

employment and forced idleness, was having a hard time of it and more often than not its morale was not of sufficient resilience to withstand the pressure. In a growing wave it was ceasing to exist as an harmonious and homogenous whole and was either breaking down into a group of warring units or dissolving completely. With the influence of the home weakened or gone, juvenile delinquency followed.

This was the dire predicament in which Los Angeles county found itself in January of 1933. Many minds were struggling with the problem and seeking the solution. In the Probation Department, Coordinating Councils were formed to muster all community organizations and agencies into a united effort to cope with the causes of juvenile delinquency. Under this sponsorship as well as that of the County Employees Association, surveys and spot maps were hastily made to reveal the geographical areas of delinquency, the basic causes, the extent and the increase. The Los Angeles County Department of Recreation was throwing all of its resources into the effort exerted by the Probation Department. The National Recreation Association was giving aid through its western office and all of the organized recreation departments were cooperating. No doubt many other public and private agencies were grappling with the situation, but as their work was not directly a part of the beginning of the projects, it is not covered in this record.

During the first six months of 1933, a small group of workers carefully chosen for their special qualifications, functioned in an experimental way in the field under the Los Angeles County Probation and Recreation Departments. The plan of action tentatively applied was that organized and directed playground activities for the youth of the delinquency infested areas would draw the youthful offenders away from the ranks of mischievous gangs and anti-social groups by furnishing them an outlet in healthful and character-building play.

The experiment was closely watched and the results obtained through this recreational approach to the delinquency and maladjustment problem were so immediately and convincingly successful that the heads of the two county departments vitally concerned, James K. Reid of the Recreation Department and Kenyon Scudder of the Probation Department, made plans during the month of June, 1933, for the development of the work during