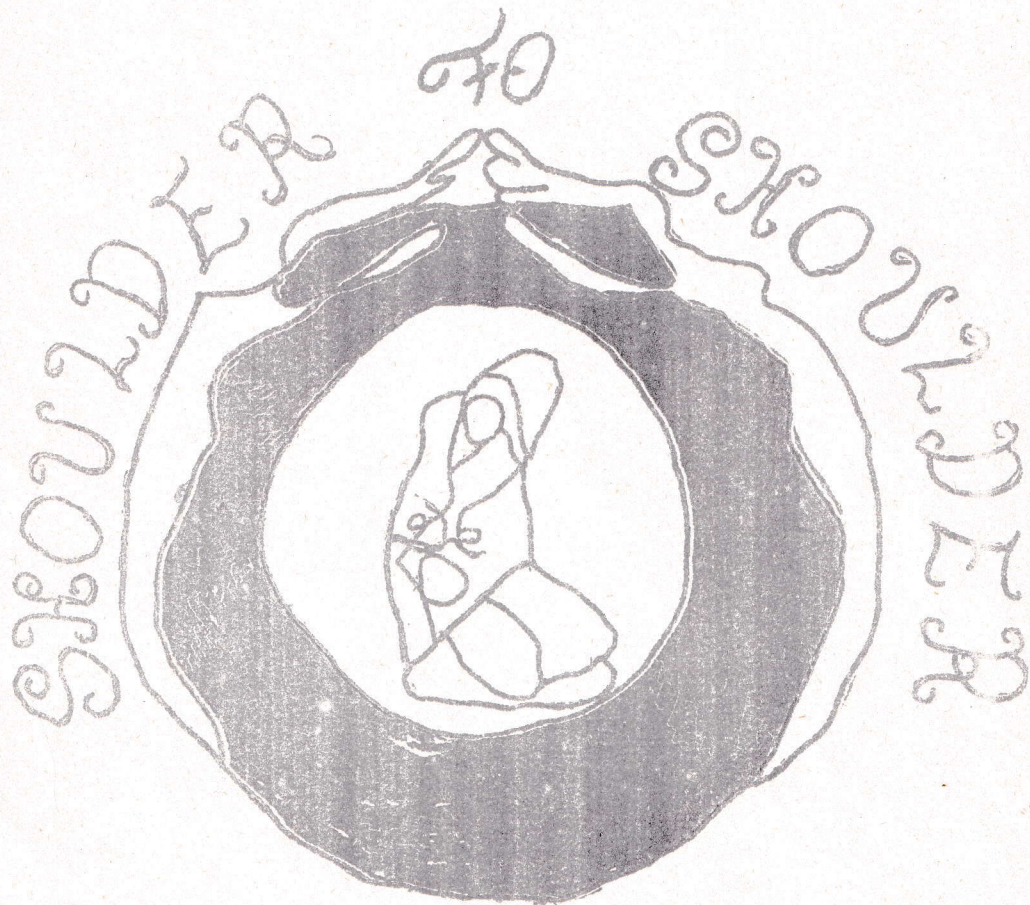


Alex 2/10 Durham.

KENSINGTON
WOMEN'S GROUP



NEWSLETTER
VOL: 3: NO 16.

KILDGATE COOPERATIVE
89 MCRACKEN ST KEN
PHONE: 3767280

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((HAPPY READING.)))

ANY COMMENTS WRITE TO THE
EDITOR. % 'SHOULDER TO SHOULDER.'

EDITORIAL - Inside the Co-operative.

The co-operative - that is : a) Administration

- 1) Treasury
- 2) Secretary
- 3) Chair person

b) Management Committee.

One of the tasks we considered necessary to secure was to organise a framework, whereby members can be encouraged to learn what their role is and how to take up responsibility in decision making. Ann Morrow has given us a few basic workshops on meeting procedures and formal decision making. Since the Annual General Meeting this year, committee members were able to form themselves into sub committees and co-opt other interested people to work on these. The areas of administration taken responsibility for was mainly finance and staffing, and furthermore, because these are functioning it has provided a clearer view and forum (general meetings) for the wider membership of the co-op to be involved.

The finance committee, with consultation and the resources of other skilled people have been able to take up the -

- 1) maintenance of books

1.

- 2) up to date treasurers reports.
- 3) paying of wages
- 4) taxation
- 5) paying of accounts
- 6) and presently learning to do recurrent funding forms, submissions and so on.

Staffing The committee has been able to take up issues relating to staffing, and where appropriate, to attend staff meetings to discuss issues.

Volunteers Although the involvement of volunteers is not a formal set happening, the involvement of volunteers throughout all aspects of the house is strong. However, we realise that more, formal contact with the parents of the children involved is needed, and the ways in which this is done will be partly determined by reviewing staff's tasks and the role of the committee. Parents should be involved in tasks related to the co-op and further well-being of the facility.

General Meetings. General Meetings are happening each month where the committee is able to report back on the decisions and happenings of the house, made at directors meetings. Issues are up for open discussion on areas that effect the whole co-op. Attendance is growing and the management committee is able to run these between themselves.

Furthermore, I would consider that the house is able to handle all aspects of its affairs, and where necessary to call on the skills and resources of others where appropriate.

The house - a community place

As with all groups, participation and involvement steadily fluctuates back and forth.

At times, the house serves dozens of people in any one week, not only for the purposes of child care but also as a place where friends, discussions and activities are held. Periodically, attendance lapses at the house, due usually to the individuals personal reasons, however, the house is able to go to them, where they are at. At most times, people drift back, sometimes resuming a position of responsibility or taking on a new role within the house. Many of our activities or the house itself has attracted different people who usually have been in Kensington for sometime, and thus, the broader networks of contacts we have developed over the last six months has become more concrete.

I do not suspect that the majority of those involved, wish to be involved in a range of classes etc. I feel, where appropriate we should channel people into already existing facilities and/or groups that offer a variety of classes, not only to enable people to become familiar with the broader community, but also to learn to utilize resources designed specifically for such interests.

Generally, over viewing our role, I see that Mc Cracken Street, offers a resource with dual components, (apart from the available child care). That is - it offers companionship in a relaxing, non-committing atmosphere for those who wish to be thus involved, and it offers numerous opportunities in a variety of areas

for those who wish to take some responsibility and who hopefully gain experiences, skills, knowledge and confidence in return, thus reflecting their own life situations.

Secondly, the house serves as a "stop-gap" for those seeking advice, information, knowledge, to talk over problems and so on, with a secure backstop for one venturing out into the world to "try", "seek", and "work-through" things related to themselves. I would say that this element of the house is its most significant. We are not in a position to "solve problems" as such, however, we can be there, supporting, encouraging, discussing alternatives and so on. Our direction is somewhat determined by those who are apart of the house and its happenings. Hopefully, as a resource, we can create and further re-create further resources within those involved and via assistance to others.

A large part of our role has been talking with other groups, intending to set-up something similar to ours, and as well, already existing groups which wish to include the family support component. Since September last year we have participated in workshops, discussions etc, with over twenty different groups, talking historically and presently about the co-operative, its people and role.

The co-op has grown and people with it.

Marg. Welsh.

OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

Dear Marg,

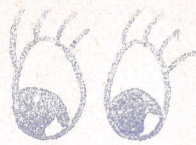
Hope this is O.K.

Tell the women they can read
between the lines as much as
they like!!!

P.S. We really do mean what
we have written because they
really are a great group!!!

We've been asked to write
about you but would rather write
to you, because we've been close
to you as friends in lots of
different ways! What a group!!

You've had hard times and
good times, but through all the
ups and downs you've helped
each other and worked together
— and done something very
important and very special —



you have had the ideas to start with and have worked together to make them real — a house and all that goes with it!

You have shown that it doesn't really matter if people make mistakes, because you have shown that you can still go on working together and learning from the mistakes.

We believe that you have had a difficult job to do and you have been able to take full responsibility for a very interesting house. And more than that — you have taken responsibility for each other, encouraging each one to do what they are best at. All we can say is — "There will NEVER be another group like you!!"

Helen, Ces + Denise (Pattie + Conan haven't seen this — but we know they would agree.)

{ A DAY TRIP TO FRANKSTON. }

During the May holidays we had a day trip to Frankston, We met at the house at 10-am. There were 9 children and 5 adults, so off we go to Ken station, and the sun was shining so it looked as though we were in for a nice day, we got two family concession tickets as it was cheaper, So 10-30 AM we are on the train and heading for the city, change at Flinders street and all aboard the Frankston train

All settled and relaxed we had a smoke the boys sitting in the compartment behind and the girls in the seat just behind us. We passed quite a few stations, when one of the boys comes to tell us that a Kid is fighting with one of our Kids, up jumps Mary and charges along the train and has a word with the Kid. Mary comes back everything sorted out (no one is going to pick on our Kids) Good on yer Mary. We all settle down again Frankston next stop. P.T.O. FOR REST OF STORY.

Off the train and every one runs to the 'loo' ^{slip} and then down to the shopping centre,

The two older girls set off for the '3 m.p.' radio station, and the older boys to the beach for fish we gave them these lunches and showed them where to meet us at a certain time

Then off we go window shopping, our thirst is building up and we are dying for a cup of tea, so we look around, and guess what there in the middle of Frankston you guessed it "COLES" so in we go just like home "tea & chips" filled up thirst quenched, we make for the beach, it was a beautiful day, and the smaller kids went for a paddle so we sat in the sun and relaxed, it's a nice feeling away from the city, even if it's only for a couple of hours.

Then it's time to set off for the station again half the kids missing, which is usual for us, at the station every one to the "Loo" and then the kiosk, when the train comes in, we start to panic when the last two arrive thank goodness, all aboard and off home. Back in Ken all tired but happy then it starts, "What's for tea Mam I'm starving" Ben "what a lousy day", But we know they enjoyed it

CEYLONESE THERESE

There was a girl called Therese
Who the kids called Ceylonese Therese;
Some women called her Black girl
Others called her nuts!

Because she's been to all the nutty places
in eleven months

She thinks it's better to be nutty;
Than been a dummy, or even a pommie
And she eats rice and curry in a hurry;
And she thinks some Aussie ar funny;
for not liking curry

She likes been Ceylonese Therese;

And love having friends like -

Aussies and Pommies.
9.

Outside Looking in

The womens group has always amazed me - the thing you've got above all is 'STICKABILITY'! When plenty of other groups have died, you've kept going (I suspect sometimes crawling along on your backsides but you're still together).

In the last twelve months, lots of things you've talked about, or tried in small ways have really happened.

You seem to be doing things for families, as well as 'women', and a whole lot of people who earlier would have thought you were too dicky are now coming and enjoying themselves.

As well, its the womens group who are actually running the house, doing the accounts, hiring and firing staff, and making policy decisions. Thats a really great achievement.

Outside Looking in

Becoming larger and more successful also brings its difficulties. Already you must be facing the problem of how to keep doing all these things, plus trying new ones, without becoming octopuses; of being overwhelmed with all the meetings and paperwork of keeping a group going; and also keeping everyone feeling part of what's happening; and continually finding out what people are good at so that they can be encouraged to share their skills. Every other Ken. group has this problem — I hope you solve it!

One of the things I've admired about the womens group is that you've worked hard at getting everyone involved in saying how the place should be run.

Having everyone help make decisions means that your decisions, and disagreements are out in the open.

Outside Looking in

It's much more public than in big organisations which manage to hide their fights, and pretend they don't happen. But being part of a community (especially Kensington, which has a good 'grape vine'!) you're very public.

I guess each time you sort out your differences it's important to both - keep working on your community image, as well as the caring feeling within the group, because that's what encourages new people to come and try you out.

A special congratulations on 'Shoulder to Shoulder' - it's great, and one of the best ways to remind Ken. you're around.

Lesley Hoatson

Educational System

Most girls are brought up to believe that it's natural for a girl to get married and have kids. But really it's not our decision. We are under a great influence by our school. It doesn't matter if you go to a private school or a co-ed school they all have the same influence. They influence girls to be early and not play day games like cricket or football which boys can. It's only natural! Girls are supposed to play house and learn about domestic life. Women should know for when they get married. They influence boys to keep on studying and go on to get a good education for their family's, which naturally brings in money for women getting married in the first place. I'm not saying don't get married but if you do I just hope it's your decision. But if education is compulsory for both sexes why do they only encourage certain parts of education for girls and certain parts for boys. If we have to go to the same school then we should make our own decisions as to what we are going to be (a doctor, a teacher or engineer) and get ahead and not let the school say, haven't a word, any woman can do anything.

continue

think it's a masculine job and women can't handle it, but of course we know that's not true. If we are going to do something then we need better education than boys. But if you set on being a housewife that's o.k. Marriage is very important for everyone but if you are going to be a bachelor or spinster is also important but just as long as it's your decision. When women's liberationists say that they want to be independent women they also say they want to be free from men.

They believe that in being independent women they are also freeing men, and should be able to do any job capable to their standards.

All I'm trying to say is if someone will be the first lady fireman or mechanic etc. It will be a lot easier for the feminine race to show that they are as good as the masculine race.

Soyuz Green.

14.

This issue of S.T.S. brought to you by - Therese, Andrea, Jill, Carol, Maureen, Bev, Mary - Thanks to - Denise, Marian, Barbara, Steve, Wesley, Sonia

LOOKING AT LEISURE

Having spoken to a number of groups and individuals over the last couple of months, I gain the impression that a majority of people are not aware of the range and nature of activities that are available in Kensington.

The Holland Park C.C. has come under a great deal of criticism in the area of providing activities for teenagers and adults.

The centre will be endeavouring to introduce a number a day and evening activities for adults and re-vamping the teenage programme.

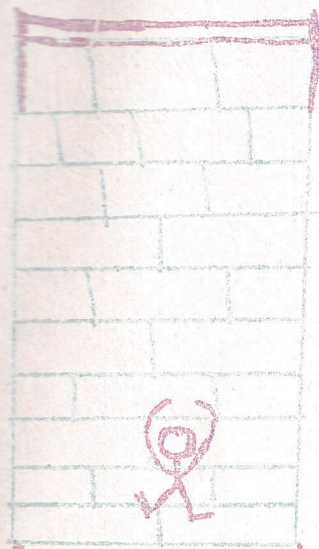
It is hoped that the changes will better serve the community. These changes will be of little value unless people (this means YOU) are prepared to give it a go.

Looking at Leisure (cont'd)

The centre staff are keen to receive suggestions and comments on ways to improve the centre and its programme.

Remember - it's so easy to sit back and criticize - it's bloody hard to get things going!

Stephen Carter
Ass. Rec. Officer
Ph. 376 2002.



HERE IS YOUR CHANCE
TO CLIMB A BRICK
WALL, WITH THE HELP
OF STEPHEN.
(GIVE A HAND.)

{ NEXT ISSUE OF SHOULDER TO }
{ SHOULDER WILL BE AUGUST. }
AS WE WILL BE BUSY
TRYING TO CLIMB THE WALL
WITH STEPHEN !!!

Outside Looking In II

I wandered into the house in 89 McCracken Street last Friday and Michelle met me and made me feel at home. The children were away on an excursion, so the house was quiet; it wasn't lonely though - it felt peaceful and lived-in and loved. The view through the open back door was of green lawn; that was new since my last visit, and the city was in the background. The front room where women met to chat and have coffee had a new rug and easy chairs, so I sat in there and relaxed while waiting for Maureen and Maury. Lil was there for a while and I enjoyed talking to her about some of the new things she is doing and discovering. There were some wonderful photographs on the walls - frank, full of fun and movement. I knew many of the people and it was good to see them involved in many different activities. I heard about the Easter camp and some of the other things that have been happening.

I came away with my eyes just a bit moist. I remember when the women's group was dreamt about and started - a place where women could drop in, make friends, escape for a short while from the cramped housing they lived in, bring the children so they could play with other children, or have them minded for a time - more than that it was to be a place where women could grow and develop as real people.

But there wasn't a house to begin with, and getting a grant for a house and then doing it up with very limited means - (not to forget the submission that had to be written first) was all a daunting task. I remember some 17

of the frayed Tempers, and the conflict, and the people who came and went, and I wonder that it ever happened.

But it has happened and it seemed to me last Friday that there is a lot of promise for the future. Child care is well established and seems to be fairly well integrated with the women's Group. It seems possible for women to come and enjoy the group for a while and then leave without being pressured and made to feel guilty about leaving.

There are well thought-out activities and excursions out of Melbourne where people can relate easily to one another and enjoy themselves in an open and honest way.

I see the Women Group playing an important part in making a healthy community in Kensington. When women can feel alive and have friends, and things to do that are important to them, they do not seem to need medical attention very often.

I congratulate you on what has been done and hope you will have lots of good times in the future.

Barbara Baird

June 1980.

