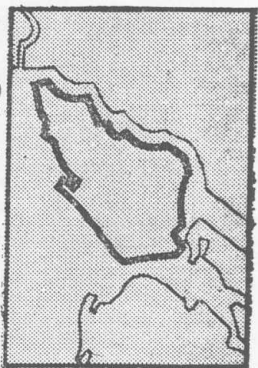


LIVING

on Staten Island



Mental Halfway House in a Home for Aged

Klein's Forest Manor Home for Adults, a West Brighton institution housing senior citizens, has come under fire from Staten Island residents because it is now also accepting discharged mental patients. Local mental health institutions are also worried about the impact of Forest Manor's new policy.

Officials of the mental institutions contend that Staten Island, already suffering from a shortage of medical facilities, is being additionally overburdened by centers like Forest Manor attracting patients from other boroughs who need extra medical or psychiatric help.

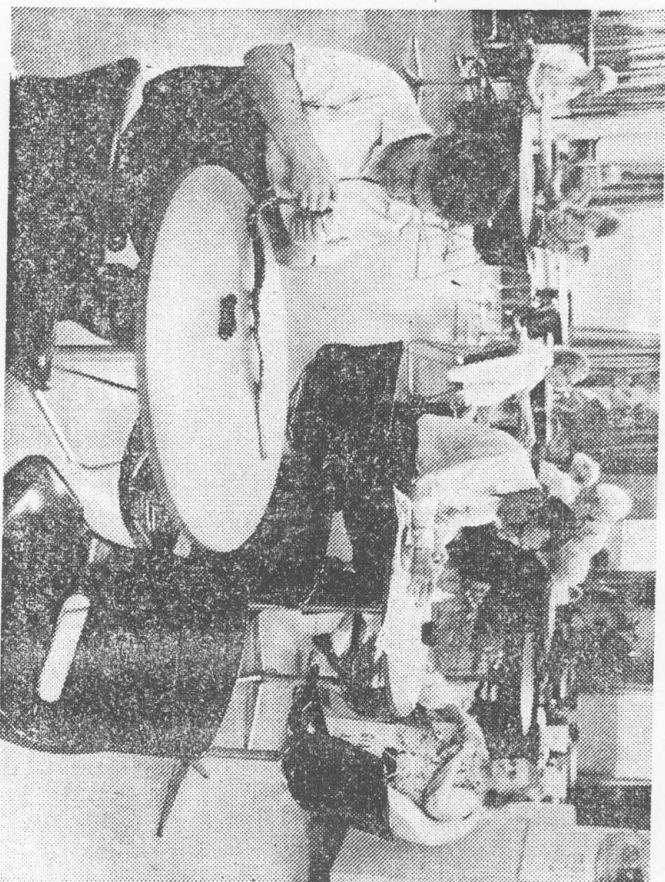
The South Beach Psychiatric Center, which has been asked to set up an after-care program for the former mental patients, says it has no money or staff to provide help to any patients who are not Staten Island natives.

The chairman of Community Planning Board 2, Ernst Bendix, said his board has received numerous complaints over the proposal for the after-care program.

"Since the home has a certificate of occupancy as a dormitory care facility," said Bendix, "we feel that such a proposal would envision a totally different use, which would make it a health-related facility."

"Furthermore," he noted, "the state Health Department has imposed a moratorium on the construction of health-related facilities on the island and would not the contemplated use violate this?"

Milt Klein, owner of the home, at 221 Forest Ave., disagrees. "We were led to believe before opening that South Beach would provide an after-care pro-



Residents of Klein's Forest Manor work on arts and crafts. The West Brighton institution is under fire over its new policies.

gram for this facility. Then, the center said it would only take care of Staten Island residents, which we think is grossly unfair."

Klein asked: "Does any community have the right to take away the right of people in a state hospital to come into that community?"

"We are here legally, licensed under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Social Welfare and the city Social Services Department," he said.

Assemblywoman Elizabeth Connelly, who has received many complaints from her district, said that the community is reacting to is "the influx of several of these types of facilities on Staten Island."

"With three already here and at least six others on the drawing board, is Staten Island, with its shortages in supportive services, to become the dumping grounds for the old and mentally disabled?" Mrs. Connelly asked.

Referring specifically to Forest Manor, she noted that "out of 110 residents, 40 are from mental institutions."

The home is still operating below capacity, however. It has 200 beds, Klein pledged that if South Beach "gives us an after-care program" the home will take only the most rehabilitated patients after a thorough screening program. Otherwise, he vowed to go to court.

Dr. Alvin Mesnikoff, director of South Beach, said he is on record as "opposing the construction of these proprietary homes for the mentally disabled on Staten Island."

"It wasn't only Klein's, but several others on the drawing boards that were seeking to bring what could amount to a few thousand patients into a community already short of adequate medical facilities," he added.

"However, now Forest Manor is here. It's a fait accompli. In presenting a proposal for an after-care program we will insist that people who live in this area get preference. If there are referrals from outside the area, we will have to get additional staffing to do the job," he said.

Meanwhile, Community Board 2 is planning a public hearing on the subject Tuesday at Morris Intermediate School, Brighton and Castleton Aves., at 8 p.m.