

WILLOWBROOK'S CITY OF 6,000

Hundreds Labor to Lessen Hardships for the Handicapped

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FIRST OF FIVE ARTICLES

Debbie is 4 years old. She's cute, likeable and has that devilish sparkle in her eye.

Timmy is 5. He has blond hair, blue eyes and likes to smile. He's a friendly youngster, Debbie is mentally retarded and is emotionally disturbed with convulsions.

Timmy is mentally retarded and has cerebral palsy.

Through hours of painstaking work, Debbie and Timmy are being helped. Though the progress is agonizingly slow, they're improving.

Debbie and Timmy are patients at Willowbrook State School. They're two of 6,000 patients. All are mentally retarded and many have a second handicap such as blindness, deafness or muscular and nervous disturbances.

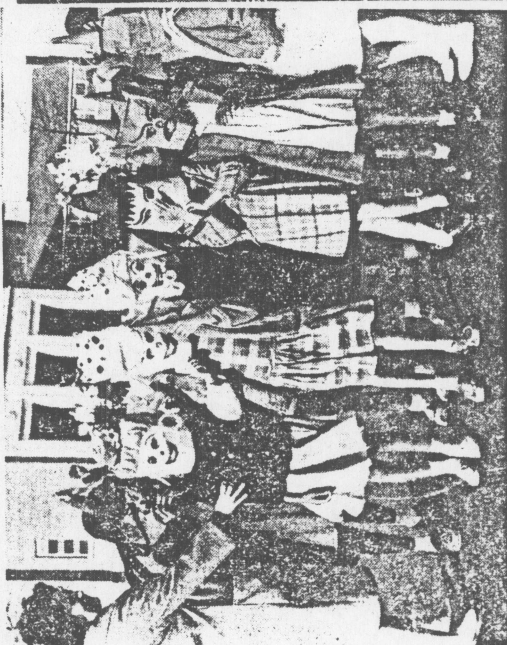
CARING FOR, training and educating these people is a monumental task.

For every three patients at Willowbrook there is an employee. These 2,000 employees are dedicated to making these mentally retarded boys and girls, men and women, as nearly self-sufficient as possible.

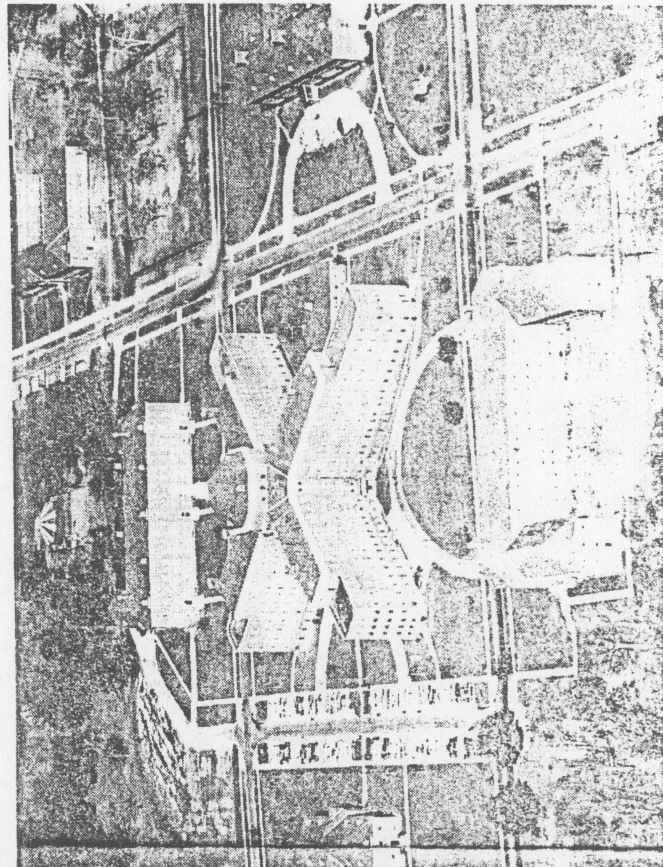
But this is only one phase of the program at Willowbrook. There is a four-pronged research program constantly probing the mysteries of mental retardation for possible causes, preventatives and cures.

From the scientific look through his microscope to the attendant holding a toddler on the merry-go-round, every employee at the institution is working to reduce the crippling effects of mental deficiency.

FIRST proposed in 1938 and bitterly opposed by the community — Willowbrook is a sprawling layout consisting of 34 buildings spread over close to 400 acres. There is much land to spare. Some of it wooded severely retarded patients are well kept. The grounds are well kept. The institution is operated by the New York State Depart-



WHERE'S THE PARTY? — There is a plenty of playtime for the several thousand children at Willowbrook. Here, a group of girls are on their way to a masquerade party. There is a wide range of recreation activities for the youngsters after they finish their way classes.



CITY WITHIN A CITY — An air view shows a few of the main buildings at Willowbrook State School, a sprawling layout which includes 34 buildings on almost 400 acres. The buildings serve 6,000 patients and a staff of 2,000. The school is operated by the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene.

1,200 aged 5 to 9, 3,000 aged 10 to 23 and 1,400 over 21.

More than 1,500 patients are severely or markedly retarded, about 3,200 are moderately retarded and 800 mildly retarded. The 400 children under age 5 are not included in this group.

Nearly all the patients at Willowbrook are there through parental or family choice. They can be removed at any time. A few are there as wards of the courts.

The wait for having a child under 5 admitted to Willowbrook is eight months.

The institution is over-crowded. Things were worse a few months ago, but patients are being transferred every day to other department facilities. A new state school being built on Long Island is expected to fill their case the crisis.

ment of Mental Hygiene. It has an \$11-million-a-year budget.

Located on a rolling landscape bounded by Victory Blvd., Willowbrook Park, Forest Hill Rd. and Willowbrook Rd., the school resembles a small city.

It has its own garbage collection system, its own police, its own golf course and pool for the patients and staff and a laundry to process their clothing. The staff includes, besides the barber, carpenters, plumbers, roofers, shoemakers and many others.

THE PATIENTS range in severity from severely to mildly retarded. The severely retarded require total care, while the mildly retarded can in some cases be trained to live normal lives in