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## PREFACE

This account relies extensively upon largely unedited taped interviews with persons who are familiar with and who have participated in the EBAC organization over the years. The reason for treating the history in this manner is to preserve the spontaneity of the conversations while purs<sup>u</sup>ing the historical account. My own parenthetical remarks are occasionally used to explain the context of a quotation.

## INTRODUCTION - CHILDREN WHO SEE THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY

The children helped by the East Bay Activity Center see the world differently, and, by the world, they are seen as different.

These children have characteristics in common that set them apart from their peers. They are unable to cope with normal public school education. They are often distraught, withdrawn, unable to channel their energies, out of touch with reality. The most common symptom of their afflictions is withdrawal - away from the world and into themselves - into silence, seclusion, inactivity. At the same time many of these children will alternately exhibit very active and aggressive, even violent, behavior. It is the very intensity of their fears of life that they cannot handle. Many of the children are autistic, that most severe and time-consuming disturbance to treat.

Recognition of emotional illness in very young children is a new field in medical science. Even newer is the systematic effort to treat the traumatic fears, the isolation, and the exaggerated insecurity which engulfs these children. Such diagnostic treatment coupled with appropriate education is still very much a pioneering effort. The story of EBAC traces one such creative endeavor.

EBAC is a small private non-profit agency established first in Berkeley and now housed in a new, modest-sized, specially-designed center in Oakland, California, on the eastern edge of San Francisco Bay. The purpose of EBAC is to seek and pursue patterns of activity for these children that will enable them ultimately to live normal lives. In the past decade over two-thirds of these children

have returned to regular schooling and to normal community life.

The children, usually about 20 in number and ranging in age from two years to 12, attend a five-day-a-week program for 11 months of the year. The children are thus able to live at home rather than having to be placed in a state institution, a treatment pattern which is meeting with growing enthusiasm for many types of cases in the mental health field. Family counseling is provided and encouraged. EBAC teachers, usually on a one-to-one basis, use music, dance, games, trips, arts, and crafts to help the children along the path to overcoming their emotional disturbances.

Referrals to EBAC are made by family doctors, pediatricians, nursery and elementary school teachers, school psychologists, and parents. Increasing numbers of diagnostic evaluations are being recommended for younger children, a practice EBAC encourages.

A child's acceptance into the program is based solely on an evaluation of his or her needs and the applicability of EBAC's program to these needs.

Funding for the Center comes from varied sources, and the mix of sources has varied considerably over the years. The history of EBAC financing, and its problems, will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

EBAC has also developed programs for consultation with and assistance to other public and private agencies concerned with education and mental health. EBAC provides intern opportunities for local universities and colleges which train graduate students in

psychology, nursing, and child-related medical courses. EBAC continues to be a model on which many parallel agencies have been formed and from which other agencies have learned.

This report summarizes the 28 year history of this pioneering non-residential facility for emotionally disturbed children, the generosity of its fund raising sources in the community, and the dedication and support of its staff.

## INCEPTION AND THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

The Berkeley Activity Center, as EBAC was first called, was organized in the spring of 1952 by Elizabeth Faragoh, the mother of a disturbed child, Franchon Coffey, next-door neighbor of the Faragohs, her husband, Dr. Hubert Coffey, a professor of clinical psychology at the University of California at Berkeley, and Dr. Phyllis Van Vleet, a clinical psychologist with the Berkeley Public School system.

At the time they expressed the purpose of the fledgling organization in the following words: "To offer a limited group of emotionally disturbed or mentally ill children the same educational and recreational opportunities which contribute to the physical well-being and social growth of all children."

Implicit in the philosophy was the thought that, while progress might take place, criteria for acceptance into the program would not be based upon the likelihood of success. The Center was conceived as a pilot project, to pioneer in action-research with children who were more emotionally disturbed than neurotic. An additional goal was to offer a training facility for teachers and counselors in the field.

The first director was Betty Meredith-Jones, from the physical education department at U.C., who had had experience with dance therapy in mental hospitals. One paid assistant was a specialist in occupational therapy. There were a number of student volunteers. Dr. Louise Petty, a Berkeley school psychiatrist, was a consultant. Augusta Ury, a psychiatric social worker<sup>dr</sup>, provided screening services

and helped advise the parents of the enrolled children.

During that first summer of 1952, a four-hour, five-day-a-week program of arts, crafts, music, dance, swimming, games, and field trips was organized in the kindergarden room of the Thousand Oaks School in Berkeley. Fourteen children attended the six week session for longer or shorter periods. By 1953 some academic work was introduced into the curriculum for those who could profit by it.

#### ELIZABETH FARAGOH

How did it get started? Well, my daughter Susan was home from Langley Porter (a U.C. psychiatric hospital in San Francisco). She was about 18 and wanted school, asked for it, made it clear that that's what she wanted, although of course this was quite impossible. There was no school at that time that would take her, and no services whatsoever.

Since then we found that there are many children excluded from school - students with emotional disturbance or behavioral disturbance. At that time we didn't know as much as we know now, but we guessed. So Dr. Coffey next door and I and Phyllis Van Vleet, who was a school psychologist, sat down to talk about this. Phyllis was interested in Susan because Phyllis had had some training at Langley Porter when Susan was there, so she was acquainted with our daughter, and in that spring of 1952 we started to think of what we could do - possibly - for a summer program. Actually, summers were

always a very difficult time for us. There was lots of activity going on and Susan was not part of it.

So we thought about what we could do, and I had some money, and so we said - okay - we've got a little money; let's get started with this project. And Phyllis got the Thousand Oaks School - the kindergarden room - for a six week session.

We got the school psychiatrist, Dr. Louise Petty, to be our psychiatric consultant. We told people like the staff at the Family Service Agency about the program to see if they had any children. We found the children in various ways. And through the schools.

We opened with 12 children early in July, most of them aged eight through 14. We got a director, Betty Meredith-Jones, She was a marvelous choice because she had so many skills. Her main skill was movement and dance, plus handiwork skills and teaching skills. She'd take them swimming. They went swimming once a week at the Y.

We had two parents' meetings that summer, which were tremendously interesting. It was the first time, I guess, that any parents had got together on these problems. There was a wide range of reaction by the parents (about having these children all together in a group).

We had no affiliation with the public school system. They gave us \$45 and the use of the room. Dr. Coffey gave his services. We paid the psychiatrist. We got lists of people



and we got kind of organized with sponsors, although no money raising yet to speak of. There was very, very little money outside of the money that came from my family. Some of the parents wanted to give some money. One parent gave \$50, one gave \$5, one \$10, one \$1.

There was no tuition at this point. It was interesting from the point of view that some parents were very upset because there was no tuition. They wanted to know where the money came from. I don't know why we didn't just tell them. You know, that we had raised the money and that we wanted to put on the program free that year. I don't know. Such things seemed difficult to say at that time.

People who helped us, acting essentially as board members, who were advising, were saying, well but these parents have so many problems that it's terrible to burden them with anything else. In fact that argument always annoyed me, because parents can share some of the problems, and want to, and feel better for it.

Helen Meiklejohn, president of the Berkeley Mental Health Association, and Dr. Ann Martin, founder of the Children's Hospital of the East Bay, became interested in the Center project that summer of 1952, and the Mental Health Board gave it their sponsorship. Under this auspices a meeting was held on September 22, 1952, at Herrick Hospital for about 40 professional persons from the East Bay psychiatric community. Van Vleet, Coffey, and Meredith-Jones reported on the summer program. As a result of

this meeting the Berkeley Mental Health Association undertook to make a brief census of the need for special classes for emotionally disturbed children in the East Bay.

Questionnaires were mailed to the various local school districts and to psychiatric and social service agencies. When the results were interpreted they seemed to indicate that the percentage of troubled students in the local school population was about equal to that of troubled adults in the United States in general.

With these results and with the encouragement of the Berkeley Mental Health Association, the Center was incorporated as a non-profit charitable organization on May 1, 1953. Signers of the incorporation papers were the newly formed Board members Dr. and Mrs. Hugh Coffey, William Commerford, Mrs. Faragoh, Dr. Martin, Mrs. Meiklejohn, Audrey Schumacher, Pearl Simburg, Dr. Van Vleet, and Dorothy Williams, an attorney. On October 5, 1954, the Board voted to change the Center's name to the East Bay Activity Center, a result of several month's discussions on an appropriate name.

#### ELIZABETH FARAGOH

By the end of that first summer, Helen Meiklejohn and Ann Martin had visited the Center together and were interested in it. They more or less set up a kind of working board. During the winter there was a ~~truncated~~ truncated program for three children; everybody else was back in school. It went on that winter, with Lillian Weitzner <sup>a psychologist,</sup> as director, in odd hours and in odd places - whatever we could find. It wasn't every day.

The second summer Lillian Weitzner was the director and Frankie Lemon began as a teacher of arts and crafts. (Mrs. Lemon has been consistently involved with EBAC ever since and is currently its program director.) Again we had a couple of volunteers to help with the 13 or 14 children - same kind of program, same place. I think <sup>we</sup> were three summers at Thousand Oaks School. In the winter times, the second and third years, we used the burned-out building in Live Oak Park. It was open to the sky, so we couldn't use it in rainy weather. It was always easier to find a place in the summer, you see, like a park or a school. Same kind of program from the very beginning.

We tried to find out what was happening other places. When we started actually there was no other day program that I know of in this country. Six months later, In Brooklyn, New York, the Links School was started. I visited that the week before they opened. They were going to be opening with three children, just as we did. They had exactly the same kind of program that we developed, the same kind of treatment altogether.

They had begun, however, with a group of parents who had met first and decided they wanted to do something. They wanted to have a program; that was their great strength. And that was our weakness. We tried so many angles before we went directly to people who needed it most. It took us quite a few years to get going in this catch-as-catch-can way. We didn't ask for tuition until about the third year, maybe the second summer. We didn't know what to ask; people

gave whatever they wanted to give. There wasn't any serious attempt to raise money for several years. I really think it began with Peggy Hayes getting in on this.

#### DIXIE CARPENTER

EBAC started for me as a summer camp. Lillian (Weitzner) asked me in the spring of '55 if I would run a summer camp for this group of children. The Tilden rangers generously gave us their own little meeting house for indoor work and play. A warm-hearted woman who ran a stable in northeast Kensington lent us a gentle old horse, and the Tilden rangers let us stable him up above the Girl Scout shelter.

So we painted, drew, played with clay and blocks, swam - or rather - waded in Lake Anza, took walks, and rode or patted "our" horse. A devoted group of volunteers, including people from the Gamma Phi sorority, drove the children to and from camp. Some of the children came from housing projects as far away as southwest Oakland.

When camp was over Lillian asked me about my training and experience and asked if I'd be willing to set up a regular school with the camp children. Lillian herself wanted very much to go to graduate school for a master's degree in social welfare. I knew professionally of the difficulties of disturbed children, but I didn't know much about autism. I asked my faculty advisor whether she would advise me to take the job or finish up my Ph.D. She said, take it. So, although humbly, I said yes to Lillian. (Mrs. Carpenter did eventually get her advanced degree.)

For the next few years our school was housed, courtesy of the Oakland Park and Recreation Department, in small public park buildings which we might use only until the public came at two p.m. The two major disadvantages were lack of security and privacy, and the fact that all our equipment had to be put away in the small closet put at our disposal or else taken home in my car. But we were grateful to be able to use swings and other equipment and to have space to run about.

Through 1957 the Center used these Oakland playgrounds and recreational areas for its activities, none of them terribly satisfactory or conducive to continuity. Meanwhile, however, the organization's support capacity, both in staff, volunteer contributors, and organized supporting personnel, was growing and solidifying.

#### FRANKIE LEMON

We had these always-temporary quarters. At one time we were in the First Methodist Church, in the Sunday school area. But we were short-staffed. We lost one little girl to a wedding party. Down the aisle she went, and how do you retrieve this little flapping number, who was in the procession, without making more of a scene. All you can do is ring your hands and sigh, because, if we'd retrieved her, it would have been worse.

## A PERMANENT LOCATION AT LAST - THE FIRST EBAC BUILDING

By late 1956 the Center had voted to raise full tuition from \$75 to \$100 a month for children whose parents could afford it, with outside contributions helping with scholarships for those who could not. Dixie Carpenter, who had been appointed director in the fall of 1955, had a team of five professionals with various skills helping with the children.

The need for a permanent facility, both for continuity and for better teaching effectiveness, was increasingly obvious, having first come under serious consideration early in 1954. Various local houses available for rent were considered and then rejected for one fault or another. Ruth Letchworth, on behalf of the newly-formed EBAC Guild, spent a great deal of time searching out possible rental properties. Under the leadership of president Peggy Hayes, the Board in 1957 concluded successful negotiation for a 10-year lease at no fee of land at 2525 Perkins Road from the Lincoln Child Center in Oakland. (In 1966 the address of the property was changed to 2545 Charleston Street.)

### PEGGY HAVES

I became involved with the Center through Dr. Ann Martin, who was the founder of the Children's Hospital of the East Bay (now of Northern California) and who was very interested in the study of emotionally disturbed children and chances to observe them. She asked me to go to this meeting, because she was sick. So I went. There were about four

people there, at Elizabeth Faragoh's, and when I came<sup>in</sup> out - I was president of the Board!

At the time (1954) the Center met on various playgrounds in Oakland, some of them in very unpleasant neighborhoods. Everything always had to be put away by two o'clock in the afternoon, and sometimes there would be bums sitting along the bench outside of the fence in the sun while the children played on the equipment.

So I decided that the thing we needed the most was a permanent place to be. For some reason I went to the Community Service meeting and then to the Lincoln Home. The Lincoln Home had a hill right next to it, and on top of the hill was a little building. And I thought, well, wouldn't this be a nice nucleus for us, because here is this big area to play in and this little building.

Well, the Lincoln Home Board didn't like this idea very much. It seemed there were all kinds of difficulties about sewage because they had a septic tank and couldn't have any great number of people using it. So they said we could have an area down the hill. The man who helped us so much about getting this site was James R. Mann, the executive director of the Lincoln Home.

In 1953, after the Center was incorporated and its name adopted, operating funds were scant. But then so was the program. A total of \$3200 was spent, all funded by donations from among the founders. Expenditures rose to \$3900 in 1954, funded from persons

interested in EBAC but not solicited from the parents.

By 1955 it was clear to those concerned that, for EBAC to provide a systematic treatment and educational program, it would need more community support, more cohesive staffing, and a more satisfactory base. A number of factors coincided to help: establishment of the Guild, which would make possible more consistent fund raising; a decision to establish tuition for families able to afford it; and some grants from public and private sources. The specifics are spelled out in a later chapter.

EBAC solicited and received advice on how to raise funds for its projected new building on the Perkins Road property from Dr. Bernard Manischewitz, national president of the League for Emotionally Disturbed Children. Robert Ratcliff contributed the architectural work and Richard Kahan and Conrad Ambrose of Basic Homes contributed their contracting services. Many East Bay Area firms and individuals contributed goods, funds, and services to complete the building.

#### ELIZABETH FARAGOH

I think one of the things that delighted me most about this list of donors was "Light Bulbs" from Westinghouse and General Electric. Nothing was too small!

#### BOARD MINUTES - September 1956

Mr. Ratcliff is our architect and our biggest problem of the moment is concerned with getting a sewer.

#### DIXIE CARPENTER

It was wonderful when we learned we would really have a building



of our own. It was fun for the staff to be able to tell the architect what seemed most important to us for our children; for instance, safety, water, sand, a kitchen, a place to be quiet, a school room, cupboards which could be locked. And at last we had a place for a certified teacher to give each child whatever academics he or she was capable of.

#### PEGGY HAYES

Then of course there was the business of getting permits, and this is endless, and to me it was Greek, and sometimes funny. Two contractors came into the picture, I know not from where. They were not busy at that time and felt like contributing some services to humanity. They were also interested in something called ForestWall, which is a made mixture about one and a half to two inches thick composed of compressed sawdust mixed with kind of an epoxy, and on the outside a sort of asbestos coating. It had been tested at the University and found fire-resistant. They wanted to see if it could be used in homes. So they proposed to build the building out of this material, which came in big sheets, so that it could be put up easily.

Robert Ratcliff was nice enough to ride herd on this to be sure it was all right. The building that they put up was very simple; it was really a rectangle, with the inside divided into rooms. Now the contractors were the ones who got all these things donated from sub-contractors and building supply companies, like excavating, grading, sewer labor and materials, cement work. And then some radiant heat contractors were very interested in trying out some ideas about

radiant heat for us, in the cement floors. This is very pleasant, but it proves to be highly impractical, because if a pipe bursts or anything happens you are really in for it. Roofing, glass, tile, office furniture, play equipment were all donated. Really, people were so generous it was fantastic. And they were so generous when we went around to ask for grants and things.

Mrs. M.H. Shepherd was said to have given dishes and bowls, but she gave endless work. She wrote to every single foundation that was in a little book which told about foundations and places to go for grants. She not only wrote to every single one but she followed up too.

The construction costs, as was expected, exceeded the original estimates and, more importantly, they exceeded funds available for construction. To avoid bank interest at least temporarily, a loan of almost \$5000 was made from the EBAC operating fund to its construction fund in December of 1957.

#### PEGGY HAYES

The parents did a lot of work. They cleaned up the yard and painted. When it came to the dedication arrangements, that was really very funny. Because of the Guild, under Ruth Letchworth, we had a very ceremonial time. I made a speech, which must have been terrible. I remember being very scared. And the rain came down just at that moment. They gave me a plaque, and the plaque was hung up on the wall right opposite the front door. It hadn't been there three months but what it was stolen.

People were also great about working on the Board and the committees, although it was harder to recruit them for the latter.

But we had a fine treasurer, who smoked a horrible pipe and, in a small room, made us all sick to our stomachs.

People like Elinor Breed were interested. She wrote articles for the Oakland Tribune now and then, and she would always come to meetings and see if she couldn't pick up something that was news that could bring us before the public again.

Almost the entire time I was connected with EBAC I was president. Five very wearying years, because I was always terribly afraid that I would do something wrong with regard to the children.

All my friends ran when they saw me coming, because they knew they were going to be asked for something. When it came to delivering things, we said to the transfer company, "People are giving us these things for nothing; can't you deliver them for nothing?" And they did.

In 1959 the staff suggested that a "quiet" room was needed to be used by one student at a time and one staff member. This room also was to feature a one-way glass viewing window. By fall it was decided that, if funds could be raised, the addition should be enlarged to accommodate various other needed functions, particularly more space for staff. Plans again were prepared by Batcliff's office, and construction of over 400 square feet was completed in mid-1960 at a cost of approximately \$5200.

In the summer of 1963 a room was added on the southeast side of the existing building for \$5230 to meet the need for more enclosed

space. Board member Ruth Benner supervised and coordinated the project.

In 1964 the Guild undertook an extensive job of refurbishing the offices. About the same time volunteers from the Oakland High School ROTC repainted the building and cleaned up the grounds.

In 1966 another remodeling and refurbishing of the structure was completed with Guild money and Navy surplus lumber and glass. Board member Catherine Dewey spent the summer supervising and coordinating this project. By the first of the following year the somewhat drawn-out job was complete, including a new paint job deemed to have beneficial effects on the students as well as everyone else.

In early 1968 the Lincoln Board voted to extend EBAC's lease on the Lincoln property for an additional five years at only a nominal fee, giving the Center until 1977 to make plans for future settlement.

In April of 1968, after several months of discussion, it was decided by the Board to obtain a 10 by 52 foot portable building for \$12,000, plus installation and remodeling. The unit was to be used for storage of equipment and records, a small conference area, and additional toilet facilities. Its cost, installation, and minor refurbishing were to be financed by a combination of a major gift from a Chicago friend of Frankie Lemon, memorial gifts in memory of recently deceased Board member Kay Rinehart, various donated stocks and bonds, and a loan of no more than \$3500, plus whatever foundation funding could be successfully pursued.

A permanent arcade connecting the unit with the main EBAC building 20 feet away (a separation required by the City Planning Department) was designed as a contribution by Ratcliff's office. The new unit was dedicated on November 15, 1968, with Judge Jacqueline Taber as the featured speaker. The Guild acted as hostesses for the dedication and the Dianians, another supporting organization, acted as guides. The dedication plaque read "The Kay Rinehart Memorial Building."

Additional portable facilities - for storage of maintenance equipment, storage of bicycles, and a playhouse - were installed in the summer of 1969, along with surrounding grass turf, for about \$1000.

## THE CHILDREN, THE PARENTS

There were a maximum of 10 students in regular attendance up until the first of 1959, at which time the number was increased to 11 and then to 16 by 1962. In 1966 the Board voted to increase the maximum to 20, where it has remained, although at any one time there may be only 18 or 19 in attendance. A summer session of about six weeks, generally with fewer students, has been held almost every year since EBAC's inception, the exceptions being a few times when either sufficient funds or adequate staff were not available.

### DIXIE CARPENTER

I came to think that the children whom we saw get markedly better were those who were either less estranged from the beginning, or those whose fears could be verbalized, or those who were able to come out of themselves enough to identify with something, however bizarre - with something "other." Like Chuckie with the mynah bird, or Ronnie with the piano and later the motor. The leap to seeing himself as a person, related to other persons, was apparently not as great as with those locked deeper within themselves.

We had a social worker who worked with the parents. Poor parents - so troubled, confused, often so guilty because of the disrupting presence of mentally ill children in their families.

## FRANKIE LEMON

Time is much longer for children than adults; that's normal. But for these children time is even infinite, because they don't have as many cues, and most of them don't even know clock time. So, with awaiting an event, like the arrival of the school bus in the afternoon, the internal time starts panicing the child. They might have to sleep here; they are going to be abandoned. I think that a lot of the problem comes from the feeling of not being wanted to begin with. You reassure them over and over again, but the feeling is too powerful and the words don't really allay the anxiety. Sometimes they're out there waiting for the bus and they can barely tolerate it inside themselves.

That's why the environment is so important, because there isn't any aspect of what, you know, we take for granted that isn't disturbing to them. The spacial perspective, the time sense, their sense of what's permanent, all are distorted. They don't feel that things will stay. It's called "object permanence," or "object constancy." It means that, if you don't have it, you have to keep re-checking.

A lot of it is a question of feeling. It should start at about eight months. The baby that throws the bottle out of the crib thinks that he is bringing his mother, that the bottle and his action bring the mother, that she is not an independent actor but a response he creates. Well, with our kids, I don't think they've had that success. If

they threw something out, it disappeared; it vanished in some kind of limbo forever. It wasn't retrieved by the caring person who heard it fall. The child knew it had lost its lifeline, as it were.

Many of the children become panic-stricken with fog. The marks that are familiar to the children, when they vanish, it creates a total panic. If they cannot see the "Mormin" Temple (as they call it), all around you hear these buzzes. Their own feelings of solidity aren't that powerful or profound enough for these feelings to dissolve or disintegrate. Much of the panic generally comes from the feeling of disintegration. They look at the environment and think, "If this can happen to something as big as the temple, where is poor little old me?"

And then you get this feeling during rain. We are so pre-occupied with the environment. They cannot process it. If there's too much water and muck around, the early toilet training, everything gets into this; this messy environment outside, and what have they done that's so bad as to create this terrible horrible thing. And all we can do is to hold it and try to keep them sane.

If one kid is out of line and you bawl him out, the whole room starts feeling that they are the victims. Because they're not living in their own space; one move becomes everybody's.



## PEGGY HAYES

And then there was a little girl named Francine who was oblivious to the fact that she was an individual. One day she was on the swing and said, "Push me." Everyone rushed around in excitement ~~==~~<sup>because</sup> she had used a personal pronoun.

## FORMER EBAC STUDENT

(What was it like to be a student at EBAC in the early 1960's?) It was kind of frightening, a little strange. It was the first place, 'though, I'd been where I was treated as being a member of the group and given a certain amount of respect, a lot of love, and a lot of firmness, especially Don in the shop who taught me about basic tools. We made signs for the front and back gates and varnished them.

The place when we walked in always had kind of a funny smell, like concrete when it's wet. Or the kitchen - we used to cook in there sometimes, making cookies or brownies. Once in a while we'd walk down to the Park store. It's no longer there. The whole neighborhood has changed tremendously. We used to like to walk through the main room to the divider with the one-way mirror that you could see through. We caught on to the mirror pretty quick.

My memory that far back isn't very good. I blocked out a lot of it because I had so many unpleasant experiences as a child outside of EBAC. Until I was in my early teens I had only one friend who was in my peer group, my age

group, and so EBAC was really a haven for me, a haven for my parents.

I believe I was there three years. After I left EBAC I went to a private school in Berkeley and then public school in Piedmont and Oakland. It was quite a bit different. When I left EBAC I really didn't know what to expect. I thought very likely that the people I'd deal with, even though they didn't know me personally, would somehow sense that I was different. I felt myself a bad person because I was treated that way by my peer group where I grew up.

When I went to Berkwood - it was a private school in Berkeley - and walked into the classroom the first day, the people were genuinely nice and welcomed me. I was so shy I broke down crying. I got over it pretty quick, in a period of weeks. I made some pretty good friends, some of whom I still see occasionally. I ran across one of them when I was going to Meritt<sup>f</sup> Junior College. We sat down and talked about ~~about~~ two or three hours.

One thing I got from EBAC was a sense of the worth of the individual, a feeling that, no matter who you were or what you did, you deserved respect as a human being; that you were a good person and it didn't matter if you were different. It was important to be a good person; it was important to be fair, if you could be; but it was also important not to pretend to be something you were not.

There was a lot of, I guess you could call it pressure, to behave in socially acceptable ways, and to accept other people as human beings also. There was a very strong demand that you take responsibility for your actions.

I was really so much in my own world; we all were. We were all very taken up with our own view of the outer world. We saw that what other students did affected us directly - took something away from us, or threatened to monopolize the attention of one of the instructors.

A lot of noises frightened me. I didn't like people getting close to me, touching me physically. When things were different than I was used to, I found it very frightening. Security was the attention of the mother or father or instructor. One of the things they taught me at EBAC was that it's okay, you can live with temporary rejection; it doesn't mean they don't still love you.

I learned patience.

I don't know where I would be now if it wasn't for EBAC. I think about it. I know that before I got in there my parents went to see a neo-Freudian psychiatrist who recommended that I be put in a home for the dangerously mentally ill for the rest of my life. I still remember sitting there, I was right across the desk, and she just

treated me like I wasn't there. I was sitting with my father and mother on each side of me. She said, "Well, obviously, Mr. Smith, the child is incurable. I suggest you save yourself a lot of trouble and pain and simply put him in a mental institution for the rest of his life."

A parent helped found EBAC, and throughout its history there has been almost constant involvement on the part of parents of EBAC children. There has, on the part of the staff, been constant concern that a social worker or psychologist be available to help the families of EBAC children with the very special problems that they must face. Parents' groups have often served as support systems for each other. And for over 25 years parents in various ways have served on work crews, clean-up squads, and in many fund raising efforts of their own.

FATHER OF FORMER EBAC STUDENT

What was it like to be an EBAC parent? I'm sure each one of us would answer this differently according to our individual experiences. But we all had in common one characteristic. We were relieved to be rid of that monstrous burden for a few hours five days a week. Selfish? Yes, but we were selfish in the elemental ways of wanting to preserve our own sanity, to take pressure off of siblings, and to maintain in so far as possible the normal flow of domestic harmony and tranquility.

Most of us knew the consequence of committing a child to institutional care. We know even now that means warehousing a child, usually for the remainder of an unnatural life. Insofar as we could we rejected warehousing and opted for whatever treatment was available. And, in this area, when my son was a disturbed child, EBAC was the only treatment center available to us. To say we were pleased to connect with EBAC, or to say we were happy to find such a facility, would be inaccurate as expressing our feelings. Rather we felt like shipwrecked sailors clinging desperately to a leaky raft. And EBAC to us was the sound of the surf and the sight of land.

The family of an emotionally disturbed child has to be seen with each member being subject to different kinds and degrees of pressure and pain. Dad gets off easiest. For eight to ten hours of each working day, Dad is at work, in

a totally different environment. And it may be coincidental, but in my years of knowing other EBAC fathers, I never once heard complaint about poor job pay or working conditions or whatever it is the average guy thinks could or should be changed to make that eight hour day go a little easier or faster.

Siblings of disturbed kids take a hell of a beating in the p#cking orders of childhood. That constant, "Hey, your brother's (sister's) crazy" has one of two effects. The sibling toughens internally to meet a hostile outside pressure, or the sibling weakens, becomes withdrawn, neurotic, and generally resentful at being any part of such an outcast family. Probably these powerful opposing forces are at all times operative in the mind of the pre-teen sibling. And how they resolve themselves is just luck and the way the dice fall.

Our daughter was mentally toughened - and lucky.

Now let us consider the mother of an emotionally disturbed child. On top of superable burdens like raising the family, making like sexy when Dad feels that way, managing a budget,<sup>and</sup> the whole big sweat of disorder that being a mother means in these times, the mother of a disturbed child has the kid on her back 24 hours a day seven days a week. Additionally, she's made to feel guilty - it's all your

fault, you spoiled him (her) rotten. That constant refrain from friends, neighbors, her and her husband's families, quite combine to wear mom down. When a disturbed kid's mother tells dad, "I'm sorry, dear, not tonight, I have a headache," she is not fooling. She really does have a headache, and a good reason for having one.

I don't know if it's still done, but we used to have parents' meetings once a week. Usually I was the only dad there. But I recall the mothers talking amongst themselves, kind of comparing notes. And I especially remember how mutually supportive they all were when they saw and accepted the similarity of their circumstances.

Basically the mothers of EBAC children had one big problem. ~~And~~ That was to learn ~~that~~ it was not their fault. The EBAC mothers that I knew were frightfully brutalized people. And at those meetings with other EBAC moms and with staff, they learned in one degree or another ways of coping with an unsupportable life circumstance. With EBAC help they mostly survived. Without EBAC I wonder how many could.

You see, we are not looking just at EBAC children. We are looking at EBAC families. And that's a necessary extension not too many outsiders perceive. Unless mother and dad and siblings can see themselves singly and collectively as worthy worthwhile human beings, our mentally disturbed child doesn't have much chance of recovery, even with the most intensive kinds of therapy.

In the business of teaching mothers that they are, honest to God real human beings, I think EBAC did and still does a helluva fine job. And if you think on it carefully, I think you'll see that as EBAC's most important function. I go along with women's lib in some ways, but a disturbed child needs a strong supportive family of which the linchpin is the elemental indomitable mother.

#### MOTHER OF A FORMER EBAC STUDENT

Our son was taken ill in 1957 with what was eventually diagnosed as encephalitis. (His resulting impairment from this disease made him subsequently into a case which EBAC accepted as falling within its possible ability to help.) At the time my husband was in bed in a plaster cast after back surgery; our daughter was recovering from a tonsilectomy; and I was convalescing from a severe case<sup>of</sup> mononeucleosis. My emotional reaction to my son's diagnosis and prescribed course of treatment was, "I can't do it." But I had a staunch strong-minded spiritual teacher at the time whose answer to me was, "You can."

My husband's love for me was a steadying influence. The two of us did our best to discuss and solve our problems. We had a good many genuine friends and relatives who also provided us with encouragement and affection.

Looking back, I see it as a time of miracles - that the four of us could have managed to survive so many difficulties. My heart is filled with gratitude now that our daughter is a successful young professional woman, that my husband, in spite of poor health, is still here and active, and, above all, that our son is a competent grown man.



## THE TREATMENT

Children are selected for EBAC if the staff considers that the EBAC program can benefit the child.

### JOEL SALDINGER

A whole bunch of us see the child. I see the child, Frankie will see the child, usually one of the teaching staff will see the child, and then the psychologist often as well. Then we'll meet and discuss informally, and later formally, whether we think the child is appropriate (for EBAC) and what we think the problems are, whether we think the family can be helped, and how important that is, and whether the funding can be arranged - a lot of practical things.

We do a fairly extensive evaluation; some of the kids have very extensive histories. Really what the program depends on is, well, is the child like an EBAC child, which is a decision, some sort of a solid feeling, made basically when the staff sees the child.

We are trying to free these kids up so they can grow and eventually be able to relate to other people, ultimately to work, to hold a job. Our whole program rests on relationships. The first, crucial part is a one-to-one relationship, an adult on the staff to a child. And then to move the child to feel safe in small groups. And so on. A great deal of our work involves familiarity with the body and its skills. And even the furniture - feeling safe with it, relating to it.

Since so little was known about these particular sorts of disturbed

children when EBAC was founded, it may be that the agency has contributed as much to current treatment philosophy as it has absorbed back into itself from other sources.

FRANKIE LEMON

Whatever we do we try to consider it as part of a growing experience. Whatever event is transpiring - which could be just getting off the school bus in the morning and into

the classroom - is thought out very carefully for each child, to make it as easy as possible.

There are different schools of thought on the environment. Dr. Bettelheim and some of the people that trained with him are very, very specific on any change they make in the environment they involve a child in. This is mostly residential treatment, but it's been done, say, at Rice Davis (in Southern California) in their day treatment center. When they move a book on the shelf, they will explain to the child why his environment, which is supposed to be his supportive ambience, has changed.

We're a little tougher, of necessity. In the first place, we're dealing with a different kind of child, where the environment in its home is much more chaotic than the middle class child has originally been in. Their home environment is very inconsistent. We couldn't and wouldn't want to seduce them into such a totally supportive environment that, when they went back home, it would be total alienation. So we play it down the middle.

Part of what we want for the children is challenge, but they don't have good enough judgment so that we can have inhibiting things that would hurt them.

When Dixie was here I think our focus was more in the area of therapy. There was always some attempt to give academics, because that's a very positive organizing factor in the way kids think. It's essential for the therapy that they have some idea of category. You can't communicate with a person who has no sense of time, place, or person. So that, what

is called the ego strength, is really learning about these essential things. Some of the academics is just a way of approaching the child to give him some skills so that he could feel independent. Dixie was just totally devoted (to EBAC) and gave a great deal. She was great working with the children.

LOUISE WIENER

at EBAC

I had started a group combining the autistic children with non-autistic children, using the non-psychotic children in the sense as models, and to interact with themselves and also with the psychotic children and promote some more meaningful kind of communication. It worked fairly well with that first group. Thinking back, I have a feeling it may have been because of the age range, because they were from around nine to eleven or twelve. That's a spurt period. Clinically it may be that that group turned out better than a group we used in an actual experiment.

I was also concerned, with the children, with setting limits, which is of course a part of structuring the program. The overly permissive atmosphere is conducive to anxiety; when children don't know where they stand - what's allowed, and what isn't. The same is true of normal children.

MARGARET TUNNEY

For my part, I had some very strong philosophy about what these kids needed. One thing was structure. Going along to a certain point, because you have to with these kids, but also not allowing them to do really crazy bizarre things or destructive things. We were there to try to

get them to a point where at least their behavior was socially acceptable, if they couldn't do any better than that. And if they could do better, fine too.

One of our kids was very autistic but he could talk. One thing he would do was grab people's eye glasses. I remember this one time he grabbed somebody's glasses for the 10th, 20th, perhaps 100th time, and he'd broken them. He'd been improving with us for some time, and so I thought, well, he's strong enough now, he can take a little discipline. So I called him in with his staff person. I told her, now you be stern with him. And I looked at Allen and I said, "Don't you ever dare touch Marge's glasses or anybody else's glasses again. We will not tolerate it." Every time after that he'd see me he'd say, "Peg, no glasses." And I'd say, "You're darn right, Allen, no glasses."

#### BOARD MINUTES - March 1956

It was moved, seconded, and passed that glasses of staff members be replaced when broken by children.

JOEL SALDINGER, Executive Director's Annual Report - January 1974  
Traditional birthday parties are held for each child and provide a constructive focus for all children. The birthday cake is supplied by the parents; the "table cloth" is hand painted each time on a roll of paper by a team of EBAC children. The organization of the birthday party here is used both to teach children certain social skills, which they sadly lack, as well as to develop some impulse control (like, don't grab for that piece of cake), skills in peer

relationships (it pays to learn to recognize your neighbor and be nice to him since he may give you some frosting that he does not like), skills in relating to adults (terribly important in how large and how many pieces of birthday cake you may get), increased awareness of one's own body (from cutting the cake to eating the cake, etc.), to the beginning knowledge that time has meaning, that there is a beginning and an end to even the best of things, and a whole host of other therapeutic areas.

#### FORMER EBAC STUDENT

I remember sitting on the floor (group sessions). There was a certain amount of role playing. I do remember being asked, "What's wrong with Jimmy? Let's pretend that you're not Jimmy, that you're stepping outside of Jimmy and you're looking at Jimmy. Trying to get outside and see things from a different perspective rather than being so overwhelmed by your own reality, your own sense of things as being direct experience coming in without considering the impact of what you're doing. To pause when something happens to you before you react; then react in a manner that is more appropriate. Because, when you do start to think about things, you do react in a more appropriate manner.

It took me a long time to learn it, though. I still used to lose my temper until I was about 14 or 15 years old.

#### DIXIE CARPENTER

You want to find the "way down" in yourself that will relate to the "way down" in the child - to find that clue that will help you to help that child.

## THE STAFF

The staff is divided into those who work directly with the children and those who handle the secretarial and financial details, although there is necessarily a certain amount of paper work required of the teaching staff as is a certain amount of applied psychology needed in the office at times when the children are present.

Although the exact mix of staff may vary to an extent from year to year, the composition of the staff as it was in 1978 will be described here as fairly typical.

The executive medical director was Joel Saldiner, M.D., who came to EBAC from being assistant chief of psychiatry at Mount Zion Hospital in San Francisco. Although employed on a part-time basis, responsibilities included design and supervision of the entire program, coordination of activities with the Board, and, of ever increasing concern, seeking both governmental and private sources of funding.

The program coordinator was Frances Lemon, who was with EBAC since the second year of its founding. She was charged with the day-to-day implementation of the program, working closely with all of the staff as well as some of the children.

### PARENT OF FORMER EBAC PARENT

The directors have always been ably supported by a fine staff of which only our beloved friend Frankie Lemon remains.

The administrative assistant for financial affairs was Beverly Castain, a B.A. in business and accounting, who handled all the budgetary matters, including separate and frequently revised budgets for both the government funding agencies and the accreditation program. She also worked closely with the Board and the executive director.

The clinical psychologist was Donald Cliggett, Ph.D., who acted as advisor to the staff.

The staff also consisted of three psychiatric social workers, who kept records of staff conferences on each individual child. They provided casework services for the families and also oversaw the volunteers. There were two teachers and two aides from the Oakland Public School System, which also provided buses to transport the children. This continuing interest in EBAC by the school system is vital to the organization's survival. There were three staff counselors, with teaching backgrounds and ability in arts or crafts; Celeste Smith, the office secretary; and several student interns, most of whom would receive college credit for their time spent at EBAC.

There would frequently be visitors and observers, ranging from students still at school to practicing psychiatric workers of various specialties and interests. From time to time, particularly in the summer, there would be lay volunteers.

#### JOEL SALDINGER

It's very tough to take the gaff with these kids (the EBAC pupils) if you're older, and by older I guess I mean over thirty. It's very difficult. It's like being in a constant state of siege.

#### PEGGY HAYES

Then, of course, the staff. Dixie Carpenter was in charge when we were on the playground and when we moved into the new building. I

... the other members of the staff came from but one



was Frankie Lemon; she was Miss Chen, and the -

And Nora Berr. And there was a wonderful man - Don Pittman. They worked for almost nothing, and they not only worked, but they worked hard and they worked overtime and they put up with all the kinds of things you put up with with emotionally disturbed children, which are not always pleasant. You know, the toilet not being used, and the something running over. But the low pay of the staff was always a thorn in our sides. We always thought it was very unfair that these people gave so much of themselves and received so little.

Did I say that Nora Berr was a psychologist? She was the one who went in several times a week to see that things were being handled the way they should with certain children. She was a nice, great big adequate person.

#### DIXIE CARPENTER

We and the staff ~~on the floor~~ had a most generous, fundamental, unusual gift after we had moved into the new building. My longtime friend, psychologist Nevitt Sanford, of Harvard and U.C., donated to us a most remarkable woman, Dr. Margaret Evans, a child analyst, to join the staff ~~on the floor~~, to observe the children, work with them, and observe our working with them, opening our eyes to the children's non-verbal actions, often very subtle, which we might miss and so lose a clue to what a child needed.

Besides helping us see and pointing out new ways with one or another child, she gave us the enormous support of her feeling that we were on the right track. What a gift! I don't remember how many weeks she was with us; but she

was very expensive and Nevitt paid for it.

And so we worked as responsibly and as deeply involved with each child as we were able. We did much rocking, touching, talking - one to one, and singing. Frankie Lemon, who was on the staff from the beginning, has natural wisdom and great gifts of understanding. When a new child came to school, the staff met to discuss which one of us felt most empathy with the newcomer. It does make a difference no matter how hard one works, and we each wanted to give each child as much individual attention, love, and understanding as possible. It was good that we were each different, so that we could meet different children's needs.

#### MARGARET TUNNEY

I had an open door policy with regard to the staff and the kids as far as working out problems went. Between Frankie and me, it was really a training process for the staff. In those days (1966-72) these kids (the junior staff) were marvelous working with our children because they could roll with the punches; they didn't mind this very bizarre behavior. But they had a terrible time setting limits, and these children must have limits set, have a structure to work in. Or otherwise, one starts yelling and kicking and you get 16 other kids yelling and kicking.

Gradually, as staff got built up, we had to work very hard with the Board in terms of making a case for each

individual new staff person that we needed. Kay Reinhart (Board member and president for three years) was certainly behind us all this time. The Board, because of her, I think, was behind her and, as a result, we built up a really terrific staff. And then we became clinically well programmed, because we couldn't build a program with<sup>out</sup> staff. With this kind of staff we were able to get three-year olds in instead of just having school kids.

We got the school department which, I must say, was most helpful to us. We really had good relations with the schools. We had a school social worker who helped us place the children when they were ready to go out (into the public schools). A child would be with us, say two hours in the morning and then an hour in public school. And so on, until he was phased out. This phasing was important, because these kids can't just split. They need the support of the Center, plus they have a tremendous separation anxiety.

Thelma Weaver. She was our executive secretary at the time, and, if it hadn't been for Thelma, if she had left for a month or so, the whole place would have completely fallen on its ear. She did everything - the Board, the Short-Doyle fund accounting; she was on top of everything. She also prodded me - you've got to do this and you've got to do that. She was very good with these kids. Two of the boys used to have lunch with Thelma every once

in a while if they had been behaving properly.

Thelma and I would have to do those awful things (paper work) for the Short-Doyle funds at the end of the year, and then we'd have to do those even worse things for UBAC (United Crusade). UBAC was terrible. They'd call and say, "We'd like to speak to your personnel manager," or "your fund raising manager." Well, they knew we were just this big and didn't have any of those things. And then we'd get forms from the government or the Institute of Mental Health like we were a multi-story hospital or something.

But actually, basically, in spite of all the terrible crises all the time, we seemed to always muddle through somehow; and we did have a darn good clinical agency, and fantastic people. Our staff liked the climate of the place, because everybody could work together, had to do everything, really.

#### FORMER EBAC STUDENT

Dorothy was one of the most important persons I dealt with at EBAC because she first taught me how to read. She had all the kids stand up straight and would try to get them to show some self-respect. She was very firm. I think the most important thing I did was learn how to read, because I wasn't expecting to be able to.

Don (Pittman) was always a kind man. You have to be able to love children who are autistic or otherwise

disturbed. It has to be, in its best sense, kind of a detached love, because if you become too emotionally involved, your judgment suffers and it is hard for you to show the firmness that is really necessary. You have to be very firm with children. They (the staff) were always very calm. It's not an exterior thing; it's kind of an inner calmness, where you have the sureness of yourself.

And Emily (Benner- then current staff member and daughter-in-law of former Board member Ruth Benner). I can't thank her enough for being my next reading teacher. I'm a compulsive reader. It's one of my greatest pleasures in life.

JOEL SALDINGER

Frankie's special forte is that she is very comfortable with children with special problems. They trust her. No matter what the trauma, she maintains an inner calm. She was educated as a teacher, but she is very knowledgeable, self-educated in psychology. She can look at the day's experiences with a real perspective.

BOARD MINUTES - December 1978

The Management Center (an independent facility and staff evaluation team) has nothing but superior comments about Bev's (Castain) handling of our finances and can give her no help because she is doing everything correctly.

BEVERLY CASTAIN

This is a really well-qualified staff, with a lot of academic credentials. They are just dedicated people. They really believe in what they're doing, and they're very good at it. So they're willing to work for a lower salary to have more gratification. Joel

them a time span to try it. Most places won't even listen to you. And he lets them grow; they learn through their mistakes; they correct them. It becomes a training ground. So they work here for a reason.

To work here you really have to be willing to sacrifice a little of yourself. Not a lot of it, because we become like an extended family. We meet at each other's homes to get out reports, call each other up. You have to be really the kind of person that can work through crises and not get so agitated that you alienate each other, be able to accept criticism without getting upset to much, be able to talk about your problems with each other.

It's really a unique place; it's a place where you really grow. And most of the interns that come through here comment it; they say, "Gosh, you guys work like a family; you really care about what you're doing." And it gives them a good feeling, because they then know that it can be done this way; it doesn't have to be all bureaucracy. That's one of the reasons why they have such a success - because the kids really feel the warmth that the staff have for each other.

#### JOEL SALDINGER

There are many strong and positive things that go with this kind of culture (the EBAC school environment). One is the family support system - every extra staff person is one more person to add to the support as well as to be supported at times of need. There's a lot of mutual sharing, there're a lot of mutual decisions to be made.

## THE GUILD

As early as October of 1954 it was suggested by a Board member, Mrs. Anker, that a separate organization be formed for fund raising. In the spring of 1955 a group was informally organized to consider setting up a Guild for the Center. The organizational chairman and eventually the first president was Ruth Letchworth, who had started a small group to aid the Center in 1952 with three other women: Grace Banker, Irene Sange, and Bobbie Sange.

The first major project of this new group was a fund-raising tea and fashion show in April of 1955 in Piedmont. A membership recruiting tea soon became an annual affair, given at various private homes in the East Bay.

The Guild itself was officially formed in 1955, with an ex-officio member of the Guild sitting on the EBAC Board. This ex-officio position was changed to one of regular voting member in October of 1956.

Throughout the Guild's life span a wide variety of fund raising events were conceived and executed, including wine tasting, lunch and fashion show, swimming and card party, golf, theater, concert, and yacht club parties and rummage sales. They also organized a speaker's bureau of eight members to present the EBAC story to PTA's and other interested groups.

RUTH LETCHWORTH

Let's face it - we tried everything!

As well as the labor involved in these fund raising activities, the Guild members contributed their time and abilities in helping to complete the new headquarters of EBAC on Perkins Street. With the starting nucleus of four members, the Guild reached a membership of 60 by 1963 and would ~~have~~<sup>be</sup> over 100 just before its demise in 1969.

RUTH LETCHWORTH

We had an extremely active group. I feel that many times the Center would have folded without the financial help that we were able to give it. They were always on a shoestring.

As early as 1955 Guild member requests to visit the Center were being discouraged by both staff and Board, apparently on the assumption that such visits would be disruptive to the on-going program. Such a policy is no longer in force and, in fact, prospective Board members are encouraged to observe at the facility before accepting membership on the Board.

RUTH LETCHWORTH

I represented the Guild and was the liaison with the Board, as were the next presidents, but we never had any opportunity to vote, we were just there. And in the meantime we were working our heads off putting money into the Center.

I have been told by some friends, who had been years in the Guild and who are still interested in it today, that they felt it had become too social - that so much money that was being raised was put into extraneous



things and that, when all was added up, there was very little left for the Center.

There were 125 members I think, when the Guild folded, in the spring of 1969. For a number of different reasons it had lost its momentum. One reason was that they never felt that they had any hold on the Center - that they were raising money but they were just raising money; that there was never anything very personal about it. These women would say to me: well, we can't see the children, we can't talk about them, we can't do anything.

And that is probably all that I can say about it, except that there were a number of very hard working wonderful women who had to do with it. They were all just totally gung ho. I think they were the finest group of women that I've ever known, and it's been a privilege to have known them and to have worked with them.

In 1979 the Board established an organization called "Friends of EBAC," with yearly dues contributions and the hope that it could grow into a fund raising arm. A committee of the Board is currently working at furthering this aim.

## THE DIANIANS .

The Dianians is a small and very active group of working women who are strong supporters of EBAC. The group originated as a social club at Richmond High School in the early 1960's. It soon after sought a sense of purpose and at first participated in an overseas child adoption program. The impersonality of this form of charity proved unsatisfactory and so, in the mid-1960's, the group investigated the possibility of becoming affiliated with a local charitable organization. EBAC was considered a possibility because <sup>one of</sup> ~~the~~ the Dianians at that time had a nephew who was going through the EBAC program. After a series of interviews with this and other organizations, it was felt that EBAC was the right institution to be the recipient of the Dianians' fund raising efforts.

The current membership of the Dianians, women in their 'thirties and 'forties, organizes throughout the year a number of both social and fund-raising activities. A typical year might include a Bingo night, a barbeque, a three-day excursion to Lake Tahoe, a wine tasting, a mothers' day brunch, a camping trip, a swimming party, a day-at-the-races, a Reno night, and their very popular Halloween haunted house. This last activity takes most of the year to organize and involves much manpower for staffing. The house is open the three days before Halloween for six hours per day in the afternoon and evening. It requires from 20 to 30 persons to staff it each three hour shift. The programs will vary from year to year, but a certain amount of continuity is maintained from one year to the next.

The group's geographical focus includes Richmond, Vallejo, Pinole, and San Pablo, although occasionally a member will move away as far as, for example, Alamo, and yet wish to keep up her association with the group.

At Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and Hallowe'en, the Dianians make cupcakes or the like to commemorate the occasion <sup>for the ch.</sup>  
<sub>at EBAC</sub>  
At Christmas they finance gifts selected by the staff for the children. At one time they outfitted those children who were well enough to attend a special summer camp. For many years they helped with the hand-addressing of envelopes for the annual funds appeal.

In recent years the Dianians generous cash contributions to EBAC have averaged over \$2000 per year.

## THE BOARD

The quality of EBAC Board members has generally always been quite high in terms of their personal professional training and accomplishments. The membership has included educators, administrators, attorneys, published writers, professional volunteers, persons from many aspects of the health care fields and business community, and politicians including a state senator, judge, and mayor.

A strong surge of interest in mental health followed World War II. The Berkeley and University communities evinced a strong interest in supporting the fledgling EBAC, often including, as noted earlier, professionals of considerable standing who helped promote the enterprise. This support base eventually widened to include the entire East Bay, including Contra Costa County. Evidence of the continuing interest in EBAC by its supporters is shown by the number of past presidents, Board members, and Guild members who have returned to serve additional terms on the Board and/or who continue to give generous financial support.

The original Board, according to its by-laws in 1955, was limited to eight members. The by-laws were amended shortly thereafter to provide for 12 members and then, in January of 1956, for 18 members. In October of 1956 the by-laws were again amended to increase the maximum Board to 25, a size it has since remained.

The Board met irregularly at first and then regularly on the second Tuesday of each month at 8:15 p.m. from 1954 through 1961, generally recessing for part of the summer vacation. In April of 1961 the meetings, which had been most generally held at the home of the presiding president, were moved to noon at the Oakland YWCA on alternate months. By the end of 1962 the meetings were all held at noon.

By the late 1960's the Board was meeting at the Children's Home Society in Oakland at 12:30, having reserved a no-host table for lunch at 11:30 at the Golden West Restaurant across the street. In late 1971 it was decided that the meetings should start at noon in order to cover increasing amounts of important business. Board members were urged to bring their own sandwiches.

In April of 1973 the meeting place was changed to the First Presbyterian Church on Broadway in Oakland. Bring lunch. Hot water provided for coffee, tea, or bouillon. Since September of 1979 the Board has been meeting at the present school site.

For the years 1958 through 1964 a Christmas party was given for the staff and Board members in lieu of a December meeting, generally at the home of the current president. In subsequent years, however, the pressure of current business precluded this convivial practice and substituted a regular monthly business meeting.

From 1955 onward, with the exception of 1957, an annual meeting, usually preceding the regular meeting of the Board, was held in January. Starting in 1970, with a pre-meeting lunch at the home of Emily Benner, a former staff member and then current Board member, the meetings were held at various places such as member's homes, the Men's Faculty Club on the U.C. Campus, and the Women's Athletic Club in Oakland.

#### MARGARET TUNNEY

By pure chance I saw an ad in the paper for EBAC, and I applied, somehow thinking it was for chief social worker, not director. I didn't hear from them and was about to take another job when I heard from Kay Rinehart, who asked me to come over for an interview. Well, I came over, and here was this poor little place. They brought me in and they had this little teeny room.

But they prevailed upon me to take the job, and I was so surprised because I didn't realize it was director; I said, I don't know anything about being a director or administrator.

But I started, and, as I say, I started from the seat of my pants. But Kay Rinehart, she really helped me to know what I was doing. The Board was very active in working with the staff.

SUE HARVEY

And one of the neat things about the EBAC Board, I think, is the people involved. That has really been one of my greatest pleasures being on the Board. There are just fantastic people on that Board, and with tremendous abilities. And the staff is great too.

Up until I came on the Board, I think a major proportion of the Board members had a strong background in social work, psychology, that kind of thing. As I gather it, in the prior years, the staff were more lay people, and the Board gave the staff the direction that they were to take and the guidance. And then, as the staff became more professional, the Board expanded into less psychiatric directions in its own membership components.

Catherine (Dewey - former Board member, Board president for three years, and Co-Director of the Anna Head, later Head-Royce, Elementary and Preparatory Schools) was a tremendously intelligent woman who knew more about more subjects than any one person usually knows about his own subject. She was a person with tremendous drive and really inspired confidence. If Catherine said something was going to happen,

everybody fell into line because they knew it was going to happen. I think maybe this was Catherine's major contribution. She inspired such confidence and she had such determination that she would get things done by sheer force of personality if no other way.

She had tremendous contacts. Without Catherine the new building across from the original Center building would never have come into being, because she was the one who did the major portion of the fund raising.

She was very much of a mind that the more beautiful surroundings you gave a child - and our EBAC children included - the better the child would respond. Catherine always expected the best of people, to a point. And she always got it. She was realistic; she was no dreamer; but she just expected to have things done the right way. And, boy, everybody scurried around and did things, to the best of their ability anyway. No one would ever let Catherine down. She was totally unstoppable. If she really thought something was right, boy, look out! Because it was going to be accomplished. And usually it was.

It was this drive that Catherine had. She really believed. She could not be coerced, ever; she was too smart. And she was a real realist, along with these high ideals. So she didn't get fooled too often. She had dealt with too many



people too much to be fooled. And she set realistic goals - high goals, but realistic. She was very direct, very clear, and she could really analyze a situation. She gave people a feeling of confidence and self-assurance. When you were there with her, you knew you were in a presence, and you were flattered to be included in the presence.

Catherine was the first to be concerned that the EBAC lease on the Lincoln property was to be up in eight years and that we had got to get a building fund going and start looking for property. Loretta (Maxfield) was the one for whom it was even more critical during her presidency. But Catherine was the one to get the slide-tape program and the color brochure, so that we would have something to show when we went out looking for funds. And then Catherine came back and headed up the fund-raising committee after she had retired off the Board.

She gave very firm leadership. She was sort of like Plymouth Rock: she was always there, very much involved. She could usually come up also with some very astute answers to any of the problems of dealing with the parents, the children, the Center.

## FUNDING OVER THE YEARS

### RUTH BENNER

EBAC was constantly going from one crisis to another, primarily financial ones.

### BOARD MINUTES - 1954

Present situation: no finances, not sufficient staff, no building.

In the 15 years after EBAC was founded, the budget increased from \$3200 to almost \$100,000.

In 1955 a budget of \$7400 was barely met. In 1956 a budget of \$10,700 was met, but also a concentrated campaign had raised a building fund of \$8500. Addition of new staff and improvements to the building meant budgets of \$25,600 in 1960 and over \$34,000 in 1962.

In fall of 1955 the newly-formed Guild gave its first major benefit. In spring of the following year the Board finance committee mounted a major campaign for contributions to the scholarship fund. Mail appeals continue throughout the history of the organization as a major source of funding next to public and private organizational support.

Early in 1956 the Center applied for and was granted emergency funds of over \$3600 to finish out the school year by the California State Department of Mental Hygiene. A similar grant was obtained to conclude the 1957 school year.

PEGGY HAYES

We were always in need. While we could get help with the building and so forth, when it came to operating funds it was very difficult. We were always in need; it was just hand to mouth.

In 1958 the monthly budget started at \$1500, soon to increase to almost \$2000, with about \$660 coming in from tuition.

DIXIE CARPENTER

There was no money for non-essential upkeep on our new building, so I regularly cut the grass, bringing the lawn mower from home, planted bushes, and was delighted to get student volunteers as gardeners once in a while. So the new school looked inviting to newcomers as well as being satisfactory to work and play in.

By 1959 the Center continued to receive occasional or continuous aid from the Alameda County Mental Health Association, the League for Emotionally Disturbed Children, the California State Department of Mental Hygiene, HEW, and certain foundations such as the Rosenberg, Crown Zellerbach, Lucie Stern, San Francisco, and Gerber foundations. Full tuition was covering only about 50% of the costs, which were about \$200 per month per child. The Guild, of course, was a regular source of funds, as at times were several other private clubs and public-spirited organizations.

DIXIE CARPENTER

There were always the hard working Board of Directors and the Guild, who had the difficult job of trying to raise the money necessary for our small salaries and equipment and the hope of some day having a school building of our own.

(DIXIE CARPENTERA continued  
new paragraph)

The difficulty of raising money brought a division among the Board, some of whom felt that EBAC should take in not the seriously autistic, which had been our first responsibility and training, but the less sick, so that, in asking for donations, they would point to cures or to greatly improved cases. This point of view eventually,

in 1960, superceded the other. I resigned. I had done what I had been asked originally to do and trained to do, and the Board wanted a new setup.

The pendulum swung again, however, in the late 1960's, and the current thrust is acceptance of children that the director thinks EBAC is set up to help, regardless of the degree of disturbance involved.

In 1960 the National Organization for Mentally Ill Children, based in New York, selected EBAC as one of five centers in the United States to receive a grant-in-aid. The U.S. Institute of Mental Health contributed a grant to pay the director's salary. Also in this year, and for the first time, EBAC received a contribution to its operating budget from the United Crusade, a funding source that would continue through 1970, at which time that organization revised its current support criteria.

By 1961 the cost per child had increased to about \$235 per month, with parents paying, at most, \$100.

#### BOARD MINUTES - 12 June 62

The finance committee is greatly concerned about the Center's financial position; it is evident that, unless special efforts are made, there will not be sufficient funds available to open school in the fall.

In June of 1962 both the Oakland Tribune and the Montclairion, the latter an Oakland hills neighborhood publication, reported that the Center must raise \$6000 by September or close its doors. The parents of the EBAC children committed themselves to raise half

of that amount, and the Board undertook to find the rest. The newspaper appeal brought an immediate \$1000 from an anonymous donor, and the next month the Golden Gate Fields Foundation donated \$1000.

In August of 1962 the Institute of Mental Hygiene granted \$18,000 for a particular study of group techniques in aiding mentally disturbed children.

LOUISE WIENER

~~As a result~~ We were then in dire straits about money, and I wasn't sure that we were going to be able to go through the year. At that particular time - it was in June - a couple of ladies from one of the local organizations were going to present EBAC with a check, and I was asked to come to the Montclair office to be photographed receiving it. I explained our economic problems to the editor and said I was not sure that we would be able to open in the fall. So Peggy Stinnett did an interview, which came out on the front page.

Among other things, I said that if we closed many of the children would have to go to state hospitals. The evening after that issue came out, I got a phone call from the then president of Golden Gate Fields Foundation with the promise of a donation. And in the middle of all this fund raising, I got a call from Washington that our grant had been approved.

From about 1968 on voluntary gifts were supplying up to 30% of the Center's operating expenses. Family fees supplied about 2%, and the remainder was taken up by federal programs (Title XX

or Revenue Sharing), Short-Doyle county and Medi-Cal funds, and varying amounts, depending on the student population, from health insurance plans and CHAMPUS (a federal program to provide health care for mentally ill dependents of military personnel).

#### LORETTA MAXFIELD - President's Report for 1972

This has surely been a year of crisis for EBAC from the very first day. The dilemma we faced was either to close our doors because of insufficient funds or to find new ways of obtaining more money. The problem was compounded by a request from Lincoln Child Center to vacate our present location as soon as possible.

It was unthinkable that EBAC should fold, deserting the children and their families who are so dependent on us and for whom we can do so much. We had to find a way to continue. Countless hours of devoted service were spent by Mrs. F.L. Naylor, our finance chairman and treasurer.

With numerous meetings, loss of or cuts in previously committed funds, and the need to relocate, EBAC decided to employ first, a management consultant for advice, and next a professional fund raiser. The fund raiser, Mr. Hubert Voight, became so interested in the organization that he offered to donate part of his services.

By 1974 it was costing \$700 per month per child for treatment at EBAC, as opposed to \$2000 if the child had had to be cared

for in a state hospital. By 1979 these costs had risen to approximately \$1000 and \$3000, respectively.

#### BEVERLY CASTAIN

Since I've been here (1973) it's been a series of crises. It's taken my all to stay ahead of the next crisis. I've utilized my ability for project planning and analysis; I've found out for sure I can do it well. But it also puts a lot of pressure on you, To try to make other people realize what's going to happen before it happens is, I've found, very hard.

#### SUZANNE HARVEY

There was always a financial crisis. When I was first president I'd think, each day, well the agency hasn't collapsed today; we'll get through tomorrow.

We'd just get things squared away, and then the other shoe would drop. For instance, CHAMPUS money would finally start in and then we'd lose United Crusade money. We'd get that turned around and then something else would happen. After about a year or two I got rather philosophical about the whole thing. I'd say, well, this is Crisis A and this is Crisis B, and just which crisis was it you were referring to. You figure somehow EBAC is going to survive. You don't know how, but somehow it is going to survive.

And this is the other interesting thing about EBAC: it not only survives but it seems to come out in a little better position than it was in before. Never safe, but somehow it survives. I think EBAC will manage to reel onward.



## THE SECOND NEW BUILDING

In January of 1977 the EBAC lease on the Lincoln Center property was due to expire, and Lincoln had indicated that it would perhaps like to have use of the property even sooner. An EBAC Board committee was formed to investigate various possibilities for relocation. Mills College and the Fred Finch Home were contacted as possible relocation sites, and a search was begun for both existing structures and vacant land to purchase. Catherine Dewey headed a committee to raise funds for the relocation.

Consideration was given to moving the present building in sections to a new site. Lincoln had offered to sell it to EBAC for \$5000. But it was generally conceded that the most satisfactory solution would be a newly planned and constructed facility. The committee determined that a new building would have to have a minimum size of 8000 square feet, and the probable cost of such a structure was estimated to be about \$200,000. Secondhand portables were also considered as a possibility.

Some East Bay water district property, located at the intersection of Chabot and Golden Gate Streets in Oakland, came on the market with the proviso that it must be sold to a public agency or charitable institution. Since no other organization seemed to be interested in it, the Board, in March of 1974, decided to take a six month purchase option on the property, at a cost of \$2400. The total price was to be \$60,000, with \$20,000 due at the end of the option period and the next two payments at yearly periods. The option was extended for an additional \$500 and in September

of 1975 the first payment was made and the deed was transferred to EBAC. At this time the relocation fund had reached \$97,000, with an eventual goal of \$175,000.

The Board and staff were exuberant at the new acquisition, at least until estimates started to come in for the cost of developing the site. It was soon to appear a blessing when a smaller site came onto the market.

In January of 1976 the property across the street from the Lincoln Center building site at 2540 Charles Street came on the market for \$35,000. Its advantages over the other property were a shorter physical move and more psychological continuity for the students, who could then watch the new building take shape and visit it during construction. The Board decided to acquire this property and dispose of the Chabot land as soon as possible. Fortunately, in January of 1977, they were able to sell the Chabot site to the College Preparatory School for \$75,000, an increase in value which reflected EBAC's costs of surveys, earthquake safety determination, various use and building permits, and preliminary architectural layout for the site.

FRANKIE LEMON *possibility of*

With a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, the staff really learned from the idea of examining the environment and the impact of whatever we programmed. And we changed our minds during this period. It took quite a bit of time. I think everybody's impulse, originally, was "Let's make a womb." You know, the ideal environment - no change of temperature, nothing

harmful, everything benign.

And then we started realizing that you don't grow and learn that way; there has to be frustration. So we gave up some of the softness and the padding and the curves. Little by little, as we considered the impact of no impact, we started changing the design to really a much more traditional one.

We decided that, if you're going to have day treatment, you want it more like a home, not the perfect cocoon. And we stepped on some of the curves; such as, if someone wanted to climb, we wanted him to climb, and if he fell he would bounce. Well, we shifted to a more realistic environment where, if you got too far out beyond certain barriers, then you would be hurt. We felt that there would have to be warnings built into the environment too.

But we had to consider the size of areas, how much light we wanted, the course of light, how much stimulation you wanted from out of doors, how much you wanted out of doors in and how to control it - all of these things had to be reconsidered in a way.

By mid-1976 EBAC had received donations to its building fund of \$150,000 against an estimated need of \$190,000. Robert Ratcliff's architectural firm was employed to design the

building. In September of 1977 a contract was signed with Coburn Construction Company, including an inflation hedge, for an eventual cost of \$200,000. A loan was finally secured by Board member Roger McKenzie in February of 1978 for \$172,000 for 25 years at 9-1/2% plus three points (\$5160).

By September of 1978 the building was essentially complete and ready for occupation, but the landscaping, most particularly the fencing and paving, had not been included in the contract and the building fund was depleted. The children and staff could make only limited use of the new facility. Fortunately Lincoln Center allowed EBAC to extend its existing lease and the school was able to continue at that site.

Faced with an operating deficit higher than ever before and the exhaustion of most of its fund raising sources, the Board was not able to finance the minimal landscaping required for another year. This work was finally completed in October of 1979 and the school was actually moved into the new facility in December of 1979.

Appendix A

DIRECTORS OF THE EAST BAY ACTIVITY CENTER

Betty Meredith Jones	Summer 1952
Mrs. Herbert (Lillian) Weitzner	1953-1955
Mrs. F.I. (Dixie) Carpenter	1955-1960
Louise L. Wiener	1960-1964
Elizabeth Huff	1964-1965
Margaret Tunney	1966-1972
Joel Saldinger	1972-1980

Appendix B

EBAC BOARD PRESIDENTS

Mr. Hugh Coffey	1952-1954
Mrs. Kenneth Hayes	1955-1959
Mrs. David Dunlap	1960-1961
Mrs. George Mehren	1962
Mrs. Ernest Lawrence	1963
Mrs. Arthur Ross	1964-1965
Mrs. T.E. Reinhart	1965-1967
Mrs. Daniel Dewey	1968-1970
Mrs. William Maxfield	1971-1973
Mrs. Scott Harvey	1974-1975
Helen Grant	1976-1979
Mrs. Scott Harvey	1980

Appendix C

EBAC GUILD PRESIDENTS

Mrs. Pierre Letchworth	1956-1960
Mrs. C.R.C. Frederick	1961-1963
Mrs. Spiegelman	1963
Mrs. Hugh Melvin	1964-1965
Mrs. Alfred Lindner	1965-1967
Mrs. Lionel Benas	1967-1968
Mrs. William Lamer	1968-1969

Appendix D

DIANIAN PRESIDENTS

Danny Tucker	1966-1967
Mel Granholt	1968-1969
Sue Bracelin	1970-1971
Irene Lopez	1972
Joe Pedraccia	1973-1974
Charlotte Fitzgerald	1975-1976
Shirley Cowles	1977
Darla Knisely	1978-1979
Sue Gesner	1980



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank and identify the persons who consented to be interviewed for this history, some of whose verbatim remarks are included herein. I should also like greatly to thank Emily Hatfield Benner for the time and effort she spent helping me by conducting some of the interviews. I should like to thank my husband, Alfred Baxter, for his editing of the manuscript. His contributions are very much appreciated, but he need not share obloquy for any defects in the final text. To Helen Grant, president of the Board during the time this history was being compiled, I extend my appreciation for her patience and support over the period. And finally I should like to thank Mary Ellen Sherry for many helpful editorial suggestions based on her extensive professional writing career.

Those interviewed were as follows: Ruth Benner, former Board member and volunteer at the Center; Dixie Carpenter, former director of the Center; Beverly Castain, current financial administrator; Mrs. Hugh Coffey and Elizabeth Faragoh, co-founders of the Center; Sue Harvey and Peggy Hayes, past Board presidents; Frankie Lemon, current program coordinator; Joel Saldinger, current executive medical director; Robert Stone, Board member and former treasurer; and Margaret Tunney and Louise Wiener, former directors.

Finally, I should like to dedicate this history to my friend, former Board member Judy Martin Walker, whose enthusiasm for EBAC got me into the organization and this project originally.

Gail Baxter

Oakland, California

April 1980

