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KENSINGTON WOMENS GROUP NEWSLETTER
No. 6. SEPTEMBER.

SHOULDER^{TO} SHOULDER



CHILD CARE CO-OPERATIVE LTD-
89 MCCrackEN ST, KENSINGTON.
PHONE 3767280.

1979.

OUR NEWSLETTER*

The response to the first "new edition" of our newsletter has been a wonderful encouragement to all of us.

We would like to inform our readers that our efforts of that last edition, the writing of most of the articles, the stenciling, printing and collating was done in the space of 4 busy hours, as to get it out in time for particular meetings happening that week.

The concepts of the actual work involved in producing the newsletter was intirely new for most of us as collective members, and the intensity of doing it, completed by 4. p.m. was an enriching learning experience for all of us, under such pressure — the relief at 4. p.m. was not only — "thank goodness, we made it", but, moreso, it was great fun, despite the drawbacks, such as (ha! ha!) — spending an hour or two writing up one article, and realising we forgot to remove the inside sheet, so the article didn't carbon, and had to be done again!

newsletters, such as ours 2 weeks ago forced us to learn much more quickly, and freed us to realise our mistakes (somewhat regrettably) and ensure tighter production methods for the future.

We hope you enjoyed the fun of it, like the fun we had re-reading the final product — missing sentences, headings that didn't print, we even had some people ringing us up to find out what the last sentence of NOID was that their copy didn't have — well, anyway!

Thankyou to those people who have written, phoned, and talked to us personally, to let us know how much you enjoyed it.

Hope you enjoy and finds this edition of SHOULDER to SHOULDER exciting.

"SHOULDER TO SHOULDER" =
We would like to clarify the reason why this title was chosen and how we responded to it's suggestion. Historically, this well known title is related to the early suffragette movement when feminist women
cont....

Such as the Pankhursts, fought bitterly for the vote for women, amongst other women's rights issues, in the earlier part of this century.

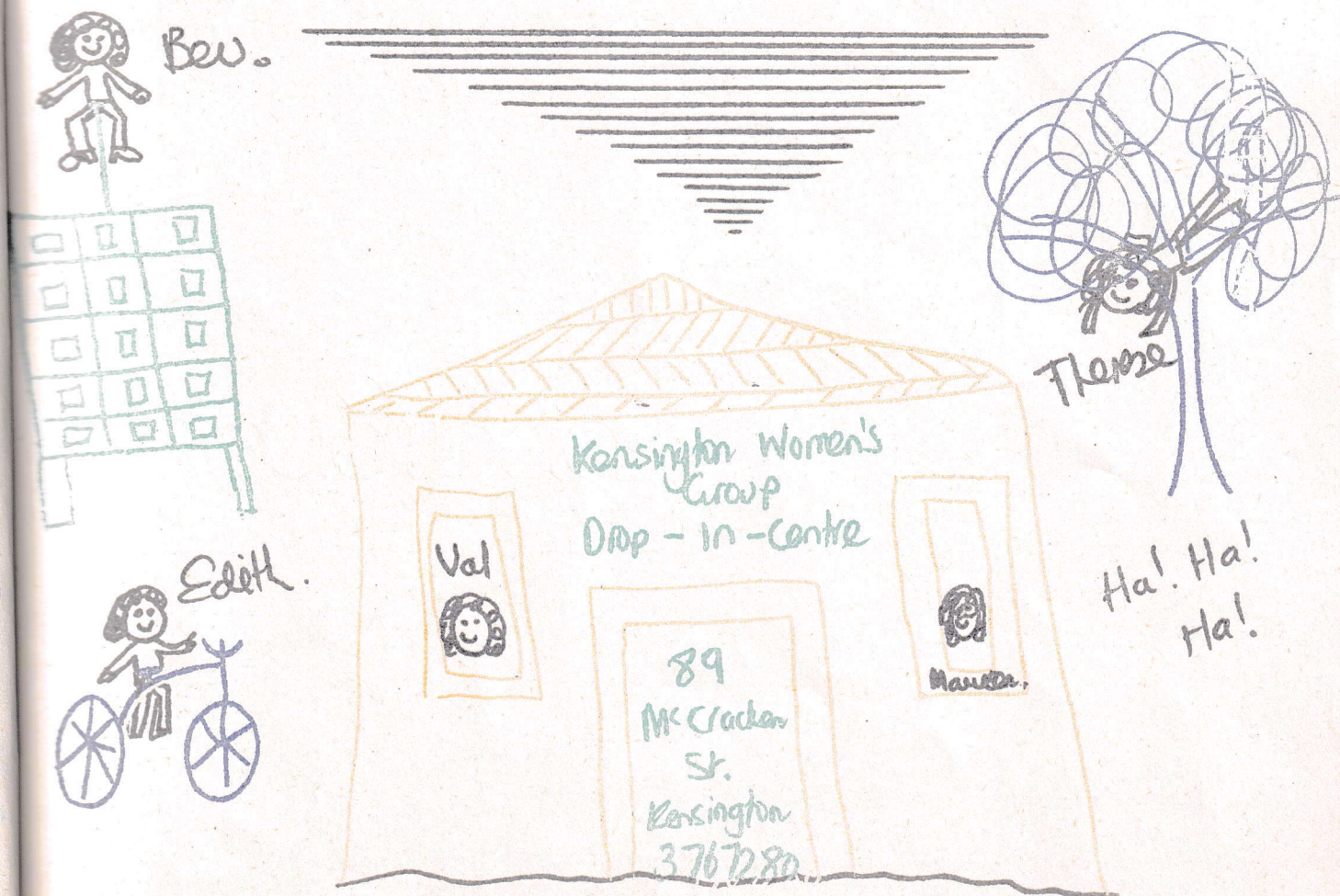
The words, "shoulder to shoulder", have often been aligned with this part of history as well as related to other active feminists over the decades who have adopted the title for publications and other related activities.

However, the Kensington Women's Group (despite the fact that a few of us had knowledge of shoulder to shoulders' origin), responded to the title "Shoulder to shoulder", as exactly that - shoulder to shoulder.

Together " (umm...) or "United", or all those other sorts of words that suggest solidarity, but we felt they really didn't convey what our group is about, our aims and intentions.

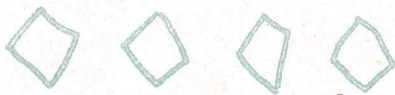
The Kensington Women's Group Drop In Centre is about solidarity - mutual support - encouraging one another - creating on-going friendships - caring and giving.

Shoulder to Shoulder is what we believe will foster our development and extension, of, not only our personal aspirations, but of our work and service to all people, in and around Kensington.



Our Shopping Day. (Page 2)

ground & jumped all over it to try to straighten it, which she did but it cracked, no more about the key but it did go in and start the car, all this time, us women were sitting in the car listening to the music, wondering if we would get our shopping that week or the next, but off we happily rolled onto Sains and everybody bought what they needed there & then we were off to the market, where we parked & as Mary couldn't get the key out of the ignition, somebody had to stay in the car as to look after all our shopping. All finished, we loaded up with all our fruit & vegetables & as we were parked where we shouldn't be we were asked to move on, one woman had to run back as she forgot her carrots so we had to drive back round the block & order her up (carrots & all). So if anybody would like to go shopping on a Thursday, its a scream, but be prepared for anything, as anything goes.



\$1.50

CHILDREN
AND
VIOLENCE

RIPPLES

AVAILABLE AT
C.C.C 191 Brunswick
St FITZROY 4191148

K.W.G.
OPEN

9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

KENSINGTON
WOMENS
GROUP

JOY

We would like to let you know that the network of contacts we are making is increasing steadily, more and more people are becoming involved in our Centre and it's activities.

We hope that anyone wishing to meet new friends, learn new things or simply have a bit of fun or laughter will fall in at St. Crispian St, anytime & have a chat.



EXTRACT from: "RIPPLE" - COMMUNITY CHILD CARE QUARTERLY
NO. 17 AUGUST 1979.

C: CHILDREN and VIOLENCE - WHAT'S BEING DONE? Robertson St. Co-op.

The Robertson Street co-op, Kensington, provides child care and social support for families who live nearby. Like most neighbourhood centres, Robertson Street "takes the lid off" the pressures that build up in isolated and vulnerable nuclear families. It provides a sympathetic environment for doing something about child abuse when and if it arises.

This year Robertson Street attempted to lower the level of enrolments by adopting a policy of accepting children only in emergencies. The co-op is still too overflowing. Half the new enrolments have been referrals of families in crisis from other agencies; all have been related to some family emergency.

Most families who use the co-op live in low standard rental accommodation, with antiquated plumbing, poor wiring and inadequate heating, or else they live in housing commission flats. In one commission block there's no lift. In another, the lift hardly ever works. That means that mothers with 1, 2 or 3 children, a pusher and shopping have to battle up sometimes ten flights of stairs. And once up - there's not much motivation to come down again. It's not uncommon for mothers coming to the co-op to have agoraphobia (a fear of going outside). Just doing the shopping or getting

to Robertson Street is a strain. Parents say, "Everyone's staring at me"... "I'm ugly". (Being ugly often means not being able to buy the products TV says you need to make you beautiful).

Money is a continual problem - low pay, or below poverty line social security benefits. Not enough money means poor nutrition which means poor health, and on it goes. In migrant families, the usual problems are overlaid with the difficulty of the language barrier.

The co-op is critically important in the lives of the families who use it.

For children, it means time to be by themselves, their own space, playmates, a chance to learn that rules are apart of growing up, and that others can love them and be kind to them.

For parents also it means their own space, and time to themselves. The co-op offers a wider circle of friends, and importantly, a chance to contribute. Parents do all the cooking and work alongside others with the children. They start finding out what they're good at and not good at.

The co-op has an excellent working relationship with the local Community Health Centre. A doctor from the centre

Continued

ROBERTSON STREET CO-OP - CONTINUED.

is once a week, and medical services are on call 24 hours a day. Other services include family therapy, individual counselling, financial counselling, and credit union. The centre tries to avoid prescribing tranquilizers. Because the Community Health Centre staff are visible and accessible, parents see them not as threatening people, but as people who have information that's useful.

From time to time, it becomes obvious that a child coming to the co-op is being abused. The following general guidelines are used in dealing with the problem.

The co-op sees that its first job is to protect the child. A record is kept of any injuries.

Help is offered at the first sign of trouble, before the situation deteriorates. Help is asked for in an indirect way, it isn't refused.

An attempt is made to gain the confidence of both parent and child as to what's really happening. It's not assumed that the parent who comes to the co-op (usually the mother) is the one doing the abusing.

If it's appropriate, the parent is referred to another parent who has experienced the same problem in their family.

Where necessary, the co-op draws on the resources of the Community Health Centre, e.g. doctors and social workers.

The co-op does everything it can to both protect the child and support the desperate family. The back up of the Community Health Centre is critically important. However this essential resource maybe under threat. Recent policy developments may force the centre to charge fees for service.

One of the most urgent problems is the lack of emergency overnight care. In the last fortnight two staff members have cared for nine children overnight.

In one recent emergency a 20 year old mother with three children under three came to the end of the line. She made an urgent and honest plea for a short break from her children. - "a little time to allow me to be 20 again". Her only option is to make the children over as wards of the state. They'll be sent to Allambie. The co-op is desperately trying to find ways to help her get her life together so she can bring her children home again in 12 months time. It's not going to be easy. When the children become wards of the state the mother will lose her pension and her flat.



SOUL

IS FEELING DEPTH, THE
ABILITY TO REACH
SOMEONE. IT'S BEING
A PART OF WHAT TODAY
IS ALL ABOUT. IT'S NOT
COOL TO BE ABORIGINAL
JEWISH OR ITALIAN
OR ANYTHING ELSE.
IT'S JUST COOL TO
BE ALIVE, TO BE
AROUND.



REMEMBERING THE PAST

I was a little girl. I remember, how I loved music. And at age. Rock n' Roll was the music, at that time. And I used to dance, with my brother. And I remember, how my nan used to dance at me. When I used to jump, on my brother's knee and assault. She thought something would happen to me. How I loved those years. And at that time. I thought those were the most beautiful years. Rock a' Round the Clock. See you Later Alligator etc. And I thought those years will never pass. Then I remember going to school with my classmates. And we all loved those rainy days. Because most of girls stayed away, on those days. And sometimes even the boys stayed away. And we really had fun those days. Then there was a time. I couldn't see the figures on the board at school. And everything went wrong. I had to wear glasses. After I wore glasses. My work improved in school. I left school in form 3. Then we moved house. And went to live by the sea. On the sands. Friends used to come home. And we all used to go for baths. But I couldn't swim. Then we moved house again. By that time most of my friends, had migrated to other countries. My sister and brother got married. My sister and her family, migrated to Australia. My mum was very sorry. She had to part with her only grandson. When my sister came to Australia. My mum asked my dad, to write to his brother in Australia. And asked him, to nominate us. Which he certainly did. When I came to Australia. I felt very lonely and depressed. I used to cry, the whole day long. I got very sick. And had to enter hospital for 11 months. When I came out of hospital. We moved to Kensington. Since then I have joined the Kensington Citizens Club.

And I'm happy to say I have found many friends in the
Women's Group. They are all very kind and understanding.

SESSIONAL WORKSHOPS.

We are organising to hold discussion groups,
once a week over a period of six weeks related
to areas such as "teenagers and unemployment,"
"relationships," "pre-teenage & pre-school children,"
"adults as people," etc. We hope that these discussion
will centre around things that you want to talk
about and learn more about. Hopefully, by the next
issue of "Shoulder to Shoulder," we can give
you a few more details. The discussions will,
however, include input and info. from other
workers in the area such as staff at the
Community Health Centre. In the meantime, if
you have any ideas, or wish for other particular
topics to be included, please see Mary and
let her know.

WINSTON, WOMEN'S GROUP
CHILD CARE CO-OPERATIVE
NEXT DIRECTORS MEETING

Oct. 8th at 6 p.m.

89, McCracken St,

Winston, Ph 376-290

All interested people most welcome to attend

Please let your name be known to Mary

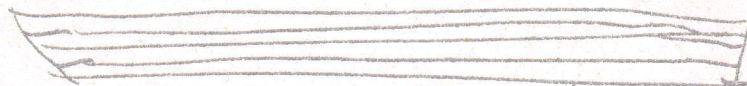
Responses To News Letter

Thanks for Sending me Shoulder To Shoulder,
I loved reading it and want to be sent
every copy please. I am enclosing \$5.00, to
cover postage for the next batch of
"Shoulder To Shoulder".

Ruth Crow, North Melbourne.

Shoulder To Shoulder is great! It must
be good to feel that the groups get
our energy.
Keep up the good work.

K.C.H.C.



Dear Gloria

GLORIA FITZS.
MALVERN.

Just a thank you, for your help and
consideration these past months, with the
children & women at the Kensington Womens
Group Child care Co-op. Centre.

We wish you well and the best of
luck in the future

Your Friends & Staff

KENSINGTON WOMENS GROUP

UNEMPLOYMENT

WHAT DOES UNEMPLOYMENT AT THE MOMENT NOTHING
TO YOU?

ARE THE UNEMPLOYED? UNEMPLOYED ARE PEOPLE
WHO CAN'T GET JOBS OR
WHO DON'T WANT JOBS.

IS UNEMPLOYMENT BOTHERS UNEMPLOYMENT DOESN'T

BOTHER ME NOW, AS I

HAVE NO REASON TO CARE
ALL MY KIDS ARE STILL
AT SCHOOL.

THESE ARE A FEW QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK
YOURSELF, AS A PERSON, AND ALSO AS A MEMBER OF
THE COMMUNITY.

As a Mother, and a member of a community, unemployment
does not affect me directly. But looking to the the future
it will be something we all have to ^{look} at, as it's not only
young people. But also people who have worked for a
number of years, who find themselves retrenched. And
if they don't find a job, they lose interest in themselves and
the people around them. This goes for all
unemployed young and old. But what affect will it have
on us in the future?

WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING ABOUT IT?

WHAT ARE WE EDUCATING OUR KIDS FOR?

UNEMPLOYMENT.

Dear Members and Friends,

Hi! from Lyn, Jean, Michele and Marg, this is the second part of our child-care news from us to keep you informed of our activities.

Parents' Meeting - The Parents' Meeting on the 14th September was a great success. Twelve parents turned up, and after a delicious supper Jean and Lyn held the floor. First item discussed on the agenda was the increase in fees, which is a result of inadequate funding from the Govt; in terms of the increases in wages and the cost of living. Obviously, we regret this move, but the Govt. leaves us no choice. Then the staff discussed the formation of a lobbying group which will be set up to involve parents along with staff in understanding and communicating with various Govt. depts. re. funding and the obvious need for the continuation of our Co-operative. The need for more

cont - -

Volunteer staff was raised to ease the burden on the staff.

Directors' Meeting - Interested parents are cordially invited to attend the next Directors' Meeting on 8th October at 6p.m. Any ideas re. the Co-op. will be welcome.

Sweets and Toys - A reminder to all parents, please see that your children do not bring any food, sweets and/or toys into the centre, as it isn't fair to the children.

Absence Due to Ill-Health - If your child is absent due to ill-health, please notify us, and we will charge only a holding fee of \$5.00 per week. However, if you fail to notify us, a full fee will be charged.

Cup Day Holiday - A reminder to parents, we will be closed on Cup Day, 6th November. Any problems regarding this, please see the staff.

cont - - -

would be appreciated by the staff.

As Jean informed in the last news letter she will be writing up information on a series of topics related to child rearing and child health. Here is the first part of the series! -

Health - Nits and Head Lice - We often have problems with head lice in the centre.

They are uncomfortable for your child and spread quickly from child to child and adults in the centre. Would you please check

regularly your child's hair and treat if necessary before your child returns to the

Centre, as the staff definitely do not have time. Moderation - P. 24 from the chemist or we can get it for you at no cost.

Backyard - We now have grass in our backyard thanks to the assistance in funds from the Women's Group section of the house.

Hopefully it will grow and the children
cont - - -

also have new climbing equipment
boom which will benefit the children
Physical development greatly

Voluntary Time - Thank you very much to all
who have been helping during the day. Your
assistance is greatly appreciated

Clothes - Please return all spare clothing
which we sometimes need to dress the
children in. Donations of clothes will also
will appreciated.

Please note that the next Parents
Co-operative Meeting will be on Friday,
26th October at 6.30 p.m. All interested
parents and friends are welcome to attend

If a person lives with CRITICISM,
They learn to CONDEMN.

If a person lives with HOSTILITY,
They learn to FIGHT.

If a person lives with RIDICULE,
They learn to be SHY.

If a person lives with SHAME,
They learn to feel GUILTY.

If a person lives with TOLERANCE,
They learn to be PATIENT.

If a person lives with ENCOURAGEMENT,
They learn CONFIDENCE.

If a person lives with PRAISE,
They learn to APPRECIATE.

If a person lives with FAIRNESS,
They learn JUSTICE.

If a person lives with SECURITY,
They learn to have FAITH.

If a person lives with APPROVAL,
They learn to like THEMSELVES.

If a person lives with Acceptance and Friendship,
They learn to find LOVE in the WORLD.

Friend \ 'frend \ n 1 a: one that seeks the society or welfare of another who she/he holds in affection, respect, or esteem or whose companionship and personality are pleasurable: an intimate associate esp. when other than a lover or relative - often used as a form of address 2 a: one not hostile or an enemy

SYN ACQUAINTANCE, INTIMATE, CONFIDANT: FRIEND

applies to a person one has regarded with liking and a degree of respect and has known for a time in a pleasurable relationship neither notably intimate nor dependant wholly on business or professional ties.

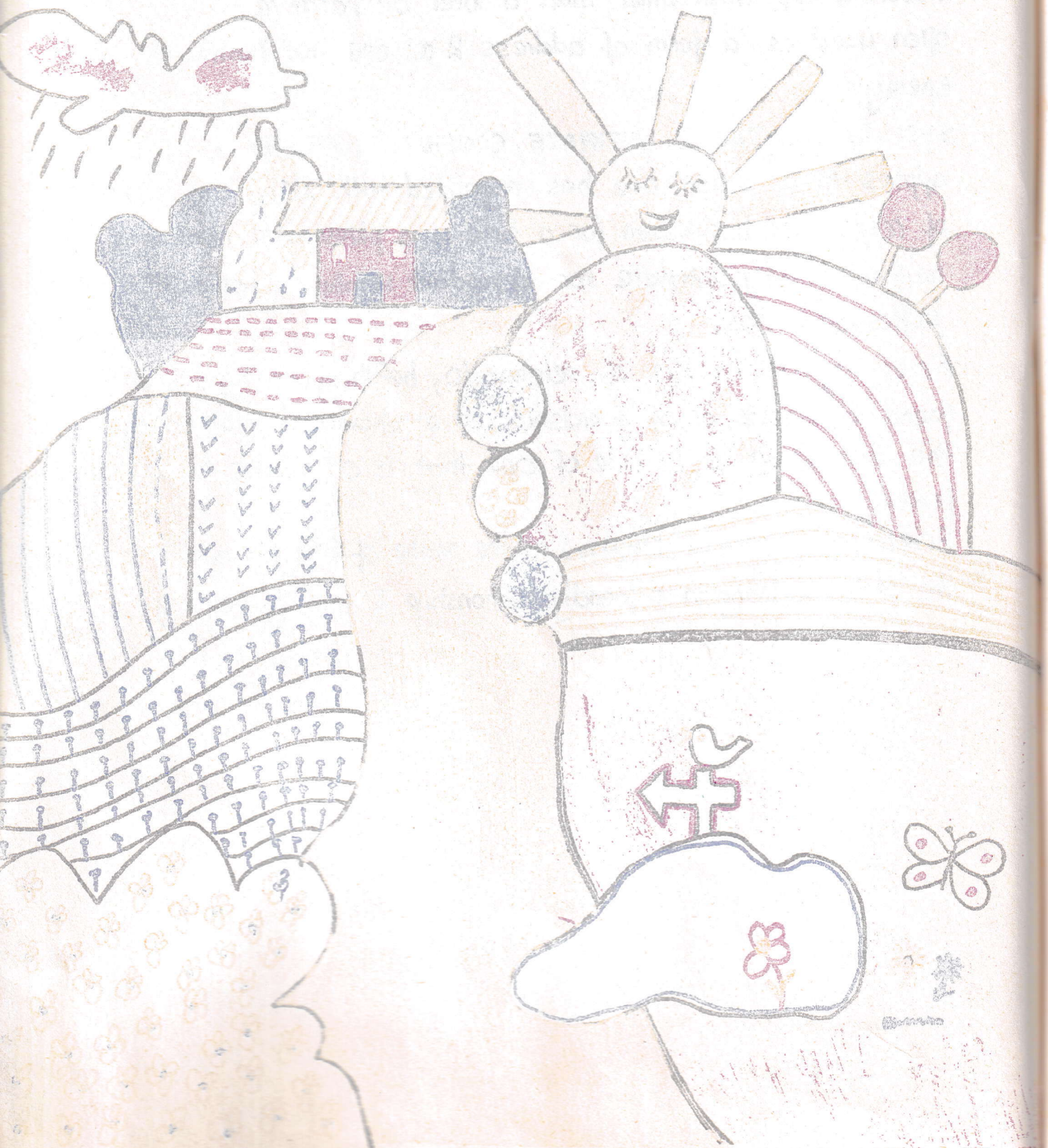
Friend·ly \ -lē, -li \ adj 1: of, relating to, befitting, or typical of a friend, of friends, or of friendship: as a: showing or marked by the disposition or attitude of one that is or wishes to be a friend.

Friend·ship \ 'fren(d), shi \ n 1 a: the state of being friends: the state of being in a friendly relationship 2: friendly feeling

YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND

You just call out my name
And you know wherever I am
I'll come runnin' to see you again.
Winter, spring, summer or fall
All you have to do is call
And I'll be there. You've got a friend.

Carole King



Friendship

Friendship is related to love, and if love is the bread of life, friendship is in the same package. And friendship is a very good guide. In fact, it seems to me the world situation, as I write, is partially due to a lack of willingness to make friends, to care about other people, other lands. This characterizes the rulers of many countries. If the nations could work at making friends, there would be no threat of war, ever again.

I could not rewrite history, of course, but I could let friendship be a guidepost for my life.

Gladys Taber.

IF IT IS A VIRTUE TO
LOVE MY NEIGHBOUR AS A
HUMAN BEING, IT MUST BE A
VIRTUE — AND NOT A VICE —
TO LOVE MYSELF, SINCE
I AM A HUMAN BEING TOO.

Each from.

from The Star-Splitter

If one by one we counted people
Out for the least sin, it wouldn't
Take us long to get so we had
No one left to live with
For to be social is to be
Forgiving.

Robert Frost

...and I'll be home, I'll be home....
In Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's story

"THE LITTLE PRINCE", a small visitor from a distant planet lands on the earth and travels in search of understanding. This conversation between the little prince and the fox he meets shows in a charming yet profound way how friends are discovered - and what true friendship can mean.

"Good morning," said the fox.

"Good morning," the little prince responded politely.

"Who are you?" asked the little prince, and added, "You are very pretty to look at."

"I am a fox", the fox said.

"Come and play with me," proposed the little prince. "I am so unhappy."

"I cannot play with you," the fox said. "I am not tamed".

"Ah!" "Please excuse me," said the little prince.

But after some thought, he added:

"What does that mean - 'tame'?"

"It is an act too often neglected," said the fox. "It means to establish ties."

"To establish ties'?"

"Just that," said the fox. "To me, you are still nothing more than a little boy who is just like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you, on your part, have no need of me. To you, I am nothing more than a fox, like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, then we shall need each other. To me, you will be unique in all the world. To you, I shall be unique in all the world....."

"If you tame me, it will be as if the sun came to shine on my life. I shall know the sound of a step that will be different from all others. Other steps send me hurrying back underneath the ground."

Continued.....

You Want a Friend, Tame Me.... Continued.

.....Yours will call me, like music, out of my burrow. And then look: you see the grainfields down yonder? I do not eat bread. Wheat is of no use to me. The wheat fields have nothing to say to me. And that is sad. But you have hair that is the colour of gold. Think how wonderful that will be when you have tamed me! The grain, which is also golden, will bring me back the thought of you. And I shall love to listen to the wind in the wheat...."

The fox gazed at the little prince, for a long time.

"Please-tame me,!" he said.

"I want to, very much," the little prince replied. "But I have not much time. I have friends to discover, and a great many things to understand."

"One only understands the things which one tames," said the fox. "Men have no more time to understand anything. They buy things already made at the shops. But there is no shop anywhere here; one can buy friendship, so men have no friends anymore. You want a friend, tame me...."



IF I HAD KNOWN

If I had known the trouble you were bearing;
What griefs were in the silence of your face,
I would have been more gentle, and more gentle, and caring,
And tried to give you gladness for a space.
I would have brought more warmth into the place.
If I had known.

If I had known what thoughts despairing drew you;
(Why do we never try to understand?).
I would have lent a little friendship to you,
And slipped my hand within your hand,
And made your stay more pleasant in the land,
If I had known.

Oh the comfort — the inexpressible comfort
Of feeling safe with a person.
Having neither to weigh thoughts,
Nor measure words — but pouring them
All right out — just as they are —
Certain that a faithful hand will
Take and sift them —
Keep what is worth keeping —
And with a breath of kindness
Blow the rest away.

The Mirror of Friendship.

On her frequent trips on foot to Temuco, an old Araucanian Indian woman used always to bring my mother a few partridge eggs or a handful of berries. My mother spoke no Araucanian beyond the greeting, "Mai-mai", and the old woman knew no Spanish, but she drank tea and ate cake with many an appreciative giggle. We girls stared fascinated at her layers of colourful hand-woven clothing, her copper brackets and coin necklaces, and we vied with each other in trying to memorize the singsong phrase she always spoke on rising to leave.

At last we learned the words by heart and repeated them to the missionary, who translated them for us. They have stayed in my mind as the nicest compliment ever uttered:
"I shall come again, for I like myself when I'm near you!"

On her frequent trips on foot to Temuco, an old Araucanian Indian woman used always to bring my mother a few partridge eggs or a handful of berries. My mother spoke no Araucanian beyond the greeting, "Mai-mai", and the old woman knew no Spanish, but she ate cakes and drank tea with many an appreciative giggle. We girls stared fascinated at her layers of colourful hand-woven clothing, her copper brackets and coin necklaces, and we vied with each other in trying to memorize the singsong phrase she always spoke on rising to leave.

October 1ST - Tennis - Courts Smithfield & Epsom Rd.

October 3rd - 10-30 Women's Group discussion
- 12-30 Newsletter Collective Meeting.

October 4th - Drama Group * "we are hoping to put a play on towards the end of the year on the K.W.G. our lives, living in the flats etc." All interested people - PLEASE COME ALONG. 11 a.m. at house.

October 8th - Tennis.

October 9th - Drama Group meeting - lunch together afterwards.

October 10th - Women's Group Discussion 10:30.
- Newsletter Group Meeting 12:30

October 11th - Shopping 10 a.m. at house

October 12th - 6 pm. Dinner at house cooked by Val. All Welcome.

NEXT ISSUE OF "SHOULDER TO SHOULDER" deadline
OCT. 9th if you or your group wishes to contribute anything.