

The two serious problems of staff shortage and lack of patients' accommodation remain. At the close of the year the hospital was overcrowded by 343 patients and there was a nursing staff shortage of 65 officers. At various periods during the year the female nursing staff shortage was such that an adequate standard of care, supervision, and treatment was only maintained with the greatest of difficulties and with considerable strain on medical and nursing staff personnel.

In our hospital treatments we have continued to use electroplexy, electric narcosis, and sub-coma insulin as routine procedures, and the results continue to confirm the early promise of such therapies being the greatest forward step in recent years in psychiatric medicine.

The building programme for various reasons progresses somewhat slowly, Villas 6, 7, and 8 are nearing completion, but are still unoccupied, and the new laundry block awaits its machinery and equipment. Plans have been finalized for a female occupational-sewing-room block, hospital, and administration blocks.

A considerable amount of renovating has been carried out to buildings during the year and much progress has been made towards overcoming arrears of maintenance occasioned by the war. The exteriors of villas Montrose, Nairn, Kaumatua, Somerset, Weymouth, Rauta Block, H Cottage, and four officers' houses were painted. Some interior painting and renovations were also carried out in certain buildings. Refrigerators and additional cooking equipment were installed in the nurses' home, Rauta, and Lower Building blocks. A 16 mm. cinema projector was provided for the nurses' home, which apart from its entertainment value, is used for staff training to demonstrate anatomical nursing and treatment techniques. Three Zip heaters were installed and an acetone welding plant was added to the engineer's shop equipment.

During the year some refurnishing was undertaken in some of the older wards. This, along with the furniture and equipment purchased for the new villas, has materially improved this aspect of the hospital.

Activities in the hospital farm and gardens have continued as formerly, and during the year 229 tons of vegetables and 16½ tons of fruit were produced for hospital consumption.

The hospital is indebted to many individuals and organizations for the lively interest they have taken in patients' welfare. It is impossible to mention all, but we particularly wish to thank the Joint Council of the Order of St. John and the New Zealand Red Cross Society, who have donated sports equipment, provide a weekly cinema, weekly bus rides, and many extra comforts for ex-servicemen patients. A fortnightly picture entertainment is also arranged for by the Army Welfare Educational Service. We thank the Women's National Reserve for their continued support in forwarding money and goods for the benefit of women patients. The regular hampers sent by the Country Districts Sub-centre New Zealand Red Cross, Masterton, were much appreciated. The Commercial Travellers' Association, Returned Servicemen's Association, and various charitable organizations have contributed liberally towards patients' extra comforts, entertainment, and recreation. The New Zealand Blind Institute have maintained a kindly interest in the welfare of blind patients. In addition to the above, from Government money, bus rides, picnics, &c., have been provided for patients and some £560 per month is being distributed direct to patients as a comforts allowance, largely for personal spending.

The hospital continues, and will be for some years, in the throes of rebuilding, with its attendant difficulties and certain inconveniences. The total number of cases under care continues to rise each year and the building programme lags behind this rise; consequently, the overcrowding on 31st December, 1947, was greater than on 31st December, 1946.