

brotherhood action

Brotherhood of St Laurence

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Out of Institutions Into the Workforce

Today when everything costs more to make, re-cycling waste materials makes sense. Take waste paper, which is where Laurence Industries, the Brotherhood's sheltered workshop in West Heidelberg, comes into the picture.

When old newspapers, magazines and cardboard boxes are collected by youth and service groups in specific areas and taken to Laurence Industries, the first stage of re-cycling begins. The workers there sort it, shred it and bale it; then it's off to the manufacturers.

What it does helps all of us. How it does it helps the people who work there. Laurence Industries provides full-time, long or short term employment for twenty-five to thirty rehabilitees referred from psychiatric hospitals, special schools and youth training centres.

Laurence Industries is about to move into new premises three times the size of its present location. Because the new building offers the potential, it can expand both the numbers employed and the work they do.

'It's a great development' said Norm English, workshop manager. 'It means not only more jobs, but more variety in the job. We can now include book and magazine sorting for re-sale. There's also the space to arrange scrap metal collections, even pulling down electrical goods for parts. Plenty of room too for recreation.'

Mrs Janet Hawkins, program development officer for Laurence Industries, shares this enthusiasm.



'Laurence Industries is already so different from other sheltered workshops in its openness and its self-organisation. The new building will allow us to expand this even further. For example, there will be a kitchen area where people can learn basic cooking skills. Also a woodworking area. Extended programs like these will provide variety and enable women to be placed here for the first time.'

However, empty spaces in the new building for these extended small group activities lack some of the necessary equipment at present. Items needed are a table tennis

table, a pool table, electric clothes dryer, kitchen implements, carpenter's tools.

But paper production is still the first priority. Expansion here means more work for more people, which is the major objective of the rehabilitation program. To help meet this development, Laurence Industries needs more voluntary groups to assist in making this expansion possible.

If you belong to a group which can help collect paper, particularly in the northern suburbs, ring Norm English on 459 4674.