

### Blockbuster

Most of the Island isn't aware of the Willowbrook State School.

Located on spacious grounds in a lightly populated area, the institution for mentally retarded children and adults does its job as quietly as possible.

Its sorties into the news are rather infrequent and seldom spectacular. "Publicity" is certainly not essential to its operations.

Now, though, it has a "blockbuster" program.

Construction of six buildings costing in the neighborhood of \$7 million is under way.

These will have far-reaching effects. The building is bound to be a spur to Island economy. So will the additional jobs to be available as enrollment at the facility is boosted from 5,000 to 5,700.

Most important of all, perhaps, is the additional care and treatment being made available to handicapped persons. The hand of mercy is being stretched out farther.

## State School Birthday

Willowbrook State School last night marked its 10th anniversary on Staten Island as a state Department of Mental Hygiene facility at a Founder's Day supper and dance in the school auditorium.

Highlight was presentation of a

New York State Psychiatric Aid Achievement Award to Mrs. Christine Simpson, an attendant, of 289 Livermore Ave., West-leigh.

Mrs. Simpson, who received the award from Dr. Harold Berman, Willowbrook's director, was honored for meritorious service to the facility's patients.

Attending the event were Willowbrook's administrative and personnel officials, members of the Board of Visitors, the school's staff, employes, relatives and friends. The Minute Men played for dancing.

# Citizens Groups to Visit State Mental Hospitals

A private citizens group will visit Willowbrook State School and 26 other institutions of the state mental hospital system under a new program designed to "increase public knowledge and understanding of the problems of mental disorder," it was announced today.

Teams of visitors, operating under an agreement between the state Department of Mental Hygiene and the New York State Society for Mental Health, will make reports on physical facilities, services and hospital-community relations.

The new program will augment activities of the officially appointed state Board of Visitors at Willowbrook and at the other institutions, and is endorsed by the state Association of Boards of Visitors.

The program is being financed initially by special foundation grants and eventually will get its support from the annual public campaigns for mental health.

## Open House Set at State School

Willowbrook State School's band went into final rehearsals this week in preparation for its concert in conjunction with the facility's annual open house Thursday, beginning at 1:30 P.M., in conjunction with Mental Hygiene Week. Visitors will be taken on tours of the school's occupational, physical, recreational and educational therapy and rehabilitation departments, Dr. Harold H. Berman, director, has announced.