

Notes on my Teaching & Training Years

My experience with kindergartens began at 3 years old, when I attended Mrs. Bellinger's Private Kindergarten at her home among the trees in Simla Cantt., Khandallah.

And later, I was sent to Miss Marjorie Seeds' Montessori-style Kindergarten in the Ngaisi Anglican Church Hall. You'll know her - she was later Marjorie Connell, and she cringed each time she saw the grown-up me. (It made her feel old!)

<sup>Our</sup> Teacher Training began in 1944 - a two year Course centred on Waiata  
Taranaki St, in rooms above the Nursery School, which some of you remember

Our Principal was Miss (ENI) WILSON, ~~AN AUSTRALIAN-trained~~ Miss Ted Scott, who ~~taught the Nursing School for many years,~~ ~~in the College~~

We worked towards a DIPLOMA, and were presented with a BAPPE, showing a child with BUILDING BLOCKS, AND LABELLED N.Y. KINDERGARTEN UNION, which I am wearing.

There were at that time, 4 FREE KINDERGARTEN ASSOCIATIONS ONE IN EACH MAIN CITY, & they comprised the Union. They had no Govt. aid in those days, so raising money was an important part of our job as Directors through Raffles, Annual Fairs etc, & the Associates & Supporters raised public money in High Social Events.

After initial weeks of Theory, beginning lectures in Child Education, <sup>Child Psych.</sup> Psychology, Art <sup>with</sup> ART & MUSIC <sup>PALEONTOLOGY</sup> CHILD DEVELOPMENT, WOODWORK ART THEATRE ?  
Art with M. Hopkins at The Kelburn Training College, Physical Educ. at The Y.W.C.A.,  
we were sent to various clinics in the mornings observing, taking notes etc., to be  
later written up & discussed with our lecturers; & then returned to Tawaaki  
St. in the Afternoon for lectures.

In our 2<sup>nd</sup> year, we were assigned to kindies, working under a Director and her Assistant, and gradually taking music, singing or story groups by ourselves.

The chn (approx 40 to 2 trained Staff) were divided up into 3 groups - TIMES, MIDDLES AND TOPS, according to age. We used the piano a lot for marching, skipping, jumping etc. Singing & group games. Each group had their own room, but joined for outside play, inside Free Play, walks, M. Tea apple & milk (?), & sometimes outings - such as a busride to the Fire Station, or Milk Depot.

Once qualified, we were allotted for a year to care Kindergarten, and then eventually became a Director ourselves, with the maintenence releandiness of the building our responsibility, working with a PARENTS' COMMITTEE, and a MOTHERS CLUB.

We used repetition & order in Reclarity programme, to a time table - elastic of course at times - but this gave Re chn. confidence & reassurance.

We were paid the minimum of salaries (heavily depended on parent support) but most lived at home in those days, or the country q. also in supervised hostels. We wore colorful ~~overalls~~ with deep pockets, & flat shoes!

My kidneys were blown for 2 yrs & opened & new Nephrons for a year only.

DRAWING & PAINTING; DOUGH; cutting-out & pasting; (sometimes for friezes on the walls e.g. Autumn etc, or transport e.g. Book area & mat, Doll's House; play cues; prams, tables & chairs in Home making area, and on group occasions, the use of musical instruments. The Piano was used a lot (Students had to learn to play the piano) for marching, skipping, jumping, dancing etc. All took part in musical games; the unenthusiastic being gradually encouraged, & we sometimes organised little concerts for the mothers (who were generally "at home" mothers).

There was repetition & order in the daily programme outlines, which were reassuring for the class, but left plenty of time ~~for~~ space for novelty activities, outings & so on.

We once took 2 busloads of B'pore parents on a picnic to Kbandallah Reserve on a beautiful summer day.

Grandparents & aunts joined parents on this outing, to supervise swimming & use of the play equipment, & the picnic food & drink were glorious to see - all (just about) home-made. They took rugs to sit on - sun umbrellas etc & many had never been as far from home - it was an outstanding success. (Few had private cars in those days.)

AT NGARAO KINDY, the parents had accomplished a huge money-raising effort to get their building up, together with the Plumkett Sch, who operated upstairs (from a ramp reaching over from the pedestrian footpath.)

It was sunny & rooney & well-planned, but the placement of tents with wire protection placed under all the blackboards!

We had a tree-lined, green play-area (adjoining a stream & public park) (so supervision had to be very careful!)

N.B. the Staff room at B'pore was tiny & inadequate, so the Ngarao roomier one was very welcome:

At all kindies, the Staff were expected to clean toilets,

Kitchen etc., & in Brome we were expected to keep a fire going in the big fireplace in the winter - no built-in heating in those days. We swept, dusted & cleaned equipment each day. Cleaners were paid to come in at weekends, wash, vacuum floors, & <sup>sweep</sup> out closets & wardrobes etc., & remove any rubbish.

Our Principals over those years were MISS EWING WILSON, AND LATER, MISS MIRIAM BAUCKE (pronounced BAUCKE), both of whom were wonderful mentors - wise & strong guides to our personal development, as well as a thorough training. Miss WILSON became a highly respected & admired mentor for our training years, and an excellent staff of tutors equipped us thoroughly for understanding & encouraging the 0-5 yr. groups of chrs. later in our care.

We formed a Graduates Assoc. in those years - probably <sup>late 40s or</sup> ~~early 50s~~; following a NATIONAL Graduates' Reunion held in Denedin approx 1946 I think - yes, it was, as June McBride was my Director then, & was present also.

(She left to marry the following year.)

MISS ELLI SCOTT, was a strong personality & "rock" for the Nursery School chrs., <sup>some</sup> ~~many~~ of whom were chosen in that area of the city, & for their parents. When she retired, Joyce Barnes was appointed from the Denedin Assoc. to take over, (it took us a while to accept her different training.)

In the days of my teaching, we used to make Home Visits one aftn. a week, with prior agreement with mothers as to time, day etc. These were eye-openers, & helped understand the chrs. a lot better. The parents looked on these visits as an honor, but were always a bit nervous too. The staff, at staff-meetings each week, discussed any features of these visits which were helpful in working with the chrs.