

CASTANER NEWSLETTER

BRUMBAUGH RECONSTRUCTION UNIT
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Castaner, Puerto Rico

BRETHREN SERVICE COMMISSION
September 1, 1947

MILEPOST FIVE

On August 2, 1942, some five years ago, the original group of CPS men arrived at Castaner. Their first feeling must have been that of futility, but as one looks now into the community in which the Unit has served, one does not have that same feeling. In the place of futility has come a challenge--that the Unit might in some way carry on the torch of service and help to a needy community. If one could count the number of lives the hospital has saved during these five years, or if one could measure the influence of unit members on the lives of individuals, or if one could calculate the impression made upon the Puerto Rican government, then he would have ample reason to be somewhat joyful as we celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Brethren work here. But the future never allows us to live on what is past, but serves to make us conscious of that which is still to be done, and leaves us humble at the thought of doing.

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CASTANER'S NEWEST HEIR

x		x
x	The youngest member of our Unit announced his arrival on	
x	Thursday evening at 5:00, on August 14, 1947. JOHN MERRILL	x
x	was given a joyous welcome, and he could not have found more	
x	grateful and happy parents than Doctors Francis and Sylvia	x
x	Helfrick. Weighing six pounds and ten ounces, Johnny's hos-	
x	pital stay was short and uneventful so that almost immedi-	x
x	ately he was able to assume his important position of young	
x	ruler of the Helfrick household. But he longs for even more	x
x	worlds to conquer, and already is laying plans for travelling	
x	to the far corners of the States.	x

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

During the latter part of August the Castaner Unit shipped to Europe over 150 pounds of magazines which had accumulated in the Unit Library's files. This action was recently decided upon by the Unit as one to give maximum use of those magazines which are of more lasting significance, since there is great need in Europe these days for magazines and books in English which bridge the gap in many of their libraries which was caused by the destruction, loss and curtailment of publication and distribution during the war years. Their need is especially for books and magazines concerning religion, politics, medicine and other such technical topics. The magazines from our library files and personal files of unit members included Christian Century, Christendom, Gospel Messenger, Our Young People, Gospel Herald (Mennonite), Evangelical Crusaders, and Builders (both Mennonite,) Christian Advocate and Motive (both Methodist), Fellowship, New Republic, The Call, The Progressive, Atlantic, Harper's,

The Journal of American Nursing, Medical Economics, Readers' Digest, the Catholic Worker, and the Cooperator.

FOUR CASTANERITES GO COLLEGIATE

On the Saturday evening of August 16th a farewell dinner was served in the dining room honoring four of our members who have so recently left the Unit to enter college. Following dinner the group was entertained in the Casa Grande living room with movies taken by Paul Snavelly.

Ruth Idleman and Wanda Brown left on August 17th to enter the Polytechnic Institute at San German. Ruth has been on our nursing staff and served as the Superintendent of Nurses for the past several months, and is to be the School Nurse as well as a special student at Polytechnic. Wanda, after her graduation from Robinson School in Santurce last Spring, returned to the Unit as one of the kitchen staff during the summer, and is now beginning her freshman year at Polytechnic.

Beth Roop and Royce Burke, the other two of our quartet of new alumni, are entering Manchester College in North Manchester, Indiana this autumn. Beth has served as our laboratory technician for the past year, and will begin her junior year at Manchester. Royce, after graduating from the Colegio Ponce de Varones in Ponce last Spring, returned to the Unit as a member of the maintenance department during the summer, and is now beginning his freshman year at Manchester. Beth left for the States on August 21st, and Royce left on September 1st.

THIS BEATS ALL

Since last October (1946, that is) the kitchen staff has eagerly awaited the arrival of a new floor model electric beater. At last it arrived with the food shipment from New Windsor, Maryland late in August (1947). The work of the cooks has been considerably lightened, and the food served has been consistently better because of the variety of work possible with the various attachments for the machine. Ice cream is made better and can now be served much oftener. Hamburger is ground easier and finer, thus producing more palatable dishes. With the dough hook the bread is mixed much better. And the fluffy mashed potatoes now possible to make with the batter attachment are a delight for all. The kitchen workers enjoy using the beater and greatly appreciate its usefulness. And all the unit enjoys the better and more varied meals which it now makes possible.

FOR THE BOOK SHELF

BLOOD IN THE STREET: The Life and Rule of Trujillo, by Albert C. Hicks. Published by the Creative Age Press, 11 East 44th Street, New York, 17, N.Y. (\$2.75) There is a man in this hemisphere about whom the people of the United States should know more. His name is Rafael Trujillo, the President of the Dominican Republic. This book contains the first details of his regime which have filtered through Dominican censorship. Rafael Trujillo is not merely a comic dictator of a tropical island. He is a living embodiment of the kind of rule so many Americans died in the hope of removing forever from the earth. This book is an effort to bring that hope closer to reality.

The author, Albert C. Hicks, a native of Chicago, is a veteran newspaper man who was for a long time a reporter on the World-Journal of San Juan, Puerto Rico. He knows the Caribbean area thoroughly, and it was while working in San Juan that the first details of Trujillo's life and rule filtered through an almost impenetrable censorship, moving Mr. Hicks to take a plane for Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The results of his investigation are found in this book.

"ELEANOR"

"Eleanor" is the Unit Hostel located in the Eleanor Roosevelt Housing Project in Hato Rey, outskirts of San Juan. Members and guests of the Castaner Project, as well as of the La Plata, Zalduondo and El Guacio Projects, are welcomed to pass the night at "Eleanor", or to go there to prepare meals while in San Juan. "Eleanor" welcomes its guests whether they come on official business or whether they come vacationing. The rule of most hostels is practiced in requiring a 25¢ payment per person per night's hospitality.

The hostel was originally located at the St. Just Project (several miles to the southeast of Rio Piedras,) where the American Friends Service Committee had a Sub-unit centered around recreation and public health work. Shortly after the Friends withdrew from a sponsorship of CPS Units (in March, 1946), Paul and Letty Leatherman of the La Plata Project established residence at the St. Just Project and became the father and mother of the then officially organized hostel. Letty did all the cooking for the hostel guests while Paul kept busy doing the buying for La Plata Project and arranging transportation to and from the States for La Plata and Castaner members, as there was a great deal of travel at that time due to CPS discharges in both the Projects.

In December, 1946 when La Plata Project suffered a personnel shortage, the Leathermans returned to their home base, and George Furse, an ex-Castanerite, kept the doors to the hostel open and collected the head tax. George, who was then doing graduate study in social work at the University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras, did no cooking either for hostel guests (as the Leathermans had done) nor even for himself. Visiting Unit members took pity on George and always invited him to join them at the table. At this time there was an average of 60 overnight stays per month, as vacationers were allowed to rent the former Central Office car for recreation trips over the week end.

It was in May of this year that the hostel was moved to its new location at the Eleanor Roosevelt Housing Project in the outer suburbs of San Juan. The building it now occupies is much larger than the one at St. Just, being one of the 30' x 100' barrack-type buildings. It is located some 100 yards off the main road in the middle of a field of tall grass, amply shaded by trees on the road side.

At the end of June the hostel again came to have both a mother and a father when Leopoldo and Clotilda Bonilla became the new hosts. Leopoldo is a part-time student at the University of Puerto Rico. Everyone finds the Bonillas a most genial and accommodating couple who are eager to make visiting hostellers feel at home. The Bonillas are expecting their first baby shortly, which event will add even more of a home atmosphere to the Unit Hostel.

AUGUST PERSONNEL NEWS:--On August 22nd Dean and Mary Katherina Rohrer arrived. Dean is learning the job of supervising the laundry, and Mary Kay is working in the hospital. They have been attending Manchester College where Dean graduated this year.

On August 23rd the Community Center sponsored the second of its "Family Nights" the new recreational and entertainment feature which the entire family attends and is able to find activities for all its members. As with the first Family Night (see last Newsletter) this was well-attended, and the people enjoyed the games, entertainments and movies.

The last part of August, Virgenmina Bobe journeyed to San Juan to attend her graduation exercises at the Presbyterian Hospital in Santurce.

On August 6th the following members of the La Plata Project visited our Unit for a short while: Paul Tiezaen of Marion, South Dakota; Clayton Gingerich of Winsburg, Iowa; William Gibboney of Pleasant Hill, Ohio; Esther Lehrman of Aberdeen, Idaho, Eleanor Weaver of Goshen, Indiana; Mr. and Mrs. Willard Good of Dewey, Illinois; and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Piepgrass of Washington, D. C.

ROSTER OF THE CASTANER PROJECT

	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>	<u>HOME ADDRESS</u>	<u>ARRIVAL DATE</u>
XC	1. Luke Bachman	Brethren	Lebanon, Pa.	May 23, 1946
	2. Martha Bachman	Brethren	Lebanon, Pa.	May 23, 1946
	3. Homer L. Burke	Brethren	Bremen, Ind.	July 25, 1947
	4. Marguerite Burke	Brethren	Bremen, Ind.	July 25, 1947
XC	5. Maurice Click	Brethren	Bridgewater, Va.	February 2, 1946
	6. Lois Click	Brethren	Wenatchee, Wash.	December 24, 1946
	7. Edna Eller	Brethren	Salem, Va.	May 31, 1946
XC	8. Walter Haag	Brethren	Whittier, Calif.	February 2, 1946
	9. Alys Haag	Brethren	Altoona, Pa.	December 26, 1945
	10. Francis Helfrick	Friends	Allensville, Pa.	May 5, 1946
	11. Sylvia Helfrick	Friends	Allensville, Pa.	May 5, 1946
	12. Betty Kimmel	Brethren	McLouth, Kansas	June 11, 1946
	13. Fern Kring	Brethren	North Liberty, Ind.	July 17, 1947
	14. Gladden Mathis	Brethren	North Manchester, Ind.	June 21, 1946
	15. Caryl Mathis	Brethren	New Lebanon, Ohio	June 21, 1946
	16. Everett B. Myer	Brethren	LaVerne, Calif.	September 23, 1947
	17. Miriam Myer	7th Day Advent.	Portland, Ore.	September 23, 1947
	18. Dale Roesch	Brethren	Ashland, Ohio	September 16, 1947
	19. Norma Roesch	Brethren	Ashland, Ohio	September 16, 1947
	20. Dean Rohrer	Brethren	Creekville, Kentucky	August 22, 1947
	21. Mary Katherine Rohrer	Brethren	Brookville, Ohio	August 22, 1947
XC	22. Paul Snavely	Brethren	Waterloo, Iowa	August 19, 1946
XC	23. Donald Sollenberger	Brethren	Curryville, Pa.	February 2, 1946
XC	24. Robert Stanely	Friends	Salem, Ohio	March 29, 1946
	25. Thelma Strite	Brethren	Hagerstown, Md.	July 17, 1947
	26. Knight Webster	Baptist	Madison, Wisc.	February 11, 1946
	27. Dorothy Webster	Baptist	Madison, Wisc.	February 11, 1946
	28. Cecil Wickline	Methodist	Warrenton, Ore..	April 12, 1946
XC	29. Howard Wolf	Methodist	Erie, Pa.	January 24, 1946
	30. Josephine Wolf	Methodist	Erie, Pa.	January 24, 1946
	31. Claude Wolfe	Brethren	Bunker Hill, Ind.	June 3, 1947
	32. June Wolfe	Brethren	Bunker Hill, Ind.	June 3, 1947
XC	33. Howard Wright	Methodist	Clarksburg, Ohio	August 19, 1946
	34. Charlotte Wright	Methodist	Clarksburg, Ohio	August 19, 1946

Now at the Beginning of our sixth year we present our roster of personnel. The arrival dates for the Helfricks and the Myers are for their second arrival, and the dates given for the Myers and the Roesches are the times they are expected in the very near future. Only eight former CPS men (marked XC) are now with the Unit.

There are also eight children on the Project:

- Lynn Burke, age 13; Jeneba Burke, age 4.
- Lizabeth Helfrick, age 2; John Merrill Helfrick (see page 1).
- Ralph Myer age 2½; Harold Myer, age 1
- Claudia Wolfe, age 2.
- Stephen Louis Wright, age 4 months.

Living with the Unit also are: Caleb Frantz of Bethel, Pennsylvania who teaches in the ninth grade at the Rabanos Second Unit School; Ermalinda Selpa of Ponce, P.R., who is the nurse for the Insular Health Department at their clinic here; Iris Rodriguez of Ponce, who is the nurse for the Fondo del Seguro del Estado in our OPD; Virgenmina Bobe of Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico who is a member of our nursing staff; and Adolfo Ramos, of Camuy, Puerto Rico who is the secretary for the Insular Health Department clinic here.