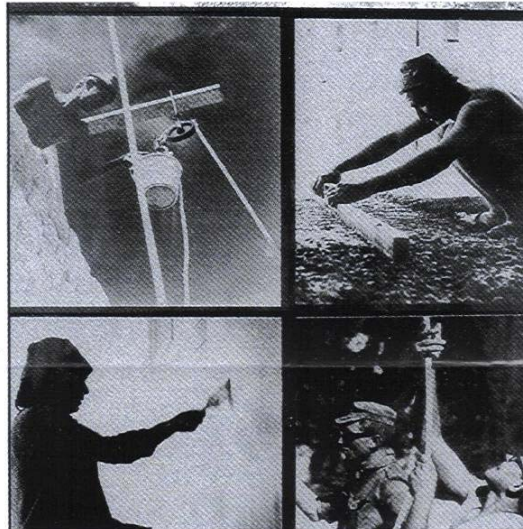


## Dormitories to be Refurbished

The original building of the Jewish Institute for the Blind was constructed at the entrance to Jerusalem in 1932. A simple and symmetrical structure, the building was constructed to enable maximum freedom and individual movement of the students. The stately buildings of the Institute are characterized by large rooms with high-ceilings, but their age is beginning to show. The old dormitory rooms are not ideal for multi-handicapped children, and bathrooms are at the end of the hallway.

"A complete renewal of the Institute's dormitory structure is planned," according to Institute Director Chaim Reshelbach. "We hope to have a modern and comfortable facility by the summer of 2004 if not before." Arrangements are being made to begin the academic year with a temporary housing facility for the students in the neighborhood, and two floors of the building's west wing will be gutted in order to start refurbishing the facility. "We are planning to construct bright and airy rooms with ample closet space and attached bathrooms in order to make the dorms a comfortable home," adds Reshelbach. This project is being supported by the British Aid Committee through the Samuel Koffler bequest.



Jerusalem October 1963:  
Volunteers from Action Reconciliation build a new school for the Jewish Institute for the Blind. (Photo: Eberhard Tschepe)

## One of the Institute's Outstanding Employees

"At the Institute we provide each student with an individual course of study, meeting his particular needs, and so we are constantly re-evaluating ourselves," explains Lilli Goren, long-time educator and vice-principal at the JIB. "There's never a boring moment."

If job satisfaction equates action, then Goren is a happy woman. She has been at the Institute for 18 years, and these days she fights battles for rehabilitation on two fronts. "On the one hand, we are trying to do our best to raise the level of independence of our students, and there is still a battle to be fought with the powers that be," she adds. "The blind and partially sighted have nationally high rates of unemployment, and this must also be remedied."

Although originally from Austria, Goren completed her studies in Israel, and she has found fulfillment in her work with the blind and partially sighted. One of her most



Lilli Goren

exciting challenges these days is a program called *shiluv* or integration, which fosters social contacts and joint projects with students at the nearby AMIT Dror school.

"We strive to make sure that the young people from the Institute and the neighboring school work together, and there is always a feeling of equality in the projects that they accomplish," Goren explains. Sports activities, cooking, music and art projects have been successfully undertaken, and friendships have grown between the groups of students.

"We have learned that the *shiluv* project has to branch out from an equal footing, and therefore the participants from both groups are volunteers," Goren explains. "The kids have learned to appreciate each other and their joint activities." Through rehabilitation and acceptance, Goren sees a brighter future for all members of society.