

Reform Main Purpose Of

3 Institutions In Make It Unique



JAYCEE G. E. REYNOLDS EXAMINES LOCKER

Fatten Inmates With Good Food

There can be nothing good about being behind bars but, if one were honest, prisoners at the Monteith reform complex eat better than a lot of their fellow citizens.

There are two reasons for this, the industrial farm provides nearly all the staples and a qualified dietitian plans the menus on a six-week cycle. Thus, both quality and health are protected.

The farm grows everything it needs during the summer and even has its own greenhouse for the winter. It has a dairy herd of 130 cows, including the sixth ranked milk producer in Canada, and its own slaughter

house. There are horses to do the hard work and hogs to provide bacon and other pork cuts. There are chickens to produce eggs and beef cattle. All in all, it is a working farm that shows a profit.

That profit helps offset the

high-class restaurant. Inmates are not allowed second helpings but they can take as much as they want the first time.

The dining room seats 120 but the two units eat at separate times.

A menu for the fifth week of the six-week cycle was provided. Here are the Wednesday and Friday meals:

BREAKFAST

Tomato juice
Cereal
1 Egg
Bacon
Toast and Butter
Grape Jam
Coffee

DINNER

Creamed Corn Soup
Grilled Steak
Mashed Potatoes
Mixed Vegetables
Fruit Jello
Bread and Butter
Tea

The winds of change blowing through our society have removed many of the cobwebs of tradition in the handling of inmates in provincial institutions.

This was brought home to members of the Timmins Jaycees when they recently toured the facilities at Monteith. The Ontario Department of Correctional Services actually has three separate services there but all are handled by one administrative unit.

This tri-service facility is one of several features of Monteith that make it unique in the province. It is a district jail, Ontario Training Centre and industrial farm.

Located 45 miles east of Timmins, Monteith is centrally located to handle persons sentenced by provincial judges to terms of up to two years less a day from northeastern Ontario. Once sentenced, a committee in Toronto decides whether the person will serve his term in the OTC, or on the farm.

The district jail is a holding point. Persons facing trial but unable to raise bail or awaiting assignment to a federal penitentiary are held there.

At one time all northern and northeastern municipalities had to take such persons to the district jail at Haileybury but since December 1965, Monteith has been used. Women prisoners however, are still taken to Haileybury.

"Those in each unit are kept separate from each other," said D. B. Griggs, superintendent for the last two-and-one-half years. He is a man with 22 years experience in penal institutions.

SPECIAL RAPPORT

Mr. Griggs gave the Jaycees a personal tour of the 1,200-acre establishment. During the afternoon it was noted the superintendent had a special rapport with the inmates as he knew nearly all by their first names and smiles greeted his appearance in the OTC complex. Even white teeth flashed in the normally closed faces of the many Indian youths when Mr. Griggs said hello.

Concern for personal dignity of his charges showed in the many comments made by Mr. Griggs to the visitors. Many of the rules long regarded as sacred before his arrival have been scrapped as part of his program of developing a sense of responsibility in every inmate.

The district jail has a capacity

of 497. In 1967-68, 497 were either released or moved.

All this, of course, cost money.

The average daily per capita cost of operating Monteith is \$15.70. This figure increased from \$13.14 in just one year

TEXT

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PHOTOS

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in 1967-68, and can be expected to go higher with rising costs. Inflation obviously affects institutions as well as the average citizen.

NO REST HOME

One of the misconceptions cleared up by the tour was that Monteith is a rest home for alcoholics and persons too lazy to work for a living. It was seen that most of the inmates of the industrial farm were young, 21-30, and certainly didn't look like alcoholics.

There were a few, of course, that were familiar faces from numerous appearances in court for such offences as vagrancy and drunk in a public place.

Questions to Mr. Griggs brought out the fact that such persons were the failures of the system that has a high percentage of successes and those too old or too far gone in addition to be reached.

A check of the annual report showed only 10 persons in 1968 with four or more previous reformatory sentences were held on the industrial farm. There were 32 with either one, two or three previous sentences.

FEW RETURN

The low return rate is an objective of the department. It states its two main purposes as being (a) to hold in custody, for prescribed periods, those persons sentenced by the courts in its jurisdiction and (b) to attempt to modify the behavior of those in its care, whether children or adults, to such an extent that their actions upon release will be essentially law-abiding rather than law-breaking, and to provide them with the kind of training and treatment that will afford them better opportunities for successful personal and social adjustment.