

## Students help Rehab Centre disabled

The recreational needs of disabled patients at the Forest Hill Rehabilitation Centre in Fredericton are receiving a much-needed boost due to the work of a series of University of New Brunswick students.

The project started when Marilyn Smith, a psychologist at the centre, contacted the university to see if student power could be utilized to alleviate the boredom and improve the mental outlook of the patients. Three physical education and recreation students, under the direction of forestry professor Tim Easley, took on the job of developing an outdoor recreation master plan for the centre. Linda Potts and Lynda Ste. Marie, who graduated this spring, and Joan Wellhauser submitted the report as one of the requirements in their degree program.

Prior to the plan's implementation, recreational facilities were minimal for the twenty patients who stay from two weeks to three months for their therapy. Their recreation was limited to visits by members of the IODE and Ladies Auxiliary.

The first step in the master plan development was studying environment and topography of the area immediately adjacent to the

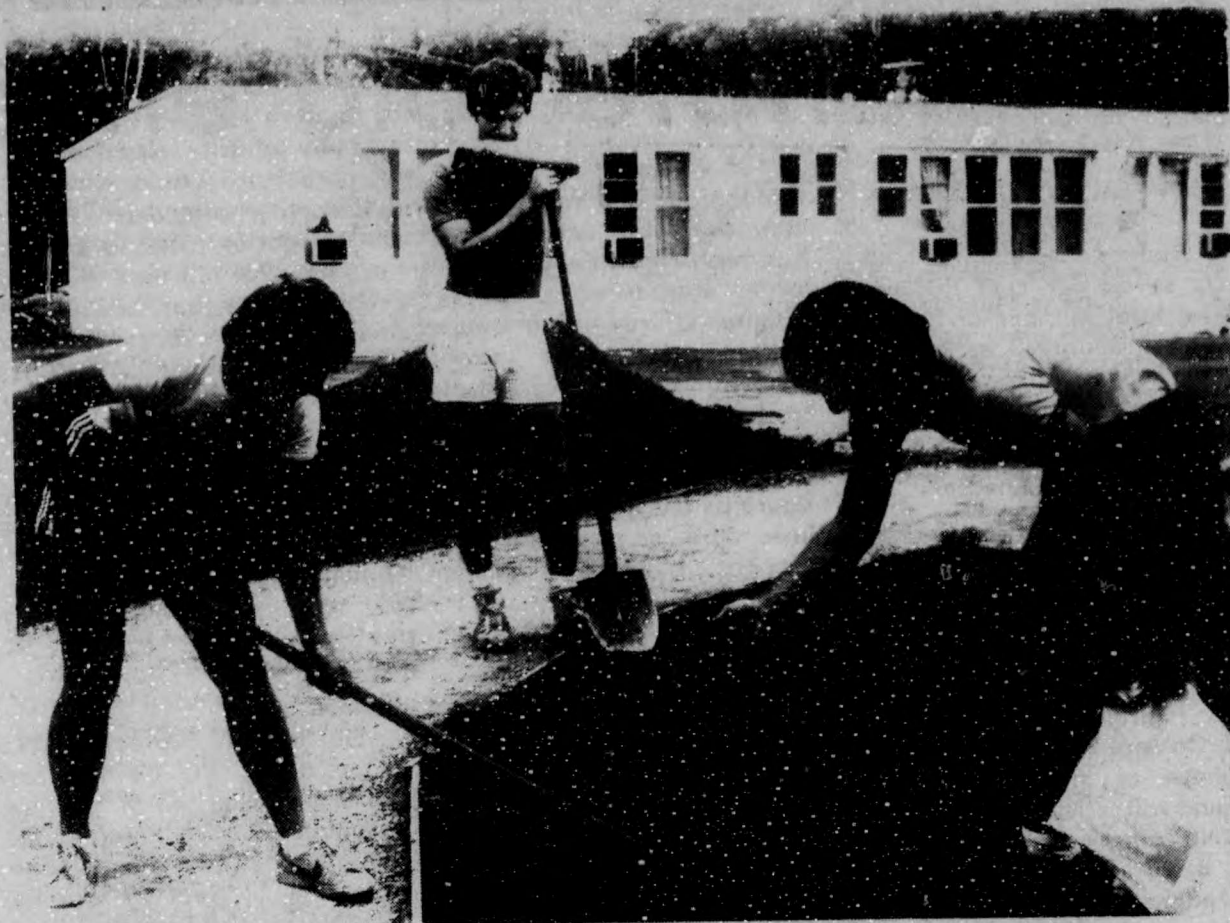
Rehab Centre. Eric Garland, assistant vice-president (administration), was instrumental in obtaining forestry and engineering students to do this survey.

Next, the recreation students stepped in to create the master plan, dividing the grounds into several sections. One was a paved courtyard enclosed on three sides by wings of the centre. This had previously held a large garbage disposal container which had to be relocated. The students proposed carpeting the area, setting up an awning over one end of the courtyard and installing window boxes and planters to make the facility aesthetically pleasing.

The key was to make everything accessible to patients in wheelchairs. In this light, special ramps were designed with slopes of no more than one foot in fifteen, and such things as an eight-foot by eight-foot checker board were planned.

In a second area a wheelchair trail about 200 metres in length was designed, with various stops for recreational activities along the way.

The plan was received enthusiastically, and the centre's



board of directors approved funds for materials for the proposed facilities, which was constructed by four students under a federally funded Canada Works summer grant.

Acting as project manager was Ken MacDonald, a third-

year UNB physical education student. The other students on the project were Cathy Hughes, a 1982 graduate in education; Doug N. Richardson, third-year physical education, and Andrew O'Donnell, second-year engineering. They arranged the courtyard area so everything could be dismantled during the winter to permit snow removal and fire access. They also modified the route of the wheelchair trail to make gradients less steep.

While constructing the facilities, the students even took to wheelchairs to verify everything was accessible.

Work on the project ran from May 17 through the end of July, and as work progressed, the patients started to use the facilities. Two weeks before the completion they inaugurated the new barbecue.

Even though the whole master plan was not implemented because of costs, Ms. Smith said the long-range objective is to complete it.

In the meantime, UNB is becoming increasingly involv-

ed with the centre. Physical education professor Diane Potvin is involving her classes with the centre, an exercise she terms "experiential learning."

Simultaneously to the outdoor program, an indoor recreation program was developed by UNB student Lorie Merriott, a 1982 graduate from physical education and recreation.

It is hoped that the recreation of the patients, who range from quadriplegics to stroke victims, soon will be receiving another boost. The Rehab Centre board has approved in principle the hiring of a recreation therapist as part of the indoor plan. All that remains now is for a proposal for funds to be submitted and approved by the N.B. department of health.

For the UNB students, the projects have proved to be a real learning experience. The project, which appropriately began in the international year of disabled persons, provided the students with first-hand insight into problems faced by the handicapped.

## Career workshop coming

Choosing a career is an important, yet difficult decision. Many people today are not satisfied by their work. They're simply putting in time. The real career choice is this: Do you want to put in your time, or do you want to use as many of your skills as possible and be satisfied with your career?

### WHAT WOULD THE WORKSHOP INVOLVE?

Once a week you would meet in a group with 10-12 people. You would learn methods to help you identify your transferable skills; those skills such as ability to organize, or to work with numbers, which can be used in many different careers. You would also learn methods to help you identify which job factors are most important to you -- working conditions, salary, or where you want to work (geographically).

You would also learn how to research careers which interest you. This includes using the Career Information Library and interviewing people in relevant occupations.

You would learn procedures for identifying what steps you from making or following through on career plans. Some of these things include your doubts about yourself, loss of direction in life, fears, or con-

flicts with family. The workshop will also help you work on these issues, and would involve sharing some of these feelings with others in the group.

### WHO IS THE WORKSHOP FOR?

If you are wondering, "What can I do with an Arts degree?" In a technical program because you thought it would lead to a job, and finding that your heart's just not in it. Feeling discouraged about not having any direction in life. Looking around and thinking that everyone knows what they want to do, and are asking "What about me?"

**HOW MUCH TIME IS INVOLVED?** The workshop would last from the end of September until the beginning of December. Three hours each week would be spent in group meetings and one to two hours in homework. Over the 10 weeks it would take five hours a week of your time.

**WHAT COULD YOU GET OUT OF IT?** From the workshop you can gain a greater sense of purpose or direction in life, formulate meaningful career and educational goals, and build up your confidence. Call Counselling Services at 453-4820 and arrange to attend an information meeting.



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