R. S. REYNOLDS FREE KINDERGARTEN
MACANDREW ROAD, DUNEDIN

History Booklet

1913 – 1977
R. S. REYNOLDS KINDERGARTEN

Rachael Reynolds Kindergarten
1977 Committee

President: Mrs P. TUTTY

Vice-President: Mrs L. LANGLEY

Secretary: Mrs L. CARTWRIGHT

Treasurer: Mrs M. MARSHALL

Committee:

Mesdames J. SLAIR, A. REID, F. DAVIS, M. SINCLAIR, W. BRETT,

F. BRYANT, D. FOLLOCO, D. REYNOLDS, Mr L. EDMONDS,

Mr B. COLLINS
History of Kindergarten

In order to understand why and how the Kindergarten was built, we must go back to the nineteenth century.

In 1889 several philanthropic citizens formed a committee with Mrs R. S. Reynolds as President. The aim of this committee was to establish the Kindergarten movement. Their first problem was to secure the services of a competent teacher of the Kindergarten system. Miss Wienickie of Christchurch was interviewed and appointed. Two rooms had been placed at the disposal of the Association, one at St. Matthew's, Stafford Street, and the other at the Mission Hall in Walker Street (now Carroll Street). The Walker Street Hall was selected as the more suitable. Thus the first of the Association's Kindergartens (or schools as they were then called) was opened in June 1889.

Early in 1906 the Walker Street Kindergarten was closed, because of the absence of children in the vicinity. However, in June of the same year another Kindergarten was opened in St. Peter's Schoolroom, Cargill Road—now Hillside Road. This Kindergarten was later moved in 1911 to the Methodist Church Hall on the corner of Wesley Street and Cargill Road, and became known as the Cargill Road Kindergarten. The Kindergarten seemed to be doing well, but, unfortunately, there was no space outside for the children to run and play in the fresh air; also the hall was used for socials and it was often found unfit for the little children on the following mornings. Consequently Miss R. Darling, the director of the Kindergarten, conceived the idea of building a hall for the exclusive use of the Kindergarten.

The parents of the children responded magnificently and a ballot was held. The amount aimed at, and realized, was £300—a subsidy of £1 for £1 was promised by the government. This brought the total to £600 which would have been sufficient to put a building on leasehold ground—the original plan. However, it was decided to acquire a freestanding section, and of course the original amount was not sufficient. The Hon. Mr Allen was then approached and through him the Education Department promised a further subsidy of £230. The Dunedin Savings Bank made a handsome donation of £300 and the subsidy of £230 was claimed. These amounts (£1,130) provided sufficient money for land and buildings, but further contributions would be required to complete the equipment.

A section, costing £230, was purchased on the corner of Dick St. and Maccandrew Road. It was decided to name the building after Miss S. Reynolds Kindergarten—a fitting recognition of the many years of work done by Mrs Reynolds in the interests of the Association.

At the laying of the foundation stone on May 3, 1913, the chairman, Mr Sidley, Mrs Reynolds, Miss Kelway (President of the Association), Mrs Bateman (President of the Mothers' Committee) and Mr Cohen all spoke. The building was opened free of debt. All that remained to be done was to raise £150 for furnishing and equipment etc. The teachers and mothers undertook to do this by opening the Kindergarten with a 3-day jumble sale and other entertainments.

Special credit must be given to Miss Darling. She was the leading spirit all through—encouraging and urging the mothers to greater efforts. Her untiring work and zeal were a wonderful example to everyone who came in contact with her. Photos of both Mrs Reynolds and Miss Darling have pride of place in the Kindergarten to this day.

R. S. Reynolds was the first building in Dunedin constructed exclusively for use as a Kindergarten. From Kindergarten records we have ascertained that Reynolds is the oldest Kindergarten building in N.Z. still in use. Three others were built before Reynolds—one in Auckland and one in Christchurch—but both have been replaced.

Mrs R. S. REYNOLDS
First President Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association, 1889-1900

Miss RUBY DARLING
Founder and First Director
ITEMS OF INTEREST

Unfortunately our records go back only as far as 1929.
1929—Building was painted and repaired. Garden fete held at Sir Thomas K. Sidey's to raise funds.
1930—Electrical plug and heater installed in teacher's room.
1931—Bank balance at end of 1931, 15/11.
1932—Donations amount to £7/10/-.
1933—Kindergarten had a full roll and a long waiting list, mainly because of the government decree that the primary school age be raised from five to six years. This resulted in all children staying on at Kindergarten after they were five.
1934—A gramophone was donated to Kindergarten.
1935—Miss Hancock resigned as director, Mrs Desmaulins took up the director's position.
1936—Because of the infantile paralysis epidemic no break-up ceremony was held, and the end of the year party for the children did not take place.
1937—Miss J. Stewart was appointed director. Kindergarten renovated. New curtaining made.
1939—Credit balance £12/13/8.
1940—Efforts for fund raising resulted in £48/9/3. Rather disappointing.
1941—Fete held at Mrs Brimley's residence, profit £45.
1942—Mothers' Club donated £2 towards the cost of new towels for the children.
1943—A shop in South Dunedin was stocked with old and new goods and a sum of £201/15/1 was raised.
1944—Mothers' Club provided the new sand pit.
1945—A room at the Otago Women's Club still being used for meetings.
1946—Fathers gave a great deal of assistance this year—and saved the committee many pounds.
1947—A baby photographic competition was held. This showed a profit of £12.
1948—Miss Just appointed director. Two fireplaces modernised in an endeavour to get more heat into the room.
1949—Director Miss V. Walker. Roll: morning 25; afternoon 30; waiting list 100. Rubber flooring laid in toilet block.
1950—Director Miss K. Binney. Fathers worked hard and painted and papered the interior of the Kindergarten. The Mothers' Club purchased 34 folding chairs and made new curtains for the Kindergarten.
1951—Spouting and down pipes renewed. Winter linoleum laid throughout the building.
1952—Miss V. McGawin director. Local committee change-over. President, Mrs Charnie; secretary, Mrs W. O. Flockton; treasurer, Mrs Ogg; committee, Messrs Brindon, Briggs, Brown, Douglas, Gyles, Marshall, Smith, Viel and Young. Fathers made a new coal bin.
1953—Exterior of Kindergarten painted by fathers.
1954—Kitchen painted by fathers and staff.
1957—Installation of four new porcelain hand basins, and a thermostatically controlled hot water system, in the toilet block.
1958—Miss S. Reddington director. Old gas rings removed and a gas range installed. The Mother's Club donated the range.
1959—Two gas heaters were purchased and installed. Miss W. Beres director.
1960—Old hedge removed and wooden fence erected.
1961—Director Miss J. James. Raffle to raise money netted approximately £100.
1963—Several plans are being discussed for the improvement of the building and for the purchasing of new equipment.
1964— (Mother's Club) A talent night was held to mark the 75th Jubilee of the Kindergarten Association.
1965— (Mother's Club) In August a visitors night was held, over 100 people attended. In November a cabaret and dance was held in the Golden Palm Lounge.
1966— A hair-dryer and dinner-set were raffled and raised £83. Parents donation: £374.16s.16d. Mother's Club donated a radio-gram. Milk in kindergarten was introduced.
1967— Bride of the year contest and mannequin parade raised $189.98. Auction raised $120.32. Parents donations $750.70. Gas heater installed in block-room. The roof was repaired in May for the cost of $144.70
1968— Dressed pig was raffled and raised $163.27. Inside of Kindergarten was painted at the cost of $593. Curtains were made, $174.60. Block cupboards purchased, $97.40.
1969— At the end of the 1st term, Miss Barbara Smith left the Kindergarten to take up a position at Richard Hudson Kindergarten.
1970— Raffle of Picnic hamper donated by Mrs Bryant raised $220.68. Outside of Kindergarten was painted at the cost of $430.
1971— A slide was purchased at the cost of $94. Wig and hat parade raised $60.20. Two radiant gas heater consoles were installed. Burst pipes.
1972— A Steps auction raised $133.08. The bathroom was painted. Teachers writing desk was purchased.
1973— A social was cancelled also efforts to start regular house, both from lack of support. Kitchen was renovated, new sink bench and cupboards installed.
1974— Trailer loads of pine blocks were sold and raised over $100. Wine and cheese was held in May with a profit of $156. Two bench units were purchased. Roof and chimney were damaged by an earthquake. Bottle drive raised $118.55.
1975— Bank balance $2,316.71. Increased to $4,165.02 over year. In July a storm damaged the tiles on the roof. Corroded iron fence erected at the cost of $460.
1976— The building was found to be structurally unsound. Trike-a-thon held at Forbury School, raised $206. A mini fair in November raised $400.
1977— October 5th, the life of a very beautiful and historical building came to an end.

DIRECTORS R. S. REYNOLDS KINDERGARTEN

Miss R. Darting 1906-27  Miss V. Walker 1949-50
Miss R. O'Donovan 1930  Miss K. Boney 1951-52
Miss G. Saunders 1930-33  Miss V. McGovern 1952-55
Miss B. Saunders 1933-37  Miss W. Brown 1956-57
Mrs Hill 1934-35  Miss S. Rees 1957-58
Miss N. Handscomb 1935-36  Miss W. Bates 1958-60
Miss N. Demoumont 1936-37  Miss J. James 1960-63
Miss J. Stewart 1937-42  Miss E. Smith 1963-66
Miss J. Thompson 1943-44  Mrs McCririck 1970-77
Miss L. Gamble 1944-46  Miss G. Robinson 1973-77
Miss M. Just 1947-49

LOCAL COMMITTEE PRESIDENTS

Our records go back only as far as 1929. If anyone has information regarding Presidents or items of interest prior to 1929 we would be grateful to receive it. It would be helpful to future committees.

Mrs Andrews 1929-31  Mrs A. Slee 1960-62
Mrs Brearley 1929-29  Mrs C. Webb 1963-66
Mrs Boot 1930-30  Mrs E. Cole 1967
Mrs Brunsdon 1931-32  Mrs J. Thomas 1968
Mrs Johnson 1932-33  Mrs D. Hunt 1969
Mrs J. A. Sim 1933-36  Mrs P. F. Proud 1970
Miss Cooke 1934-37  Mrs N. Greep 1971
Mrs Brinkley 1935-37  Mrs O'Donnell 1972
Mrs Cooke 1936-39  Mrs P. Metham 1973
Mrs M. Lang 1937-39  Mrs Howard 1974
Mrs C. J. Lame 1938-44  Mrs M. Williams 1975
Mrs M. Ogg 1939-44  Mrs L. Cartwright 1976
Mrs C. Mead 1940-44  Mrs E. Bailey 1977

*From 1953 onwards the composition of the Local Committee was changed. Up till that year ladies who were interested in the Kindergarten movement continued on the Committee. New committees comprised ladies whose children had attended the Kindergarten. They were mothers of past Kindergarten children.

In 1964 the name of Local Committee was changed to "Kindergarten Committee" and once again the composition was changed. "Kindergarten Committee" now means Mothers or Fathers of children who are attending or who have attended Kindergarten, and any interested persons.