

4.0 HISTORIC TIMELINE

Following is a summary of key dates relating to the development of Kindergartens and the construction and ongoing use of Myers Park Kindergarten:

- 1837 Freiderich Froebel(1782-1852) established the first kindergarten at Blankenburg, Prussia. It was a revolutionary system of education for the very young based on self-activity and harnessing play as the route to learning. He also invented a range of toys called the Froebel gifts and pioneered the professional training of women in early childhood education.
Helen May, The Discovery of Early Childhood Auckland University Press, 1997, Chapter 3
- 1850s After his death in 1852, the Kindergarten concept is promoted internationally by Froebel's supporters including his second wife Louise Levin and Baroness Berthe von Marenholtz-Bulow, as well as some of those trained by Froebel.
Ibid
- 1851 The first recorded British Kindergarten was opened by an ex-pupil of Froebel's. However the idea of the free kindergarten did not develop as successfully as in America and later New Zealand.
ibid.
- 1860 The development of the kindergarten in America was much more successful. With its practical approach to improving the situation for some children it was an attractive charity and also a method of Americanising the huge influx of immigrant children.
The Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, established by Sarah B Cooper, became known as the largest, wealthiest, best organised and most flourishing association for the extension of the kindergarten.
It was also very important in the establishment of the kindergarten in New Zealand and Australia.
ibid
- 1876 The Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia included a model Kindergarten class annexed to the Women's Pavilion demonstrated activities and the range of Froebel "gifts".
Norman Brosterman, Inventing Kindergarten, Abrahms 1997
- 1889 The first free kindergarten in New Zealand opened in Dunedin.
Helen May, The Discovery of Early Childhood Auckland University Press, 1997, Chapter 3
- 1904 First free kindergarten opened in Christchurch.
Ibid
- 1906 First kindergarten in Wellington opened.
Ibid

1908/09 The Auckland Kindergarten Association was formed in October 1908. There were at this time already two well attended, fee-paying kindergartens in Remuera and Epsom.

Ibid

The officers elected for first year included President Mr L J Bagnall; vice presidents Mrs Leo Myers and the Rev W Beatty; treasurer, Mr G O'Halloran; secretaries' Mrs F Robertson, and Mr Edward Brooke-Smith; council Mesdames Coleman , Fergusson, A Nathan, J P Stevenson and Messers L Bachelder, Carlton hay, C.J. Tunks, Dr McDowell and Mr W R Holmes.

Auckland Star, February 27 1909

A deputation of Association members waited on the Minister for Education, Hon. George Fowlds, and secured an agreement for Government funding of 2 pounds per child attending kindergarten.

Auckland Star 13 July 1909

Miss Margaret E Gibson was the Director of the Training Department, holding diplomas from the National Froebel Union of Great Britain. Applications for Student Teachers were advertised in the Star in December 1909.

1910 The first free kindergarten in Auckland was established and soon moved into a purpose built building on the edge of Victoria Park, donated by Sir John Logan Campbell.

Brian Marshall, A History of the Auckland Kindergarten Association, Auckland Kindergarten Association 1983

1912 The Newmarket kindergarten was opened in June 1912, and the AKA developed rapidly.

Ibid

1913 In February 1913 the St James Kindergarten in Wellington Street opened.

Ibid

1915 The foundation Stone for the Kindergarten was laid on December 13 1915 by Mayor J H Gunson. The foundation stone is dated 23 December 1915, and notes "This Building Is The Gift of The Hon. Arthur M. Myers MP. To The Children of Auckland".

NZ Herald December 14 1915

1916 Constructed by Johns and Sons, the Kindergarten was opened for classes in October 1916, even though the official opening didn't occur till the following month.

AKA newspaper scrapbook

The Training School shifted from the Logan Campbell kindergarten to Myers Park kindergarten in 1916. When numbers became too great in 1958, the Government purchased a large house at 43 Arney Road Remuera and the College relocated there.

175 Years of Free Kindergarten In New Zealand 1889-1964 Helen Downer, President of NZ Free Kindergarten Union.

The Kindergarten was officially opened on November 15 1916 by the His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand The Earl of Liverpool.
NZ Herald November 1916

1918 Later in 1918 the influenza epidemic broke out in Auckland and Myers Park Kindergarten was one of a number of buildings that were used to provide temporary hospitals.

J Barr, The City of Auckland pages 229-230

An agreement was made between Auckland City Council, the Auckland Kindergarten Association and the Education Board dated 22 May 1918, it states that the "*Education Board shall have use of the upper floor so long as it shall be required by them or used by them as a school for backward children.*

AKA Archives

1921 Following frequent closures due to epidemics and contagious diseases, Myers Kindergarten instigated monthly medical inspections in 1921. Dental work was also included.

A History of the Auckland Kindergarten Association B Marshall AKA 1983

1921 In 1921 a school for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children was established in part of the upper level of Myers Park Kindergarten

Celebrating 50 Years of Deaf Schools in Auckland, Kelston Deaf Education Centre, June 1992

1932 In 1932 the school shifted from Myers Park Kindergarten and after a number of further moves, returned in 1935. They remained in the building until 1942 when a new Auckland School for the Deaf was opened. After this time it appears that space within the Kindergarten continued to be used by the Hard of Hearing League, catering for adults with hearing problems.

Ibid

1944 In July 1944 a large piece of plaster fell from the ceiling of the Sand room. In November that year Council were asked to repair a serious leak to the roof.

AKA archives

One of the upper level balconies was partly enclosed for an office in January 1944, with new windows and a door onto the remainder of the balcony. Permit drawings also showed a temporary wooden stair to be located in front of the north balcony.

Auckland City Council Microfilm Records

Telephone was installed to the upper level, via an extension from downstairs.

AKA Archives, File Myers 1940-1979

- 1946 The entire upper level was made available to the AKA for use as the training centre.
AKA Archives.
- 1948 Council replaced a toilet, sink and plumbing removed by the Hard of Hearing League in January 1948..
In March the Council also provided a set of wooden steps from the retaining wall down to the lower level adjacent to the main entrance stairs.
In June of that year a new wooden floor was laid in the glassed-in sun porch, replacing the previous asphalt flooring. The work cost 75.15 pounds and Council and the AKA paid half each
Ibid
- 1948 A formal agreement was drawn up between the Auckland Kindergarten Association and Auckland City Council in July 1948 Council were responsible for maintenance of the exterior of the building. The Association were responsible for maintenance of the interior together with all fittings and fixtures and water and sanitary appliances.. They were also responsible for the full insurance of the building . The Agreement would remain in force unless the Government took over control of Kindergartens in New Zealand.
Ibid
- 1950 the concrete floor in the Training Centre Kitchen had become badly pitted. Winstones quoted 33 pounds to carry out repairs. The Association were to apply to Council for funding.
Ibid
- 1953 The Chief Sanitary Inspector advised in February 1953 that the kitchen sinks were insanitary, and the Boys toilet very old-fashioned. He advised a complete overhaul of original plumbing
Ibid
- 1954 In December 1954 the Association proposed enclosing a play area in front of the building. Kenneth Myers wrote a letter of support saying his father would have approved the enclosing of the grassed bank above the existing asphalt area. Half height wire mesh gates had been installed to the verandah around this time.
Ibid
- 1957 Linoleum floor coverings were replaced in 1957.
- 1963 The sliding doors at the front entrance had come off their runners and needed to be tied shut.
Ibid
- 1971 Renovations were proposed to an upper level office in 1971.
ACC Microfilm Records

- 1973 The outdoor play area was extended, with design work done by architects Scott and May.
- 1976 Reasonably substantial changes made to the upper level, with the addition of partitioning within the Main Hall to form offices.
ACC Microfilm Records
- 1978 An interior fire egress stair was built, within one of the then enclosed balconies in the north east corner.
ACC Microfilm Records
- The Agreement between Council and the Association was amended in 1978 to allow the Association to sub-license part of the top floor to the Girl Guides Association. The Girl Guides were located in the building until June 1980.
AKA Archives
- 1981 The floor in the Children's toilet was resurfaced.
AKA Archives
- 1982 Kitchen renovations were carried out in March including a new stainless steel bench, value \$1443
AKA Archives
- 1983 During August 1983 the interior was repainted.
In September 1983 the AKA presented estimates to the Education Board for internal renovations including new floor coverings and replacing the kitchen sink. It was also noted that Auckland City Council had programmed some major repairs to the exterior at a similar time, including replacement of the large folding doors to the outdoor play area. The Department of Education authorised the work to the interior in August 1984 including flooring (\$8876), Gas fitting (\$3105), carpentry work (\$497.28), electrical (\$1118.50).
AKA Archives
- 1984 In October 1984 The Department of Education funded an upgrading to plumbing work to a value of \$2460. Exterior maintenance scheduled by the Council for 1984 included repairs to the roof (to be done by McMillan Roofing), repair and making good soffits, repair to downpipes and parapets. All work was carried out in 1985 by the Council Workshops.
AKA Archives.
- 1986 Alterations were made to the playground.
AKA Archives
- 1987 Repainting undertaken in May included the entrance foyer back to the first arch., the Arts and Crafts room, kitchen and ladies toilets. A line was to be struck at the level of the picture rail and ceiling and frieze painted white.

Floor areas in toilets, arts and crafts room and steps to be painted with paving paint.

AKA Archives

1989 The Auckland Education Board ceased operation. Responsibility for maintenance was taken over by individual Kindergarten Associations.

AKA Archives

1991 Office alterations were designed by Graham Keys Architects in 1990/91

AKA Archives

1993 The outdoor play area was redeveloped.

AKA Archives

1996 A Shade structure was installed in the playground in 1996. Joyce Group Architects designed a new kitchen and children's toilets for the Kindergarten in October 1995. These alterations were carried out in 1996.