant director in 1967. He could scarcely believe what he saw in some homes as he delivered food hampers. One home he remembers vividly had nothing at all to eat and no bathroom, laundry, or cleaning supplies. "I never saw a place so absolutely empty," he recalls. Sauder tried to back up





*Gerry Vandeworp hangs a portrait of founding board chairman C.F. Derstine after the 30th anniversary celebration. K-W Record photo.*

food donations with support and counsel whenever he could. On a tip from the welfare office he remembers once finding a woman alone, hungry, and sick, with no desire to live. To change her situation she needed a lot of encouragement as well as food, both of which House of Friendship provided. Hers was one of the successful cases.

At other times Sauder's efforts brought disappointment. One family had run afoul of a finance company which threatened to seize all the furniture. They called Stan and together they spent a lot of time figuring out what the family could pay each month.

Sauder persuaded the finance company to go along with the plan. The next week, after setting it all up, Stan went back and found an empty house. The family and everything they had were gone. The neighbours said they had moved to B.C.

Sauder often got calls to help in domestic disputes, some involving violence. Once a battered wife asked him to talk to her husband who worked with a paving company. He agreed to go, but with some trepidation. He helped the couple patch up their differences and things went well for several years. Later, he discovered, the situation had turned sour once again. "One thing I learned is that you don't very quickly help a great deal," he concedes. Gerry Vandeworp learned that too, but he continued trying to help the ever-growing number of transients who drifted through House of Friendship's doors.

### **Fascinating characters**

There was the man who day after day piled crates in front of the open garage door behind House of Friendship, calling it his palace, and declaring himself king. Another had kept a meticulous log of his journeys across the country since 1927, submitting it with his application for Old Age Security Pension. No one can be quite sure why; presumably he did it to prove he was a long-time resident of Canada, thus eligible for the pension. There was the artist who pencil-sketched landscapes with intricate detail and shading. And there was Joe, the "neat old guy" who survived the elements in Kitchener's nooks and crannies for 20 years, living on cheap wine, rye whiskey, and food scraps salvaged from garbage cans. On rare occasions when he was sober, Joe was allowed into House of Friendship where he skillfully avoided the showers.

Some of the men were offenders. Often the names on the House of Friendship intake forms showed up in newspaper reports of arrests for petty thefts, break and entry, forgery, false pretences, arson, vagrancy, and being drunk in a public place. One man, known as the clock thief, had an uncontrollable compulsion to steal alarm clocks when he was drunk. He ended up doing time.

Sometimes the charges were more serious: assault, wounding, even murder after a fight in a local hotel which had left one man dead. (The offender returned to House of Friendship after serving a jail sentence.)

Sandra Vandeworp never wanted to know their past so that she would treat the residents equally. They responded to her warmth and trust with respect. When son Evert arrived, the men collected money among themselves to buy a bassinet. They often helped look after Evert and later Rhonda, fussing over the children and bringing them presents. Once Sandra let one of the men take young Evert to the park for the afternoon. Two years later that man gave Sandra a gift, a token of appreciation for the trust she had given him. Sandra and Gerry said they felt God's protection. They never worried about their own or their children's safety.

House of Friendship residents had enough appreciation and respect for the institution's staff and property to police their peers to a great extent. One fellow told Vandeworp, "If a guy wants to steal, he can go to Eatons or somewhere; he'd better not steal at House of Friendship."

Occasionally someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs got into the building, lost control, and caused some damage, but Vandeworp never laid a charge. If he couldn't talk him down, Gerry called the police to take the offender away before other residents were drawn into a disturbance. Vandeworp's bottle collection testified to a lot of confiscated alcohol poured down the toilet. Despite developing a lot of "street smarts," Vandeworp got taken in from time to time. One woman duped him out of several hundred dollars over a couple of years. "She was Dutch and looked so much like my mother," he laments. Women seldom came into the hostel, but when they did, particularly if they were drunk, they created a special challenge for the staff. Vandeworp knew he did not dare touch a woman to escort her out, so he kept his eye on her purse. If she set it down, he would grab it and run outside. "No woman, even if she's drunk, wants you to look into her purse. She'll come after you," he observes. As soon as the woman came outside, Vandeworp would drop the purse, rush back inside, and lock the door.

### **An advocate of the poor**

Until the day he left, Vandeworp maintained a hands-on style of leadership, taking his turn at delivering hampers, working all the shifts including weekends, spending a lot of informal time with his clients, encouraging them to find ways to help themselves. Once when the city planned to cut funding for the drop-in centre,

the residents themselves petitioned City Hall. Vandeworp helped them with procedures, but the men organized the delegation, presented their case, and won – keeping the drop-in centre open all winter.

Vandeworp believed firmly that the socially disadvantaged needed to learn how to make their needs known, to work together as an organized group to that end. "People in the professions, civil service, labour, and elected positions all have their associations or unions to back them up, but the down-and-outers haven't any organized muscle power at all," he once told a reporter. He often encountered the attitude that "they" don't deserve to have amenities such as TV. That disturbed him; the socially disadvantaged needed television more than anyone, he believed, because they were often stuck at home 24 hours a day.

Vandeworp's outspoken and consistent advocacy for the poor in every available forum attracted a good deal of attention in the community and in the press. He got invitations to speak to a variety of community organizations, giving him plenty of opportunity to acquaint people with not only the plight of the socially disadvantaged but also with House of Friendship itself. He could be disarmingly straightforward. Once he addressed a meeting of The Young Men's Club where drinks were flowing freely. He responded to a question on admission policy by saying that most of his listeners would not be admitted if they showed up at House of Friendship that night because "they were too tight." The comment didn't deter the club's support.

But Gerry did "get into hot water," as he describes it, when he publicly tangled with the K-W Federated Appeal in 1974. Along with social planners he criticized Appeal officials for their distribution of funds. The critics felt the YM-YWCA got a disproportionate amount of the money. They also thought the board, largely middle class businessmen not always in touch with social needs, should include working people and welfare recipients. Despite severe clashes with a top Appeal executive, Vandeworp received strong support from the House of Friendship board throughout the controversy. In the end, the Appeal board broadened representation by adding 12 new directors – a small step toward change – although few people in the target groups, in fact, were willing or able to serve.

House of Friendship began receiving funds from Federated Appeal (now United Way) in 1950 and representation on the board began in 1961. Vandeworp was himself a very active board

member for several years. In 1962 the Federated Appeal contribution reached an unprecedented 41 per cent of the House of Friendship budget, but that percentage figure dropped fairly consistently after that. By the early 1970s it had fallen below 20 per cent and continued dropping, although the dollar amount climbed.

### **A growing network**

While the strongest link remained with supporting churches, House of Friendship and its executive director were relating to a growing network of organizations. Vandeworp started a community workers association, a rather informal group of social workers who continue to get together for lunch regularly. He also served on numerous local and provincial organizations, some newly formed, and often in key executive positions: K-W Council of Churches; the Social Planning Council; the steering committee of the Regional Development Council (now Waterloo Region Social Resources Council); Alcohol Recovery Homes Association of Ontario (ARHAO), now Alcohol Drug Recovery Association of Ontario (ADRAO); and the Rotary Club. (For the Rotarians he made a few concessions: he wore a tie and bought a trench coat "because nobody went there in a windbreaker.") His position as president of ARHAO in 1977 sent him to halfway houses and detox centres across the province and gave him opportunity to comment when the government formed policy.

Vandeworp held no university degree or title. He and Robert Johnson, his pastor at First Mennonite Church, felt strongly that Gerry's work was legitimate ministry, qualifying him for ordination. He and Johnson also believed that ordination would give Gerry more status in the circles in which he moved. He didn't have seminary training, but neither did a good many other Mennonite ministers at the time. Johnson began working toward ordination. Discussions went on for some time, first at the district ministerial level and then with Mennonite conference officials. All were less concerned about Gerry's theology (which was more "Mennonite" than that of some Mennonites) than about his reasons for seeking ordination.

Officials didn't need to look far for a precedent; C.F. Derstine had ordained J. Ross Goodall, a previous House of Friendship director, for exactly the same reasons. Conference officials saw Vandeworp's ordination, which took place at First Mennonite Church on December 2, 1973, more as a commissioning for the

specific ministry at House of Friendship. Vandeworp, however, felt that he was also being ordained for ministry in a congregation, a profession he had planned to take up years earlier and which he eventually did enter when he left House of Friendship.

While Vandeworp valued the professional status of an ordained minister for himself, he resisted "professionalism" with a passion, especially within House of Friendship. He struggled to keep the informal, hands-on, front line managerial style with which he was comfortable. But he was losing that battle. When he had first come in 1961, the director and the cook ran the mission out of one building on an annual budget of about \$10,500. By 1974 there were three buildings, staff had more than doubled, giving from churches, individuals, and businesses had almost doubled in just the last five years, and the annual budget had jumped to over \$107,500. While the number of meals and beds supplied had actually dropped significantly, the number of food hampers had skyrocketed, several new programs had been started, and a major new development was on the horizon.

### **Changes in board structure**

The House of Friendship board was changing, too. Younger persons with more education – some professional social workers – became active members. Up until this time, the board had functioned as a whole, relying on the executive director to do the background work. The two exceptions were a small committee that worked out the budget each year and a personnel committee that began in 1972. By the mid-1970s it was clear to some board members that further changes were crucial to meet the demands of an expanding ministry.

April 1974 marked a turning point in the House of Friendship organization when some board members attended a retreat at Grand Bend. While they had planned to discuss the projected recovery home, board restructuring became the primary agenda. A month later the full board approved suggestions to form program and property committees.

Vandeworp considered the move a vote of no confidence in his leadership and submitted a letter of resignation two weeks later. When the executive and personnel committees met jointly at the end of May, all members affirmed their confidence in his leadership and at the June meeting the board acted to defer

acceptance of the resignation. Early in July, Gerry formally withdrew his resignation.

Vandeworp and the board realized that 13 years at the head of House of Friendship had left him physically and emotionally drained. The board freed him for a few weeks' vacation which Gerry spent in the Netherlands, his native land. He recalls, "I walked the streets and came back full of vim and vigour." Although the issue of his tenure brought on two months of anguish, it was resolved with no lasting ill will and Vandeworp stayed on at House of Friendship for another four years. The board was restructured with four separate committees: personnel, program, property, and finance and public relations. The heads of each committee along with a president, vice-president, member at large, and a recording secretary formed the executive committee. A model was adopted by which the executive director supervised the hostel and all family aid programs and was directly responsible to the executive committee. The recovery home would have its own director, directly responsible to the board, with an informal reporting relationship to the executive director and to an outside professional advisory committee.



*Gerry Vandeworp spent many hours listening to troubled clients. K-W Record photo.*

There were other significant changes and innovations during the Vandeworp years. Children from House of Friendship families went to summer camp at Hidden Acres for the first time and various loan funds were tried. House of Friendship cooperated with other service agencies to provide Christmas hampers, with requests cleared through the Lions Club. Funding from the city and later from the Region of Waterloo moved from simple grants to a per diem (daily) designation. The personnel committee set up a salary grid for the first time, with fringe benefits gradually built in.

### **Launching a recovery home**

But by far the most dramatic change was the establishment of an alcoholism recovery home under a new provincial government initiative which had begun before the end of 1974. (Chapter 8 is devoted to the alcoholism recovery home at 174 King Street North in Waterloo.) That project more than any other thrust House of Friendship onto a new plateau of expansion and development, thus opening the door to new dealings with government bodies. A different kind of leadership would be required to deal with those bureaucracies. As the organization continued to grow, the chief executive officer would be increasingly removed from personal contact with the men in the drop-in centre and the low-income families who came to the door for food.

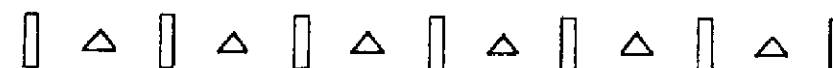
Vandeworp realized that it was time to move on. For 17 years he had been on the front lines, fighting for the rights of the poor in the community. He spent countless hours in the hostel sitting at a card table with a cup of coffee, listening to clients who wanted to talk. He could look back with considerable satisfaction at a string of accomplishments, particularly at the recovery home for alcoholics which was a dream he had dearly wished to see come true.

With the recovery home well established and a three-quarter house for its graduates in operation by 1978, Vandeworp once again tendered his resignation. This time it did not come out of frustration and despair. It came as a response to a call to pastoral ministry, something he had set aside for nearly two decades but had not forgotten, and as a recognition that a new chapter for House of Friendship would need fresh leadership. He felt that competent leadership was available in former board member Martin Buhr whom Vandeworp endorsed as his successor.

In 40 years House of Friendship had moved a long way from the little storefront on King Street. But the next decade would take it far beyond what anybody could have dreamed, its twofold mission established in 1950 still permeating every facet of the organization.

## 6

## Integrating mission and social service: The Buhr years (1978-19--)



A new executive director occupied the House of Friendship office at 23 Charles Street on September 5, 1978. Martin Buhr was the first in 40 years to be appointed without the direct involvement of Bishop C.F. Derstine, the founding chairman of the House of Friendship board, who had died in 1967. Buhr's appointment was based on the recommendation of a personnel committee.

Cranson Knechtel, board chairman at the time and also a member of the personnel committee, remembers hiring Buhr as "a very good thing that happened to House of Friendship." Knechtel worked closely with Buhr for more than a decade – as board chairman until 1981 and then as chairman of the finance committee.

Martin Buhr was not a front line director who mingled with the men in the hostel over coffee and cards like Gerry Vandeworp had done. Nor did he conduct worship services before supper like Orval Jantzi. But he had a passion for the poor and a commitment to serve the disenfranchised. He had the kind of administrative and management skills required to lead House of Friendship into a new era of expansion.

Following studies at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg Buhr spent five years in church-related service in Pennsylvania and Taiwan. He did further study at the University of Waterloo before beginning a career in professional social work with the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (COMSOC) in Waterloo. His experience and knowledge of the

welfare system led eventually to a supervisory position. In the mid-1970s Buhr took time out to work toward a MSW (Master of Social Work) degree at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo even though he had a family to support. After a year of professional upgrading Buhr took a position as team services manager with COMSOC in Metro Toronto. His family saw him on weekends and once in the middle of each week. A year later Martin and his wife, Pauline, decided they did not want to move to a big urban centre, nor did Martin wish to climb the professional ladder there. "I was looking for a place where I could integrate my faith, my training, and my experience," he says. "I was looking for a place like House of Friendship."

Martin Buhr knew about House of Friendship. He was a member of Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener which began supporting House of Friendship soon after the mission was founded. Two of its pastors, Andrew Shelly and Wilfred Ulrich, and one of its laymen, Clayton Moss, had served successively as House of Friendship board secretaries from 1939 to 1972. Buhr himself had been a board member from 1971-1975 – until House of Friendship began receiving COMSOC funds for its new alcoholism recovery home in Waterloo. At that point COMSOC policy required that Buhr resign from the board to avoid possible conflict of interest.

Buhr was one of several young men who came on to the board in the early 1970s. They brought not only the deep Christian commitment characteristic of House of Friendship board members, but also a new kind of professional training, skills, and savvy. (A few years later several women with similar credentials were also appointed.) These new members, including Buhr, were part of the Grand Bend meeting in 1974 that led to a restructured board and helped to set new directions in the following years.

### **A holistic view of mission**

Buhr began his new job in 1978 by immersing himself in House of Friendship's history. During his first month as executive director he read all the board minutes from the previous 40 years. From that exercise he says he got a clear sense of the founders' vision for House of Friendship. He understands that they saw it as a Christian agency, a mission and service arm of churches in partnership serving the most needy in Waterloo Region.

The blended mission and service concept fit Buhr's holistic philosophy. He sought to integrate rather than fragment the physical, spiritual, emotional and social well-being of people. He believed that persons in the helping disciplines (social workers, medical professionals, clergy) could complement the work of Christian staff and volunteers in restoring persons to wholeness. No particular mode of treatment was adequate for every situation. The primary problem, he felt, needed to influence the choice of intervention strategies.

"If a person is without money we either provide a food hamper or serve a meal or provide a bed. We do not assail his spiritual welfare as a condition of meeting his physical need," said Buhr in a November 1979 report on hostel facilities. He went on to endorse offering spiritual counsel when the opportunity arose, particularly when an individual showed remorse and an interest in changing his behaviour.

The documented hostel report illustrates Buhr's style of carefully reviewing, analyzing, and charting a critical path before plunging into major decisions. "Martin doesn't run things by the seat of his pants," says Kaye Rempel, who worked with him both at COMSOC and on the House of Friendship board. Within the first few months he instructed committees and staff to write out goal statements for their particular areas of involvement to provide both "a map for 1979" and an evaluation tool at the end of the year.

### **Changes at the hostel**

By the beginning of 1979 Martin already knew that something had to be done about the hostel. The overcrowding caused frustration among staff and clients. The facility was serving increasing numbers of needy people, but in so doing health, fire, safety, and building codes were being violated. It was not a new situation. Even though city officials tolerated the hostel's substandard conditions, Buhr knew that long-term operation called for changes. There were three options: to upgrade, to relocate or to close.

Buhr immediately ruled out the third option. Well established and highly respected in the community, House of Friendship served prevailing needs that could not be ignored. The other two options required considerable financial support. However, before either option could be pursued the number of



*The Charles Street hostel needed up-grading.*

supporters needed to be increased and they would have to be clear about the mission of the House of Friendship.

In January 1979 the executive director suggested to the board that the annual meeting on March 3 include a joint board-staff discussion on the mission of House of Friendship. Two facets of mission needed to be addressed: philosophy, and goals related to specific programs.

The discussion had already begun within the House of Friendship program committee. After the annual meeting the discussion moved to supporting churches. The conversation continued with the Mennonite conference and Mennonite

Mission Board of Ontario officers. In May board chairman Cranson Knechtel, head of the Knechtel Corporation, together with the executive director met the Kitchener-Waterloo Mennonite Ministerial. Reports from the various discussions reaffirmed the long-standing view that House of Friendship should address both the physical and spiritual welfare of the most needy in the community.

At the September 1979 board meeting Buhr presented "Mission: Next Steps," a document based on data collected at the discussions. After nearly a year of reflection and research and months of consultation he concluded:

It is my personal view that this is the right time to proceed with improving our hostel operation. I sense that if we do not proceed now others will take the initiative and move into the hostel field. New operators may not share our vision for wholeness of persons. Rather than weaken the witness of the Christian church, I recommend that we take steps to strengthen it even though it will mean new financial sacrifices. Improvements to our hostel services, I believe, will be incomplete unless we provide space and an environment in which the spiritual ministries can flourish.

#### **Preliminary steps to hostel upgrading**

At that September meeting the board acted to obtain preliminary cost estimates to update the hostel facilities. It directed Buhr to do a feasibility study on alternate housing and expansion of programs, and to return with cost and income projections.

The study, tabled in November 1979, outlined House of Friendship's history, purpose, programs, resources, levels of service, community support and the needs to be addressed. It charted the growth pattern of the meals served and beds filled at the hostel from 1954 – the earliest year complete records were kept. Figures for five-year intervals are as follows:

Year	Annual bed days	Nightly average	Annual meals served	Daily average
1954	68	-	4,912	13
1959	4,257	12	12,781	35
1964	5,407	15	15,248	42
1969	7,336	20	17,615	48
1974	6,158	17	11,541	32
1978	8,705	24	23,212	64



The study identified three significant trends that were developing as a direct result of provincial government health and social policies: decentralization – building new structures or transferring responsibility from provincial to municipal governments; discharge – moving ex-psychiatric patients and adult mentally handicapped persons from institutions into the community; and privatization – subsidizing operating costs for private/voluntary agencies to provide services. In addition to the House of Friendship study, the Waterloo Region Social Resources Council further documented the need for hostel services.

Buhr also identified House of Friendship's sources of income: government subsidies, clients paying their way as income allows, and voluntary donations. He charted the latter for a 20-year period. The table below shows the result at five-year intervals:

	1959	1964	1969	1974	1979
Operating budget	13,015	12,792	50,091	122,771*	388,500
Churches	4,396	-	-	15,670	30,000
Individuals, businesses, and groups	1,619	5,965**	16,636**	24,141	63,719
Federated Appeal	3,000	4,316	10,067	23,395	37,725
Total donations	9,015	10,281	26,703	63,206	131,444
Donations as percent of income	69%	80%	53%	51%	34%

\* figure includes some start up funds for the alcohol recovery home that opened in 1975.

\*\* figures include donations from churches

## Hostel proposals

The report also included several proposals: that House of Friendship build and operate a modern 7,000-square foot 40-bed hostel conforming to municipal standards; that the hostel be in the vicinity of the existing operations and constructed to allow for expansion to 50 beds; and that a capital fund drive be undertaken in 1980 to raise \$100,000. (The board later raised it to \$400,000.) Buhr also projected a balanced budget based on 90 per



*Executive director Martin Buhr, president Cranson Knechtel, and secretary Norma Dettweiler conduct board business. Dettweiler served as secretary for 10 years.*

cent occupancy. In addition he mapped out the pros and cons of three alternative plans and plotted an ambitious "critical path" which projected a move into new hostel quarters by August 1, 1980.

At its November 17, 1979 meeting the board accepted eight recommendations that essentially put in gear the new hostel building project. Eventually three properties in a row, a few doors east of the hostel on Charles Street, were purchased. Two were demolished and the third was incorporated into the new building.

The critical path had to be extended considerably since it took time to negotiate such things as a zone change and grants from regional municipalities. But by the summer of 1981 building was underway and on February 27, 1982 the big move to the new hostel took place.





Left: Former executive director Gerry Vandeworp joins board member Helen Rempel and executive director Martin Buhr in breaking ground for the new hostel in 1981.

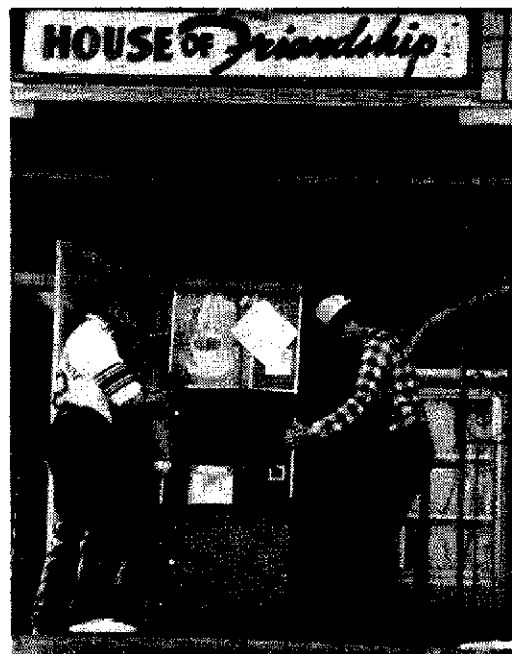
Right: Volunteers help move to the new hostel.

Conrad Grebel College students helped to carry furnishings down the street to the new location. One item to be moved was a safe. Martin Buhr wasn't eager to let it be generally known that House of Friendship had a safe – which sometimes contained a considerable amount of money. Apparently a few of the students had not heard his directive that the safe be transported with the utmost discretion. Finding the object very heavy, the students managed to nudge the safe onto a dolly and with noisy exuberance rolled it down the sidewalk to its new home – the distance of a city block. According to a House of Friendship staff member, "Martin was not amused!"

(More information on the hostel and the many programs based there is included in later chapters.)

### Spiritual discovery

Recognizing the importance of reinstating a more explicitly spiritual emphasis at House of Friendship, the board approved space for a chapel in the new hostel. After House of Friendship moved to 23 Charles Street in 1949 a main floor room had been used for daily chapel services until 1971 when it became a drop-in centre. Regular weekday services were no longer held



Charles Street East before 1982 (above) and after the new hostel at #63 was completed.



but the room doubled as a chapel on Sundays until those services, too, were disbanded in the mid-1970s.

"When I came in 1979 there were no chapel services, nothing like that," says Helen Epp, program director at House of Friendship until the summer of 1988. She agreed with Martin Buhr that meeting the needs of the whole person meant offering

spiritual help. A low-key emphasis on faith issues called "Spiritual Discovery Groups" had begun in 1981, but leaders struggled with meeting in different places – Epp's office, the dining room, and at "27 Charles."

"When we moved to the new hostel in 1982 we had a chapel. My, what a wonderful thing to have that room," recalls Epp. Staff began to meet for monthly chapel services. Evening services on Sunday, usually conducted by a staff member, and once or twice during the week were reintroduced. Bible studies were sometimes offered on weekday afternoons.

Discovery groups continue, not only at the hostel but in other residences as well. Attendance is voluntary, except for the Friday morning services at the alcoholism recovery home. Several staff persons with training in ministry also provide chaplaincy service and spiritual counselling. House of Friendship staff participate in an annual one-day retreat away from the city for their own reflection.

While the revival-style services before supper have long gone, House of Friendship remains a Christian agency, making deliberate choices to underscore that emphasis. "At the alcoholism recovery home," says Buhr, "we tell the residents that this is what we are about. If they were in another recovery home, they would be required to go to A.A. (Alcoholics Anonymous) as a condition of staying in the program. This is our equivalent." Women's groups like Live and Learn are church-based to symbolize the Christian connection. Where possible, the program incorporates an occasional visit from the pastor and volunteers from the church to help the participants appreciate what good resources churches can offer.

### Religious emphasis

Agenda that is clearly faith-centred has never interfered with government funding for qualified programs. The part-time chaplain position at the alcohol recovery home, in fact, is funded on a par with chaplains in prisons and hospitals. As for other programs with a Christian emphasis, Buhr says, "We are very open. I've learned that we don't have to be going around fearfully and apologetically. If it [chaplaincy] were challenged, we'd have to be ready to take the consequences." Buhr would endeavour to find other sources of funding, not change the agenda.

Far more important than programs, places, or policies in giving House of Friendship a Christian character are the people who do the work – board members, volunteers, and staff.

"We have intentionally sought our volunteers and board members through churches," says Buhr. "We don't treat them lightly. We try to get a sense of who they are, what they could do, what their values are and where they would fit into our organization in a positive way." The majority of regular volunteers and board members come from Mennonite churches.

Job opportunities, too, are first made known through announcements in supporting churches as a deliberate recruitment strategy. People frequently wonder if House of Friendship hires only Christians. "We can't always hire people just because they are Christian if they don't have the skills or the expertise for a particular job," explains Buhr. Direct questions about personal faith may not be asked of persons applying for jobs, but the interviewer may ask something like, "How do you feel about working at an organization that embodies a Judeo-Christian philosophy?"

"Some people who use less Christian language are sometimes more Christian than the other way around," observes Helen Epp. "By some people's standards they may not be [Christian]. I'm not prepared to make that judgment."

Epp goes on to explain that people who know the organization often apply even when there is no immediate job opening because they want to work at House of Friendship. A seminary graduate from Elkhart, Indiana for example, applied because he wished to gain experience working with low-income people.

### Wage policies

Motivations other than salary usually send job seekers to House of Friendship. Often they don't even mention money, says Epp. Nevertheless the board has tried to upgrade wage packages to a more acceptable level, according to finance chairman Cranson Knechtel.

At the outset, in 1939, there was very little money coming in and House of Friendship staff worked for almost nothing. Later, wages improved somewhat, but no policy seemed to guide the board except that women were always paid less.

In July 1969 rates for positions were adopted: \$7,500 for the executive director; \$6,000 for the assistant; and \$4,500 for the

cook. Vacation pay and an hourly rate for part-time and replacement staff were also set at that time.

By 1975 the alcoholism recovery home opened. There were new job categories and more professionally-trained staff. But some staff felt that the old pattern of determining salary on the basis of the person rather than the position (particularly biased against women) was still in place.

To address the problem, the personnel committee interviewed staff, drew up new salary guidelines, and adopted a sick-leave policy in 1976. Finally, in November 1977, the board approved a 10-level salary grid which took into account categories such as education, experience, and responsibility, and allowed annual negotiation for cost of living.

A 1982 study prompted a salary increase of \$1,000 for all staff. The increase meant a much greater gain for those at the bottom of the salary scale. Buhr and other upper level staff members endorsed the move, which has been repeated several times to narrow the gap between the highest and lowest salaries. The board also introduced a group pension plan in January 1983.

"The board has made a diligent effort to get into a more marketable salary range. Before, working at House of Friendship was more like voluntary service," says the finance chairman.

Total wages and benefits as recorded in year-end financial reports took a dramatic leap in the 1980s – from under a quarter million dollars in 1980 to just over one million in 1987. Better wages were only partly responsible. During that time the staff more than doubled due to a burst of new activity.

### A decade of development

The program development momentum had already begun in the 1970s when interest-free loans, summer camps, Live and Learn, the alcoholism recovery home, and the three-quarter house were introduced. It continued and even increased in the 1980s – the decade of development at House of Friendship. The 10-year period began and will end with ambitious and venturesome projects: the new hostel at 63 Charles, and Eby Village, an apartment building for low-income single persons, both described elsewhere. Sandwiched between were a host of other new programs. This explosion of activity prompted increased support services and administrative changes.

When it began in 1974, the alcoholism recovery home in Waterloo had its own director who was responsible to the House



*The administrative council. Seated: Martin Buhr, executive director; Pamela Gardiner, "174" program director. Standing (l-r): Deborah Schlichter, program director for residential services; Anthony Bender, program director for community services; Mary Little, financial officer. Photo by Robert Gascho.*

of Friendship board. The director had only a reporting relationship to the House of Friendship executive director. Buhr changed the model, making the Waterloo unit a program of House of Friendship parallel to the Kitchener operation, each with its own program director. Both persons were directly responsible to the executive director who in turn was responsible to the board.

With the expansion of existing programs based at Charles Street and the addition of new ones, the board approved the hiring of a third program director in September 1985. Individual programs had managers responsible to the program directors.

In the summer of 1988 the model shifted slightly when Helen Epp, the program director for "63" (the hostel), left House of Friendship after nine years in that position. The other Kitchener program director, Deborah Schlichter, took on responsibility for all Kitchener residential programs, and Anthony Bender, formerly a manager of several "63" programs, moved to directing the community support programs. Pamela Gardiner succeeded Linda Sibley who directed the Waterloo programs. Each program director supervised managers, coordinators, and other staff in their areas.

The model is quite different from that of earlier days when a few people ran a small program and everybody, including the executive director, was frontline staff. Then it was like a family –

most of whom were Mennonite – where everyone knew all the staff and something about each person's job. While Mennonites still make up most of the staff in the 1980s, "there was this joke going around that the Presbyterians were taking over," chuckles Schlichter, a member of Knox Presbyterian Church in Waterloo.

Some workers fear the loss of the sense of family as the numbers grow. They feel distance and unfamiliarity with new programs and people. The 75-member staff tries to keep in touch through a monthly newsletter, and a social committee (with representatives from different programs) plans several annual events.

Despite efforts to build relationships, frontline staff and supervisors sometimes find themselves in conflict on how to handle problems. Schlichter admits that personality clashes surprised her, but she concedes that they are inevitable even in a Christian organization.

Schlichter is one of a succession of women appointed to top level positions at House of Friendship over the past dozen years. Linda Worth, who had worked in various clerical and program positions since 1973, was the first. She was appointed assistant executive director in 1976, a position left vacant when Leroy Shantz resigned in 1973 to pursue further studies and a career with COMSOC. When Worth took some time out with her new baby in 1978, Christine Derstine replaced her. The position was then renamed "program director" (for Kitchener programs) and in the summer of 1979 Helen Epp replaced Derstine who then became the first hostel caseworker.

Lynn Baine was appointed director of the alcoholism recovery home in 1982 followed by Melissa Miller, acting director during Baine's maternity leave in 1983. Linda Sibley headed the program from 1985 to 1988 when Pam Gardiner was appointed director.

Another key role also filled by a woman is that of financial officer for the agency. In 1980 Mary Little moved from a staff position at the recovery home in Waterloo to the head office on Charles Street in Kitchener where she manages the finances – a \$1.6 million operating budget in 1988.

Epp says that policy did not dictate hiring women. "I think it just happened that way." House of Friendship tries to balance the male/female ratio among staff, keeping in mind that in some instances a good male role model is important. Epp believes efforts are always made to select the best candidate, regardless of gender.

Women have always served as head cook, the least dispensable position at House of Friendship, according to Epp. She says, "We could get along without a caseworker for a day or so; we certainly could get along without the program director for awhile, but we could not get along without a cook!"

Epp might have placed the general maintenance supervisor alongside the cook. James Carr, a House of Friendship board member for the previous five years, took on the job in 1984. He is in charge of maintaining all vehicles and buildings. "Jim deserves all the credit," say his colleagues, for buildings so well-kept they enhance the neighbourhood. Carr also coordinates increasing numbers of non-food donations.

### **New residence and office building**

One of the well-kept properties Carr maintains is Cramer House, an ambitious project completed during Martin Buhr's first 10 years as House of Friendship executive director. Twelve permanently unemployable men, some of whom are ex-psychiatric patients, call it home.

For years many concerned people had recognized the lack of adequate housing and support services for ex-psychiatric patients. The agenda at the March 1979 House of Friendship annual meeting included discussions of some possible responses, but it took four more years for plans to develop. By then the new 39-bed hostel with its 12-cot overflow was operating up to 135 per cent capacity. A chronic group of socially disadvantaged men including some post-psychiatric patients filled spaces designed for short-term guests.

More men at the hostel and increased services outside of residential programs also meant additional office work, creating a second crucial space problem. When property at 55 Charles Street, adjacent to the new hostel, came on the market in June 1983, House of Friendship put in a bid.

At about the same time, the International Gospel Centre, just east of House of Friendship's long-term residence at 27 Charles Street, offered to purchase the old hostel and the properties on either side. The board decided to retain the 19 Charles Street property for staff housing but sold the other two properties to the church by the end of 1983. The church then rented #27 back to House of Friendship until the church's expansion plans would call for its demolition.

In October that year, with the proceeds from the sale of the two properties in hand, the board explored purchasing property at 51 Charles Street as a possible home for socially disadvantaged men. Buhr proposed applying for the required rezoning for both #55 and #51 as soon as the owners accepted offers of purchase conditional on the success of that application.

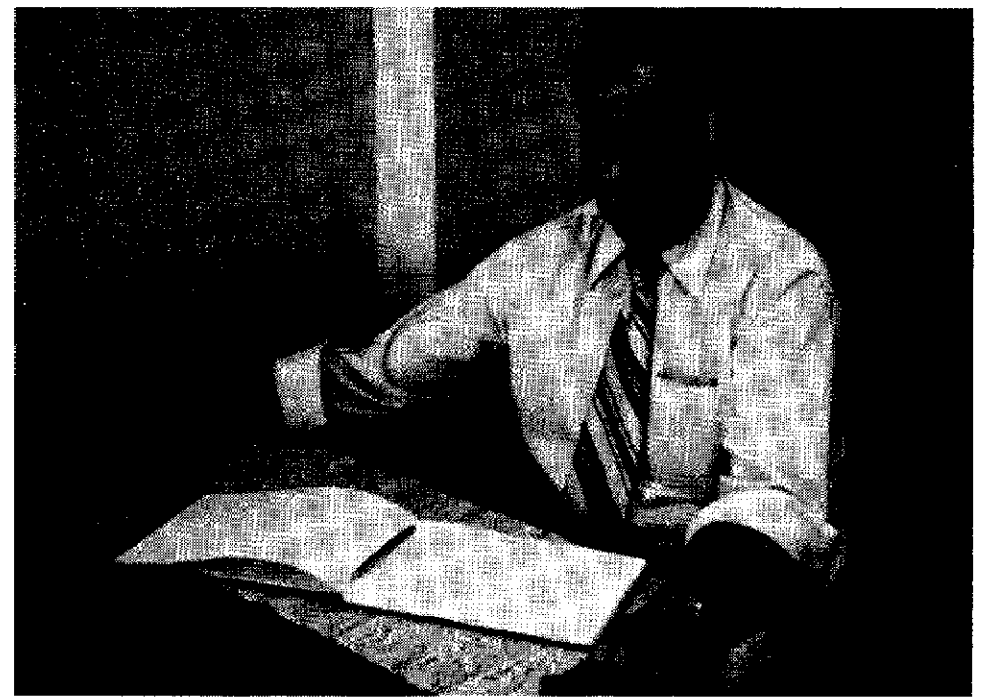
The offers were accepted in September and December, respectively, but it took until April 25, 1984 for the city to process and approve the rezoning application "package." It gave a zoning designation to all House of Friendship properties on Charles Street that allowed residential, commercial, and institutional uses. A professional planner had advised such an application – downgrading in some cases as a trade-off to upgrading in others – to save future rezoning and lot levy costs. The procedure paid off at this point and again in 1988 when plans for Eby Village developed.

In the meantime, with rezoning approval anticipated, the House of Friendship board and the executive director proceeded with plans for an office building and a home for socially disadvantaged men. But they switched the plans for the two sites. The house at 51 Charles was in good enough condition to renovate for offices; the other house was not. It would be demolished and a new one constructed on the site. The office building would provide a buffer between the neighbour to the west and House of Friendship residences adjacent to each other to the east--# 55, the hostel (#63), and the parolee house (#67) next door, which functioned from 1982 until 1988.

### Capital funds from COMSOC

In 1983 the provincial government announced its new "EcuHome" program to provide capital funds for housing for people of severest need. The program became a stormy public issue since municipalities feared being saddled with operating costs. But the government applied stringent regulations and only organizations that had demonstrated the ability to manage ongoing programs qualified for funds. House of Friendship was one of only two in Ontario to receive the grants.

Marilyn Stephenson, area manager for COMSOC, the ministry that supplied the \$130,000 grant in this case, remembers House of Friendship being caught in severe time constraints – 48 hours or less to file a proposal. "But House of Friendship did it!" She recalls documents being hand delivered to beat the deadline.



*Derwood welcomes guests at the official opening of his new home, Cramer House.*

After several more months of planning, demolition of the existing house and construction of the new one began in November 1984. By the end of April 1985, the first 10 residents had moved in. The house was filled almost immediately and has had a waiting list ever since.

On October 28, 1985 John Sweeney, Ontario's Minister of Community and Social Services, officially opened Cramer House – named for House of Friendship founder Joseph Cramer. He called it a model for other transition houses.

"We were asking people to show us models that work. We were sure about House of Friendship. They have a really good track record," he said at the ceremony. (More information on Cramer House is included in chapter nine.)

### Rapid expansion

Before John Sweeney cut the ribbon opening Cramer House three other new programs were at various stages of development, and the fourth, a \$4 million housing project, was just down the road. All, including Cramer House, were realizations of dreams spelled out at the April 1983 annual meeting at Steinmann Mennonite Church near Baden, Ontario.

The first of the four, a joint venture by House of Friendship and several local Kiwanis Clubs, responded to the problem of street kids. The Kiwanians purchased a house at 85 Wilhelm Street in Kitchener for a six-bed youth residence. They also paid for renovations and House of Friendship provided the staff and program. "Kiwanis House" opened in January 1986.

Knox and Calvin Presbyterian churches and Westmount Rotary Club joined House of Friendship in the second new project designed to assist and support low-income mothers and families. Barbara Hughes, a member at Knox and an advocate for the poor, became a "Family Support Worker." An advisory committee and House of Friendship staff member Deborah Schlichter, also a member at Knox, supervised the project. After several months of planning, the project began operating in January 1986 and was entrenched as a House of Friendship program in December that year.

The third program, Community Support, helps disadvantaged, isolated, and dependent people living in unstable environments to connect with the social and health service network. The Community Support Worker, a House of Friendship staffer funded by COMSOC, provides crisis intervention, helps secure housing, and gives guidance in budgeting, goals planning, and life-skills development. This program began in December 1985 with Diane Ritza, succeeded by Susan Gallagher in 1988.

Community development, while not a separate program, is another new thrust in which staff members make a conscious effort to work with governments, other social agencies, churches, and community groups to address community problems.

The newest project, approved in 1987, scheduled to begin in 1989 and to be completed in 1990, will provide 56 apartment units for low-income single persons. Eby Village will be built on property virtually in the hostel's backyard. (Additional information on all these projects can be found in other chapters.)

### **First \$1 million budget**

The rapid expansion in buildings and staff to serve more than 20,000 people pushed operating figures to new limits. Fiscal year 1985 saw the first \$1 million budget. By 1988 it had climbed by another \$600,000. The increase alone was almost \$100,000 more than the entire operating budget just seven years earlier.

Despite the budget increases, contributions kept pace. In 1985, for example, the budget called for a 7.4 per cent increase in general and designated contributions for a total of \$271,898. Actual donations were \$306,209. Mennonite churches continued their substantial support; 34 churches donated an average of \$2,341 each. Donations from churches of other denominations increased as well; 56 churches each donated an average of \$424, up considerably from the previous year's average of \$256.

Some people both within and outside of House of Friendship wonder if House of Friendship is growing too rapidly, spinning out of control. "Oh, really?" Cranson Knechtel, who has served on the boards of numerous civic and church-related organizations, seems surprised. "I find it completely opposite. I would have to say that there is very tight control. I have never been involved in an organization that has so much input from staff, from committees, and the board. They set objectives that are reachable, look at new opportunities, and then evaluate them. We have jumped into things rather quickly, but it wasn't that the issues weren't thought out."

### **Ten incredible years**

Heading into his third five-year term as executive director, Martin Buhr remembers "10 years of incredible support" and a board and staff with a great deal of mutual respect and trust. He



*The backyard at Cramer House.*

sees an agency working toward a more balanced program of crisis intervention and development work, with clients not only being served but increasingly participating in service. He subscribes neither to the theory that the plight of the poor is totally their own fault nor to the opposite view that society is fully to blame. "But if you've got to make mistakes, then err on the side of generosity [to the poor]," he says.

One of his greatest agonies, says Buhr, is the loss of clients – to alcohol, drugs, crime, prison, or mental breakdown. "We know them, have been involved with them, invested in them, and they are gone. That hurts a lot. That's the hardest thing." On the other hand there are small rewards like unexpected donations with heart-warming thank you notes like this one: "The reason I am sending donations is that you helped my brother about 20 years ago. He still speaks well of you." There is the satisfaction of knowing that people have been assisted in significant ways – like the Cramer House resident, paranoid to the point of immobility until he got busy in the backyard, finding freedom from his fears while working with plants and soil. And there were the two clean-cut young men with good jobs who met the night watchman on the street. He didn't recognize them. Two years earlier they had been the most miserable, abusive, incorrigible young men he had ever met. They said they were glad for his friendship at the hostel, that he had been good for them. And there is the joy of people finding faith or being restored to a faith they had lost.

Heading into the second half century, Buhr concedes that House of Friendship's work will never be done. He shows no sign of despair nor lack of vision. Instead Buhr asks, "I question how one justifies not responding to need when one is qualified to do something about it." He speaks of "retrenching" (changing methods of operating) if necessary, but not of House of Friendship abandoning its holistic ministry to the destitute and disenfranchised.

## PART TWO



# Current Programs



## **The Charles Street hostel: More than a stopover for transients**



A chronic alcoholic well-known to Kitchener crisis agencies, Dan\* came to House of Friendship because he had no other place to go. He was about 65 and could have lived on the pension he received, but he spent his money on liquor. When he drank he became disagreeable and abusive. He frequently neglected taking his medication and sometimes missed his twice weekly appointments for kidney dialysis at the hospital.

House of Friendship staff soon learned that Dan became uncontrollable after a few drinks, forcing them to seek help from the police. When he stayed at the hostel he drank less often and House of Friendship staff were able to help him steer his life in a more positive direction.

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Kim\* surprised House of Friendship staff when he dropped in for a visit. Three years earlier he had arrived from India with no money, no home, and no work. House of Friendship provided food and a bed while he looked for a job. He had several university degrees and soon found employment in a nearby town.

Kim later married a woman he had met at the American Embassy in India. They settled in the United States where Kim worked in the aerospace program. When he returned to Kitchener for a visit he stopped in at the hostel to say thanks for the help he had received.

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In 1963 a truck drove over Peter, 86, who was sleeping in long grass in a field. His injuries put him in K-W Hospital. A native of Poland, he had no home or family in Canada. His only friends, he said, were the people at House of Friendship and Ed Knechtel.

The founder of the Knechtel Corporation often took Peter to his own home for supper and provided a bed for him when he saw the man wandering along the road. Sometimes he gave Peter a ride to House of Friendship.

When the hospital discharged Peter after his accident, House of Friendship took him in for about two months until arrangements were made for him to live at Sunnyside Home. At his death a short time later, in March 1964, he left a gift of \$115 for House of Friendship.

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At age 18 Tom\* was in trouble with the law. The magistrate decided on probation because someone in the offender's downtown church offered to minister to him and provide support. The judge also directed that the young man should live at House of Friendship where he would get supervision. Within a few months Tom had a good job. A week after leaving House of Friendship he came back with a thank-you gift of \$10.

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John's\* story was different. He had made a profession of faith in Christ as a young man. After six years in a Mennonite foster home outside the city, John left and eventually landed at House of Friendship. Sometime after he disappeared from there he was arrested for armed robbery in Sudbury.

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Longtime board member Lorne Bolger didn't recognize Ben\* at the House of Friendship annual meeting. Smiling radiantly, Ben hardly resembled the broken individual Bolger remembered. Ben had come to House of Friendship deeply depressed after his family fell apart and he had spent time in a psychiatric institution. Gradually his depression decreased. He began attending a downtown church because he had learned to know some of the members through their work at House of Friendship. The wholesome family relationships he observed at the church impressed him greatly. Ben declared his Christian faith and

became a member of that church, where he now serves as an usher.

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The product of a broken home, Andy\* himself was divorced at an age when most young men haven't even thought about marriage. He came to House of Friendship with a criminal record. He left with staff wondering if the help they had been able to give was enough.

Sometime later the House of Friendship executive director met Andy in a store. He had a good job and had established a home. Andy proudly introduced his wife and beautiful baby daughter.

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Many times House of Friendship workers wonder what happens to people they have helped. When stories like John's get back to them, they are disappointed. Unlike Ben, the clients who recover tend to close the book on their past and put the House of Friendship chapter behind them. Usually House of Friendship loses contact with them, as it had with Andy.

Few men as old as Peter come to House of Friendship. In recent years young men about the age of Tom have numbered 15 per cent. In 1987, two thirds of the residents were under 35 years of age. Some, like Kim, need a temporary boost. Others, like John, are in trouble and keep running. For still others, like Andy, House of Friendship provides a pause and an opportunity to consider a different direction.

New arrivals at House of Friendship must see a caseworker on their first day and again a few days later. Residents under age 18 must see one every day. Before formal casework began in 1979, the executive director, the receptionist, volunteers – whoever was available – counselled residents as they were able.

### A typical day begins

Caseworkers meet at 7:00 a.m. to review the list of overnight hostel guests and to decide which men to interview. They begin seeing clients at 7:30 a.m. By then breakfast is over and most of the men, except those scheduled for interviews, have gone. Open bedroom doors reveal neatly made beds covered with bright-coloured patchwork comforters. Nothing litters the rooms. Personal belongings, few but precious, are stashed in lockers.

Some men get up as early as 5:15 to make sure they have time for a shower and breakfast before finding their way to work or an employment agency that might offer a casual job for the day. Others, looking for permanent work, knock on personnel office doors. Still others move slowly toward the downtown to try to fill the hours until they can return for lunch.

Some don't care about showers or jobs. They resent the rule that gets them up and out of the hostel before 9:00 a.m. They complain, but they comply so they can return.

A vacuum cleaner hums in the hallway while front office staff sorts the collection of locker keys the men have dropped through a slot in the counter before leaving the hostel. One person checks the list of the previous night's guests, wondering who might have left his noon lunch behind. The brown paper sack still sitting on the desk contains several hearty sandwiches, fresh vegetables and fruit. Kitchen staff make the lunches for men who remember to order them before the previous night's supper.

In the basement dining room, breakfast is cleared away and chairs are turned up on tables while a janitor mops the floor.

### Food gifts

Cooks in the adjacent kitchen, like their predecessors over five decades, incorporate food donations into the meals they begin to prepare. Food comes from the food bank, local growers, and various businesses which donate surplus meat, yesterday's pastries, and unsold produce. Many churches have special projects – like the Steinmann Mennonite Church which donated 160 pounds of hamburger in November 1982. The Drayton Christian Reformed Church (where 90 per cent of the members were farmers) donated several hundred pounds of fresh meat each month in the winter of 1982-83.

For nearly 50 years E.G. Snyder of Cambridge, Ontario has supplied potatoes for the tables at the various House of Friendship residences and for food hampers. In recent years Snyder's Potatoes has donated about 20 tons of potatoes annually – 13 tons for Christmas hampers alone in 1988. What motivates this generous man who as a lad planted potatoes every 24th of May before going fishing in the afternoon? He believes firmly that Christian faith must be active. That belief, he says, stimulates his desire to support organizations that help the needy. "And



*Martin Buhr presents a plaque to E.G. Snyder, recognizing his donations of potatoes to House of Friendship for 50 years. Snyder's Potatoes has donated about 20 tons annually in recent years.*

House of Friendship is one of the best. It is doing the right thing," he adds.

The elderly gentleman, who became a personal friend of every House of Friendship executive director since Joseph Cramer, continues to keep up to date on the agency's work through *News and Views*, the House of Friendship newsletter.

While potatoes are a staple at House of Friendship, leftovers from weddings, banquets and church suppers provide a welcome change from basic fare. So do Annabelle Crane's sweet loaves – banana when the fruit is on special; lemon, date or carrot when it is not. Since 1972 (when she retired from 46 years of work in a shirt factory) she has baked more than 1,000 loaves in her own kitchen and delivered them to House of Friendship.

But head cook Sandra Wall is cautious about personal gifts of food. At the very least she must be assured the food is safe. Occasionally she still encounters the attitude – as did cooks who preceded her – that the poor should be grateful for anything, even that which is not fit for the donor's family or friends. It is such an attitude that House of Friendship staff would like to see permanently put to rest. Most food gifts, however, are given sincerely and received with gratitude. Without them many House of Friendship programs would be severely handicapped or impossible to operate.

## Food hamper program

The food hamper program is one that requires substantial community support – food gifts, volunteer help and funds from the Regional Municipality of Waterloo. The municipality refers clients to House of Friendship for food, and everyone thus referred is guaranteed a hamper which is paid for—\$27.14 each in 1988 – with municipal funds. The average cost including expenses (Food Bank fees, staff and office costs, storage, transportation, utilities, etc.) in 1988 was \$27.22 while the supermarket value was about \$50 per hamper.

The largest group of clients – about 60 per cent – contact House of Friendship directly or are referred by churches or individuals in the service network. The Region does not fund hampers for these clients. Until recently those on some form of social assistance were required to call their social worker before House of Friendship staff approved giving them food. A policy change near the end of 1988 now allows workers to give food to clients immediately, clearing the necessary social service channels later.

Seven days a week, individuals or families in crisis call House of Friendship for food. Regular volunteers like Roy Shantz



*Volunteer driver Fred Snyder picks up food hampers for delivery from the hostel basement.*

– or staff, if calls come on weekends or at night – pack a three-day supply of food including staples and some extras like fresh produce or pastries when they are available. Hampers can be delivered the same day if calls come before 11:00 a.m. or clients can pick them up at any time.

For nearly eight years George Dyck was one of many volunteers who deliver food hampers regularly. He began helping one afternoon per week in 1980 after he retired from teaching high school. His greatest satisfaction came from seeing the excitement and joy of tiny children when he arrived with the first food they had seen that day. Some lived in seedy walk-up apartments; others in respectable neighbourhoods. They had one thing in common – no food, due to some kind of crisis. Dyck did not make judgments on lifestyle or needs. He simply served.

In the earliest days of House of Friendship, Ilda Bauman and Joseph Cramer took food to needy families they encountered. Food distribution became a regular program in 1958 when 183 hampers were delivered. At the height of the 1983 recession, 4,800 food hampers plus 1,300 special Christmas hampers went to hungry families. After declining in 1985 and 1986, the numbers rose again to 4,889 regular food hampers in 1988. The 2,160 Christmas hampers that year broke all records.

The hamper program has critics who believe free food goes to the undeserving. House of Friendship staff knows there is occasional abuse, but the choice to help first and ask questions later is deliberate because usually the needs are genuine and acute.

"It's difficult to ask for help," says Helen Epp, hostel program coordinator from August 1979 until July 1988. She has felt the embarrassment of people requesting food. When the income-earning spouse in an area like Stanley Park suddenly walks out, his middle class family doesn't know where to begin to find help, she says. The embarrassment is no less for low-income families.

House of Friendship responds quickly the first time but checks subsequent requests for food against files, suggests budget counselling, and gets in touch with other agencies working with the client. During the first nine months of 1988 more than one half of the 2,735 clients received only one food hamper. The second largest group – 28 per cent – received two hampers. Of the 46 per cent repeat users, 10 per cent received three hampers, five per cent got four, two per cent got five and only one per cent received as many as six hampers.

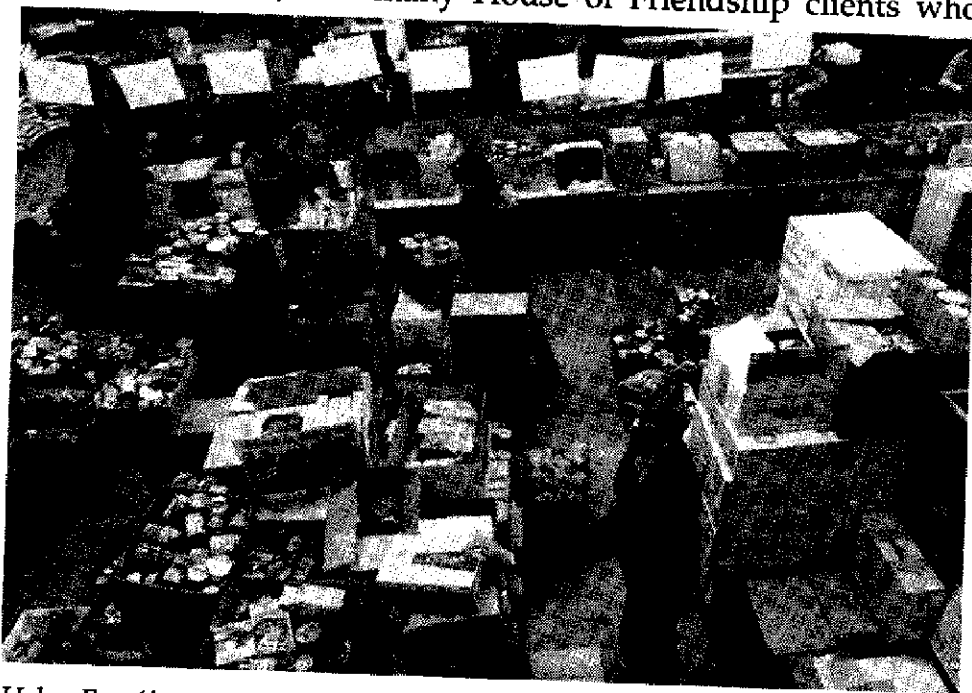
Workers are seldom fooled by people like the man who called for food for a large family and had difficulty remembering names and ages for all the children he claimed. He had even more trouble identifying what grades they were in at school. When he realized he had betrayed himself he swore at the worker and hung up the phone.

### Christmas Hamper Program

The Christmas hamper project is the shortest and most intense of all House of Friendship projects. All requests for Christmas hampers from Regional Social Services, COMSOC, and individuals are channelled through the Lion's Club Christmas Bureau for cross-referencing. With years of experience and the aid of computers, Anthony Bender, coordinator of the program, and his staff have a highly efficient system whereby hundreds of volunteers gather, sort, and pack food and deliver nearly 2,000 hampers in about three weeks.

Almost everything is donated – warehouse space, boxes, conveyor belts, tons of potatoes and apples, mountains of non-perishables, thousands of cookies from home and factory ovens, special Christmas treats, and even a garbage bin.

Housewives, executives, farmers, professors, students, retirees, children, and many House of Friendship clients who



*Helen Epp (foreground) organizing the warehouse and volunteers as the annual Christmas hamper blitz begins. K-W Record photo.*

have themselves received help in a variety of ways, work side by side to accomplish the monumental task.

For the Mannheim Mennonite Church family, "Christmas hamper night" has long been a tradition. Each year in early December several dozen people – from over 80-year-old great-grandparents to preschool children – go to the warehouse for a fast-paced, fun-filled evening to assemble boxes and to sort and package food.

Christmas hampers mean a lot to people like Tracey,\* a low-income parent. "Poor people have little to look forward to," she says, "and they find Christmas nearly impossible to bear. With the help of a Christmas hamper, we, too, can look forward to a good meal and happy little faces Christmas morning."

The notion of bringing a little excitement to poor children spurred the Webers\* to creative giving. They shopped for food and individual gifts for a House of Friendship family with five children. When the Webers arrived at the designated address with their Christmas gifts, they discovered that the family had suddenly left town. The Webers returned to House of Friendship and Helen Epp gave them the address of a single parent whose family closely matched the first. But the single mother's boyfriend had already given gifts to all her children. Despite the frustrating experience, the Webers were prepared to try again the next year.

Staff and residents at the hostel celebrate Christmas day with gifts and a traditional turkey dinner. For 26 consecutive years Mabel Steinmann cooked the turkeys, fixed the trimmings, and baked mince pies for up to 40 people. In the early days Steinmann and a volunteer or two served not only transients but also lonely people who knew a welcome awaited at House of Friendship. She never knew exactly how many diners to expect until serving time, but she always had plenty of food.

In recent years, various staff members, volunteers – even board members – have brought their families to serve dinner and spend part of Christmas day at the hostel.

Sometimes volunteers come to House of Friendship simply for fun and fellowship with the men. They come for weekly film or games nights; they befriend residents on an individual basis; they assist in the recreation room or teach a craft. Students at the universities and community colleges sometimes fulfill field work requirements by assisting with recreation at House of Friendship.

## Recreation Program

With a holistic approach to the needs of residents, House of Friendship's recreation director plans leisure education and activity for the men. Although they have more free time than most persons, they are seldom equipped to make the best use of it. They have little money, are often not physically fit, and have developed few recreational skills. For many, drinking has filled their leisure hours. A recreation program nudges them toward fitness and helps them to learn more creative use of time.

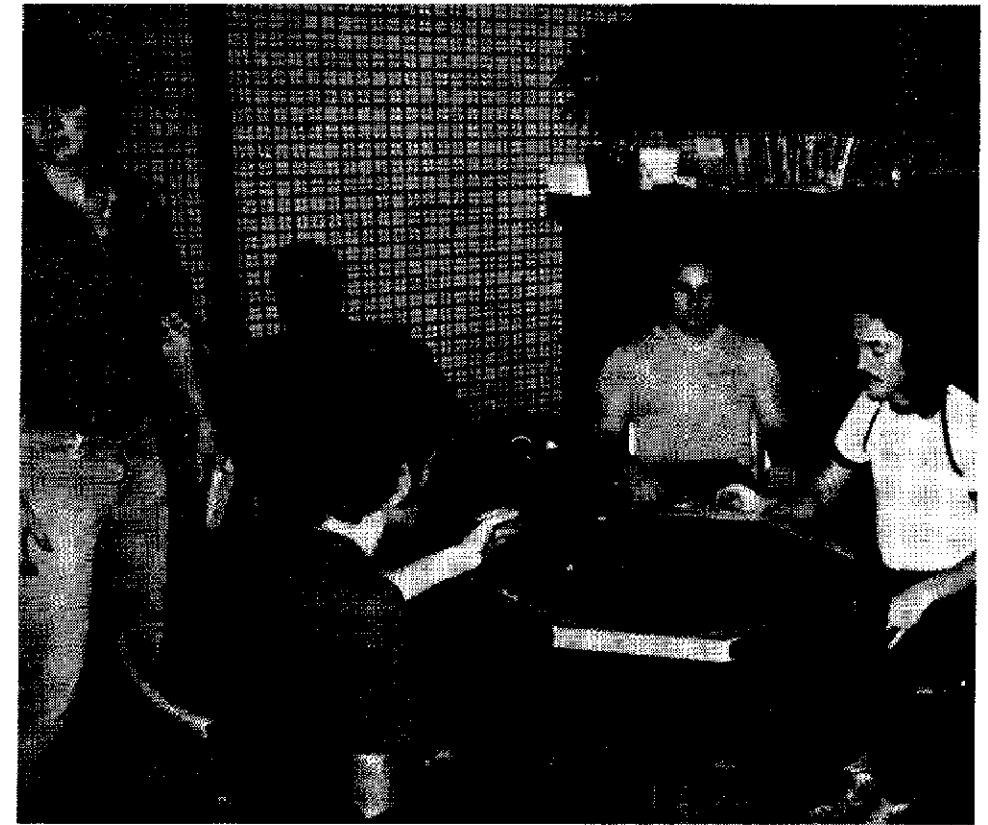
As early as 1971, when a federal "Opportunities for Youth" grant paid for three summer staff persons, House of Friendship provided a drop-in centre. It proved so successful that efforts were made to keep it open when the funding ended. Gerry Vandeworp, executive director at the time, helped the men draw up a petition addressed to the mayor of Kitchener requesting funds for the centre. Forty men signed it and two of them presented the petition to the city council. As a result, the city welfare department provided a \$2,000 grant, a significant slice of the \$14,500 budget. The next year, 1973, the Ontario Ministry of Health gave a \$6,000 grant. A hostel attendant and volunteers supervised activities.

The drop-in centre continues to be open to men in the community and to House of Friendship residents. Funds specifically for recreation services no longer come from government sources.

Plans for the new hostel, opened at 63 Charles Street East in 1982, included more space for leisure activities: the drop-in centre, television rooms, a recreation room, a place for weights and a punching bag, and a chapel.

Anthony Bender, now a program director in charge of several programs – including recreation and volunteer coordination – came to House of Friendship in 1979. He set up leisure programming at the new hostel, the Waterloo recovery homes and later at the youth residence. Bender plans outdoor activities like tennis and baseball and he works with recreation directors at the YMCA and the city's Parks and Recreation Department. He looks for activities that don't cost much – games, singsongs, gardening and visits to the library. He must weigh the value of free tickets to a variety of events against the costs of arranging and paying for transportation.

"Among the best kinds of leisure activities," says Bender, "are those that blend House of Friendship clients with people



*Residents play games in the drop-in centre.*

from the community – like the Waterloo Christian Reformed members who go bowling with men from '174' on Friday nights." Bender points out that in a group such as this the recovery home residents don't feel conspicuous as they do in some recreational facilities where it seems everyone else works out in a designer track suit. At the hostel the pool table is a great equalizer. In fact, Bender notes that volunteers from the community who come to "shoot pool" with the men often aren't as good as the residents.

Such shared activities provide opportunities to build relationships, and the men rediscover self-esteem and regain motivation. "That kind of recreation has therapeutic value," adds Bender.

## Providing spiritual resources

House of Friendship has always existed to meet human need. At various times the weight of its emphasis shifted between addressing physical needs and spiritual needs. In the early years it was a mission to the Jews and to new immigrants. But

providing food for the destitute became an important focus almost immediately and it remains at the core of House of Friendship programs to this day. In the late 1950s House of Friendship moved more toward the style of a rescue mission with "church" services every night. During the 1970s formal religious services were totally abandoned.

"This was probably a necessary phase because of the history of that decade," says Brice Balmer, chaplain at House of Friendship. "House of Friendship staff and board needed to come to a new sense of how to address the spiritual needs of the men. House of Friendship was also changing from a 'men's mission' to a comprehensive social and emergency service for poor and transient persons."

"Spiritual Discovery Groups" provided a fresh approach to the hunger of the soul. They began at the alcoholism recovery home in 1981. K-W Mennonite ministers volunteered to lead the groups for three-month periods at first. Will Stoltz, pastor at Wilmot Mennonite Church who later became a prison chaplain, started Discovery Groups at the hostel.

By 1984 Discovery Groups were part of the job description for hostel staff members Brice Balmer and Ron Flaming, both of whom were seminary graduates. During the next year they formed separate groups for younger and older men.



*Cramer House manager Ross Erb (right) leads residents in spiritual discovery.*

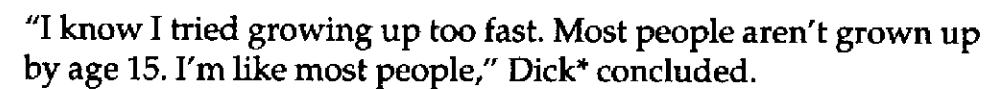
Another staff member, Eric Derby, who also studied at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, began weekly Sunday evening chapel services in 1982 using lectionary readings and discussions. A group of volunteers from First Mennonite Church still comes regularly with guitars to lead the music. Pat Steltzer, a Mennonite Central Committee voluntary service worker at House of Friendship for two years, started Wednesday afternoon Bible studies in 1983. Students from Emmanuel Bible College spend Saturday evenings visiting with the men at the hostel.

Services are open to all residents but attendance is not compulsory. Some men who have left the hostel continue to show up for "their church" on Sunday evenings.

Leaders of the programs avoid religious jargon to communicate faith concepts to the people in the groups, many of whom have little or no church background. The leaders use language their clients can understand to help them with religious questions and spiritual struggles. They begin by reading from the Bible but the men determine the direction of the discussion. At one meeting, a man wore a T-shirt with a "Satan" motif which proved to be a discussion starter. Chaplains are regular staff members who are accessible to the men, willing to meet them at their level and lead them to new and meaningful spiritual "discoveries."

One day Jack,\* an ex-psychiatric patient who seldom spoke, came to Bible study. Since no one else came that day, the leader was able to draw him into a discussion on a biblical passage. It was a small beginning, but after that Jack became more open in other settings as well.

Spiritual Discovery Groups do not bring instant transformation but, over a period of time, some quite dramatic changes do occur. The groups open the door to exploring religious faith, including a fresh understanding of forgiveness and repentance. They are a 1980s effort at addressing the spiritual dimension of a holistic ministry based at the hostel but also reaching into the community.



After Dick completed the program for recovering alcoholics, he moved into the associated three-quarter house on Central Street. He recognized the support available to him there only after he had tossed it aside, thinking he could strike out on his own. Immediately he fell into the old lifestyle.

Life wasn't perfect at home, but the family got along. Dick set some goals and returned to school, determined to catch up on the years he had lost to alcoholism.

"174," as the 15-bed alcoholism recovery home is called, is an alcohol-free, therapeutic, residential community where alcoholic men receive help to change their lifestyle. Since 1975 it has helped Dick and dozens of others from age 16-65 face the alcohol problem that has shattered their lives. They will never be cured.



But they can journey on the road to recovery and learn to live without depending on alcohol.

### **Dreams of a recovery home**

"If in another 50 years I am remembered for anything, I hope it will be for helping to get the treatment centre for alcoholics started in Waterloo," says Gerry Vandeworp, who directed House of Friendship from 1961 to 1978.

For a decade he had seen alcoholics come and go and come again to the 23 Charles Street hostel. He knew they needed treatment to break the cycle that trapped them. He dreamed of ways that House of Friendship could provide it. But would supporters who donated funds to help buy the home for long-term residents at 27 Charles in 1968 respond to yet another plea for capital funds? Would they also contribute the additional operating funds a new program would require?

Vandeworp kept his dream alive. In 1971 he learned of new legislation that would provide a grant toward operating costs for alcoholism recovery homes. In August that year the board approved exploring such a venture.

Rumours that the government of Ontario was considering the K-W area for a halfway house and detox centre finally solidified by the summer of 1973. With its pre-planning, good service record, and connections to the Ministry of Community and Social Services (COMSOC) through board member Martin Buhr, House of Friendship was a strong contender. It won approval to operate the halfway house designated for Waterloo Region. COMSOC would provide operating funds under the Charitable Institutions Act, and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) assisted with mortgage financing.

On October 5, 1973 the board approved purchase of a house at 15 Schneider Avenue in Kitchener for \$49,000. When its application for rezoning failed, House of Friendship resold the property. The board also investigated properties on Mansion Street in Kitchener but finally purchased the house at 174 King Street North in Waterloo for \$68,663 and renovated it.

Despite moving ahead the board had some concerns. It was uneasy with having only one member on a 15-member advisory committee of professionals that advised on the home's program and operations. The House of Friendship board also wanted a voice in hiring staff required by the government for positions like that of vocational rehabilitation counsellor (VRC). It had no



*The alcoholism recovery home, "174" King Street N. in Waterloo.*

quarrel, however, with COMSOC's appointment of Leroy Shantz (a former board member and assistant executive director at House of Friendship from October 1970 to June 1973) to be the VRC at the recovery home.

The VRC was one of three components in the Ministry of Health's new initiative to deal with "chronic drunkenness offenders" (CDOs). The other components were detox centres and halfway houses (recovery homes). Both the Addiction Research Foundation or ARF and the Alcohol Drug Recovery Association of Ontario (ADRAO) scrutinized these new ventures. Results were uneven in some 20 homes across the province, according to Marilyn Stephenson, area manager for COMSOC in the Region of Waterloo.

"Recovery homes were a high profile issue for a time, but eventually the government put on a freeze due to its changing agenda, uneven demand for the programs, and no clear evidence of success," says Stephenson. "The House of Friendship program proved more successful than most," she adds, "due at least in part to its group therapy and treatment methods."

While COMSOC continues to fund and monitor the program, House of Friendship hires the staff and operates the program.

### Launching the new recovery home

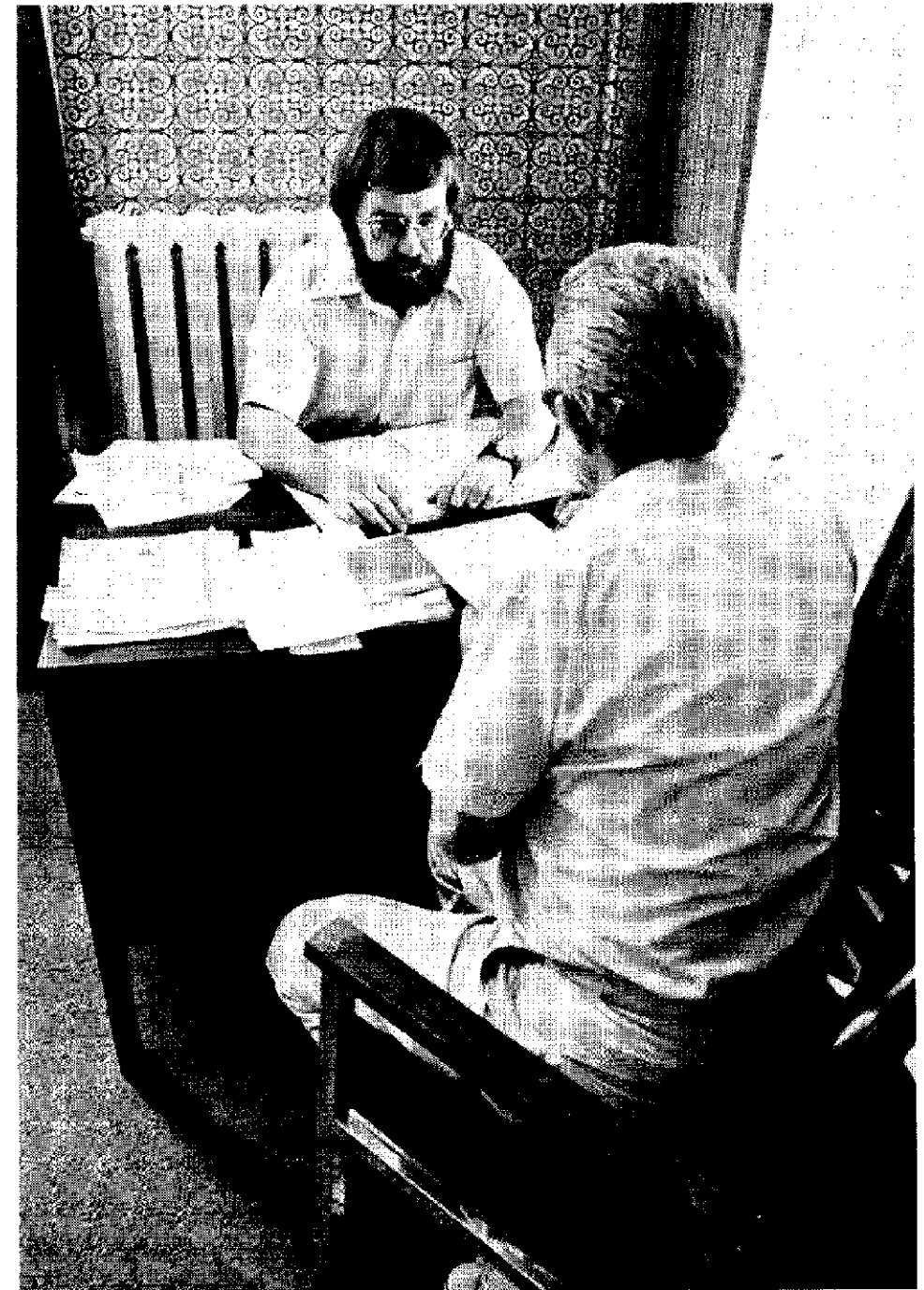
Anticipating a March 1975 opening, the board hired Norman Wildman as the first director of "174" that January. One week after the doors opened, Wildman suffered a debilitating heart attack. Without a director, the program began on a tentative note. Leroy Shantz, Barb Rigney (house manager), and Joanne Jantzi (cook), all carried extra responsibilities for several months. Wildman didn't come back; he died on July 2. In November the board hired Terry Soden, who directed the program for the next five years. Ed Daniszewski took charge from 1980 to 1982, followed by Lynn Baine, Linda Sibley, and Pam Gardiner.

The initial three-month program changed to a six-month program in 1982 with more intensive work on emotional and personal problems. The men themselves, their families, the Kitchener-Waterloo Detoxification Centre, and other counselling and social service agencies refer applicants to "174."

Twice as many men apply to enter the program as are accepted. A man whose primary problem is psychiatric would not fit the program. Men just released from a correctional institution are not accepted either unless circumstances are exceptional. (One man with an outstanding charge had his treatment interrupted when his case came to court. He received a jail sentence, but after serving the sentence, he was readmitted because of his earlier involvement.) The home does not take violent offenders, particularly if the man is violent when he is sober. Residents who make threats, resort to violence, or are involved in a fight, whether or not they instigate it, are immediately discharged.

Sibley prefers some flexibility when making admission assessments or discharges. "We primarily have to look out for the safety and security of the [current] residents and of the applicant, himself," she says. About 50 per cent of those admitted complete the entire program.

Most of the "174" residents are divorced or single and have had a drinking problem for a long time – frequently 10 to 20 years. Their level of education on average is higher than that of men in such situations a few years ago but still fewer than half have completed high school. Usually they are homeless and



*Leroy Shantz counsels a client at "174".*

unemployed. If they have jobs they most often are working in a skilled labour occupation. Some have held professional positions but heavy drinking has taken away everything – family, social supports, jobs, financial assets and self respect. Many have had psychiatric problems. Few fit the skid row stereotype although some have lived on the streets. Their common addiction to alcohol reduces the barriers of age, status, education, and professional experience – not always without conflict.

Conflict may surface as “cups and saucers” conflict, as Linda Sibley calls it – residents complaining about cups left littering the house, or quibbling about the mustard jar that somebody failed to fill. “It’s usually just an opportunity to take a shot at somebody you don’t like and then the interpersonal things start to come out. We try to look at the issue within the issue and help the men work that out,” adds Sibley. That happens in weekly interpersonal relations meetings she sets up. In addition, 10 different kinds of groups meet regularly.

### **Recovery program**

The program has three phases. When a new applicant is accepted he enters Phase I for two or three weeks. He does not have a house key; he must remain at the residence unless accompanied by another resident; and he begins group meetings and individual counselling. After an evaluation, staff may ask the man to leave or admit him to Phase II, a 20-week program of goal-setting, counselling, and group therapy. At 10 weeks the man himself, his group, and the staff conduct an evaluation. Passing that point allows the resident to begin making vocational plans. The program is a full-time job until the end of Phase II. In Phase III the resident may find a job and begin work or start back to school at some level. The vocational counsellor helps him make these decisions.

The program aims to help the men handle daily living routines, continue their education, maintain jobs, become involved in the community, and stay sober. Staff alcoholism counsellors work with them on the latter. Sharing household chores helps residents prepare for independent living at the Central Street three-quarter house (to which they can move at an agreed upon point during the program) or at a place of their own when they are ready to leave.

While the success rate at “174” tends to be better than the provincial average for rehabilitation, it is difficult to measure.

Does it mean three months of sobriety? Or six? Or a year? Is it normal for these men not to drink when they re-enter a society that is not abstinence-oriented? Some men (like Dick) have an initial binge after leaving the 174 program. For them, such a “fall” may be necessary to strengthen their resolve to lead a sober life, chaplain Brice Balmer believes.

Linda Sibley considers a 47-year-old man who returned to drinking after nine months of sobriety somewhat of a success. He had lived on the streets since he was 16, had never worked or had an apartment. Toronto’s Allen Gardens park was “home” for him. There he drank constantly, never facing his problems with a sober mind. At “174” he couldn’t drown his frustrations in alcohol and after staying dry for nine months, he relapsed. “But he really liked being sober,” insists Sibley, “and you have to believe that he will get sober again.”

“There are lots of men who have done very well,” she says, adding, “Many of them we never hear from again and we have no way of knowing whether they are sober or not.”

Bill Frost has been easy to track since he graduated from the recovery program. From there he came to the hostel to help out the night watchman and stayed for seven years. He used to cook breakfast – fried eggs on toast, and coffee – before his shift ended, and he still sets up the dining room in addition to doing his desk work. He spends many hours during the night listening to the stories of men who can’t sleep. He understands their battles and their loneliness. And he can assure them that it is possible to live without alcohol.

A World War II veteran, Frost started having a problem with alcohol after the British company that sent him to work in Canada sold out its interests here. In the aftermath Frost got hooked on sleeping pills; later he substituted alcohol. After a bout with lung cancer in 1980, Frost came to “174” to try its recovery program. There he soon became chairman of the House Committee, organizing household duties, ball games in the summer, and keeping the place active at Christmas for the men who had no place to go for the holidays.

When he went to work at the hostel after completing the recovery home program, Frost took along some of his management skills. “We had a lot of kids at the time and staff didn’t know how to handle them. I wouldn’t tolerate any breaking of rules,” Frost explains. He started getting a resident to help with breakfast. He believes giving a man some status helps

him along the road to recovery. "Give him something to lose," says Frost.

There are fewer opportunities for the personal touch between staff and residents than when he first came to the old hostel, Frost maintains. "I miss the days at 23 Charles when residents were much more integrated," he muses. "Not all the changes have been for the better." But Frost has the highest possible regard for the staff with whom he has had the privilege to work. "They are first-class people and they are dealing with some awkward individuals." Frost plans to continue to cook breakfast at House of Friendship after his retirement in December 1988.

### **Home for "174" graduates**

Along with other recovery home graduates, Bill Frost lived for several months in 1981 at the Central Street three-quarter house. It provides a supportive environment where graduates of "174" can begin to live a sober and independent life. The eight residents, who live in two bachelor and two three-person apartments, must maintain sobriety to stay; they are responsible for the upkeep of their apartments. Once a week a counsellor and the residents have a group meeting, both for support and to discuss any in-house problems.

A house manager, also a "174" graduate, lives in one of the apartments. Residents, who pay rent geared to their income, are involved in school, jobs, or some other form of structured activity. Most of their food is supplied by "174" and the Food Bank. A resident can choose to leave Central Street at any time. Staff members can ask him to leave if they feel he is ready or if the space is required for more recent graduates.

The need for a three-quarter house had surfaced soon after the recovery home began in 1975. Two years later, the board began looking for a facility to rent. Several men moved into apartments at 29-31 Central Street in Waterloo in the summer of 1977; by October 1 House of Friendship had arranged a mortgage and had purchased the property for \$60,000. Designated donations, which had reached \$6,040 by the end of December, helped finance the new project. Initial plans called for 12 residents but the number was cut to eight to reduce crowding and conflict. That reduction resulted in lower income from rent. Since residents move in and out at different times, the average occupancy rate is below 100 per cent. These two factors account for the fact that the program has not been totally self-sufficient. It

continues to require some operating subsidy from House of Friendship general funds in addition to capital funds to retire the mortgage.

Both "174" and the Central Street apartments have required considerable upgrading over the years to meet changing health and safety standards and to operate more efficiently and economically. New insulation and siding at "174" reduced heating costs considerably. Grants through COMSOC paid for most of the extensive face-lifting in 1982 and 1983. Major renovations at "174" were completed in 1987 as was some remodelling at the Central Street building.

Room and board payments from each resident, a subsidy from COMSOC, and donations pay the costs at "174." Funding is based on occupancy; operating with a full house at all times is almost impossible especially when the program is disrupted by repair work. Residents' fees based on income cover only about two thirds of the costs at Central Street.

Despite occasional vacancies, referrals to the recovery home in 1987 increased by almost one third with a significant rise in referrals from detoxification centres outside the Waterloo region – Toronto, Kingston, St. Catharines, and Windsor.

### **Good times at the recovery home**

To stay in the recovery program residents must respect fairly stringent guidelines. They must totally abandon the use of alcohol, do household chores, meet with counsellors, participate in various groups (including Spiritual Discovery Groups), and observe other house rules.

There is time for relaxation and fun as well – corn roasts at the Shuh farm at Elmira and walks in the bush at the Hofstetter farm near New Dundee, where the men pick apples that yield gallons of fresh cider.

Christmas is both a difficult and a special time, difficult because alcohol played such a big part in Christmases past and because many of the men are not included in traditional family festivities. To compensate, the "174" family plans a special dinner with gifts and lots of activities.

One year staff members bought material and made Christmas stockings, stuffing them with small items they knew the residents would appreciate. Joanne Jantzi, the cook, who lived nearby, delivered the stockings early Christmas morning. The Christmas surprises and thoughtfulness went two ways.



*The three-quarter house on Central Street in Waterloo.*

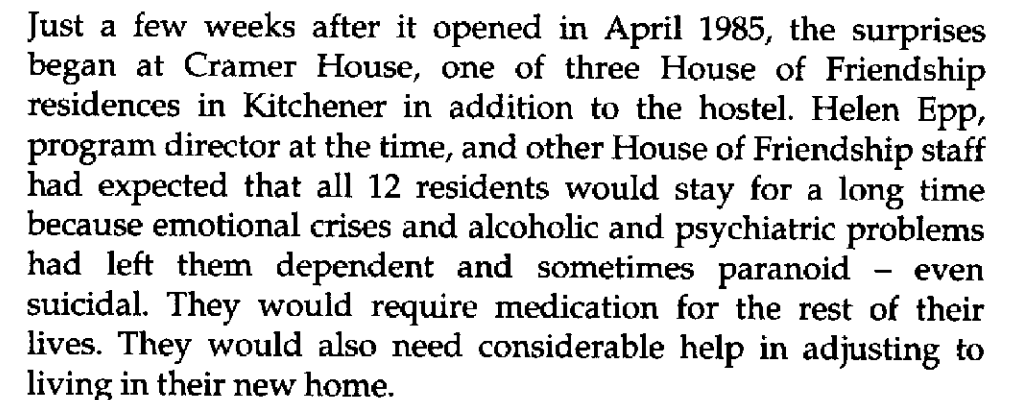


*The first House of Friendship cooks would have enjoyed working in the well-equipped "174" kitchen. Joanne Jantzi was the first cook at the recovery home.*

Joanne received a warm, black scarf, something the men knew she could use when she walked from her house to work on cold mornings.

Twice each year the men hold a "sobriety party" to mark three months, six months, or a year of sobriety. They prepare a special meal – Hawaiian, perhaps – for the celebration and present gifts to the honoured guests. Up to 25 former residents, whose sobriety sometimes stretches over several years, may join the party. These are important events, not only to the achiever but to other residents as well. "To see the success of another gives a man hope and encouragement to continue the struggle," reflects Joanne.

The alcohol recovery home began in 1975 as an extension of the work House of Friendship had done for many years. Its individual treatment programs, group therapy, and caring staff provide surroundings conducive to helping a man change a life controlled by alcohol. It can extend no guarantees. But its record stands as having made a difference in the lives of many.



Within a month the men had decided to do their own cooking rather than eating at the hostel. One, who had not been able to do so much as hold a broom, now vacuumed the rugs and washed his own clothes. Others helped out with kitchen and household chores. Another fellow who had spent his time punching holes in walls at his previous residence began to help pack food hampers.

The dramatic changes delighted the staff, who had hardly dared hope that these residents would ever achieve any independence. The men had spent time in psychiatric hospitals or had stayed for extended periods next door at the hostel because nobody else wanted them.

For a decade or more, House of Friendship workers had observed the disastrous results of a government health and social policy called "de-institutionalization." It meant – in reality – releasing psychiatric patients dependent on medication into the

community and leaving them on their own to cope with a hostile and confusing world. By 1985 social agencies estimated that as many as 400 psychiatric patients had been released to the Kitchener-Waterloo area alone. Many of them were out of the public eye, living alone in deplorable conditions. Unsupervised, they were neglecting to take prescribed medication. The most likely candidates for rehabilitation found shelter with Waterloo Regional Homes for Mental Health Inc.

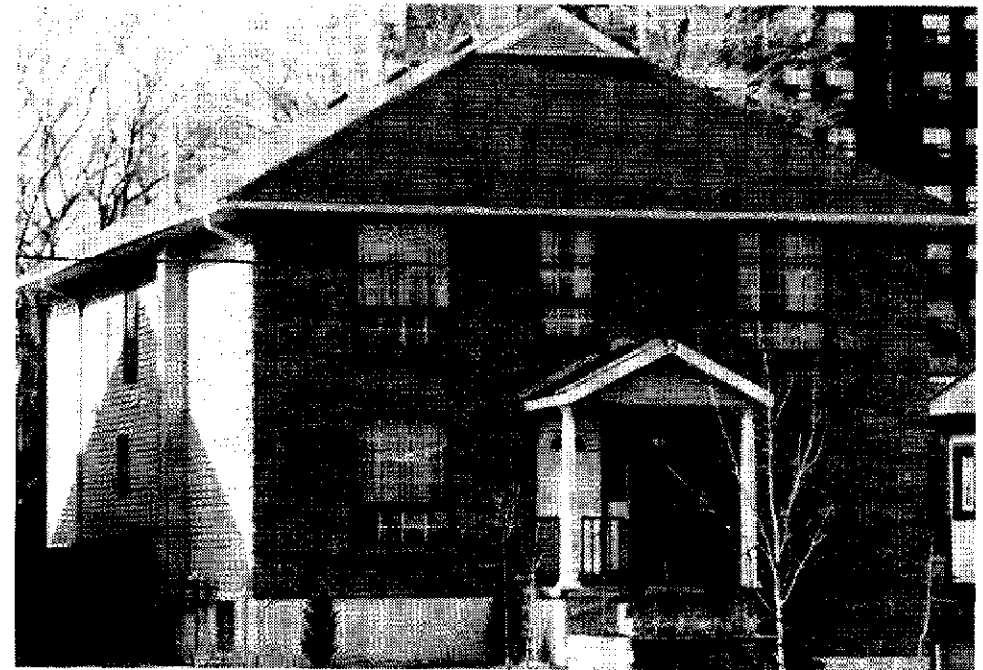
The new House of Friendship hostel had filled to capacity almost immediately after it opened in 1982. Regular residents included up to a dozen men, unemployable due to brain damage from alcohol abuse or because of physical or mental handicaps. Some were too fearful to go for a walk downtown. Mostly in their 40s and 50s, this group of residents sat silently in corners, frightened and intimidated by the noisy exuberance of the hostel's younger residents. They needed a place of their own – and House of Friendship needed the hostel space for short-term, emergency shelter.

### **Cramer House**

These were the men who moved into the new residence in April 1985. (See chapter 6 for details on the purchase of property and development of the facility.) The home was named "Cramer House," honouring the self-effacing founder of House of Friendship, Joseph Cramer (chapter 2). In a short time all the Cramer House rooms – some single, others shared by two men – were filled, and there was a waiting list.

The residents at Cramer House live in community, sharing cleaning, meal planning, grocery shopping, cooking, and other activities. In addition to assessing new applicants the house manager supervises daily household planning and chores, helps with financial management, and ensures that personal habits meet house standards. He works with the men, bolstering their flagging self-esteem and recognizing their achievements. A night attendant who sleeps at the residence is available in case of emergencies.

Length of stay at the house is unlimited. While the program's goal is to help the men gain greater independence, a few will move only when they require more care rather than less – in a hospital or a nursing home. Others – like Mike\*--have surprised staff with their progress and have successfully moved on in a relatively short time. Mike, who was suicidal, suffered from a



*Cramer House.*



*Cramer House residents enjoy a fishing trip to Fraser Lake.*



crippling fear that he was being followed. Every few steps he would look back nervously to see who was behind him. After sharing life at Cramer House, Mike gained confidence, got a job, joined a church, and moved out on his own.

New residents, referred by the hostel, by group homes or psychiatric hospitals, or who arrive on their own initiative, come for a trial period. After mutual assessment either the staff or the applicant may choose to terminate the arrangement.

Any change in the household can create stress at any time for residents who are victims of mood swings. If someone "gets crazy" (aggressive), there can be trouble, says current house manager Ross Erb, "but most of the men are very likable and they tend to respect the rules." If behaviour becomes a problem, a resident may be asked to leave. Drinking alcoholic beverages, a typical lifestyle pattern in many rooming houses where these men would otherwise live, is never allowed at the home.

Birthday and holiday celebrations, recreational outings, mealtimes, and spiritual discovery groups are all significant at Cramer House.

Leshy Paynter, a student at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, led House of Friendship's spiritual discovery groups as part of his study program. He began his final group gathering at Cramer House in June 1988 by reading Psalm 136, a litany of praise and thanksgiving. Then he moved to Mary's "Magnificat" (Luke chapter 1), describing the mother of Christ as having low self-esteem and noting Joseph's problem accepting the situation in which he found himself. There was no heavy-handedness, no moralizing. Paynter let the scriptures speak for themselves.

Three residents chose to gather in the living room that day, listening politely and thoughtfully to Paynter's presentation. William\* entered into an active discussion. He is now studying theology by correspondence and hopes eventually to re-enter the ministry, a goal Ross Erb thinks William can achieve.

While some Cramer House residents cannot work, others work part-time or get involved in volunteer activities. They have various sources of limited income – such as disability pensions. All contribute a monthly residence fee based on their ability to pay. The remainder of operating costs are met through general donations.

Cramer House is a new building surrounded by neat lawns, trees, and flowers. Here each man has a place of his own, even if he shares a room with another person. Cramer House is much

more than a place to live; it is a home giving each member of the household a sense of pride and worth.

### **27 Charles Street: Long-term residence**

Up the street to the west, the five-bedroom house at 27 Charles Street which House of Friendship purchased in 1968 is home to several men who are previous long-term hostel residents. Some have worked part-time at the hostel; all have a history of



*27 Charles Street*

alcoholism. To live at 27 Charles they must refrain from using alcohol and be able to live independently with minimum support. (A House of Friendship staff person spends half a day per week with the residents.) They may participate in activities at the hostel, including counselling and pastoral services.

For some years residents lived communally – sharing meals, chores, and outings. But some simply wanted to be left alone. From eight men the number was reduced to five so each could have his own room. 27 Charles became a rooming house with kitchen privileges and some common areas, but little interaction occurred between residents. In 1985-86 efforts to recover more of

a community lifestyle met with limited success. Although operating costs are minimal, income (from fees the men pay out of their disability pensions) is also low. Community, which House of Friendship endeavours to build and maintain, has been displaced by social isolation, so the agency struggles to assess the value of this residence and to know whether to replace it if and when the International Gospel Centre terminates the rental agreement. (See chapter 6.) Meanwhile it provides an alcohol-free home for five men who might otherwise live in a hotel or rooming house where alcohol abuse is common.

### **67 Charles Street: Parolee house**

At the request of Correctional Services Canada, House of Friendship began accepting male federal parolees in 1982. At first they lived at the hostel, but in May of that year a house for parolees was opened next door to the hostel.

When the house at 67 Charles Street came up for sale in October 1981, House of Friendship purchased it for \$50,000. Income from tenants in the house at the time offset some of the cost. The primary reason for acquiring the house was to protect the property east of the hostel and to improve traffic flow. The space behind and between the two buildings provided extra parking and a U-shaped driveway around the hostel. The purchase proved to be not only a convenience but a good investment. Within two years the value of the property rose to \$60,000.

In the meantime the tenants moved out and the house was converted to a residence for five persons on day parole. Applicants were assessed for a three- to five-day period before the parolee and House of Friendship agreed on a longer term or to end the arrangement. Parolees usually found work within a week or two; average stay was three months. The federal parole board paid House of Friendship a daily rate to cover the cost of meals and a room at 67 Charles. General donations were not required to carry this program. A House of Friendship staff person who worked at the hostel served as house manager and counselled the parolees. "Since they've grown accustomed to living by regulations imposed on them rather than making their own decisions, they need guidance to assume responsibility for their lives once more," noted Curt Shoemaker, the last house manager.

Most parolees had committed property offences. About half as many had been involved in drug trafficking or some kind of violence. Over a five-year period, 86 per cent successfully completed their day parole.

Public pressure due to unfortunate incidents involving parolees in other cities led Correctional Services Canada to tighten policies and emergency procedures in all halfway houses for parolees. The new regulations and their financial implication caused House of Friendship to discontinue operation of the parolee house in August 1988.

### **Kiwanis Youth Residence**

Some teenagers find the future hidden behind an insurmountable wall. Caught in a world of Catch-22, they run away from a home situation they can't handle or get thrown out by families who can't handle them. They can't earn enough to live on because they have little education and no skills. Without money they can't find a place to live. Without an address they can't get money from the welfare department. Even if they do establish an address, welfare workers are cautious about approving payments for people under 18. Workers don't wish to appear to encourage youth to leave home. But young people do leave. And they survive on the streets where they learn that life there can be tougher than anything they've experienced before.

At its 1983 annual meeting, House of Friendship identified service to disadvantaged youth as one of its most urgent concerns. In 1984, 165 youths 18 years and under – about 12 per cent of the total number of guests – found shelter at House of Friendship. Toward the end of the year the Waterloo Region Social Resource Council (Martin Buhr, House of Friendship executive director, was a member of the council's Planning Advisory Committee for Adults) responded to a request from House of Friendship. The council called together a special committee to study the housing and employment needs of socially disadvantaged youth in the area.

The problem of youth unemployment and shelter was also being addressed at federal and provincial levels, and COMSOC launched various programs providing funds for housing, support, and retraining opportunities.

"When the province announces something, House of Friendship is ready!" says Marilyn Stephenson, Waterloo Region area manager for COMSOC. At the invitation of the ministry,

House of Friendship submitted a proposal for a youth residence for eight. In March 1985 the ministry endorsed the proposal and recommended that the Ontario government approve operating funds for staff and program.

Five Kiwanis clubs in the area (K-W, Twin Cities, Cameron Heights, Waterloo-Laurel, and Rockway) came to House of Friendship's assistance. They purchased a house at 85 Wilhelm Street in Kitchener for \$63,000 and leased it to House of Friendship. Club members also paid \$17,000 for renovations to meet fire, health, and building codes – like replacing beautiful oak doors with metal ones.

Rumours that ex-convicts and ex-psychiatric patients were about to move into a house on their street upset the neighbours; 60 households signed a petition to stop the project. After Brice Balmer of House of Friendship organized a neighbourhood meeting to explain the project some of the opponents became supporters. "I don't know that my children won't need it some day," conceded one.

The Ontario government approved funding (most of the first year's operating budget of about \$180,000 came from COMSOC) and "Kiwanis Youth Residence" (KYR) officially opened on May 22, 1986. The first residents had already moved in at the end of January. During the first year less than 20 per cent of the young residents came from a correctional institution and only one from a psychiatric hospital. The rest were referred by the House of Friendship hostel, by social agencies, by relatives or friends, and seven of the 33 came on their own.

KYR provides a supportive living environment along with life-skills training and counselling programs individually designed for each of the residents. Admission is voluntary and youths aged 16 to 21 are accepted. They sign a contract, setting goals for themselves and agreeing to participate in day programs like school or work during the week and residential programs in the evenings and on weekends. They share in household chores – with the usual range of complaints – and contribute to rent and food costs according to their income (usually from government assistance programs).

To complete the program in preparation for independent living a maximum stay of 48 weeks is allowed. Length of stay during the first year, however, averaged only 40 days. Many of the young residents were simply looking for a place to live, not for a program that would change their lives. They had left home because they couldn't cope with rules; they were not prepared to



*Kiwanis Youth Residence*

accept a code of conduct at the youth residence. To them, independence meant the freedom to do whatever they wished – without accepting any responsibility. Curfews and rules prohibiting the use of alcohol and drugs were too confining.



*Cutting the ribbon at the official opening of Kiwanis Youth Residence (l to r) Robert Shantz, president of House of Friendship board; Dominic Cardillo, mayor of Kitchener; Donald Williams, president of Kiwanis International; Marilyn Stephenson, area manager for COMSOC; and Andrew Telegdi, Waterloo alderman.*

The young residents tended to view staff as "guards" even though the youths were not "sentenced" to KYR and could leave whenever they wished. And leave they did. But the news that KYR was a good place to live began to spread through the street network. Some young men who had gone back to living on the street applied for readmission when they realized what an opportunity they had thrown away.

Down-sizing from eight residents to six reduced the hostility and aggression that had resulted from crowded conditions when the house first opened. Some program changes and softening on negotiable rules also had positive results. Eventually, at regular house meetings, the residents themselves set some rules – like the one on smoking, recorded in bold print: "Absolutely no smoking upstairs. None!"

By the second year the length of stay had increased, further decreasing the number of admissions. In 1987 seven of the 19 new residents came from correctional institutions. The majority of residents attend school regularly. One was chosen valedictorian by his class at Open Door Adult Learning Centre in Waterloo. Open Door, with classes in Cambridge and Waterloo, is a special school for people 18 or older who have been out of

school for at least one year and wish to return to complete grade 12.

Some of the young residents are teenage alcoholics who come from a recovery home or rehabilitation centre. For one 20-year-old, Christmas 1986 was the first he could remember spending sober. Another, aged 17, said it was the first Christmas he had not spent in jail since he was 12. For most, Christmas holds no special meaning. Family traditions were not a part of their experience except for a tradition of holiday drunkenness. That first year at KYR, everyone enjoyed celebrating Christmas and the special activities planned by the staff.

The second Christmas was different, recalls Elaine Seeley, house co-ordinator. More of the residents that year – like Mac\*--had had good Christmas experiences and they longed to be with their families rather than spend Christmas at KYR.

Typical of residents at the house, Mac came from a blended family. His father's new wife had a daughter Mac's age. For whatever reason, the parents decided they didn't want to have two 16-year-olds in their middle class home. Mac was a big, husky chap with an appetite to match, making a significant impact on the family food bill. The couple told him he would have to go. The parents, who apparently retained a measure of interest in the boy's welfare, had previously investigated KYR as a possible home for Mac. He arrived the day after his 16th birthday, bewildered by the action of his father and stepmother. He was a good student, had never been in trouble with the law, did not smoke, drink, or do drugs. He knew his stepsister's behaviour didn't match his. Mac could not understand why she could stay and he had to leave.

"Despite the injustice and rejection he experienced, Mac made the best of the situation," says Seeley. He retained his good habits and values, improved already good grades, and learned the skills he would need to live independently.

Mac completed the program at KYR and moved into a rooming house. He is continuing in school and plans to attend university. Even more to his credit, he has maintained a positive relationship with his family.

Mac found the support he needed at a difficult time in his life. So did Reg,\* a 21-year-old recovering alcoholic. He was shocked to discover that his counsellor, only two years older than Reg, had already completed university and had begun a professional career. Good and bad choices make a tremendous difference, he learned. For Reg, KYR proved to be a safe place to

stay while he struggled to beat alcoholism. He learned new ways to have fun. Reg didn't want to drink, so he managed to be "busy" when old friends whose social life revolved around a bottle wanted him to join them for a party.

Both of these stories highlight the success of KYR, the most recently established House of Friendship residential program. Not all the stories end as well. Young men do check out before finishing the program, often without having a job or completing school. But the number of residents who had at least partially met their goals by the time they were discharged rose dramatically from 40 to 76 per cent by the end of KYR's second year. Also at the end of 1987, the percentage of those who had inappropriate or no housing when they left had dropped to 43 from 60.

The problem of homeless youth in the K-W area is far from solved, but Kiwanis Youth Residence is providing help for at least some of the disadvantaged young persons in the area.

## 10

## Meeting community challenges: New programs for women and families



House of Friendship is more than a place dispensing prepackaged "help" for the disadvantaged from the front desk or a counselling room to sustain them until the next crisis strikes. About 15 years ago its services began to be piped from the central reservoir – the Charles Street hostel – into the community in new ways. The agency began a program specifically for women, away from the hostel. Six years later another program took a worker into people's homes, often in response to a crisis. But the success of both programs goes far beyond the initial contact.

## Live and Learn Program

On a scale of one to 10 Jane's self-worth had crested at zero. Jane\* couldn't remember any compliments since her mother had praised her finger-painting in kindergarten more than 20 years earlier. Her shattered marriage had left her with several children, and she struggled to survive on public assistance.

Jane hated her situation, her surroundings, and above all, she hated herself. She felt hopeless, alone, and scared. Sometimes she vented her frustrations on her children despite the knowledge that they could be taken from her if she abused them. She felt powerless to change anything; that was the greatest oppression of all.

For Jane and other single mothers like her, House of Friendship's Live and Learn Pogram – begun in 1974 – has

become a doorway to a new world. Stepping through that doorway demands courage and commitment from the program's participants. When they take that step they begin to discover fulfillment, renewed self-confidence, and a real world of friends who value them. Building self-esteem, community, and a sense of hope are the most significant accomplishments of the program – the first designed specifically for low-income women and their preschool children. Learning new skills and exploring new ideas are a means to that end.

House of Friendship staff and some board members in touch with disadvantaged persons in the city, were keenly aware of the plight of young mothers overwhelmed with responsibility and isolation. With little money and without a car, many of them seldom got out and often had no support from immediate or extended families in times of crisis. Some had little education and poor family models to follow.

Ideas on how to address the needs of the young mothers were discussed only casually in the early 1970s when House of Friendship's ministry was primarily geared to men. The more immediate concern was the purchase of a Schneider Avenue property for a halfway house for men.

Then, in January 1974, executive director Gerry Vandeworp brought a proposal for a totally new venture to the House of Friendship executive committee.

Some months earlier, Joanne Bechtel (Jantzi) had graduated from a Consumer and Family Studies program at Conestoga Community College in Kitchener. She had looked unsuccessfully for work where she could make use of her training to help others. She talked to Doug Snyder, then executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Ontario and a House of Friendship board member, about a voluntary service assignment. There were no openings and Snyder wasn't planning any new ventures, but he shared with Dave Worth, one of his staff members, Joanne's desire to serve.

Worth, Joanne recalls, was a key person in discussions on the concept of the Live and Learn Program. Another was Kaye Rempel, a social worker whose clients often needed support beyond what a government agency could offer. Joanne took the idea to a meeting with Doug Snyder and Gerry Vandeworp. With their encouragement and the promise of support from some church women's groups, she drafted the proposal that Gerry took to the House of Friendship executive and the board. It was approved for a trial period.

## **Live and Learn begins**

Working as a volunteer, Joanne Bechtel was responsible for the new project. Some start-up funds came from the Ontario Mennonite Women's Mission and Service Commission. Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church offered free space for meetings and its women's group agreed to cooperate in every way possible. Kaye Rempel, a Stirling member, and Doris Kramer from St. Jacobs, another social worker, provided counsel and support.

The first Live and Learn session was planned for Friday afternoon, March 8, 1974. Joanne didn't know what to expect. Her program and her child care volunteers were ready. Five women had promised to come. Only two did, and Joanne was deeply disappointed.

Over the next two years, however, the group grew to 12 women, who attended sporadically. It took time for trust to develop between the women and staff and among the members themselves, most of whom were strangers to each other. Gradually the women made new friends and the group became important to them. For some the weekly meeting was their only outing.

In March 1975 Joanne left her part-time volunteer job with Live and Learn to cook fulltime at House of Friendship's new alcoholism recovery home in Waterloo. Volunteers Barbara Burkhard, Gwen Miller, and Cathy Harrison, and staff member Linda Worth all worked at planning and running the new program during the next few years. They took the women and children – and there were always more pre-schoolers than moms – to the library, the stockyards, the African Lion Safari, and various historic sites. Few of the women would have ventured out to these places on their own. Nor would they have had enough money to pay for transportation and regular admission. Some didn't know such places existed even though they lived nearby. Their worlds were very small, scarcely reaching beyond four apartment walls and the nearest shopping centre.

The two part-time staff began monthly visits to the mothers and responded to calls for help. They could connect the women to the social service agency best able to assist them with a particular problem.

"We were the first ones they'd call for help," says Linda Worth, "because we didn't have any power or control over them. They had lots of professionals in their lives...but they don't give out home phone numbers."

Social service agencies soon recognized the value of the Live and Learn program and began referring some of their clients. Other women learned about it when they received assistance from some other House of Friendship program. By the fall of 1976 the board was ready to consider putting \$5,000 into the budget to hire part-time staff for Live and Learn. Up until then the project had cost very little. Most of the staff time and transportation was volunteered, food and craft materials for class sessions were often donated, and Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church charged no rent for the space.

The program stalled briefly in the fall of 1978 when a staff person could not be found. But in January 1979, Live and Learn was reactivated and became a permanent program under the direction of Linda Worth. By 1980 an additional part-time staffer, Marjorie Weber, was hired and in 1983, when a second Live and Learn group formed, Margie Brubacher became the third staff person. A year later each group was increased from 10 to 14 mothers to accommodate a waiting list, and a fourth staff person, Margaret Reimer, was hired. The program continued to grow with as high as 50 women and 60 children participating.

In the fall of 1987 three groups – organized geographically – were meeting on three different afternoons at Highland Baptist



*Linda Worth (second from right) looks on as Live and Learn participants create wreaths with nuts and cones.*



*Elma Bender, a volunteer babysitter, entertains a toddler during a Live and Learn session.*

Church, Hazelglenn Christian Alliance Church, and Stirling Avenue Mennonite (with the children gathering at First Mennonite). Volunteers, many from host churches, babysat infants and conducted a planned play period for the two- to five-year-olds. Theresa Zimmerman, Eleanor Snyder, and Ingrid Flaming led the three groups with Linda Worth coordinating the entire program.

Worth's commitment and long-term involvement (she supervised the program for nine years) solidified Live and Learn, making it a permanent House of Friendship program. After spending most of her working days for the previous 15 years at House of Friendship, Linda resigned in March 1988 to initiate a new missions endeavour at Mannheim Mennonite Church where she is a member. She turned over Live and Learn to a new coordinator, Linda Kruger.

### **Participants take responsibility**

During her years of leadership, Worth orchestrated changes in the program. Her group leaders became resource/support persons, increasingly shifting the responsibility for planning and



leading parts of the group sessions to the women themselves. Everyone brought program ideas at the beginning of a new season and the group decided together which ones to develop. Instead of asking if the women would like to help with something, staff posed the question, "Which program do you wish to plan?" This provided a gentle shove toward self-esteem and responsibility.

The women planned programs on all kinds of health, parenting, and home management topics. They cooked dishes ranging from the economical to the exotic, and they transformed dozens of ordinary items into artistic creations. They celebrated together around a Christmas dining table and at summer picnics.

With equal pride in their achievements, mothers and children showed each other what they had made when they left for home. Making something that the mothers could finish in one afternoon was important, notes Worth. She tells the following story:

Our Live and Learn group had decided to try to crochet purses. One woman, a mother of six, had a very poor self-image. As a child, both at home and at school, she was told she was stupid. Now her own children told her the same thing. A "friend," on hearing about the crocheting project, said, "You'll never be able to make that. You're too stupid." I'll never forget the look on that woman's face as she held up her completed purse.

All participants in the Live and Learn program are low-income mothers. Most have preschool children. Statistics gathered on the 56 mothers involved between 1979 and 1984 reveal the following:

- 48.7% received family benefits
- 28.5% received welfare
- 17.8% had working husbands
- 5.0% were working or on disability benefits
- 73.2% were single heads-of-households
- They had a total of 127 children.

These statistics are quite consistent for Live and Learn participants in more recent years as well.

Although other groups in the city served as important advocates for low-income women, none provided the intensive relationship that existed between Live and Learn staff and participants – in addition to providing group sessions and outings.

This preventive program, geared to increase the self-esteem and coping skills of low-income mothers, could not have survived without a host of dedicated volunteers. Finding enough of them has always proved difficult. The few male volunteers provide good role models for the children whose families seldom include a supportive father.

Donations were also crucial since no other funding was available. Various levels of government continue to invest a lot of money in retraining and preparation for the job market. But they have no funds for the preliminary step of building self-esteem so that a disadvantaged woman can find enough courage to try such self-help programs.

Worth credits the women who come to Live and Learn with incredible strength. "I'm not sure I could survive very long in the situations that a lot of them live in. At times, when it seems nothing more could go wrong, it does, and somehow they survive," she says.

"I'm rich," she continues, "because I have choices – such as the kind of neighbourhood in which to live and raise our family. I was taught household skills and responsibility at home as a child, and I have a Christian faith, family, friends, and a church to provide support."

The luxury of such choices and support systems may never be within reach for people like Jane. But Live and Learn, where compliments are given and everyone has worth, enriches their lives and opens doors to hope in place of despair.

Another program helps to dispell frustration and despair when a piece of essential home equipment breaks down and the family cannot afford to repair or replace it. A House of Friendship repairman makes a house call to help solve the problem.

### Minor Repair Program

Bruce Weber couldn't believe what he saw when he entered the cluttered apartment kitchen. Steam rose from a pot on the stove he had been called to repair. But beside the boiling pot, where another stove element should have been, a gaping hole revealed dangling electric wires.

He first disconnected the power to the damaged stove, then talked to his client. Eight months earlier, she told him, her son had purchased a new element to replace the one that didn't work, but they didn't know how to install it. Nor could they

afford a repairman's service charge. They continued to use the stove despite the exposed wires. Weber installed the new element and took a few minutes to adjust a bicycle before moving on to his next call.

When House of Friendship launched its Minor Repair Program in March of 1980, Weber, dubbed "Mr. Fix-it," was the repairman. Nothing like this project had been tried before in Kitchener.

On another occasion Weber went to an apartment where other repairmen had refused to go. ("It was not a very nice place to be," he admits.) For only \$2.00 he was able to fix a bad electrical connection that the apartment dweller had tried unsuccessfully to get repaired for two months. A third customer also had a problem with a stove. Weber discovered that a mouse had taken up residence in the stove's insulation. He removed the mouse family and suggested that his client get a cat!

Through its various crisis-oriented services, House of Friendship became keenly aware of the problems caused by malfunctioning appliances. Sometimes requests for food hampers came simply because a fridge had quit and all the food had spoiled, or the client couldn't cook because the stove didn't work. Broken down appliances and other kinds of repair and maintenance expenses also brought people to House of Friendship requesting loans they would be hard pressed to repay.

Social workers, too, constantly dealt with problems related to broken down appliances that their clients couldn't afford to repair. Sometimes the caseworkers simply approved replacing a broken machine to save time and avoid frustration. Either replacing or repairing was costly.

When Bruce Weber offered two volunteer days a week to do minor repairs for House of Friendship, executive director Martin Buhr arranged a meeting with Community and Social Services and Regional Social Services officials. The COMSOC worker immediately asked Weber if he knew how to fix stoves. Bruce didn't, but he was willing to learn. At age 26 he had recently completed two years of voluntary service in Arizona doing house repairs for low-income people. His service experience had made him less interested in the high wages that his cabinet-making skills could bring and the possessions he could acquire than in helping the less fortunate.

Buhr suggested that Weber do some research on his repairs idea. So Bruce went to virtually all the service agencies in the



*Bruce Weber, called "Mr. Fix-it", launched the Minor Repair Program in 1980. K-W Record photo.*

area to determine need and what was already being done, to avoid duplicating services. City of Kitchener housing data revealed that more than 2,000 homes in the city at that time were in poor condition. Most residents in these homes lived below the poverty line and could not afford to repair their houses or equipment.

On January 12, 1980, the House of Friendship board heard a carefully planned proposal drawn up in cooperation with Mennonite Central Committee Ontario. It proposed a 12-month demonstration minor repair project with priority to low-income households. The proposal, with a budget of \$17,282, called for a salary of \$10,000 and \$800 for benefits for one worker. It projected March 1 as the date to begin.

### **\$2.00-an-hour service calls**

Weber spent a month in training with an appliance repairman. Then, with a box of basic tools and a leased pickup truck, he began the minor repair project.

Although local social service agencies applauded the project they felt they could not make referrals to Bruce. He was, after all, competing with commercial companies who could hardly match his service rate – starting at \$2.00 an hour, it went down from there. The total charge was often negotiated, considering the customer's ability to pay, since House of Friendship wasn't in the business for profit. Weber soon learned, however, that tradesmen didn't mind losing the business he picked up.

The stuff I was doing was the dirty work. It was the old appliances that somebody picked up because they didn't have the money for anything else. They were the bad debts. Once I ran into a problem when I did a bit of advocacy. I felt a repairman from a company in town had really given this woman a raw deal. Sometimes such a person is seen as gullible and can be taken for a real ride. I felt that had happened in this case and I called and told the dealer that. He called Martin [Buhr] and gave him a tongue-lashing, demanding an apology. But Martin didn't jump. He talked to me first. By this time I had built up a reputation of honesty. Martin stood behind me. He called the man back, and probably asked him for an apology! That was the only time I had trouble.

A good relationship with most local appliance companies continues.

An interim report based on the first five months of the Minor Repair Project so impressed the board that it acted on October 4, 1980 to make the project a full-fledged House of Friendship program by January 1, 1981, and its worker a regular staff person. It soon became clear that while the program offered a variety of home repairs, broken appliances consistently accounted for about 95 per cent of the calls. Most of them came from Kitchener, about one third from Cambridge, and the rest from the City of Waterloo and other parts of Waterloo Region.

Occasionally Weber got to use his carpentry tools. He tells these stories:

There was a young kid in an apartment and he just went nuts. He was really angry at the world and he got a gun and he shot his apartment full of holes. Then he got to thinking he would get into trouble for this, so he either kicked or put his fist through every gunshot hole, thinking this would cover up his shots. He was a client of Youth in Conflict with the Law. I helped by fixing all the holes.

Another guy with three kids had just one bedroom. The family lived in one of those downtown dives. [It's been demolished and the site is now a parking lot.] It was an old building and he had just one huge bedroom. Family and Children's Services had threatened to take the children away unless they had a separate bedroom. There probably were other reasons, too. Anyway, I worked there quite awhile to build a new room. The man said he would finish it himself. When I came back about a month later, the new room was just full of cats. I could hardly stand the smell. The whole family still slept in the one bedroom.

Weber says that House of Friendship's philosophy tends to err on the side of being gracious. While this program, like most, can be abused, he believes it seldom is. While it has suffered abuse it has not always been from recipients. Sometimes people "donated" vehicles that were worn out and proved to be nothing but trouble. Donations of used appliances sometimes weren't much better.

"I got some real junk. The stuff was shot, and people said it was working." Weber is somewhat indignant as he continues: "I stopped accepting things, saying we didn't have room to store them, which was true. My policy was that if it wasn't good

enough for them to fix, it wasn't good enough for someone else. One thing I discovered was that we in the churches have something to learn about giving."

Because Weber worked primarily with appliances that kept breaking down he got a lot of return calls and learned to know many of his clients by their first names. And they learned to know Bruce as a jovial and caring friend who listened to their troubles while he worked. He often pointed his clients to Bible passages when they sought help. If they had no Bible, he gave them one from the extras he carried in his truck.

His clients told their friends and neighbours about Bruce. (By 1987 at least one third of the calls came from first-time users of the service.) Weber realized that he was perhaps the only Christian to enter some of those doors. By his response to his clients and their troublesome appliances, he could demonstrate God's love and compassion.

The program grew and did well. After four years Weber decided to leave the program, and in 1984 he went back to the farm where he was raised.

The program continues to flourish under Keith Wagler, a licensed electrician. When he isn't out on a call, Keith works from his House of Friendship basement workshop, cluttered with motors and appliances to rejuvenate. He made 816 service calls in 1987 alone, some of them in response to requests from agencies like St. John's Kitchen or Anselma House.

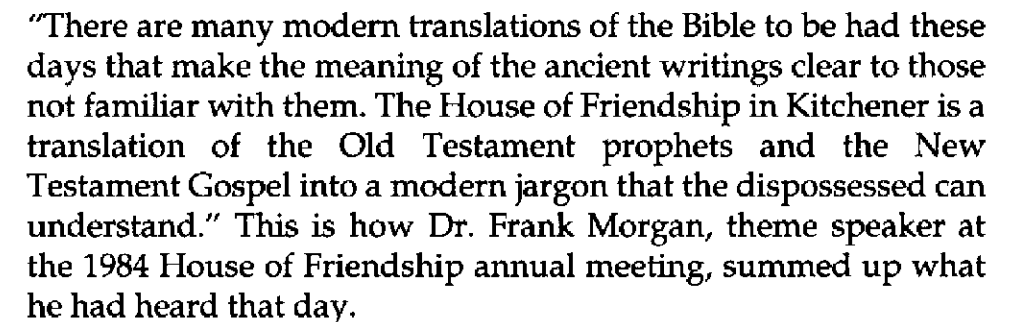
Most of the clients are on some form of social assistance, but the working poor, who can afford small fees for services, also benefit – as do taxpayers. Regional Social Services recognize the effectiveness of the program by the decrease in the number of appliances they need to replace for low-income families, a cost borne by taxpayers. House of Friendship also has significantly fewer requests for interest-free loans for appliances.

The Minor Repair Program proved to be somewhat costly since it required a staff person and a truck. By 1986 the truck carried more than \$3,000 worth of basic spare parts so that the repairman could find the problem and fix it on the same trip. Funds from the Region of Waterloo, designated donations, and income from recipients of service just about kept pace with the cost of parts for some time. As the program grew, funds from general donations were applied.

This program saves money for taxpayers, time and energy for social workers, and it improves the quality of life at a cost recipients can afford. It also offers hope and restores self-esteem,

especially to the working poor who can pay for the repairs themselves. Occasionally workers hear expressions of gratitude and joy like those in this anecdote:

A woman's oven did not work for nine months. Fear of high repair costs kept her from phoning a repair service. One of her friends encouraged her to phone House of Friendship and ask for the minor repair worker. He fixed the oven for \$2.00. The grateful woman exclaimed, "Now I can bake a batch of cookies for my son!"



About two dozen House of Friendship staff persons – in 180 seconds each – told how their departments turned on a light in darkened lives. Each lit a candle to emphasize the point. Morgan confessed that hearing from the night watchman, the custodian, and the repairman, not just heads of departments, caught him off guard. All the staffers reflected joy in service motivated by genuine religious faith. "There was something in the air so real I could almost reach out and touch it. I thought I knew what the House of Friendship was doing," continued Morgan, "but the scale of concern amazed me. And more is planned."

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Two new programs reached into the community, providing support for families, many of which were headed by single women.

Ranking with these lesser known – but not insignificant – House of Friendship endeavours that Morgan referred to as future plans were three well-established programs already operating in the early 1970s. The first of the three helped people caught in a financial crisis to work out a solution.

### **Interest-free Loan Program**

“Someday,” Karla\* told the repairman, “I hope to be in a position where I can help someone the way I’m being helped.”

Karla, a single mother of three, had needed a new fuel pump for her furnace. During a February thaw her family coped with a couple of space heaters, but she knew the warm weather would not last. A university student, Karla didn’t have any spare cash to repair the furnace. She called House of Friendship for help.

House of Friendship approved an interest-free loan to pay for the pump. The repairman, whom Karla’s church had found, purchased the pump at a discount and fixed the furnace at no charge. He told Karla that he had stayed at the House of Friendship hostel when he first arrived in Kitchener without money or friends. “Have you ever paid them back?” asked Karla. “I’m doing that now,” he replied. The interest-free loan fund began as a major appliance fund in 1971 with seed money from churches. But loans were not always for appliances. The first loan of \$300 helped an Elmira woman pay for a real estate course so she could become independent.

Designated donations continue to boost the revolving fund. Borrowers make payments on the principal each month, putting money for new loans back in the coffers. They pay no interest or service charges.

Only people unable to acquire loans through regular lending agencies qualify for House of Friendship’s loans. Most are on family benefits, welfare, or some kind of pension. Some have jobs, but low pay keeps them below the poverty line. Cambridge families receive about one-third of the loans but the majority of recipients live in Kitchener.

By the end of 1987, 746 loans totalling \$163,533 had been made. Only about 10 per cent have been written off as uncollectable.

Several marked changes have occurred over the years. For the first decade, loans for stoves and fridges topped the requests (37 and 18 per cent in 1981). In 1983, they accounted for only five and two per cent respectively, a dramatic decline due largely to the House of Friendship Minor Repair Program which was well established by that year. Loans for fuel bills and hydro then took the lead. In 1984, loans for the first and last month’s rent were discontinued because they threatened to consume the entire fund and were difficult to collect.

The interest-free loan fund, designed to help low-income persons in emergencies, allows people like Karla to retain their dignity by taking some ownership in solving their problems. The 90 per cent repayment record attests to the willingness of beneficiaries to assume a measure of responsibility even though their financial circumstances are difficult.

### **Trusteeships**

At any given time House of Friendship helps about 20 people manage their money by trusteeship. Some are hostel residents, others live in the community. About half have a serious alcohol problem and the remainder have had psychiatric disorders or are low functioning. To qualify for this financial management service, a doctor or social worker must declare these individuals incapable of handling their own funds.

Trusteeships help this particular group of individuals achieve some financial stability with maximum independence. Their pension cheques are deposited with House of Friendship and the money is portioned out according to a monthly budget the client and the responsible staff person have worked out. Money is then given to the client on designated days to meet expenses, ensuring that funds are available at the end as well as the beginning of each month. Sometimes the staff assists in purchasing clothing or in planning debt repayment; sometimes they act as advocates in situations of exploitation.

Legal trusteeships were set up in 1982 although much earlier former House of Friendship executive director Gerry Vandeworp had acted informally as trustee for some clients from time to time. As legal administrator, House of Friendship cannot charge for the service it provides. It is totally funded from general donations to House of Friendship.

Since many of the clients are separated from family and friends, regular contact with House of Friendship staff keeps

them from total isolation. During these contacts the worker can detect changes in the physical or emotional health of the client. If abuse of alcohol or other addictive substances is evident, treatment is recommended.

### Summer Camp Program

"This year was the best!"

Words tumbled out in rapid succession as Tina and Darryl Richards vied for turns to talk. Each found it tough to wait politely when both had so many exciting things to tell about a week at summer camp. Eyes sparkling with enthusiasm, each child squirmed on the edge of a chair – or off it – poised to grab the story line and run with it like a relay racer.

There wasn't just one "best" thing, according to Tina, aged 14. She began to rattle off a whole list – with frequent interjections from her 11-year-old brother. She started with "great counsellors," moving breathlessly to "hippie" theme day and tie-dyed shirts, to campfire stories, to nature hikes and eating food found along the way that was "pretty gross." It was not at all like the usual good camp meals, both children quickly pointed out.

Darryl, thrilled with the wonder of seeing five falling stars and catching fireflies on a night hike, enjoyed deciphering a set of clues to the mystery of the missing counsellor. When the mystery was solved, "ponding" the unfortunate chap was great fun. Even doing "dung duty" – the reward for the messiest cabin – didn't dampen his enthusiasm.

Mona Richards, the children's mother, shared their delight with summer camp. "It's the best thing I ever did for my kids," she said. This single mother will do all she can to make sure they get to go for a third summer.

Campers at Hidden Acres, one of two camps which House of Friendship clients attend, sing the usual silly songs and groan at having to do dishes. They do push-ups as a penalty for swearing and learn to pay back insults with compliments. Morning watch and evening campfire gatherings build on themes of self-esteem, self-identity, and peaceful interaction. And counsellors provide spiritual guidance without being heavy-handed.

"The enthusiasm of the Richards children is typical," says 1988 camp director Julie Weber-Buehler. "The children *never* don't want to come again."



*Children enjoy summer camp at Hidden Acres.*

Most children from the Kitchener-Waterloo area attend Hidden Acres, a Mennonite camp west of New Hamburg. Those from Cambridge go to Camp Shalom, a Christian Reformed camp near that city. At camp the children blend in with those sent by Family and Children's Services and youngsters from churches. They are never set apart as "House of Friendship kids" and they stir up no more – nor less – mayhem than average youngsters at any camp. "None has ever been sent home," says Julie, "although there have been occasions when an insecure child acted out on the bus enroute to camp; seldom, however, on the way back."

Many of the House of Friendship campers come from families who have had contact with the agency through one of its other programs. Camp brochures go out with food hampers, with the minor repairman and other workers. The camp director also writes to school board consultants and other social agencies who may meet youngsters who could benefit from a camp experience. "But advertising needs to be controlled," says Julie, "since each year people are put on a waiting list. Only a few of them can take the places of the small number of registrants who inevitably can't go at the last minute."

The program began in 1972 when \$100 became available to send a few children to summer camp. Now it costs nearly that much per child for one week. House of Friendship sends about 100 children each year, mostly from single-parent families,



financed largely by special donations. Families are asked to pay what they can, but the combined contributions of parents usually totals less than \$1,000. After camp, House of Friendship staffers try to make home visits to build on positive experiences.

Each year a few single mothers from House of Friendship programs also spend several days at Hidden Acres Camp with their children. Other single-parent families come from London and Toronto. Escaping to the country, meeting new people, and making new friends is like "a little bit of heaven" for them. It is one of their few breaks out of isolation.

Isolation and lack of extended family to provide support are common experiences among socially disadvantaged persons. To address the situation, House of Friendship launched a family support program in January 1986 with staff going to the people rather than the reverse.

### Family Support Program

The idea of home visits and community chaplaincy is as old as House of Friendship. Founding director Joseph Cramer and his assistant, Ilda Bauman, made hundreds of home and hospital visits during the mission's first decade.

In the late 1960s assistant director Stan Sauder revived home visits for a few years. In the mid 1970s the Live and Learn Program included home visits by its workers. Then in the summer of 1983, hostel staff requested that Jean Jacques Goulet and Vickie Jenkins, pastoral interns at Inter-faith Counselling Centre, visit House of Friendship clients in their homes. Other staff did have some ongoing contact with former residents of the recovery home and the hostel but not with clients in other programs. The following year House of Friendship set "community outreach" as priority agenda.

In 1985 Brice Balmer, working at House of Friendship during a leave from his pastoral position at First Mennonite Church, drew up a set of discussion papers for the annual meeting in March. A document entitled "Follow-up" suggested that one or more staff members be assigned to visit the homes of people who have had more than a one-time contact with House of Friendship. They would not be "counsellors" trying to establish a therapeutic relationship. They would be pastoral visitors ready to provide support in difficult family or personal situations and to assist in finding helpful service agencies.

The idea moved intervention from a crisis solution to a developmental one. It also raised some important questions. Would people voluntarily choose to seek the help that House of Friendship could offer? How much grief and pain could House of Friendship transform? How could a ministering community be constructed around a lonely person? Could House of Friendship workers realistically expect all clients in the community to achieve independence?

Executive director Martin Buhr, who was well acquainted with the Ministry of Community and Social Services (COMSOC) and many of the people in the ministry, knew that funds were available for outreach work. Participants at the annual meeting affirmed the outreach idea and encouraged Buhr to investigate further. (COMSOC funds were later acquired for a different community outreach program.)

In September 1985, Buhr, Balmer, and Melissa Miller, senior counsellor at the hostel, presented the board with a proposal to hire a community worker. Before that presentation, Barbara Hughes, a member of Knox Presbyterian Church in Waterloo and an advocate for the poor, brought her vision for befriending



*Barbara Hughes (second from the left), family support worker, makes plans with women from the Mowat-Chandler housing complex.*

single mothers to House of Friendship. In addition to her own church, she had approached Calvin Presbyterian in Kitchener and the Kitchener-Westmount Rotary Club.

The proposal linked all of these groups as partners in the project. Direct dialogue among them refined the proposal and put an advisory committee in place by November. Hughes, the new "Family Support Worker," began her job in a 61-unit subsidized housing complex in the Westmount and Ottawa Street area in January 1986.

After meeting families and identifying personal and community needs, Hughes began to set up programs to meet those needs. Within the first year a preschool program, a Bible study group, weekly crafts and activities for women, and short-term activities for children, youth and parents developed. Community members, along with volunteers, provided group leadership, a key factor in building a sense of community.

The following year, five neighbourhood women organized a Community Association which succeeded in a variety of efforts from acquiring a school crossing guard to cleaning up the landscape. Several community events were planned and carried out during the year. New program initiatives included a preschool choir, which sang at several churches and institutions, and tutoring for struggling students.

The community also began to expend energy for needs beyond their own. In December the women in the Mowat-Chandler housing unit joined women from the sponsoring churches to bake cookies for House of Friendship Christmas hampers and to sew diapers for refugee babies in Nicaragua.

Nine women from the housing complex went to the Mennonite Central Committee warehouse on Kent Avenue and packaged 4,500 pounds of noodles into family-sized lots for the Food Bank. Their three visits to this facility, where volunteers gather almost daily to do community service, made a profound impression on the women. When they discovered that all the volunteers were active church members, several of the Mowat-Chandler women said they were ready to give church another try.

The Family Support Program not only lights candles to dispel some of the darkness in the Mowat-Chandler community; the Chandler women themselves in turn are lighting candles to brighten the lives of others.

## Community Support Program

The Community Support Program began in December 1985, just a bit ahead of the Family Support Program. COMSOC contributed the funds to hire Diane Ritza, the first community support worker. She provides guidance to individuals within the Region of Waterloo who are socially disadvantaged, dependent, and isolated. Usually they are victims of psychiatric, behavioural, and/or financial problems, living on the streets or in other unstable environments.

Ritza picks up referrals from House of Friendship, St. John's Kitchen, and various hospitals and clinics. Most of her clients receive Family Benefits Allowance due to their disability, but they need an advocate to connect them to the social and health service network.

If accommodation is the immediate need, Ritza helps them find housing. She also assists them in securing appropriate services, walks with them through situations of crisis, and helps them with budgeting, lifeskills, and goal setting.

Sara\* faced an immediate housing crisis when vacant apartments in Kitchener were almost nonexistent. Ritza was able to find one for her. She had bunks installed for Sara's three teenagers. The apartment was small, but Sara agreed that it would do for awhile.

Almost immediately, Sara had problems. There was no heat and the smoke detectors weren't connected.

Ritza discovered that the landlord had raised the rent by \$70, well beyond the legal limit. When she filed a claim with the Residential Tenancy Commission on Sara's behalf, the landlord was infuriated and abusive to both Ritza and Sara. Although the tribunal eventually ruled in Sara's favour, she never recovered the overpayment from the landlord.

When Sara got sick she refused to take care of herself, to quit smoking, or to go to hospital. Then a doctor, public health, welfare, and Family Benefit Assistance officials, the fire inspector, the Residential Tenancy Commission, House of Friendship Live and Learn workers, and Ritza all got involved in trying to help Sara.

But Sara would not help herself. She made little effort to locate other housing and refused to compromise on her unrealistic demands. Conflict with the landlord continued; he ordered her to vacate.

Despite Ritza's efforts for nearly a year and small successes along the way, Sara's story does not end happily. She did find another place to live, but her family, under stress for a long time, fell apart. While her case brought disappointment, many others bring the satisfaction of seeing people moving toward independence and taking charge of their lives.

The majority of clients receive assistance for up to three months – until their life situation stabilizes. In addition, an average of about 150 persons a month receive help on a short-term or one-time basis.

Besides working directly with individual clients the Community Support Worker provides a link between various agencies serving the disadvantaged. She also works on committees striving to improve services, resulting in better quality of life for the persons served.

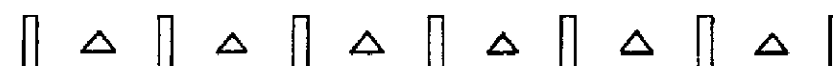
This kind of "networking" is one of the newer developments at House of Friendship. It guards against duplicating services available elsewhere. Although much has been done to help the poor, not nearly all needs have been met. Housing is one of the most crucial needs and House of Friendship enters its second 50 years ready to begin construction on Eby Village, the proposed 56-unit apartment complex for low-income single women and men.

Should House of Friendship continue to expand in response to evident need? The question has been debated many times and will be again. One concept getting serious attention has House of Friendship playing the role of consultant to other groups which could provide help rather than taking responsibility itself for more direct services.

Thus House of Friendship would spark many candles which in turn could dispel darkness and despair in numerous corners.

## 12

### The second fifty years begins: A torrent of doing good



Picture a sparkling pond, cool and clear, on a high plateau. Below, on the uneven terrain isolated patches of vegetation wither, drooping helplessly above the parched earth. A few stalks stand straight, defiant but brittle, destined to break in the wind. Tenaciously clinging to life, they reach for a bit of moisture and the slim hope of survival.

Above, a dark spot appears at the rim of the pond as water begins to ooze between the rocks at its edge. The water becomes a trickle, winding its way purposefully down the slope, reviving life along the way. Streams from many directions flow into the reservoir and replenish the supply. The trickle becomes a stronger flow, gathering momentum as it pours down the path carved by the first slender thread. It splits, its curving fingers reaching new hollows, creating new pools. The pools spread, spill over their edges, and make new streams like a network of irrigation channels, greening the parched earth.

Fifty years ago Joseph Cramer, with Ilda Bauman and Ruth Dahmer assisting, began to help people in physical and spiritual need from a base they called "The House of Friendship For All Nations."

Resources from individuals, from churches, and from governments began to flow into the reservoir and out to the disadvantaged. During the next five decades, as others took leadership, as many more workers took part and much more money flowed in, a torrent of doing good made a difference in the lives of increasing numbers of people.

"The House of Friendship's existence proves that the Kitchener-Waterloo community cares about its weaker members

– and cares enough to give money voluntarily instead of only through the tax system,” suggested a *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* editorial writer. The December 23, 1988 editorial challenged readers not to forget the agency at Christmas time, but to give generously to House of Friendship which “stands for the Christmas spirit 365 days a year.”

“Practical Christian Concern,” an editorial writer called it almost 20 years earlier. The essay published on September 16, 1969, two days after House of Friendship held a 30-year anniversary service, noted that the agency “provides a form of service with which the Founder of Christianity would be quite familiar.” The writer went on to say: “The House of Friendship stands ready to minister to people for whom ordinary society has little concern; people who themselves have lost not only their self-respect but also, sometimes, much interest in living.”

### Significant developments

Without a doubt, among the most significant recent developments are efforts to help people gain self-respect and find purpose in life. Derwood, a Cramer House resident who has lived at House of Friendship for more than 10 years, has found fulfillment in volunteering his services in the community in numerous ways. His eagerness to help invigorates people who work with him. “He’s a blessing; he takes care of us,” praised a staff member. Derwood’s great concern for the welfare of staff and the agency prompt him to constantly watch for anything that might be harmful.

The trend toward people who have themselves received help assisting others in similarly difficult situations – pools spilling over and starting new streams – is firmly established. Currently 15 per cent of all House of Friendship staff, Martin Buhr points out, are former clients or recipients of social assistance. Community-based services are still in their infancy, but developing and expanding those services with House of Friendship performing the role of advocate and consultant is high on the agenda as the institution enters its second 50 years.

“People should not be denied rights just because they are poor,” states board president Robert Shantz. “We are ready to go to bat for them. We are not alone in this; we want to work with other agencies.” Shantz cites House of Friendship’s record of quick response in crisis situations and flexibility in changing times as evidence of the expertise the agency has developed. That



*Susan Gallagher, Community Support Worker, visits St. John’s Kitchen. House of Friendship declined an invitation to start a soup kitchen, choosing to support another non-profit organization in the effort. Photo by Robert Gascho.*

skill, along with the credibility and respect it has earned over the years, equips House of Friendship to counsel others who see opportunities, have the will to respond, but may need practical help in implementing ideas.

“There are many demands for services that the agency could provide,” says vice-president Lee Sauer. (The federal government’s 1982 request that House of Friendship provide housing and supervision for parolees is one example.) Sauer sees the current relatively small size of the organization as an advantage he’d like to keep. Like Shantz, Sauer believes that House of Friendship should use its expertise to help launch new programs that could then “spin off and become affiliates or independent organizations” rather than expand the portfolio of House of Friendship programs. It has already done so in the case of the Food Bank which became an independent, non-profit program after House of Friendship collaborated with Mennonite Central Committee and the Social Planning Council to get it started. House of Friendship declined the invitation to start a soup kitchen and decided to support vigorously the creation of such a project by a different non-profit organization.

Shantz suggests community-based day-care, a service which could be an extension of existing House of Friendship programs,

and meals for hungry children as two urgent needs that could be addressed and developed as independent programs with initial assistance from House of Friendship.

This philosophy for the agency as a whole as it reaches into the community is actually an extension of what already exists within the organization – the crisis intervention that workers hope will be a step toward eventual independence.

They realize that the ideal can never be fully achieved. "There will always be paternalism," says chaplain Brice Balmer, who cites the handing out of food hampers to illustrate his point. There will always be crises which call House of Friendship workers to make decisions on behalf of clients. "House of Friendship will not withdraw services, but we want to prevent people from becoming stymied at that level [crisis support]. We want to help move them on to a second stage," says Balmer. That second stage involves self-determination, beginning to find neighbourhood solutions to problems, and building community.

Community is a recurring theme in the House of Friendship story. There are distinct communities – staff, residents, other clients, board members, volunteers, supporters, and a network of fraternal agencies like Social Resources Council, Waterloo Regional Housing Coalition, Food Bank, Waterloo-Wellington Addiction Workers Association, to name a few. But often the lines become blurred: staff members leave and join the board, and board members resign to accept staff positions alongside former clients; clients also volunteer, as do corporate officers; supporters come from everywhere.

Building community not only within the institution but also beyond has given House of Friendship a broad base of financial support. Donations – from businesses and individuals as well as churches – have kept pace with House of Friendship's ever-expanding response to human need. According to Balmer, who did an extensive study of House of Friendship's programs in 1986, donations have consistently accounted for about 33 per cent of income for at least 10 years. Fees from clients make up about 17 per cent and the remainder comes from various government sources.

After a half century, support continues to be strong from Mennonite churches although House of Friendship is not and never has been accountable to a Mennonite conference. Some Mennonites feel House of Friendship has an unfair advantage in fund-raising since institutions within the conference must have official authorization before launching appeals for funds. House

of Friendship, because it is independent, needs no such approval. But House of Friendship has also given back less tangible gifts to the church.

"I feel that volunteers and staff at House of Friendship have helped us [Mennonites] stay in conversation with the Region's marginalized people. And the variety of programs have identified urgent needs in our community," observes Vernon Leis, who chairs the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada and is a former pastor of Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church.

"I dream of House of Friendship being a primary setting for our conference to train pastoral and other congregational leaders so they can better relate to the poor," he continues. Leis, who has himself counselled at "174" and participated in Live and Learn events, notes that some of the conversations he has had in those settings were the most refreshing he has experienced in any of his teaching situations. "Unless we who are affluent talk to the poor, we can't understand their situation. We are in danger of having simplistic, judgmental notions about them."

Leis, who appreciates House of Friendship's Christian perspective, also worries that House of Friendship could lose that orientation because it is an independent agency, not a church agency. Currently the high percentage of staff and board members committed to Christian faith, House of Friendship's history, and its strong links to many churches would seem to entrench its identity as Christian.

The chairman of the Mennonite conference lauded House of Friendship's ecumenical scope. While several more evangelical churches were actively involved from House of Friendship's earliest days, the support base has broadened to include mainline churches. Those in the city's core in particular have been faithful supporters for many years.

"House of Friendship has served the churches extremely well. It provides a focus for pooled resources," says the Rev. Cy Ladds, rector of St. John's Anglican Church, which runs a soup kitchen. Some of the same women and men are regular clients at House of Friendship, the soup kitchen, Rockway Thrift Shop, and a clothing centre operated by St. Peter's Lutheran Church. The Rev. Eric Reble, pastor at St. Peter's, says that the downtown churches try not to duplicate services, and as a policy they tend not to give out "emergency money." Rather, they direct the needy person to the place best equipped to address the presenting need. Often that is the House of Friendship.

Ladds observes that today's clients tend to be younger, angrier, and more volatile. Few if any have lived a normal life, free of major trauma. Confused and bitter, they are ill-prepared to make their way in a highly competitive world. "They are victims of our society," he insists, "the weaker brothers [and sisters], left by the wayside, unable to fend for themselves."

## Two attitudes

The compassionate attitude of the pastors differs from that of many other people – including some of the downtown merchants also struggling to survive in a competitive society. They believe their efforts to attract customers are thwarted by what a former Kitchener councillor described as "an unusually high proportion of transients" in the downtown area, making shoppers feel uncomfortable.

Transients represent only a relatively small segment of the 20,000 people House of Friendship serves annually (few of whom are likely to shop at the more exclusive, long-established downtown shops). Transients and alcoholics are often highly visible, but not all inebriated men shuffling along downtown streets are House of Friendship residents. Merchants, however, quickly connect them to House of Friendship, also highly visible. Supported in part by public funds, House of Friendship is an easier target for criticism than the invisible absentee landlords of the cheap, shoddy core area apartments and rooming houses where derelicts tend to live.

Dominic Cardillo, mayor of Kitchener, believes that Kitchener and the Regional Municipality of Waterloo are indebted to House of Friendship for providing homes and services to help at least some of these men gain dignity and establish themselves. "Without the agency," notes the mayor, "facilities for accommodation would have to be provided and the Region and the City of Kitchener would share in this expense. The multiplicity of problems that could arise would certainly require hiring many more social workers and setting up additional support services – at even greater cost to taxpayers."

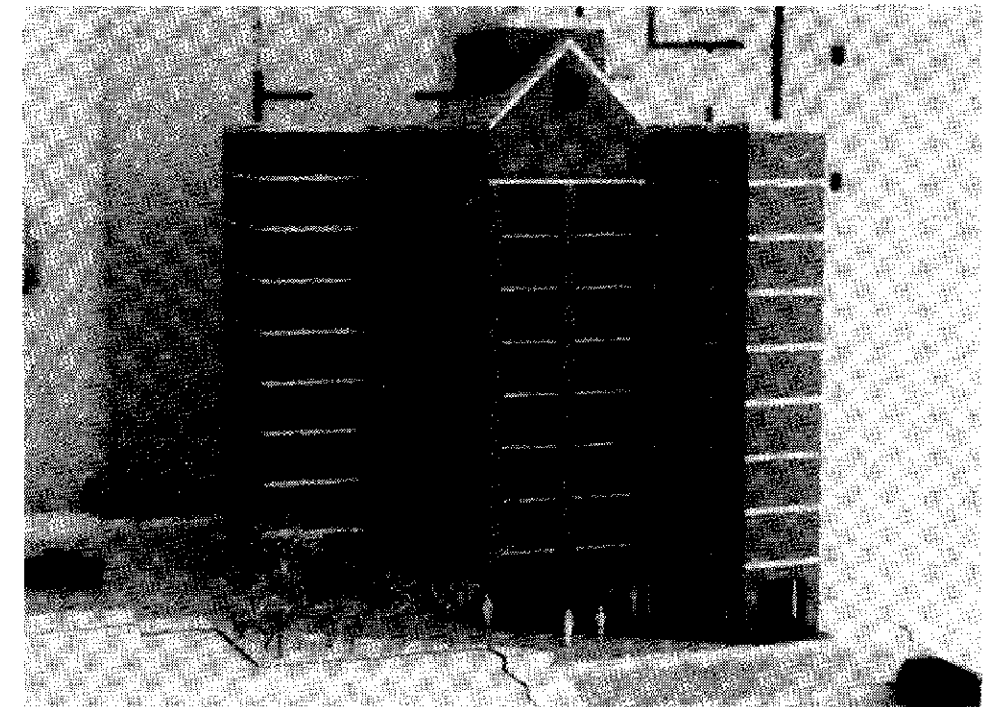
Richard Christy, a member of Kitchener City Council from 1980 to 1988 and chairman of a committee on downtown revitalization during that time, understands the concern of the merchants. He chooses his words carefully, knowing that even the slightest criticism of House of Friendship upsets some people. He prefaces his comments by noting his personal support

of House of Friendship in a variety of ways, but he voices his concern about "the institutionalization of Charles Street" and the possible swing to catering to one social strata. Christy believes planning for the core area must strike a balance, considering the needs of all – including the merchants and the shoppers. "In the next generation, House of Friendship may have to question whether expansion is right for the long term," he cautions.

## For whom is it right?

Christy's question is one with which the House of Friendship board of directors has wrestled many times – and will again as they undertake to map out plans for the next five years. They will push the question further when new opportunities arise, however. For whom is it right when a plan is obstructed or approved? Who stands to gain and who will lose? Is it ever right not to respond in the face of an obvious need?

When choices have to be made, House of Friendship has consistently sided with the disadvantaged, deciding to be a voice for the voiceless. Proposals for new projects get careful scrutiny beyond the first bend and down the back stretch. The board acts deliberately, not by default. John Sweeney, Ontario Minister of



*A model of Eby Village, a 56-unit apartment complex to be built in 1989 as a fiftieth anniversary project. Photo by Robert Gascho.*

Community and Social Services (COMSOC), notes that House of Friendship "turns the issue around, seeing it from different angles" and, as a result, "is very reliable in delivering what it sets out to do."

Sweeney also calls House of Friendship a "trend setter," adding, "There are few places where a single organization has its hands in so many [service] fields. I don't know of any."

The newest one for the agency is the 50th anniversary Eby Village co-ed housing project, approved by the Ontario Ministry of Housing on August 17, 1987. The \$4 million-plus project, largely funded by the Ontario Ministry of Housing and COMSOC under "Project 3000," will provide 56 housing units in a nine-storey building at 48 and 50 Eby Street South in Kitchener. Single men and women residents with special needs will live independently with professional support staff and planned programs available in this "rent-geared-to-income" apartment building.

"This is permanent housing, not emergency or transitional shelter, for people who have been living in illegal, unsafe quarters," said Martin Buhr when he announced the government's approval. Some of the units will be rented to single persons earning a moderate income.

"That's part of the integration," he explains. Buhr intends to propose to churches that some of their single persons consider moving into the complex, making it their mission to help those with special needs at Eby Village. Brian Hunsberger, a Mennonite Central Committee Ontario local voluntary service worker assigned to House of Friendship, has coordinated the development of Eby Village from its beginning stages. Construction is scheduled to begin in 1989.

In its first 50 years House of Friendship has grown from a simple storefront mission where the poor found food for body and soul to a complex institution still making the same offer in dozens of new ways. Today it strives to maintain the balance of an holistic ministry based on the original mandate. As it enters its second 50 years and anticipates the 21st century, House of Friendship will place greater emphasis on advocacy, client participation, and permanent housing.

"The House of Friendship job will never be done," concedes Martin Buhr, recognizing that each generation will have its own disadvantaged people. "The challenge will be to maintain an holistic model of Christian ministry that is sensitive, responsive, and adaptable to however the future social context unfolds."

Buhr and his colleagues in the House of Friendship community – and, one would hope, also their successors – will go on caring for those whom society so often passes by. Each year more and more people whose lives are touched by House of Friendship's practical Christian concern will find new hope. The efforts of the few who launched House of Friendship five decades ago will continue to swell into "a mighty flood of justice, a torrent of doing good."



## **Epilogue: Anticipating the future**

The founders of House of Friendship called for a genuine response from the Christian community to help the needy, setting off a torrent of righteousness and a stream of justice as well as releasing a flood of God's love. And a mighty flood it has been over the first 50 years. Thousands and thousands of lives have been touched and influenced. Many have changed!

Growth is a major concern. It will continue to be so in the future because there will be a tremendous increase in the numbers of those needing community-based services. The question of how to be both efficient and effective during a time of organizational growth and adjustment will require new answers.

An attitude of flexibility will need to prevail for House of Friendship to remain dynamic in the years ahead as inevitable social changes occur relative to changes in the economic order. It would appear that the non-profit charitable sector will play a bigger role in health and social services as tax-payers resist the development and support of larger public programs. Better use of resources – by governments and non-profit organizations – will be a dominant theme of the future.

Whatever its size and age, however, House of Friendship always will want to remember that it was created by area churches to be a local Christian mission to serve the most needy in Waterloo Region. More than that, the future House of Friendship will need to be committed to keeping the organization's core values, beliefs, and ideals clear so that the powerful love that comes from God can energize board, staff, volunteers and constituents to a faithful Christian response to the needy.

If there is any special ingredient in the House of Friendship model it is the belief that every one can serve; that every one can join in the mighty flood of service to the needy. This means that the cook and custodian are instrumental in giving support as are the caseworker and rehabilitation counsellor; that the receptionist and secretary are important in creating an atmosphere of hope and healing as are the frontline worker and

the chaplain; that the night attendant and maintenance supervisor are significant agents of change as are the house manager and program director; that the volunteer and board member contribute to the overall direction of the agency as do the financial officer and the executive director.

The belief that every one has a role in the "mighty flood" of community ministry means that the House of Friendship team includes board members, staff, volunteers and constituents who share their resources in the common cause of standing with the most vulnerable in our midst. Such a response creates a safety net. A high challenge will be to keep an appropriate safety net in place in partnership with other service providers.

What will be most important, then, in the face of future developments, is maintaining the ideal of what House of Friendship has called an "holistic model of community ministry." Concern for the whole person, and access to a full range of resources (physical, emotional, social, and spiritual) will produce healing of a more lasting quality.

The past 50 years – thank God! – serve as a marvellous example of how to approach the next 50 years. Our collective prayer is that House of Friendship's future ministries likewise will be experienced as "a mighty flood of justice and a torrent of doing good!"

A statement by the executive committee,

Robert Shantz, president

Lee Sauer, vice-president and "174" program chair

Cranson Knechtel, treasurer; finance and public relations chair

Clifford Kennel, "63" program chair

Helen Louise Sauer, Eby Village program chair

Vernon Sherk, personnel chair

Bruce Weber, property chair

Martin Buhr, executive director

January, 1989



*House of Friendship executive officers. Seated (l to r): Lee Sauer, vice-president and chair of "174" King N. program committee; Robert Shantz, president; Cranson Knechtel, treasurer and chair of finance and public relations. Standing: Bruce Weber, chair of property committee; Vernon Sherk, chair of personnel committee; and Martin Buhr, recording secretary and executive director. Not pictured: Clifford Kennel, chair of "63" program committee and Helen Louise Sauer, chair of Eby Village committee. Photo by Robert Gascho.*



*Finance and public relations committee. Seated (l-r): William DeKruyf, Robert Shantz, Cranson Knechtel (chair). Standing: Mary Little (financial officer), John Unruh, Willis Martin, Frederick Pfisterer (auditor). Not pictured: Corny Barg, Ed Cressman, Katharina and Ed Hiebert. Photo by Robert Gascho.*



**"63" program committee.** Front row (l-r): Nancy Cressman, Linda Emch and Nancy Jutzi. Back row: Deborah Schlichter (program director), Anthony Bender (program director), Janet Stevens and Dorothy Boshart. Not pictured: Clifford Kennel, (chair). Photo by Robert Gascho.



**"174" King N. program committee.** Seated (l-r): Grace Stephenson, Norman Weber, Lillian Mayman, Lee Sauer (chair) and Pamela Gardiner (program director). Standing (advisory committee members): Mervyn Mothersell, Rand McIntyre, and George Gibson. Not pictured: Ted Mavor. Photo by Robert Gascho.



**Property committee.** Seated (l-r) Bruce Weber (chair), Clinton Bechtel, Amos Weber, Earl Litwiller. Standing: James Carr (maintenance supervisor), Kenneth Martin, and Robert Belec. Not pictured: Lorne Bolger and Ernest Epp. Photo by Robert Gascho.



**Personnel Committee.** Seated: Paul Fretz and Frederick Cressman. Standing: Vernon Sherk (chair), and Manfred Papenfuss.



*Eby Village committee. (l-r): Gordon Chambers, Elam Horst, Ronald Flaming (hostel manager), Helen Louise Sauer (chair), Terry Zacharias, Brian Hunsberger (housing coordinator), and Carolyn Fast. Photo by Robert Gascho.*



*Helen Epp (left), then program director, looks on as treasurer Cranson Knechtel thanks Pauline Bauman for five years of service as volunteer bookkeeper. Bauman served from 1976 to December 31, 1980.*

## House Of Friendship Board Members (1939-1989)

The following is an attempt to list persons who served on the board of directors (called "Advisory Committee" until 1950) and the years in which they served as nearly as could be determined. Annual meetings were held in January in the early years, and later in March or April. Members sometimes joined the board and others terminated during the course of the year, not just at the time of the annual meeting. Due to the fact that members were not listed consistently in official records – particularly in the early years – some names may, unfortunately, have been missed. The executive directors were also ex officio board members. (The first two directors of "174 King North" are also included since at the outset the position was parallel to that of the hostel director.) The late Woldemar Dyck of Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church, who served on the board for 36 years, holds the record for longest service. Cyrus N. Good (1943), Andrew R. Shelly (1950), and Clayton F. Derstine (1963) were named "Honourary board members."

Albrecht, Harry	1967-69
Alpay, Selen	1986-87
Bachert, Lester	1961-66
Baer, Simon	1939-41
Balmer, Brice	1979-84
Barg, Cornelius	1987-1988
Bauman, Brian	1984-85
Bauman, Howard S.	1953-55
Bauman, Howard	1970-75; 78-85
Bauman, Oliver	1941-52
Bearinger, Eddie	1982-86
Bearinger, Howard	1975-77
Bechtel, Clinton	1987-
Bechtel, Lester	1980
Bechtel, Muriel	1979-81
Belec, Robert	1988
Bell, Randy	1979
Bender, Jacob R.	1946-47
Bender, Noah S.	1940-51
Bender, Orie	1962-68
Bingeman, Marshall O.	1940-41
Boehm, John	1964-65
Bolger, Lorne	1965-

Boshart, Dorothy	1987-
Boshart, Elroy	1966-71
Bowman, Bryan	1972-81
Brenneman, Joseph	1973
Brubacher, Elaine	1975-77
Brubacher, Elmer	1960-72
Brubacher, Glenn	1966
Burkhard, Volker	1977-86
Burkhardt, Dwight	1979-81
Burkhart, Roy	1967
Burkholder, Oscar	1939-49
Buhr, Martin	1971-75; 78-
Carr, James	1979-84
Cassel, Percy	1955
Chambers, Gordon	1987-
Charters, Robert	1969-70
Claasen, John	1939
Colclough, Stanley	1960-65
Cornwell, Charles H.	1940
Cramer, Joseph	1939-49
Cressman, Eben	1959-61
Cressman, Edward	1985-
Cressman, Frederick	1983-
Cressman, John	1957-59
Cressman, Nancy	1985-
Dean, Joseph	1976
DeKruyf, Willaim	1987-
Derstine, Clayton F.	1939-67
Dettweiler, Norma	1975-84
Dick, Arthur	1958
Dirks, Waldemar	1965-75
Dueck, Ronald	1973-76
Dyck, Woldemar	1941-77
Eby, Agnes	1975-86
Eitzen, Paul	1984-86
Emch, Linda	1987-
Epp, Ernest	1987-
Epp, Helen	1977-79
Epp, Henry	1949-57; 59-61
Fast, Carolyn	1987-
Fast, Jacob	1956-58
Friesen, Abram	1940-49
Friesen, J.	1949

Fretz, Bruce	1972-77
Fretz, Paul	1986-
Funk, Edward	1975-76
Gascho, Ivan	1972
Gascho, Norman	1967-68
Gascho, Roy	1969-84
Gerber, Orland	1968-74
Gingerich, Alvin	1958-59
Gingerich, Ernest	1946-49
Gingerich, Orland	1953-55; 59
Gingrich, Newton	1953-54
Goertz, Arthur	1979
Goldsworthy, Ralph	1966-70
Good, Cyrus N.	1939-51
Good, Raymond	1967-71
Goodall J. Ross	1949-55
Goodall, Martin	1956-57
Goulet, Jean-Jacques	1984-85
Haarer, Leonard	1954
Hallman, Harvey S.	1952-54
Harder, Carrie	1977-79
Harder, John	1977-78
Heinrichs, Henry	1976-78
Heipel, Lloyd	1971-73
Hess, John H.	1949-50
Hiebert, Edward	1987-
Hiebert, Katharina	1987-
Horst, Elam	1988-
Horst, Glen	1962-64
Horst, Osiah	1948-49; 54
Huygens, Robert	1985-86
Jantzi, Glenn	1979-84
Jantzi, Moses O.	1940-57
Jantzi, Orval	1957-61
Janzen, Henry H.	1940-43
Janzen, Jacob H.	1940-41; 45
Janzen, Rudy	1979-82
Johns, Galen	1970
Johnson, Robert	1970
Jutzi, Alvin	1959-66
Jutzi, Lauretta	1984-85
Jutzi, Nancy	1982-
Jutzi, Rufus	1976-77

Kennel, Clifford	1985-
Klassen, Paul	1975-76
Knechtel, Clifford	1984-87
Knechtel, Cranson	1977-
Koch, Orton	1961-64
Kramer, Raymond	1959-61
Krotz, John	1983-84
Lehman, Percy G.	1943-51
Leis, S.	1940; 52-55; 57
Leis, Vernon	1968
Litwiller, Earl	1980-
Logan, Hugh	1965-69
Manske, Irvine	1953-55
Martin, Albert	1964
Martin, Ananias	1965-71
Martin, Jesse B.	1939-53; 56-61
Martin, Kenneth	1984-
Martin, Laurence	1968
Martin, Lloyd	1959
Martin, Simon B.	1952-55
Martin, Willis	1984-
Mayer, Earl	1956-64
Mayman, Lillian	1986-
McNair, Robert	1977-79
Metzger, Wesley	1967-77
Moss, Clayton	1956-71
Motz, Margaret	1981-82
Nafziger, Peter	1949
Neufeld, Jacob	1981
Papenfuss, Manfred	1979-
Pauls, Nicholas	1979
Penner, George	1976-79
Peters, Frank C.	1949-52
Pierce, Willard C.	1942-43
Pries, John	1988
Redekop, Wendy	1981-82
Regehr, David	1976
Reimer, Waldemar	1961
Rempel, C.J.	1955
Rempel, Helen	1978-82
Rempel, Kaye	1975-79
Rempel, Lynn	1987
Reusser, James	1964-65

Roth, Moses H.	1943
Rudy, Carl	1955
Sauder, Stanley	1961; 64-66; 72
Sauer, Helen Louise	1985-
Sauer, Lee	1979-
Schlegel, Ray	1975-77
Schmidt, Ernest	1980
Schmidt, William	1959-64
Schmitt, Delton	1978-79
Schultz, Samuel	1940; 52-53; 55-57
Schwartzentruber, Elmer	1949-53; 56-60; 62-68
Schwartzentruber, Elroy	1971-72
Schwartzentruber, Joseph	1945
Shantz, Ervin.B.	1940-53
Shantz, Leroy	1974
Shantz, Lloyd	1965-70
Shantz, Lowell	1970-75
Shantz, Robert	1980-
Shantz, William	1976-77
Shelly, Andrew	1941-50
Shepherdson, George A.	1940
Sherk, Vernon	1981-
Shuh, William	1954-56
Sime, Kenneth	1976-78
Snider, Boyd	1977-78
Snider, Deldon	1940-41
Snyder, Douglas	1971-75; 77-78
Snyder, Eleanor	1984
Snyder, Etril	1973
Soden, Terry	1975-80
Steckley, Lyall	1975-76
Steinman, Emmanuel	1955
Steinmann, David	1974-80
Steinmann, Walter	1982-85
Stephenson, Grace	1988-
Stevens, Janet	1987-
Swartz, Simon H.	1940-42
Thaler, Joseph	1939-64
Thamer, Ezra H.	1943-51
Toews, J.J.	1955
Toman, Russel	1965-66
Ulrich, Wilfred	1951-64
Unruh, John	1988

Vandeworp, Gerry	1961-78
Wagler, Daniel	1940-49
Walsh, Arthur	1948-52
Warkentin, Henry	1958
Weber, Aden	1971-78
Weber, Amos	1984-
Weber, Angus	1939-57
Weber, Bruce	1984-
Weber, Byron	1977-82
Weber, Gordon	1955-57
Weber, Irvin	1943
Weber, Norman	1969-71; 76-83; 88-
Weber, Rex	1968-70
Weber, Urias K.	1939-41
Wildman, Norman	1975
Wilkinson, D.J.	1962-64
Witmer, H. Keith	1975-80
Woolner, A. Ward	1950-51
Worth, David	1981-84
Yantzi, Henry	1948-53
Zacharias, Terry	1988-
Zehr, Brent	1985-87
Zehr, Chris	1973-84

## House of Friendship executive officers

### October 18, 1939

Clayton F. Derstine, chairman  
Oscar Burkholder, secretary

### February 3, 1940 (first full executive)

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
Urias K. Weber, vice-chairman  
Oscar Burkholder, secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
Jesse B. Martin, fifth member

### 1941

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
U.K. Weber, vice-chairman  
Oscar Burkholder, secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
J.B. Martin, fifth member

### 1942

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
Henry H. Janzen, 1st. vice-chairman  
Moses O. Jantzi, 2nd vice-chairman  
Oscar Burkholder, secretary  
Andrew Shelly, assistant secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
Cyrus N. Good, 7th member

### 1943

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
H. H. Janzen, 1st vice-chairman; resigned in October when  
Ezra H. Thamer was named in his place  
Noah S. Bender, 2nd vice-chairman  
A.R. Shelly, secretary  
Willard C. Pierce, assisant secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
Simon H. Swartz, 7th member

### 1944-1947

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
E.H. Thamer, 1st vice-chairman  
N.S. Bender, 2nd vice-chairman  
A.R. Shelly, secretary  
Percy G. Lehman, assistant secretary



Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
Woldemar Dyck, 7th member

**1948**

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
E.H. Thamer, 1st vice-chairman  
N.S. Bender, 2nd vice-chairman  
A.R. Shelly, secretary  
Oscar Burkholder, assistant secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
Woldemar Dyck, 7th member

**1949**

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
E.H. Thamer, 1st vice-chairman  
Woldemar Dyck, 2nd vice-chairman  
A.R. Shelly, secretary  
Oscar Burkholder, assistant secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
N.S. Bender, 7th member

**1950**

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
E.H. Thamer, 1st vice-chairman  
Woldemar Dyck, 2nd vice-chairman  
A.R. Shelly, secretary; life honorary member in December  
A. Ward Woolner, assistant secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
N.S. Bender, 7th member

**1951**

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
E.H. Thamer, 1st vice-chairman  
Woldemar Dyck, 2nd vice-chairman  
Frank C. Peters, secretary  
A. Ward Woolner, assistant secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
Wilfred Ulrich, 7th member

**1952**

C.F. Derstine, chairman  
Henry P. Epp, 1st vice-chairman  
Moses O. Jantzi, 2nd vice-chairman  
Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
Angus Weber, assistant secretary

Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
Woldemar Dyck, 7th member

**1953 (titles changed)**

C.F. Derstine, president  
Henry Epp, 1st vice-president  
M.O. Jantzi, 2nd vice-president  
Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
Angus Weber, assistant secretary  
Joseph Thaler, treasurer  
Woldemar Dyck, 7th member  
Wilfred Ulrich (3 years); Simon Martin (2 years);  
Ervin B. Shantz (1 year): trustees

**1954**

C.F. Derstine, president  
Henry Epp, 1st vice-president  
Orland Gingerich, 2nd vice-president  
Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
Angus Weber, assistant secretary  
William Shuh, treasurer  
Woldemar Dyck, 7th member  
Joseph Thaler, trustee (3 years)

**1955**

C.F. Derstine, president  
Henry Epp, 1st vice-president  
Orland Gingerich, 2nd vice-president  
Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
Angus Weber, assistant secretary  
William Shuh, treasurer  
Woldemar Dyck, 7th member  
Simon Martin, trustee (3 years)

**1956**

C.F. Derstine, president  
Woldemar Dyck, 1st vice-president  
Henry Epp, 2nd vice-president  
Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
Angus Weber, assistant secretary  
William Shuh, treasurer  
Elmer Schwartzentruber, 7th member  
Wilfred Ulrich, trustee (3 years)

**1957**

C.F. Derstine, president  
 Woldemar Dyck, 1st vice-president  
 Henry Epp, 2nd vice-president  
 Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
 Angus Weber, assistant secretary  
 Earl Mayer, treasurer  
 Elmer Schwartzentruber, 7th member  
 Joseph Thaler, trustee (3 years)

**1958**

C.F. Derstine, president  
 Henry Warkentin, vice-president  
 Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
 Clayton Moss, assistant secretary  
 Earl Mayer, treasurer  
 Alvin Gingerich, additional member  
 Orval Jantzi, trustee

**1959**

C.F. Derstine, president  
 Henry Epp, vice-president  
 Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
 Lloyd Martin, assistant secretary  
 Earl Mayer, treasurer  
 Alvin Jutzi, additional member  
 Woldemar Dyck, trustee

**1960 (records incomplete)**

C.F. Derstine, president  
 Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
 Elmer Brubacher, assistant secretary  
 Earl Mayer, treasurer

**1961**

C.F. Derstine, president  
 Henry Epp, vice-president  
 Clayton Moss, 2nd vice-president  
 Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
 Elmer Brubacher, assistant secretary  
 Earl Mayer, treasurer  
 Alvin Jutzi, 7th member  
 Orval Jantzi, trustee

**1962**

C.F. Derstine, president  
 William Schmidt, 1st vice-president  
 Lester Bachert, 2nd vice-president  
 Wilfred Ulrich, secretary  
 Elmer Brubacher, assistant secretary  
 Earl Mayer, treasurer; resigned in September when  
 Orie Bender was named in his place  
 Alvin Jutzi, 7th member  
 Wilfred Ulrich, trustee

**1963**

C.F. Derstine, honorary president  
 William Schmidt, president  
 Glen Horst, 1st vice-president; resigned in August  
 Lester Bachert, 2nd vice-president; assumed Horst's post  
 Clayton Moss, secretary  
 Stanley Colclough, assistant secretary  
 Orie Bender, treasurer  
 Alvin Jutzi, 7th member  
 Woldemar Dyck, trustee (2 years)  
 Orton Koch, trustee (3 years)

**1964**

C.F. Derstine, honorary president  
 William Schmidt, president; resigned in July  
 Albert Martin, 1st vice-president; assumed Schmidt's post  
 Lester Bachert, 2nd vice-president; assumed Martin's post  
 Clayton Moss, secretary  
 Orie Bender, treasurer  
 Alvin Jutzi, additional member  
 James Reusser, trustee

**1965**

C.F. Derstine, honorary president  
 Lorne Bolger, president  
 John Boehm, 1st vice-president  
 Lester Bachert, 2nd vice-president  
 Clayton Moss, secretary  
 Stanley Colclough, assistant secretary  
 Orie Bender, treasurer  
 Alvin Jutzi, additional member  
 Stanley Sauder, trustee

According to new bylaws which came into effect December 11, 1965, corporate officers included a president, vice-president, an executive director, assistant executive director, a treasurer and other officers as required by the board. The secretary became an ex-officio clerk of the board.

#### 1966

C.F. Derstine, honorary president  
Lorne Bolger, president  
Hugh Logan, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Lloyd Fretz, assistant executive director  
Waldemar Dirks, treasurer  
Clayton Moss, secretary  
Orie Bender, additional member  
Lloyd Shantz, additional member

#### 1967

C.F. Derstine, honorary president  
Lorne Bolger, president  
Hugh Logan, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Stanley Sauder, assistant executive director  
Waldemar Dirks, treasurer  
Clayton Moss, secretary  
Orie Bender, additional member  
Lloyd Shantz, additional member

#### 1968

Lorne Bolger, president  
Lloyd Shantz, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Stanley Sauder, assistant executive director  
Waldemar Dirks, treasurer  
Clayton Moss, secretary  
Ralph Goldsworthy, additional member  
Orie Bender, additional member

#### 1969

Lloyd Shantz, president  
Orland Gerber, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Stanley Sauder, assistant executive director  
Waldemar Dirks, treasurer

Clayton Moss, secretary  
Ralph Goldsworthy, additional member  
Lorne Bolger, additional member  
Woldemar Dyck, additional member

#### 1970

Lloyd Shantz, president  
Orland Gerber, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Stanley Sauder, assistant executive director  
Waldemar Dirks, treasurer  
Clayton Moss, secretary  
Woldemar Dyck, additional member  
Ralph Goldsworthy, additional member

#### 1971

Orland Gerber, president  
Woldemar Dyck, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Leroy Shantz, assistant executive director  
Howard Bauman, treasurer  
Clayton Moss, secretary  
Lorne Bolger, additional member  
Roy Gascho, additional member  
Woldemar Dyck, additional member

#### 1972-1973

Orland Gerber, president  
Roy Gascho, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Leroy Shantz, assistant executive director  
Howard Bauman, treasurer  
Bruce Fretz, secretary  
Lloyd Heipel, additional member  
Stanley Sauder, additional member  
Bryan Bowman, additional member

#### 1974

Roy Gascho, president  
Lowell Shantz, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Howard Bauman, treasurer  
Bruce Fretz, secretary  
Orland Gerber, additional member  
Ronald Dueck, additional member

Howard Bauman, Doug Snyder, Martin Buhr and Leroy Shantz formed a personnel committee.  
In 1974 the board was restructured with personnel, program, property, and finance and public relations committees.  
Chairpersons of the committees along with the executive officers formed the executive committee.

#### 1975

Ronald Dueck, president  
Lowell Shantz, vice-president; resigned in June when Lorne Bolger was named to the post  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Norman Wildman, director of "174" (recovery home)  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Howard Bauman, treasurer  
Agnes Eby, personnel chair  
Bryan Bowman, program chair  
Roy Gascho, property chair  
Bruce Fretz, finance and public relations chair  
Aden Weber, additional member

#### 1976

Ronald Dueck, president  
Rufus Jutzi, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Terry Soden, director of "174"  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Bruce Fretz, treasurer; finance and public relations chair  
Agnes Eby, personnel chair  
Bryan Bowman, program chair  
Roy Gascho, property chair  
Aden Weber, additional member

#### 1977

Douglas Snyder, president  
Rufus Jutzi, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Terry Soden, director of "174"  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Keith Witmer, treasurer; finance and public relations chair  
Agnes Eby, personnel chair  
Bryan Bowman, program chair  
Roy Gascho, property chair  
Aden Weber, additional member

#### 1978

Douglas Snyder, president  
Cranson Knechtel, vice-president  
Gerry Vandeworp, executive director  
Terry Soden, director of "174"  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Keith Witmer, treasurer; finance and public relations chair  
Cranson Knechtel, personnel chair  
Bryan Bowman, program chair  
Roy Gascho, property chair  
Aden Weber, additional member

#### 1979

Cranson Knechtel, president  
Kaye Rempel, vice-president; resigned in November  
Martin Buhr, executive director  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Keith Witmer, treasurer; finance and public relations chair  
Howard Bauman, personnel chair  
Bryan Bowman, program chair  
Roy Gascho, property chair  
Helen Epp, additional member (until resignation in June)

#### 1980

Cranson Knechtel, president  
Brice Balmer, vice-president  
Martin Buhr, executive director  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Keith Witmer, treasurer; finance and public relations chair  
Howard Bauman, personnel chair  
Bryan Bowman, program chair  
Roy Gascho, property chair  
Helen Rempel, additional member

#### 1981

Cranson Knechtel, president  
Helen Rempel, vice-president  
Martin Buhr, executive director  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Howard Bauman, treasurer; finance and public relations chair  
Wendy Redekop, personnel chair  
Brice Balmer, "23" program chair  
Lee Sauer, "174" program chair

Glenn Jantzi, property chair  
Margaret Motz, additional member

**1982**

Howard Bauman, president  
Helen Rempel, vice-president  
Martin Buhr, executive director  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Cranson Knechtel, treas.; finance and public relations chair  
Wendy Redekop, personnel chair; resigned in September when  
Vernon Sherk was named to the post  
Brice Balmer, "63" (formerly "23") program chair  
Lee Sauer, "174" program chair  
Glenn Jantzi, property chair

**1983**

Howard Bauman, president  
Robert Shantz, vice-president  
Martin Buhr, executive director  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Cranson Knechtel, treas.; finance and public relations chair  
Vernon Sherk, personnel chair  
Agnes Eby, "63" program chair  
Lee Sauer, "174" program chair  
James Carr, property chair

**1984**

Howard Bauman, president  
Robert Shantz, vice-president  
Martin Buhr, executive director  
Norma Dettweiler, secretary  
Cranson Knechtel, treas.; finance and public relations chair  
Vernon Sherk, personnel chair  
Agnes Eby, "63" program chair  
Lee Sauer, "174" program chair  
James Carr, property chair; resigned in June when  
Bruce Weber was named to the post

**1985**

Howard Bauman, president (until September)  
Robert Shantz, vice-president; named president in September  
Martin Buhr, executive director  
Cranson Knechtel, treas.; finance and public relations chair  
Vernon Sherk, personnel chair  
Nancy Jutzi, "63" program chair

Lee Sauer, "174" program chair  
Bruce Weber, property chair  
Helen Louise Sauer, additional member

**1986**

Robert Shantz, president  
Lee Sauer, vice-president and "174" program chair  
Martin Buhr, executive director  
Cranson Knechtel, treas.; finance and public relations chair  
Vernon Sherk, personnel chair  
Nancy Jutzi, "63" program chair  
Bruce Weber, property chair  
Manfred Papenfuss, additional member

**1987-1988**

Robert Shantz, president  
Lee Sauer, vice-president and "174" program chair  
Martin Buhr, executive director and recording secretary  
Cranson Knechtel, treas.; finance and public relations chair  
Vernon Sherk, personnel chair  
Clifford Kennel, "63" program chair  
Bruce Weber, property chair  
Helen Louise Sauer, Eby Village program chair

## 50-year staff list

The following list is an attempt to record all paid workers at House of Friendship in its 50-year history. Names are drawn from early board minutes and, more recently, from annual reports. Almost certainly some names have been lost or omitted due to incomplete records or oversight, and for this we apologize. The list cannot include the hundreds of volunteers, some of whose names have never been recorded – like women who canned thousands of quarts of food or made quilts in their own homes – but whose help can never be accurately measured or sufficiently acknowledged.

Names marked with an \* represent staff persons who worked as volunteers for specified terms under special Mennonite Central Committee programs. House of Friendship usually provided housing and food for these volunteers. Dates mark the beginning year of work at House of Friendship.

Abraham, Fareena	1986
Alexander, John	1988
Albert, Kenneth	1987
Arnal, Marion	1976
Axt, Irene	1944
Baine, Lynn	1982
Balmer, Brice	1984
Baron, Diane	1982
Bartleman, Alice	1977
Bauman, Fannie	1944
Bauman, Ilda	1939
Bauman, Janet	1983
Baumann, Katharina	1986
Bauman, Richard	1983
Bender, Beverley	1979
Bender, Elmina	1943
Bender, Robert*	1970
Bender, Kenneth	1970
Bender, Anthony	1979
Benin, Michael	1986
Berge, Marilyn	1971
Bernhardt, Thomas	1988
Bowman, Edwin	1955
Bowman, Janet	1975
Boyes, David	1983

Bradley, David	1988
Braun, Helmut	1983
Braun, Henry	1973
Brenneman-Beckett, Jane	1986
Broga, Donna	1987
Brubacher, Alice (Good)	1953
Brubacher, Beth	1982
Brubacher, Laura	1984
Brubacher, Mable N.	1969
Brubacher, Margaret	1983
Bryant, Lee	1982
Buehler, Steven	1987
Buhr, Lisa	1986
Buhr, Patrick	1981
Buhr, Pauline	1988
Buhr, Martin	1978
Burke, Harold	1979
Burkhard, Barbara*	1975
Burkhard, Volker*	1975
Burkhardt, Dwight	1983
Burkholder, Robert	1976
Carr, James	1984
Claasen, Arthur*	1971
Coupland, Steven	1984
Cramer, Joseph	1939
Cressman, Douglas*	1985
Critchison, Helen	1944
Culp, Daryl	1988
Daniel, Carolyn	1988
Daniszewski, Edward	1980
Derby, Eric	1982
Derstine, Christine	1978
Dickens, Ned	1988
Dillon, Daniel	1986
Driediger, Arnold	1986
Dykeman, Lynn	1986
Eakins, Ruth	1982
Eby, Kenneth	1974
Elias, Morlin	1988
Enns, George	1973
Epp, Barbara	1987
Epp, Donald	1986
Epp, Helen	1979

Epp, Kevin	1987
Erb, Ross	1986
Fast, Annie	1983
Fast, Bruno	1987
Fast, Kathy	1986
Fiveash, John	1985
Flaming, Allan	1984
Flaming, Donald	1980
Flaming, Ingrid	1984
Flaming, Robert	1986
Flaming, Ronald	1983
Frazer, William	1987
Fox, Kevin	1987
Fretz, Lloyd	1964
Frey, Miriam	1987
Frost, Basil	1983
Frost, Peggy	1986
Fullarton, Valerie	1986
Gallagher, Susan	1988
Gardiner, Pam	1982
Gascho, Kevin	1985
Gerber, Gary	1971
Gibson, John	1982
Gingrich, Luann	1988
Goller, Rudy	1988
Good, Margaret (Dettweiler)	1956
Goodall, J. Ross	1949
Goodall, Martin	1951
Goodall, Shirley	1949
Goulet, Jean-Jacques	1983
Green, Gregory	1988
Griffen, Mal	1962
Grove, Douglas	1986
Hamilton, Tammy	1988
Hampson, Elaine	1988
Harris, Laura	1986
Harrison, Cathy	1976
Hasenpflug, Gwen	1986
Hedrich, Glenn	1985
Hershberger, David	1961
Hiebert, David	1979
Hildebrand, Sandra	1984
Hildebrand-Brown, Sharon	1986



Holley, Ann	1985
Holmberg, Frederick	1985
Honderich, Thomas	1987
Howard, Max*	1972
Huber, Charlene	1981
Huber, Darlene	1984
Hughes, Barbara	1986
Hughes, Joel	1986
Hunsberger, Brian*	1987
Hyde, Sherrie	1988
Irvine, Stewart	1986
Israel, Mrs. ---	1954
Janzen, Rod	1976
Jantzi, Glenn	1974
Jantzi, Joanne	1975
Jantzi, Orval	1957
Jenkins, Victoria	1983
Johnson, Linda	1979
Johnson, Paul	1973
Jutzi, Robin	1985
Kennel, Timothy	1976
Kirby, Kevin	1975
Klassen, Joel	1987
Klassen, Peter	1984
Klassen, Ruth	1979
Klassen, Ruthann	1985
Kloostra, Margaret	1989
Koegler, Mark	1987
Kreider, Florence (Cressman)	1947
Kroeker, Kevin	1985
Kruger, Linda	1988
Laflamme, Andrew	1988
Lamont, Stuart	1979
Lepp, Kathy	1989
Leonard, James	1989
Letskeman, Allan	1986
Little, Mary	1980
Loepp, Ingrid	1989
Lowe, Lois (Ford)	1978
MacFarlane, Laura	1946
Marshall, Ralph	1973
Martin, Andrew	1987
Martin, John	1985

Martin, Luc	1982
Martin, Lucinda (Reist)	1940
Martin, Mary	1988
Martin, Virginia	1984
McAllister, Roy	1987
McDowell, Arletta	1953
McLuckie, Ralph	1988
Mennie, Gail	1988
Miller, Melissa	1983
Montgomery, Margaret	1953
Montgomery, Ted	1953
Moolenburgh, Coba	1978
Morgan, Pamela	1973
Moyer, John	1982
Muntean, Paul	1986
Murdoch, Gregory	1986
Murphy, Paul	1987
Mutch, Anne	1986
Neufeld, Donald	1987
Olson, Al	1987
Overduin, Evelyn	1988
Paynter, Leshy	1987
Pennell, Garfield	1985
Penner, Chris	1982
Penner, Gwen (Miller)	1975
Penner, James	1984
Peters, Franz	1986
Pifer, William	1987
Pitchford, John	1976
Poll, Ruth Ann	1988
Plummer, Paul	1959
Reid, Kenneth	1988
Regeher, Maya	1986
Reimer, Margaret	1984
Rigney, Barbara	1975
Ritza, Diane	1985
Robinson, Joseph	1984
Robinson, Helen	1986
Roorda, Paul	1988
Rosslein, Ernst*	1974
Roth, Clifford	1975
Roth, Ruby (Dettweiler)	1945
Ruby, Anita	1982

Rudy, Marilyn	1986
Sauder, Calvin*	1982
Sauder, Jeanette*	1982
Sauder, Dorothy	1984
Sauder, Stanley	1967
Scheffler-Kroecker, Ruthild	1985
Scheifele, David	1986
Schiedel, Adeline (Snyder)	1949
Schilder, Sol	1981
Schilk, Harold	1986
Schlenker, Ella Mae	1971
Schlichter, Deborah	1983
Schwartzentruber, Murray	1987
Seeley, Elaine	1985
Seymour, Kathleen	1988
Shafer, Rochelle	1977
Shantz, James	1988
Shantz, Leroy	1970
Shantz, Lois	1976
Shantz, Roy*	1987
Shantz, Terrance	1988
Shields, Patricia	1987
Shoemaker, Curtis	1984
Sibley, Linda	1985
Simmonds, John	1972
Sine, Ian	1986
Smith, Marjorie	1983
Snider, Gary*	1984
Snider, Robert	1986
Snieder, Gordon	1986
Snyder, Alice	1950
Snyder, Eleanor	1984
Snyder, Lucinda	1953
Snyder, Norma	1944
Snyder, Peggy	1983
Soden, Terry	1975
Spiegel, Lavonne	1986
Sproule, Judy	1986
Starr, Sharon	1987
Steffler, David	1987
Steinmann, Leona	1983
Steinmann, Mabel	1956
Steltzer, Patricia*	1983

Stelzer, Vernon*	1983
Stephenson, Roy	1987
Stevens, James	1984
Sukkau, Carl	1986
Sweeney, Edward	1982
Thiessen, Jennifer	1986
Thomas, Norah	1987
Thorpe, William	1976
Traue, Eugene	1984
Treush, Diana	1975
Ulrich, Daniel*	1971
Unrau, Cathy	1988
Vandeworp, Gerry	1961
Vandeworp, Sandra	1967
Voth, Eleanor	1982
Wagler, Keith	1984
Wall, Abraham	1982
Wall, Sandra	1983
Warden, Rita	1982
Warner, Miss ---	1943
Waterfield, Dean	1986
Watts, Dennis	1976
Weber, Bruce	1980
Weber, Glenn	1986
Weber, Grace,	1985
Weber, Marjorie	1981
Weber-Buehler, Julie	1987
Weigel, June	1986
Wesselhoft, Leota	1952
Wildman, Norman	1974
Wilhelm, Paul	1987
Williams, Harold	1984
Wismer, Derwood	1982
Wolff, Lynn	1983
Woolner, Marilyn	1986
Woolner, Paul	1981
Woolner-Pratt, Brenda*	1985
Worth, Linda	1973
Yandt, Claire	1982
Yi, Yung	1987
Zimmerman, Theresa	1987

# **Financial Comparison**

Dear Brethren:

At the May meeting of the Advisory Committee to the House of Friendship in Kitchener, the secretary was instructed to prepare a statistical report of the activities, receipts and disbursements for the year 1940. The purpose of preparing this report is to make such information available to the supporting christian bodies, so that, if they deem advisable it could be made public at their regular Annual Conference, or Convention. We, therefore, submit the following report in gratefulness to all who so liberally, and sympathetically, supported this worthy work during the past year, and trust you may be guided by the Lord in continuing such support as the need requires.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

The City of Kitchener	-	February	-----	\$ 508.00
The Various Churches	-	January	-----	79.77
		February	-----	50.53
		March	-----	54.00
		April	-----	54.00
		May	-----	42.50
		June	-----	77.25
		July	-----	103.80
		August	-----	98.85
		September	-----	26.86
		October	-----	49.46
		November	-----	61.37
		December	-----	69.24
Special Donations	-	January	-----	10.00
		February	-----	1.00
		May	-----	47.00
		June	-----	55.00
		July	-----	13.00
		October	-----	5.00
Total Donations	-----			\$1406.63.

Also many donations of meat, vegetables, etc., were received of which no estimate was made.

<u>EXPENDITURES PER MONTH</u>	-	January	-----	24.15
		February	-----	283.30
		March	-----	144.14
		April	-----	144.76
		May	-----	118.74
		June	-----	101.21
		July	-----	120.48
		August	-----	85.03
		September	-----	103.29

October	-----	61.14
November	-----	60.63
December	-----	70.46
Total Expenditures	-----	\$ 1353.83

The expenditures include rent, eatables, workers' allowances, telephone, Kitchener Record, and other necessities incidental to this kind of missionary endeavor.

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES.

1. House visits -----940
2. Hospital visits -----630
3. Meals served ----- 8717
4. Beds supplied ----- 177
5. Literature distributed in various languages
  - a. Tracts ----- 15319
  - b. The Way ----- 6000
  - c. Bibles ----- 21
  - d. Gospels ----- 58
  - e. New Testaments 6
6. Meetings held at the Mission ----- 192
7. Meetings held among the churches where the work was presented.
  - a. United Church S.School, Ilderton, Ont.
  - b. Zion Evangelical Y.P.Society, Kitchener
  - c. Mennonite Senior Women's Sewing Circle, Kitchener.
  - d. Children's Meeting, Kitchener.
  - e. Hagey Mennonite Prayer Meeting.
  - f. Steirman's Sunday Evening Service.
  - g. Stratford Pentecostal Tabernacle.
  - h. Shantz Y.P.Meeting.
  - i. Bright Mission Sunday School
  - j. Erb St. Mennonite Y.P.M. Waterloo.
8. Dispensary.
  - a. Clothing for Transients
  - b. Clothing for local needy families
  - c. Food for 12 families in Kitchener.
  - d. Christmas baskets -- 7
  - e. Found work for 6 transients on farms in Kitchener vicinity.
9. Professed Conversions.
  - a. French and Canadian - 23
  - b. Polish ----- 5.
  - c. Ukrainian ----- 4
  - d. Czeckolovakian --- 3

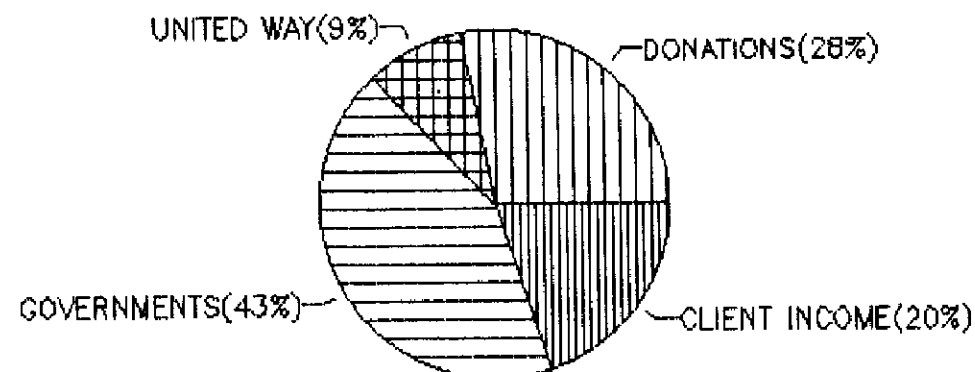
Respectfully submitted,

*Oscar Burkholder, Secy*

INCOME	1980 BUDGET MARCH, 1980
CASH ON HAND	.00
DESIGNATED DONATION	22600.00
GENERAL DONATION	97821.00
UNITED WAY	40000.00
C.M.H.C. SUBSIDY	.00
REGION OF WATERLOO	86325.00
ONTARIO GOVERNMENT	98394.00
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	.00
CLIENT INCOME	79157.00
OTHER INCOME	9197.00
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	
TOTAL INCOME	433494.00

EXPENSES	
SALARIES	226878.00
BENEFITS	15683.00
V.S. COSTS	.00
AUTO EXPENSES	13791.00
FOOD	90000.00
FOODBANK COSTS	.00
INSURANCE	1491.00
TAXES	3717.00
UTILITIES	11187.00
CONSUMABLE SUPPLIES	.00
MAINT & REPAIR	9730.00
EQUIP & FURN	5200.00
OFFICE	4280.00
POSTAGE	1620.00
OUTSIDE PRINTING	1200.00
TELEPHONE	5500.00
STAFF EDUCATION	1500.00
AUDITOR	1200.00
PROGRAM/SPEC.ASSIST.	19715.00
FEE FOR SERVICE	.00
MORTGAGE EXPENSE	14155.00
RENT	.00
COST OF BORROWING	.00
RESERVE ALLOCATION	.00
MISCELLANEOUS	6647.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	433494.00

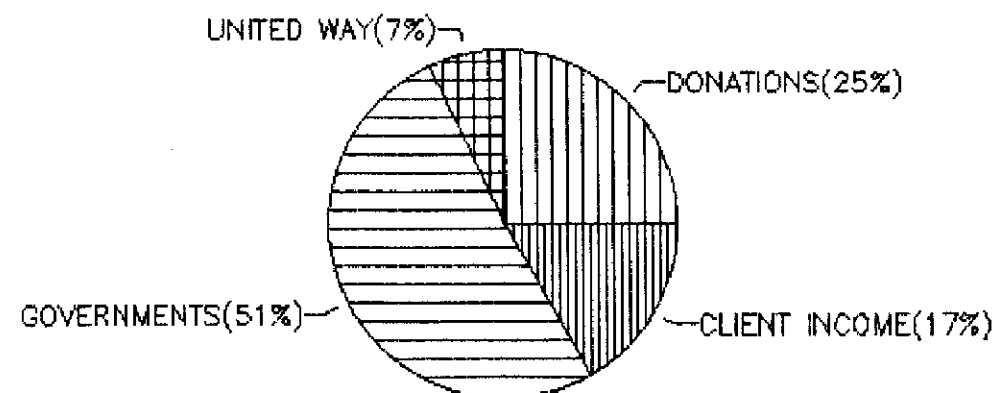
## 1980 BUDGET INCOME



INCOME	1988 BUDGET MARCH, 1988
CASH ON HAND	-9251.00
DESIGNATED DONATION	95550.00
GENERAL DONATION	319730.64
UNITED WAY	106000.00
C.M.H.C. SUBSIDY	44364.00
REGION OF WATERLOO	342071.00
ONTARIO GOVERNMENT	396442.36
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	36500.00
CLIENT INCOME	263105.00
OTHER INCOME	13850.00
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	
TOTAL INCOME	1608362.00

EXPENSES	
SALARIES	952164.00
BENEFITS	110254.00
V.S. COSTS	30995.00
AUTO EXPENSES	29075.00
FOOD	99300.00
FOODBANK COSTS	8900.00
INSURANCE	15127.00
TAXES	4455.00
UTILITIES	45550.00
CONSUMABLE SUPPLIES	18680.00
MAINT & REPAIR	34450.00
EQUIP & FURN	11950.00
OFFICE	13790.00
POSTAGE	8580.00
OUTSIDE PRINTING	3725.00
TELEPHONE	10795.00
STAFF EDUCATION	5500.00
AUDITOR	11800.00
PROGRAM/SPEC.ASSIST.	104150.00
FEE FOR SERVICE	1000.00
MORTGAGE EXPENSE	66847.00
RENT	8400.00
COST OF BORROWING	6500.00
RESERVE ALLOCATION	2900.00
MISCELLANEOUS	3475.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	1608362.00

## 1988 BUDGET INCOME



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 Cook, Barbara  
 Critchison, Helen  
 Derstine, Clayton  
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 Erb, Ross  
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 Hess, Rev. John H.  
 Horst, Lorne and Iona  
 Horst, Rev. Osiah  
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 Jantzi, Glenn and Joanne  
 Jantzi, Luke  
 Johnson, Rev. Robert  
 Jutzi, Rev. Rufus  
 Klassen, Ruth  
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 Leis, Rev. Vernon  
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 Martin, Lucinda  
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 Martin, Rev. Paul and Ruth  
 Martin, Shirley  
 Michel, Margaret  
 Montgomery, Margaret

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 Vale, Joseph  
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 Wall, Sandra  
 Weber, Alice  
 Weber, Bruce and Marjorie  
 Weber, Ethel  
 Weber, Violet  
 Weber-Buehler, Julie  
 Worth, Linda



## The Author

Ferne Burkhardt has been a life-long resident of Waterloo. She was born near New Hamburg and moved to Waterloo after her marriage to Don Burkhardt in 1956. After living briefly in Kitchener, the Burkhardts moved to a home near New Dundee where they raised two daughters and one son. They also provided foster care for young children for 15 years.

Choosing career parenting allowed the author time to pursue her interest in journalism. She has written numerous articles for a variety of Mennonite and other church publications. She has had a long-time association with *Mennonite Reporter* in Waterloo where she began a three-year interim position as associate editor in September 1986. She is the author of an essay published in *Mennonites of Ontario* (1986) and of *Full Circles* (1986), a history of the Mannheim Mennonite Church where she is a member.



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