

NEW ZEALAND FREE KINDERGARTEN UNION (INCORPORATED)

EXECUTIVE REPORT - 1958-59.

The Executive has pleasure in presenting its report for the year which ended on 31st July, 1959.

The year is one of special significance, since it marks the seventieth anniversary of the opening of the first free kindergarten, which was established in Dunedin on 10th June, 1889. Sincere congratulations are offered to the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association for its long and valued service to pre-school education.

OBITUARY.

With the death of Dame Hilda Ross, D.B.E., M.P., the Union suffered a deep loss. During her term as Minister of Social Welfare, she had shown a keen interest in the free kindergarten movement and was always ready to promote its development. Very many associations will remember her pride in their achievements when she attended the official opening of their buildings. To her family, the sincere sympathy of the Union is extended.

MEMBERSHIP.

The affiliation of Waitara, Greymouth, Howick, Kawerau and Tauranga brings the membership to 78. Recently, an application for affiliation has been received from Cromwell, enquiries have come from other communities and several new committees have been formed in older associations. To all these new members there is a warm welcome and best wishes for the success of their activities.

With encouraging developments in the amalgamation of associations in several districts, the membership of the Union is likely to change in the next financial year. This should strengthen the movement, bring greater stability and obviate the necessity for frequent changes in office-bearers. During this year no fewer than 42 associations reported a change of secretary.

It is necessary again to remind associations of their obligations as members. Although every effort has been made, by the Union office, to ease the work of associations in furnishing information which is required from time to time, there are still too many who fail to meet their responsibilities. On 31st July, when all information was required for the Annual Meeting, there were 20 associations who had given no indication of their intention to attend. All too frequently accounts are paid by cheques which bear no exchange and many receipts for moneys disbursed from the pooling scheme are overlooked.

NEW KINDERGARTENS RECOGNISED AND OFFICIAL OPENINGS.

The Hon. Minister of Education has recognised three new kindergartens during the year: Milford (Auckland), Taupo and Winton.

New buildings have been officially opened at Auckland (4) Christchurch (3), Hamilton (2), Napier, New Plymouth, Taupo, Tokoroa, Wanganui (3) and Winton. Wanganui had the distinction of opening two kindergartens on one day.

VISITS TO ASSOCIATIONS AND REGIONAL MEETINGS.

Invitations have been extended to the President to open new buildings at Auckland, Hamilton, Taupo, Tokoroa and Wanganui.

The President has travelled to visit associations at Blenheim, Dunedin, Havelock North, Hastings, Howick, Kawerau, Manawatu, Napier and Putaruru and, by attending regional meetings, has made contact with representatives of Huntly, Ngaruawahia, Morrinsville, Hamilton, Te Aroha, Tokoroa, Matamata, Rotorua, Taupo, Tauranga, Te Puke, Edgecumbe, Whakatane, Kawerau, Opotiki, Waipukurau, Dannevirke, Levin, Pukekohe

Papakura and Waiuku. Other members of the Executive have represented the Union at regional meetings held at Balclutha, Mosgiel, Waimate, Timaru and Dannevirke.

Sincere appreciation is extended to those associations which have given generous hospitality to the President and members of the Executive.

REMITTS FROM 1958 CONFERENCE.

Associations have been advised of the reply by the Director of Education to remits from the last Conference and of the Government's generous approval of the request for recognition of academic qualifications in the kindergarten teachers' salary scale. This incentive points to the value of higher educational attainment and raises the question of the minimum requirement for entry to training. The Director of Education has asked that the Union give consideration to this matter at this meeting.

Further information on other remits will be presented during the Conference.

RECRUITMENT AND PUBLICITY.

There are indications that the staffing position has improved and that more and better applicants are seeking entry to the Training Colleges. For the long list of associations awaiting permission to proceed with the building of kindergartens, under the terms of the new policy, this is encouraging. Kindergarten teaching received gratifying publicity from an article written by Mrs Susan Graham and printed in the newspapers of the four main cities.

The Director of Broadcasting has agreed to include this profession in the Careers Programmes which are broadcast in the National Women's Session each month.

Associations continue to make full use of the Union brochure as a valuable aid to recruitment.

TRAINING MATTERS.

The Executive, in consultation with representatives of the four Training Associations, has given further consideration to the manner in which a completely national system of training might be established. Associations have been advised of and invited to comment on the recommendations that have arisen from these meetings.

It is clear that, although the need to share the cost of training is recognised, there are some doubts about the implications of the scheme which has been suggested, and further thought will be required to ensure a scheme which is acceptable to all associations.

AMALGAMATION OF ASSOCIATIONS.

In several areas decisions have been made to form district associations. Negotiations are in progress for the establishment of a Franklin Association, which will include Pukekohe, Papakura and Waiuku.

In the Bay of Plenty there has been agreement to link the work of Rotorua, Taupo, Tauranga, Te Puke, Edgecumbe, Whakatane, Kawerau and Opotiki.

The Christchurch Association has accepted the affiliation of Lyttelton, Rangiora and Hornby as local committees.

NEW ZEALAND FREE KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

The congratulations of the Union are extended to the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Teachers' Association on the success of its first application, as a service organisation, for an increase in kindergarten teachers' salaries, and on the outstanding success of the first Summer School, held at Lincoln College in January of this year. It is hoped

that members of the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Teachers' Association will give their full support to the second School, which is planned for January, 1960, at Massey College.

The Union has been gratified by the success of those who were awarded bursaries for post-graduate study in 1958, all of whom gained passes in the subjects they undertook at their separate Universities. Four further awards have been made for 1959.

The Auckland Kindergarten Association conducted a Refresher Course in its new Training College in April, when Miss Nancy Martin and Dr. Barney made valuable contributions to the programme.

OVERSEAS CONTACTS.

From the President of the World Council for Early Childhood Education, O. M. E. P., has come an invitation to the Union to affiliate with this international body as an associate member.

The distribution of Parents' News-Sheets by the Union has brought close contacts with the Australian Pre-School Association.

CONGRATULATIONS.

The Union is proud to record its congratulations to Miss I. M. Jamieson, M.B.E., President of the Hamilton Free Kindergarten Association, on the occasion of her services to education receiving the recognition of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON INFANT AND PRE-SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES.

The Executive accepted the invitation to make submissions to the Consultative Committee enquiring into infant and pre-school health services in New Zealand, and, on behalf of the Union, the President, accompanied by Mrs H. C. Batten, appeared before the Committee at its sitting in Auckland in July.

FINANCE.

The Executive acknowledges with gratitude the generous assistance from the J. R. McKenzie Trust Board, which has made possible the continuation of post-graduate bursaries and grants towards in-service training.

The distribution of the Australian Pre-School Association Parents' News Sheets, while increasing the work of the Union office, has yielded a valuable return which may defray the cost of discussion pamphlets for committees meeting the terms of the new policy.

The growing work of the Union is shown in the increased cost of providing a helpful service to its members. It may be necessary to consider a revised scale of subscriptions when amalgamation is achieved, in order to ensure sufficient funds. Present developments in the formation of district associations will cause a considerable reduction in income in the next financial year.

THANKS.

The Executive records its gratitude and appreciation to all who have assisted the work of the Union during the year. To the Hon. Minister of Education, the Director of Education and the Supervisor of Pre-School Services, we are deeply indebted for their continued interest, advice and assistance; to the Hon. Solicitor and the Hon. Auditor, we extend sincere thanks for their services so willingly given; and to all member associations, for their loyal and energetic contributions to the movement, we offer congratulations, appreciation and best wishes for their continued success.

For the Executive,

H. DOWNER,
President.