

# DUNEDIN KINDERGARTEN ASSOCIATION

*CENTENNIAL*

*1889 - 1989*



1889



1989



*Among other things the Kindergarten seeks:*

1. To develop the individuality of each child, and to offer opportunity for the expression of talent.
2. To shape character, train it to perseverance and to a spirit of helpfulness in the home and in society.
3. To cultivate habits of thrift, cleanliness, order and system.



**Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association**  
1889



4. To awaken in each child a love of beauty, and thus reveal to the mind a store of simple educative pleasure.
5. To train the hand with a view to modify and prepare surroundings for use.
6. To teach the holiness of work and its consequent delights.
7. To infuse the spirit of the family into the school, with the recognition of the Father whose will it is that not one of these little ones should perish.

## An Introduction

This Centennial publication celebrates 100 years of the life of the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association which was first established to help children in need because of the poverty and social disruption of the times. It honours the thousands of people who, following in the footsteps of the Rev. Rutherford Waddell and Mrs Reynolds, have washed, fed, clothed, as well as educated, pre-school children in Dunedin. That effort was, and always has been, in advance of its time.

Here we have a fascinating picture not only of individual kindergartens as they struggled to survive, but also that of the Association as a whole as it set policy, raised funds, co-operated and shared with other organisations and gained the trust and respect of the community as a whole.

This booklet also celebrates the struggle to gain national recognition and financial strengthening, to achieve adequate training and status for staff and to appreciate the importance of the involvement of parents in the day to day life of a kindergarten. Despite the successes of a century the struggle goes on. The Association will be doing everything in its power to ensure the hard won gains are not lost in the proposed reorganisations.

Finally, I congratulate the writers for they have caught the spirit of the first 100 years and signalled some of the goals for the next. May the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association and its people go from strength to strength in the interests of children, families and whānau!

*Cec Irwin*

## Preface

In the publication of a booklet such as this we hope that we have recorded important milestones in the first hundred years of the kindergarten movement in Dunedin. The picture cannot be complete because, some of the records are not now available, while others are often incomplete.

It would be impossible to name all whose dedication, love of children, and concern for the welfare of society have given us this rich heritage.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of many people who have talked with us or written their recollections.

We mention especially: Mrs A. N. Haggitt, Miss V. A. Hayward, Miss E. S. Hamilton, Mrs N. McAllum, Mrs J. McLean, Miss M. Jast, Miss M. Cumming, Mrs L. Wright, Mrs R. Kennedy, Mrs L. Smith, Mrs J. Irvine, Mrs V. Reynolds and Mr C. H. Irwin for writing the foreword.

Phyllis Varcoe

Dorothy Dempster

### Centennial Committee

Chairman: Mrs R. Kennedy, Mesdames E. Ball, K. Hall, P. Macdonald, C. Melville, B. Thornley, L. Wright and Miss P. Varcoe.

Association Executive Representatives: Mesdames R. Hand and V. Reynolds.  
Staff Representative: Mesdames B. Dolby, A. Sparrow. Secretary: Miss M. Ayers. Association Executive members — ex officio.

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1906 - 1909	Mrs Ulrich	1965 - 1966	Mrs R. M. Boyd
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1952 - 1954	Mrs E. F. D'Ath	1987 -	Mr W. Bedford
1954 - 1956	Mrs A. S. McCrobie	1987 -	Mrs L. R. Hand

## Founding Chronology

### THE BEGINNING

By the 1880's Dunedin was no longer the pious, peaceful, presbyterian village it had been. With the flash flood of immigration following the gold discoveries of the 1860's, it had become a rowdy, undisciplined city — superficially prosperous but with few regulations in place to ensure a sensible, safe transition to urban life. Overcrowding in some inner city areas was endemic, especially on the lower slopes south of the exchange "the Devil's Half-acre" where there was a chaos of tents and shanties, as well as in the low-lying swamps of North Dunedin. It was because of such places that the mortality rate amongst children was higher than that of contemporary England.

"Our sewage poisons, our houses, our streets are filthy and our flats in many parts a saturated mass of pollution," claimed an indignant. Of course such conditions did not deter other problems — what to do with the chronically sick, the maimed and handicapped, the mad, the destitute child, the deserted family.

Throughout the 60's and 70's Dunedin was forced to look for solutions for these or at least some means of mitigating or concealing such inadequacies. Nor did the world-wide depression help. Rather it added to the breakdown of families in which the father was made unemployed but the mother remained working, albeit at lower wages, in the large clothing, boot and shoe-making or food processing factories which had replaced the original proliferation of small, skilled owner-operator workshops.

Dunedin's streets only too readily revealed the extent of the social problems of the age — drunkenness, prostitution, wife desertion, larrikinism, a low-paid female labour force and an unemployment relief system which had men leave the cities to live and work in rural labour camps — these were all source of great concern, the theme of many an indignant sermon.

And in the middle irretrievably affected by such conditions was the poignant image of the street waif. Some thing had to be done.

However it was still the age of optimism. People believed in the curative, restorative power of education which could be expected to curb natural tendencies leading to larrikinism, to redirect the erring child towards the path of moral responsibility where diligence labour and application are the necessary means of progress. This was the citizen Otago indeed New Zealand needed. Moreover many among Dunedin's influential, educated elite had read and discussed the latest papers concerned with contemporary educational reform. They knew of the theories of Friedrich Froebel with his kindergarten. Two such enlightened members of this circle were Mrs Reynolds wife of W. H.



Source of Archive Library, University of Otago, Dunedin, N.Z.

29/12/1892: Walker Street Kindergarten  
Children with the dressed doll brought by Dot and the Little Folk.

Reynolds M.H.R. and the Rev. Rutherford Waddell whose parish was the inner city one of St Andrews. This parish included some of Dunedin's wealthiest families (High Street) and a large number of her most destitute citizens in Walker Street and the village of Palmyra where so many Chinese and Lebanese immigrants had come to live. After many compassionate discussions they called a public meeting in March 1889 during which an enthusiastic and knowledgeable committee was established to advance the cause of kindergarten education and promote the welfare of Dunedin's poor little children.

The elders of St. Andrews offered them the use of their church hall in Walker Street free of charge. Once the ladies of the committee had managed to equip this suitably, they found and appointed a Froebel trained kindergartner as their head teacher. Miss Wieseke came to Dunedin from Christchurch, bringing with her Miss Graham a pupil-teacher and they opened the doors of Dunedin's first free kindergarten in June of the same year.

From subsequent descriptions one can imagine these two young women going out to the street and finding their little pupils, bringing them back to the hall, washing, feeding and even clothing them and starting the long process of civilizing and educating them. Certainly contemporary witnesses all attested to the visible change they observed in these children. Those dull, apathetic, cowed dirty little creatures who first attended quickly became lively, active, enquiring children under the gentle guidance of the kindergartners. That they were so successful and managed to gain the trust, confidence and respect not only of both the children and their parents but also their educational colleagues is the story of the D.F.K.A.

## CHAPTER 2

### Teacher Training and Education

A major concern of the pioneers in the movement was to have a trained teacher. Bishop Suter at the public meeting, held with the object of forming a public kindergarten in March 1889 said "If we have at all realised the position, we cannot help coming to the conclusion, that to do such work well must require a most remarkable person for a teacher."

From 1889 until 1950 students spent the mornings in the kindergarten and attended lectures at Kelsey Yarralla kindergarten in the afternoons. After a morning with children, assisting with putting them on buses at lunch time, preparing paint, paste, clay, dough, raking and covering sandpits, bringing in moveable outdoor equipment etc., undertaking domestic chores (now done by cleaners) getting a tram to Kelsey, often meant there was no time for lunch — so to lectures.

Initially students paid to train but in 1941 the Department of Education made student allowances available. The cost of training with only limited government assistance was the responsibility of the Association. In 1947 the first national syllabus was drawn up and in 1950 the first Diplomas of the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union were issued.

The Association in 1949 rented an office in Stuart Street for the principal, assistant principal and supervisor of students. Lectures were held in the Pioneer Women's building until 1950, when the Department of Education purchased for the Association a house at 519 Macandrew Road. Twenty three first year, 11 second year students and three staff members were the first to occupy these premises. It was marvellous for staff and students to have a "home". The corporate life of students was extended, through facilities for fellowship and leisure activities in addition to a library for study, craft room, lecture rooms, kitchen and storage space.

A more balanced programme ensued with block teaching, and theory sessions. In the late 50's the facilities at Macandrew Road were becoming inadequate and the College moved to 273 York Place. The interior alterations made this imposing residence functional for use as a college. Although farther from some kindergartens, particularly the Helen Deem Centre for Pre-School Education, it was closer to the University of Otago, Teachers College and the then King Edward Technical College. Staff from all three of the forementioned institutions participated in the courses. Full time staff increased to five, (principal and four lecturers) in the late 60's, and the Association was permitted by the Department of Education to employ part-time staff for nine hours a week and a secretary was employed on a part-time basis. Gradually student numbers increased from 34 in 1950 to a high of 83 in 1973. This venue provided a common room and student kitchen, more library space, one large and two smaller lecture rooms, while staff offices and facilities were much more adequate.

Each year group was divided into two sections and this plan relieved the kindergartens of having too many students involved at any one session.

The seminar type teaching increased the group resources of knowledge, variety of approaches to problems, and the ability to provide feed-back without at the same time inhibiting individual participation. Small groups generated more personal student learning activity.

In 1967 the four Kindergarten College principals met with primary teachers college and Department of Education personnel at Lopdell House where a national teacher training course was agreed to. This included professional, educational, and selected studies; however each college developed its own courses within that frame work. In Dunedin we had the support of the principal and staff, of the Teachers College and the University Education Department staff, to restructure the existing courses, and plan the time-table.



"Former in the Hall" at Kelsey Pavilions in 1970

1971 saw the publication of the report of the Committee of Inquiry into Pre-School Education (The Hill Report) which made some significant recommendations for teacher education. It "recommended that the kindergarten training centres should be incorporated into their neighbouring teachers college in the following order, Christchurch, Dunedin, Wellington and Auckland; that the minimum entrance qualification and student allowance, plus opportunities for students and staff, to undertake appropriate university studies should be the same as currently operating in the primary school service."

Liaison with the teachers college continued to expand, and students not only attended lectures there, but used the sporting facilities, and the services of the college nurse and the University Health Services, were available to them. The principal continued to be the chairman of the selection committee, and his nominee (a senior staff member) was the chairman of the Kindergarten Education Committee.

In 1974 a Hogben House working party prepared a report on the integration of kindergarten teachers colleges into their neighbouring teachers college. Correspondence on the Association's file from the Department of Education stated that no decision had been made about the take over date and colleges would be kept fully informed. It is however, now recorded that the public announcement, including the first indication of the change date was published in the daily newspapers in July. The Association president in her annual report 31st January 1975 states "For the first time in many years the Association was in some financial difficulty. College finances as well as Association expenditure had to be curtailed fairly severely. This state of affairs did nothing to make the lot of the staff or of the Association personnel a happy one. Combined with the worry of integration the situation could only be described as grim."

The working relationships established over the years provided a solid foundation on which to build early childhood education into the teachers college. In anticipation of receiving a letter of formal approval for the integration from the Minister of Education; a sub-committee commenced work on a suitable integration programme. It was to the credit of all concerned that by the time the minister's letter was received five months later the senior lecturer had been appointed, a comprehensive training programme was complete and awaiting the approval of the Teachers College Council. The support of the college principal (Mr C. H. Irwin) and the staff in this process of integration was acknowledged by the Association.

Naturally the Association looked back with a sense of pride on the past achievements of its college, a tinge of sadness as it handed over the reins of training, but looked to the future with a feeling of confidence knowing that it would be better for one and all.

Division II (Early Childhood Education) students attended classes in human development, social foundations of education, educational psychology and



*Rocky Point Kindergarten at its best.*

subject studies with Division A students. Courses specially planned and taught by Division E staff were early childhood education 1 and 2; family and community studies, curriculum study courses in language and literature, art and craft, music, movement, and drama, science, mathematics, social studies and audio visual. Division A staff expertise, and the facilities of the college departments were used as appropriate in the courses. Division E staff taught, and tutored in some Division A courses and were accepted as part of the total college staff, sharing in extra-curricula activities, and representing division E, and/or college on committees.

Disadvantages of the two year course became more apparent when staff were faced with the problem of organising this in an institution geared mainly for a three year pre-service course, and a degree. The students' feelings of rush, and desperation to complete the course modules left them little time to browse, explore, experiment, and discover knowledge for themselves. Staff appreciated the improved facilities, particularly in the curriculum areas, and the library, as well as the increased professional support.

### **A SECOND YEAR STUDENT'S THOUGHTS ON INTEGRATION**

The change-over from the York Place to Dunedin Teachers College campus was in my opinion a very beneficial move. By moving down to 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 assistance, and more teaching resources from which we could benefit.

The other students came to learn 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 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 more involved 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. \*

### **BACHELOR OF EDUCATION DEGREE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

For many years the need for three year training was recognised and submissions were made to the 1971 Committee of Inquiry on the subject. Integration highlighted this and also the need for a Bachelor of Education degree in Early Childhood Education. Since 1975 a sub-committee elected by the College Advisory Committee E.C.E. was working on the B.Ed. degree proposal. The initial draft was held in cool storage in the hope that a three year pre-service course would become a reality. However in 1980 the committee decided to examine the original proposal, and complete the document; "Rationale for the



Extension of the Bachelor of Education Degree (Otago) to Early Childhood Education," which was submitted to the University of Otago for approval. In 1982 the proposal was accepted by the University Academic Committee.

As from the beginning of the 1984 academic year Division E students so qualified were able to enrol for the Bachelor of Education degree in Early Childhood Education. The degree was constructed to preserve the present practically — based — professional preparation for early childhood education, but also included the academic standards necessary for a university degree.

This appropriately designed four year B.Ed. degree (specifically for early childhood education) will make a contribution to the quality of teacher education, and provide well qualified teachers for leadership within the early childhood field. As the degree is concurrent at the pre-service and in-service stages, students will gain degree credits for their college as well as university papers. The degree structure is such that students at the end of the college course will complete the course requirements for the Teachers College Diploma E.C.E. and the N.Z.F.K. Union Teachers Diploma College. College graduates are able to teach and complete the degree through extra mural and part-time studies; or have study leave. Teachers outside of Otago are attracted to the college and university to complete their degree, as are those working in other early childhood education services. Two teachers received the degree in May 1988.

1988 brought more significant changes to the field of early childhood education training. Dunedin College was one of two to introduce the integrated training 0 - 8 years. The traditional two year course N.Z.F.K. Union Teachers Diploma, and the one year Early Child Care and Education certificate were replaced by a three year Diploma of teaching E.C.E. 0 - 8 years, plus a one year induction course. The fragmentation of early childhood training will be lessened; personnel will be prepared to work in early childhood programmes; while a variety of career structures and educational career opportunities will emerge. Today the social and economic changes affecting the structure and functioning of families have created an increasing demand for quality early childhood care and education; the extended course will meet this demand; A high note on which to enter the second century.

\* — Farquhar, S. Kindergarten Education — An Official publication of the N.Z.F.K. Union, March 1978.

## DUNEDIN FREE KINDERGARTEN'S PRINCIPALS 1889 - 1989

1889 - 1990	Miss Wieneke
1901 - 1908	Misses McDougal, Wright, Waters, Head Kindergartners, who trained students,
1909 - 1910	Miss Tinsom
1911	Miss Dutton
1912 - 1918	Misses Findlay and Goldsmith, Head Kindergartners, who trained students; extra classes being taken at Training College.
1919 - 1921	Miss Bird
1921 - 1938	Miss Dutton
1939 - 1947	Miss Duthie
1947 - 1967	Miss Hamilton
1967 - 1974	Miss Varcoe
1975	Kindergarten College integrated with Dunedin Teachers College.



*It is sticky — more flour needed!*

## CHAPTER 3

# Programmes for Children

### EARLY PROGRAMME

There are several contemporary accounts of parts of the early kindergarten programmes so that it is possible to put together a typical kindergarten morning as it was presented at Walker Street or Yarella kindergarten before 1900.

On arrival the children were helped to hang up their coats, hats — if they had any — put on slippers or over-shoes possibly and their pinafores. Not all the children wore shoes to kindergarten, although this was preferred if possible. They were assembled around the piano where there was one, to sing the morning hymn. Then they dispersed to their age group classes of "tines, middles and tops" to take on a variety of hand crafts, weaving, plaiting and the like.

Neither of the early kindergartens possessed any outside play area at all. However, whenever the weather permitted, groups of children were taken out on walks to play in nearby reserves and parks and even private gardens. Discipline was rarely a problem. Children who did not behave did not go out. Indoors, where the children were much of the time, they were kept busy and discipline then was of a self-regulating type.

Whenever the activities or questions of the children suggested it, a teacher would take a small group aside for a lesson on some aspect of their world. Often these were spontaneous, the sight or sound of the fire-engines would provoke a lesson on fire and firefighting. More often however, these were planned as set lessons where the teacher taught whilst showing the children examples of her subject, i.e. an ear of wheat, flour and bread.

The gifts presented by Froebel as the cornerstone of his teaching system were certainly used and much of their mystique was retained for a time. They were "mostly wooden bricks and tablets shaped in different ways."

There were ten different gifts each in its own container and at least one of these was used with the children at a set time each morning. A teacher with a dozen children sat around a low, long table and after displaying that day's gifts, she would handle it in the required way and then pass it to the next child and on around the group. Often a chanted rhyme accompanied this solemn ceremony. "In my hand a ball I hold." For these gifts were not at first regarded or used as playthings, rather as mystical objects which should reveal to the children holding them something about the structure of the universe. The first gift was a set of six coloured wooden balls each in a crocheted cover with a string attached. They were passed from hand to hand and their colours were recited but the balls were not used as balls. Most of the other gifts were sets of different shaped blocks and rods each set stored in its own little wooden box. They too were passed from hand to hand around the table, and occasionally the children could play with them for a short time. There was even a fixed routine for removing the blocks from their box and returning them after use. Although these gifts were first used in the prescribed way it appears to be likely that the teachers and children soon devised less restrictive methods of playing with them.

Many of the original games however retained their structured quality. They had been introduced to train children in the right ways of doing things. "Busy Mothers" was such a game, where children swept and dusted the doll's corner, washed and hung out the doll's clothes and generally learned how to keep a house and look after a child in the "correct" way. Always, a great emphasis was placed on orderliness, in the need to put things away and to avoid confusion and untidiness.

Another virtue stressed was thrift, born of necessity as well as principle. Kindergarten resources were scanty, much of the resource material provided for the children to use was donated and in very short supply.

Consequently it was carefully used, never wasted. The children themselves were encouraged to save any discarded scraps of paper or materials they might find for their kindergarten "craft boxes".

They played many singing and dancing games, circle games like Puschinello, Ring-a-Roses, Farmer in the Dell, learning chasing games like Mr Wolf, games still played in kindergartens today. Every morning there was a quiet time when the children were expected to rest together. Sometimes a story would be told then, sometimes music was played. Every day teachers or students told or read stories to the children, so that they were introduced to the world of books and to the idea of reading.

The children were encouraged to help care for their surroundings, to serve and clean up after their morning milk and rusk, to sweep and tidy the hall and to put away their toys (still a feature of kindergarten routine) and above all to help each other. And at the end of the morning, hats on, coats buttoned. They all lined up, bowed or bobbed and marched away singing.

## THE BEGINNING OF MILESTONES

### MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF THE DUNEDIN FREE KINDERGARTEN ASSOCIATION

1889

The Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association was formed. The first kindergarten was opened on 10 June in the Mission Hall, Walker Street (now Carroll Street).

1891 - 1920

Yarella Kindergarten opened in King Street Church Hall. On 19 October with a 100 pound donation from Miss Walker of Sydney. It was soon moved to North Dunedin Club Rooms, and then to the old Knox Church Hall. This kindergarten was also held in the Albany Street School Gymnasium, a room at The Grange, and in the Union Street School Gymnasium until finally in 1920 the Association erected the present Kelsey-Yarella Kindergarten building in Trent Avenue.

#### 1906 - 1914

**South Dunedin Kindergarten** open in St. Peter's Church Hall, Cargill Road. In 1911 after it was shifted to the Wesleyan Church School Rooms, the teachers and parents started to raise funds to build their own kindergarten, which was finally opened in 1914 as **Rachael Reynolds**. This building was demolished as an earthquake risk in 1977 and the present kindergarten was rebuilt in 1978 on the same site in Macandrew Road.

#### 1908 - 1926

A kindergarten was opened in the Caversham Presbyterian Church Hall. Later it was shifted to a City Council Cottage until in 1926 it was housed in its own beautiful building given by Messrs Hudson as a memorial to their father **Richard Hudson**.

#### 1914

279 Children attended the three kindergartens. The first Mothers' Club formed.

#### 1922 - 1957

**St Kilda Kindergarten** was opened in the Presbyterian Church Hall. In 1929 this was moved to the Scout Hall, and in 1939 to a house owned by the Musselburgh Presbyterian Church. In 1957 the present kindergarten was opened in Victoria Road, St Kilda.

#### 1924 - 1960

**Kalkorai Kindergarten** opened in the Presbyterian Church Hall and remained there until it moved to its own building in Greenock Street in 1960.

#### 1926

**New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union** formed with Lady Sidney from Dunedin as the first president.

#### 1926 - 1953

**North East Valley Kindergarten** opened in the Millar Street Hall, then moved to the Bowling Green Pavilion. It was closed in 1931 because of the depression and finally re-opened in 1937. In 1944 it was rehoused in the Presbyterian Church Hall until in 1953 it moved in to its own building as **Jonathan Rhodes Kindergarten**.

#### 1941 - 1954

The **Pre-School Educational Centre** was opened with the active co-operation of the Plunket Society in the Truby King-Harris Hospital in Andersons Bay where it remained until **The Helen Deem Centre** in Forbury Road was opened in 1954.

#### 1943

**Wakari Kindergarten** was opened in the Presbyterian Church Hall. This was moved to its own building in Lynn Street in 1956.

#### 1944 - 1988

**Abbotsford Kindergarten** opened in a cottage, but closed when the property was sold in 1946, to reopen their own building 1950. Now (1989) a new kindergarten is being built.

#### 1945

**First Play Centre** opened in Richard Hudson Kindergarten.

#### 1947 - 1979

**Mosgiel Kindergarten** opened in the Scout Hall and remained there until its own building was erected in Irvine Street in 1957.

#### 1949

500 children attended 10 Dunedin Kindergartens.

#### 1950

**Kindergarten College Staff and Students** moved to 519 Macandrew Road. (34 Students).



519 Macandrew Road.

#### 1953

698 Children in kindergarten with a mother helper scheme now operating. **New Zealand Free Kindergarten Teachers Association** founded.

#### 1953 - 1956

**Grants Braes Kindergarten** opened in a hall. This was moved to its own building in Belford Street with space to extend for a roll of 40 children.

#### 1954

**Mosgiel Kindergarten Association** was now recognised as a separate association. Mother and child pre-entry groups developed.

#### 1956 - 1986

**Roslyn Kindergarten** opened in a converted house on Highgate. Extensive alteration to the indoor and outdoor areas were carried out in 1986.

#### 1957

**Port Chalmers Kindergarten** opened in their own building on Albertson Avenue. Twelve of the 13 kindergartens were conducted in their own permanent buildings with 825 children on the rolls.

1957

Andersons Bay Kindergarten opened.

1961

Kindergarten College moved to York Place where it was officially opened on 4 March by the Minister of Education Hon. W. B. Tennant. In August Mornington Kindergarten opened its beautiful new building.

1963 - 1989

Conserphise opened its triangular shaped building in Middleton Road. They are planning to upgrade the building in 1989. More than 1,100 children attend the 15 kindergartens in Dunedin.

1966

Appointment of the first supervising head teacher.

1967

Brockville Kindergarten opened in Wray Street adjacent to the primary school.  
Pre-school/Junior School Liaison Group formed in Dunedin.

1970

A survey conducted by the Teachers' College showed that 70% of children entering Dunedin's Primary schools had received pre-school education.

1975

Kindergarten Teachers College integrated with the Dunedin Teachers College.

1977

Halfway Bush Kindergarten was opened in Salmon Street and Concord Kindergarten was opened in Mulford Street.

1978

Rotary Park Kindergarten opened in McKerrow Street.

1978

Green Island Kindergarten opened in a converted pre-fabricated classroom in Howden Street. This was the first kindergarten to use an existing building under the new Government regulations.

1984

The Teachers' Resource Centre was opened in Rutherford Street next door to Richard Hudson Kindergarten.

1986

Mosgiel Association amalgamated with Dunedin adding two kindergartens, Mosgiel Central (1947) and Reid Park (1967) to the total number within the area.

1989

22 Free Kindergartens attended by children. Centennial anniversary of the D.F.K.A.

## KINDERGARTNERS REMEMBER

### MRS A. N. HAGGITT

The kindergarten was a source of community charity. Even after Reynolds Kindergarten was built, which was in 1913, there was always a cupboard full of clothes and they were needed. If a child came inadequately clothed it was more or less routine to supplement his outfit. There was great co-operation in the Reynolds Kindergarten between the mothers and the teachers.

### ROLE OF THE STUDENT KINDERGARTNERS IN 1920's

I trained from when I was 19 in 1926. Handwork was quite a priority. There was a list of what we had to do as students and we had to make a doll's house, if you please, and furnish it. I had electricity put in mine, but that was not me of course — but it was quite interesting what we had to do.

We had to do most of the dirty work (each morning in the kindergartens), as well as the painting things — we had to clean out the lavatories. We swept up the kindergarten and we were always given the job if the children had an accident of any kind, we had to clean that up as well. However, there was one kindergarten student who gave up because she had to clean out a bird cage.

When the children actually arrived they would come in to the cloak room and there would always be someone on duty to see they hung their clothes up properly and put on their slippers, and did not come straight into kindergarten until they had little slippers on so that they would not make too much noise on the floor. They would just play around until they were called together on the huge circle that was drawn on the floor. From then on it would be a little more serious.

At one stage we used to sing God Save the King and have someone holding the big Union Jack (flag) in the middle.

We would then separate them out into groups sometimes with different teachers for either stories or singing or games. We would have games on the ring very often. If we thought we were not getting their attention we would have what we called finger plays. Do things with our hands and say things and they would say it as well.

When children hurt themselves we used to sing the song

*"Hoarsey for Bobby Bumble,*

*He never minds a tumble,*

*But up he jumps and rubs his bumps*

*and doesn't even grumble"*

and you would suddenly get a smile. Sometimes they would be homesick and cry but we didn't have the idea of letting the mothers stay. In those days the mothers were bustled off and the children soon settled down.

Morning tea was between 10.30 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. The children used to say a little prayer when they had their rusks — bread hardened in the oven — which we got from Hudsons. When the milk for schools came in the kindergartens had it too. We used to have pieces of apple sometimes too. There was a great improvement in the children's health.

We would take turns to supervise the play. If it was fine they were always outside — just out the back and around the Scout Hall. We did not have a lot of outside equipment. Even in the depression days, however, children had tricycles and brought them, as well we had a trolley and later in the early 40's a jungle gym.

They had a special time when they could choose what they did — handwork or even go to the doll's corner and playhouse if they wanted to. We didn't make the children join in the games if they didn't want to.

They would sit and watch, but very often they would get up and join in.

We had to have programmes thought out exactly for the whole week and had to have them linked on. The staff comprised of just one director and students — senior students and a junior student with sometimes 60 children on the roll.



*"Where will I go? What will I do?"*

## ROLE OF THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER IN 1930's

### MRS N. McALLUM

We were supposed to be jacks of all trades in those days. We had to paint furniture. At the St Kilda Kindergarten we had to take the furniture away every day because it was a Scout Hall, and put it in the shed (even if it was wet) at the back — tables, chairs, everything and leave the hall completely bare for the scout activities.

We started at 9.00 a.m. The children came until noon and then after that we used to do things in the kindergarten itself — clearing up and preparing materials — that sort of thing and also visit parents. Especially parents of children who seemed to have problems of any sort and just see if we could help.

### A HOME VISIT DURING THE DEPRESSION

During the depression I remember taking a loaf of bread and a pound of butter to one family that I really felt was half starved. They had some sort of soup in a pot on the stove and that was all they were going to have for their meal. They were terribly grateful. The mother was so weak and sick she was lying on the bed the whole time I was there — pale as a ghost — and the children equally pale.



*"Don't go into Mr McGregor's garden."*

## CHAPTER 4

### Dunedin Shares

Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch formed associations but by 1912 Dunedin realised there would have to be some form of National Union, and arranged a conference in Dunedin for these four centres. The union was formed with President: Lady Sidy; Secretary: Miss N. Alexander; Treasurer: Mrs J. A. Hannan and later Miss Kelsey. These four very able and enthusiastic women held office at local and or dominion level for many years.

*F. A. Hayward*

#### HELEN DEEM CENTRE FOR PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

In 1941 a demonstration pre-school education centre was established through the combined efforts of the Plunket Society and the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association with government assistance. The purpose of the centre was to enable the Plunket trainees to study the development of "normal" pre-school children, to observe their management by a kindergarten teacher, as well as providing an opportunity for kindergarten trainees to study the physical development, feeding and sleeping needs — indeed the general health and nutritional care of the preschool child. The centre also provided help for parents in the up-bringing of their children.

The first centre was opened in a cottage in the grounds of the Truby King Harris Hospital. From the beginning it was recognised that this modest building was inadequate, but it was hoped that if the venture proved its worth, all parties involved would be inspired to strive for a more appropriate building. Thus after four years of pioneering, everyone agreed that it was time to prospect for new premises; intensive research revealed a suitable section in Forbury Road which was purchased by the government. The Plunket Society and the Kindergarten Association were now faced with the formidable task of raising \$6,000 each towards the estimated building cost of \$36,000. The Sargood Trust's generous and timely donation of \$4,000 towards the kindergarten's share was particularly appreciated.

In November 1954 the centre moved to 81 Forbury Road with a permanent staff comprising a head teacher, a plunket nurse, three trained kindergarten teachers, and a cook. Dr Helen Deem — medical adviser to the Plunket Society was the first medical director. Fifty percent of the children attended the full day session (9.00 a.m. - 3.00 p.m.) where they were given lunch and a sleep — the remainder staying for the morning session only. The programme was similar to that provided in all kindergartens.

Before a child was enrolled the head teacher and the plunket sister visited the home to obtain a personal history and become acquainted with the child's

background. Each child was examined by the medical director with her/his mother present and then every six months or as necessary. Children requiring further medical or dental treatment were referred to their family doctors or their neighbouring school dental clinics. Any behavioural problems were jointly considered by the health and education staff.

Staff visited the homes regularly and encouraged parent participation while a programme of parent activities both cultural and recreational were maintained. A parent library was established and leaflets on diet, clothing, health, and play needs of the pre-school child were made available. While not catering for full-time working mothers, invaluable support was given to solo parents and to mothers who felt the need for further study or to return to their professions in a part-time capacity.

The centre was an excellent example of the inter-relation of two professional groups, working and studying together the development and guidance of young children in close co-operation with their parents. Apart from Plunket and Karitane trainees and kindergarten students, university students specialising in medicine and psychology had regular observation periods under the guidance of health and education tutors.

This centre was named after Dr Helen Deem the first medical director.

#### OTAGO PRE-SCHOOL PROJECT

From 1968 the Queen Mary Hospital Multidisciplinary Child Development Study had been studying the problems encountered by children considered at risk with a view to determining what special needs they had and making provision to meet their needs. This study highlighted the importance of the child's early language development and it was decided that a project to provide for the early identification and treatment of children with language problems should be mounted. Therefore the Otago Pre-School project was set up: an intervention/integration project.

The three main components of the intervention package were — structural language, development programme, parental counselling, and participation in a normal school programme. The involvement of the kindergarten was sought and three kindergartens selected where staff were interested to participate in the research, and to a certain extent with this special group of children.

The kindergarten was given an extra teacher employed for eight half days a week. Six half days were spent with the groups and two used for group meetings, parent contact and general maintenance. Project groups were at Andersons Bay, Roslyn and Wakari. When children moved from the intervention group they went to their local kindergartens or play centres.

Because of the reduction in the numbers of children in the intervention group in the later part of 1977 they were able to accommodate children outside of the research sample. After observation and assessment of the needs of these

various children referred by pre-school staff it was decided to continue a group for three mornings at Roslyn's and at Port Chalmers for two afternoons.

The intervention group finished at the end of 1977 but because of the imperative needs of the children at Roslyn and Port Chalmers discussions between the Department of Education and the Kindergarten Association resulted in the groups at Kalkorai and Port Chalmers continuing.

As a follow up to this project, two groups were accepted by the Department of Education at Port Chalmers and one at Rachael Reynolds. Today the groups are centred at Richard Hudson and Constance Kindertemps.

## UNIVERSITY

The professors and education department staff have from the early 40's been very supportive and participated in kindergarten teacher education courses. Staff and students undertaking research in medicine, dentistry and education have observed in kindergartens. This relationship of goodwill sharing of knowledge and expertise is to the mutual benefit of children, parents, teachers and students.

## D.F.K.A./STAFF RELATIONSHIP

The association has always been supportive of the teaching staff, both in the kindergartens and the college. To this end an Education Committee, deliberately small in numbers, was established to maintain a sound relationship and assist the staff in their efforts to gain professional recognition and status as teachers in the field of early childhood education. Support for continuing education is still fostered through the award of funds from the Kelsey Trust to teachers who are completing degrees or diplomas.

## PLAYCENTRES

Cordial relationships with the Playcentre Association have been widened by staff participation in courses and weekend seminars. Supervisors have attended courses offered by the college staff, and other in-service courses. Playcentre personnel have contributed to college courses and in-service programmes for teachers. The association is represented on the College Advisory Committee (E.C.E.), and on the B.Ed. sub-committee.

## CHILDCARE

During the past few years the childcare movement has expanded, and as with the other services there is a sharing of knowledge especially in the area of full day care and family day care. This relationship has been cemented with the implementation of the integrated college course.

## KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

In 1952 the Dunedin Association initiated the formation of the Kindergarten Teachers Association. As the movement was expanding so rapidly it was necessary that the teachers were united to advance the cause of early childhood education and uphold and maintain the just claims of members, and student members. This included taking steps to improve their working conditions, status and qualifications, to negotiate for improved salaries, working conditions and privileges in regard to standards of training and status of teachers.

At a conference of principals and vice-principals in 1952 an interim committee was formed with Miss E. Hamilton as Chairman, Miss J. Stewart as Secretary and Miss V. Hayward also of Dunedin as Adviser.

In 1953 the Association met in Christchurch and elected its first national president and secretary. The constitution was accepted in 1957 and the Association was registered under the Incorporated Societies Act of 1908. Recognition as a service organisation gave the Association direct approach to the minister.

The New Zealand Free Kindergarten Teachers Association concerns itself with salary, professional status, conditions of employment, research into early childhood education, buildings, equipment, children with special needs, students welfare, relationships with other early childhood services, and various matters related to this arm of the education service. It continues to be an effective organisation as the voice of the teachers and in conjunction with other early childhood education groups in policy making for the future.

## CHAPTER 5

### Gleanings

#### MOTHER'S CLUBS AND COMBINED MOTHER'S CLUB

In the formative years Mother's clubs played a very important role in the kindergarten movement, only going in to recess in many cases, with the advent of television.

At that time, it was only through the Mother's clubs that parents had any great degree of contact with the staff. Up until the mid 1960's, parents were only encouraged to attend with their children, for the initial settling in period. At this time too, it is worth noting, that most children walked to and from kindergarten; often unaccompanied by an adult, especially the morning children. Very few families owned a second car for mothers to use and the streets were generally safer for small children — something which, unfortunately, is not so today.

Meetings were held monthly, and speakers covered every imaginable subject. These ranged from children's health to cake decorating, from make-up to the senior teacher junior classes explaining what was expected from the children when they started school.

Combined Mother's Club met on average, six times a year. Among other activities, they organised a flower show and a baking competition. These were held annually, in the Duxedon Concert Chamber (now the Glenroy Auditorium). Kelsey Yarella and Kaikorai kindergarten usually scooped the pool. These events went into recess in the early 1970's. The annual Talent Evening was the highlight of the year and people rehearsed for months to present these shows. Who will forget the musical items from St Kilda and Mornington or Roslyn's Sooty Melodrama.

The highlight of the show one year came from Port Chalmers. Little did the mothers realise, that while they were rehearsing, the fathers were doing the same. So, while the mothers were getting changed back stage, the fathers were doing likewise in the ticket office. When the curtain went up, the men ran through the theatre and joined their wives on stage. The result was a magnificent Maori Concert item.

Through meeting on these occasions, kindergartens supported each other in money raising efforts. New Zealand wine became cheap, plentiful and a novelty in the 1970's so Wine and Cheese Evenings became a popular way of raising money. Mornington was the first to try this and the function was held in the kindergarten, while Roslyn hosted an evening in the staff cafeteria at Speights Brewery. Many will recall the perils of driving back from Port Chalmers with the road a sheet of ice, the annual dances hosted by St Kilda and Helen Deem respectively and the Ball given by Green Island, the night they opened their kindergartens. Then there was the fashion parade at the Student Union Building, where the funds raised were divided up and returned to the kindergartens. Some purchased things like cups, a new clock or chairs for their kindergartens. Another most enjoyable occasion was a cooking demonstration, presenter Alison Holt, held in the Otago Museum. The Pork Marketing Board and Cooks Wines made the evening possible, with a wine tasting in the museum foyer following the cooking demonstration.

Nowadays, parental involvement with the kindergartens is taking a different path and parents are more involved in the programme. Lunches and family teas have almost completely replaced the evening meeting.

Mother's Clubs were a great training ground for committee members, and often the people who became interested in working on kindergarten committees went on to serve as school committee members and on again to high school boards.

One other factor is that many of the mothers of that period formed friendships that remain to this day. It is not unusual to be greeted, unexpectedly, in the street, by some that we worked with and had fun with more years ago than many of us care to remember. It's a pleasant thought, that while we were working so hard for the benefit of the children, we gained something worthwhile for ourselves as well.

*Raiko Kennedy & Lyn Smith*

## KINDERGARTEN FUNDRAISERS

The Kelsey Jumble Sales of years gone by were events to mark on your calendar — especially if you lived in North Dunedin. They were the kindergarten's only fund raising efforts for many years and were held regularly every term so that preparation for the next one seemed to be always underway with boxes of jumble always in store.

During these years the committee at Kelsey consisted of a number of middle-aged women who were friends, whose husbands were prominent businessmen and retail shop owners and who lived "on the hill" or in the inner city. The committee members friends were conditioned into saving their cut-offs, especially for these sales and hence the reputation spread that the Kelsey Jumble Sales always offered a large quantity of high quality bargains.

Hours before the kindergarten doors were opened, crowds would assemble on the verandah and out as far as the gate — all armed with carrier bags and even sugar bags in hopeful anticipation. Then, at the appointed opening time, the crowds would surge inside, running to various trestle tables grabbing and jostling for the bargains.

I remember one really poor Kelsey mother buying an imported red lace evening gown for 2/6 and wearing it to the Mothers' Club meetings for months afterwards. And then there was the young man who bought a St Kilda's gym frock for his wife's winter maternity dress.

The demise of the great Kelsey Jumble Sales came with the Health Department ruling that no such sales were permitted in kindergarten buildings. Halls were hired and tried out but nothing was quite the same — the winds of change had set in and taken over.

*Lorne Wright*

## IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

There was a kindergarten held in a room at the normal school in Union Street. This kindergarten was a very useful link in the co-operation of primary and kindergarten teachers. Miss Alexander the teacher was secretary of the union, and a member of the Association Executive, and Education Committee.

*F. A. Hayward*

## IN CHURCH HALLS

In the early 1940's a kindergarten was opened in a local church hall in Wakari — in those days a new state housing area.

The hall was not very big and was used every night by other groups — it was set in a very exposed area with very limited outside space, very little flat ground and no fences. The equipment was a slide and swings.

The hall had a piano on the stage — no toilet inside, so in wet weather, the children had to put on hats and coats and use the toilet outside, under supervision, or use potties in the kitchen!



There was no tap and all the water had to be heated in a kettle on one gas ring — no hand basins, just portable basins which had to be emptied.

The equipment was stored in an army hut and had to be brought out each morning, wet or fine, snow and frost, and packed away each night, including the slide — quite a feat to fit everything in!

Often the hall had to be cleaned before the equipment could be put out in the morning. There were two staff members and sometimes a student.

A far cry from the standards that are now taken for granted.

However, we still provided for active spontaneous play, the most important means of educating a young child — water play, painting, clay, dressing up, as well as stories, music, movement and outdoor play were all included in the daily programme.

*Margaret Jast*

Do you remember the original Kaikorai Kindergarten? Called Sutherland Hall, it was built for the junior Sunday School of the adjacent Presbyterian Church. Located in quiet little Chapel Street, it was a small modern kindergarten type building of three rooms. There was the "big room" for general activities and refreshments (apples and milk, preceded by the singing of "Thank you for the food we eat"), and Mothers' Meetings were held in this room.

As many grandmothers as current mothers came to the meetings, a wonderful group squatting in some discomfort on the minute wooden chairs which were faithfully refurbished with shellac on "equipment days."

The napping room for the smallest children had a stack of canvas stretchers ready to be placed in several rows for rest time. Out in the back, the sunless block room cum wash room. There was a folding shelf to hold enamel basins, and beyond the block room, just one toilet for both children and staff!

The corridor served as a cloakroom and in the tiny kitchen, at Christmas time, the children made tiny pots of jam for gifts. There was a small back yard looking up to the hills of Kaikorai and Roslyn, and outside the front door a sunny area where staff often had lunch.

Perhaps because of its very size, Kaikorai Kindergarten had a "family" atmosphere, within a close knit community. No longer Sutherland Hall, the building is a trim private home, though little angled outwardly.

*Mary Cumming*

## THE FUTURE

Miss Hayward writes: "It is so easy to take the present for granted, not knowing or even thinking about the heroism, self-sacrifice, hard work, skill and

dignity that Mrs Reynolds and her committee displayed in founding the Kindergarten Association. Its position in the education system of today is the testimony of their tremendous work. Let us learn from them and the equally splendid group of women who contributed to the union by their excellent work in the second half of the century.

How are we laying good foundations in the second century? Let us face the hurdle of the present — the deterioration in the quality of family life, increasing crime rate, the increasing number of children at risk through lack of loving home support and discipline. Yes, we have a problem on our hands. Let us do our part by bringing to the administrative side the same skill, enthusiasm, drive, common sense and dignity as those pioneers we admire so much and thus start off the second century."

In his foreword in the 1914 Semi Jubilee Report the Rev. Dr Rutherford Waddell writes:

"A nation that does not put its children's needs or joys in the forefront of its thought and work will go to the rear. The kindergarten stands to prevent this. It suits the child. It captures it at the most plastic period. It captures it by the force of play and love. The value of this is immense. A child learns more in the first few years of its existence than in all the other years put together, and what it learns in these early years goes deepest and lasts longest."

This is a significant message for the second century if we are to build on the rich heritage given to us by those who contributed to the progress in the first century.

## KINDERGARTENS TODAY

In following the latest trends in Early Childhood Education, present day kindergartens offer quite a contrast to kindergartens of yesteryear. Teachers now involve parents, grandparents and caregivers to a greater degree, as part of the teaching team, using their special interest and skills to enrich the daily programme. However, these same parents, grandparents and caregivers are still expected to take part in fundraising schemes and working bees.

The kindergarten environment is designed so that children have control over their learning process. The "self-selective" approach to "play" offers children choices of what area to play in, with whom to play and the opportunity to explore, discover, experiment. They learn in their time, at their own rate and developmental level. We have become less activity orientated and more child orientated — that is, we now plan a programme around a child or a group and not around specific activities or themes. Through observation, teachers develop an awareness of individual children's needs. An enormous task when you are dealing with eighty individuals. After establishing the group's needs, we have to provide a setting in which each child can achieve success commensurate with his/her stage of development.

No longer is the mass produced stereotyped art work, instigated and three quarters produced by the teacher, acceptable. The "best" creativity comes as inspiration from the child creating in his/her own unique way. We do not farewell 80 children clutching 80 (pre-drawn, pre-cut, pre-stuffed) fluffy chickens. Each creation that goes through the door is a tribute to the under-five owner!

There are increasing expectations in today's world, teachers are concerned with all the "news" — competitive, sexist, racist and violent issues. They need to be aware of their own attitudes, and how as role models they can foster ideals, and influence the future adults of our society.

Kindergartens now are recognising the need to diversify by providing sessions with flexible hours, extended full-day sessions, and family grouping, in order to meet the expectations of today's communities. Our lack of male teachers is a problem that will be redressed hopefully with the present attitude "boys can do anything."

Dunedin Teachers' College is one of the first to offer a three year early childhood training course with provision for trainees to specialise in kindergarten or child care teaching. The 1990 graduates will be the first three year trained teachers to enter early childhood care and education centres.

In a 100 years time they will look back on today's innovations as outmoded, a bit of a giggle — history. But they will give us the same credit for our intentions that we accord to our predecessors. May their leaders have as much foresight! It is a coincidence that our centennial celebrations should take place in "the year" of radical change in the Government's educational policies — more than one reason not to forget 1989.

*All Irvine*

## CHAPTER 6

### What of the Future?

This is a time of great change for kindergartens with the policy for early childhood education not yet finalised. Great change with no certainties is a frustrating time. It appears as if the kindergarten section of early childhood education will continue to function in much the same way as at present: provided it meets the community need. Obviously this need is being met, because today it is the largest early childhood education provider.

As a result of the "Before Five Report" we hope the management and administration will change to provide more money at local level, with less lost to bureaucracy. Generally the feeling is positive, but with a degree of trepidation as is natural with any major change.

*Ffionne Reynolds*

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