

## SHORT HISTORY OF THE HASTINGS FREE KINDERGARTEN ASSOCIATION (INC)

Early in 1928 two Hastings citizens, Mr and Mrs.K.Chamberlain, saw the necessity of forming a kindergarten for the care of small children. They convened several meetings in their house before the first recorded meeting was held in July of that year. A small band of women canvassed the town prior to the opening of the kindergarten in the Y.M.C.A. lounge in February 1929, with a Mrs McLeod as voluntary director and a roll of 38. Mrs McLeod held office till the end of that year when Mrs Black was appointed with Miss Frost as assistant. A mothers' club was formed with Mrs Bennett as secretary, and very early in the records we read that they donated £3 towards the cost of tables and chairs.

In 1930 the kindergarten was moved to the S.D.A. rooms but due to the growing numbers was shifted back to the Y.M.C.A. where it was when the disasterous earthquake compelled it to close down temporarily in 1931. In 1930 the Association became an incorporated society. In this year the southern area was canvassed with a view to starting a kindergarten there, and it was found that 78 children were eligible to attend. In July of that year the association became affiliated with the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union and delegates attended the Conference. The first shop day was held in September and realised £65.16s.

In March 1931 the kindergarten was reopened in the Hastings Tennis club's pavilion with 13 children. During the period between the earthquake and the reopening, the President, Mrs Bauchop, and the secretary Miss Ford (who held that position for 17 years), were untiring in their efforts, devoting much time in visiting the children and mothers in their homes and keeping the affairs of the kindergarten up-to-date.

In the winter months of 1932 the local milk vendors supplied the kindergarten with milk daily, free of charge. The following year,

the Art Union grant, instead of Government assistance, was received and with the increasing roll (now 64) the directors salary was raised to £124 and the assistants to £20. The advisability of engaging a second assistant at £10 a year was considered!

Between 1933 and 1948 the kindergarten was housed in a variety of halls for varying lengths of time, and towards the end of this period a stronger desire for our own permanent premises developed. In 1946 a section was purchased. A committee was formed to raise funds and more than £400 was quickly raised. A permit to build was sought on the 16th April 1948 but it was not until the 25th March 1949 that final agreement was reached and building commenced. In July 1950 a local committee was formed to administer the functions of this kindy. The first local committee to be formed was the Mahora committee in August 1949. The third local committee, Parkvale, was formed in November 1950 and by early 1951 new kindergartens were functioning in these areas. On the 10th November 1951, Central our first "home to call our own," was opened by Mrs.S.I.Jones wife of the local member of parliament.

Work soon commenced on our next building, at Mahora, and this was opened in February 1957. A section was purchased for Parkvale, a 4th kindy started at Raureka, and a local committee formed for Mayfair in a short space of time. Parkvale's building proceeded apace and was opened in 1959. Raureka soon followed in 1961 and Mayfair in 1962. Our 6th Kinderagarten building is now being worked for and very shortly we hope to be able to commence building Frimley, a local committee having been formed in that area in 1962.

Presidents of the Association have been: Mrs.T.H.Lowry, MrsB. Crompton -Smith, Mrs.F.L.Boumgart, Mrs.MJ. Bauchop, Mrs.Joseph Wilson, Mrs.C.P.Hopkens, Mrs. L.R.Winter, Mrs.R.Stevenson, Mrs.E.J.Duff, Mrs.G.B.Bonisch ' Mr.N. Helleur.

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From that early donation of £3 for chairs the finances of the Association has risen in leaps and bounds until today when assets totalling more than £30,000 are administered and an income in excess of £3500 is earned by Council and local committees.