1952

A study to determine the effectiveness of the Sixty Club of Union Settlement of Hartford

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Boston University

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Boston University
A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SIXTY CLUB OF UNION SETTLEMENT OF HARTFORD

A Thesis

Submitted by

George Francis Oster, Jr.
(S.B., Springfield College, 1950)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Social Service

1952
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PREFACE

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to Mrs. Elinor Bissell, Sixty Club Director, for her generous cooperation and support in making this study possible.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

A shifting of age patterns towards a larger number of older people in the population is creating a new frontier for social work in our American Society. Increasingly, group work agencies are being challenged to meet the needs of our senior citizens through day center and club programs. For most group work agencies programming for the older person is a relatively new development and one requiring constant experimentation and evaluation. While aged persons have much in common, just as other age groups do, there still remains a uniqueness of different individuals and groups. Therefore, in evaluating the effectiveness of a group work program for the aged, each group must be studied in light of the needs and characteristics of that particular group.

The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the program of the Sixty Club of Union Settlement of Hartford in light of the following criteria. Does the program grow out of the needs and interests of the individuals who compose the group? Does the program take into account such factors as age of group members and economic and cultural backgrounds? Is the program diversified enough to satisfy a variety of needs and interests? Do the members feel that the club is helping them according to
their individual needs?

Sources of Data

The following methods were used in collecting the data for this study. To determine the content of the present program of the Sixty Club, the writer held interviews with the club director and made personal observations of the club. Needs and characteristics of the members were determined through individual interviews with the members. Ways in which the members felt the club was helping them were also determined through individual interviews. The writer also reviewed club records and reviewed current literature on problems of aging and group work with the aged.

Scope

This study is to be confined to the active membership of the Sixty Club of Union Settlement of Hartford, Connecticut. Active membership was determined to include all members who had attended the club on an average of three or more times per week from September 1951 through March 1952. It was found that thirty members fell into this category and that these thirty members seemed to comprise the nucleus of this club. The members who did not fall into this category presented a picture of scattered attendance and were not considered to be valid subjects for the purpose of this study. From this group of thirty members, the writer selected a one third representative sample for
interviewing.

Since the original group of thirty members was composed of eighteen, or sixty per cent males, and twelve, or forty per cent females, the writer restricted his sample group to sixty per cent males and forty per cent females. The original group of thirty members was composed of fourteen, or forty-six per cent of persons who had limited ability at expressing themselves verbally, and sixteen, or fifty-four per cent of persons who were capable of expressing themselves adequately. Therefore, the writer restricted his sample group to the same ratio of verbal ability as was found in the original group of thirty. The writer then selected the first ten from the group of thirty members who qualified under the above limitations. This group comprised the representative sample of the original group of thirty active members.

Method of Study

In order to determine the effectiveness of the Sixty Club program in light of the criteria selected, the writer had to first obtain factual information in answer to the following questions. What is the content of the present program? What are the needs and characteristics of the members of this club? In what ways do the members feel the club is helping them?

To determine the content of the present club program
the writer interviewed the club director, analyzed club records, and made personal observations of the club. The writer will present the content of the club program in Chapter IV of this study.

Personal interviews were held with a representative sample of the active club membership to determine needs and characteristics of the members and to determine ways in which the members felt the club was helping them. In Chapter V of this study the writer will analyze the needs and characteristics of the members and relate these findings to the present club program.

In Chapter VI the writer proposes to summarize the personality of each member interviewed and to present their expressed feelings as to ways in which the club is benefiting them. In Chapter VII, the writer will evaluate the effectiveness of the Sixty Club program in terms of the criteria and factual material obtained in this study.

**Limitations**

The scope of this study is so small that any conclusions drawn are applicable only to the group of thirty members from which a representative sample was selected for interviewing. This study proposes to give a picture of the effectiveness of the present club program for this group of thirty members which is the nucleus of this club.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerical Increase of Aged Persons

Due to the rapid advances of medical science, the average individual life expectancy has increased from forty-eight years in 1900 to sixty-seven years in 1948.1 This increasing life expectancy coupled with a declining birth rate is giving rise to an increasingly larger percentage of older persons in our total population. "There are more than eleven and one half million people or 7.5 per cent of the total population in the United States today (1950) sixty-five years of age and over."2

TABLE I

FORECAST OF THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF THE TOTAL U.S. POPULATION SIXTY AND SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE AND OVER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>1945 No. (000)</th>
<th>1960 Per cent (000)</th>
<th>1980 Per cent (000)</th>
<th>2000 Per cent (000)</th>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>15,416</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>20,845</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>10,110</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>13,978</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>3,077</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4,261</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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Table I gives a picture of the expected increases of older persons in our total population through the year 2000. In the past fifty years, the total U.S. population has doubled while the number of persons age sixty or over is approximately three and one half times as great. Women outnumber men by about 7.5 per cent in this age group.

The following statistics have been made available on the population of Hartford, Connecticut in a preliminary report of the 1950 census by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. In 1950, persons sixty-five and over comprised about 9 per cent of the total population of greater Hartford, which was an increase of 2 per cent over 1940. The total population of greater Hartford in 1950 was 357,000, and persons sixty-five and over totalled 31,300. The rate of increase for persons sixty-five years of age and over was 56 per cent, exceeding the rate of increase of the total population during the period from 1940 to 1950. In 1940 there were 20,069 persons sixty-five years of age and over comprising 7 per cent of the total population, while in 1950 this group had increased to a total of 31,300 persons, comprising 9 per cent of the total population.

Thus we see statistically that the older groups of the

3 U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 Census of Population - Preliminary Reports, Series PC - 5 #20, June 20, 1951
U.S. population are increasing rapidly throughout the U.S. The preliminary statistics released on the 1950 census for the greater Hartford area indicate the extent to which the number of persons sixty-five years of age and over are increasing in this area. This numerical increase of older persons in the Hartford area is going to necessitate increasing services by social agencies.

**Time on Their Hands**

Forced early retirement is confronting a large percentage of our older persons with the problem of finding things to do in the unlimited free time most of them have available. "Only 25 per cent of our people sixty-five and over are employed in the U.S. today (1950)." The following material extracted from a report by the U.S. Bureau of the Census gives a statistical picture of the large numbers of aged persons no longer in the U.S. labor force. As of April, 1948 there were a total of 5,170,000 males sixty-five years of age or over in the United States. Of this number 2,300,000 or 44.5 per cent were in the labor force. Out of a total of 5,690,000 females sixty-five years of age or over in the U.S., only 520,000 or 9.1 per cent were in the labor force.


A preliminary report of the 1950 census for the Hartford Metropolitan area gives the following statistics on the employment status of persons age sixty-five and over for this area. Out of a total population of 31,300 persons sixty-five years of age or over, 8,000 persons or 26 per cent were in the labor force and 23,300 persons in this age group were not in the labor force. Out of a total male population of 13,600 persons sixty-five years of age or over, 6,400 persons or 47 per cent were in the labor force and 7,200 persons were not in the labor force. Out of a total female population of 17,700 persons sixty-five years of age or over, 1,600 persons or 9 per cent were in the labor force and 16,600 persons were not in the labor force.

Retirement for most older persons is a major tragedy. After an active life of work many older persons feel useless, insecure, and rejected. Unlike some societies where the older person enjoys a position of great prestige, here in the United States we frequently find the older person pushed aside and neglected. We put a premium on youth to the detriment of our older citizens, denying them the opportunity to use their skills and talents. The industrial world of America stressing efficiency, speed, and maximum output has pushed the older worker aside in favor of youth.

6 U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 Census of Population - Preliminary Reports, Series PC-5 #20, June 20, 1951
Physical Changes Accompanying Aging

It is important that social workers have some understanding of the physical changes accompanying old age. Stieglitz summarizes the most common physical changes which accompany old age as follows:

1. Gradual retardation of cell division, capacity of cell growth, and tissue repair.
2. Gradual tissue desication.
3. Gradual retardation in the rate of tissue oxidation. Lowering of the basal metabolic rate.
4. Cellular atrophy, degeneration, increased cell pigmentation, and fatty infiltration.
5. Gradual decrease in tissue elasticity, and degenerative changes in the elastic connective tissue.
6. Decreased strength of skeletal muscle.
7. Progressive degeneration and atrophy of the nervous system, impaired vision, hearing, attention, memory, and mental endurance.

It is essential that group workers be familiar with these physical changes in order to understand limitations to be found in working with the older age groups.

Psychological Aspects of Aging

We must also consider what some of the psychological aspects of aging are in order to better understand and be able to help the older person in a group work program. Old age for many persons is a period of loneliness. It is a time of loss of friends, prestige, family, and often income. The

7 E.J. Stieglitz, Geriatric Medicine, p. 54
following is a summary of the psychological aspects of aging according to Stieglitz.

1. Worry, especially over health and economic security.
2. Feeling of inadequacy, leading to feeling of insecurity, anxiety or guilt.
4. Attitudes of suspicion.
5. Narrowing of interests, leading to introspection and increased interest in bodily sensations and physical pleasure.
6. Loss of interest in activity and increased interest in quiescence.
7. Reduction of sexual activity but sometimes increased sexual interest, especially in the male; regression to earlier levels of sex expression.
8. Conservatism.
9. Inability to adjust to changed conditions.
10. Overtalkativeness, especially of the past.
11. Hoarding, often of trivial things.
12. Tendency to relive past events.8

Donahue and Tibbitts report the following psychological characteristics of older persons.

Most older people have acquired certain habits of thought and living which do not yield to change without painful wrenches and sometimes bitterness and unhappiness. They want independence at a time when others think they should be emotionally and financially dependent. Yet with this desire for independence, there is conflicting desire for security, for freedom from

8 Ibid, p. 5-6
fear of what the future almost inevitably holds - sickness and the need for care because of it. One of the most delicate tasks in working with aged persons is to keep independence and security in balance. 9

Many of the psychological traits of the older persons can be attributed to a lack of satisfaction of their basic physical or psychological needs. If their physical needs for health and comfort are not satisfied they may react with feelings of loneliness, rejection, or depression. If their needs for recognition are not satisfied they may react with feelings of inferiority and worthlessness. If their needs for expression are not met they may react with restlessness or apathy. If their needs for emotional security are not met they may react with symptoms of anxiety.

Dulling of recent memory and the tendency to reminisce about the good old days are actually a turning away from the unpleasantness of the present; the memory of the pleasures and successes of the past being an attempt to find reassurance in the past against the threats of the present. When an elderly person becomes overly assertive and domineering, it is a compensatory reaction for feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, and insecurity engendered by physical and psychological decline. The feelings of depression arise from increasing isolation and loneliness as friends and relatives die, and this added to a loss of self-respect and self-esteem, which follows decreasing status and prestige, feed the depressive feelings. Illness becomes a means of gaining sympathy and attention, a means of restoring at least some lost security and sometimes provides a method of aggressive domination of the situation by arousing guilt in the children. 10

9 Wilma Donahue and Clark Tibbitts, Planning the Older Years, p. 34

Group Work With the Aged

The basic emotional needs of older people are no different than those of younger people. The older person has the basic needs for belonging, for self-expression, to be loved and to give love, for new interests and participation, for recognition, for opportunity to contribute to society, and to feel useful and of worth to himself and others. These are some of the many needs which can be met in a group work program for the aged. Trecker has given us the following definition of social group work:

Social group work is a process and method through which individuals in groups in social agency settings are helped by a worker to relate themselves to other people and to experience growth opportunities in accordance with their needs and capacities. In social group work the group itself is utilized by the individual with the help of the worker, as a primary means of personality growth, change and development. The worker is interested in helping to bring about individual growth and social development for the group as a whole as a result of guided group interaction. 11

Thus we see that the broad purposes of social group work can be applied to any age or to any group. In work with the aged the techniques used may have to differ some due to the needs and limitations of the older person.

Isolation can not fail to bring deterioration regardless of age or circumstances. It was the recognition of this fact that led to the establishment of clubs for older people. The

11 Harleigh B. Trecker, Social Group Work, p. 8-9
older persons needed opportunities to make new friends to replace those who were gone. They needed a place to go where they were welcome and where they did not sit forgotten in a corner. They needed mental stimulation and the encouragement for physical activity which going to the club offered.

Margaret Wagner, Executive Director of the Benjamin Rose Institute, Cleveland, Ohio cites the following services which clubs for the aged can render.

1. It gives them a place to meet old friends and to make new ones.
2. The club programs give them a chance to continue their education and to enlarge their experience as long as they live.
3. It helps them to meet their responsibilities as citizens.
4. It provides them with an opportunity to share their experiences with others and to learn from others in turn.
5. It gives them a chance to have a good time.12

In planning programs for older people a good leader must bear in mind that every old person is a distinct personality. The older person's personality is the result of all his life experiences. All older persons have an inner capacity to grow which can be helped to develop providing an incentive is supplied for them. Growth is

12 Margaret W. Wagner, Group Work With the Golden Age, p. 2
painful at any age and it requires effort which the older person many times is reluctant to make. The understanding of basic human needs and behavior, brought to the program by the trained group worker, can do much in helping to motivate the older person to participate and grow in a club program.

We find that clubs for the aged are increasing rapidly to meet the great needs of the growing numbers of older persons in our population. In the New York City area two active groups are operating; one at the Hodson Memorial Center in the Bronx, and the other at the Hebrew Educational Society in Brooklyn. Another very active program for the aged is being conducted by the Recreation Project for Older People, of the Welfare Federation of Cleveland, Ohio. The program in Cleveland, under the direction of James H. Woods, is emphasizing the social group work aspects of programming for the aged. Much of the social group work with the aged is still in the pioneering stages and there are still many unanswered questions as to what is right and what is wrong in our treatment of the older person. Continued research will be necessary to clarify many of the questions which are now being raised concerning social group work with the aged.
CHAPTER III

AGENCY HISTORY AND FUNCTION

The Union Settlement of Hartford is the result of a merger in 1936 of two agencies, namely the Union for Home Work and the Hartford Social Settlement. The Union for Home Work was established on July 3, 1872 with the granting of a charter by the Connecticut State Assembly. The purpose of this agency as stated in the original constitution was as follows:

The objects for which this corporation is hereby created are the relief of all kinds of suffering, and the physical, intellectual, and spiritual elevation of women and children of said city of Hartford, by personal and representative visitation, by the immediate opening of a reading room, and in due time, the opening of a home for the friendless and the establishment of a nursery where working women may leave their young children for the day, and by other means and appliances such as may from time to time seem best and wise.  

The Union for Home Work was an outgrowth of a coffee shop which had been established on Market Street to serve inexpensive lunches to workers in a nearby mill. The coffee shop and the Union were both established to help the poor people of Hartford, and in the earliest days the Union was given rooms rent free in the coffee house. The Union next acquired a building adjoining the coffee shop and here initiated as parts of its program a girl's reading room,

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1 Union Settlement of Hartford, House Manual, October, 1944
temporary lodgings for women, sewing schools, a lending library, and visits and gifts to the sick. The Union also established a program for boys from five to twenty but this program met in various places in the neighborhood and consisted of music, games, books, baths, and lectures. In 1874 the Coffee House was operating at a financial deficit and was turned over to the Union for Home Work. During the early days, the Union was truly an agency for "home work", including in its program sewing schools, a laundry program, a thrift shop where old clothes were repaired, a day nursery to care for children whose mothers had to work, and a program to teach proper methods of house-cleaning.

The directors of the Union for Home Work very early expressed progressive thinking in their attitudes towards charity. The annual report given in 1897 stated the following philosophy:

Ordinarily we look upon the Union as a simple charity where the hungry can be fed, the naked clothed, and the sick ministered unto; but our work and our aim is to go still deeper than this - to lay a foundation in each of these departments that will inspire all who come under their influence to work out their lives on the principles of purity, thrift, honesty, truthfulness, and self-dependence. 2

The Hartford Social Settlement was established in 1894 and had as its purpose:

To establish and maintain a house in Hartford as a

2 Ibid
residence for those engaged in work for the social and moral elevation of the people in its vicinity, to bring into friendly and helpful relations with one another the people of the neighborhood in which the house is situated, to serve as a medium between the different social elements of the city for bringing about a more intelligent and systematic understanding of their mutual relations. 3

The Hartford Social Settlement was established on North Street and engaged in a program of clubs and classes. Later a kindergarten was started and a recreation hall was built in 1928.

In 1935 a survey was made of the East Side of Hartford, the area in which the Union for Home Work and the Hartford Social Settlement were both located. The survey recommended that the Union for Home Work discontinue its nursery program, its sewing project, and its laundry program, and that the Union be merged with the Hartford Social Settlement as one agency. No action was taken on this recommendation until a flood in 1936 destroyed the laundry and the sewing project at the Union for Home Work. At this time it was decided to merge the two agencies and to assume the official name of Union Settlement of Hartford.

The purpose of the present program of the Union Settlement is the development and social adjustment of the individual through participation in group activities of an informal educational nature. Union Settlement is concerned

3 Union Settlement of Hartford, Serving for 75 Years, 1947, p. 3
about personalities; the way people feel about themselves, the way they feel about other people, the way they handle the conflicts, competitions, and realities of everyday living. The agency has been primarily a neighborhood agency attempting to do an intensive job with the families as whole units residing in the area. Formerly neighborhood boundaries were rigidly adhered to in the intake policy of the agency, but today this policy is not followed as closely due to changes in the neighborhood and pressures arising from wider community needs.

Today residents of all ages in the East Side can find places in the many types of agency groups.

Street corner gangs, groups of friends, adult neighborhood groups become social clubs. Under the direction of volunteer leaders, these clubs work and deal with problems, make decisions, and develop their programs. This is good experience in democratic living. Under the supervision of the group work staff, hundreds of East Side youths are organized into small groups and clubs where they learn to live, play, and work together. Organized activities are developed around interests in arts and crafts, dancing, cooking, dramatics, and many others. 4

During the summer months the agency operates an extensive day camp program utilizing the facilities of a nearby public park. Another major aspect of the present program is the "Teen Town" program. In keeping with the purpose of meeting new neighborhood needs, the agency responded in 1945 when asked by the "teen-agers" of the

4 Ibid, p. 8
neighborhood if they could have a Teen Center such as were being developed elsewhere throughout the city. To meet this need the agency obtained a special appropriation in 1946 from the Greater Hartford Community Chest to remodel three basement rooms for Teen Town. Teen Town is governed by a Teen Town Council which works closely with an agency staff member in setting rules and regulations and in planning of special activities for the teen-agers. The later development of the Sixty Club was related to the development of Teen Town, since it was the Teen Town rooms which were given over to the Sixty Club for their use afternoons.

The area served by the Union Settlement, known as the East Side, is bounded on the south by Sheldon Street, on the north by Avon Street, on the west by Main Street, and on the east by the Connecticut River. On the western boundary are to be found Hartford’s municipal buildings, banks, insurance companies, and stores. On the eastern boundary are to be found the gas works, coal docks, food and produce warehouses, the switch yards and main line of the New Haven Railroad, freight houses, Riverside Park, and the North Meadows, an undeveloped tract of marshland. Within the East Side there seems to be three distinct neighborhoods. One neighborhood runs south of Morgan Street along Front and Market Streets. Another neighborhood comprises the
area just north of Morgan Street. The third neighborhood is an area around North and Pequot Streets.

The total population of this area in 1940 was 7,471. Of the total population over twenty-one years of age, 36 per cent were foreign born. Of this foreign born group, 73 per cent were born in Italy, 8 per cent in Poland, 6 per cent in Russia, and 3 per cent in Lithuania. Of the total population 11 per cent are negroes. Of the total population of the East Side over ten years of age 15 per cent are illiterate. A high concentration of inability to speak English among the foreign-born white population is found in this area. A considerable amount of mobility in the population of the East Side is indicated by the fact that 9 per cent have lived at their present address less than one year, 15 per cent less than two years, 24 per cent less than five years. 5

The neighborhood today presents a picture of rat infested, deteriorating dwellings, many of which have been condemned as uninhabitable. With the rapid expansion of business in Hartford and the acute land shortage, business enterprises are rapidly encroaching upon the remaining dwellings in this area. The entire East Side has been scheduled for slum clearance and redevelopment by the Hartford Planning Commission within the next ten years. The dwellings which remain are no longer kept up and are being allowed to deteriorate rapidly. Those families which were best able to mobilize themselves have moved out of the neighborhood leaving behind the families which were least

5 Union Settlement of Hartford, House Manual, October, 1944
adequate to cope with the environmental dilemma which faced them. With the acute labor shortage which developed in the Hartford area since the outbreak of the conflict in Korea, many Negro families have migrated to Hartford from the Southern United States and from Puerto Rico for work on the tobacco farms. Many of these families have settled in the East Side and are now finding their way into the program of Union Settlement. Due to their sub-marginal incomes, many of Hartford's older persons are forced to find rooms in these inadequate dwellings remaining in the East Side. It is this group which has found their way into the Sixty Club program of Union Settlement. This group of older persons had large amounts of free time and little money with which to find recreation. In establishing the Sixty Club program, the Union Settlement was meeting an urgent need for recreation and leisure time activities on the part of these older persons.

In addition to the Sixty Club of Union Settlement, there are four other clubs for the aged in the Hartford area, which have open membership policies. These clubs are scattered throughout various sections of Hartford. The Center Church Club is sponsored by the downtown churches of Hartford, and is located on Main Street in the center of the Hartford business district. The Happy Hours Club is sponsored by the Mitchell House, and is located in the Park Street district of Hartford. The Asylum Hill Club is sponsored by
a group of Asylum Hill Churches, and is located in the Asylum Avenue - Farmington Avenue district of Hartford. The East Hartford Club is sponsored by a large group of churches and civic organizations of that town. In addition to the above mentioned clubs, there is a club sponsored by the Immanuel Congregational Church on Farmington Avenue. This club has a closed membership policy and is operated only for the members of the Immanuel Church. The Sixty Club of Union Settlement is the only club located in the East Side of Hartford, and is the only club in the Hartford area which is open every afternoon from Monday through Friday. All other clubs for the aged in Hartford are open only one afternoon a week. Because of the large amounts of free time they have, many members of the other clubs are to be found at the Sixty Club of Union Settlement on days that their own clubs are closed.
CHAPTER IV

THE SIXTY CLUB PROGRAM

In this chapter the writer proposes to present the development and content of the present program of the Sixty Club of the Union Settlement of Hartford. The material presented in this chapter was gathered by the writer through interviews with the Sixty Club Director, by direct observation of the club in operation, and by reading club records.

On October 9, 1947 a meeting of a Consulting Committee was held at Union Settlement for the purpose of establishing a club for older persons residing in the East Side of Hartford. This committee was composed of community leaders who were interested in the development of such a program for the aged at Union Settlement. There were representatives on this committee of the clergy, the board of education, and various health and welfare agencies of Hartford. The members were asked to serve as a consulting committee to the Sixty Club Director for the establishment and operation of this program for the aged. The agency director explained to the committee that Union Settlement had long been aware of the large numbers of older persons living in the neighborhood on very small budgets. These older persons had little or nothing to do all day long and many were longing for companionship. Most of the older persons stayed in their rooms and were seldom seen by agency workers except on home visits. The director
explained to the committee that she had visited Hodson Memorial Center for the aged in the Bronx, New York, shortly after it had opened and was impressed with the program there. Union Settlement at this time wanted to offer a place where older men and women could come for recreation. The director felt that personnel was the key to the success of such a program, and, therefore, had postponed action on trying to set up such a program until the right person was found to direct the project. The agency at this point had been fortunate in securing as director of the project a person who had experience in working with aged persons at the Hodson Memorial Center in New York City.

The director of the Sixty Club then explained some of her plans for the coming year to the committee. She said that Union Settlement wanted to offer a place where older persons could come and make new friends and engage in whatever kinds of activities they liked. The club was to be open to anyone over the age of sixty and would be open daily Monday through Friday from one to four in the afternoon. Invitations to attend the club had been mailed to 280 persons and these invitations were to be followed up by home visits. The program was to be very simple at first. Refreshments would be served every afternoon and magazines, newspapers, cards, checkers, and other games would be made available. The greatest effort at first was to be directed towards
making the members feel at home. The program would develop from the expressed interests of the members. The director pointed out that the experiences of clubs already established had been that the programs grew very slowly at first. Once the members felt secure, they themselves would do the best job of selling the club to their neighbors and friends. 

The Sixty Club opened with a large celebration on October 15, 1947. Eighty persons attended on the opening day. The Governor of Connecticut and the Mayor of Hartford were honor guests at this opening program. Through this large opening program the club received considerable publicity in the local newspapers which helped in bringing the club to the attention of many older persons eligible for membership.

Facilities

The Sixty Club occupies three rooms in the basement of the agency. These three rooms were remodeled and refurnished originally for the use of Teen Town. In order to make these rooms available for the Sixty Club the Teen Town afternoon program was discontinued. The three rooms used by the Sixty Club are attractively decorated and comfortable furnished. One room contains a refreshment bar where the daily refreshments are prepared and served. Beneath the refreshment bar are cupboards in which are stored supplies for the club such as dishes, silverware, cards, games,
coffee urns, and other cooking utensils. Scattered throughout two of the rooms are large comfortable lounges, floor lamps, and small moveable tables. A third room contains a piano and a ping-pong table which is used by the members for rug hooking. There is an ample supply of folding card tables and folding chairs which can be set up as needed anywhere throughout the three rooms. There are two lavatories located in the basement, thus eliminating the necessity of the members having to climb stairs to use the lavatories located on the main floor. There are also facilities in the basement for washing the dishes used for the daily refreshments. For the arts and crafts program the members have to climb a flight of stairs to go over into an adjoining building where the craft rooms are located. The movie program held every Friday also necessitates the members climbing a flight of stairs to reach the room where the movies are shown.

Financial Arrangements

The members pay no fees for membership in the club. When the club was originally opened the costs of the simple refreshments and supplies were met by agency board members and other interested persons. Two appeals were made by the Board of Directors of the Union Settlement to the Budget Committee of the Community Chest for funds with which to operate the Sixty Club program. Action by the Community Chest upon this request was withheld until the completion of
the Hartford Survey. During this period there was considerable uncertainty as to whether or not the Sixty Club could continue to operate. In 1949 the Community Chest approved a separate budget to be used for the operation of the Sixty Club, thus assuring the continuance of this project. A considerable amount of the financial responsibilities for the club program are still met through the generosity of many community organizations such as the Ladies of the B'nai Brith, the Hartford Quota Club, The Cotillion Club, The Hartford Chapter of Chi Omega, The Service Club of Oxford School, The Hartford Women's Club, and Hartford Junior College. There are also many contributions made to the club by interested individuals.

Membership

The Sixty Club was first started as a neighborhood project for the purpose of providing recreational services to persons over sixty years of age residing in the immediate neighborhood. Gradually neighborhood restrictions on membership were relaxed due to the great demand for services by persons not residing in the neighborhood. Today membership in the club is open to any person over the age of sixty regardless of the location of their residence.
TABLE II
TOTAL REGISTERED MEMBERS AND AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE
1947 - 1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Registered Members</th>
<th>Average Daily Attendance</th>
<th>Per cent of Total Attending Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947 - 48</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948 - 49</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949 - 50</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950 - 51</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951 - 52</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II indicates the rise in total registrations and average daily attendance between the years 1947 and 1952. The percentage of the total registered members attending daily has run consistently at 33 percent for the past three years.

TABLE III
BREAKDOWN OF MEMBERSHIP BY SEX 1947 - 1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Registered</th>
<th>Total Male</th>
<th>Total Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947 - 48</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948 - 49</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949 - 50</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950 - 51</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951 - 52</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table III indicates that males have consistently outnumbered females in this club. The club year 1951 - 52 has shown the greatest divergence in the ratio of males to females. During this year there were twenty-nine more males than
females registered.

**Club Officers and Committees**

New officers are elected by the members yearly. There is a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer elected to the governing body of the club. While most members welcome the prestige which accompanies their being elected as a club officer, few of the members have been able to carry the responsibilities which accompany their positions. After being elected officers many of the members have been absent a great deal. Further investigation by the club director revealed that these members stayed away when faced with responsibilities because of feelings of inadequacy. Having become aware of this fact, the club director has taken steps to reduce the responsibilities to a level which fits the abilities and capacities of the officers. The officers function best when they are given routine tasks to handle.

At present there is a Bingo Committee and a Refreshment Committee composed of club members. These are the only two committees functioning at the present time. The Refreshment Committee has the responsibility for preparing the coffee and setting up the trays with eating utensils. After the group has had their refreshments, this committee is responsible for washing and drying the dishes, and storing the dishes away in the cupboards. When the club first started,
the director allowed members to volunteer their services for
this committee. This plan had to be discontinued due to the
fact that the same small group of persons were doing this
job every day. The director then divided the entire mem-
bership into groups of twelve, and each group served as the
Refreshment Committee for a period of a week. A member
suggested that these groups be balanced in terms of having
some of the more able members on each group. This suggestion
was carried out in setting up the committees. The refreshment
committees seem to be functioning very well and will go ahead
with their job when the director is absent. The members
seem to enjoy doing this work because it is routine and does
not involve a great deal of responsibility on their part. The
bingo committee has the responsibility for purchasing the
prizes to be given away for the Bingo Games. The director
at one time attempted to have this committee assume the
responsibility for running the entire bingo game. This plan
was not successful due to the fact that none of the members
wanted to give up their chance to play the game. Service
on this committee is voluntary and two members are selected
from the volunteer list to serve each week.

The director has found that the members of this club
cooperate readily in doing small routine tasks connected with
the operation of the club. They enjoy being asked to do
specific manual tasks such as getting chairs out and putting
them away, turning lights on and off, emptying ash trays, and picking up the club rooms before going home. Any attempts to get the members to assume responsibilities other than these usually results in making them unhappy and drives them away. During this past year one of the members was asked to serve on a committee planning a city-wide hobby show for the aged. When this request was made to him he became very upset and stayed away from the club for two weeks. In view of situations such as this, the director now asks the members to help only with the routine tasks.

**Refreshments**

The service of refreshments is a very important part of this club program. Refreshments meet several needs of the members of this club. Some of the members coming to the club are actually hungry. The director in making a home visit to one of the members found him in bed late in the morning. This member had been living on such a small income that he could not afford to buy three meals a day. He found that by staying in bed until noon he could conserve his strength and get along with less food. In observing the members eating, it is obvious that many of them are hungry and welcome the refreshments to appease their hunger.

Most of the members eat their meals alone in restaurants or in their rooms and the refreshment period at the club gives many of them the only opportunity they have to sit
down at a table with other persons. The small group they eat with at the club becomes a substitute family group for many of them, and the giving and sharing of food becomes the symbol of the giving and sharing of love as in a family group.

Some of the members have been forced to lower their standards of living considerably due to the decline in their incomes after retirement. Many of these members enjoy things which are "nice" and enjoy having refreshments in a pleasant atmosphere. The director tries to have the members eat their refreshments in a leisurely manner so that they can talk and enjoy themselves. China dishes are used for the refreshments in order to create more of a home atmosphere for the members.

The refreshments consist of coffee and cookies served daily. The members sit in groups of four at small tables. One member from each table brings the tray of refreshments from the serving bar to their table. After eating, a member from each table carries the tray to the kitchen where the dishes are washed. The member then returns the tray and clean dishes to the serving bar where they are put away by members of the refreshment committee. Refreshment time seems to be a very cheerful part of the afternoon program with considerable talking, laughing, and joking among the members.
Informal Program Activities

Many of the members come to the club just looking for a warm, pleasant place where they can relax and talk. The majority of the members have little money to use for recreation and have nothing to occupy their time except to sit in their rooms, which frequently are inadequately heated during the winter months. Some of the men used to spend considerable time loafing in the railroad station but were told to move on by the police. As one member expressed it to the director, "There is no place to loaf -- no country store, no blacksmith shop". With the opening of the Sixty Club these men were able to come to a place to loaf where they were welcomed and made to feel at home. Frequently members take naps on the sofas and seem to be completely relaxed and at home in the club. Magazines and newspapers are provided for those who are interested in reading.

Several types of informal small games are played by the members. Probably the most popular of the informal games played is a card game named "Set Back". There is a small group of members who arrive before the club officially opens daily in order to play cards. This group plays cards continually, and shows no interest in other activities. There is considerable socializing during the card games and the members appear to be having a great deal of fun talking and joking while they are playing. Other informal games played
are Dominoes and Checkers. Shuffleboard was formerly played until the member most interested in this game moved to Florida. Since this time none of the members have showed interest in playing this game. An attempt has been made to interest the members in playing Horseshoes without success due to the fact that the members felt that this game required more strength and energy than they had.

**Arts and Crafts**

The women have been the main participants in this phase of the program and it has been found to be very difficult to interest the men in this activity. The women are motivated to work in arts and crafts by the desire to create objects of beauty whereas the men cannot accept this. The men must have a practical purpose for working in arts and crafts and feel that if they cannot use the objects themselves or sell them, there is no purpose in making them. This attitude of the men towards arts and crafts is due to the fact that the majority of the men were unskilled manual laborers and never enjoyed the satisfaction in their work of producing finished products with their hands. The men have enjoyed making tin ash trays which had a practical use to them and in making wooden lap boards which they were able to sell. The men have also responded to requests to do practical projects for the agency such as repairing and refinishing of tables or chairs. The director is constantly looking for projects of
this sort for the men since it gives them a feeling of con-
tributing to the agency and gives them an opportunity to
work with their hands. It has been difficult for the director
to find enough of this type of work for the men to do for
the agency and some consideration is being given to try to
interest the men in doing service projects for other com-
munity agencies.

On Monday afternoons a group of six members take part
in a ceramics class which has proved to be very successful.
The group is composed of five women and one man. It is
interesting that this same group of six members were the
only members taking part in the painting class when it was
being held. The members of the ceramic class pay one-half
the cost of the materials they use. This plan is in effect
to try to cut down waste by impressing upon the members the
cost of ceramics materials. When the class was first started
the members did not have to pay anything for their materials
and there was an excessive waste of clay and glazes. The
members of this class have produced some beautiful ceramic
pieces and seem to get an immense amount of pleasure and
satisfaction out of the activity.

Another popular craft is rug hooking. To date ten rugs
have been completed and two members are presently working on
rugs every afternoon. The members get a great deal of sat-
isfaction when they complete a rug and the entire group seems
to take pride in the finished products. When a rug is completed the member takes it all around the club to be admired by the other members. One member informed the club director that she was so excited when she began to work on her rug that she would lie awake at night thinking about the next day's work.

Other arts and crafts activities include knitting and crocheting, Turkish Knot Weaving, paper flower making, rug braiding, sewing and altering of dresses, loop weaving, and copper foil craft. Members completing work in arts and crafts had two opportunities to display their achievements during the past year. An agency arts and crafts show was held in which the members of the Sixty Club were able to exhibit their work. A city-wide hobby show was held in conjunction with five other clubs for the aged from the Hartford area. This show received a great deal of publicity and gave the members city-wide recognition for their achievements in arts and crafts.

**Special Activities**

Each Thursday there is a large attendance due to the fact that Thursday is "Bingo Day" at the Sixty Club. This game is enjoyed a great deal and the members look forward to playing the game each week. Small prizes such as candy bars, soap, apples, or oranges are given to the winners. While the prizes are of little monetary value, they seem to
add a great deal of zest to the game for the members and
cheers usually accompany a member's winning of a Bingo
prize. One member has assumed responsibility for handing
out the Bingo prizes to the winners. This particular member
does not take part in any other club activities, never takes
refreshments, and seems to be content just sitting in the
same sofa every day he comes to the club. Handing out the
Bingo prizes is a responsibility this member enjoys and is
his only active participation in the club program.

Once a month a birthday party is held to celebrate all
member's birthdays occurring during that month. The birth­
day parties usually bring out the majority of the club
membership with the average attendance running between
seventy and eighty on party days. The Ladies of the Bnai
Brith contribute sandwiches and the birthday cake to the club
each month in addition to helping with the serving of the
refreshments. Members with birthdays occurring during the
month sit at a table of honor and each is given a flower
to wear. The flowers help to identify the members celebrat­
ing birthdays so that the other members may congratulate
them. Group singing and games are usually part of the
birthday party activities.

A Thanksgiving dinner is held each year and a full
course turkey dinner is served. Attendance usually averages
ninety-five for this program. The Oxford School of Hartford
contributes the turkeys and the agency pays the cost of
having the turkeys cooked. The club members set the tables and do the decorating for this affair. The Ladies of the Bnai Brith serve as volunteers and donate the dessert for this dinner.

A Christmas Party is also held each year at which time a full course turkey dinner is served. The food for this dinner is donated by the Ladies of the Bnai Brith. Attendance for this party usually averages ninety-five. The Quota Club of Hartford donates presents so that each member is given a present at the party. The program usually consists of Christmas carol singing and games. In the past the Governor of Connecticut and his wife have attended these parties. The Thanksgiving Dinner and Christmas Party, while expensive and difficult undertakings, seem more than justified in view of the immeasurable happiness they contribute to the lives of these older persons. Most of the members of this club live alone in rooming houses, and seldom or never see their relatives. The Thanksgiving Dinner and Christmas Party assure many of these older persons that they are not completely forgotten and that society is concerned over their happiness.

Summer Program

The Sixty Club operates throughout the summer with an average daily attendance of between twenty-five and thirty. The program consists of bus trips to various points of
interest, picnics, and movie trips. Day outings are very popular in which the members are taken by bus to various parks early in the day. A picnic lunch, prepared by the women is held at noon and the members return to the agency around three in the afternoon. A fishing trip was held once but proved to be too exhausting on the members and thus was was not planned again. The members plan and make the lunches themselves for their summer outings which seems to give them considerable pleasure.

Personal Problems and Referrals

The club director has to spend considerable time listening and helping club members with personal problems. Many of the members do not speak English well and those who can speak English have difficulty in communicating with people. Due to their difficulty in expressing themselves well, many of the members feel helpless and come to the club director for help with personal problems. The director has to make a great number of telephone calls to various social agencies in order to help clarify decisions of those agencies to the members. Seldom does a week go by in which a member doesn’t come in greatly upset over some letter they have received from a welfare agency, their landlords, a hospital, or even their church. The club director then has to interpret to the members the purpose of the letter or telephone the appropriate persons in order to clarify the situation for the members.
Frequently the club director has to make various appointments for the members by telephone due to the fear many of the members have of using a telephone. The club director also spends considerable time making home or hospital visits to ill members. If a member's personal problems seem to warrant referral to another agency, the director discusses this possibility with the member. Seldom can members of this club mobilize themselves to the degree that they can approach another agency for help on their own. Therefore the director has to give a great deal of support in helping members to go to other agencies for help.

Various social agencies have also referred members to the Sixty Club for their leisure time activities. Among the agencies referring members to the Sixty Club have been the Family Service Society of Hartford, The Diocesan Bureau, and the Public Welfare Department of Hartford. Social workers with the Division of Old Age Assistance have helped to publicize the Sixty Club program by distributing folders describing the club program to their clients.

Club Atmosphere

In the early days of the club, the leader spent most of her time listening to members relate their life histories, and in trying to get members to talk to each other or to play games together. Now, long before the official opening time, there are several card games in progress and many members
are to be seen sitting around talking to their friends or reading papers and magazines. The members seem to feel completely at home in the club and frequently members may be seen sleeping on the sofas. In talking to the members, one is immediately impressed with the enthusiasm and pride they show for their club. When new members or volunteers come to the club for the first time, there are usually several members who will take the responsibility for welcoming them instead of leaving this job for the club director. In making home or hospital visits, the director frequently finds that the member's neighbors or ward mates know all about the Sixty Club. Members frequently state that their club is "nice" and they want to keep it that way.

Much of the credit for the warm atmosphere in the club must be given to the present club director who has been with the club since 1948. The director has all the personal traits so necessary in working with older persons which includes warmth, sensitiveness to the needs and problems of older persons, patience and a sense of humor, enthusiasm, and ability to treat older people as adults rather than as children. The members have a great deal of feeling for their club director and are always trying to do things which will please her. In talking to the members during a period when their club director was in the hospital, many of them broke down and cried for her. The director was so besieged by
members visiting her in the hospital that it became a problem and the members had to be requested to send cards rather than to visit the hospital. As one member expressed it, the director was a "Noble Seignora".

The present director of the Sixty Club has been with the program for the past five years. While not formally trained in social work, the director is a college graduate and has had many years of experience serving on boards of directors of social welfare agencies. The club director is at present a member of the State Commission for the Treatment of the Aged and Chronically Ill in Connecticut.
CHAPTER V

CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF MEMBERS INTERVIEWED

In this chapter the writer proposes to analyze the characteristics and needs of the group of members interviewed, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Sixty Club in relation to these findings.

TABLE IV

AGE RANGE AND SEX OF GROUP INTERVIEWED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Total Males</th>
<th>Total Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65 - 70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 - 80</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table indicates that the majority of the members interviewed fall within the age range of sixty-five to seventy with a total of seven members in this range. The age span of the entire group interviewed falls between sixty-five and eighty. In this group interviewed sixty percent are males and forty percent are females. The ratio of males to females in this group interviewed is the same as the ratio found in the total registered membership for the year 1951-52. The preliminary report of the 1950 census on the population of Hartford, Connecticut indicates that, in the age group sixty-five and over, females comprise fifty-six
per cent of the total while males comprise forty-four per cent of the total. These statistics indicate that the Sixty Club is drawing more males than females into the program while city-wide there are more females than males in this age group. The reasons for this are unknown to the writer, but might well be worthy of further study by the agency.

In determining the amount of free time each member had daily, it was found that eight members interviewed had all day free and two had half days free. This indicates the great amount of free time these persons have daily. The Sixty Club in operating daily Mondays through Fridays, from one to four P.M. would seem to give these older persons considerable opportunity to occupy their free time. Since the Sixty Club is the only club for older persons open five days a week in Hartford, it is found that many members of other clubs attend the Sixty Club on days their own clubs are not open. The Sixty Club is serving a definite need of these older persons in providing a place where they can go to occupy their time for three hours five afternoons a week.

1 U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950 Census of Population - Preliminary Reports, Series PC - 5 #20, June 20, 1951
Table V indicates that five of these persons interviewed see their children or relatives once a month or once a year. All ten of the persons interviewed had either children or relatives living. Five of the members interviewed see their children or relatives once a year or less.

Seven of the members interviewed were living alone in rooming houses. One member lived in a home with his children and two members lived alone in their own apartments. Six of the seven members living alone in rooming houses disliked their rooms describing them as "cold", "gloomy", and "lonesome". Therefore the Sixty Club seems to be meeting a need of these members interviewed in providing them with pleasant, cheerful, clubrooms where they can spend a few hours a day away from their living quarters. As one member expressed it,
"It booms you up to be able to be away from your lonely room and into this cheerful atmosphere for a few hours a day."

The members interviewed present a picture of a group of persons isolated from their families, and living in rooming houses which they dislike. The Sixty Club is helping these persons to associate with people a few hours a day in a pleasant atmosphere. Since half of the group interviewed see their children or relatives once a year or less, it is evident that many of these older persons spend their holidays alone. The Sixty Club by planning special programs for holidays is giving these persons the opportunity to observe their holidays in the company of friends.

The writer next proposes to analyze the type of recreational activities these persons engage in when they are not at the Sixty Club. The writer has divided the recreational activities into two groups, those which require socialization with other persons, and those which do not require socialization with other persons.
TABLE VI

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS OTHER THAN AT SIXTY CLUB
ACTIVITIES REQUIRING SOCIALIZATION WITH OTHER PERSONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activities</th>
<th>Frequency of mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visit or entertain friends or relatives</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write letters</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go on walks with friends</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit in park with friends</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit taverns to meet people</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in church work</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE VII

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS OTHER THAN AT SIXTY CLUB
ACTIVITIES NOT REQUIRING SOCIALIZATION WITH OTHER PERSONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activities</th>
<th>Frequency of mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sitting and thinking</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio or television</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend movies alone</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look out windows</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crafts or hobbies at home</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go on walks alone</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables VI and VII indicate that the types of recreational activities engaged in by these members when they are not at the Sixty Club are largely those requiring little or no socialization with other persons. On the basis of the above
facts it may be concluded that the members interviewed have a need to be given considerable help in engaging in recreational activities which will give them the opportunity to socialize with other persons. The member who stated that he went to taverns did not drink alcoholic beverages, but went to the taverns to dance and to talk with people. The Sixty Club program is providing these persons with a place and activities where they may socialize with other persons, but the question remains unanswered as to whether the members maintain this pattern of engaging in less social activities at the Sixty Club. Therefore, the writer next proposes to analyze the type of activities engaged in by the members when they are at the Sixty Club.

**TABLE VIII**

**ACTIVITIES ENGAGED IN AT SIXTY CLUB**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Activities</th>
<th>Frequency of Mention</th>
<th>Less Social Activities</th>
<th>Frequency of Mention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Card Playing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Arts and Crafts</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominoes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checkers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sitting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing in a group</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Watching movies</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Listening to singing</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trips and Outings</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bingo</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Table VIII indicates that there is a considerable difference between the type of recreational activities...
preferred at the Sixty Club and the type of recreational activities engaged in by the members interviewed when not at the Sixty Club. The more social type of activities were mentioned as being preferred more frequently at the Sixty Club in contrast with a smaller preference for the less social type of activities. In comparing Tables VI and VII against Table VIII, it is apparent that these older persons do want the opportunity to engage in more social recreational activities. When the opportunities for participation in the more social type of recreational activities are provided, these older persons will select these types of activities. It appears that these older persons are looking for the opportunity to participate in recreational activities with other persons and that the Sixty Club is meeting this need.

All of the members interviewed expressed a preference to belong to a club where the members were close to their own ages. Many of them stated that they enjoyed having young workers around the club because the younger persons added enthusiasm, but that they preferred to have the club members close to their own ages. They felt that they had more in common with persons their own ages. As one member expressed it, "We can talk over our problems together". It therefore seems that the Sixty Club is providing a place where these older persons can come together to discuss mutual problems.
All ten of the members interviewed stated that they ate their meals alone. This fact emphasizes the importance of the refreshment period at the Sixty Club when the members sit down to eat in small groups. The refreshment period at the Sixty Club provides the members with the only opportunity they have to sit down together with other persons at a common table to share food. These small groups become substitute family groups to the members and there is a great deal of talking, joking, and laughing at the tables during the refreshment period. The club director makes special efforts to see that all members are seated at tables with small groups for refreshments.

In analyzing the occupational backgrounds of this group of members interviewed, the writer found that six of the males were formerly manual laborers and one of the males was a skilled tradesman. Three of the female members had not worked and one had worked as a clerk in a department store. The majority of the male members interviewed had never done fine work with their hands, and this fact is probably related to the difficulty the director had in interesting the male members in the arts and crafts program. The only male in this group participating in the arts and crafts program was the one member who had been a skilled tradesman. The male members do enjoy working on practical projects which are of benefit to the agency such as repairing and refinishing of
chairs or tables. In view of these facts it might be well to concentrate upon interesting the male members in doing service projects for the agency and community which would not require the fine hand work necessary for arts and crafts.

Seven of the members interviewed have made new, close, friends since coming to the Sixty Club. Three members stated that they had not made any new friends at the club. These facts indicate that the majority of the members interviewed were able to make new friends at the Sixty Club. This is an important contribution of the Sixty Club to these older persons in that many of them have lost their families and old friends and were looking for the opportunities to meet new friends. The facts indicate that many of the members interviewed are making new close friends at the Sixty Club.

In summary it may be said that the Sixty Club is helping to meet the following needs of the members interviewed.

The need for recreation to help occupy the large amounts of free time the members have.

The need for a pleasant, cheerful meeting place where they can spend a few hours a day away from their living quarters.

The need to associate with other persons and to celebrate some of the holidays in the company of others.

The need to participate in recreational activities through which they can socialize with other persons their own age.

The need to sit down occasionally to eat at a common table with other persons.
The need to acquire new manual skills.

The need to make new friends to replace lost families and old friends.
CHAPTER VI

MEANING OF THE SIXTY CLUB TO THE MEMBERS

In this chapter the writer proposes to analyze the ways in which the members feel the Sixty Club has meaning to them. The writer will present summaries of the personalities of each member interviewed with ways in which each feels that the Sixty Club has helped them. These summaries are divided into six different groupings according to the major ways in which each member feels the club is helping him. Group I includes one member who felt that the Sixty Club was benefitting his health. Group II includes one member who felt that the Sixty Club was helping him to continue working with his hands and to acquire new manual skills. Group III includes two members who felt that the club was benefitting them primarily by giving them a warm, pleasant place to spend their leisure time. Group IV includes three members who felt that the club was giving them the opportunity to socialize with other persons their own age, thus making life less lonely for them. Group V includes one member who felt that the club was contributing to her improved mental health. Group VI includes two members who felt that the club had helped them with personality problems so that they were able to form better relationships with people.

Group I

This group includes one member who felt that the club had
helped his health. This member had been troubled with stomach ulcers and prior to coming to the club had spent a great deal of time in his room worrying about his health. Since joining the club he feels that his health has improved considerably due to the fact that he is able to keep himself occupied and does not worry about himself as he formerly did.

Mr. A. is a sixty-seven year old widowed male who had worked as a laborer in lumbering most of his life. He had one child living whom he sees about once a month. He lives alone in a rooming house. Mr. A. is a quiet, reserved person usually sitting alone on one of the sofas at the club. He has been coming to the Sixty Club for three years and states that he came to the club for the first time because he was tired of "hanging around with nothing to do." Mr. A. says he is a very nervous person and used to spend most of his time in his room worrying about his health. He had been suffering from a stomach ulcer which his doctor told him had been caused by too much worrying about himself. Mr. A. says that since coming to the Sixty Club he feels a great deal better and his ulcer has not bothered him as much as it formerly did. He thinks that this is a result of his keeping himself occupied by coming to the club instead of sitting in his room worrying about himself. When he gets up in the morning now he has something to look forward to which will occupy his mind and break the monotony of the day for him.
Group II

This group includes one member who came to the club primarily to acquire new skills with his hands. This member had formerly been a skilled tradesman and wanted to continue to work with his hands after his retirement. He feels that the Sixty Club has helped him to do this through the arts and crafts program it offers.

Mr. C. is a sixty-nine year old widowed male. He worked as a skilled tradesman most of his life. He is intelligent, has been able to buy his own home, and has a comfortable income during his retirement. He is a warm, stable person with considerable social poise. His children live in Hartford and he sees them almost every day. He seems to have always been a very adequate person. He says that he is happy in his retirement and is able to "go places and do things" now that he never had time for when he was working. He has been coming to the Sixty Club for two years and came originally because he wanted to be with people his own age, and to learn to do new things with his hands. He says that the Sixty Club has given him the opportunity to learn new hobbies such as ceramics and painting. He likes the arts and crafts program and enjoys this part of the club program more than anything else.

Group III

This group includes two members who came to the club primarily to get off the streets during the winter months.
They were looking for a warm, pleasant place where they could spend some of their leisure time. The two members in this group feel that the club has given them a place to spend some time during the winter months. They feel that the Sixty Club was the first place where they felt welcome and were made to feel at home.

Mr. D. is a seventy-six year old single male who had worked as a laborer most of his life. He has two sisters living whom he sees about once a year. He lives alone in a rooming house, and complains that he does not like his present living quarters. He sleeps late every day during the winter so that he won't have to spend his mornings sitting in his cold room. He has been coming to the Sixty Club for one year, and came originally because he was looking for a place to spend some time during the winter months. Mr. D. enjoys talking and playing cards at the club. He says that it is a lot more pleasant to pass the time at the club rather than in his room. He says that he feels better and is more contented since coming to the club. He thinks that the Sixty Club has helped him in giving him a warm, pleasant place to occupy his leisure time.

Mr. E. is a seventy-eight year old single male who has worked as a laborer in shops most of his life. He has one niece living whom he sees less than once a year. He lives alone in a rooming house. Mr. E. spends most of his time reading and walking when not at the Sixty Club. He has been coming to the club for five years, and came originally to get off the
streets. He said that the older men had no place to spend their time and that the police were always chasing them away from the street corners. Mr. E. says that it feels good to come to the club because he knows he is welcome, is treated well, and made to feel at home. He feels that the club has helped him most by giving him a place where he can spend some of his time. His activities at the Sixty Club have been primarily talking and sitting on the sofa.

**Group IV**

This group includes three members who came to the club primarily to socialize with other persons. The members in this group feel that the club has given them the opportunity to socialize with other persons their own ages, thus helping to make life less lonely for them.

Mrs. B. is a sixty-eight year old widow. She has two children living in Hartford whom she never sees "due to doctor's orders". She lives alone in her own apartment which she likes very much. Mrs. B. says that she keeps herself busy at home by sewing and upholstering and painting chairs. She is rather a rigid woman who does not believe in dancing and thinks that the young persons today are too wild. She is a warm, active, outgoing person at the Sixty Club and has many friends there. She says that she does not leave her apartment after five o'clock evenings. She has been coming to the Sixty Club for three years and came originally to "get among people, forget herself, and to have a good time". She states that she has
felt a great deal better since coming to the club. When she
if feeling dreary and unhappy she comes to the club and "it
booms her up". She feels that the club has helped her to
be with people and to forget her troubles.
Mrs. G. is a sixty-nine year old widow. She owns her own
home and operates a rooming house for her financial support.
Her son and daughter in law occupy an apartment in her house.
Mrs. G. lives alone in her own apartment. She and her hus-
band worked hard all their lives and had little time for
recreation. She is now able to live rather comfortably on
her income from the rooming house. Mrs. G. is a warm,
friendly woman who enjoys entertaining friends in her home.
She has the finances and the social poise to entertain her
friends graciously. She has had many of the Sixty Club mem-
bers to her home for dinners and parties. She does not care
to participate in craft work at the club because she has so
much sewing and handwork to do at home that she likes to re-
lax and talk when she comes to the club. Mrs. G. has been
coming to the club for one year and says that she came origi-
nally because she was lonesome after her husband died, and she
wanted to see and talk to people. She says that the club has
helped to make life worth living for her since her husband's
death. She feels that the club now gives her one more thing
to live for. In the morning she realizes that she has some-
thing to look forward to every afternoon. She has made many
new friends at the Sixty Club and has had many of them visit her at her home.

Mr. H. is a sixty-eight year old male separated from his wife. He worked as a laborer in railroading and construction work most of his life. He has one child living whom he sees less than once a year. He lives alone in a rooming house and refers to his room as "the dark room". Mr. H. is a warm, talkative, extroverted type of person. He has been coming to the club for five years and came originally so that he could talk and be with people. Mr. H states that he spends his evenings in taverns, even though he does not drink. He goes to the taverns so that he can be with people, dance, and talk. When at the club Mr. H. spends most of his time talking and joking with the members. He has had a particularly good effect on Mrs. I, a member who has suffered from mental depressions. Mr. H. jokes with Mrs. I. and calls her his sweetheart, which seems to make Mrs. I. more cheerful and happy. Mr. H. says that he loves the club because it gives him a chance to get out of his "dark room", and to be with people. He feels that he is a sociable person and has to be with people in order to be happy.

Group V

This group includes one member who feels that the Sixty Club has helped her mental health. This member had formerly been treated for mental depressions, and feels that the
club has done more to help her than all the other treatments and medicines she received.

Mrs. I. is a seventy year old, widow. She has no children but does have relatives whom she says have nothing to do with her. She is hurt over the fact that her relatives avoid her. She lives alone in a rooming house. Mrs. I. has been coming to the club for three years and came originally because she suffered from melancholia and thought that the club might help her to think about other things than herself. Mrs. I. is an extremely sensitive woman who needs constant recognition and reassurance that people are interested in her. Since coming to the Sixty Club Mrs. I has become interested in rug-hooking. She has finished several rugs and has received a great deal of attention and recognition from the club members and agency staff for her accomplishments. Mr. H. spends a great deal of time talking and joking with Mrs. I. This joking on the part of Mr. H. seems to cheer Mrs. I. up considerably. Mrs. I has become very friendly with Mrs. G., and has been invited to Mrs. G's home for dinners with other members. Mrs. I. says that if it weren't for the Sixty Club she never would have met a friend as wonderful to her as Mrs. G. Mrs. I. feels that the Sixty Club has helped her mental health more than any other treatment she has received. She says that the club is the center of her life now and that she cries on days she is ill and unable to attend the club.
Group VI

This group includes two members who had personality problems which prevented them from ever making close friendships with people. These two members feel that the Sixty Club has helped them with their personality problems so that they are now able to get along better with people and to make some friends.

*Mr. F.* is a sixty-eight year old widower. He worked as a farm laborer most of his life. He has one sister living whom he sees about once a month. He lives alone in a rooming house. Mr. F. is a loud speaking, boisterous person who formerly antagonized many of the club members. He has been coming to the Sixty Club for two years and came originally to pass the time away. Mr. F. has had many personal problems, and formerly got into considerable difficulty over his drinking. The club director has given Mr. F. a great deal of personal attention and support. He seems to have responded well to this treatment. His drinking seems to have decreased as a problem, he is considerably quieter at the club, and he now seems to be accepted by most of the club members. He takes a great deal of personal responsibility for work to be done in the club and seems to enjoy doing odd jobs for the director. Mr. F. says the club means a lot to him because it has helped him to learn how to get along with people. He says that he formerly was always "scraping with
people". Mr. F. thinks that the club director is one of the most wonderful persons he has ever known, in that she is one of the few persons who has ever shown an interest in him and helped him when he was in trouble.

Miss J. is a sixty-eight year old single woman. She worked as a clerk in a department store until the age of sixty-five when she retired. She has relatives living whom she sees about once a month. She lives alone in a rooming house.

Miss J. has been coming to the Sixty Club for two years and came originally because she was "bored with idleness after retiring and came to find smething to do". Since coming to the club she has participated in ceramics, knitting, and rug-hooking. She has become very friendly with Mrs. I. and Mrs. G. and has been invited to Mrs. G's home for dinners.

Miss J's activities at the club have been primarily of the less social type, but she is now reaching out for more social types of activities such as card playing, talking with other members, and serving on committees. Miss J. states that she has always stayed by herself, traveling alone, and never mixing with people. She feels that the club has been a blessing to her because she now enjoys being with people. She realizes now that she was formerly too selfish to give enough of herself to be friendly with people. She thinks that since coming to the Sixty Club she has been able to better understand herself. She feels that the club is the
most important thing in her life now and that there is more
kindness at the club than anywhere else she has ever been.
She feels that the club has broadened her mind and has
helped her to understand why she never wanted to be with
people.
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

In Chapter V of this study, the writer determined some of the needs and interests of the group of members interviewed. The writer found that the members interviewed had large amounts of free time available and needed things to do to occupy this time. The members also had needs for opportunities to associate with other persons in recreational activities, celebration of holidays, and eating of meals, for opportunities to acquire new manual skills, and for opportunities to make new friends to replace lost friends and relatives.

In Chapter IV, the writer presented the program of the Sixty Club and it may be concluded that this program is diversified enough to help meet the needs and interests of the members interviewed. The Sixty Club is providing a recreational program five afternoons a week to help occupy much of the leisure time these persons have. The Sixty Club is giving the members opportunities to socialize with other persons their own ages through recreational activities, celebration of holidays and birthdays, and the eating of refreshments in small substitute family groups. Through the arts and crafts program it offers, the Sixty Club is helping some members to continue to work with their hands and to acquire new manual skills. Many of the members are making
new close friends at the Sixty Club. The members are being given help with minor personal problems at the Sixty Club and are being referred to other agencies for help with the more serious problems. The Sixty Club is providing warm, pleasant, club rooms for members who would otherwise have to spend their time in cold rooms or on street corners.

The Sixty Club program does take into consideration the backgrounds of the members. The physical facilities are arranged out of consideration of the age of the members. Toilets and all other necessary facilities are provided on one floor, thus eliminating as much as possible the need for members to climb stairs. The duties involved in the club government and committees are geared to the level of the capabilities of the members. When many of the male members did not show interest in the arts and crafts program, the director found practical projects which did motivate them to working with their hands. In Chapter VI it is shown that the members interviewed do feel that the Sixty Club is helping them according to their individual needs. The many ways in which the members feel this program is helping them are presented.

In summary, it may be said that the Sixty Club program is effectively helping the members in light of the criteria selected by the writer. In addition to showing that the Sixty Club program is effective in light of his criteria, the writer believes that this study may also offer suggestions to
other communities or agencies planning club programs for their aged persons. This study points out some of the many possible ways in which a group work program can help the aged person. The study also describes in detail the experiences of one agency in setting up a club for the aged. Through this experience the Union Settlement has learned that the growth of a club for aged persons proceeds very slowly. There is a long period in the early stages of the club development where emphasis must be placed upon making the older person feel wanted and at home. Until this is done, there is little movement of the members into the activities of the club. A program for the aged requires a considerable amount of individual attention by the director to personal problems of the members. The older person comes to the club many times with health and economic problems which he feels inadequate to meet alone. Therefore, the director of a club for the aged must either give the help needed or refer the person to other agencies for help. The creating of a warm, home-like atmosphere is essential to the success of a program for the aged. Many of the older persons live alone in rooming houses which they dislike, and they therefore welcome the opportunity to be with other persons in the home-like atmosphere of their club. The serving of refreshments to the members daily is an important part of a club program for the aged. Most of the older persons eat their meals alone. When they sit down for refreshments in small groups at the club,
these groups then become substitute family groups in which the giving and sharing of food symbolizes the giving and sharing of love. The leader of a club for the aged must proceed cautiously in urging member participation in the club government or in club activities. The experience of this club has been that the older person will stay away from the club if he is given too many duties or is pushed too hard to participate in the club activities.

Old age is generally a difficult period, characterized by frustration, unhappiness, difficulty in adjustment, and loneliness. The older person has been frequently neglected emotionally as well as physically. They have large amounts of leisure time and many of them have nothing more to do to occupy this time than to sit in their rooms or on park benches. Social group work services have been primarily rendered to persons in the first part of their life span. If social group work is to meet its objective of helping to meet new needs, it must orient itself to the fact that the aged are increasing yearly in numbers and will require increased services from social agencies.
Appendix

**SCHEDULE**

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<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
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Education

Children and Close Relatives (Frequency of Contact)

Living Quarters

- a. Alone or with other persons.
- b. Type of housing.
- c. Member's reaction to present living quarters.

Eating Habits

Amount of leisure time daily.

Leisure time activities when not at the Sixty Club.

Length of time attending Sixty Club

Why interested in attending the club for the first time?

Effect of the Sixty Club program on individual's personal contentment.

Activities preferred at the Sixty Club

New friendships formed at the Sixty Club

Age group member prefers to associate with

Meaning of the club to member (or) how important club is in member's life.
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