

Walkie-talkie type hearing device donated for use at Willowbrook

By ELAINE HESS.

A hearing aid which works like a "walkie-talkie" was donated to Willowbrook State School yesterday by Local 32E, Building Service Employees' National Union, AFL-CIO, and the Benevolent Society for Retarded Children Willowbrook Chapter. New York State Association of Retarded Children location of Retarded Children that they stay riveted to their classroom sets.

The gift was dedicated by ex-Islander Raymond McDonough and his wife of Mahopac, N.Y., who at 15 drowned in a lake accident three years ago. McDonough is vice-president of the contributing union.

A brief unveiling ceremony for a wall plaque in a bright orange and yellow painted classroom for the deaf was attended by several school staff members and members of the Benevolent Society, a 21-year-old organization.

Fundraising for the equipment valued at \$6,400 has been

arranged on June 17 at Yonkers. Raceway by the New York State Association of Retarded Children to reimburse the school.

The chief advantage of the hearing aid is that it enables as many as 10 deaf children to get around on foot together. Earlier equipment with cumbersome wires required that they stay riveted to their classroom sets.

The portable aid frees them and makes outings to the community store, to a show and other places possible. It opens up new sounds and brand new experiences.

Deaf students can tune in to their guiding instructor with their environmental surround. The instructor broadcasts from a central microphone and members of the apparatus. She controls the apparatus. She can turn off alternately one earphone so that the children hear only her or switch her-

SERVICED DAILY

The battery-operated hearing aid is serviced at the end of every school day.

In many instances, this instrument makes outmoded use of hand language which people with hearing difficulty traditionally use. Their hand language enabled them to communicate effectively among themselves, but tended to isolate them from the rest of the world.

The hearing aid introduces new sounds of the world and broadens the scope of the deaf person. Sounds such as a car honking or a chair scraping have to be taught to be understood. Many deaf persons have never associated the honking noise with a car.

Dr. Jack Hammond, school director, called the gift a "mag-nificent contribution to our school program. We and the children appreciate it very much," he said.

FAMILY MEMBERS

Parents who have had family members afflicted with mental retardation, Mrs. Albert A. Levin and Mr. Irvin Bier, president and vice president, respectively, of the benevolent association, were particularly instrumental in the acquisition of the equipment.

McDonough, who has never been afflicted in his family life by mental retardation, said he undertook the project to help others.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John McDonough of 34 Roswell Ave. and brother of John Jr. of 23 Price's Lane, Travis. Miss Jean Grunstein, teacher in charge of the demonstration, in hope of acquiring more instruments, explained that another piece of equipment, properly controlled, could be operated successfully in the adjacent classroom.



Dr. Jack Hammond, center, director of Willowbrook State School, displays a new walkie-talkie hearing device to be used by residents. Looking on are Raymond McDonough of Local 32E of the Building Services Employees' National Union and his wife, left, and Mrs. Albert A. Levine and Irvin Bier, president and vice president, respectively, of Willowbrook Chapter, Benevolent Society for Retarded Children.

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