

Clair Argow Makes Report To Women's Prison Council

By ANN CONNELL
Register-Guard Society Editor

A report of her recent tour of 21 prisons in which women offenders are housed in the United States, was given by Mrs. Clair Argow, executive secretary of the Oregon Prison Assn., before the Women's Prison Council recently in Portland. The study proved to the Oregon woman, she said, that such women offenders do not need prisons which offer costly "maximum security" provisions; that they respond wholesomely to rehabilitation effort, and that trust builds morale.

First prison visited, she said, was in Vermont. She described its appearance as a "veritable Bastille," which caused her heart to sink at sight of its formidable high brick walls. Inside, to her surprise she found high morale, a kindly woman superintendent who has been there for 21 years, and a general attitude which wholly belies the grim exterior. The superintendent explained: "This used to be the men's work house. We have left it unchanged, only we don't lock the doors!"

Most successful prisons, with least average returns, she said, are those prisons for women which are run by women. Most of these are of the cottage type. Success or failure depends not on surroundings, she declared, but on staff.

Prison authorities have two responsibilities, she said: To keep the prisoner in the institution to which she has been sentenced, and also to do something constructive for her while she is there.

In several places which Mrs. Argow visited, the women inmates were treated with basic courtesy, as though they were "people" still. The visitors' presence was explained simply, their names given to the group, and often members of the inmate group were introduced to Mrs. Argow by first name, telling something of her work or accomplishment in prison. "This is Betty, who runs the laundry," or "this is Jane, who is studying so she can obtain a better position when she is released."

Honor System Good

In some institutions, inmates were permitted to usher the visitors about the grounds, and did so with good manners. Where such honor systems are in force, Mrs. Argow noted, morale of the women inmates is noticeably good.

In others, where matrons take the attitude of dictators and offenders are made to feel constantly caged, the tenseness is felt at once.

An innovation which the Oregon woman found interesting in one of the eastern states was the "pre-parole cottage," where girls expecting parole are allowed to live without constant supervision, in preparation for their return to society. When the matron took her to visit such a cottage, she rang the door bell and was admitted, as if it were any neighborly visit.

Contrasted with these progressive prisons, was the one where inmates were required to rise to their feet when the matron entered. "I almost expected to hear a 'Hell!' Mrs. Argow remarked. When the matron nodded, they were permitted to sit. No explanation of the visitors' purpose was given, no recognition of the fact that these inmates were other women, possessed of human curiosity.

Cold Food Eaten

She told of watching the women convicts file past a serving table, get their food and go to their seats. When all thirty had been served, the matron was served, all sat and ate... most of them, including the visitors, having cold food.

At a prison in the south where segregation was in force, the matron was amazed and apparently even disgusted when the visitors asked to attend a Halloween party which the colored girls were having. This, although she had just expressed her regret that they would not be present for the party which the (white) girls were to have next day. The Negro girls were having a grand march as the party entered, and a few were "strutting" a bit, in reaction to the music. Mrs. Argow smiled at this, but not the matron! She immediately touched on the shoulder the "unruly" ones, warning them to be more decorous! Under her eye, the party went forward in very dull manner. The visitor asked the matron if the girls could sing for her. She looked displeased, and said the girls would be much "disturbed" if asked to do such a thing on the spur of the moment, but no doubt they could plan to sing for her next morning, at chapel! "As if," Mrs. Argow said, "any group of Negro girls needed time to plan before they could sing!"

However, when Mrs. Argow remarked next morning that the girls had seemed to enjoy the party (wishing to be tactful), the matron smugly responded: "Yes, we let them laugh on Halloween."

(To be continued)

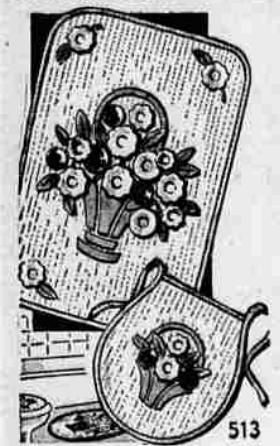
Parents Study Teen Problems

Regular meeting of St. Francis High School Parents Club will be at 8 p.m. Thursday at the school.

Following through on a question box at the December meeting, a panel, a representative parent-educator group, will discuss questions received in the question box. Members of the panel are Judge William G. East, Dr. T. A. Kerns, Lt. W. H. Smith, O. E. Kingzett, Mrs. Maurice Higgins, Mrs. Henry Schronenberg, Sister M. Eileen Rose, and Sister Miriam Margaret.

Questions invited from parents at the earlier meeting were on teenage problems. The panel will lead the discussion, inviting further questions and comment from the floor. Refreshments will be served.

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SOCIETY, WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

ANN CONNELL, Society Editor

Register-Guard, Eugene, Ore., Thur., Jan. 13, 1955 5A



GOLDENWEDS—Mr. and Mrs. William Strode will observe their golden wedding anniversary Sunday afternoon at an open house in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Burge, their daughter and son-in-law.

Strodes to Note Golden Wedding

Mr. and Mrs. William Strode of 1025 Irving Road will observe their golden wedding anniversary at an open house Sunday from 2 to 5 p.m. in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Burge, 705 Walnut Ave.

The Strodes were married Jan. 18, 1905, at Derby, Kan., and moved to Oregon in 1943. They have three children: Mrs. Burge of Eugene; Ray Strode, Douglas, Kan.; Mrs. Ralph Baker, Carmen, Okla. There are eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Two Names Added To RNA Officer List

A recent story on the installation of new officers for Royal Neighbors of America omitted the names of Mrs. Arthur A. Brown as outer sentinel and Mrs. Dora Gammon as assistant installation officer.

Altrusans Ready Proposals For Oregon Legislature

Springfield Altrusa Club began work on eight proposals it will submit to the Oregon Legislature, and to leaders in other associations, on a variety of subjects dealing with health, safety and education. These were adopted at a recent meeting and will be ready for distribution soon.

Some time ago the club voted to ask that traffic lights be uniform in color for both automobile and pedestrian traffic. Since colors for lights are designated by state law, an amendment must be made by the Legislature.

The club will work for the passage of a Community Center Act similar to the one in California, which states that school boards must make school facilities available for the use of qualified departments and/or organizations.

The proper agency will be asked to make it mandatory for all public toilets to be equipped with clothes hooks and shelves, also establishing a minimum size for stalls.

The fourth proposal asks for support of the regional library project as advocated by the State Library.

A request will be made for a survey and for the money to conduct it on a state level to insure that proposed school buildings be suitable for approved educational practices.

In the same vein, financial

PTA Schedules Annual Carnival

January 28 is a big date on the calendar of events for Westmoreland PTA, as that is when its annual carnival is planned. Al Zengel as general chairman heads a large committee of parents who will work to make the annual money-raising venture successful.

Plans are in progress for a dinner and "concessions" such as cold drinks and candy. There also will be a "spook house" for thrills; a sale of "white elephant" articles; a fish pond, dart and baseball throws, and a variety of similar entertainments.

Proceeds of the carnival will go toward meeting expenses of the PTA budget and projects.

Parents and friends in the community willing to work in booths are invited to call Mr. Zengel. Toys, trinkets, food and candy will be needed, as well. A full list of committees and chairmen will be given later.

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Sonja Lodge Seats Officers

Installation of new officers for Sonja Lodge, Sons of Norway, took place Jan. 6 in ceremonies at Sons of Norway Hall. Oscar Melby was installing officer and members of the drill team escorted the officers to their chairs.

Mathew Gustafson was seated as president. Other officers to take over their duties were: Clarence Nelson, vice president; Mrs. John Haugen, secretary; Raymond Samson, assistant secretary; Mrs. Elmer Holland, financial secretary; Thomas Gredvig, treasurer.

Howard Herbranson, counselor; Mrs. Stephen Frame, social director; Miss Helen Johnson, marshal; Mrs. Clarence Nelson, assistant marshal; Theo Maltzau, inner guard; Peter Ness, outer guard; R. Harlow Schillios, historian.

Mrs. John Eklund, musician; Dr. George Larson, physician; Tom Kaarhus, Kenneth Gustafson, Mrs. Astrid Lindsay, Stephen Frame, and Jens Thorsen, trustees; Marvin Hanson, James Chaney and Iral Nelson, auditors.

Three new members were initiated: Mr. and Mrs. Johan Christensen and Anton Luxhøj.

Refreshments were served by Mrs. Signe Anderson, Mrs. Paul Muller, Mrs. Mabel Watkins, Thorval Nysten and Mrs. Edwin Reiersgard.

Barkers Return From Midwest Tour

Mr. and Mrs. Howard O. Barker and daughter, Susan, returned to their Arbor Drive home Friday following a three-week trip to the Midwest. They left Dec. 20 and went first to Amarillo, Texas, where they visited friends. At Idabel, Okla., they visited Mrs. Barker's mother, Mrs. Cline Roberts, her sister Mrs. T. J. Wyrick, and two brothers, Charles and Norwood Roberts, and their families.

They were guests at the home of Mr. Barker's aunt in Benton, Ark., and went on to Camden, Ark., to visit at the home of Mrs. Barker's brother, Joe Roberts, and family. En route home they visited friends at Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas.

Dickinsons Return

Mr. and Mrs. D. D. Dickinson returned Saturday from a ten-day trip to San Francisco, where they visited with their son, Walter, his wife, and son, Robert. Walter Dickinson is employed by United Air Lines. En route home, their son Wayne, who lives in Medford, visited with them during the plane stop there.

BREADED PORK chops are delicious but you must make sure they are well done. To test, cut a small slit near the bone; if no trace of pink can be seen on the meat it is ready to serve.

Card Parties to Earn Funds for Projects

Members of Beta Gamma Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi at Springfield will give card parties in their homes during the last week of January. Each hostess will provide prizes and refreshments so all proceeds from the parties may be used for cultural and civic projects. Mrs. Kenneth Buss is president.

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