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**HONG KONG SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND**  
**Expected To Be Formed Within Few Months, Says Mr Keen**

**Ebenezer Home**  
**An Inspiration And Call To Action**

Mr K. Keen, Social Welfare Officer said yesterday it was expected that a Hongkong Society for the Blind would be formed within the next two or three months. Meanwhile, the organizing energy and initiative of the Ebenezer Home served as an inspiration and call to action.

He was speaking at the opening of the new Home for the Older Blind, a fine modern house close to the original building at Pokfulam, which is run for the Hildersheim Mission by Miss A. Laukoetter, Superintendent, and Miss E. Morgenstern, her Assistant.

Tribute was paid by Mr Keen to the Jockey Club Stewards who with “spontaneous generosity,” had donated \$95,000 to cover the total cost of constructing the annexe.

The Rev. A. Olson, Chairman of the Advisory Committee, and Director of the Lutheran World Federation, welcomed the large number of visitors.

**STEP FORWARD**

In his speech Mr Keen said in part:

“The opening of this new building is a significant forward step in the history of welfare for the blind in Hongkong. Looking at this fine new building makes me “think” what a long road the Ebenezer Home has travelled since that day in October 1897. When the Hildesheim Mission first began its work in a little house in the West Point District with four blind girls.

“The war brought much suffering to the Home, but it pulled through the privations of the Occupation period, and when the war was over once again took up its dedicated task of training the blind.

“I understand that today there are 85 blind in Miss Laukoetter’s care. Ebenezer is no longer a home for blind girls only. for there are now some 30 blind boys who are pupils here. Learning to equip themselves for a life of usefulness and self-respect. Until quite recently nothing was being done for the blind boys of the Colony, and Miss Laukoetter made up her mind to take vigorous steps in the matter and by doing so has rectified the situation to some extent, although there is yet a long way to go. This is at present the only institution to the Colony which caters for blind boys.

#### GENEROUS GIFT

“This new building, the Home for the Older Blind Women of the Ebenezer Home, has been made possible by the generosity of the Stewards of the Hongkong Jockey Club, who donated \$95,000 covering the total cost of construction. It has been planned as a home in the true meaning of the word. No longer need these elderly blind women live in dormitories, for they will have bedrooms designed for three, and their social needs will be catered for by a fine large dining-sitting-room and a guest room, whilst a sighted matron has been engaged to look after their comfort.

“Voluntary effort has always played a most important part whenever welfare services in Hongkong have been concerned, and there is no other field of welfare which offers so much scope for voluntary efforts as the Welfare of the Blind. It is my hope, and also my expectation that a Hongkong Society for the Blind will be formed within the next two to three months and that development of work on behalf of the blind will then go forward rapidly. In the meantime, let the spontaneous generosity of the Stewards of the Jockey Club, and the organizing energy and initiative of the management of the Ebenezer Home serve as an inspiration to the rest of us and a call to action.

#### USE OF SENSES

In the Home blind children trained to use other senses, if their faces to the light. Sensitive small fingers read Chinese and English words swiftly and surely, strong young fingers write rhythmically by punching out the Braille alphabet.

The older women are expert in handwork and many examples of their work can be seen in showcases in their work rooms. They knit by hand and by machine, crochet, embroider, and now are learning to weave scarves, rugs and materials on the “Weaver’s Delight,” a loom which is a gift from America.

When children are brought to the Home, the teacher’s first task is to gain their

confidence. Some are very timid and not even able to walk properly, but they quickly respond to patient guidance, and can soon find their way about recognize their own belongings, and learn to help other schoolmates.

### NORMAL ROUTINE

The inmates of the Home have a normal, healthy routine, regular meals, physical training, work, recreation, quiet times, communal worship and more than nine hours' rest. In addition to the Primary education which includes the subjects in the Government school syllabus, the girls learn all domestic duties, the care of the younger children, musical instruments, and the boys do rattan work. Later they can learn shorthand and typing, and Braille typing machines are also used.

From the learning of the Braille alphabet by fitting nails with rounded heads into a Braille board, to the knowledge of literature in English, Cantonese and Mandarin, is the happy achievement of many of the bright young students.

Photo caption: The new building for the older blind of the Ebenezer Home, which was opened yesterday by Mr Kenneth Keen, Social Welfare Officer. — (Staff Photographer).