

Mr Ray Doyle

# Minnesota Association for Retarded Children

CAMP FRIENDSHIP DEDICATION

~~possible future~~

*- Dedicated to expanding  
the lives of Retarded children and  
Adults.*

Grandale, Minn.  
July 3, 1966

I am privileged to be here today with you, my fellow Minnesotans, to dedicate this new facility that has been established to serve a group of our citizens who have long been denied many of the opportunities society so abundantly offers today.

*opportunity for all*

~~Not that the opportunities in essence have not been there. But they have been in such a form as to make them unavailable to a young mind that cannot fully grasp or to an adult mind with a child's limitations.~~

What <sup>greater</sup> ~~more basic~~ opportunity can there be than that of enjoying and partaking of Nature's very own gifts --- its sunshine, its fresh air, its woodlands, its greenery and its flowers?

What can be easier to understand than the feel of cool, clear water or the sound of a bird singing? To what things of the world can a young mind better respond?

~~Not~~ <sup>noted</sup> ~~Not~~ only have schooling, job training and employment opportunities been denied mentally retarded persons, but so also have opportunities for recreation and social activities.

It has been said that the mentally retarded person is one who has difficulty adapting to society. Perhaps the shoe needs to be put on the other foot. Perhaps the problem is that society has not adapted to the mentally retarded person by not making a place for him.

And so it has been that parents, faced with the first knowledge that their child is mentally retarded, have looked with heartbreak and apprehension toward the future, because there is no place in society for their child.

Mrs. Humphrey and I know personally what this heartbreak and apprehension can be. I am sure our little five-year-old granddaughter Vickie is known to many of you. ~~She was years old when her parents were told that Vickie was mentally retarded.~~

Yet, through this personal experience, we have come to know what hope can be, because Vickie, there has been a place in society. There has been a school where she can learn at a pace suited to her ability, where she can associate with other children with whom she

*Largest Camp - full program  
1 counselor every 4 campers  
700 - 436 families*

can compete, a place where she fits.

This ~~facility~~ <sup>Camp</sup> that we have come to dedicate today is another embodiment of the hope that we hold out today for our mentally retarded youngsters <sup>adults</sup>. Those of you ~~mentally~~ who have been responsible for this camp --- and I understand that it is the contribution of thousands of persons that have made possible its establishment and ongoing operation -- you have indeed expressed your faith in the mentally retarded person by providing him with this opportunity.

Ralph Waldo Emerson has said:

"A divine person is the prophecy of the mind;  
a friend is the hope of the heart."

✓ Camp Friendship should truly add hope to the hearts of mentally retarded children and adults, and to those who have been concerned that these children and adults should lead ~~fuller~~, happier lives.

(VICE PRESIDENT STEPS OVER TO UNVEIL THE DEDICATION MARKER)

It is with pleasure and with pride in the efforts of the citizens of my home state that I now dedicate Camp Friendship to the service of mentally retarded children and adults and to the enrichment of their lives.

May it open new worlds. May it fulfill old hopes.

And may the friendship it offers bear out the words of Robert Browning ---

"Hand grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship, and great hearts expand and grow one in the sense of this world's life."

*Dedication* For the benefit of those present, he reads the words inscribed on the marker:

"CAMP FRIENDSHIP, DEDICATED TO THE SERVICE OF MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN AND ADULTS  
BY HUBERT H. HUMPHREY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, JULY 3, 1966."

(VICE PRESIDENT RETURNS TO THE PLATFORM)

VICE PRESIDENT:

✓ We also are assembled here today to name two buildings that are part of the facilities  
Camp Friendship.

*2 Buildings*

# Gay Beecher Lodge

One of these is the main lodge and dining hall, the building in front of which we stand, to be known henceforth as the Gay Beecher Lodge in memory of a mentally retarded child, the daughter of Evelyn and Ardis Beecher, who died in 1952 at the age of four and who lies buried on the grounds of St. Mark's of Corina Episcopal Church located adjacent to the camp.

## Mildred Thomson Hall.

The other building, the large recreation hall at the far north end of the main camp site, is to be known as the Mildred Thomson hall in honor of the woman who for 35 years headed programs for the mentally retarded in Minnesota's Department of Public Welfare and devoted her career to building a program based on enlightened concern for the mentally retarded and their families. Miss Thomson began her work at a time when there was little knowledge about retarded persons and few services available to them. By the time of her retirement in 1959, broad programs for the retarded were being initiated local, state and national levels.

\* Art + Evelyn Beecher  
Gay Beecher Lodge  
Mildred Thompson  
Hall

Science, Research  
Discovery -  
Treatment, College  
Guidance, Students  
Training

The way we treat  
People, is the  
way we treat  
God

Cooperation -  
Federal State -  
& Private!

## Camp Friends

More than 100,000  
Mentally Retarded  
over 6 million in U.S.

Long neglected - Victims of  
ignorance, Prejudice & lack  
of Care.

New Day - Opportunity for All

" Rt. to learn, to work,  
to Play, to have care  
acceptance as a <sup>Rt. to respect -</sup>  
human being.

Family resort

75 acres - Full Program

200 campers this yr  
36 families

513 " Last yr, 13 families

College Students, &  
Help!



# Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



[www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)