



# KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

An official  
publication of the  
New Zealand Free  
Kindergarten Union

MARCH, 1976



# AS I SEE IT

A press statement of December 23 which caught my eye has caused me to feel anxious about our immediate future. "Education spending may be cut," Minister warns, was the ominous title which spelt out the message. Whilst no one denies that cuts in expenditure must be made in the face of the economic situation in the country it would be a downward step if the education field were to suffer.

The future of any country is in its children and if they are to be effective citizens then they must be well educated. Commencing with the Early Childhood field their education at all levels must be of right. A great deal of criticism is being tossed our way because of the anomalies in this field. It is no secret that only a fraction of our children are enjoying attendance at one of the kindergartens in the country.

Any cut in our expenditure now would compound the problem greatly. I suggest that a more realistic use of existing buildings and permanent appointments for the many supernumerary teachers in them could be one way of helping both the Minister and us in our endeavour to provide more kindergarten places in the immediate future.

PATRICIA M. LOCKHART,  
Editor.

# The New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union

is a body which consists of and co-ordinates kindergarten associations throughout New Zealand working in the interests of kindergarten.

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## In the Next Issue You Can Read

1. Articles on children's play and books.
2. An article on the new office.
3. Something about a very successful fund-raising campaign.
4. Around and about.

Please remember that your own contributions are welcomed.

Deadline for articles for the July journal is May 15.

Until I have a permanent address in Wellington would you please address all mail **OTHER THAN THE ORDERS** to:—

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The next copies of this journal will be on sale in July and October 1976 at 20 cents a copy.

It is essential that sufficient journals are printed for those who require them. To assist in this matter would **Association Secretaries** please complete the form provided and return it by the requested date.

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# *Around and About*

Since the publication of the last journal several kindergartens have been opened or are about to be opened.

## **EAST COAST BAYS**

Taiaotea Kindergarten was the first to be officially opened by the new president, Mrs K. D. Lockhart. A gold key to the building and a certificate conferring the Freedom of the Kindergarten were presented to her to mark the occasion.

## **UPPER HUTT**

Mrs Doris Nicholson, Mayor of Upper Hutt, and a past Union member opened Totara Park Kindergarten on December 13.

## **SOUTHLAND**

Otatara Kindergarten was opened by the president on December 6. A report on the establishment of their new playground is included in this journal. This kindergarten is the first of the Southland Association buildings to be sited on a school site and the co-operation between the Association and the school is tremendous. The opening coincided with the Association's Christmas Party and the President and her husband were guests.

## **HASTINGS**

The Ellen Stevenson Kindergarten named in appreciation of the tremendous work done by Mrs Stevenson at both local and national level was opened on September 27.

## **MANAWATU**

On the same day as East Coast Bays were opening Taiaotea, Manawatu were opening Parkland. The official opening was conducted by Professor G. Shouksmith.

Other kindergartens to be opened were at Tawa and Waiouru. The President will open Rosebank at Balclutha on February 14 and on the same day Blenheim will open Seymour. In April the President will travel to Papakura to open Park Estate and Papakura West for the Franklin Association.

## **KAIKOHE**

Following her visit to the East Coast Bays Association and the Auckland Association, the President travelled to Kaikohe to have a look

at the 50th Jubilee Conference venue. It was Mrs Lockhart's first visit to the far North and she was most impressed with the work being done in the two kindergartens there, and also with the arrangements for the Conference. It gave her an opportunity to meet those members of the Association who are responsible for the organisation of the Conference and to enjoy a formal dinner party which they held in her honour. Mrs Lockhart left Kaikohe with much excess baggage comprising lemons and grapefruit which she claimed "don't grow in Dunedin".

## **DUNEDIN**

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT COURSE**

Over 50 enthusiastic parents gathered at Dunedin Teachers College to participate in this course of four two-hour sessions.

The programme included one session on each of the following topics : — "The Child 3-8 Years" (Mr N. R. Borland, Principal Lecturer Education); "What Does the Kindergarten Offer Children and Parents?" (Miss P. M. Varcoe, Senior Lecturer Early Childhood Education); "Aspects of the Curriculum" (Mesdames L. Versteeg, B. McCay (Head Teachers), M. Ruthford (Lecturer E.C.E.), Miss D. Ross (Supervising H.T.)); and a final session on Parent Involvement. A major part of each evening was spent in discussion groups, and speakers illustrated their talks with slides, videotapes, materials and handouts. After each session, observation and participation assignments were given to members and the completed work was very pleasing. Those who successfully completed the course received the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association Parent Involvement Certificate.

The following comments are from parents:—

"I enjoyed the course, as it helped to explain a lot of things I took for granted and accepted without wondering why."

"I would like to see more parent courses and lectures."

"Love mother helping, especially so after this course when one perceives the wide scope of assistance that can be given."

"I learned more how to play in the sand than what I taught."

"When I observed my child I realised how much she had developed in the seven months she has been at kindergarten. I was not aware of this before the course."

The parents' enthusiasm was stimulating and reinforced our knowledge of the valuable contribution parents can make to the education of the children.

This year will also see the continuation of our research on parents and kindergarten. We look forward to this continuing venture, and parents' suggestions for 1976 courses are : — Emotional development of children; The junior schoolchild; New mathematics; Reading; A course for Fathers; The child 0-8 years; and another course on Parent Involvement.

—Phyllis M. Varcoe.

## NAPIER

### A USEFUL EXERCISE?

Recently members of the Nga Tamariki Establishment Committee (who will, when Government subsidy is forthcoming, provide Napier's tenth Free Kindergarten) undertook a house to house survey to ascertain which of two sites would best serve the needs of pre-schoolers in their area. Originally I had intended obtaining a street map and on it marking one dot per child on the corresponding section. However, an obliging council member with access to such maps offered to supply me with one relating to the required area.

A week later the map was delivered — not one small pocket of Napier as had been discussed but a most imposing masterpiece measuring 140 x 200cm and showing each individual section in Napier. It was then that I became carried away and "the exercise" commenced in earnest. Maybe it would be interesting to see from where the children on all nine waiting lists were drawn. How many, if any, were on more than one waiting list. All head teachers supplied me with the **addresses** only of children on their waiting lists. With the map laid on the dining room floor (the office table and floor being totally inadequate) and equipped with my Senior Head Teachers prized set of multi-coloured "painting stiks" the mammoth task of marking commenced.

First step was to mark all Primary schools in a distinctive colour. Secondly, the nine existing Kindergartens, each in an individual colour. Thirdly, the waiting lists — a dot of corresponding colour to match the parent Kindergarten of each child's address.

Several hours and some 900 dots later the map resembled a severe case of multi-coloured measles BUT — several facts were proved.

1. The best site for this new Kindergarten was quite evident. Site 'A' was in the centre of a large number of pre-schoolers while site 'B' was out on a limb and would in time cause serious depletion of an already established Kindergarten.
2. The number of children on more than one waiting list was negligible.

3. To enable their children to have the benefit of Kindergarten experience, parents are prepared to travel considerable distances.

4. Once Nga Tamariki is in operation the established areas of Napier will have sufficient Kindergartens. But in order to decrease waiting lists of 200 plus, our efforts must be concentrated on the new rapidly expanding suburbs.

A useful exercise? — I think so.

—Mary Collier, Secretary.

## AUCKLAND

At a recent meeting of the Auckland Ward held in Dargaville, there was evidence of wide concern at the professional isolation of staff in country areas. One single kindergarten association stated that they received only one call per year from the Pre-School Adviser and this was apparently the rule rather than the exception. Concern was also expressed that the Pre-School Adviser offered little of value to kindergarten staff. The long-ranging discussion that ensued brought forth some interesting ideas some of which would be worthwhile following up.

While we are well aware of repeated requests for supervising head teachers, country areas even more than urban ones where there are at least several staff members to hold informal meetings, have an urgent need for professional advice with a special emphasis on kindergarten rather than pre-school knowledge. In the future it may be possible for smaller associations to group together and employ a suitably qualified kindergarten teacher to the role of travelling supervising head teacher. Many of our larger Associations do in fact employ their own professional adviser and it could be possible that the Kindergarten Union Executive may feel it wise to lay down criteria for the qualifications of these people for the guidance of Associations when employing them.

The suggestion was made again at this ward meeting that these occasions could profitably be used to bring staff together when Association personnel meet. At the next meeting in March, Wellsford Association extended a warm invitation to all ward members to their area and will make available a suitable separate venue so that staff may travel with the ward representatives and hold their own meeting at the same time. It is hoped that the supervising head teacher from Auckland will also be present and regular meeting such as this could provide stimulating interchange of ideas for our staff.

—M. Fogarty, Deputy Ward Member,  
Auckland

# DUNEDIN TEACHERS COLLEGE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

Following the publication of an article advertising the Centennial in the February edition of *Kindergarten Education* several people wrote asking for a further report after the celebrations. For the many who were unable to be present here are some details of New Zealand's largest centennial celebrations to date.

I write this two days after the conclusion of the formal functions and like hundreds of others I am physically and mentally worn out and I have "no voice!".

As a member of the Centennial Executive and Chairman of the Registration Committee I had enjoyed the hard work, the attendant frustrations, and the mental preparation as the opening on January 15 drew closer. Nothing, however, could have prepared me or any one of the 3,500 people in the Town Hall for the feeling of pride and excitement that overwhelmed us as the Official Party made its way through the Hall and on to the stage for the singing of "Gaudeamus". What an emotional moment it was — the culmination of over four years' planning and work. There we all were — ex-students from as early as 1906 to 1975 representing primary, secondary, art students, phys. eders., homecrafters, pressure cookers, music students, ex-staff, ex-principals, and the newest ex-students — our kindergarten graduates.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Education were there, as were members of the Department of Education and representatives of every education organisation in New Zealand. The Union was represented by the "president". It was a proud moment for me to wear the chain of office as the Union representative at my own College Centennial.

The guest speaker was the Prime Minister, The Right Hon. R. D. Muldoon, whose address could only be described as a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Mr Muldoon has made the text of his speech available for publication at a later date. It was an emotional moment when Mr Ces Irwin, Principal of the College and Chairman of the Centennial Committee rose to speak. Ces, now fully recovered, adopted the guise of a lecturer who opens every lecture with a series of announcements. The announcement which caused much laughter was, "please read your brochure carefully. It contains all the information you will require. It will save you many frustrating moments and it will save us having to tell you that the information is in your brochure". Suffice to say that the information desk personnel did a roaring trade giving out helpful advice and the same information a hundred times over.

The singing of the National Anthem concluded the opening ceremony which was followed by the taking of the official photographs.

The College Council Luncheon for invited guests gave us an opportunity to hear the Hon. L. W. Gandar, Minister of Education, speak. A short quote was included with each speaker's name and when Mr Gandar rose to propose the Toast to the College he questioned the source and the reason for his — "Now I will say something to remember". The enthusiastic honouring of the toast was evidence itself that the Minister had indeed said something to remember. The official opening of the new college buildings by the Prime Minister, the presentation of paintings of the past three colleges by the ex-students Association, the cutting of the Centennial cake by the two oldest ex-students present, the unveiling of the Centennial sculpture and the planting of a tree by past principals completed the formal programme on opening day, and concluded Mr and Mrs Muldoon's visit to the College.

During the next two and a half days there were a variety of functions and activities for everyone to enjoy. Musical recitals, golf, bowls, bridge, a smorgasbord tea, singalong, folk music, jazz group, section do's, bus tours, garden party, art exhibition, display of historical material, two balls to accommodate the 4,500 people who attended, a service at the Cenotaph and the laying of a wreath, and finally the Church Service.

To say that we kept the best until last would be an understatement. For fear of sounding trite and for want of the right words to describe my feelings and those of the 1,500 people present I will sum up by saying that the Service to me WAS THE CENTENNIAL. There is nothing quite as moving as a choir well rehearsed and under special direction.

So on that high note we enter our second century, the first Teacher's College to do so. Next year will see Christchurch joining us and we look forward to receiving a report of their Celebrations. How fortunate the Kindergarten movement is to be a part of that second century.

Limited copies of a Centennial History written by Carol Morton Johnston and Harry Morton and a College Register are available to those who were not able to attend. The history sells at \$7.50 and the register at \$2.50. Address your orders to: Teachers College, Union Street, Dunedin.



## PLANNING A NEW KINDERGARTEN PLAYGROUND

If you have an abundance of spare time and willing to occupy it with helping to design your new kindergarten playground, do so, and enjoy a totally new experience. Matters which you have never previously considered will pound your mind for months and you will take more interest in your child's joys and sorrows while at play.

A playground sub-committee of four was formed as soon as the go ahead for the new kindergarten was given. We pooled our ideas to plan for our play area before discussing them with teachers and children. Two members undertook to visit the eleven kindergartens in the Invercargill area. This time consuming exercise paid off handsomely as we realised that some of our plans were not practicable. Finding the ones which wouldn't work, were perhaps more important to us. Watching the children play and what they enjoyed most outside at kindergarten were all taken note of and evaluated later. We found the teachers had varying ideas on equipment such as climbing apparatus and what they should be made of, but basically their ideas were similar.

A plan was drawn up, placing a double coned hill, 20ft x 4ft x 7ft high, in one corner and calling it a "wild area" where rocks, tussock and other hardy plants were to be placed for rough play. A 'Wild West' fort was planned for the larger of the double hills with a slatted pathway from the base of the hill joining the rough dirt pathway to the fort. Connecting the central grassed play area to the hill, was a bridge from a free-standing structure. In this we hoped to include all climbing apparatus including the slide, in one unit. This structure, the pride of the planning committee, was all wood, on two levels and 6ft square. Level one was a half floor and level two a platform for the slide and climbing apparatus, with a semi-closed-in house at one side.

A bean-shaped trolley track was drawn round the outer edges of the flat grassed free area in front of the kindergarten. In this area, next to the trolley track, a quiet corner which was felt to be important was incorporated. This included a paved brick floor, low wooden table, wooden planked seating with rocks and foliage on the built-up weatherside to form a wind-break. This built-up 2ft slope was used as a "rolling" area suitable for "self" rolling or in barrels as we discovered this is a favourite sport. We felt hills were important because Otatara is very flat and they would be another new experience for the children and also good for developing leg muscles.

The double sand pit, 16ft x 10ft, was built into the concrete area close to a fence, for easy storage of the pit screen and also for shelter from the cool westerly winds.

Any trees planted were to be natives, as the Otatara area is surrounded by native bush. Trees and plants were asked for at public meetings and many residents were generous with contributions.

A double wooden-framed tyre swing was erected beside a fence with much thought given

to child safety as we are fully aware of the dangers of swings.

A paddling pool for summer days was given considerable thought, but because of the short summer and difficulty of keeping up the water supply (Otatara is on bore or rain water) we decided against it.

By incorporating the different textures of grass, timber, rocks, slatted paths, brick pavements and of course concrete, we felt we had added visual interest to the playground.

All these ideas have been incorporated in a working scale model. Our playground now looks most attractive having been put together and laid out by community working-bees. The structure is to be built in the New Year when fathers will have more spare time to help us.

As a guide line for other playground builders, our plan, including soil, rocks, trees, grass and structures cost less than \$1,000, which was made possible only by the efforts of many volunteer helpers and their equipment. By not employing a landscape gardener, and outside labour we probably saved \$750 - \$1,000.

We hope our playground will be fully appreciated and utilised by those who attend Otatara kindergarten.

Marilyn Bunce,  
December, 1975.

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## — and then they all went home.

How empty everything is

Empty halls of residence

Empty lecture theatres

We stand on an empty campus feeling flat —  
is it really all over?

Going into the empty halls to remove the cups and the coffee, we remembered the excitement and the anticipation of the days before the convention when we ran from floor to floor with lists of names, bubbling with curiosity, imagining how the people arriving would feel as they moved into these rooms.

We were excited thinking of the wonderful things we had planned for them —

Would they like this convention?

Would they benefit from it?

Would they give of themselves to it?

Would they go away rich in knowledge?

Minds brimming over with ideas, figures, facts.

Well! Now it's all over — let's get on and clean up.

Look what's in this room! A wonderful collage, a pre-school masterpiece and a note to the student.

"Dear Student, Thank you for your room. It was really comfortable. I have watered your wandering willy and enjoyed your posters on the wall. Here is a collage for your room. Best of luck for your exams next term."

yes

Christchurch loved having you to stay,  
come back soon.

—Joan Whale.

Round about the time of my retirement I was asked on a number of occasions whether there were any educational aims which I was particularly sorry had not been sufficiently achieved. I was also asked the reverse and rather more flattering question — what particular forms of progress I was most proud of. In fact when I appeared briefly on television on the day of my retirement and could be seen to be soundlessly speaking I was replying to some such question.

These are difficult questions for, although there are in education people whose interests are properly directed to particular fields and whose enthusiasms lie there, the Department has to try to see the whole range and measure progress over a broad front. Naturally, I had some personal fields of satisfaction or regret. They arose from the degree of personal involvement I had had in them rather than from their importance.

I had, for instance, had a great deal to do with the negotiation and formulation of the scheme for the integration of private schools and it was natural that I should look back on this with some satisfaction, and regret a little that I would not be there to see the next stage. I had chosen to identify myself considerably with the discussions which were going on in many places on the suggestions made in the excellent E.D.C. working party report on the local administration of education. An answer on this could not be quickly expected and indeed it would have been most unwise to endeavour to hurry it, but I was interested to see the directions of argument and it would perhaps have been pleasing to have stayed a little longer to see it further develop.

I had in my 1972 report suggested some basic reorganisation in the Department from what I called the tier system of primary, secondary, etc., into a functional system in which there would over the whole field be directorates of schools, of research, and of personnel. This was also a matter which could not possibly be hurried, but considerable progress had been made and I would perhaps have liked to have seen it move a little further.

As something of a different order of magnitude I had been very interested in the reintroduction of Education News in its new form and in fact this had been my idea. I was gratified that a number of people worked very hard so that I might have the satisfaction of seeing the first issue before I left.

I mention these particular things because for various reasons I had had a personal involvement in them. Someone else in my position might well have used his time differently. Over the whole field of education the satisfactions and the disappointments such as they had been, had been absorbed into a profound overall satisfaction at what I had regarded as a tremendous volume of achievement contributed by very many people.

I have never been much impressed by the argument that some particular field of education should maintain such and such a percentage of education expenditure. Indeed it would be mathematically impossible for all existing fields to do that if there were to be any new developments at all.

I have never been particularly interested in the argument that education as a whole should

maintain such a percentage of Government expenditure or of some other measurement of total resources. These figures are interesting enough and they can be used and misused. The question to my mind has always been whether fields of desirable education advance have been identified and whether progress has fairly been made having regard to all those circumstances which must apply.

We in New Zealand are never short of proposals for the development of education, and hundreds and thousands of people combine to help to identify them. The recent Educational Development Conference was an important exercise of that sort, and in general there was a remarkable agreement throughout the country on the directions in which advances should be made.

Naturally I had asked myself whether the progress made in my time was satisfactory and I thought it had been. When the new Government came into power at the end of 1972 we started to give the Minister a quarterly report of progress made in moving towards the educational policies of his Government set out at the time of the election. The last of my reports was dated June 1975 and covered something like 70 foolscap pages, with pre-school education, as you know, substantially represented. In total it was a commendable result.

It is proper, inevitable, and desirable that there should be enthusiasts for each of the many components of the whole of the education effort. It is also very desirable that people interested in particular educational fields should see something of the others. One of the encouraging features of the discussions which were taking place as I retired, on the possible new forms of local educational administration, was that it was many times said that this new experience of getting together to discuss a common problem, and inevitably to tell others about one's own problems, was a very valuable exercise and should be continued whatever form of education administration is in due course adopted. I feel sure that whatever happens there will be an increasing coming together of people across their various differences of interest and this will be a very good thing.

This brings me to the point at which I can mention that one of the greatest satisfactions I obtained throughout my 10 years in the business of education, was working with the hundreds and thousands of people who shared the responsibility for making the machine work, and among whom it was possible to feel such a sense of common purpose and real personal warmth. Good luck to you all.

—A. N. V. Dobbs.  
January, 1976.



*This article was supplied by the Hamilton Kindergarten Teachers' Publicity Committee. It is a most interesting survey and their final summary is well constructed and makes thoughtful reading. Congratulations to the Committee on producing a worthwhile piece of research.*

## HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT TV IS TEACHING YOUR CHILD?

Recently Kindergarten Teachers have been dismayed to notice the increasing amount of violence portrayed through children's play, e.g. Kung Fu leg kicks on the chest and lower body, Karate chops on the back of the neck, and Six Million Dollar Man head presses.

It is increasingly obvious through conversation that many Kindergarten children are watching programmes which are not suitable and are on at too late an hour.

With this in mind could you please assist us by answering the following questions. Please RETURN your questionnaire to the Kindergarten.

1. Have you a TV in the house?
2. What time do children commence TV viewing?
3. What time does TV viewing stop for your child?
4. Is TV turned on for specific programmes?
5. Is TV turned off after specific programmes?
6. Is TV turned on at beginning of day and left on?
7. Is TV turned on at beginning of children's programmes?
8. Do you watch with him and discuss story and behaviour during programme?
9. Does child tell of fears about character situations?
10. What reactions have you noted?
  - a. Favourable.
  - b. Detrimental.
11. Has he had nightmares related to TV programmes? If so, what programmes?
12. Have you noticed violent behaviour copied from TV characters? — which ones?
13. Does the child discuss and comment on programmes with you?
14. What are your child's favourite six programmes?
15. Do you plan viewing?
16. Do you subscribe to "The Listener"?
17. Do you use the daily newspaper TV programme?

We would appreciate any further suggestions or comments regarding children's TV viewing.

1,280 Papers issued.

996 Papers returned.

284 Papers not returned.

1. 964 have television.
2. Bulk of viewing starts at approx. 3 p.m., varying according to weather and seasons.

3. Bulk of viewing stops at approx. 6-7 p.m. — weekends later.
4. 75% turn on for specific programmes.
5. 50% turn off after specific programmes.
6. About 5% admitted to turning set on at beginning of viewing and leaving it on.
7. About 50% turn on for children's programmes.
8. The general trend was to try to watch and discuss when time permitted.
9. More children do tell parents of fears over programmes — either regularly or sometimes.
10. The favourable reactions noted were mainly centred around the educational and creative programmes with some comments about general knowledge, and general enjoyment of comedies.  
For detrimental reactions we had children frightened by wild animals and monsters. Pleasure in use of guns and acceptance of these as a way of life. Fear of science fiction and space stories. Increase in bad language and lazy speech.  
Copying behaviour of TV characters and general insolence. Admiration of children who outwit authority, parents and teachers.
11. 72 cases of nightmares attributed to TV viewing. Programmes named included: Dr Who, Tarzan, Black Beauty, Kidnappers, Cookie Monster, Tomorrow's People, Lost in Space, Daktari, Wild Life Programmes, Six Million Dollar Man, Kung Fu, Swiss Family Robinson, Grunt Machine, Sesame Street, King Kong.
12. 147 cases of violent behaviour copied from TV characters. (Many commented that this was copied from older brothers and sisters who had seen programmes).

Kung Fu	54
Zorro	3
Tarzan	13
Six Million Dollar Man	32
Westerns	13
Batman	14
Dr Who	5
Policewoman	1
Cookie Monster	3

13. Approx. 65% of children discuss and comment on programmes with parents.
14. Over 70 programmes were involved in the six favourites.
 

Playschool — most popular	588
Sesame Street	554
Flinstones	388
Romper Room	321
Disneyland	192
Rupert Bear	165
15. 40% parents claim to plan children's viewing.
16. 27% subscribe to Listener with a further 3½% buying it sometimes.
17. 65% use daily newspaper TV programme regularly, 5% sometimes.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS:

Although cases of violence were mentioned in the comments, the general concern seemed to be for the negative effect on children rather than the physical damage caused by TV viewing. Older children appear to influence children with behaviour they have copied rather than direct influence. Parents are disturbed that children of all ages are accepting violence and often justified it as normal. Parents feel children can't cope with leisure time because of too much TV viewing. Content of undesirable examples of language and speech, especially in American programmes brought. Suggestion that we have more New Zealand-based material.

e.g.: Sesame Street — not relevant to New Zealand children.

The time children spend sitting passively in

front of TV is damaging the reading patterns and participation in activities that would be more beneficial mentally and physically. One mother commented that violent behaviour can be classified as adventurous. Suggestions for improving the situation were:

1. More parental control.
2. More New Zealand programmes for children.
3. Appointment of TV Controller with knowledge of children's needs.
4. Content of children's programmes be published so parents will be warned if programmes are not suitable.
5. Adult programmes should not be previewed during children's viewing.
6. Survey into older children's TV would be wise. More detailed than ours.
7. Parents need to be more aware of role as parents and not use TV as a babysitter while keeping house tidy.
8. Parents need to be aware of child's attitude to new situations as many children accept without question anything which is presented to them. How much are they absorbing?
9. TV should be turned off during meals, to give family opportunity to discuss the day's happenings so they do not have to keep quiet while programme is on.
10. TV has taken over from bedtime stories and songs. Fewer children know nursery rhymes than in past. Parents should consider this.
11. Lack of spontaneity and imagination.
12. TV very powerful teacher but what is it **teaching !**

## What is Television Teaching Your Child?

For some time now concern over television and children, has been growing among parents, educationists, and psychologists. They are questioning the length of time children spend watching television, the quality of the programmes, and to what extent, and how effectively it can influence the thinking and behaviour of children.

TV is a powerful media, and it is audio-visual. Audio-visual techniques are widely used by teachers, and are known to be extremely effective in learning. TV is a teacher — what is it teaching?

That children's conversation, and play are centred around TV programmes and characters so often, is indicative of the significance of television in our lives. Observation of this, and suspicion that some harmful and disturbing behaviours could be attributed to the influence of TV, prompted Hamilton Kindergarten Teachers Publicity Committee, to distribute some questionnaires in order to find some facts and views from parents.

1,280 papers were issued, and 996 of them were returned, of these only 32 did not possess a TV set. Results showed that the 3½ to 5-year-old children are watching television on an average of four hours a day, or 28 hours a week — varying according to weather conditions and seasons.

It was significant to note that although a large percentage of parents control children's viewing time, very few are always aware of the content of the programmes. Parents seem to watch and discuss TV programmes with children only "when time permits them".

Although parents noted favourable reactions from educational, creative, and comedy programmes, many more noted detrimental reactions. Most common were fears of wild animals and monsters, and occasional nightmares; pleasure in the use of weapons, the possibility of accepting the violence they see, and justifying it as normal behaviour; increase in bad language and lazy speech from bad examples and especially American programmes; admiration of children who outwit authority, parents and teachers; lack of spontaneity and imagination — an inability to cope with leisure time; copying play of older brothers and sisters, who are in turn exposed to programmes, possibly beyond the comprehension of pre-school children.

Concern seemed to be for the negative effect of children, rather than the physical damage caused by copying violent behaviour of TV characters.

One thought-provoking suggestion was that the time children spend sitting passively in front of TV is damaging the reading patterns, and participation in activities that would be more beneficial mentally and physically. 103 programmes were listed in the six favourites, a number being adult programmes running at late hours, but encouraging to note that the most popular were good quality, and perhaps the least potentially harmful — Play School, Sesame Street, Flintstones, Romper Room, Disneyland, Rupert Bear.

We can presume that from this questionnaire that parents are concerned as to how much children are absorbing, what they are watching, the quality of the programmes, and the behaviour that results. So little research has been done in this area, that no one can say whether there are any long term effects from such influence.

Several other studies on children's TV viewing habits have been conducted. One comprehensive survey on Sydney students, ranging from Kindergarten to High School was initiated by the director of Hunter Hill audio-visual centre, and a lecturer at Sydney Teachers Training College. Results revealed some similar facts and brought out other disturbing theories, and rather more subtle influences.

Children are learning that most families — except their own — are headed by business executives, professional persons or parents of unknown origin with lucrative occupations. That Police are often corrupt, or at least incompetent.

That marital discord and divorce are the rule rather than the exception, that members of ethnic minorities are associated with criminal communities who display gross characteristics of their supposed national traits. That roles of women are glamorous, stereotyped and house-bound and uniformed. In the final analysis, those responsible for the Survey declared — it is possible that the media, especially television, have superseded the influence of school, church and perhaps family as the major sources of children's values and ideas.

For those few of us who are concerned and thinking about these things — what can we do? Television is present, and well and truly integrated into our life styles. We cannot ignore it.

Parents have made some suggestions on the Hamilton questionnaire.

1. Pressure must be made for: The appointment of a TV controller of children's programmes — someone with a good knowledge of children and their needs.
2. More programmes for children to participate in.
3. Content of children's programmes could be published, so parents could be warned if not suitable.
4. More New Zealand programmes; many people felt that there are too many programmes not relevant to New Zealand children.
5. Adult programmes should not be reviewed during children's TV viewing hours.
6. Parents can help by: Having more control over TV viewing hours and choice of programmes. Also to think about whether they are using television as a babysitter.
7. By turning TV off during meals to give the family the opportunity to discuss and communicate over the day's happenings.
8. To be aware of children's attitudes to new situations, as many children accept without question anything presented to them; to take time off to watch TV with children; to be available for explanations, and share viewing time generally.
9. Not to neglect bedtime stories, songs and nursery rhymes.

**WHAT IS TV DOING FOR YOUR CHILD — HAVE YOU THOUGHT?**

## Graduation ceremonies

1975 saw the first of our students who had been involved in the merger of the Colleges graduate and receive their New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union Diploma. In Dunedin all students from the College graduated at the same ceremony in the Town Hall on December 5. The Diplomas were presented by the president of the Union, Mrs K. D. Lockhart. After congratulating the Graduands Mrs Lockhart made mention of the fact that throughout the country the last entries in the book on Kindergarten Teacher Training by the movement itself were now being written. All teachers in the future would be graduates of Teachers Colleges along with Primary and Secondary teachers. Special thanks were conveyed to all those who had assisted in the training of our students. A special mention was made of Mr D. K. Carmichael, the first male to receive the Union Diploma.

At the Wellington Graduation five days later two men, Mr D. S. Butler and Mr B. E. Newman received their Diplomas from the President. In contrast with Dunedin the ceremony was a separate one because of the accommodation available not being large enough to house one function. The guest speaker was Mrs M. Dell, Chairman of the Committee on Women.

Mrs Lockhart, while speaking to the students, reminded them of the obligations they had now acquired as members of the teaching field. She quoted from Henry Brook Adams who said: "A teacher affects eternity, he can never tell where his influence stops." She reminded them of the influence that they would have on the children and adults they would come to work with over the next years. The second point which Mrs Lockhart made was that of loyalty to one's employers. "Many problems could and would be avoided," she said, "by adopting the early habit of frank and open discussion, and by leaving the doors of communication open at all times."

Along with the many letters I have had about the content of the journal and suggestions for future copies, two ask why I use my Christian name to sign the editorial and my husband's initials for all other purposes. The answer is simple — I write in my own name, and for business purposes it is much easier to be located in the phone book under the only listing we have, i.e. K.D.

Among other letters received are requests for quotes on various topics and also a request for the source of the quotes. I have a collection of books of quotes, their sources, proverbs and their meanings. The latest requests for a selection of quotes vary from life, to music, to more humorous ones, to ones on poetry and poems. I have chosen some on music which I hope you will enjoy:—

Music is well said to be the speech of angels.—Carlyle.

Music is the universal language of mankind.

—Longfellow.

Of all noises I think music the least disagreeable.—Johnston.

After silence that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music.—Aldous Huxley.

Music is harmony, harmony is perfection, perfection is our dream, and our dream is heaven.—Amiel.

Music produces a kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without.—Confucius.

The article on the new office will be printed in the next copy along with the photo of the Executive which many of you asked about some time ago. Our next meeting will be held in the new office so you will be able to see something of the office as well as of your executive.

Three associations have asked for articles on children's play ideas, and suggestions for suitable books for children of two years to five years. I would value any contributions you can send me.

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*Two recent requests, one from Australia, asked for the history and other details about this unique centre.*

## THE HELEN DEEM CENTRE FOR PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

### WHY AND HOW THE CENTRE WAS ESTABLISHED:

In 1941 a demonstration Pre-School Educational Centre was established through the combined efforts of the Plunket Society and the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association, together with Government assistance, for the following purposes:—

1. To provide an opportunity for Plunket trainees to study the physical and emotional development of a group of normal pre-school children, and observe their management by a Kindergarten specialist.

With the passage of time, the Plunket Society had extended its infant welfare service to embrace the pre-school child. In 1941, 16,462 children in the 1½-5 years age group attended the society's clinics annually. The corresponding figure for 1957 was 76,135 and in 1969 was 112,390, and the number is increasing rapidly.

It was realised that the curriculum of training should be broadened so that the nurses would be better equipped to advise mothers on the all-round care of the pre-school children seen at the Clinics and also in the home in the course of visiting new baby cases — incidentally 90% of New Zealand's baby population comes under Plunket supervision.

2. To provide an opportunity for Kindergarten trainees to study the physical development, feeding, sleeping and general health and nutrition of a group of normal pre-school children.

The Kindergarten Head Teachers and their assistants have a unique opportunity of meeting the mothers of the children attending kindergartens daily, and visiting homes, consequently a practical knowledge of general health principles would enable them to give elementary advice to the mothers of children committed to their care for a few hours of the day.

3. To provide all the amenities of an up-to-date nursery school for a group of 25-30 in the 3-5 years age group.

4. To provide help for parents in the upbringing of their children.

The parents have the most important influence on their children's all-round development in the pre-school years through the day to day care provided in the homes, consequently it is highly desirable that they should be guided and advised in their all-important task.

### THE FIRST CENTRE:

The Dominion Council of the Plunket Society provided the original building, which had served as the Mothercraft Cottage of the first Karitane Hospital and was about to be demolished. Alterations were effected to make a spacious playroom, a dining-cum-playroom, and toilet facilities. The kitchenette was retained and another small room was used as the Director's Office and medi-

cal examination room. An outdoor playing area was fenced off, and all the play equipment was provided by the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association with the assistance of Government subsidy. The Plunket Society supplied the meals for which a small charge was made to the parents.

From the beginning it was realised that the modest building was not ideal for the purpose it served, but it was thought that if the venture proved its worth, all interested parties would strive to secure a modern building which would accommodate many more children. After four years of pioneering work, it was agreed that the Centre had justified its existence and that the time had come to prospect for new premises as the old building was becoming increasingly costly to maintain and a larger building was deemed necessary.

### ACQUISITION OF A SITE FOR THE NEW BUILDING:

Great difficulty was experienced in finding a site which would serve the needs of a thickly populated area, but after an intensive search the present section in Forbury Road was secured by the Government for the purpose of erecting the new Centre. The architect to the Otago Education Board, Mr Muir, agreed to draw up a plan voluntarily for submission to the Education Department, with a view to obtaining the finance for a new building.

### FINANCE:

The Director of Education and the Director of Pre-School Services viewed the project most sympathetically, and after lengthy negotiations commenced in 1946, the plans were finally approved and the Government agreed to give a \$2 for \$1 subsidy on the building.

Both the Plunket Society and the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association were faced with the formidable task of raising \$6,000 each, as the estimated cost of the building was \$36,000. The former's contribution was met by a special grant from the Karitane Products Society and the latter by the Sargood Trust.

The building was completed towards the end of 1954, and a local committee constituted to be responsible for the management of the Centre, to raise funds for its maintenance, and to interest the general public in the work. The new centre commenced to function on November 1, 1954, and by the end of the year 40 little children attended. The numbers have been increased to 60.

### THE NEW BUILDING:

The building has been placed to obtain maximum sunshine. It is modern and essentially functional in design, and ample space has been provided for indoor and outdoor activities. There

are two large playrooms and a spacious dining room which can be used as a third playroom eventually. The two playrooms are equipped with shelves for toys, a sink with running water for water-play, stacking tables and chairs with framework of tubular steel, and the customary play material. The children's chairs have been specially designed to permit comfort and good posture. An observation booth with a wire mesh window and dark battleship grey walls has been incorporated into each playroom and into the dining room, to permit observers to watch the children's play activities without them being aware of the onlookers. They are approached from the corridors. The selected use of observation booths by visitors protects the children from being overwhelmed by the presence of unfamiliar adults. These booths will be useful for parents who wish to watch the response of their own children to play, feeding and sleep situations. They will also prove helpful to mothers of children who have been poor feeders and others who exhibit curious behaviour traits in their own homes and not at the Centre.

The part glass walls separating adjacent rooms greatly facilitate the supervision of the children.

A children's toilet block and cloakroom with individual lockers, communicates with each playroom and can also be entered from the playground.

The medical room contains scales, measuring rod, and a specially designed low table for the children to walk along during the course of their medical examination. The Director's Office adjoins the medical room.

The staff members have been provided with a comfortable staff room, from which the children can be observed while playing out of doors. It is also used for staff meetings and for the weekly case study conference with the trainees.

The spacious kitchen is equipped with modern conveniences and it communicates with the dining room by a door and two large slides.

The building is centrally heated as required.

#### **THE PLAY AREA:**

As the children spend as much time as possible out of doors, a quick drying surface has been laid down immediately outside the playrooms, and provides conditions and space for ideal outdoor play even in showery weather. The winding paths add variety to the scene. It is planned to plant trees and make an attractive garden.

#### **THE STAFF:**

The Staff consists of a Head Teacher (Miss M. Just), who has been at the Centre since it opened, a Plunket Nurse, three trained Kindergarten Teachers and a Cook. The Medical Adviser to the Plunket Society (Dr N. Begg) is the Medical Director.

#### **THE CHILDREN:**

Approximately 50% of the children attend for the full day (9 a.m. - 3 p.m.) and have their midday meal and sleep at the Centre. The remainder stay from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Mothers wishing to enrol their children are requested

to communicate with the Head Teacher and the names are entered on a waiting list at two years of age. Generally speaking the children are accepted in turn, but priority is given to a few for whom nursery school experience appears to be particularly necessary.

The Centre caters for **normal** children in the 3-5 years age group and provides a wealth of material for child study, illustrating the individual differences in children of the same age and the variations in normal growth and development.

#### **PROGRAMME:**

Active, spontaneous play is the most important means of educating a young child. Through play he can investigate, express his creative ideas and feelings, develop his skills, and learn to share with his playmates and become a sociable little person. Consequently, opportunity and equipment for both outdoor and indoor play are provided throughout the morning and afternoon sessions. The children are free to choose their own play materials from the low shelves in the playrooms and from the outdoor equipment. Facilities for water play, painting, finger painting, clay modelling, imaginative play, etc., are always freely available.

Story and music form part of the children's pre-school experience. Stories selected from the rich background of children's literature available today are told to small groups of children in the open air playrooms.

Music is included in the programme, the children expressing themselves through moving to the rhythm of the music provided and singing together their favourite songs and nursery rhymes.

Preparatory to the meal the children are sent to the bathroom, where the Kindergarten teacher supervises them washing their hands. Dinner is served at 12 midday to thirty children who sit at low tables. The main course consisting of meat, potatoes and two other vegetables, is served by the Sister and the Director. Children's appetites vary and some eat much more quickly than others; those desiring a second helping take their plates to the serving table for more. A simple milk pudding, custard or junket and fruit, and in Winter light steamed pudding, is served as a second course. Malt and cod liver oil, and a glass of milk, followed by a piece of apple or a carrot strip completes the meal.

**During the morning:** All children attending the Centre enjoy a social time over a cup of milk, and those remaining for dinner have another milk drink and piece of apple or other tooth cleansing food when they get up from their rest.

After dinner the children proceed to the playrooms, which have been transformed temporarily into sleeping quarters. The teacher assists the children in removing top clothes, shoes and socks, and then tucks them down comfortably. Each child has his own stretcher and own clearly marked blankets. The children rest and sleep according to their needs from 1-1½ hours, and as they awaken they wash and dress themselves, with assistance if necessary.

An afternoon play period concludes the activities of the day. The children are called for by their mothers and all have left for home by 3 p.m.



Independence is encouraged throughout the child's entire day at the Centre. His efforts are appreciated and the staff does everything possible to promote self-confidence.

Mild, steady, and consistent discipline is exercised in order to preserve a happy, harmonious atmosphere and help the children to acquire self-control and a sense of security.

#### **HEALTH SUPERVISION:**

Before a child is enrolled at the Centre, the Head Teacher and the Plunket Sister visit his home to obtain a personal history and become acquainted with the home background.

All children are routinely examined by the Medical Director. With their mother for the first time, then six monthly, or as required. Those requiring medical treatment are referred to the family doctor, and the mothers of those with dental defects are advised to take them to the neighbouring school dental clinic, the Dental School or to their own Dentist. Every effort is made to maintain a close liaison between the Medical Director, the family Doctor and the Child Specialist. As behaviour problems may have a physical or emotional basis, they are always considered jointly by the health and education staff.

The mothers are encouraged to discuss their doubts and worries concerning their children with the Head Teacher or the Health Sister, and when necessary the Medical Director is consulted or the child is referred immediately to his family doctor.

Height and weight are recorded every term, then along with any illness or accident, eye test, immunisation, are recorded on their Health Card.

With a view to minimising the spread of infection parents are requested to keep children home if they appear off-colour or exhibit the first stage of the common cold.

#### **RECORDS KEPT AT CENTRE:**

##### **1. Health Records:**

Child Health Record Cards as used for all pre-schoolers.

##### **2. Case Studies:**

To help with better all-round understanding, the staff meet at least once a week, after the session to discuss and record the children's play and emotional behaviour. Plunket and Kindergarten students participate in these discussions.

##### **3. Pre-school Junior School Liaison:**

To foster better liaison between these groups, regular meetings are held. At 3 years 11 months "Pre-School Progress Cards" are commenced, and at 4 years 11 months completed and forwarded to the appropriate school.

#### **PARENT ACTIVITIES:**

As has already been indicated, close parent-staff co-operation is considered fundamental in the care of the young children. The staff members seek to understand each child, both in the Centre and in its family background with home visiting and parent participation. A programme of parent activities, cultural and recreational is maintained throughout the year. The mother is expected to stay with her child when first admitted, and later to spend some time at the Centre working with the children along with the staff.

A small parents' library is available and leaflets on diet, clothing, health and play are distributed to the mothers.

Over the years the Centre has filled an ever-increasing need in the Community. Though it does not cater for working mothers (hours not suitable), valuable support has been given to solo parents and mothers who find the need for further study or return to professions in a part-time capacity.

#### **THE CENTRE AS A DEMONSTRATION OF MODERN METHODS OF CHILD CARE:**

The Centre provides an excellent example showing the inter-relation of two professional groups, i.e. Kindergarten teachers, and Doctor-Nurse, who work with and study the development and guidance of young children in close co-operation with the parents.

The original purpose of the Centre as outlined earlier, has been maintained. Plunket Students and Karitane Nurses have regular visiting and lecture periods, Kindergarten students observe and teach under the guidance of Health and Education Tutors; University students specialising in medicine, education and psychology have regular observation periods under guidance from paediatricians and psychologists. In addition, the Centre provides valuable educational experience for the mothers of the children who often assist at the Centre and attend the active Parents' Club.

## A FURTHER PEN PORTRAIT OF A NEW EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Mrs Betty van der Werff

(WARD 2)

Betty, who has just been elected to replace Shirley Muir, the newly elected Vice-President of the Union, has had continuous service with kindergartens in Ward 2 for the past 20 years.

Ward 2 has 15 associations made up of 64 kindergartens and geographically covers a wide area from Huntly in the North to Taumaranui and Opotiki to the South-east and West.

Originally Betty joined the Huntly Association, a one-kindergarten association at that time, and served on the Council for eight years including four years as secretary and was the Huntly Association delegate to Union Conference on several occasions.

On transferring to Whakatane, Betty joined the largest non-training Association and has served as local Chairman of a Branch Committee, Council Member, Liaison Officer and Executive Member for the Eastern Bay Region of the Association which has six kindergartens and one Establishment Committee. A Vice-President of the Bay of Plenty Association and delegate to Conference for 10 years.

Betty is married to Hans, a Dutchman, who is Head of the Technical Department of Whakatane High School and District Scout Leader. They have four sons who range in age from 22 to 12 years. Betty is a member of a number of cultural and educational organisations and lists as her interests mainly activities the family unit enjoys, such as skin-diving, Scouting, soccer, caravanning, and in her little leisure time enjoys pottery, copper enamelling, interior decorating, gardening and entertaining. She admits to hating housework, and consequently does most entertaining barbecue style in their large back garden. Originally Betty trained and practised as a School Dental Nurse for 10 years. Currently she is secretary to the Whakatane A. and P. Show Association and is organising their three-day Spring Show with a full programme of trade exhibits, continuous stage entertainment, Miss Whakatane Spring Show Contest and equestrian events. Previous to this Betty has been secretary to three Whakatane Public Relations Officers, the Industrial Promotions Council, a building contractor and even tried her pen as a casual newspaper reporter.

She firmly believes every woman should have some interest outside her home and as she doesn't play golf or bridge or such like, has made Pre-School Education her main interest outside home and family.

Students from several colleges were asked their thoughts after one year in a Teachers College. There were many who admitted to dreading the thought of going into a large college where they claimed they wouldn't know anyone.

There were those who thought they would be swallowed up in the large institution and they would lose their identity. Many claimed that they had been cheated because they had never been told of any change when they were selected for Kindergarten training in a Kindergarten College.

Some felt very lonely in the large college and out of place among the greater numbers. Others who had been to smaller schools all their lives were overwhelmed by the vast numbers of students. It would appear that one of the greatest differences the students faced was the length of training — two years as against three years for primary teachers. Very many of course were happy and thrived in the environment.

Few felt capable of putting their thoughts adequately on paper, but the following was supplied by a student in Dunedin. Her comments will sum up how the majority of students regarded their first and only year in a Teachers College. The Union feels that nothing but good can come from the integration, and it is grateful to all who helped the students to become a part of each college. Much work has still to be done, but only time will achieve this. We look forward to the time when our students will receive in one way or another the three years' training which their Division A Colleagues enjoy.

The change-over from the York Place College to the Dunedin Teachers College campus was, in my opinion, a very beneficial move. By moving down to the Dunedin Teachers College, the facilities available to us were increased. There were also many staff members who specialised in their respective fields and who could give us assistance and more teaching resources from which we could benefit.

The other students came to know of our existence and learned that we had just as much theoretical and practical work to complete as they had, and that we were not just "baby-sitters" as so many of them thought.

The change-over for the second year students tended to make us a fairly isolated group. The first years were better off, as they had come straight into the institution and its administration, and were involved more with the Division A students.

I feel that the change-over was a very good move and I am sure it will benefit the Kindergarten Teacher Trainees more as each new group of students enters the College.

SUSAN FARQUHAR.