

TRAVELERS AID SOCIETY

Compared with other welfare agencies assisting the city's new immigrants Travelers Aid Society combines a unique array of clients side by side with its services to the foreign born. This difference arises out of the locale in which it operates, namely railroad terminals, airports and docks, where a motely assortment of depressed travelers come to the attention of the Society. The immigrant shares the services of the Travelers Aid Society with runaway children, old travelers, mothers accompanied by children, fatigue servicemen, and sick or stranded travelers in need of financial or medical assistance. These protective services demand the talents of an organization capable of dealing with more than one type of social problems.

The Chicago Travelers Aid Society is but one of many similar groups operating in major cities of the United States and federated with the National Association for Travelers Aid and Transient Service of New York City. The first such organization was the St. Louis Travelers Aid Society which originated when a former mayor of that city, Bryan Mullanphy, left one third of his fortune in 1849 to provide aid to stranded travelers on their way westward to the gold fields. During the following years, the national association of the Young Women's Christian Association urged its branches to establish Travelers Aid departments, which resulted in an inevitable duplication of efforts. The non-sectarian Travelers Aid Societies were then organized, first in Philadelphia in 1901, and then in New York in 1905. By 1948, there were 98 local Travelers Aid Societies, only four of which being departments of the Young Women's Christian Association.

The Travelers Aid Society of Chicago was established in 1888 as an adjunct of the Young Women's Christian Association, which opened in the same year a residence for transient women seeking employment in the city. Volunteer workers were stationed in railroad terminals to meet and assist newly arrived women. With the rapid transformation of Chicago into a busy urban center and a railroad terminal point, it became the destination or transit stop for immigrants, the unemployed, and travelling servicemen. The need to devote greater effort and bring specialized skills to these problems resulted in the organization of a separate Travelers Aid Society of Chicago and Illinois in 1914, with a Board of Directors numbering representative of Jewish, Protestant and Catholic groups. A residence providing temporary shelter for women was established, only to be discontinued in 1926 because of the availability of similar community facilities. The first Board of Directors also took steps to establish branches throughout the state, with the result that some of which, namely Peoria, Danville, and Springfield, survived until the present day.

Increased unemployment accompanied by the unusual dislocation of populations in the early 1930's alarmed the federal government into financing a federal transient program in 1933. When a public relief agency for interstate transients in Chicago, named the Federal Transient Service, came into being, a redivision of responsibilities became necessary and the Travelers Aid Society was made responsible for the care of dependent children under Juvenile Court age and special cases of transients in other age groups, in addition to its services in transportation terminals. But in 1935, the Cook

County Bureau of Public Welfare supplanted the Federal Transients Service. Yet the need for the services of the Travelers Aid Society were not diminished, and with the influx of immigrants and the troop movements during and after the Second World War, more and more responsibilities were shouldered by the Society.

The Society's Board of Directors, often referred to as the Administrative Board, directs and controls all activities. It tries to include within its ranks representatives of the city's civic, professional and business circles. Members of the Board are elected at each annual meeting and serve for a three-year term. Officers of the Society are elected by the Board from its own ranks for a term of one year. The Board also oversees the employment of the necessary salaried staff. First officers of the Society who served in 1914 included Thomas C. MacMillan as President, Dr. Gerson B. Levi and the Reverend Peter Joseph O'Callaghan as Vice-Presidents, Albert Harris as Treasurer, Mrs. Ignace J. Reis as Recording Secretary, and Everett L. Meservey as General Secretary. The annual report of 1959 lists the following people as officers of the Society: Robert E. Johnson as President, Douglas Campbell, Mrs. Charles F. Cutter, and L. Hyland Erickson as Vice-Presidents, Wesley H. Loomis III as Treasurer, and Mrs. Herman H. Pevler as Secretary. In 1939, a Woman's Board composed of 35 young women was appointed for the purpose of interesting women in the programs of the Society. Officers of the Woman's Board in 1959 included Mrs. Ike Sewell as President, Mrs. John Brittingham as Vice-President, Mrs. Robert A. Beebe as Secretary, Mrs. Bernard J. Cooper as Treasurer, and Mrs. G. Robert Parry, Jr., as Benefit Chairman.

Standing committees of the Society are: The Executive, Service, Finance, Publicity, Membership, Nominating and Development Committees. The Society finances its operations through contributions from the following groups: Community Fund of Chicago, United Service Organizations especially during the Second World War, foundations, transportation companies, women's clubs and church groups, individual contributors, and the Woman's Board annual benefit.

People of note who corresponded regularly with the Society are few. Jessie Florence Binford of the Juvenile Protective Association must be singled out though, for her letters afford an interesting view of the cooperation or lack of it between various social welfare agencies.

Papers of the Travelers Aid Society are filed in the Department of Special Collections. They include correspondence; agendas and minutes of the Board of Directors, the Woman's Board and various committees, 1914-1959; memoranda exchanged between members of the Board and officers of the Society; lists of candidates for use by the Nominating Committee; articles of incorporation; reports of the Nominating Committee; salary scales; financial papers; literature and published material; tally sheets; annual reports of the Society, 1916, 1920, 1923, 1927, 1933, 1935-1937, 1951-1955, 1957-1959; constitutions and by-laws; bulletins; manuals for the use of Board members; case histories of the Society's clients. These papers also consist of material relating to other organizations such as minutes of the National Social Welfare Council, 1954-1955; published material of the National Travelers Aid Society; 1956 annual report of United Service Organizations, Inc.; programs; 1959 annual report of Grant Hospital of Chicago, Illinois.

Papers of Travelers Aid Society pertain to assisting new immigrants to the Chicago area; assisting old travelers in transportation terminals; returning runaway children and youths to their relatives; aiding weary servicemen in terminals; finding suitable lodging for newly arrived people in search of employment; the

personnel requirements, salary scales and general procedures of social welfare agencies; United Service Organizations, Inc., and its activities; National Travelers Aid Society of New York; the progress of Grant Hospital, Chicago, Ill.

When received, these papers were subject-classified, folders being arranged alphabetically and chronologically thereunder. This arrangement was maintained, with the exceptions of the folder titled Annual Reports and Mailing Pieces, which was broken into the following three folders: Articles of Incorporation and Related Material; Annual Reports; Literature.

Papers of the Travelers Aid Society are filed under the following titles:

1. Annual Meetings, 1927-1929
April, 1927 - December, 1929
2. Annual Meetings, 1931
March - April, 1931
3. Annual Meetings, 1932-1933
February, 1932 - February, 1933
4. Annual Meetings, 1934-1935
January, 1934 - March, 1935
5. Annual Meetings, 1936
December, 1935 - March, 1936
6. Annual Meetings, 1937
December, 1936 - March, 1937
7. Annual Meetings, 1938
February, 1937 - March, 1938
8. Annual Meetings, 1939
February - April, 1939
9. Annual Meetings, 1940
February - March, 1940
10. Annual Meetings, 1941
January - March, 1941
11. Annual Meetings, 1942
1941 - April, 1942
12. Annual Meetings, 1943
January - April, 1943
13. Annual Meetings, 1944
March - April, 1944
14. Annual Meetings, 1945
March - April, 1945
15. Annual Meetings, 1946
December, 1945 - April, 1946
16. Annual Meetings, 1947
September, 1946 - April, 1947
17. Annual Meetings, 1948
January - April, 1948
18. Annual Meetings, 1949
February - June, 1949
19. Annual Meetings, 1950
February - June, 1950
20. Annual Meetings, 1951
1950 - May, 1951
21. Annual Meetings, 1952
1951 - May, 1952
22. Annual Meetings, 1953
December, 1952 - April, 1953
23. Annual Meetings, 1954
1953 - February, 1954

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24. Annual Meetings, 1955
November, 1954 - March, 1955
25. Annual Meetings, 1956
June, 1955 - March, 1956
26. Annual Meetings, 1957
February, 1956 - February, 1957
27. Annual Meetings, 1958
1957 - April, 1958
28. Annual Meetings, 1959
November, 1958 - January, 1960
29. Annual Meetings, 1960
December, 1959 - March, 1961
30. Annual Meetings, 1953 - Community Fund of Chicago
January, 1953
31. Annual Report, 1959
1959 # March, 1961
32. Annual Reports
1915 - 1959
33. Articles of Incorporation and Related Material
April, 1918 - ~~May, 1948~~ June, 1959
34. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1914 -1919
February, 1914 - April, 1919
35. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1919 - 1927
May, 1919 - February, 1927
36. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1927 - 1932
April, 1927 - December, 1932
37. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1933-1934
January, 1933 - December, 1934
38. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1935
January - November, 1935
39. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1936
January - December, 1936
40. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1937
January - November, 1937
41. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1938
January - December, 1938
42. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1939
February - November, 1939
43. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1940
January - December, 1940
44. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1941
January - December, 1941
45. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1942
January - December, 1942
46. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1943
January - December, 1943
47. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1944
January - December, 1944
48. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1945
January - December, 1945

49. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1946
January - December, 1946
50. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1947
January - December, 1947
51. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1948
January - December, 1948
52. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1949
January - December, 1949
53. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1950
January - December, 1950
54. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1951
January - August, 1951
55. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1951 - 1952
September, 1951 - March, 1952
56. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1952
April - December, 1952
57. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1953
January - December, 1953
58. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1954
January - November, 1954
59. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1955
January - December, 1955
60. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1956
January - December, 1956
61. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1957
January - December, 1957
62. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1958
January - December, 1958
63. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings, 1959
December, 1958 - December, 1959
64. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings: Supplementary Material
January, 1925 - December, 1927
65. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings: Supplementary Material
January - December, 1928
66. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings: Supplementary Material
November, 1928 - December, 1929
67. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings: Supplementary Material
December, 1929 - November, 1930
68. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings: Supplementary Material
January - December, 1931
69. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings: Supplementary Material
January - December, 1932
70. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings: Supplementary Material
January - December, 1933
71. Board of Directors - Minutes of Meetings: Supplementary Material
March - November, 1934
72. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1934
January - December, 1934
73. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1935
January - December, 1935

74. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1936
December, 1935 - December, 1936
75. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1937
January - November, 1937
76. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1938
January - December, 1938
77. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1939
February - November, 1939
78. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1945-1950
May, 1945 - December, 1950
79. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1950-1952
November, 1950 - December, 1952
80. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1953
March - August, 1953
81. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1954
January - December, 1954
82. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1955
1954 - June, 1955
83. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1956
March - September, 1956
84. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1957
March - December, 1957
85. Board of Directors - Miscellaneous, 1958
January - December, 1958
86. Board of Directors - Publicity - Miscellaneous, 1914-1943
March, 1914 - April, 1943
87. Board of Directors - Solicitations
October - December, 1958
88. Committees - Annual Meeting Committee: Minutes
December, 1940 - February, 1948
89. Committees - Development Committee, 1954
May, 1954 - February, 1955
90. Committees - Development Committee, 1955
February - May, 1955
91. Committees - Development Committee, 1957-1959
July, 1957 - March, 1959
92. Committees - Development Committee, 1959
October - December, 1959
93. Committees - Executive Committee, 1929-1939
December, 1929 - December, 1939
94. Committees - Executive Committee, 1940-1948
1940 - May, 1948
95. Committees - Executive Committee, 1949-1950
January, 1949 - August, 1950
96. Committees - Executive Committee, 1951
January - November, 1951
97. Committees - Executive Committee, 1952
January - April, 1952
98. Committees - Executive Committee, 1953
January - August, 1953

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99. Committees - Executive Committee, 1954
January - December, 1954
100. Committees - Executive Committee, 1955
1954 - November, 1955
101. Committees - Executive Committee, 1956
January - September, 1956
102. Committees - Executive Committee, 1957-1958
March, 1957 - December, 1958
103. Committees - Executive Committee, 1959
January - December, 1959
104. Committees - Executive Committee; Minutes
December, 1929 - September, 1957
105. Committees - Finance Committee, 1933-1939
November, 1933 - December, 1939
106. Committees - Finance Committee, 1940-1944
January, 1940 - December, 1944
107. Committees - Finance Committee, 1945-1947
March, 1945 - September, 1947
108. Committees - Finance Committee, 1948
February - September, 1948
109. Committees - Finance Committee, 1949
January - December, 1949
110. Committees - Finance Committee, 1950
January - December, 1950
111. Committees - Finance Committee, 1951
January - December, 1951
112. Committees - Finance Committee, 1952
March - November, 1952
113. Committees - Finance Committee, 1953
September, 1953
114. Committees - Finance Committee, 1954
April - October, 1954
115. Committees - Finance Committee, 1955
March - September, 1955
116. Committees - Finance Committee, 1956
September - November, 1956
117. Committees - Finance Committee, 1957
July - August, 1957
118. Committees - Finance Committee; Minutes
April, 1937 - September, 1956
119. Committees - Membership Committee, 1936-1940
October, 1936 - December, 1940
120. Committees - Membership Committee, 1941-1943
January, 1941 - October, 1943
121. Committees - Membership Committee, 1944-1946
January, 1944 - December, 1946
122. Committees - Membership Committee, 1947-1949
January, 1947 - May, 1949
123. Committees - Membership Committee, 1950
January - November, 1950

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124. Committees - Membership Committee, 1951
January - November, 1951
125. Committees - Membership Committee, 1952
January - December, 1952
126. Committees - Membership Committee, 1953
January - August, 1953
127. Committees - Membership Committee, 1954
January - February, 1954
128. Committees - Membership Committee, 1957-1958
January, 1957 - November, 1958
129. Committees - Membership Committee: Minutes
November, 1936 - January, 1957
130. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1927-1942
April, 1927 - March, 1942
131. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1947-1951
January, 1947 - April, 1951
132. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1952
January - May, 1952
133. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1952-1953
December, 1952 - February, 1953
134. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1954
January, 1954
135. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1955-1956
December, 1955 - December, 1956
136. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1957
January - December, 1957
137. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1958
January - November, 1958
138. Committees - Nominating Committee, 1959 - 1960
November, 1959 - January, 1961
139. Committees - Nominating Committee: Minutes
March, 1932 - February, 1956
140. Committees - Nominating and Membership Committee
November, 1954 - March, 1955
141. Committees - Organization and Review Committee
April - August, 1957
142. Committees - Personnel Committee, 1953-1958
May, 1953 - December, 1958
143. Committees - Publicity, 1932-1938
April, 1932 - 1938
144. Committees - Publicity Committee, 1940-1946
May, 1940 - November, 1946
145. Committees - Publicity Committee, 1947-1948
March, 1947 - December, 1948
146. Committees - Publicity Committee, 1949
March - December, 1949
147. Committees - Publicity Committee, 1950
January - November, 1950
148. Committees - Publicity Committee, 1951
January - December, 1951

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149. Committees - Publicity Committee, 1952
February - November, 1952
150. Committees - Publicity Committee, 1953-1954
January, 1953 - January, 1954
151. Committees - Publicity Committee, 1956
October, 1956
152. Committees - Publicity Committee; Minutes
March - April, 1958
153. Committees - Publicity and Interpretation Committee: Minutes
June, 1940 - October, 1952
154. Committees - Public Relations Committee, 1957-1958
July, 1957 - June, 1958
155. Committees - Retirement Plan Committee: Minutes
September, 1945
156. Committees - Service Committee, 1931-1945
October, 1931 - December, 1945
157. Committees - Service Committee, 1946-1947
January, 1946 - December, 1947
158. Committees - Service Committee, 1948
January - December, 1948
159. Committees - Service Committee, 1949
January - December, 1949
160. Committees - Service Committee, 1950
January - December, 1950
161. Committees - Service Committee, 1951
January - December, 1951
162. Committees - Service Committee, 1952
January - December, 1952
163. Committees - Service Committee, 1953
January - December, 1953
164. Committees - Service Committee, 1954
January - December, 1954
165. Committees - Service Committee, 1955
January - December, 1955
166. Committees - Service Committee, 1956
January - December, 1956
167. Committees - Service Committee, 1957
January - October, 1957
168. Committees - Service Committee, 1958
February - December, 1958
169. Committees - Service Committee, 1959
January - November, 1959
170. Committees - Service Committee: Minutes
November, 1936 - December, 1950
171. Committees - Service Committee: Minutes
January, 1951 - June, 1957
172. Committees - Special Board Committees: Minutes
March, 1938 - September, 1951
173. Committees - Transiency Committee: Minutes
April - May, 1940

174. Committees - Trust Committee: Minutes
March, 1952
175. Literature
1935 - 1958
176. Projects - Fund Raising Projects
March - April, 1958
177. The Woman's Board - Minutes, 1939-1942
June, 1939 - May, 1942
178. The Woman's Board - Minutes, 1942-1945
June, 1942 - November, 1945
179. The Woman's Board - Minutes, 1946-1951
January, 1946 - November, 1951
180. The Woman's Board - Minutes, 1952-1999
January, 1952 - October, 1959

Papers of the Travelers Aid Society were acquired through the Department of History,
University of Illinois, Chicago Circle Campus.
These papers were acquired on November 22, 1966.

Ghada Tadhumi
March 15, 1968