

in a

NUTSHELL



Vol. 3, No. 4

MENTAL PATIENTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

September 1974



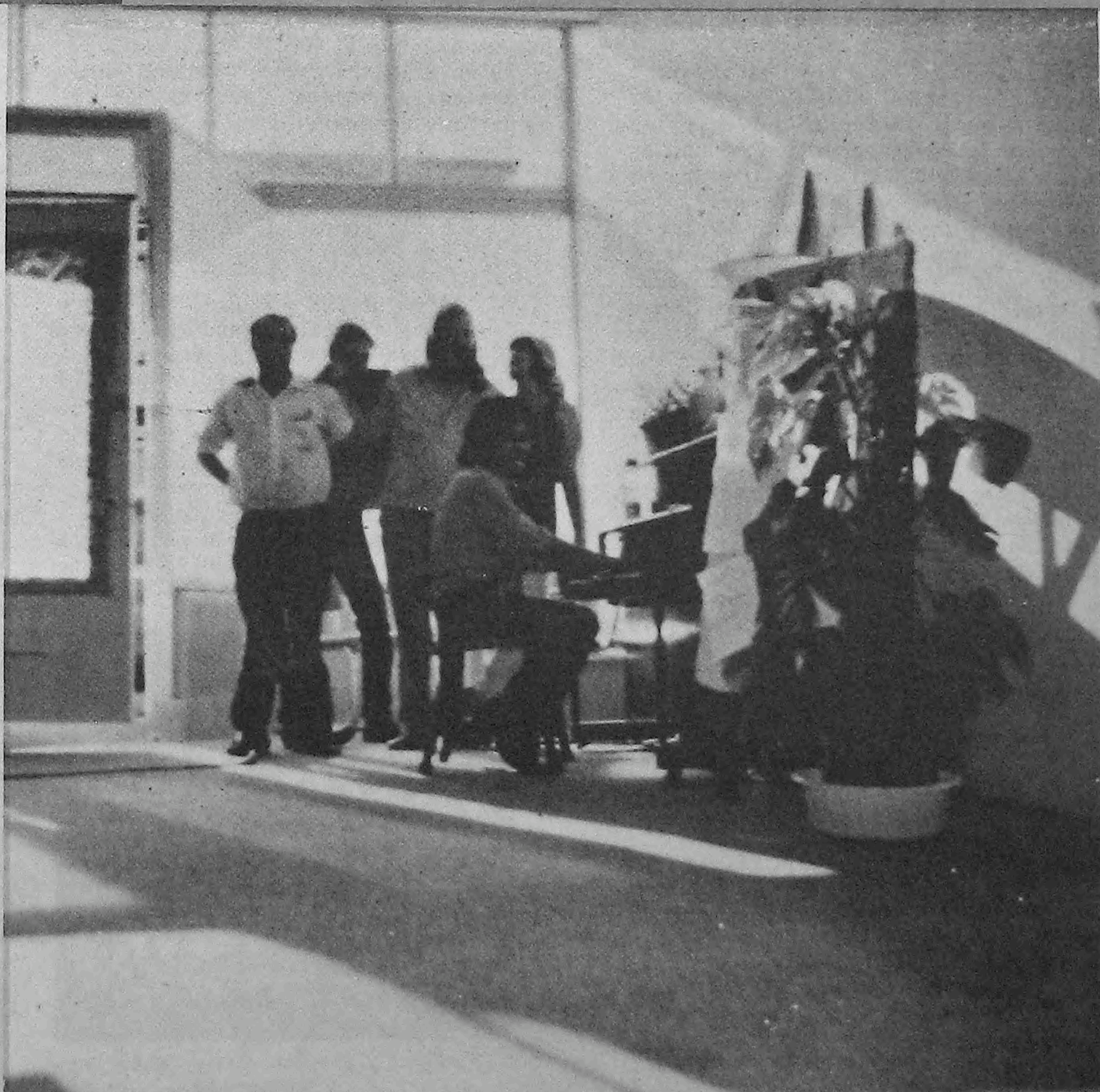
MPA'S NEW DROP-IN

2146 Yew at Sixth
Come by and see us

What we've got

When all the work on the drop-in is completed within the next month, these are the facilities that will be available to members (most of them are already available):

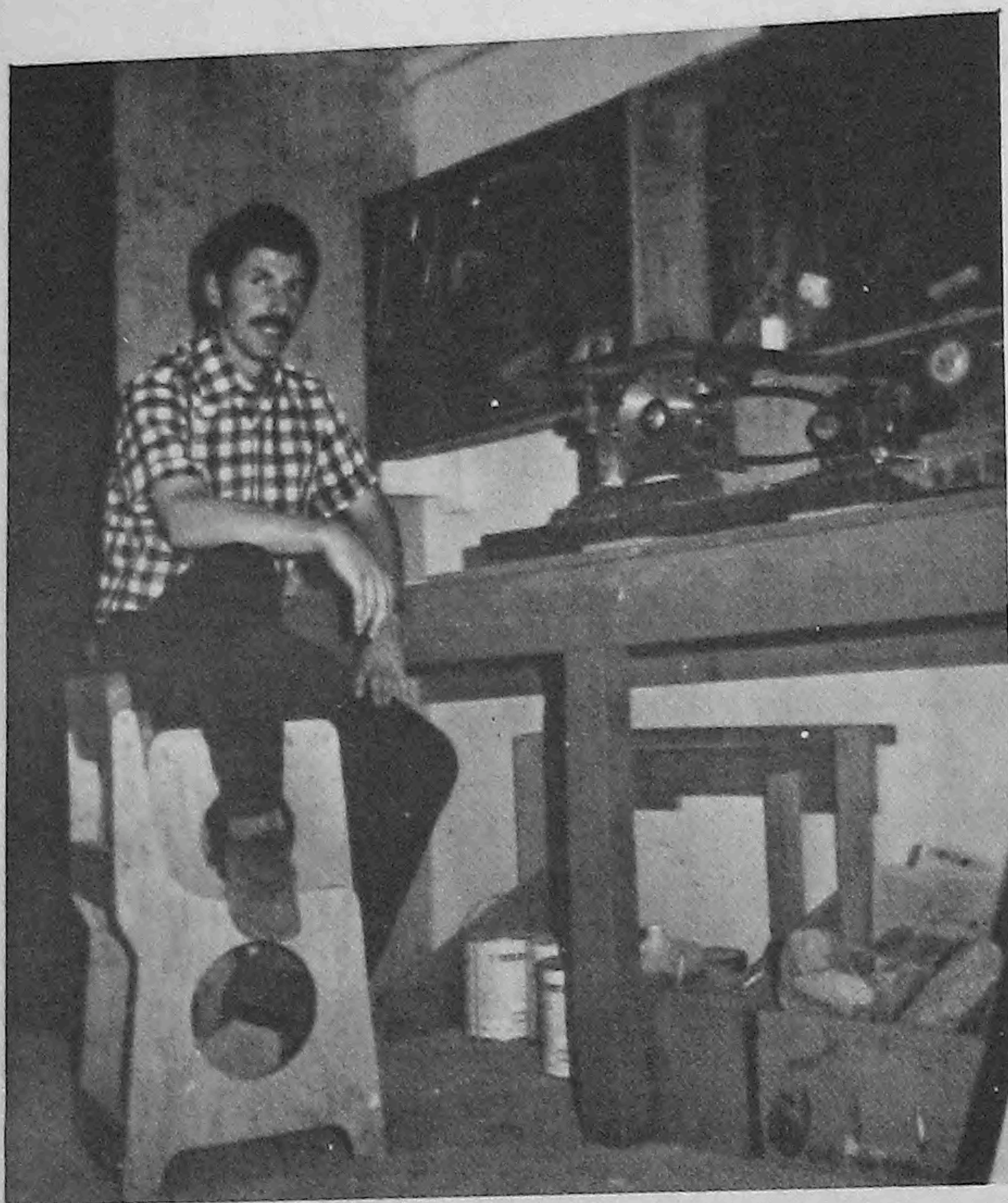
- A SPACIOUS, WELL-LIT, COMFORTABLE LOUNGE AREA
- A KITCHEN AREA WITH SMALL CAFE-STYLE TABLES
- A POOL TABLE
- A PING-PONG TABLE
- A QUIET ROOM
- A TV ROOM
- A CRAFTS AREA
- A WORKSHOP AREA
- A DAYCARE ROOM FOR KIDS
- A PHOTOGRAPHY DARK-ROOM
- TABLE GAMES
- A NEWSLETTER LAY-OUT AREA
- OFFICE SPACE FOR READING, WRITING AND TYPING
- A LIBRARY OF MAGAZINES AND BOOKS
- TWO TOILETS
- AND MORE!



Our invitation to you, pages 2-3

After hospital - what?

A PERSONAL INVITATION:



If you're like most of the rest of us when we leave Riverview or VGH or Health Sciences you're going to go through a period of uneasy re-adjustment. Maybe you're going to feel like we did - lonely, depressed, lost, confused, - almost wishing you were back on the ward where at least there were other people to talk to about how lousy you felt or what kinds of plans you were thinking about making for the future.

Then again you may be one of the lucky ones. Perhaps you've got it made. A place to go back to. Encouraging friends and relatives. Your old job waiting for you. A loving family to welcome you home.

But at least some of you are going to hit down-drafts and wonder what to do, who to phone, where to go to find people who understand. Not professional people UP THERE, but people like you who have been through rough times and really do understand and care.

YOU'RE WELCOME HERE

For you, MPA has a PLACE. You are welcome to come here first thing in the morning and stay as long as you want - right through to the end of the late show. Our PLACE is the MPA Drop-in Centre at 6th and Yew in Kitsilano (southeast corner.) You don't have to "join" to become a member. You don't have to "sign up". You don't have to explain who you are, where you came from, how you've been diagnosed (or misdiagnosed.) All you have to do

is walk in the front door and automatically become part of an expatient community made up of people from all walks of life, nationalities, religions, educational backgrounds, hang-ups or whatever. Just bring yourself.

We've got the PLACE. The coffee urn is usually full (and the coffee is free.) We have a 6 member democratically elected staff of Drop-in co-ordinators hanging around on scheduled 2 person shifts from 9 AM until midnight to make you welcome if you want to be noticed, or ignore you if you prefer to sit in a corner and hide for a while till you feel secure enough to want to be recognized amongst the rest of

**we're easy
to find:
2146 Yew**

us. You won't be the only new comer. People come and go all the time. And you won't be able to distinguish co-ordinators from the members unless you care to ask.

The co-ordinators are hired to be around in case you want help in finding housing, advice about social assistance, a little legal counselling, someone to rap with, someone to introduce you around.

THINGS TO DO AT M.P.A.

We have activities you can join if you want to: bus trips, picnics a crafts program, a workshop, a job search program, and we print this newsletter ourselves. We get into all kinds of other areas too: mental patients' legal rights; creation of low cost housing; a publishing project presenting our views from our side of the we-they picture.

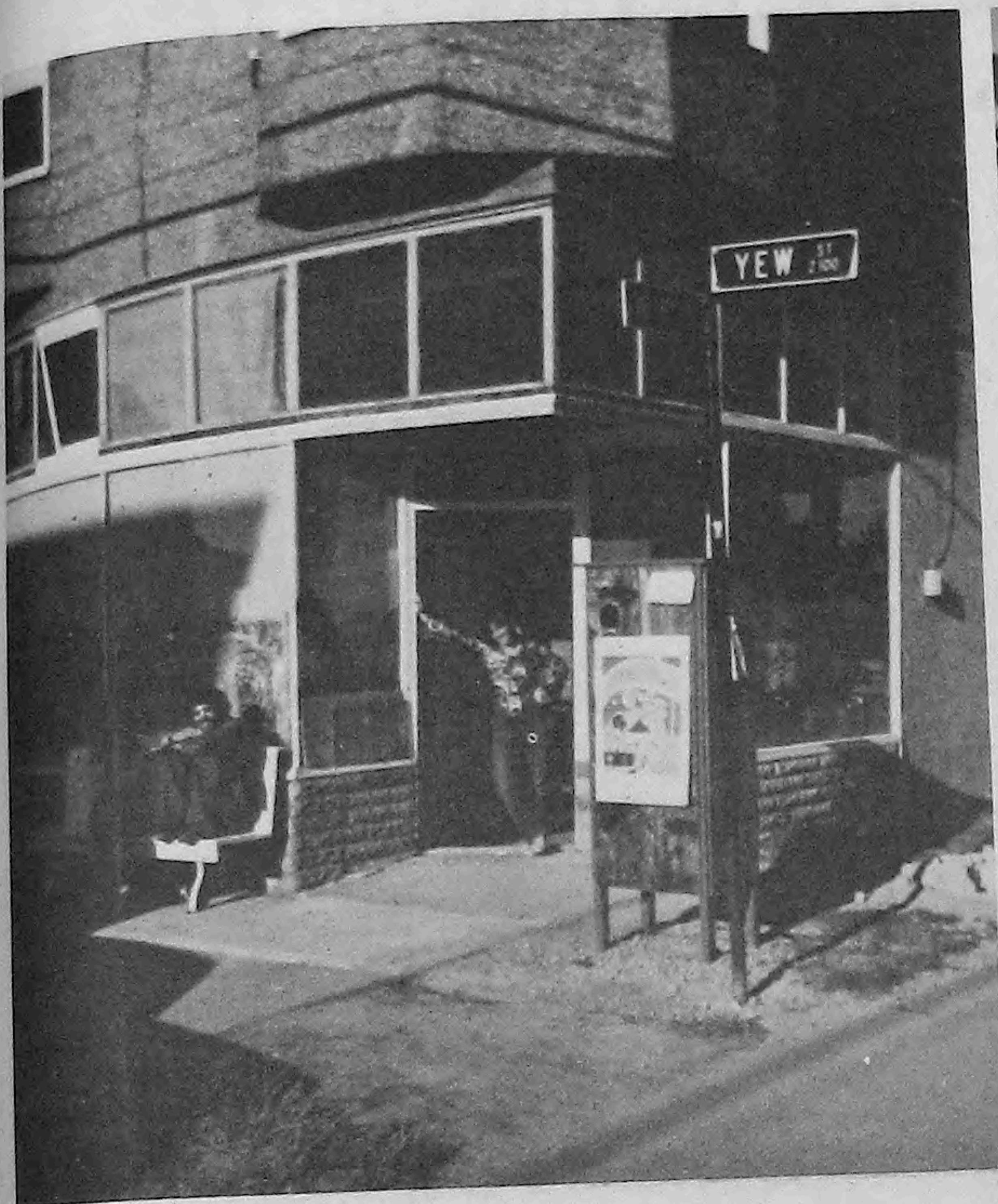
We self-operate 5 democratically run communal halfway houses. We have a helluva lot of meetings in which we formerly powerless, formerly institutionalized people hold the power to make MPA whatever we want it to be. (That's up to you, and the rest of us. We each have an equal vote in everything that goes on at MPA.)

Most of our members are under 40 (over 40's tend to go to Coast Foundation Society's Drop-in Centre at 876 East 18th - where you'll find the same kind of welcome and the same easy atmosphere. Some come to both.)

OUR NEW DROP-IN CENTER, A HOME FOR THE M.P.A. FAMILY

We used to be quartered in an old dump on 6th Avenue. Our new

MPA HAS A PLACE FOR YOU



PLACE at 6th and Yew is - NEW and BEAUTIFUL. We borrowed money from the government to make it an attractive social centre for people to drop-in, play pool, rap, do their thing. We've got only 3 rules (which we enforce.) No non-prescription drugs. No alcohol. No violence or threats of violence to others. We're trying to make our new Drop-in Centre a happy optimistic people-place where you can come and feel comfortable instead of isolated. We want you and need you. Every new member is an asset to MPA because you bring us new ideas, new ways of looking at things, maybe new problems you've run up against that we can all tackle and solve together.

In a way we're kind of a family. We have our ups and downs, our disagreements and agreements. But like any family we kind of stick together - especially against those who dare to think they're bigger and better and more together than we are.

We understand exactly how you feel because most of us have been in hospital and practically all of us have been through head hassles of some kind that brought us here in the first place.

At MPA you'll get rid of that "Mental Illness stigma" thing which we all know is just so much crap. We're merely ordinary people who happen to have been through rougher times than the people across the

street or the nurses in the hospital. They may call us sick. We won't accept ourselves as sick. We're okay. And we're getting more

**we're easy
to phone:
738-5177**

okay all the time. Sure - we do have the odd freak-out but we use group support to help a fellow member in a crisis.

US AND THE COMMUNITY

MPA carries a lot of weight in the mental health community. Government bureaucrats listen to us more than you might think. We've helped initiate a lot of good changes in hospitals, in courtrooms in outside psychiatric circles. You can help by joining us and pushing for more improvements. People out there are watching and listening; taping, televising and writing about us. Oppressed groups in other cities are modelling themselves after us. We feel that due largely to our efforts since we started MPA in February 1971 that the winds of change are blowing in the right direction. Puff along with us. If you're reluctant to

walk in off the street, phone and rap with us first at 738-5177 or 738-1422.

**SURE, WE'RE MENTAL PATIENTS,
NOT A BRA OUTFIT!**

Don't sit in a lonely room and mope about the poor, sick, underprivileged, misfit you may think you are. Come on over and find out you're just as good as the next guy. Maybe better.

Does our name bother you? Some professionals tell us it does. We tend to think it's a good one because we are an Association of Mental Patients. We think any other name would be misleading. If the Canadian Arthritic Society called itself the Uplift Association, how would arthritics know where to go? To a new bra outfit? Photography Clubs call themselves Photography Clubs don't they? Since we disagree with and reject the whole idea of mental illness "stigma" we couldn't care less about our name. If you don't dare to be identified with a group which doesn't get uptight about labels, maybe you are sick. We equate mental "illness" with rough times, not illness. That's why we call a spade a spade. That's part of our trip. The only way to educate the ignorant is to show outsiders that mental patients are ordinary people, no better nor worse than Karl or Pierre; hopefully better than Richard. In fact a lot of us are rather proud of our name. It's honest. It honestly expresses where we've been. So what? Everybody's been someplace.

LETTERS TO THE NUTSHELL

I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN BUT A LETTER, I CAN MANAGE

The same in Ottawa

Dear Nutshell:

Thanks very much for your letter of May 8th and the copies of In a Nutshell.

It seems that whether one lives at one end of the country or the other the problems of housing for people who have had a psychiatric illness are much the same. The situations, which you describe, to which people traditionally return, are identical to those here. The only addition I might make is a system run by the Ministry of Health called Homes for Special Care. These are, for the most part, small private custodial institutions to which people are regulated when labelled "chronic." They are as far from being "homes for special care" as one can imagine.

We are very much interested in the concept of a group home run by the residents with the support of volunteers, social workers or perhaps public health nurses as needed (based on homes developed in Norwich, England, - enclosed is a brief article describing them.) Your homes sound even more exciting.

I have a lot of questions collecting in my mind but I think I'll keep them there until we know more clearly where we're headed.

I wish you continued success in your unique efforts.

Please add me to your mailing list for "In a Nutshell." Is there a charge?

Hope to communicate with you again.

Sincerely

Sandra Howell

Community Worker

Canadian Mental Health Assoc.

Ottawa, Ontario

Lovely titles

Dear Nutshell

Love your titles and your articles. I think our pamphlet (enclosed) shows what we're up to here. It's an effort and an attempt. Can you give us feedback on what we should do etc. and what you think of the idea of people helping people.

We would certainly like to receive your newsletter and maybe one day we could supply an article.

Luck to you and luck to us

Rickard Nuinday

Saskatoon People Centre Society

Seattle similarities

Dear Gentle People:

Enclosed is a check for \$5. for a subscription for all back issues beginning with January 1974 and en-

Dear Joanne

To my very beautiful and courageous friend. My name is Tom and I'd like to say how precious "I Never Promised You A Rose Garden" was to me.

I suppose that for my age (45) I hold the provincial championship for the number of admissions to mental institutions in B.C. (18) in 20 years. To start my climb out I needed and got a large amount of self-helping love. I tried to settle in the city but found it impossible so I rented a cabin 65 miles from Vancouver.

As soon as I got there I inhaled big breaths of fresh air. It was right on the shore of the Vedder River in the middle of the mountains. The only way I knew how to live out in society was as a mental patient but people feared me and I so much wanted to be their friend. I knew I wasn't crazy and some other people living there also knew that I wasn't. There were about 6 of them and they were the cutest bunch of children you ever saw and I knew that their parents loved them. I made an honest friendship with these kids and in awhile I was accepted by their parents.

It was a wonderful feeling to have people around me that I could talk to, who I could share my life with. I met a young lady who was a Christian and something new started in my life.

A couple of weeks later I went crazy again on drugs and booze because I had to put my dog, who'd been like a child to me, to sleep. I found myself in a halfway house run by A.A. and I did have people I could talk to. I stayed there a couple of weeks and decided I had built my strength enough to try the city.

I stayed a few nights at the YM and around eight I walked into a Guru Maharaji Meeting. I don't know why but I found myself bowing

with December 1974. (Please don't send Feb. & March 74 since I have already received them as introductory copies from your office)

Your newspaper has been very well received by me since I am doing research on the new Washington State Mental and Civil Commitment Law of Jan. 1974, and it seems that there are great similarities between Canadian (at least B.C.) commitment laws re: civil rights and those of Washington State.

One suggestion though - had I not inadvertently been informed of your existence by a small bookstore proprietor I would never have known of your efforts. I think you should send some copies down to a few bookstores in Seattle so more lay-

in honourable respectful prayer. That night, alone in my room, I gave praying a try and asked to be forgiven. After, my frustrations flowed out of me and I felt cleaner than I had in 20 years.

I've recently gone to a Community Care Team. The first day I had a verbal encounter with a nurse as I wanted to go home to Riverview for Xmas. (You know where that's at.) I went back to the team the next day to tell them I appreciated their help and I met Don. Through talking to him I managed to get settled in a place and I've been here ever since. He's pretty smart and I think he's outgaming me. I've sure improved somehow since then. I'm making it.

All the very precious best,
Tom Pollok

Dear Mr. Pollok,

Thank you for your very interesting and good letter.

I know how hard "outside" can be and I am delighted at how you took it on and are making it bring you what you need.

I also think that psychotherapy is a good thing. I don't know what the Canadian hospitals give for therapy, but the overwhelming number of American ones give a hearty hand shake and a band-aid. It's good that you can have the community places like the one you describe. In my day, none of that existed and I think the existence of one would have saved me some hospital time.

Anyway, thanks so much for your "hello" wave from Vancouver.

Sincerely,

Joanne Greenberg

Author of "I Never Promised You A Rose Garden"

man, mental patients, and professionals can know about you. Keep up the good work.

Yours in personhood

Toni Trend

NUTSHELL

IN A NUTSHELL is the official publication of the Mental Patients Association. It is a politically dependent paper, standing for the world-wide spread of insanity--namely, peace, love and socialism. The paper is distributed free to people who won't pay for it. Secret headquarters are located at 2146 Yew Street, Vancouver 9, B.C. Tel: 738-5177.

FRANK

IN A NUTSHELL



KF

BEYOND SOUND

My day is a snare
In which I am caught
Struggling

As dawn breaks I am revived
To continue what has become to me
A life outside of life
Where my soul screeches
To unimagined heights
And instinct holds me back
Puts on the breaks
Till gathering strength
I quietly descend to the glassy
surface
And I remain
Healing myself
By the steady routine of my
existence
And yet I am not healed.

For a word
A distant threatening sound
Shoots me off again
Shattering the cobwebs
That enfold me
Encircle me
Bind me
To some hidden sorrow
That lies there in a stupor
At the back of my head.

There is no word
That accurately describes
The feeling of foreboding
That I once had
That now slides past
Like some reptile
Nudging at my eyes.

Oh let me look away!
Let me see the things I love!
How wonderful!
How beautiful!
But it is still there
When will I feel safe again?
Never?
Yes, never.

Molly Dexall

TO JIM MY ONLY LOVE

If you have someone to love you
When times seem dark and gray
It was just that kind of day
That my one and only love passed
away

If you have someone whose love
Makes you want him ever near
Then the world will glow its'
brighest
And your life will be full of cheer

Make his home a place of beauty
Never let him feel alone
Then you'll find that life is happy
More than you have ever know

Yes, if you have that someone who
loves you
He will fill your every need
Enjoy each moment of your life
For you are very rich indeed

The very one time I failed my love
Was when he needed me the most
I pray to heaven, God above
Forgive me, as I failed the one I
loved the most

Now I have no one to love me
No one to brighten my every day
And I shall never love as strongly
As I did my precious love who pas-
sed away

God above please hold him close
As he suffered in life, grief and
strife

More than many people do in an en-
tire life.

Irene

LOST AT SEA

There's something shining in the
sky

It's the sun

Something must be around for fun
Maybe a creature to communicate
with

Maybe one to dream with

What to do, what to do

I'll talk on flying saucers

They gleam

Many are just stunts

But if they are real what became
of them?

What will become of us?

Gleam, gleam, gleam, gleam

All I'm thinking of is shiny things

What fantasy, what play

The time of day

What to say, what to say

Come forward and see

If you please

In one second I noticed the sky

In this hour I eat this piece of
pie

I think I'll reach and touch the
sky

If I do I'll have touched the sky
The sky, Thesky!

Have I gone nuts or is this vision
making noise

My mind is lost but not I

Not I, I am not lost

Lost, well no just found in my
valve

I'm not lost

Paul Curtis.

NEUROTIC CITY WOMAN

I'm feeling kind of alone
why is accomplishment such a
struggle?

What do you consider important ways
you have grown in the last meaning-
ful time period?

Why is it we spend so much time
talking about me.

I don't know what way of being I am
extending or flowing into
Direction in life seems to be out
of my hands

BREAKING UP

I don't feel so bad
this week

Because I've done
caring

Trying to predict
hoping

For the unknowable
I feel free

It is good.
Yes, good.

Anon.



WOMAN WITHOUT A VEIL

She stood within her cave
Half-naked to her gills,

The phosphorescent walls,
Her shining eyes stood still.

The cracks about the cave
Shone like candles of the song.

Everywhere was light
But darkness was throughout
The beastly beast did stalk,
Did stalk her prey throughout
And she did stare it down.
The poorfeel beast did moan
She did pounce!

And then she gorged;
The blood did spill so red;
Her fangs did rip and tear-
The flesh, so white and soft.
As her mouth did foam and froth
She smiled so sweetly
And said, "Did I not do well
today?"
He's dead now you know,
and she has 22% fewer cavities.

Glen H. Underwood

Marsha & Felix - the first man and
woman as mentioned in the Sodom
and Gomorrah Book of Sinful Tales.

MARSHA & FELIX

Never anything like it
Before had ever occurred.
Marsha and Felix weren't lovers.
So Venus decreed in her shell
That they would be as such.

Twinkle, twinkle little fink
How I wonder what you aren't
And was cloudy with mildy feathers.

It was somewhat lovingly so
That Marsha and co were friendly
Friendly like a couple of bears
Bears in a tree
Too bad for the fool-hardy clowns

From the primeval slim
Emerged another grotesque
Of the same similar mould
of mouldy mould.
Thus was born the Satan son
Known as the son of Felix 1st,
Therefore Felix Jr. was he
And they lived habbily everafter.

Glen H. Underwood

THE BATTLE OF THE CREEPS

There upon the plain, a great cloud
of smoke.
Darkness soon was falling,
And the frogs did croak.

Marsha was about, feeling somewhat
down;
But Phyllis was there about,
feeling like a clown
Tisha was the master; Harold was
the tool,
And felix was a cat of long lost
virtue.
Elsa feels she knows it all
And Clive did send her up.

They were labbing and jocking
Until Lisa had a cow.

Then Harold told of sin, and
Marsha did attack.
She was all around attacking like
a trooper.

And far away the sky was red
Like Cain was again.
And Harold died polite without
loss or gain
Only Marsha laughed for joy
While the others did not care
Glen H. Underwood

GOOD BYE MPA

Good bye MPA, not farewell
Every day is today, not tomorrow
Good bye MPA, wish you well
From the future, don't beg or
borrow

Flow on the stream of life
Over boulders, raging water
And believe in today and strive
Strive for unity, amid slaughter

Brains get hurt, bent from shape
Yet MPA today fights for hope
Shock, pills, minds are raped
Of hope, good clean straight dope

People come for succor, MPA
From despair, and disrepair
Give it to them today - today!
If all are bereft, we care

MPA, today, not tomorrow do
The aiding and abetting of minds
I bid you not good bye, just adieu
Everyone is different, all kinds

Yesterday went hell, today help
MPA is a clue to tomorrow
Mental health gives no help
So MPA must make today, tomorrow

Bill Helem

ALLITERATIONS

Blonde, bronzed elbow stuck out
street car window,
Towel tightly clutched, swimming.
Bolting burning pepperoni bought on
burning beach.
Rollicking, raucous, roisterous rides
on rickety, rackety rollercoaster.
Flying freely on flashing wheels,
Clattering across crinkled cobbles,
Swishing across seething asphalt.
Baseball on the block, kick the can,
hide and seek,
Running, relieve-y-0-, OHHH David!
Playing parts, praiseful applause,
perfect pleasure.
Sitting stiffly straight in school-
house rows.
Filching fruit, smashing street-
lamps, wrecking windows,
Late nights, family fights, running
roads to strange abodes
Into a barless cage:
Bloody battles, broken bones, booting
balls, balls booted.
Big bad boys bullying for buggery,
Big bad boys bawling in their beds.
Finally freedom.
Working with sweating seamstresses,
Slaving for puny paypackets; boost-
ing boxes; cleaning crap.
Then tramps, tramps, tramping. Salute
you, sir.
Mindless unmaning marches
Crazy-comic killers in blackened
boots and burnished brass; bullshit.
Cracking, crazy. Knifed by needles,
senses smothered, strangled;
Stretching, straining against straps
Teeth brutally broken, bastards---
Mad, modern mental health exorcists.
Leaving.
Ludicrous loving, playing house,
twice tried torture for two, tragic.
Pills and needles, needles and
pills, ills.
Empty rooms, lonesome tunes, booze
and blues, wasting;
Folds of flab, hoary hair, sagging
skin, sinking.

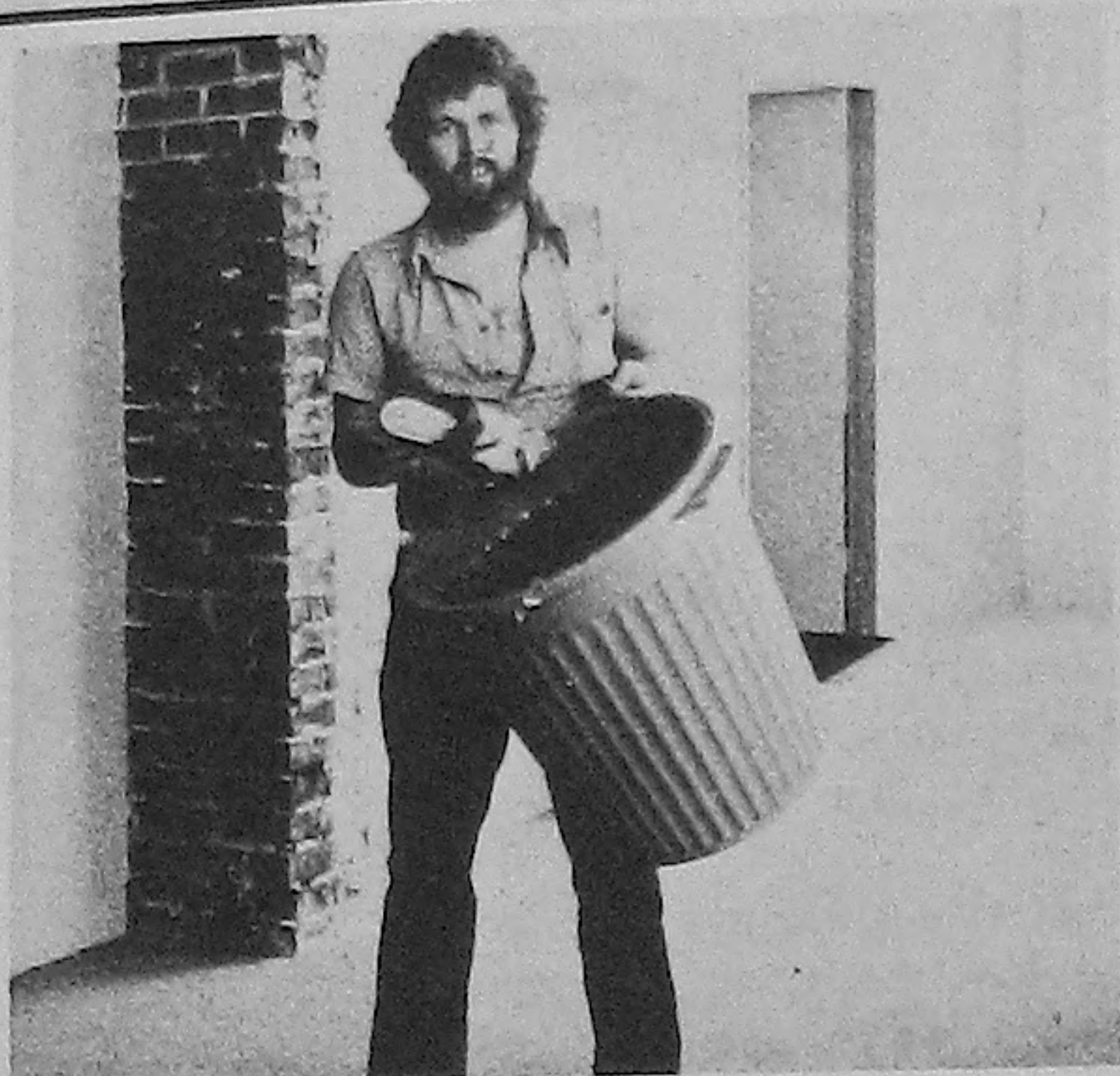
Dave Beamish



PSST!

ROBERTS RULES . . . Eve-Lynn and Barry, having diligently attended and participated in every meeting for the past six months, are on a well-deserved holiday. Our secret reporter says they haven't stopped talking yet. He overheard a conversation at their vacation hide-away. Eve-Lynn said, "I move we go to sleep." The motion was seconded by Barry and after lengthy discussion carried unanimously.

LABOUR REPORT . . . Tina Woodhall had a baby girl, so did Nancy Marsden, Eve Hamilton had a boy. Congrats!



Bill Helem

JOB-CREATION SUCCESSES . . . These previously unemployed people, who have been working as IPA coordinators, are now employees or students in the "real world." Bill Helm on the move is working in the stationery department of the UBC bookstore. Morris Nishi is going to art school. David Kennedy is enrolled in UBC's physiotherapy program. Dick Walraven has a job in the mental health field with VEEC. Dave Beamish will be taking a daycare course at Vancouver City College, and rumour has it that Jane Blackstock may be taking up work at Children's Aid, while Al Kuenzli is back in business. Take that LEAP!



David Kennedy

gossip



John, Beverly & Morris Nishi

MARRIAGES . . . No comment.

WOMEN GETTING TOGETHER . . . A women's committee has been formed to start a broad range of programs to advance and protect a broad range of women's rights. They've proposed that a 5th rule be established, namely, that violence against women is also violence.

CLEANING UP THE MESS AT CITY HALL . . . Fred Fisher, stalwart MPA cleaner-upper, has applied for a job as janitor at city hall. Can't think of a better man for the job.

EDDIE FISHER DEPARTMENT . . . Whatever happened to Kevin Clarke, Sharon Cohen, Sharon Douglas, Bob Hunter, George Laurie, Alice Stark, Billie Weyman? Let us hear from you.

MOST ELIGIBLE BACHELOUR . . . Sun-tanned Howard Hotzen has grown a very sexy moustache and looks like a rich banker. He's the recipient of countless admiring glances.



Dick Walraven

IT MAY HAVE BEEN SEX . . . Stan and Anne-Marie slugged it out for eight rounds -- a real knock-down, drag-out fisticuffs set-to. They're now going into professional prize-fighting as a team (another job-creation success?). What was the fight about? Neither of them knew. It was all very modern and non-verbal. They both "got a lot of feelings out" without knowing what the feelings were or why they should be out.



Howard Hotzen



Leo & Anne-Marie

GETTING THE NEW DROP-IN IN SHAPE . . . And these have also served. Jim Lamming has laid the rubber flooring in the crafts room. Sonja has made exquisite batiks. Joyce Klassen and Kathy Frank have contributed drawings. Anita Mathieson has painted windows and Liz Silver has washed them. Len Lorimer is putting the workshop together. Ed has provided free roll-your-owns. Janet has made a sea of beautiful cushions and Trudy has cleaned beyond the call of duty. And there are many more whose accomplishments are on display at 6th and Yew.



Sonja & Phil



Kathy Frank & Fran Phillips



Liz Silver

OLD FACES, OLD MEMBERS . . . The first business meeting at the new drop-in saw a spontaneous re-union of many people who hadn't been around in a while--people like Bob Ward, Janet Bell, Dick Betts and Lanny Beckman. Lanny, sporting a pair of tanned legs and ultra-short cutoffs sat silently through the meeting in a meditative yoga position with legs crossed. Asked later why he maintained such a fixed pose, he replied, "People have been telling me my shorts are too short."



Lanny, Patty & Dick

WHAT'S FIDEL REALLY LIKE? . . . Only Phyllis Brown, who's been in Cuba for the past few months, really knows.

YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD TO TEACH AN OLD DOG NEW TRICKS . . . No, Carla is not chasing cars. She's chasing her dog who's chasing cars.

TIGHT SQUEEZE . . . Jim James, whose main talent is that he knows everything, is an MPA caretaker. An unnamed source says that Jim (or most of him) sleeps in a locker in the back that's about 3 feet by 2 inches.

A STAR IS CONCEIVED . . . Watch for Terry Haughian on your TV screen. As part of her new acting career, MPA's Book Project coordinator plays the part of a doctor on a B.C. government V.D. commercial. Asked whether it was typecasting, Ms. Haughian replied, "No, as far as I can recall, I've never been a doctor."



The 11th Ave. Firefighters

VIOLENCE: A NEW TWIST . . . The drop-in is adorned with a whole nursery of exotic plants. The first day they arrived, one of them picked a fight with Gerald Buddha. The Emergency Action Committee advised the plant of MPA's anti-violence rule and since then there's been no trouble.

THE BLUNT TRUTH . . . The Kits Mental Health Team (KMHT) came by with a questionnaire. One of the questions asked, "Are there any changes, positive or negative, in your work as a result of the KMHT being available?" Our answer: No. (P.S. Anne-Marie, who's been seeing a lot of KMHT shrink Hugh Parfitt, says that's not exactly true. So make that "The Blunt Half-Truth.")

New Forensic Act for 'mentally ill offenders'

"IT CAN HARDLY GET WORSE"

Being charged with a crime is bad enough. When suspicion of "mental disorder" is added to that, it's much worse.

The BC government's new Forensic Psychiatric Services Act may improve the situation for people who find themselves in this position of double jeopardy. Says MPA coordinator Fran Phillips, "It could hardly make matters worse."

Those affected by the act fall into two main categories: people remanded for psychiatric examination because they're suspected of being unfit to stand trial; and people found not guilty by reason of insanity.

Presently, they find themselves trapped in a rat-maze which can shuttle them endlessly between the city jail, Oakalla and Riverside. Many wind up in Riverside for years. Just the first few days behind bars has been known to destroy emotionally-troubled people.

Health minister Cocke has appointed a ten-member commission to administer the act. Conspicuously missing from this group are consumers and representatives of grassroots organizations.

The commission, which has met only twice so far, is vague on the intent of the act and on their role in implementing it. The most candid statements have come from police inspector Daniel Brown, who

hastens to add that these are his own views and not necessarily the commission's.

"I hope that mentally ill people picked up by the police are never taken to the city jail," he says. "They should be taken directly from the street to a holding facility, or assessment or primary treatment facility—I don't care what words you want to use—rather than being put into cells." (The words used by Dennis Cocke, incidentally, are "forensic clinic.")

As for the inmates now choking on Riverside red-tape, Brown hopes the act will allow for far more frequent reviews.

Whether the proposed community-based forensic clinics will provide a more decent environment remains to be seen. Another test of the act is whether it will speed up the judicial process for suspected offenders.

The act is certainly not going to be a cure-all. A real solution would require large financial expenditures to create dozens of alternate facilities to replace Riverside. These expenditures are unlikely.

Short of this, the commission can aim at a couple of realistic goals. One would involve reducing the period of detention to the minimum necessary. The second is mak-

ing the conditions of detention at the forensic clinics as humane as possible.

One commissioner did voice some reservations about the problem of "psychiatric tyranny," a problem which he sees may be compounded by the act. Presently, however, "mentally disordered offenders" are subjected, if not to psychiatric tyranny, then to judicial tyranny. You get to choose your form of poison; or rather it is chosen for you.

Anti-psychiatric faith in the judicial process is at best naive. Society, in its wisdom, has seen fit to create separate institutions for the punishment of mental patients and prisoners—psychiatry and mental hospitals for the former and courts and prisons for the latter. The 5% of mental patients unlucky enough to fall into the criminal category are so far down the social ladder, they don't even have a rung to perch on.

The Forensic Psychiatric Services Act can hardly push them down any further. Whether it will improve their condition depends on the commission's willingness to take bold—and probably expensive—steps to humanize the psychiatric and judicial treatment of probably the most discriminated-against group in society.

—Lanny Beckman

NORMALLY, SCHIZOPHRENIA IS

How do you tell schizophrenia from normal behaviour? This debate has been raging at MPA since the NUTSHELL mistakenly reversed the columns listing each set of traits six months ago.

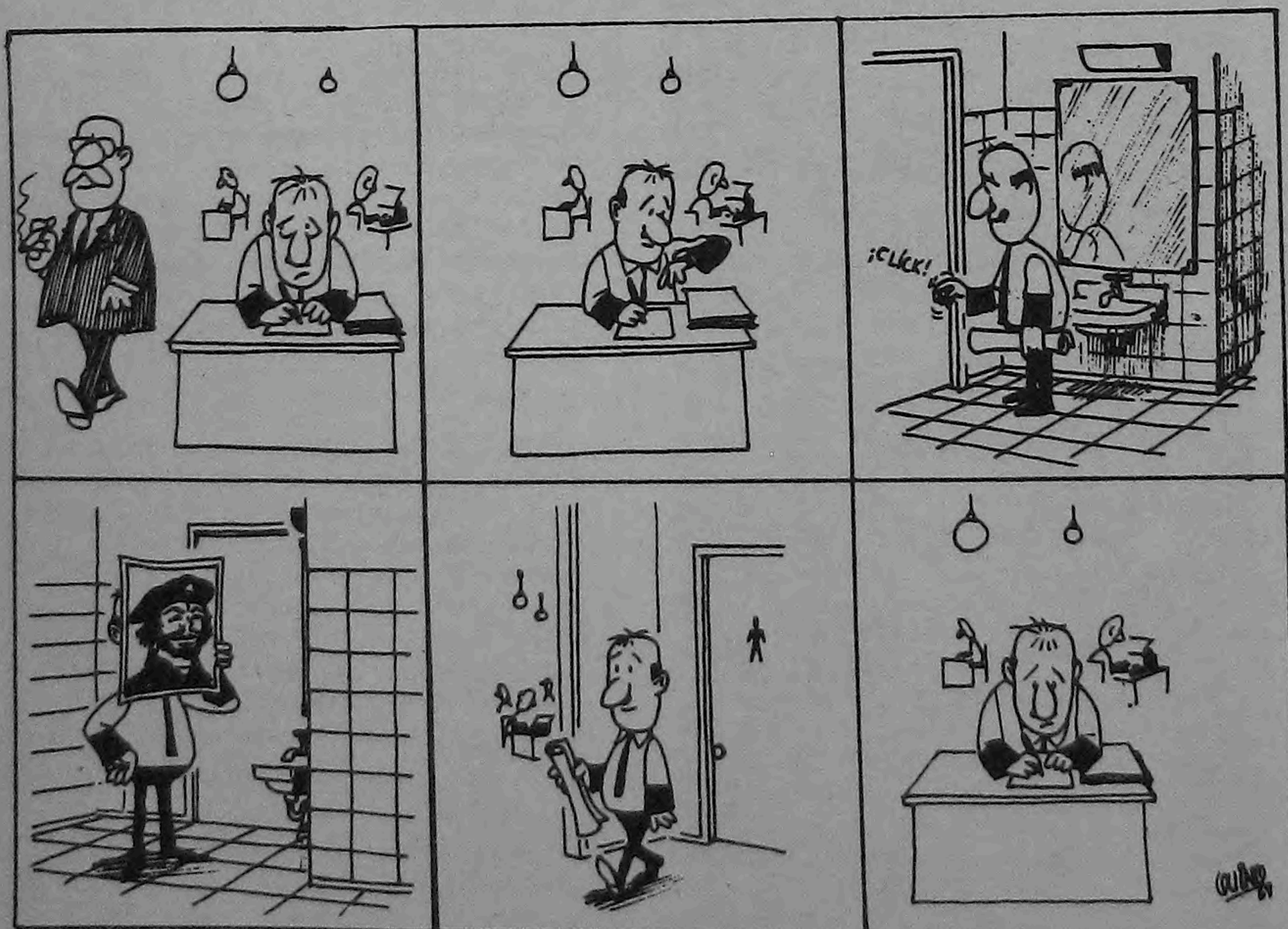
Even when we announced our regrettable error in the following edition, many readers clung to the belief that the "mistake" was really correct.

Since then, confusion has reigned. Hundreds of letters and phone calls have poured in arguing all sides of the issue.

We were so bewildered by the whole thing that we set up the Committee on Fine Distinctions to resolve the question. After months of futile debate the committee collapsed in a rancorous heap.

But never let it be said that mental patients shy away from the impossible. We've recently commissioned the Council on Hair-Splitting to do a thorough investigation of schizophrenia and normal behaviour and to submit its report by April 1, 1979.

When that report is in, you'll read it here first.



MPA BOOKS COMING OUT

The Mental Patients Publishing Project has been in operation since May 13th. They are preparing five manuscripts for publication including a book about the birth and history of MPA, a book of MPA creative writings, a quarterly journal called Bedlam, a bibliography of anti-psychiatry resources compiled by MPA resident Cathy Frank, and finally, the autobiography of gestalt therapist David Berg, who died by suicide in December 1973. They expect to complete their work in late August, and to have Cathy Frank's bibliography in print and ready for distribution by that time.

There are seven persons engaged on the project; five sponsored by OFY and two by MPA. Of these seven

persons, four are ex-mental patients and three are not; five are women and two are men. They include some familiar MPA persons such as Terry Haughian, Petra Graves, Barbara Bussigel, and Peg McNameer, who ran in research in the May 24th election. New persons are David Wallace and Robert Melnick.

At the present time the creative writing book is in really fine shape. The project is still taking contributions, however, so send your work to Creative Writing Submissions, 2643 W 11th. Cathy Batten is working with the creative writing book in a voluntary capacity; so you would contact her at MPA if you have any submissions.

Bedlam has just created its editorial policy and is forging ahead soliciting articles from persons writing in the anti-psychiatry field, and will be producing a few of their own; possibly on a political analysis of Riverview, the Community Mental Health scheme in Vancouver, attitudes towards Mental Health Research, Women and Psychiatry, a critique of the writings of Art Janoff, and the anti-psychiatry bibliography by Cathy Frank is in such fine shape that typesetting on this book will be taking place in the next week.

WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FORMS

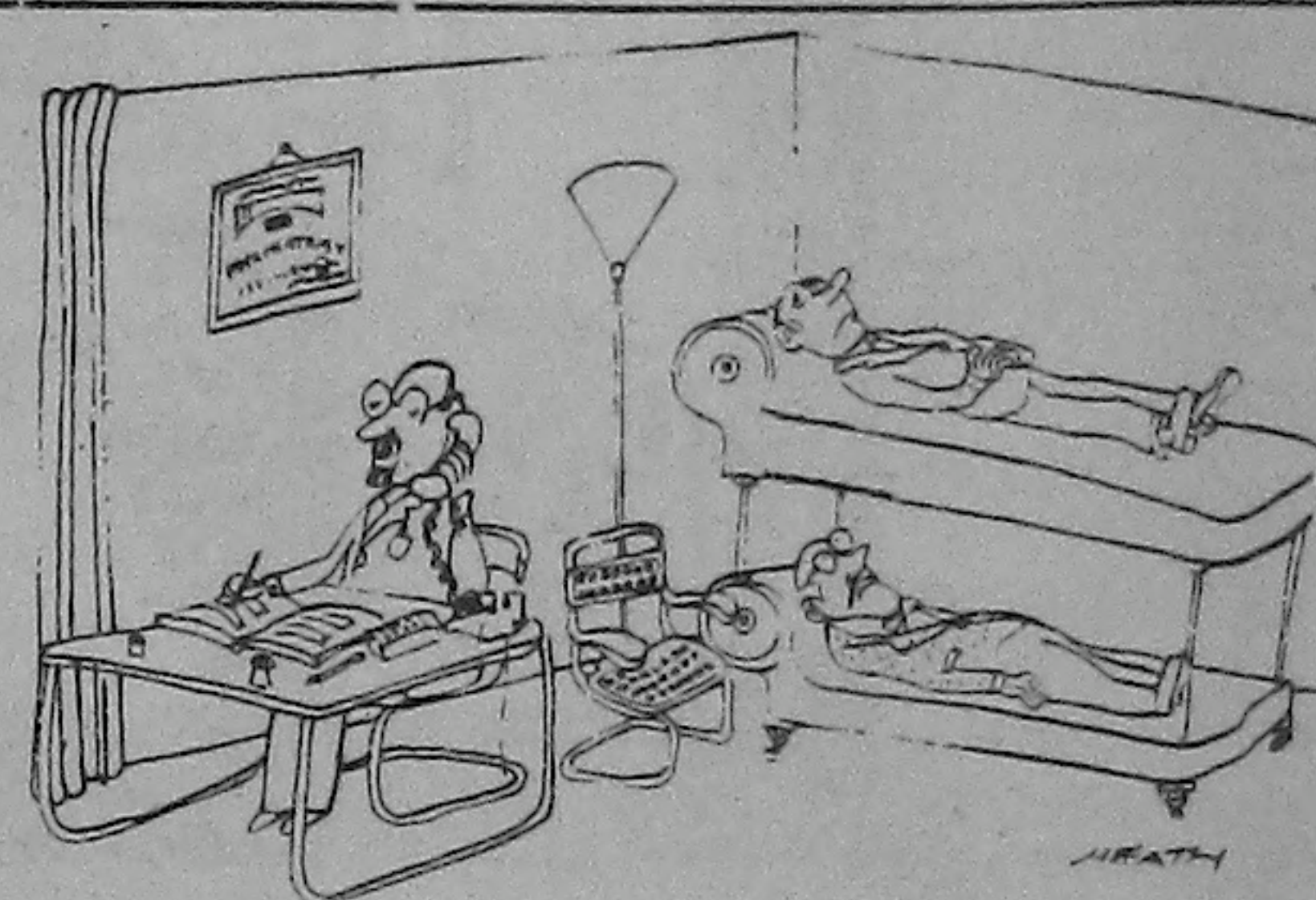
Tuesday Aug. 13 was the first meeting of the MPA Womens Committee. We talked about our personal reasons for wanting to form such a group. We feel that this will give the women of MPA a chance to meet and share our personal experiences as Women. To give each other feedback and support. It will be a learning experience. We will become more aware of our role as women, our position and collective power.

We feel it is important for us to meet on a regular basis. At a later date we intend to form a legislative body which will act on behalf of women members and co-ordinators at MPA. Where need arises, particularly on the issue of violence against women, we will work in groups, where needed, to resolve

grievances between individuals. We intend to put forth, at a later date, a proposal which elaborates on the definition of violence within MPA to include violence against women, and to insure that the penalty for this type of violence will be the effective implementation of banning in all areas of MPA: Drop-in and residences. We feel our group will change as needs change.

We will have resource women whose names will be posted on the co-ordinators list who will be willing to deal specifically with women's problems. We will contribute to the nutshell regularly and will also report to the business meeting weekly.

We invite all interested women to please attend our meetings. For more information phone the drop-in at 738-5177.



"I'm very sorry, I'd like to help you, but I'm worked off my feet as it is."

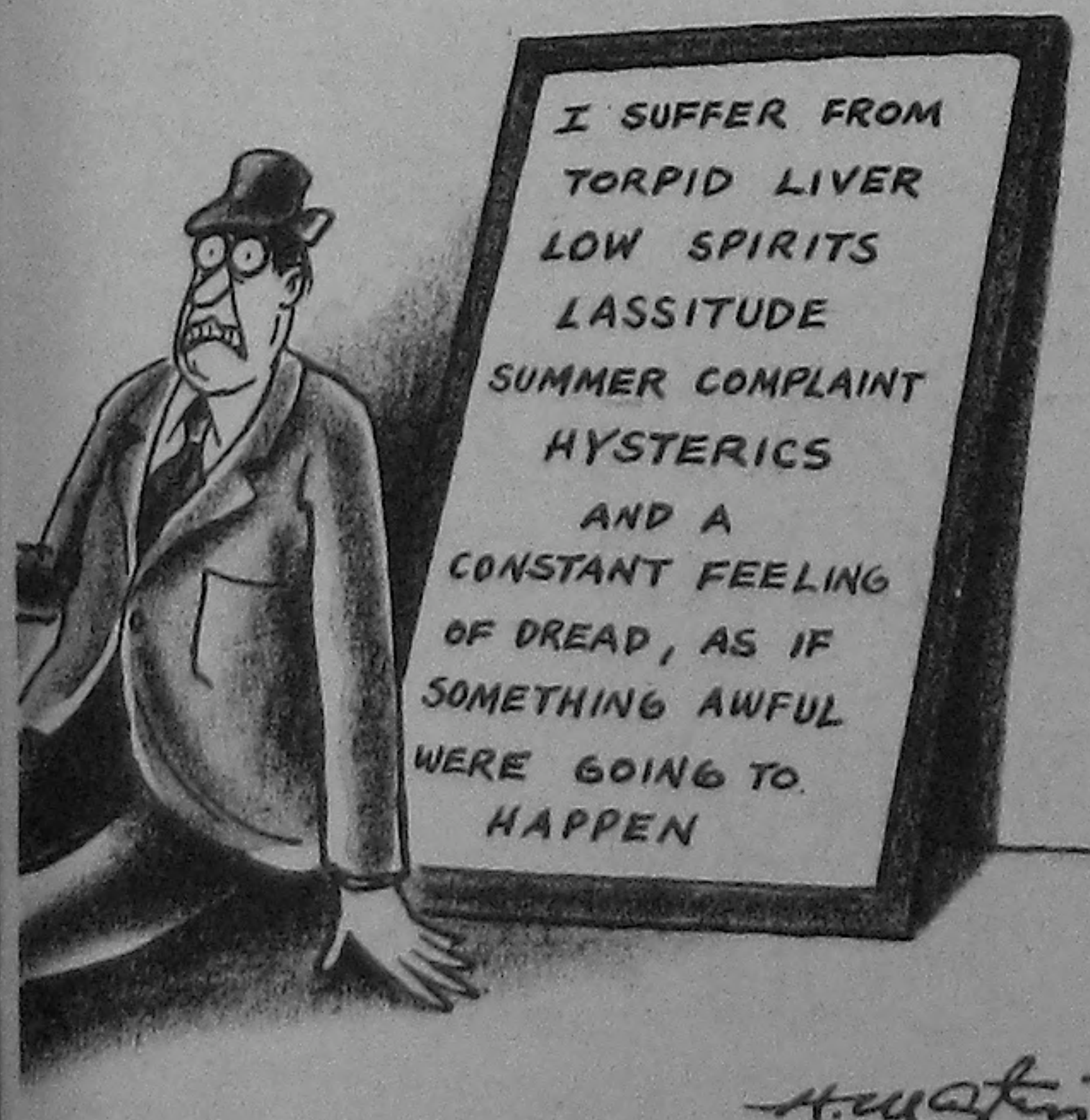
The Nutshell Lives!

How come the NUTSHELL hasn't come out lately? Has MPA collapsed?

The very opposite, friends! We've been so busy moving into our brand, spanking new drop-in center that we just haven't had time to put out one of these rags for the past few months.

But the press is rolling again and here we are. From now on you can expect us every six weeks or so.

ACTIVITIES



Saturday Sept. 7
BUS TRIP AND PICNIC LUNCH TO Horse-shoe Bay. Leave DIC at 1 p.m.

Sunday Sept. 8
BASEBALL GAME. Meet at DIC at 1 PM

Monday Sept. 9
MOVIES. Leave DIC at 6:30 P.M.

Wednesday Sept 11
GENERAL MEETING 7:30 P.M. at DIC.
Also ELECTIONS for 6 new people.

Saturday Sept. 14
GALA MPA PARTY AT DIC. 7:30 PM - ?
Food - Punch - Band.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED EVENTS
Mondays
11 A.M. Residence Council Meeting.
Meets at different residence each

week.

Tuesdays
10 A.M. Drop-in Centre Meeting.
12 Noon Business meeting at DIC.

Wednesdays
6 P.M. FREE Dinner
7:30 P.M. Educational discussion
A different topic each week on Wed.
when there is no general meeting.

Thursdays
1 P.M. Riverview Trip. Meet at DIC at noon.
7 P.M. Women's Committee Meeting.
Phone Drop-in Centre for location.

Saturdays
1 P.M. Afternoon trip and FREE lunch to different interesting places in the lower mainland each week.



by Kathy Frank

MPA *** 2146 YEW**

GRAND OPENING

& ANNIVERSARY

PARTY!
saturday sept. 14TH
7:30



HUGE FEAST

MPA JUG BAND

DANCING

come one

LIVE BAND

PAT PARSONS REVIEW

ALCOHOL

PUNCH

come all