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KENSINGTON WOMEN'S • GROUP •

SHOULDER^{TO} SHOULDER



NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2 NO. 12

-CHILD CARE CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED-

99 M. COCKEN ST KENSINGTON LONDON W. 27/7200

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We would like to apologise, for the lateness
of Shoulder to Shoulder Due to the Women's
Group being away on holiday. But we will
make up for this, with two editions at
Christmas. "Happy reading" any comments
contact the Editor.

Thanks to .

Val, Bev, MARG, MAUREEN, THERESE.

FOR GETTING THIS EDITION OUT

EDITORIAL. 1980

As we have reached the 1980's, a New Year, we hope to bring all our readers and friends some new and interesting things. Over the past couple of weeks a group of women (and 2 might add one young man called "Gerald") have been pretty busy getting the house in ship shape order (mainly the office). As the people who use the office know (let's face it) it was a pretty gloomy place, even to sit in let alone to try and talk to somebody in private, so it was decided to brighten the gloomy place up. First of, out went a lot of the accumulated junk which we had collected, and the Council were very decent in coming to take it away. Shelves were emptied of everything and the first slap of white undercoat went on. I must say, even that was an improvement. Not only was the office undercoated but also the cupboards in the Child Care, and the back veranda. The following day we were back down there to paint over (with blue) all the parts that had been

2 think had more blue paint on the walls, face and arms than she did on the cupboards (I don't know where her glasses were), Helen was like an Indian on the warpath with blue streaks down her face and nose, Sharon had the nicest blue feet I have ever seen, while I had blue soles and back (only a little bit though). Theresa was too busy making our tea to be blue. Eventually all the inside painted, we started on the fence (brown) outside the back yard 2 say started as we didn't have enough paint, so that was still to be done. Next was to buy a few things to make the office even brighter, so Mary & Helen purchased a deep blue carpet & a coffee table, some chairs and a lamp, when everything was put into place the room was no longer a gloomy place, but bright and gay, even the atmosphere seemed changed. It's really amazing what a bit of paint and people working together and 2 mean together can achieve. I think the people who used the house last year can appreciate and see the improvement.

EDITORIAL. cont

up there free time to help not only themselves, but you, the people who use the house, to be a more brighter and happy place for all. I would like to point out a few of the things that have been organised for this year. There are to be holidays for families including a camping holiday. Places to be looked and checked out are at Archies Creek?, Torquay? and Doxa?. Classes to be organised such as pottery,

Typing, Craft, and publicity. We are also having film nights (7 days so everyone has a chance to come along) these films are provided by state film Centre or 20th Century fox. We are also pleased to say we now have our own lending library, while we havnt a huge range, it is a start. These are a few things coming up this year so we would like to invite anyone who is interested to come along even if none of the above appeal to you, we are open to other choices.



LIVING IN HOUSING COMMISSION ESTATES.

These six questions were put to three young kids around the Housing Estate, we would like to thank our reporter (Ben) for doing the research on it, but mostly we'd like to thank the three young people for giving there time to talk to her.

The Questions are.

- (1) ARE YOU HAPPY ?
- (2) WHAT THINGS MAKE YOU HAPPY AND UNHAPPY ?
- (3) WHAT PROBLEMS DO YOU FACE AS PART OF A FAMILY ?
- (4) WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME ?
- (5) HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT PEOPLE ?
- (6) HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE WARS GOING ON OVERSEAS, DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD BE INVOLVED ?

The Answers went like this

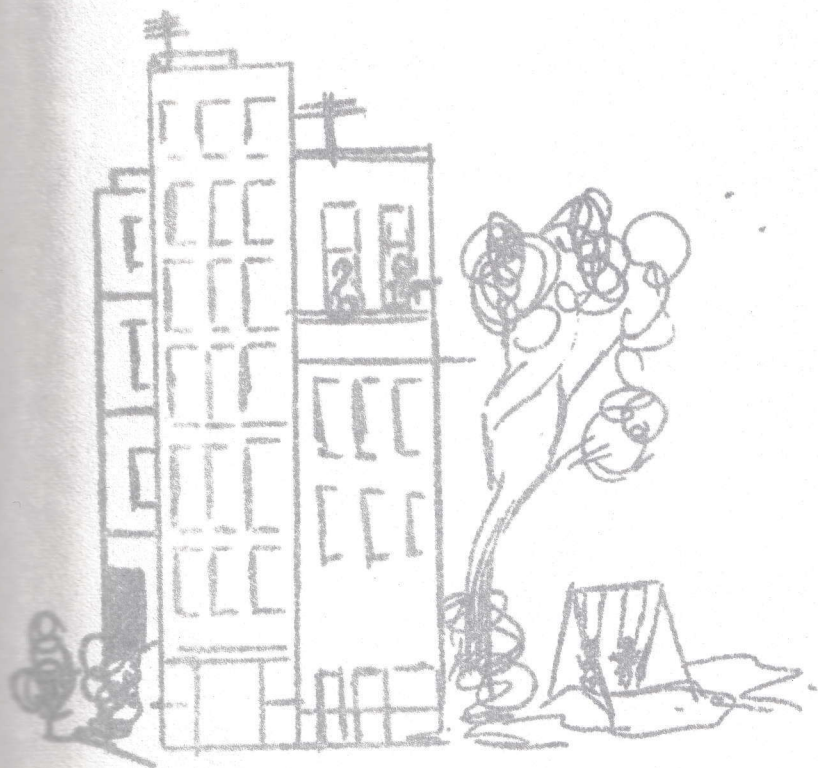
- 1) I don't particularly like living in Commission flats, I feel too closed in, I would much rather live in a house with a yard.
- 2) I have lots of friends in the area which I am happy about, what makes me unhappy is the way people treat me as a teenager and an immigrant I get called a wog and a black b..... If any trouble happens around Ken. the New Australians (kids) get the blame almost every time.
- 3) The things I face as part of a family is that I am in the middle of a family of 5, my older sisters seem to get what they want, my younger brothers seem to need attention all the time. My parents tell me I have to wait my turn, if I ask them to buy me some shirts etc, I don't think they listen, they just do what they think is right.
- 4) In my spare time I listen to Music, play football or

LIVING IN HOUSING COMMISSION ESTATES

Continued

5) I think people in general can be very, but we get a few who just don't understand us teenagers, I think police in particular, should think about the time when they were teenagers, maybe then they would be a bit more understanding.

6) Why should we be involved in a war that we had nothing to do with in the first place, I think everybody should live in peace.



THE GOOPS

BY Leonie Green.

The Goops they lick their fingers.
The Goops they lick their knives;
They spill their broth on the tablecloth
They live untidy lives.
The Goops they talk while eating
And loud and fast they cheer,
I'm glad that I am not a goop—
ARE YOU?



DONT TAKE POISON — DRUGS.

A REVIEW FROM THE BOOK "GO ASK ALICE"

Before I write what I have read about drugs and about a teenager who couldn't make it without drugs.

One night I started hearing noises in the night and there was the person, he kept calling me, and he wanted to come near me, at first I thought it was God calling me, I didn't know who it was, I was afraid, I used to scream at night, it was terrible, every night I kept hearing these noises and I just used to scream. I came down with a nervous breakdown in the end, and was put into hospital. I ended up in two hospitals for 11 months and was put on drugs. When I first took Drugs I felt really good, as if I was on air, I was calm I slept at night. Now I take just one tablet at night but I try to do without it, and an adv. quick happen.

I read this book about a girl who couldn't cope with things and she found it hard to tell her parents what was wrong with her. She started taking drugs, L.S.D, speed etc. after she took the drugs she felt really wonderful. She thought she could do anything, she came back home and went to another city to live, there she met some friends who owned a fashion shop and got a job there. These friends were having a party, she was invited. As soon as she went into the room she got the smell of drugs and she thought she'd try it just once again, after that she'd have nothing to do with drugs for anyone taking them. When she returned to her room she thought of her home, her room, the beautiful things she had in it, so she decided to return. She went to a church close by and spoke to the priest and told him to phone her parents. Her parents were so happy to hear from her, her parents sent her back and she returned home. She was once again happy, but some friends who had helped her once before with drugs wanted her to try the stuff again, she didn't want to take anymore, but her straight friends didn't seem to want to know her. Then one day her parents came home and found her dead in her room, she died from an overdose.

So please, if you have a problem or troubled in anyway talk to someone, don't take poison - Drugs, it will only harm you. Throw them away. ???

Teresa

(6)



GETTING A HOUSE.

In March 1976, the group was notified that they had received a capital grant of \$36,000 and shortly afterwards they found what appeared to be a suitable house, conveniently situated in the same street as the Health Centre. However, a number of problems accompanied this site. Firstly, the house had been approved for purchase by the Health Department on the condition that certain renovations were done. However, the cost of these renovations proved to be somewhere in the vicinity of \$9,000 which was more than the group could possibly afford. Secondly, there was a great deal of confusion and poor communication regarding the procedures necessary for obtaining a Town Planning Permit. Namely, the group had

to 'advertise' which involved informing, in writing, land owners with adjoining fences about the intended use for the house; and placing a notice of application outside the building for a period of 2 weeks. The group, mainly through inexperience and taking notice of unofficial advice, did not technically comply with these requirements, although they had done so in spirit. They had spoken to neighbours and received verbal agreements and they had written an article for the local paper which fully outlined intended uses of the house. In time, they were informed that this was not enough and once again they took unofficial advice and applied for an exemption to the 14 days advertising

"DOING IT TOGETHER" (2)

CONT

time was becoming rather crucial, as the council was about to go into recess for its holidays and this would cause further delays if the permit was not through beforehand. Also, the owners of the house were extremely anxious to settle and the group was worried that they might find another buyer unless things were speeded up.

The group heard nothing more about the exemption till after the Town Planning Committee met; and they were told that the condition of advertising still applied.

Deputations regarding the urgency of the situation were made to the Health Department and meetings were held with the Council Town Planning Department, but they proved fruitless. The Council took a fairly rigid stance on the matter, probably influenced

by a petition from some of the residents in Gower Street, objecting to the proposed use of the house, on the grounds that the street was already overloaded with traffic. There was a certain irony in this, because only one of the women had ready access to a car, and the only other vehicle occasionally involved was the minibus, belonging to the Save the Children Fund. In the opinion of the solicitor, (someone who has given the group voluntary assistance throughout their history), the screen outlining what to do with planning permits etc, is a confusing and difficult document even for people familiar with such instructions, let alone for those with no previous experience. Although legally within their rights, the Council was uncompromising and unco-operative in this

DOING IT TOGETHER

(3)

matter, offering the group little in the way of assistance, or alternative suggestions. The property settlement fell through in October 1976, because the owners could no longer wait for the matter to be resolved.

Once again, the group started looking for a house. This time there were new difficulties; house prices had risen sharply and real estate agents were now familiar with the potential problems associated with government purchases and therefore insisted on settlement within 60 days or "no deal".

In November 1976, a house which seemed suitable was found in McCracken Street. Although the price was \$2,000 and this meant that the group had to reapply for an increase to the original amount, a land use permit was obtained quite easily this time and approval of the increase in funding was also eventually confirmed.

In March 1977, although the finance did not come through till after a letter had been sent to the Health Department explaining that if the money did not arrive soon, the group was in danger of being sued by the vendors for breach of contract. The new grant was for \$58,000 leaving \$5,000 to equip and renovate the property. The Health Department placed an added condition on the purchase, i.e. that a caveat be lodged on the title in favour of the Victorian and Commonwealth Grants. There was no precedent with any group for such a condition and the affect of it shall be explained in a later section as the matter did not arise again till the group was ready to start its renovations. In April 1977 the Women's Group started using the house for meetings and activities and the After School club used it as the 7.

FAMILY CAMPING



Throughout the next few years we are organising ourselves to run a lot of family camping programmes. Our big first "Back to nature" camp is for 5 days over Easter at the Murrumbidgee River 25 km inland from Yea. We hope that through gaining such experiences, families will borrow the equipment and organise themselves to go away regularly. We have already started a "CAMP STORE" of equipment which will enable families & other groups in the area to borrow our stuff for their own use. If anyone has anything they don't want in the way of old

OUR HOLIDAY

Monday 26th Jan, 8
men (and one dog) started
on a trip to Flinders, 5
whom were really very
out from the school holiday
the other three, well 2
they were worn out by
watching us. Anyway we
met at Helen's with
everything but the kitchen
sink. Mary arrived with the
on time as usual and
started packing all our
into the bus, that done
we were off for a nice
brisk 5 days of peace,
sick (or so we thought)
and sunshine. The trip of
approx 3 hours as we
stopped for a nice drink (tea)
the country side was beaut
the sun shining on it
we arrived and unloaded
the bus we went in to have
look at the beach house,
was terrific, Mary was
of the mark to pick
her bed out as she wanted
a hard one, (bed 2
can) so she laid on all
beds as the mattress on
the floor were too low for

double bed with the net over
it. Cathy slept in the other
bedroom which had two beds
in it, and Mary, Helen, Bev,
Therese, Maureen & myself all
landed in the 3rd bedroom.
Helen had a top bunk & 2 the
bottom, I think I got the short
end of the stick as there was
some mighty queer noises float-
ing down. (don't worry I sent
them back to) Bev & Therese
had the other two single beds,
while Mary & Maureen made
do with a mattress each on the
floor which was a shame for
Maureen as we had to stand
all over her bed to get
anywhere so she was lucky
in one way cause she couldn't
make her bed. Anyhow having
sorted the sleeping emergency
out we all went down to the
beach, as it was only a short
way we took the bus to
save our feet (7 mins) it
was a bit cool but we
braved the water (except
Cathy) and Bev wouldn't get
wet, what a shame we

and catch her. Finally we
 went home had tea and mucked
 around till everybody had had
 tea. Whoever thought they were
 going to have a nice sleep was
 for a big shock, as the thing
 the six of us got up to was
 hilarious and it'll leave that
 to your imaginations? no wonder
 why Mary got a bedroom
 to themselves (they were smart)
 Well that sort of thing went
 on all week or just about. We
 went to quite a few places
 most of us have never been to
 before. Phillip Island really
 ticks out the most to me as
 it was absolutely beautiful, even
 the ferry ride was enjoyable.
 Sunday came all but too soon

and we were packing up &
 leaving, we left about 1pm
 as we were driving early
 to just past the Dandenong
 About 6pm, we arrived home
 (I might add if I had had
 my way it would have been
 the wee hours of the morning)
 On the whole everybody had
 a great time, we were lucky
 with the weather and ended
 up nice and brown if not
 red for some, Mary was a
 bit annoyed I think with
 all the wind that was
 around, but in sure Helen
 couldn't help it, "aye Helen".
 I could write a lot more, I'm
 sure you'd enjoy reading it but it
 would take pages & pages, so that's
 it folks, "our holiday".

Val Martin



LIVING IN THE HOUSING COMMISSION ESTATE.

Continued from previous Page.

LIVING IN HOUSING COMMISSION ESTATE

CONTINUED FROM Page. 3.

I am fairly happy, but SOME-TIMES I DON'T LIKE LIVING IN THE ESTATES.

The things that make me happy, ARE that there are plenty of friends. To muck around with and most of them stick together. When you're in any sort of trouble they will help you. A lot of them you can ^{talk} about things, you don't want to talk about e.g. your parents or any adults. That wouldn't understand your problem.

Things that make me unhappy are that if you know by a few people - E.G. The estate officer, or just face is known tend to get blamed for everything or nearly everything that you don't even know what they're talking about or you weren't even around at that time.

The problems I face as part of a family are that you often tend to be in the way all the time or if you get blamed for something you didn't do, your parents don't listen to your side of the story and more-or-less believe what the person complaining has to say. If you have something to say to your parents and they just send you away you get in a stink and they wonder why you are in a

Continued from previous Page.

Stink - this they get in a stink, and tell you off for being in a stink, when they started it in the first place

I think parents should listen to reason.

② In my spare time I either read or just potter around really there is nothing to do downtown either

③ Security Guards.

Security guards are hired to keep peace and order on the estate, In the evenings they are not meant to bother people. I was walking home with some friends, and they came up to us and asked us our names and addresses. Till these guards came from miles around and set up a "wall of men"

Later in the week I heard that one of my friends had been bashed with batons, that they carry for no reason. They should take up professional Bashing.

Other Nationalities: most of them think they own the estate and if they have parties till all hours of the night no-body says anything. We would be served with eviction notices

④ No I don't think we should be involved in wars going on over-seas between other countries

LIFE IN HOUSING COMMISSION ESTATES.

1) Sometimes I am happy living in Housing Commission flats.

2) The thing that makes me happy is when I am with all my friends and we are playing together by ourselves, but the things that make me sick is when we get told of for playing downstairs, and then we get told of for playing on the balconies. The other thing that makes me sick, is when kids go out people might ask us where we live, we tell them and they put us down because they think people living in Housing Commission flats are trouble makers, but really we don't if they want to know what we are really like they should come and meet us personally.

3) The thing I hate as being a teenager is when I walk around with boys, my mom gets angry because she thinks I am going to get into trouble. I am nearly 14 years old and I am only allowed out till 8.30 pm, my sister is 11 years and she is allowed out till 7.30 - 8 pm, the other thing that gets to me about being a teenager is when we get told of for things we didn't do, they blame us because we are teenagers and they reckon we get up to a lot of mischief.

4) In my spare time, I listen to the radio and wander round the flat, sometimes, I go downstairs, but there's very little to do.

5) Some tenants on my floor think they own the joint, (10th floor) for the simple reason, that they were here first. When my mom does the washing they come into the laundry and want to use

LIVING IN HOUSING COMMISSION ESTATES.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE.

WASHING MACHINES, SO THEY TAKE OUR STUFF OUT OF THE MACHINE
AND CHUCK IT ON THE FLOOR, THEY DO THE SAME WHEN WE USE THE
WASHER AND THE CLOTHES LINE. SOME TENANTS ON MY FLOOR HAVE GOT
BUSTING HABITS LIKE CHUCKING FILTHY GARBAGE OVER THE SIDE OF THE
BUILDING, WHEN THE CLEANERS FIND OUT THEY USUALLY BLAME THE KIDS WHO
WERE RECENTLY MOVED IN. THE CLEANERS ARE JUST AS BAD E.G. SOME
THE ADULTS SLAG IN THE LIFTS, AND IF THEY ARE THE CLEANERS
END, THE KIDS GET THE BLAME. ONE OF THE CLEANERS BLAMED MY
FRIEND FOR SLAGING IN THE LIFT, NOW HE ISN'T ALLOWED IN THIS BLOCK
FLATS AGAIN, FOR SOMETHING HE DIDN'T DO.
I DON'T THINK THAT WE SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE VARS OVER-
SAS, BECAUSE THEN WE GET KILLED FOR SOMETHING THAT THEY STARTED.



WOMEN
MAKE
POLICY
NOT
COFFEE

(BARBACUE)
FRIDAY 29th
FROM 6PM ONWARDS
AT KENSINGTON WOMENS
GROUP 89 McCracken ST.

COME ALONG AND
BRING THE KIDS "B.Y.O." MEAT + DRINK.

GET OUT OF YOUR FLAT

FOR A WHILE

ENJOY THE LUXURY OF A BACK YARD.

DROP IN CENTRE OPEN 9-6



"DA
ANOM

"D.D."

[illegible]