

New Publications

'Half a Chance' The evaluation of a Youth Accommodation Project. Justin McDermott. \$3.50. Brotherhood of St Laurence.

The Northcote Accommodation Project was set up by the Brotherhood as a joint project with the Melbourne Diocese of the Anglican Church, who provided most of the funding, and a community management committee, with the aim of providing a medium-term housing service for homeless, disadvantaged young people.

It was a difficult project to run, with problems related to management, staffing, and to the high expectations of the project. In 'Half a Chance', those involved describe these difficulties, as well as the positive aspects:

"There were glaring contradictions in the proposal or its implementation, but when you really look at it, NAP has done as well as any other such project. Kids have been housed, fed, clothed and given some measure of support. It has been part of their growth."

"... But you'd sooner live at home". Justin McDermott. Footscray Home Care Project for Elderly People. \$4.95.

The Brotherhood was approached by the Board of the Footscray Home Care Project for Elderly People to undertake the evaluation of the project, which has operated in Footscray since May 1982. Justin McDermott has worked closely with the co-ordinator, Val Nicholls, and the team of young people on the project. The aim has been to assist older people retain their independence in the community, and as a job creation project, it has also had the aim of exploring a new career option for disadvantaged young people.

The report shows that disadvantaged young people (early school leavers) can be successfully employed in domiciliary services; it shows the advantages of good on the job training; that young women can work very well in traditional male occupations like home maintenance; and that some young people enjoy working with older people.

"... But you'd sooner live at home" is available from the Footscray Council's Community

Services Department or from the Brotherhood.

"SPAN — The Who, What, When, Where and Why: Establishing a development programme for older people." Department of Health, Canberra 1984.

"Nothing succeeds in life like a good idea." That's how Bishop Peter Hollingworth summed up the SPAN project for older and retired people when he launched the SPAN manual earlier this year.

SPAN was begun by the Brotherhood in 1978, with guarantee of support for three years to get the project off the ground. The Spanners (members of SPAN) then had to decide their future. SPAN was incorporated as a co-operative and employed a full-time co-ordinator.

At the launch, Bishop Hollingworth described SPAN as one of the Brotherhood's greatest success stories. SPAN's basic premise is that older people should be able to contribute to the community in a positive way during their years of retirement by sharing the skills accrued over a life-time of living. Older people are then seen as useful, active and important, rather than passive and dependent.

SPAN fulfils its aims through a variety of programmes, most of which happen at the SPAN House of Thornbury. They include craft sharing with four school groups, including a group of newly arrived migrant teenagers; an adult literacy programme; a reading programme with special needs students from Northcote Tech.; a home handy person and mending service; a craft group for adults of all ages; an exercise class for the over 50's, as well as learning activities and social occasions.

Spanners see the publication of the manual as an important milestone in the history of SPAN. The book traces the steps required to establish and maintain a community project for older people, and uses SPAN's experience to illustrate how this can be achieved. It is intended for use by groups of older people themselves and is written in uncomplicated language. Workers in the aged field will also find it valuable.

SPAN's early success was certainly due to the Brotherhood's initial support. However, Spanners feel that

other groups wanting to start a similar project can do it themselves, provided there is the commitment to the idea and a lot of dedicated work.

The SPAN Manual is available from the Brotherhood or from SPAN, 298 Victoria Road, Thornbury. \$2.00 plus \$1.20 postage.

Brotherhood Film

A 20 minute documentary film on the Brotherhood has been made by Erwin Rado, with Keith and Alison Head.

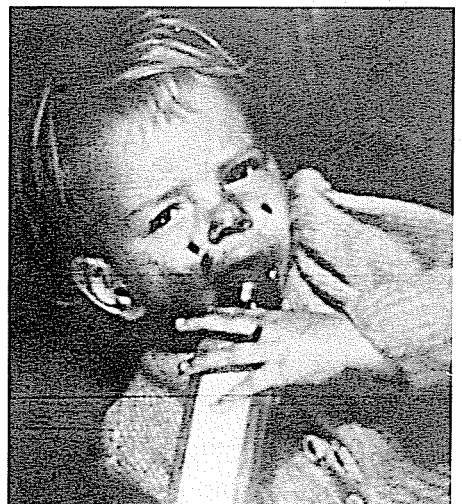
Erwin Rado was for many years Director of the Melbourne Film Festival and has recently worked on a number of films, including 'Lonely Hearts' and 'My First Wife'.

Keith and Alison Head made a film called 'The SPAN Project', about the Brotherhood's project in Northcote, at Swinburne Film School in 1981. Their particular interest is in making films with a social awareness for non-profit organisations.

Erwin, Keith and Alison have given generously of their time to make this very beautiful and moving study of the Brotherhood.

It will be launched at The Glasshouse Theatre, 360 Swanston St., Melbourne on Monday, 8th July at 6 p.m. Readers of 'Action' are warmly invited to attend. If you would like to, please ring Bonnie Turnbull on 419 7055.

The film will be available for loan, on 1/2 inch and VHS video in July and may be booked through the Brotherhood's Public Relations Department, 67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy 3065.



A scene from the Brotherhood's 1946 film 'Beautiful Melbourne', showing housing conditions for families in Fitzroy.