

EXECUTIVE REPORT 1956/57

The Executive has pleasure in submitting its report for the year 1956/57.

PATRONESS

It is with deep appreciation that the Executive records the devotion and great interest that Her Excellency, Lady Norrie, showed in the Free Kindergarten Movement while her husband was Governor General of this country, and has fittingly expressed to her its sincere thanks for the honour she paid the Union by accepting the office of Patroness during that time.

DEATH OF LADY SIDEY

It is with deep regret that we record the death of Lady Sidey, the first President of the Union, who for very many years gave untiringly of her strength and devotion to the movement. It is because of her foresight and the firm foundation that she laid that the Union has attained the position it now holds.

We also record the death of Mrs Dora Smeaton and express to her family the sympathy of all member associations. Mrs Smeaton was a valued member of the Union Executive for some years.

MEMBERSHIP

Since our last meeting in Wellington in September 1956 new associations at Edgecumbe, Eltham, Opotiki, Te Puke, Te Aroha, Whakatane, and Waiuku have been accepted as affiliated members of the Union while we await only the completion of minor formalities to include Greymouth, Raetihi, Taihape, and Tauranga. With the inclusion of these associations membership of the Union will have reached the very large number of 76. To these new member associations we extend a warm welcome and every good wish for their successful development.

Other associations working steadily for kindergartens are now established at Carterton, Cromwell, Hornby, Howick, Otorohanga, Reefton, Rangiora, Ruawai, and Waitara. The demand for Free Kindergartens continues and the Union office has endeavoured to keep in constant touch with new associations during the initial stages of their formation. The Union handbook, for which there has been a continued demand among established associations, has been invaluable in work with these new groups and they have expressed their appreciation of the wealth of material that it contains.

To our knowledge, there are at present about 40 groups of people preparing for Free Kindergartens either in new associations or within already established associations - some ready to proceed with building their own kindergartens and others with their money raising projects well advanced.

CONTINUATION OF PERIOD OF CONSOLIDATION

The Executive has again given careful thought to the difficulties of staffing kindergartens which member associations are continuing to face and to the effects that the period of consolidation has had upon the kindergarten movement as a whole. A questionnaire was sent to all associations and, although returns were far from complete, much valuable information was assembled.

On July 2nd the President with the two Vice Presidents and the Wellington Representative met the Director of Education and his senior officers to discuss the overall staffing situation and because of the position revealed, with the approval of the whole Executive agreed to the continuation of the period of consolidation until March 1958. A statement giving reasons for this decision was sent to each member association in July.

NEW KINDERGARTENS RECOGNISED

Since last September eleven new kindergartens, to which the Department of Education was already committed at the time when the period of consolidation came into force, have been recognised by the Honourable the Minister of Education and two others temporarily closed have been re-opened. Because of this the slight gain in the total number of trained kindergarten teachers now employed has not altered the relative number of positions being filled by untrained temporary staff.

FINANCE

The financial statement shows a very small credit balance on the year's income, in which is included the sum of £500 received from the J.R. McKenzie Trust Board. This money has enabled the Union

1. To reprint its brochure for recruitment
2. To maintain an essential circular and information service to enquiring groups and member associations
3. To supplement the I.M. Jamieson Scholarship Fund and bring it up to the necessary £400 by 31 July
4. To pay the travel expenses of applicants for the Scholarship called for interview
5. To reserve £100 for post graduate work in 1958.

We record with gratitude our sincere thanks to the J. R. McKenzie Trust Board for its generous gift without which the Executive would have found it necessary to curtail some of its work for this year.

I.M. JAMIESON SCHOLARSHIP

In December 1956 Miss Gwen Gilbert of Auckland was awarded the I.M. Jamieson Scholarship of £400 and the Executive was able to make most satisfactory arrangements for her to pursue her studies under the guidance of Miss D.E.M. Gardner of the Institute of Education, University of London. Miss Gilbert sailed for England in July.

INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS

During the year several international contacts have been made, some as a direct result of our enquiries about courses offered overseas for post graduate study suitable for the Union Scholarship holder.

Overseas Study The Union office has also been notified of post graduate courses in pre-school work being offered at Sydney University and by the Montessori Association in England and has circulated details to the Kindergarten Teachers Association and to all kindergarten teachers.

Students from Overseas. Two overseas students, one in Ghana and the other in India, have written seeking information of the possibilities of study in New Zealand Kindergarten Training Colleges. They have been advised by us to apply to their own Governments for recommendation for studentships under the Colombo Plan. We have now received word that Miss Patel of Madras, India has taken this action.

World Organisation of Pre School Education (O.M.E.P.) From O.M.E.P. a full report of the 6th Conference held in Greece in September last has been received together with special papers prepared by Israel and Pakistan.

Dr Josephine Palmer. At its meeting in March the Executive entertained Dr Josephine Palmer - an expert in pre school education from U.S.A. and a Fulbright Scholar, who has, during her period in New Zealand been a source of inspiration to our kindergarten teachers, students and association members.

INCREASE IN SALARIES

A letter was received in November from the Honourable the Minister of Education advising that a small increase in the boarding allowance to students had been granted, representations for which had been made earlier in the year. Later we were pleased to learn that all kindergarten trained teachers were participating in the general wage rise.

CONFERENCE 1956

All the work arising from the Conference in 1956 has been completed.

Constitution and By Laws. Our Honorary Solicitors have prepared and registered all the alterations to the Union Constitution approved at the Conference. Member associations have been sent copies of these clauses for insertion in the Constitution they are holding.

Remits. All remits passed at the Conference have been dealt with and replies to all representations have been sent to all member associations. The Executive expresses its appreciation of the very fine work done by the Principals and by Doctors Helen Field and Enid Needham in preparing valuable material on the question of the need or otherwise of lavatory doors in kindergartens. This material was later assembled in pamphlet form for study group work and has been very well received.

Insurance. As it was agreed that all associations take out their own insurances on the children attending their kindergartens the blanket insurance cover held by the Union was allowed to lapse. The Executive trusts that all associations are now holding sufficient cover on the children in their care.

THE UNION DIPLOMA

In December 1956 the President was given the privilege of speaking to the students and presenting the Union Diplomas at the graduation ceremonies in Wellington and in Christchurch.

Diplomas were awarded to 81 graduates as follows:

Auckland	26
Wellington	19
Christchurch	17
Dunedin	19

RECRUITMENT

The Executive has again been actively pursuing the policy of encouraging associations to make personal appeals to young girls and to their parents to give careful consideration to kindergarten teaching as a career. This method of recruitment was proved last year to be a most effective means of attracting suitable girls to enter Kindergarten Training Colleges.

The Union brochure "Kindergarten Teaching as a Career" has been completely revised and reprinted and is much in demand by associations, training colleges, and high schools. At their request 500 copies have been supplied to the Vocational Guidance Department for national distribution.

REVISION OF SYLLABUS

During the year the Principals have been steadily working on the syllabus. The first draft was submitted to the four Education Committees through the training associations for comment and helpful criticism and in June with these to hand the Principals met together to complete the work which is now ready for approval. The syllabus has already been very well received and we express our appreciation to the Principals for the very careful and thorough work they have done. A report upon the syllabus will be presented to members during this meeting.

EDUCATION COMMITTEES AND TRAINING MATTERS

During the year the Executive has sponsored discussion on questions of national significance in training matters and we wish to record our appreciation of the splendid co-operation given by the Education Committees and by the training centre associations.

Three reports, including a very fine interim report, rich in suggestions for future betterment of training received from the first combined meeting of Education Committees held last September are now before the Executive. These however have not yet reached the stage when a co-ordinated and comprehensive statement can be made.

During this meeting members will be given a brief outline of what has been before the Executive.

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

A close liaison has become well established between the Union and the Kindergarten Teachers' Association which now refers all matters pertaining to kindergarten policy and administration to the Union. The Kindergarten Teachers' Association has accepted the responsibility of helping its members improve their professional knowledge by organising "in service" training in the forms of pamphlets, newsletters, lectures, refresher courses and branch monthly meetings. The Executive asks that associations make every endeavour to encourage this work by offering transport to teachers meetings and hospitality if needed.

We would like to congratulate the Rotorua Association on the splendid help it gave the kindergarten teachers of the Auckland district in offering hospitality and helping them to arrange a refresher course at Rotorua.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

Regional meetings have been held in Motueka, Dunedin, Rotorua, and Timaru. We appreciate the opportunity of being able to send a Presidential message to such meetings and have read with interest their agendas and reports. There is a very definite need for such meetings and we gratefully acknowledge the splendid work of the associations who have made them possible.

PUBLICITY

Useful and encouraging newspaper publicity has reached the Union office and the Executive wishes to congratulate the associations concerned. A few newspaper reports, however, reveal a lack of understanding of the fundamental principles underlying the kindergarten movement and these have caused the Executive some concern.

VISITS TO ASSOCIATIONS

During the year the Union has again been honoured by receiving invitations for the President to open new kindergartens at New Plymouth, Timaru, and Havelock North, but unfortunately this last invitation could not be accepted.

Visits have also been paid to the following associations:

1. Dunedin, Balclutha, Gore, Invercargill, Winton, and Alexandra.
2. Hawera, New Plymouth, Wanganui, and Marton. On this visit contact was also made with representatives from Stratford, Eltham, and Waitara.
3. Hornby, Lyttelton, Burnham, Wigram, and Rangiora.

The Vice President has given valuable advice when visiting new associations at Edgecumbe, Opotiki, Te Aroha, Tauranga, and Whakatane. Other members of the Executive have given help when called upon by nearby associations.

The Executive records its sincere appreciation of the generous hospitality extended to the President and all visiting Executive members by the associations concerned.

THANKS

To Dame Hilda Ross and the Honourable R.M. Algie we record our gratitude and appreciation for the gracious manner in which they have received our requests and the interest they have shown in the kindergarten movement.

To the Director of Education, to the Supervisor of Pre-School Services, and to the officers of the Department of Education we also say a very sincere thank you.

To our Honorary Solicitors and to our Honorary Auditor who have given much valued time to Union matters we extend our sincere thanks.

And lastly to our member associations we express our grateful appreciation of their loyal co-operation and helpfulness on all occasions.

for the Executive

KASSIE B. McCREANOR
President

September 1957.