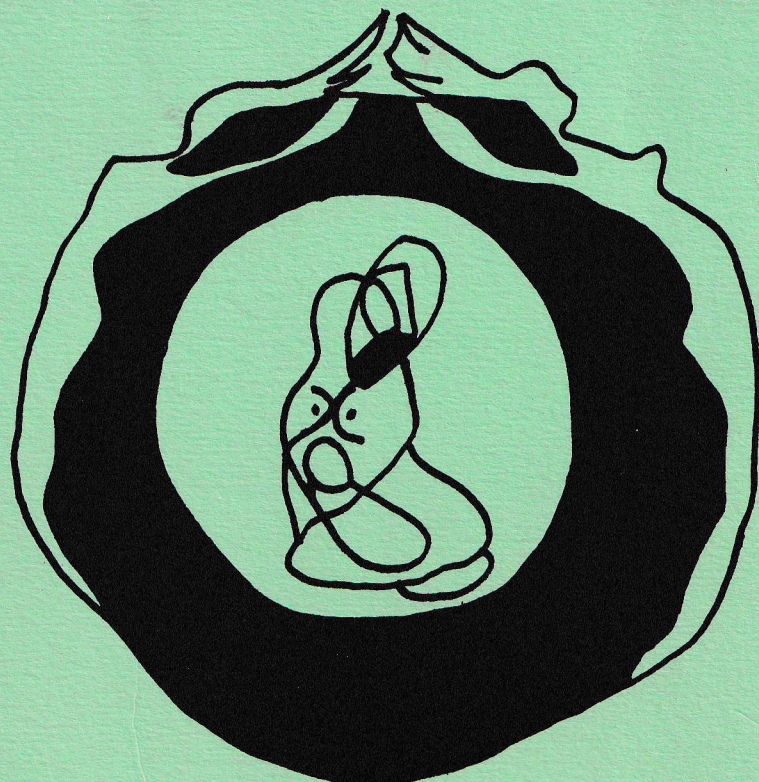


# **KENSINGTON WOMEN'S GROUP**

**SHOULDER TO SHOULDER**



**NEWSLETTER  
89 mc. cracken street  
kensington**

**SPECIAL ISSUE 1980.**

A  
COLLECTION  
OF ~  
STORIES,  
CHANGES,  
POEMS  
COMMENTS,  
FEELINGS.

# CONTENTS:

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**part 1** "THE HOUSE" - PROGRAMS, CHANGES, DEVELOPMENTS.

**part 2** FEELINGS, FRIENDS, COPING, LONLINESS, FAMILY.

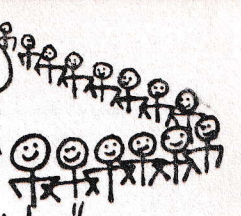
**part 3** CAMPS, EXCURSIONS, TRIPS.

**part 4** OUTSIDE VIEWS,

**part 5** ACTIVITIES, PHOTO'S, PERSONAL VIEWS, LETTERS.

**part 6** VIEWS ON - YOUTH, UNEMPLOYMENT, COMMENTS.

# SHOULDER TO SHOULDER



We would like to clarify the reason why this title was chosen and how we responded to its suggestion.

Historically, this well known title is related to the early suffragette movement and feminist women such as Emmeline Pankhursts, fought tirelessly for the vote for women, amongst other womens rights issues, in the earlier part of the 20th century.

The words "shoulder to shoulder", have often been associated 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 Womens Group (despite the fact that a few of us had knowledge of shoulder to shoulder's origin), responded

to the title "shoulder to shoulder", as exactly that - shoulder to shoulder.

We could have called it "sticking 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 Womens 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.

AUGUST 1980.

# EDITORIAL:

## this issue and our house—

Everybody needs the opportunity to say exactly what and how they feel without somebody telling them, you can't or you shouldn't say that. We are only human after all, very much tied to our own opinion, we all have feelings, that sometimes can only be expressed on paper.

Some people cannot communicate face to face, shoulder to shoulder gives you the opportunity to do this, a chance for people to share their thoughts and worries about everyday living, after all, when you think about it most everybody's problems are the same or very similar. Everybody needs friends, help, and love and sometimes in their life.

If you find it difficult to speak about it in person, put it down on paper, you will find there is always someone there who understands and can help in some way. This is how our newsletter came about.

Many of us sat around organising and writing for each issue, but much more was talked about, others gathered around and drank coffee, some often cried. The house provides a place for people who have nowhere else to go. Where they can meet people, have a good laugh, make new friends, and do the things they are capable of doing, with encouragement, enthusiasm and fun.

# EDITORIAL cont...

It also offers great opportunities for lone parent families, where they can just come and talk to other adults, and where cheap holidays are organised for them and their children, so they can get breaks away from the flats and the houses and city life.

No one person is under any obligation, they are free to come and go as they please. But if they do make commitments they are encouraged to stick with them.

Our house belongs to us, and we have grown in confidence and ability and learnt so much about ourselves and each other, and we all have much more understanding and awareness of people's individual needs, our motto is sharing and caring, as that's what it's all about.

People said we couldn't do it, but they soon realised the capabilities of the women, less trips to the doctors, laughing at themselves, talking about themselves, and believing in themselves, changing in appearance and much more happier knowing they weren't struggling on their own.

The tides are changing and the house is often called upon to give opinions and participate in broader community issues.

The house is not to do with end products, but rather it revolves around learning; these processes are the most important part.

We hope you enjoy this issue.



# THANKS TO:

Therese  
Bev  
Val  
Maureen  
Marg  
Beryl  
Debbie  
Donise J  
Denise C  
Marion  
Helen  
Cec  
Deanne  
Gail  
Sue  
Francis  
Ann  
Kerrie  
Jill  
Andrea  
Carol

Lesley  
Barbara  
Kathy  
Lil  
Edith  
Lyn



and all the others who encouraged us and supported us.

Mary K, Mary B, Maureen P, Helen, Nell, Dot, Val J, Elizabeth, Shirley, Vicky, Winsome, Peter.

and the staff,

Michelle, Debbie, Jenny and the kids who wrote articles, And those who's names don't appear.

Thanks  
1990.

# **PART 1**

# Outreach Programme

SEPTEMBER  
1979.

The Kensington W.G drop - in centre exists, simply because there remains an ever expanding and obvious need to provide a service that is orientated towards building personal friendships, family support and access to information related to areas that are vital to our existence and survival as human beings as well as building up our awareness of our community. That we are presented and understand alternatives to our current situation that often proves difficult and traumatic eg. home management, effective communication; that through sharing skills and personal support, that we strive towards helping ourselves, while offering this same opportunity to others in similar situations, that through our involvement and shared opportunity we begin to understand our individual rights and

awareness as human beings, and not be defeated by things we don't understand or haven't had knowledge about in the past.

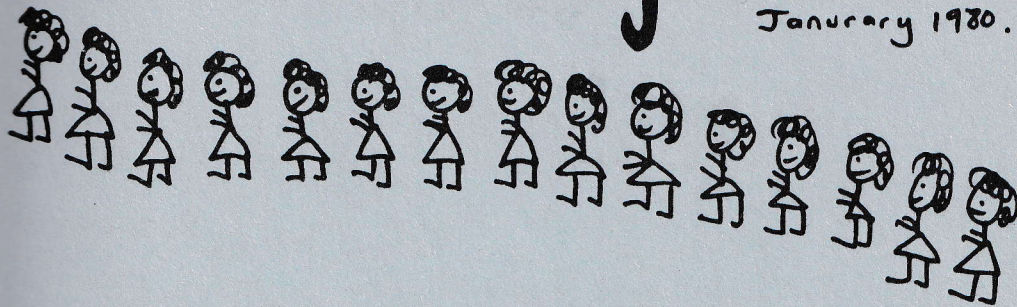
Basically we maintain that our service aims to provide a positive and developing approach towards certain ways of living that have in the past crushed and negated our responsibilities and family life.

Our future as a service cannot be pin-pointed or described in explicit detail, as we operate flexibly, according to changing needs and demands in respect to the level of involvement, however we can be explicit about the fact that we believe there will always remain a need for such a service as long as many of us remain isolated and dependent (receiving pension benefits, unemployment) but despite our social and economic problems we are participants in this situation.

We maintain that our service provides for basic human needs and rights along with opportunities for all people to have the option to responsibly contribute and further our centre via sharing knowledge and skills and simply joining in.

# "Into the Eighties...."

January 1980.



As we have reached the 1980's, or 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 I 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 (lets 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 undercoated. While Maureen, I think had more blue paint on the walls, face and arms that 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. I say started as we didn't have enough paint, so that has still to be done. Next was to buy a few things to make the office even brighter, so Marg and Helen purchased a deep blue carpet and 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, its really amazing what a bit of paint and people working together and I mean together can achieve. I think the people who used the house last year can appreciate and see the improvement that these few women who gave 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 organized for this year. There are to be holidays for familys 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 (and days so everyone has a chance to come along). These films are provided by State Film Centre and 20th Century Fox. We are also pleased to say we now have our own lending library, while we havn't a large 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.

# a parents view of the co-op

## "OUR SON RICHARD"

FEBRUARY 1980.

Our son Richard has been at the co-op for over a year now, and in all aspects, we are very pleased with the care he is receiving there. I think that the best judges of a child care situation are the children themselves and gaging from Richard and the rest of the children's responses to the "house", McCracken Street is functioning as an ideal environment for pre-school aged children.

A wide range of interesting activities are being provided for the children and the environs of the house and yard are continually being improved and renovated.

We have noticed many attitudes that Richard has developed, through the co-op situation which seem to be lacking in an only child, of this age, at home. These are - a willingness to share things, an ability to play amicably with other children, a communicative attitude, and a positive response to instructions. We acknowledge Jean, Michelle and Lyn's roles in the development of these characteristics.

The Women's Group, being the founders of the co-op situation, are a vital part of the "house". Their willingness to assist with the child care proceedings and their presence around the place, including Marg's, gives the children a variety of people to respond to.

In closing, I would like to include a special "thank you" to Jean, for all she has done for Richard over this, and last year. From the start, in agreeing to take a child as young as Richard was, she has displayed a gentle and responsive attitude to her young charges, as have Michelle and Lyn. We will miss her very much and can only hope that her replacement will be as capable.

Debbie Bourke.



Richard.....

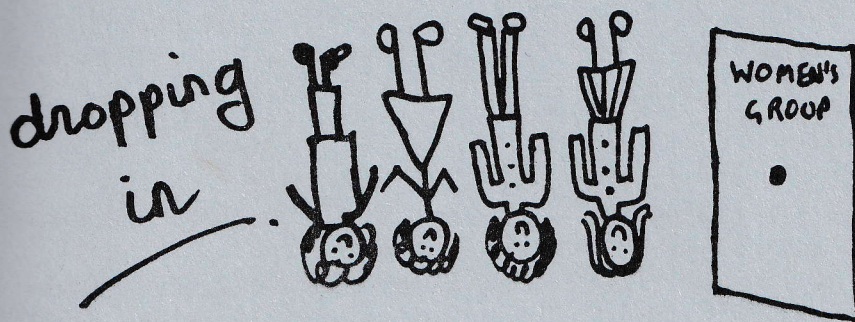
NOVEMBER 1979

# "Getting It Together"

We have been able to let you know, through a variety of articles and stories published in S.T.S. over the last 2½ months, what sort of things and activities we are involved in and other projects we are currently in the process of developing.

One of the main things that stands out in our centre, is the consistency of people who use the "drop in centre" on a regular basis. On any one day, there are as many as 15-20 people who come through the door between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Often, a lot of these people, go off, and come back throughout the day 2-3 times. There is always someone around to talk with, to listen, give advice or help with some problem. We have recognised the ever expanding need to include evening and weekend activities, as these times are often the most loneliest for people because, either, they have no-one else, they work or their social life is somewhat non-existent. The weekend of activities we have recently was quite successful, with around 30 people passing through the door, enjoying the fun, meeting friends - feeling at home.

Many of us have contact with a number of families and individuals who are not able and/or ready to become a part of a larger group. We visit regularly, as to provide companionship and keep them informed realising that, people will become involved on their own level, at their own pace.



The Drama Group is well on the way and provides great release and self expression through its group work orientation.

Our regular Wednesday discussions, shopping days, dinners, family outings, B-B-Q's and the establishing of a resource centre and library, not only offers a chance to build relationships, but, as well, a chance to share in the organising and carrying through. Our article in the October Ken. news describes some of it this way -

# "getting it together"

"Our group is orientated towards - mutual support of each other, creating on-going friendships (particularly outside of the house), self help (having the opportunity to learn and experience new things or alternatives to things that have often proven a trial and difficult in the past, sharing knowledge and having access to information related to areas that effect us, for example, what to do and who to contact if assistance is needed, say, with over due social security benefits. Thus, through sharing skills and knowledge and personal real support we strive towards the understanding of the practicalities and efforts involved in helping ourselves to better our lives, whilst offering this same opportunity to others in similar situations.

Moreover, we discuss broadly, our own involvement, participation and responsibilities to others and the centre, how we feel about this, are there are problems, new developments, and on it goes.

The group tries to maintain regular contact with other women and agencies in the area, as to allow, input and discussion on areas of our work which is interrelated.

This ensures that:

1. people know who is doing what and with whom,
2. that there is little as possible, duplication of services,
3. that we are in a position to put people in contact with the appropriate person and for the right reason."

Often, many of us, who are either working in the field of community work or participating in community activities, get tired of using the same language and phrases to describe our group, its function and so on. I guess it is hard to substitute or get away from using such words as, "participate", "involvement", "responsibility", etc. It seems to be a part of the welfare "cult", and besides, in using them, we all know what we are talking about. In fact, we constantly describe the Women's Group using such terms, as we believe, that those words best describe our work, programme and those involved.

Starting in the next issue of S.T.S. we are going to bring you a 6 part history, describing the growth and development of the Women's Group (Child Care Co-operative) from 1975 to 1979. "DOING IT TOGETHER" - a study commissioned by Community Child Care, researched and written by Sophie Inwald in collaboration with Yoland Wadsworth and with the help of parents and staff of neighbourhood houses throughout Victoria, looks at the emergence of the Women's Group,

reasons for establishment, type of approach, and the processes involved. We will attempt to recount 1979 as our sixth part, as to keep the history alive.

**\* THE 6TH PART ISN'T WRITTEN TECHNICALLY, WE FEEL IT'S WRITTEN, HERE, THROUGHOUT THIS PUBLICATION, IN OUR HOUSE, IN THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE APART OF IT.**

MAY 1980.

# Inside the Co-operative..



- THE CO-OPERATIVE - that is:
- 1) Treasury
  - 2) Secretary
  - 3) Chairperson
  
  - b) management committee
  - c) co-op members
  - d) staff
  - e) kids
  - f) women's group.

One of the tasks we considered necessary to secure  
to organise a framework, whereby members can be encour-  
ed to learn what their role is and how to take up res-  
ponsibility in decision making. Ann Morrow has given us a few  
workshops on meeting procedures and formal decision  
making.

Since the Annual General Meeting this year, committee members  
are able to form themselves into sub committees and co-  
-ordinate 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  
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 res-  
ources of other skilled people we have been able to take

# Inside the Co-operative

© © cont

appropriate.

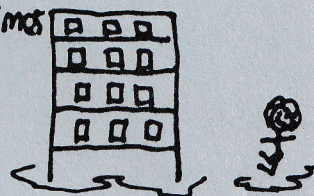
## THE HOUSE - A COMMUNITY PLACE.

As with all groups, participation fluctuates, steadily 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, meet and 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're 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, of 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, overviewing our role, I see that McCracker St. offers a resource with dual components, (apart from the available child care. That is:- it offers companionship in a relaxing, non-committing atmosphere for

# Inside the Co-operative

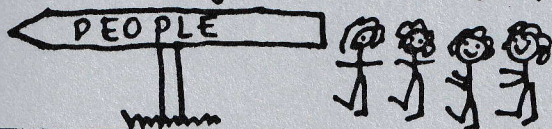
who wish to be thus involved, and it offers numerous opportunities in a variety of areas for those who wish to take some responsibility and who hopefully gain experiences, skills, knowledge and confidence in return, thus reflecting their own life situations.

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 part of the house and its happenings. Hopefully as a resource, we can create and further re-create resources with those involved, via assistance to others.

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

The co-op has grown and people with it.



Marg.

**PART  
2**



# DO YOU CARE?

SEPTEMBER 1979.

Do you care that I'm going off my head because my money has run out 3 days before the next pension cheque is due?

Do you care that I feel I need a valium or two during the day to see the night fall?

Do you care that my kid has been missing for 5 nights and 6 days and I don't know where to find him?

Do you care that I can't get off the booze, that I need its thrill, its violence, its awful stink?

Do you care that I don't know what to do when I'm threatened with eviction at 5 pm on Friday evening?

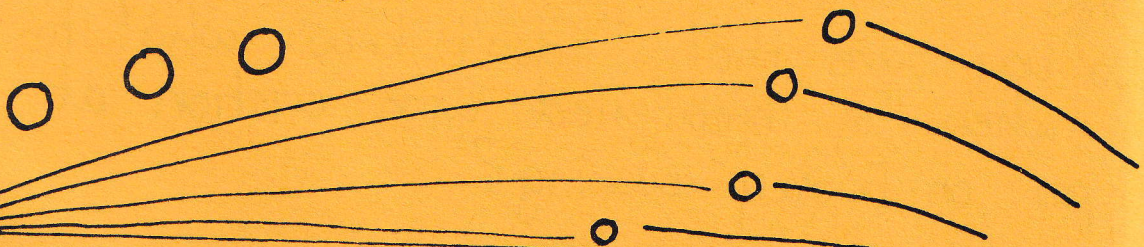
Do you care that I feel like killing my kid almost every night not because I want to kill her, but because I can't handle having to be mother, father, educator, cleaner, cook, friend, understander, recreational officer, law enforcer 15 hours to 24 a day, and yeah, on it goes?

Do you care that my self-opinion has gotten so damn low that I can't see clear skys or breath fresh air any longer?

It may seem to you that I am a no-hoper. I've copped that statement all my life since I was crawling.

Or maybe you think I don't want to help myself or that I can't really face what I am.

Well, I've got news for you. We all have our problems, traumas, heartaches. It's just that they are on different levels, different degrees. I need the knowledge of your experiences and you need mine. Right so let's! Cut all the ideological crap. Let's stop saying "Oh, god, here we go again!" and get on with it and decide realistically if we do care!!



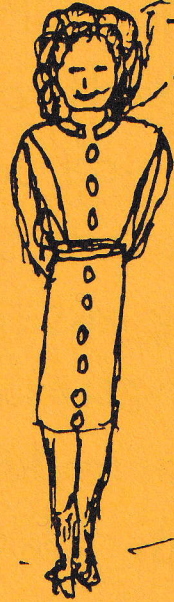
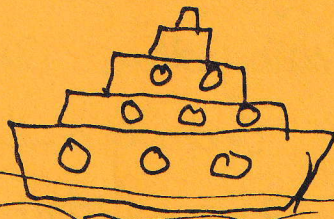
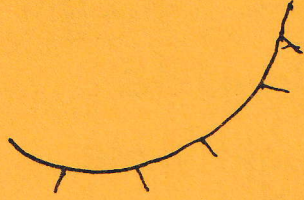
# REMEMBERING the PAST .....

OCTOBER 1979.

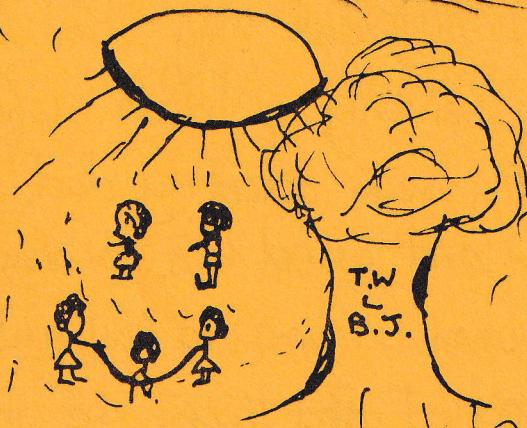
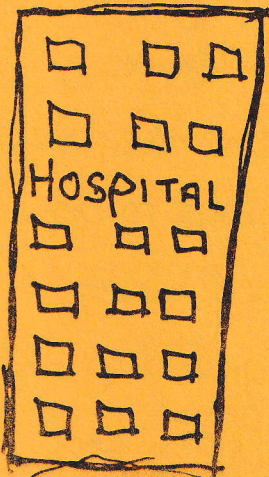
When I was a little girl I remember how I loved music. And  
my age. Rock n' Roll was the music, at that time. And I  
used to dance, with my brother. And I remember, how my  
used to shout at me. When I used to jump, on my brothers  
and somersault. She thought something would happen  
me. How I loved those years. And at that time. I thought  
were the most beautiful songs. Rock a' Round the  
See you later Alligator etc. And I thought those  
will never pass. Then I remember going to school with  
classmates. And we loved those rainy days. And some-  
even the teacher stayed away. And we really had  
those days. Then there was a time. I couldn't see the  
figures on the board at school. And everything went wrong.  
had to wear glasses. After I wore my glasses. My work  
improved in school. I left school in form 3. Then we  
moved house. And went to give by the sea. One the week-  
ends. Friends used to come home. And we all used to go  
for seabaths. But I couldn't swim. Then we moved house  
again. By that time, most of my friends. Had migrated to other  
countries. My sis 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  
mother 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.

# REMEMBERING the PAST

I got very sick. And I had to enter hospital for 11 months. When I came out of hospital. We moved to Kensington. Since then I have joined the Womens Group. And I am happy to say I have found many friends in the Womens Group. They are all very kind and understanding.



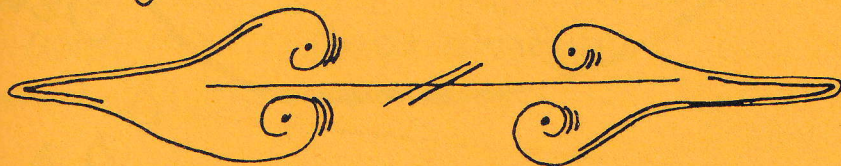
THINKING

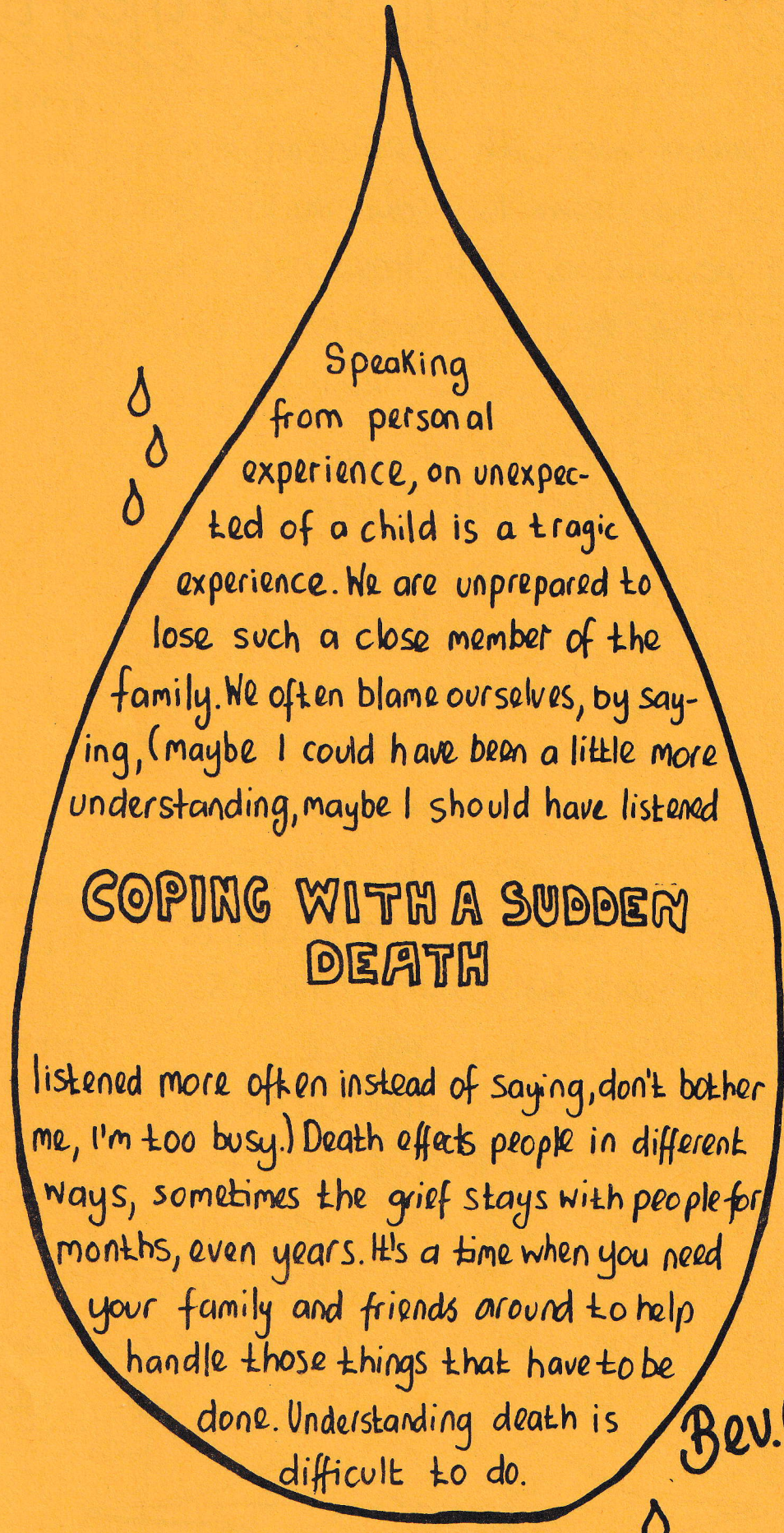


# people learn what they live

OCTOBER 1979.

- 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





Speaking from personal experience, on unexpected of a child is a tragic experience. We are unprepared to lose such a close member of the family. We often blame ourselves, by saying, (maybe I could have been a little more understanding, maybe I should have listened

## COPING WITH A SUDDEN DEATH

listened more often instead of saying, don't bother me, I'm too busy.) Death affects people in different ways, sometimes the grief stays with people for months, even years. It's a time when you need your family and friends around to help handle those things that have to be done. Understanding death is difficult to do.

Bev. Green.

I am a thing, who is supposed to be a living human being, I say supposed, because how do you treat a person as a human being? by being yourself, fat chance today your not supposed to be yourself, you have to live up to other peoples expectations, is that any way to live, "personally" I don't think so. To be yourself, you have to be yourself, nobody, but nobody can be you, only you. I would love to laugh, never be down, in the dumps, never have to worry about money etc. but most of all, never having to worry, or listen to what other people have to say about you, as that is where most of us come undone, one person says something to another person, that person passes it on and so it goes on and on, and by the time it gets all around, its about a mile long and all out of proportion, then people say " Did you hear what that thing said", (or does it's okay if your kids haven't the best clothing or other things, as long as they know their loved, wanted and needed for themselves, not, as that things kids, why worry what people say. We're not things cause some people say, "look at their house", 'ugh', look at the ways the kids are dressed, look at the bum their living with, "Oh God", they've been belted up again, that b..... is an alcoholic. But we care, we're not things we have hearts and souls like anybody else, some people just have to struggle a bit harder than others, and those who don't now might have to a bit later on in life, so people, a thing isn't anything to laugh about, as if you do, you're laughing about yourself. We are all human not "that THING".

AT-TH-20

1980

neer.

# GUILT .T.T.T.

NOVEMBER 1979



DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO WRITE, SO I THOUGHT!! WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ON MY MIND AT THE MOMENT— MY KIDS— I DON'T LIKE THEM RIGHT NOW! GOING THROUGH A BIT OF A DEPRESSION AND I DON'T SEEM TO HAVE THE ENERGY OR THE INCLINATION TO GIVE MY KIDS THE ATTENTION THEY NEED — GUILT — O.K. GET RID OF DEPRESSION — DO SOMETHING FOR MYSELF — SO I LEAVE THE KIDS AT THE DAY CARE CENTRE — GUILT. KEEP THE KIDS AT HOME, "LIKE A GOOD MOTHER"— MY HUSBAND COMES HOME, HE'S TIRED, I'M TIRED, WE CAN'T RESPOND TO EACH OTHER — GUILT. TRY TO COPE WITH THE KIDS — RELAX LET THE HOUSEWORK AND WASHING GO FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS MEET THE KIDS NEEDS. PEOPLE COME CALLING, THE HOUSE IS A MESS — GUILT.

WHY DO WE FEEL SO GUILTY AND WHAT DO WE DO TO OVERCOME IT? I CAN POP PILLS, GO TO MY DOCTOR, FRIENDS, MEDITATE, DO DEEP BREATHING, BUT BASICALLY IT'S ALL UP TO ME — SHUDDER — GET MY PRIORITIES STRAIGHT, WHAT DO I WANT FOR MYSELF — BUT THAT'S SELFISH — GUILT FOR MYSELF, BUT THAT'S SELFISH — GUILT. WHAT IS IT TO BE OF MIDDLE CLASS BACKGROUND? BRAIN WASHED WITH MIDDLE CLASS VALUES AND NOT HAVE THE DETERMINATION TO DO WHAT I'VE GOT TO DO TO SAVE MYSELF!!

"AROUND AND AROUND IN A  
CIRCLE I GO,

WHERE I LAND I DO NOT  
KNOW" — YET

BUT I'M WORKING ON IT! ——— unsigned.

# WOULD LIKE THIS TO GO IN THE WAY I WROTE IT.

NOV. 1974.

It seems to me that when those long years ago when they  
 worked out the rules of our society that no woman was on the  
 job. We are on the job 24 hours a day. longer if the could  
 manage it. Who is around when you think world war three  
 is broken out between your kids before you open your  
 eyes to another day when the house work must be done,  
 and all the needs of the other members of my family need to  
 be met. Don't get me wrong, I love them all very much and  
 I want to do for them but when things go on and on that I  
 think my head will fall off, I feel like running away from  
 them, all. So what about me, the woman, don't I need things  
 for me as well. I agree that I feel guilty if the kids  
 don't look good, if my husband feels neglected and the  
 house is untidy, if I don't get involved in my children's  
 activities, if I get bad tempered about looking after a  
 husband, kids, the house and doing a full-time job  
 (which I love).

Then if I think about me, the person I am, selfish and  
 unfair and all that rubbish. Well, I think its about  
 time to do away with all that crap, and start living,  
 when you think we are on this earth a few short  
 years but a b...dy long time dead. So lets get going, let  
 them sit up and take note that we are people, like  
 them we have to do all the same things they do to  
 stay alive. So come on all you men of the world,

!! WHAT H  
 MOMENT-  
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igned.

"I WOULD LIKE THIS TO GO IN THE WAY I WROTE IT CONT  
 try taking on our jobs and thinking what it's like to be a  
 wife, mother, lover (young and fresh at all times) cook, doctor,  
 cleaner, laundry assistant etc, ect, ect, all the things us super  
human wonder women are supposed to be able to do, then our  
 rewards are comments such as, "you look older than me", or  
 "you're going grey", and the rest of the crap they tell us  
 to make us feel we are a failure to the human race. Well  
 is one woman who is going to get up and have a go at  
 But first I must look at the consequences of my actions  
 and what will happen to the ones I love most in the world  
 But do I have to get on top of the flats with a microphone  
 to tell the world I am alive, then everyone will say, "she  
 has gone out of her tree", or "I am a nut", but I am  
 not. Believe me, just a woman who feels the years are passing by  
 without knowing who I am as a person, and what will be  
 put on my headstone, - "Here she lays, a good wife and  
 mother CRAP". in there and at them, that's my motivation  
 who wants to join me ???



## Thoughts

around, around  
Vapour thin, they twist and  
turn and Disturb

I need to be me,  
Not the me that he wants  
But .... The me I know I am.  
Why the Fight?

Freedom is a Right!!!!

I don't need to rhyme

I feel the need to scream

There is an oppressive heat.

It doesn't weigh at my heart  
just my head.

You can kill a butterfly  
just by

stroking its featherlight wings

People drift and dart

In a myriad of confusions

I am nothing but a specimen

I struggle as the pins go in

And heavy hand crush my  
nothingness into nothingness

IT CONT.

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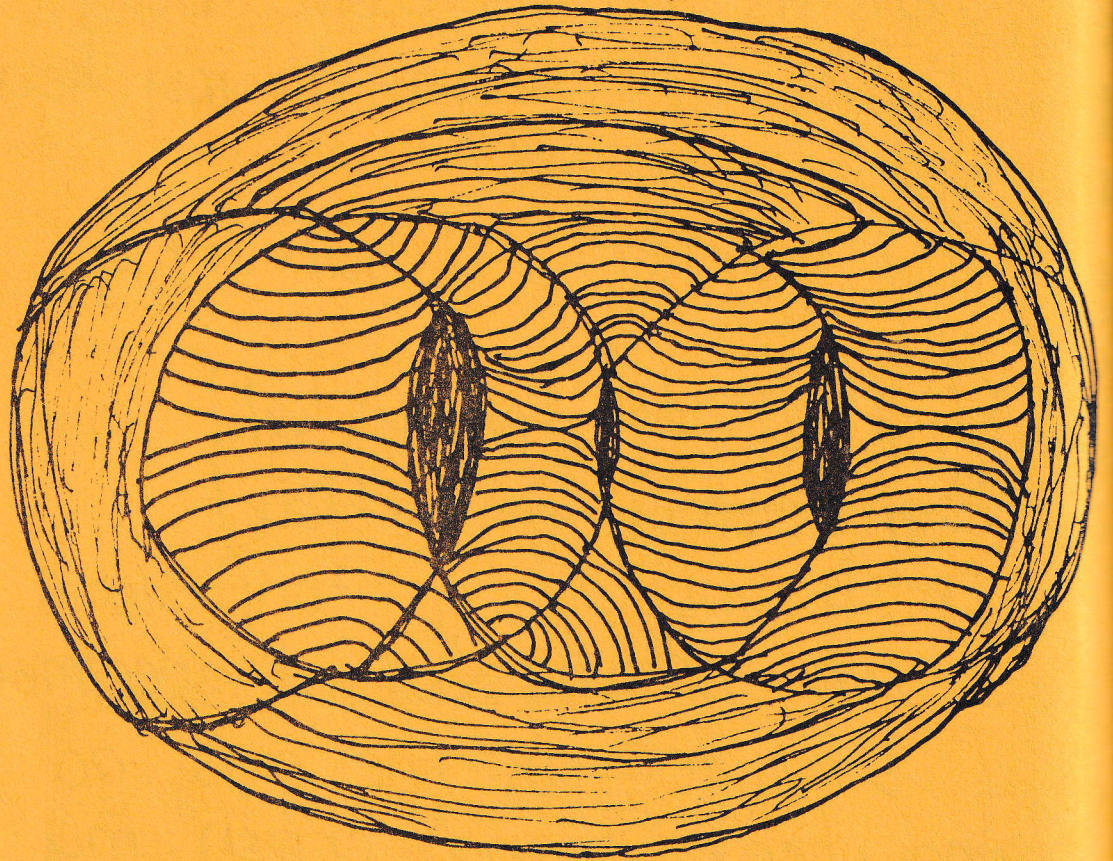
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ter.



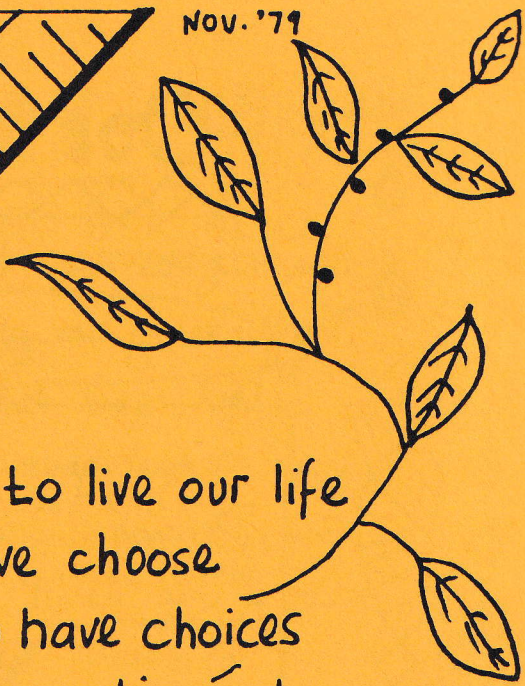
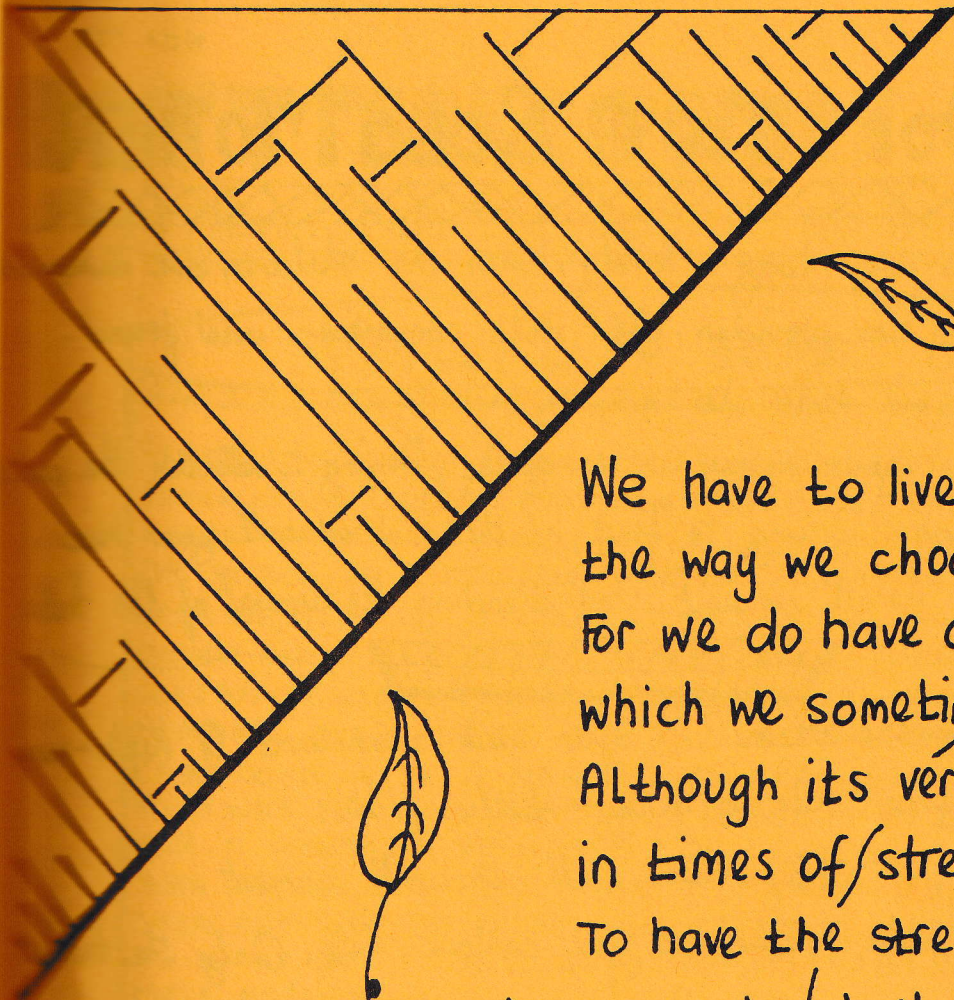
The black hands mould my  
shape  
the mystery called me  
Into a figment of his  
imagination,  
not the me . . . .  
That  
I understand.

Dee Jay.



my

NOV. '79



We have to live our life  
 the way we choose  
 For we do have choices  
 which we sometimes abuse  
 Although its very difficult  
 in times of stress and pain  
 To have the strength and  
 energy to start all over  
 again.



And when you have friends  
 around who really do care  
 It helps to build your  
 confidence and teaches you  
 to share.

They also give encouragement  
 which helps you to go on  
 whether you have lots of  
 friends or even just one.

As we all need faith and hope and love  
 to help us on our way, and where  
 will you find these gifts ~  
 In a friend we meet each day.

UNSIGNED.



# DIARY OF A TYPICAL DAY

APRIL '80

Dear Diary

Its 5.0. clock in the morning, (light up  
smoke and puff away) Finished smoking, get up, put  
the Kettle on and go back to bed, detour to the  
loo, on the way, light up another smoke, cough spl  
Wake the Kids at 7, give them breakfast, make the  
beds and cut the lunches, (Kettle boiling make a cup  
of tea, take it back to bed, & get the Kids off  
school, take a load of washing up on the roof  
while that's going around, do the breakfast dishes, a  
load done bring that down, and maybe take another  
load up. Started sweeping the floor, telephone rings  
wrong number, finished the floors, a knock on the door  
only the rag man, wash the floors and maybe dis  
phone rings again, only so & so for a matter, its 12  
o'clock, no time for lunch have to go to a meeting,  
come back put the ironing board up and start  
to iron, another knock on the door, only someone a bit long  
we have a chat for  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour or so, Kids are home start  
tea, what will we have tonight? tea finished, start the dishes  
Kids all fighting as usual, throw them out for a hour or so  
dishes finished run bath, Kids fighting who's getting in first (only  
smoked a couple of packets) Kids in bed peace, wake up and  
its morning again. Oh well Diary its time I got up out  
of bed, & made a move, I guess I dont have to wonder  
what I'll do today, I know it all by heart.  
Come on Kids, out of bed;

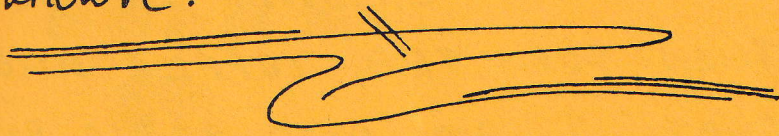
APRIL '80

# If I Had Known.

OCT. '79.

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

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



Oh the comfort - the true unexpressable  
 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 -  
 Chaff and grain together  
 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.

# IF I HAD KNOWN.

OCT. '79.

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 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 thought despairing drew  
you (Why do we never try to understand?)  
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---

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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.



# September '79

I AM WRITING A FEW LINES TO LET YOU KNOW WHAT THE WOMEN'S GROUP MEAN'S TO ME.

I CAN NOT GET OUT VERY MUCH AS I HAVE GOT BAD LEGS, AND LIVING IN THE PENSIONER FLATS I FIND IT VERY LONELY BECAUSE I HAVE NO FAMILY OF MY OWN.

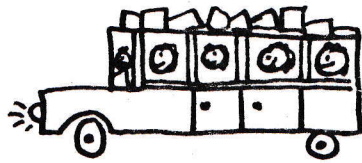
IF IT WASN'T FOR A COUPLE OF THE GIRLS CALLING IN NOW AND THEN FOR TEA, COFFEE AND A CHAT. I AM ALSO A BIG BUILT WOMAN AND CANNOT GET CLOTHES TO FIT ME, SOME OF THE WOMEN FROM THE GROUP HAVE FOUND SOME-ONE TO MAKE SOME FOR ME, WHICH I APPRELIATE VERY MVCH.

Beryl. McIntyre.

5

**PART**  
**3**

# OUR HOLIDAY



Jan. '80

On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January, 8 women (and one dog) started on a trip to Flinders, 5 of whom were very worn out from the school holiday. The other three, well I think they were worn out by just watching us. Anyway we all met at Helen's with everything except the kitchen sink. Marg arrived with the bus on time (as usual) and we started packing all our gear into the bus, that done we were off for nice glorious 5 days of peace and quiet (or some thought) and sunshine. The trip up took approx. 3 hours as we stopped for a nice drink (tea). The countryside was beaut with the sun shining on it. Once we arrived and unloaded the bus we went into have a look at the beach house, it was terrific, Mary was quick off the mark to pick her bed out as

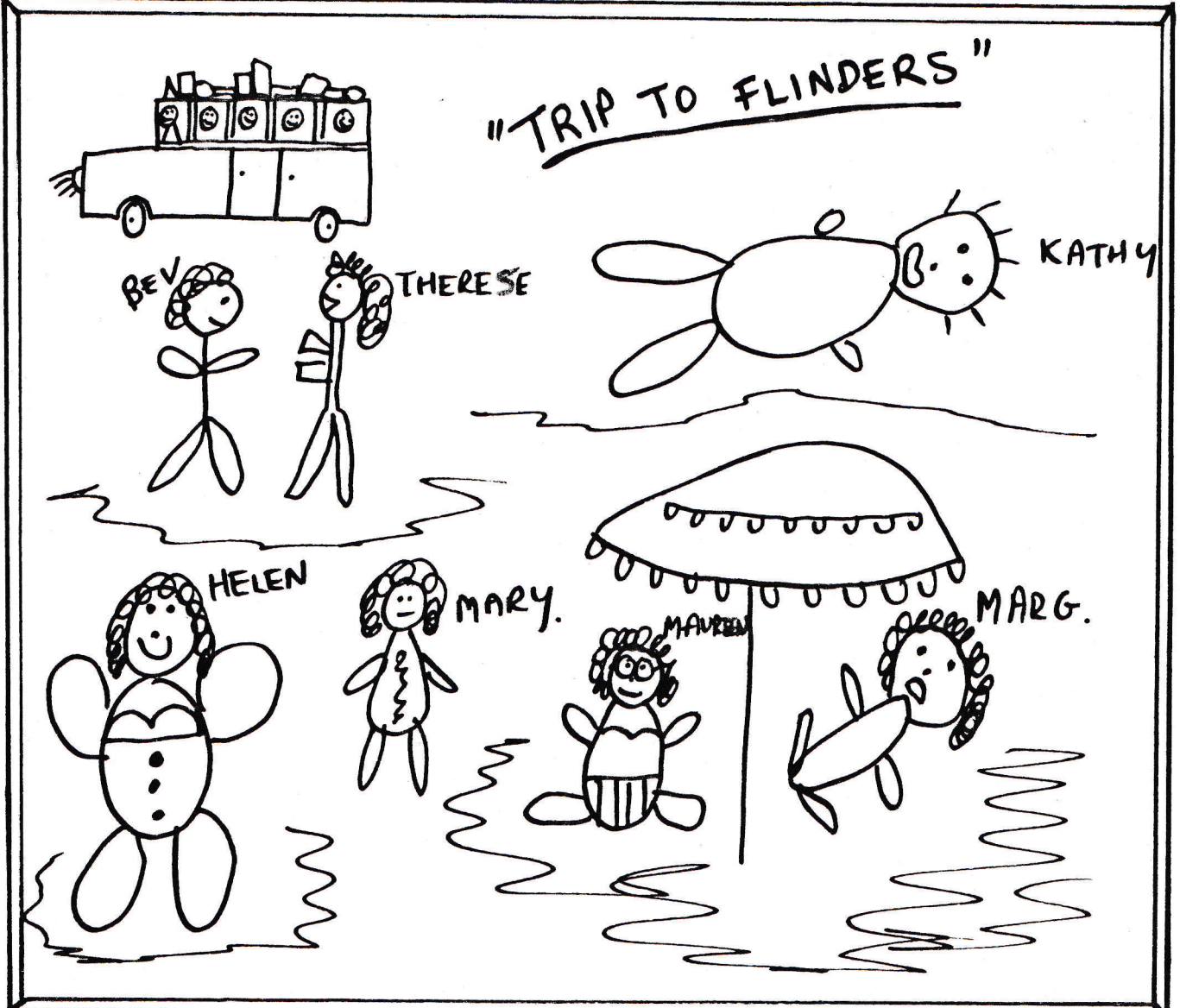
she wanted a nice hard one, (bed, I mean) she laid on all the 7 beds as the mattress on the floor were too low for her, and decided on the big double bed with the net over it. Kathy slept in the other bedroom which had 2 beds initially and Marg, Helen, Bev, Therese Maureen and myself all landed in the third bedroom. Helen had the top bunk and I the bottom, I think I got the short end of the stick as there was some mighty queer noises floating down, (don't worry I sent them back to) Bev and Therese had the other two single beds while Marg and 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



CONTINUED.....

anywhere so she was lucky in one way cause she couldn't make her bed. Anyhow having sorted the sleeping arrangements 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 Kathy), and Bev wouldn't get wet, what a shame we didn't catch her. Finally we went home and had tea and mucked around till everybody had had it. Whoever thought the were going to have a nice sleep was in for a big shock as the things the 6 of us got up to was hilarious and I'll leave that to your imaginations? No wonder Kathy and 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 had never been to before. Phillip Island really sticks out the most to me as it was absolutely beautiful, even the ferry ride was enjoyable. Friday came all but too soon, and we were packing up and leaving, we left about 1 p.m. as we were driving Kathy to just past the Dandenongs. About 6 p.m. 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, Marg was a bit annoyed I think with all the wind that was around, but I'm sure Helen couldn't help it, "aye Helen". I could write alot more and I'm sure you'd enjoy reading it, but it would take pages and pages, so that's it folks, "Our holiday" Val Martin



Nov. 79

# ACTIVE LISTENING

An ancient Hebrew sage said, "The beginning of wisdom is silence; the second stage is listening." Modern psychology concurs. To communicate with children we need to employ attentive silence and active listening. Attentive silence means being quietly attuned in order to understand. (It is the opposite to resistive silence, which is biding one's time in order to pounce with a response.)

## OUR DAY TO PHILIP ISLAND Feb '80

On Sunday March 4<sup>th</sup>, Marg organised a trip to Philip Island. We had to meet at the house at 9am, which is difficult on Sundays, (for most of us sleep in), anyway I think most people were there on time, except for a few of us. There were 10 adults and about 20 kids, so with two buses and our station wagon we left Ken about 9.25a.m.

We set off on a convoy following each other as we went to Stony-Point so we could catch the ferry. We were all happy and smiling (and still half asleep) to be getting away from the flats for the day. We had to be at Stony-Point for 11a.m., so we had to move pretty quick. Every thing was going great and were making good time, as we were suddenly turning, the bus Helen was driving went straight ahead and they were all smiling and waving and we all waved back, when suddenly, someone said "were are they going"?

I wont tell you the exact words Marg used, anyway the other car was still following so we went a bit slower as we were getting

PHILLIP ISLAND CONT.....

a bit worried as the other bus was no where in sight, then we decided to stop, which was just as well as all the kids jumped out to do wee's, then the other bus comes and as time was getting on everyone was getting a bit concerned over the ferry so off we go again. We are doing good time again and nearly there when we couldn't see the other car or bus again, we kept thinking they would catch us but still no sign. In the end Marg. our driver who is so very considerate decided we better go back and look for them, we eventually found them parked back a bit and they had took a wrong turning so we turn around and off we go again. Well we got to the ferry all in good time and everybody happy. All aboard we set sail, great the sky black, the sea rough, it was cold and there we are with towels and bathers all set for a nice day at the beach. The first thing we all did on the ferry was head for the canteen for a nice cup of tea, the poor bloke serving was all confused being bombarded by us lot, and it was his first time on the canteen. A couple of our considerate kids asked if they could help, so of course he moved out and the kids took over and we all

PHILLIP ISLAND CONT.....

away from got our tea or coffee. We had a 2 hour ride on the ferry as they had to pick people up from French Island and take them back, but we enjoyed it and the kids had great fun. We finally arrived at Phillip Island and the sun started to shine it was great, a couple of us went for a quick dip, also the kids went in. Most of the adults caught up on lost sleep and the kids had a great time. All too soon 4.30 and everybody back to catch the ferry for our voyage home. The kids took over the canteen again, and we all enjoyed standing in the cold (being brave) looking out to sea, when a big wave came and drenched us. I went from one side to the other, it was so funny, we were soaked so inside we went and got a cup of tea. Back at Stony-Point and then the journey home.

We arrived back in Kea about 7 p.m. and all set of home. The kids tired and ready for bed also the adults, it was a great day, and for most their first time to Phillip Island, it was well worth getting out of bed and to good a day to miss.

# THE MURRINDINDI CAMP



EASTER '80

## Afterthoughts - SOME!

We were the late starters of the camp (not due to cowardice!) arriving around 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon. The couple of days we spent there were a great experience and re-awakened our pre-baby enjoyment of the exercise of community with nature.

The absolute rusticity of the camp (no such luxuries as refrigeration, showers or toilet!) made its escape from the city atmosphere complete, and the kids enjoyment made all these "little inconveniences" worthwhile.

Many thanks to Marg and her assistants for organising the camp for us and let's hope we'll have more in the future.

I'd advise all you "city-slickers" to come back to nature with us next time - you'll love it!

DEBBIE BOURKE

B/P

A group of women and children went on a camping holiday for six days during the easter break-up. As I was one of the members who had never been camping in my life before, it was quite an experience. They say there is a first time for everything, well this was my first time. All the other mothers and kids slept in sleeping bags, but me being the grandmother of them all, I had to have a bed which was duly organised for me.

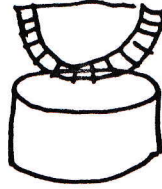
Well as I said we had six lovely days, the weather was ideal, but very cold in the mornings and at nights. No more cooking over a hot stove for us mums we thought, but cooking over a hot open fire. Talk about smoke gets in your eyes. All we did was move around the fire to get away from the smoke. We had really good fun and plenty of laughs, especially when one of the boys went into the icy cold river every day for a shower with his jocks on, but the best laugh was when he ducked one of the women in with all her clothes on. Good on you Marg - for all the work and organizing you put into the camp we really enjoyed ourselves and a good time was had by all, so roll up on the next camp, which I

hope won't be too long in the future.

MARY KING.



SOMEDAYS  
MARY WORE  
AN APRON  
(IN THE BUSH)



FALSE TEETH  
AT NIGHT  
SITTING ON  
A CAN OF BEANS.

I BET NO-ONE HAS EVER SEEN MARY WITH A DIRTY FACE -  
WELL ONE NIGHT MARY FELL OVER AND HER FACE WAS PUTRED!

I would like to go again because I liked the camp. It was the first time when I slept in a tent I liked when we slept in the bush Therese got thrown in the water by Gerald Therese was all wet Michelle pushed Gerald in too and Gerald was going to get Michelle but Michelle locked herself in the car it was funny because Therese got thrown in the water Debbie took me and Carol up to the mountains to see the waterfall it was beautiful.

KERRY FAGAN →



THE MURRINIDINDI - IT'S GOING TO GET YOU.

Snakes, by the hundreds patrol the campsite at night, enclosing us in a huge circle of venom, leeches glue themselves to your body - not letting go, and a variety of spiders, triantulas, redbacks, scorpions, and giant bull ants, threaten to creep into your tent at night and harrass the living daylight out of you.

Huge bushfires are a common feature followed by flooding rains which wash you out.

As well, we dine and drink tea in a smoked atmosphere - everything is smoked, toast, soup and tea. There's not much to do, except fishing, beautiful scenery, walks and a peaceful atmosphere.

Finally, we are threatened by raids from bushrangers, with guns, we have to remain on guard - cannons loaded, beware of the Murrindiidi - except in this case the Women's Group realised that none of this really happens and such fears are a thing of the past.

Many asked these sorts of questions on deciding to come. We arrived late on Thursday night in the dark and everyone helped to put up the remaining tents 10 adults + 10 kids + loads of fun.

MARG WELSH.

My first experience of camping in the bush was on our easter camp. It was so relaxing and peaceful, it felt strange. No set times for eating and sleeping, sitting around an open fire, washing in ice cold water, no clocks or T.V, and just sitting around and talking, or walking, or just sitting peacefully on your own. We also had lots of sing - songs around

the fire at night, it was great.

But I did have one shock, I was cleaning my teeth down the river, when I suddenly slipped and fell in it was so cold I didn't know what happened when I realised I was hanging onto my false teeth like grim death and my false teeth which has 3 teeth on the plate was stuck to my other hand, I eventually got myself out and called for help.

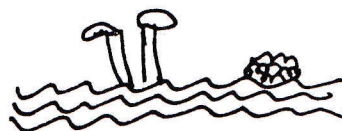
Anyway what happened was my hand got infected and with Dr Marg and Sr Debbie on hand, they cleared it up for me. Which was lucky cause if I had have had to go to hospital I could have been in an embarrassing situation explaining that my false teeth poisoned me. But apart from that it was great and I'm looking forward to another and getting away from the city.

MAUREEN FAGAN.

FEARLESS



LESS- FEAR



I think the Easter Camp was great fun. The peace and beauty of the bush was unreal. The best part of the camp were the people, everybody who made an effort really enjoyed themselves. I wasn't looking forward to coming back to the

city, but it was inevitable.

I'd like to thank everybody who made the camp possible, all the people who attended and Marg for all the hard work.

I had a terrific time and I can't wait for our next family camp.

MICHELLE TURNOUR

As you know Marg and Maureen went 2 days ahead to set up the tents for the camp. I was to go too but as I needed a bit of a rest I stayed back. I bet you Maureen must have been scared. But when I asked her if she had been scared. She said she wasn't. Maureen and Marg came back, and took some of the kids and parents. Michelle, myself and the rest left Ken on Friday. When we reached the camp. It was such a lovely sight! With all the tents up a camp-fire was lighting. Some were near their tents. Some were by the camp-fire. We had a cup of soup, with bread. The soup was really good. Thanks to the person, made the soup. The first night at the camp I couldn't sleep. Suddenly I heard footsteps, near our tent. and I screamed! Then I heard Helen saying, "don't worry Therese, it's only me". Anyway I think most of us enjoyed camping. and I liked camp-life.

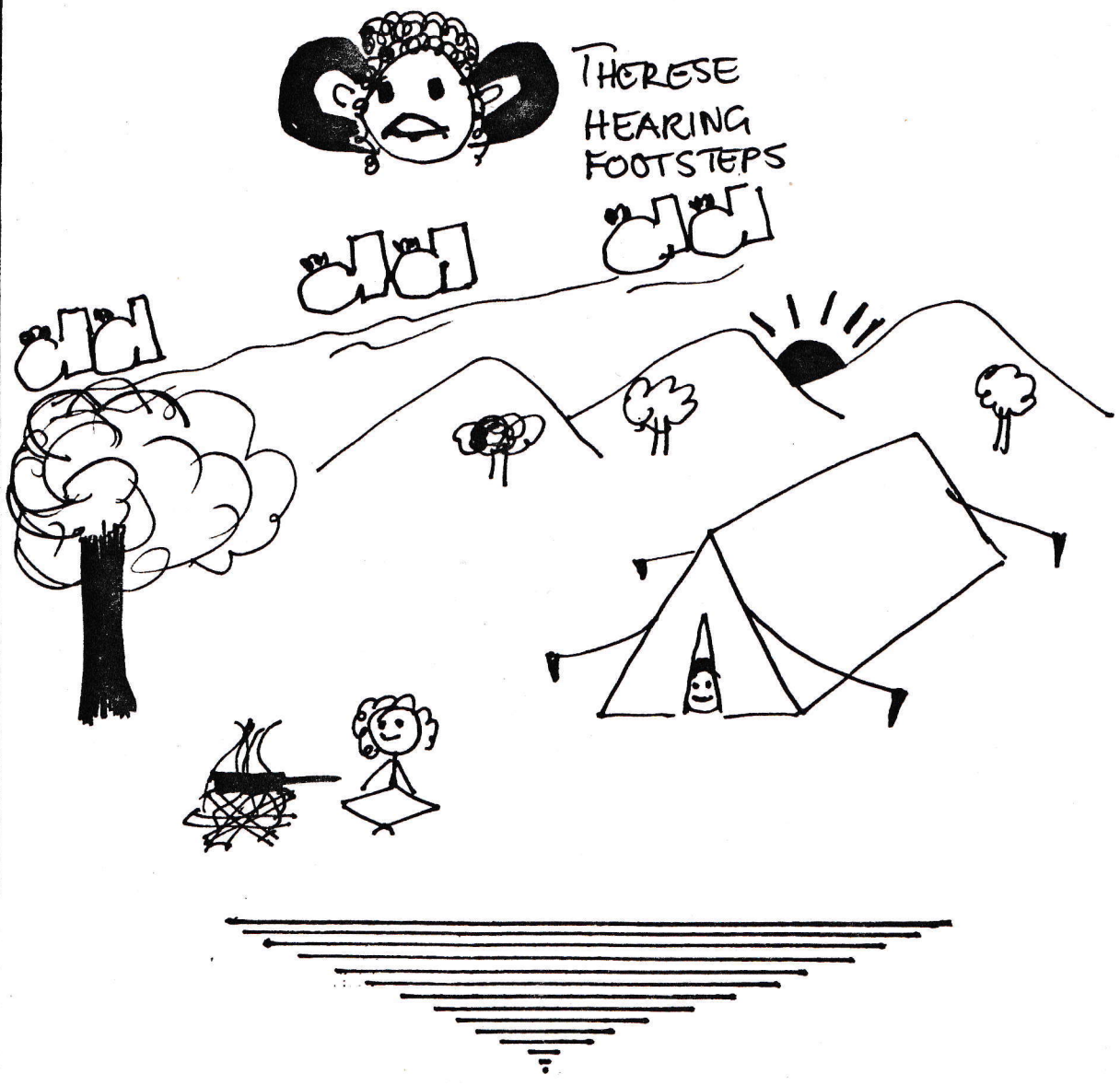
So if you like camping. Why don't you join us on our next camp.

For more news on our next camp, ask Marg, or any women from the Ken. Women's Group.

THERESE



THERESE HEARING FOOTSTEPS



---

# day trip to Frankston.

During the May holidays we had a day trip to Frankston, we met at the house at 10 a.m. 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 2 family concession tickets as it was cheaper. So 10:30 a.m. 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 and everything sorted out (no-one is going to pick on our kids) Good on yer Mary.

We all settle down again, Frankston next stop.

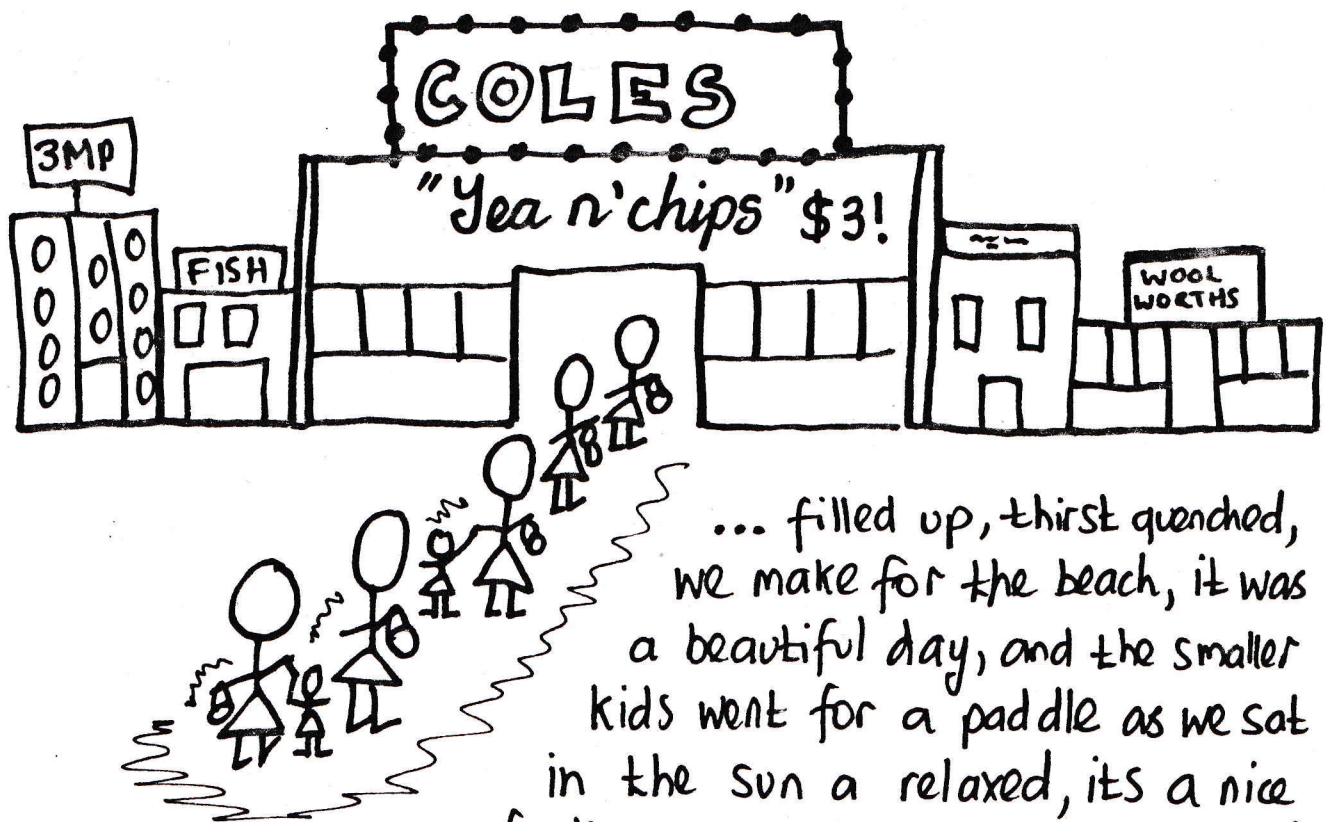


Off the train and away one runs to the 'loo', "relief". and then down to the shopping centre. The two older girls set off for '3MP' radio station, and then the older boys to the beach for fish we gave them their lunches and

---

# Frankston continued....

and showed them where to meet us at a certain time. When 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 is in the middle of Frankston you guessed it "COLES" so in we go just like home "tea and chips"....



... filled up, thirst quenched, we make for the beach, it was a beautiful day, and the smaller kids went for a paddle as we sat in the sun a relaxed, its a nice feeling away from the city even if its only a couple of hours. Then its time to set off for the station again, half the kids are missing which is usall for us, at the station everyone to the "loo" and then the kiosk, when the train comes in we start to panic when the last two arrive thank goodness. All-a-board, back in ken, "what's for tea mum", then "what a lousy day", but we know they enjoyed it. - *Mawren Fagar.*

PART

4

# Outside looking in

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 the 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 Marg. Hil 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 marvelous 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 Womens 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 of

# outside looking in

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 Womens 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.

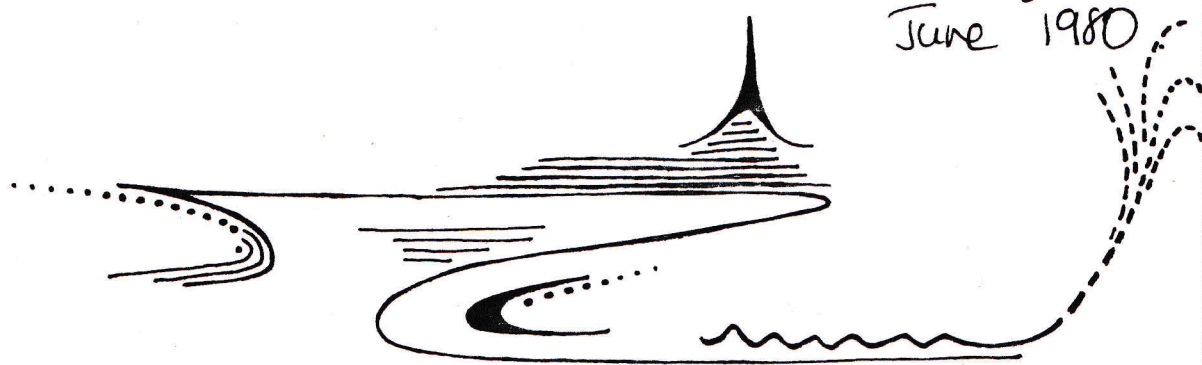
There are well thought out activities and excursions out of Melbourne where people can relate easily to one another and enjoy themselves in an open and honest way.

I see the Womens 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 Burge

June 1980



May '80

# OUTSIDE LOOKING IN \* \* \*

The following section "Outside looking in", is a collection of letters written on invitation from women who had been witness to & participated in the development of the group. We value their retrospective thoughts and memories.

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Dear Marg,

Hope this is okay.

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

# OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

people make mistakes, because you have shown that you can still go on working together and learning from 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, Les, and Denise  
(Pattie and

haven't seen this but we know they would agree!)

May 180



# 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. That's a really great achievement.

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 whats 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.

# Outside Looking in

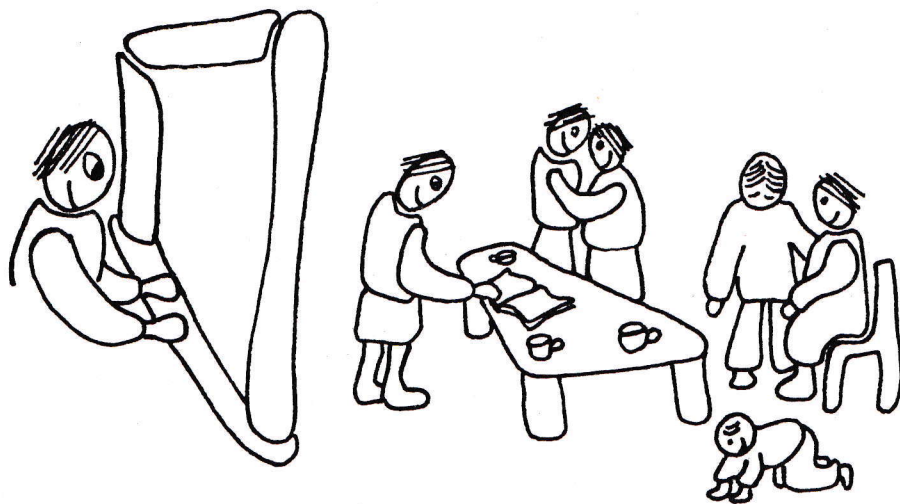
Having everyone help make decisions means that your decisions and disagreements are out in the open. Its much more public than in big organizations which manage to hide their fights, and pretend they don't happen. But being part of a community (especially Kensington, which has a good grape vine!) you're 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 groups, 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.

May 180.

Lesley Hoatson.



# what was it all about?

Reading your latest - "Shoulder to Shoulder" stirred up memories of past events and I had this urge to share, to contribute the memories I have with the Ken. women's Group - I recalled the highlights, the stages, the faces, the changes over the past few years. I remember the tears, the frustrations, the incredulity of what has happened. My first memory was a house, I think it was in Gower street but I can't remember - it was a long hallway with a kitchen, eating area at the end with sunlight pouring through a long row of windows. The room was filled with people sitting around a table laid with cream cakes, buns, doughnuts, sandwiches and Mary pouring cups of Tea. The conversation was about the importance of being together, being able to talk (you must not be afraid to talk, even if it doesn't make sense, we'll listen, we won't laugh at you.) I can still remember the funny feeling in my stomach - what am I doing here - what am I going to say - I remember people saying if you listen and talk you find out that your worries are the same as others, the weight on top of your head falls off and you can start thinking of yourself again. In the midst of all this I began to realize that people were talking about the crazy idea of getting together and buying a house so that everyone could have a place of their own, a place to meet, where children would be cared for. I remember thinking it's not possible - they're all mad! and then being amazed that nobody talked about How it was going to happen - everybody talked about what was going to happen in our house as if it already existed! Along with these memories of the early days I've always associated with the Womens Group vast quantities of cream buns, buttered buns and Mary saying "anymore for Tea" and the saucer being rattled for 20c contributions for morning Tea.

My next memory was taut faces, angry fists, people writing letters to M.C.C., Government, Health Department, and Gower street. There was a house in Gower street - it was ideal, we could purchase it but then there was the problem of a firewall which would cost \$6,000 - where would the money come from, what WERE the Health Department regulations - anger, despair, nothing happening. Then came

McCracken Street - at last! Our house. People came together again - a table filled with cream buns, Mary pouring tea. Dark grotty rooms - collected furniture soon to become junk, freezing cold huddled around the gas heater, the old fashioned electric bar heater. People talking, remember the blackboard and chalk? What's for discussion today? Whose going to chair the meeting? - no response - your turn today! Stop shaking in your boots, - we'll help you - you can't be any worse than Val who did it last week and she did a good job! A new wave of people. Oldies teaching newcomers - Big discussions - how to deal with particular situations or problems - RENOVATIONS - let's worry about it to-morrow, cream buns and tea - But what about the RENOVATIONS. O.K. O.K. we'll do the renovations. Discover there's only \$12,000 to renovate. Plans not accepted by the health Department. Have to find an architect - no money. Who do we know - no one. Nothing - delays, delays. Oh well, discussion groups, activities set up. Word has spread about the unusual happenings at McCracken Street. Lots of people, watching faces. Worried, tearful faces turn to laughter and heads held high. Then come the social workers, doctors, Government Officers, Beth Stubbs, Welfare students, case workers, student doctors. Offers of adult education courses, lots of people willing to do things for you - In the back of our minds were the renovations, but all these people were talking about self-development classes, becoming a coping adult, sewing, pottery, painting classes, on and on and on.

It was a strange period, you came to the house, watched the pantomime, nodded your head, - and asked "where were the cream buns and cups of tea?" People shouted, "aren't you listening - we're discussing mode of operation, strategy plan, building regulations, qualified staff, budget control, administration."

You sat amid the noise of conversation, and dreamt and wondered where the cream buns and Mary's cup of tea had gone! No one used the blackboard and chalk, no one appointed anyone to be the chairperson - People stopped coming, the house was empty - a few remained - something made you stick in there and quietly nod your head. Suddenly the organisers had gone, and there was just you and your friends again. AND of course,

the RENOVATIONS.

At last a mad builder arrived who could do the renovations at the price requested. Plans drawn up, accepted by the Health Department Working-B to clean the rubbish out - We moved out of McCracken Street and down to Derby Street with Helens smiling face, warm lounge room, tea and bun rolls, and our saucer for 20c. Derby street has memories of a friendly house, welcoming atmosphere, close friendships, bitter fights, a few tragedys, lots of discovering, losing of friends, understanding, relationships, pressures of decision making, recognising responsibilities, and learning how to do things, and then —

House can't be renovated! Health Dept requires another legal document. Tony the solicitor helps out. He put in many hours of work finding out what it was all about - Tram rides into the Health Dept. It was clear that the payment of renovations was not possible until this document was signed. Finally we saw the document - quite a celebration in the signing of the document. We were never too clear what it was all about but Mr Hamers signature was on it - with Government seals and stamps all over it. Ruth signed on the dotted line beside Mr Hamer and we celebrated with cream buns and tea! The renovations started.

The period before moving back into McCracken Street were all new events, The Dora camps, the parties, the personal talks were forgotten. Events like interviewing for staff what will the programme be, who will organize what, who will take responsibility for making sure the jobs will be done. etc. The terrible scene with the Health Centre and the joy of knowing they really did support our group.

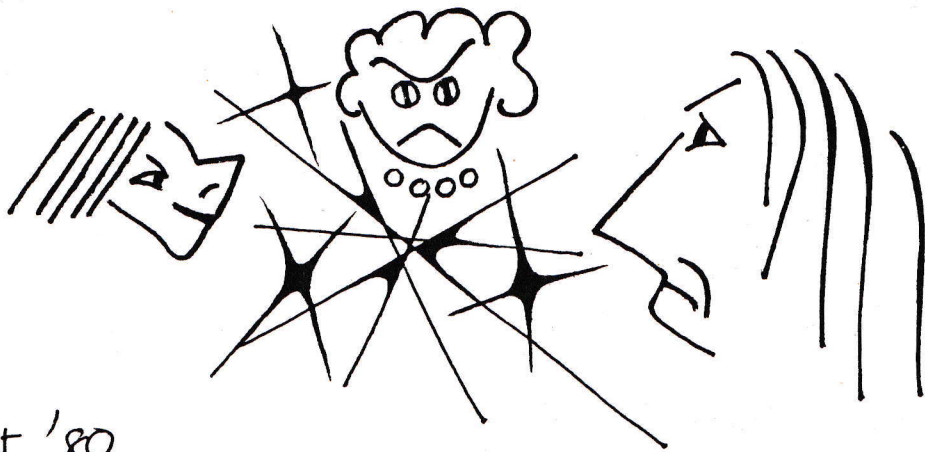
John moving in to paint the house; fights, arguments, Tears, conflicts - no money for furniture, floor coverings, heaters done on the cheap, and they didn't work - the endless rounds of fund-raising again - fights over money.

We moved back into McCracken Street. It was renovated - new, empty. There was a sadness - where were the good old times? The house stood for the future.

818

- the past could be remembered but we had to go forward. There was something frightening about the future - it was unknown. The dream was over, we had actually achieved our own house - now what! Old faces started appearing again - there was the awesome task of organization, responsibility, finances, budgets. But the house was officially opened, shouts of hooray! and lots of enthusiasm. This had no sooner happened but there was the Health Dept again - threatening to close us down. That Friday when they arrived at the door, whisperings, mutterings, mad panics, frantic phone calls for support - to fear - an unforgettable Friday. Boy - you sure can't win. But still there was that determination to succeed. And so McCracken street stayed open.

What was it all about? I see now people whose lives have changed - friends who have grown and learnt; who are confident and hopeful. The arguments and conflicts still abound but the ways of dealing with it are different. The harshness and the overpowering sense of bitterness are no longer there. What is it? Maybe acceptance and tolerance is better understood or the understanding of what it means to recognise the good and the bad of others, maybe its the sharing of one anothers lives, maybe at last I've become recognized and feel important - whatever it is I'm glad I had the opportunity of being part of the house, being part of the people involved - all those people who have come and gone - I know I've become a different person - and I'm glad it all happend.



August '80

**PART**  
**5**



# DROP IN CENTRE

OPEN EACH DAY

9-6 p.m.

89 McCracken St.

DROP IN!



## SHOPPING DAY -

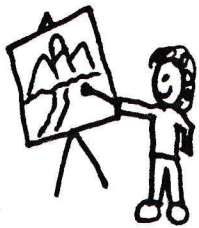
EVERY THURSDAY ON PENSION  
WEEK - MEET AT HOUSE 9. a.m.

## KENSINGTON WOMEN'S GROUP

DISCUSSION EVERY  
WEDNESDAY AT 10.30  
COFFEE, FRIENDS, FUN.

## NEWSLETTER GROUP ARE YOU INTERESTED TO HELP?

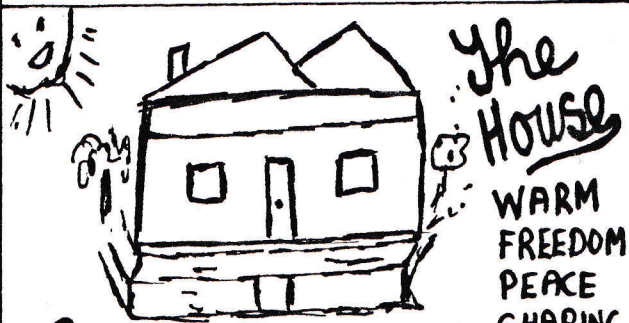
We meet  
Tuesdays at 1 p.m. *Come along*



## ART CLASSES

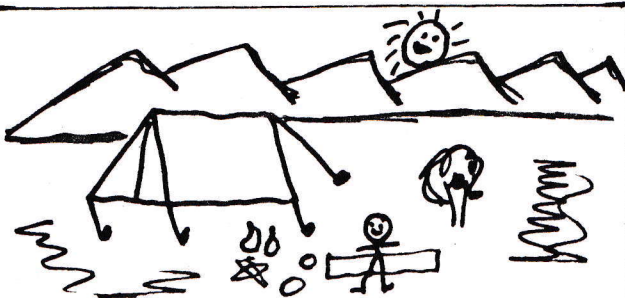
THURSDAYS 7 p.m.

AT HOUSE - (OFF PENSION WEEK)  
"DI VINCI'S ANONOMOUS"



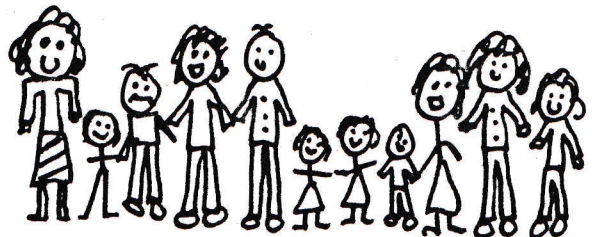
learning together  
HAPPINESS.

WARM  
FREEDOM  
PEACE  
SHARING  
CARING



## BACK TO NATURE.

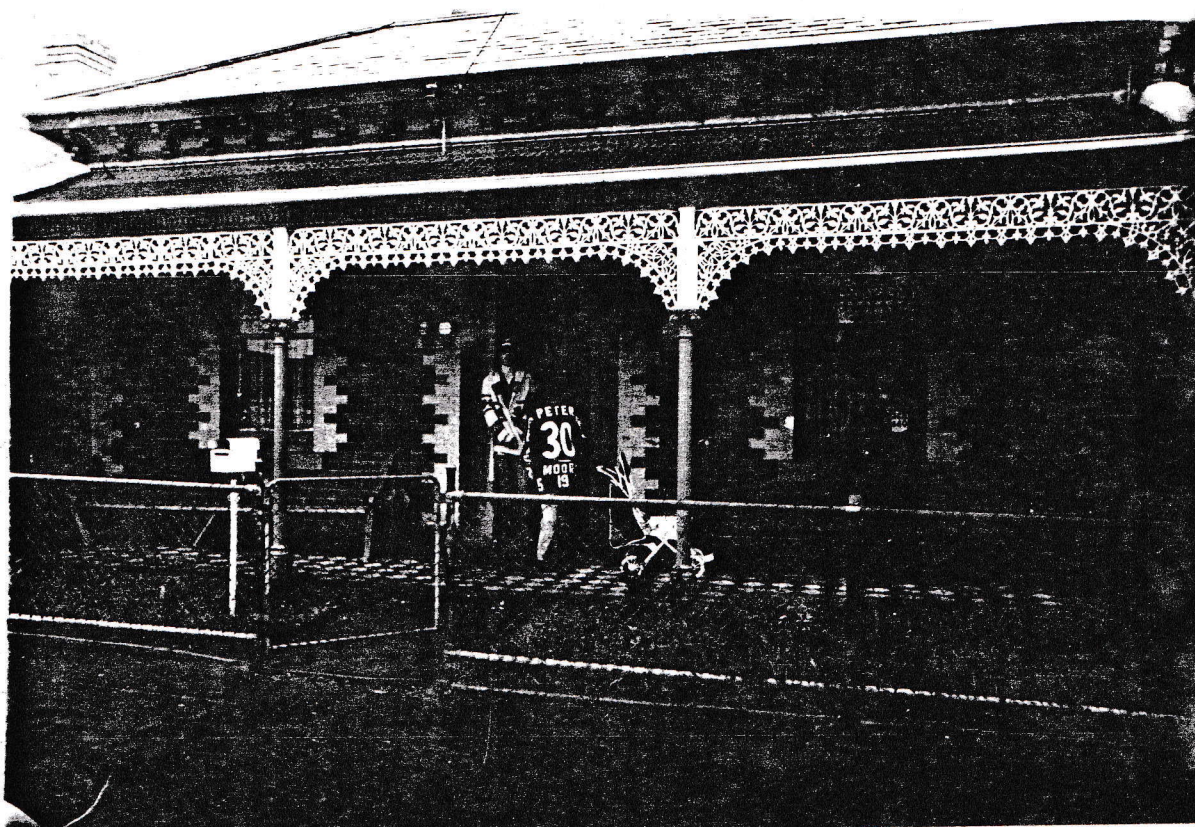
We have camping programmes  
throughout the year. Come  
and hear about them!!



## GENERAL MEETINGS

3rd Monday in month 5 p.m.  
for tea, everyone welcome  
Come and hear about the place

P13





WE HAVE  
A SMALL  
LIBRARY  
OF INTERESTING  
BOOKS, INFORMATION,  
MAGAZINES - COME AND  
BORROW ANYTIME.

FRIENDS,  
FUN,  
ACTIVITIES,  
INFORMATION,

3767280.

YOU ARE INVITED TO  
BECOME A CO-OP  
MEMBER. CALL IN, ASK  
ANY OF THE  
STAFF ABOUT  
IT.



day trips



b-b-q's

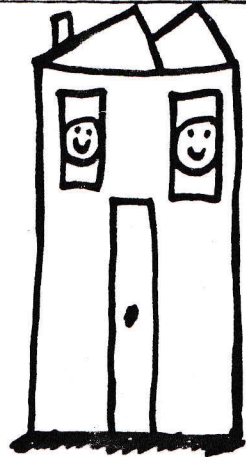


diners

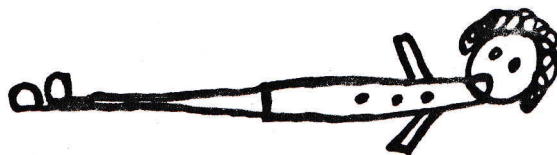
lots of things  
loads of fun.

WE HAVE PRINTING  
FACILITIES, CAMPING  
gear, LOTS OF SPACE  
AND MUCH MORE  
YOU ARE WELCOME TO USE  
THESE THINGS.

LOTS OF  
PEOPLE WORK  
IN THE  
HOUSE -  
LOTS OF  
PEOPLE MAKE  
IT WHAT IT IS  
GROWING



Gossip Kills !!



B12



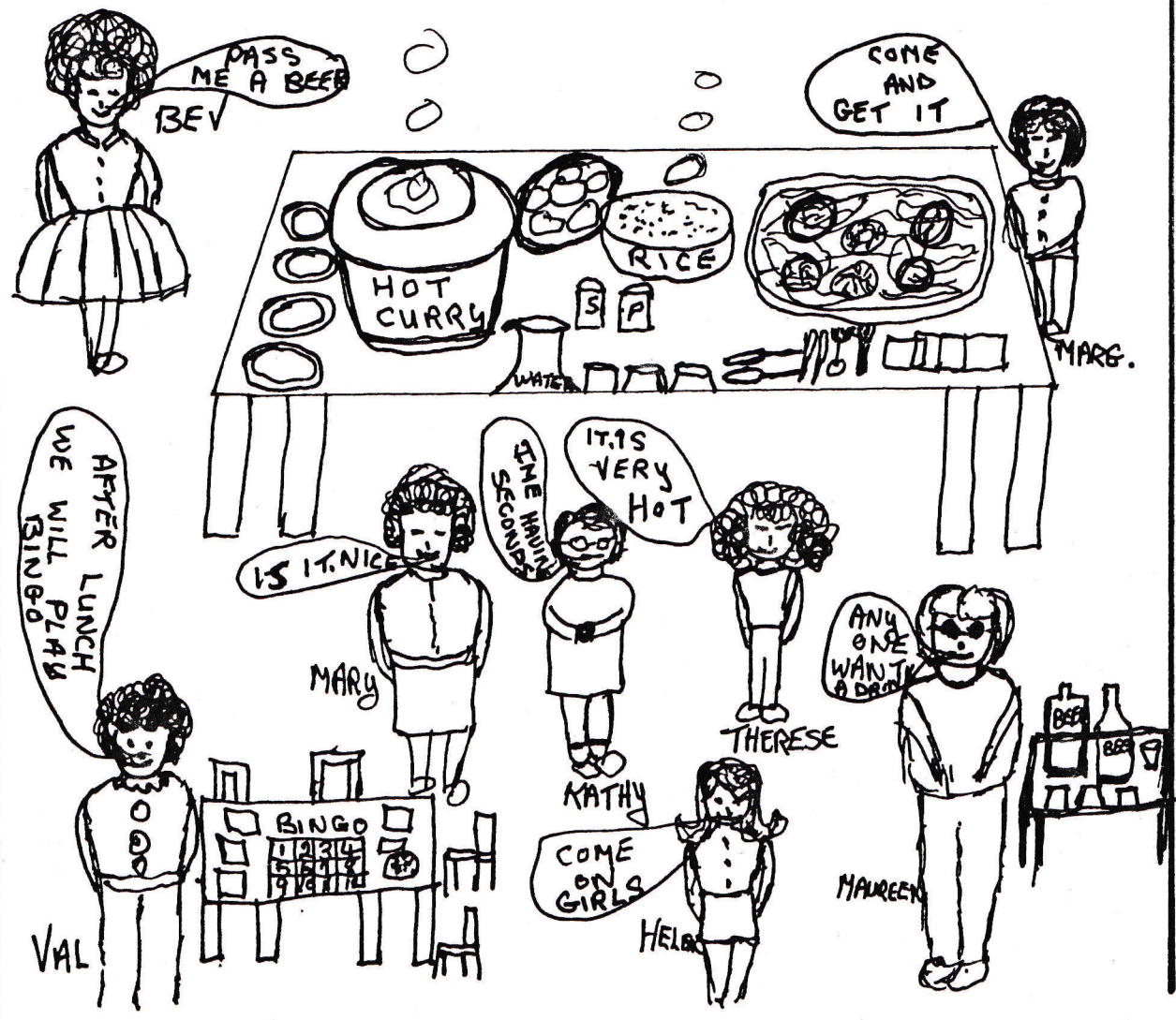
# Getting Together OCT 179

On Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October, we had a get-together. We all met at the house at 12 o'clock. It was a Ceylonese lunch. There was fried rice, meat curry, fish, cutlets and salads. While I cooked the curry and made the salad the rest of the girls played Bingo, and when everything was ready we all had lunch. The girls said they enjoyed the lunch, but Kathy Gibbs, kept running to the toilet all the time, after she had her lunch, and we were all laughing at Kathy going to the toilet. I guess the curry didn't agree with her, so I said no more curry again, except for our drama teacher who is coming to teach us drama on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November. I promise to give him curried sandwiches (Ha! Ha!) Anyway after lunch we were still playing Bingo and Maureen didn't give me peace, she was covering my card before the numbers were called, and I couldn't keep my mouth shut as every number that was called I was saying yes! and I didn't know, I thought I had won and shouted Bingo and it was Maureen

who had covered my card again, I really felt like punching her, but I'm too scared of her. (Not really.) Maureen pulled Bev down from her chair, and she broke the ashtray. We really had fun. So why don't you come along next time we get together. You can have fun, and most of all we could make you feel happy.

Friends are people who make you feel happy. 😊

Therese Weikmeister



# OUR SHOPPING DAY

SEPT. '79.

As most people are aware every fortnight - (pension week) on a Thursday we have a shopping day. First we go to Simms in Footscray, then were off to Moonee Ponds Market. Well last Thursday was no exception, or so, we thought, first off we all meet at the house at 10 o'clock as usual, then we were off to Simms (or so we thought) well blimey we didn't get very far as a matter of fact we only got as far as the corners of Ken Road and Derby St, when the car ran out of petrol, "Terrific", so Marg jumped out hailed a Taxi, and went in search of a petrol station, which she found in Flemington. Not thinking, Marg never took anything to put petrol in so the ?? petrol attendant made her pay \$8 deposit on this real old watering can, which I might add you could have bought 2 or 3 new ones for that, having purchased the petrol as well as the can she jumps back in the taxi, which has been ticking over all the time and comes back to where the rest of us are waiting in a conked out car, at least we had some music while we waited. She paid the driver of the taxi and he was off (happy because he had his money and petrol) Marg, then tried to open the hole where you pour the petrol in, (I'm not sure what that's called but I'm sure you all no what I mean), well the darn key wouldn't go in, so that got bent trying to fit it in, then half the petrol went all over the place but she did manage to get some in anyhow. After that she took the key out and it was that bent

# OUR SHOPPING DAY

it wouldn't fit in the ignition, by this time she was nearly pulling her hair out, so she put the key on the ground and 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 on. To Simms and everybody bought what they needed there and then we were off to the Market where we parked and as Marg 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 and vegetables and 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~~ we had to drive back around the block and pick her up (carrots and all). So if anybody would like to go shopping on a Thursday, it's a scream, but be prepared for anything as anything goes.



# OUR AUSSIE NIGHT -

(BOUGHT BY A POM)

NOV. '79

As most people know, every month we have a dinner for the Women's Group and anybody else who wishes to come along. Well this one was no exception, but you had to be there to see it, or even believe it. First off, I'm a pom and so was the other person who was SUPPOSED to help me, "yes you've all guessed who I mean", Maureen, she was too busy yakking as usual, (but she did help a bit). I got the bloke next door to me (Jock), to buy me two dozen pies as he can get them a bit cheaper from four + twenty, then I ordered a couple of dollars worth of chips, (so I wouldn't have to cook them) then I bought all the salad stuff as there was one fussy person there who is a vegetarian (Marg) I bought some fish and did a special batter which the ingredients consisted of, butter, lemon juice, paprika, Worcestershire sauce, parmesan cheese, horseradish and parsley, we never done it before, but the people who ate it reckoned it was O.K.

As it happened, we ended up with two fussy persons, as Helen Sheils also came to see us, which was great as we haven't seen Helen for ages and we all have missed her. Anyway, we talked her into coming back to the dinner, which I'm glad she did as she helped me to prepare the rotten salad.

To make it more of an Aussie night, me and Maureen went to the second hand store, and bought some old gear

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## OUR AUSSIE NIGHT = pie n' chips.

(mind you it was a laugh as neither of us can play or sing a damn note) I think we started off with "Waltzing Matilda", and then onto "there's a hole in me bucket" but as we didn't know the words we made them up as we went along, the words we did make up I'll leave to your own imaginations. Then we went around the table, everybody had to do something, Mary did a scottish jig, she's real good at it to, Helen Shields did that thing where the music gets faster and faster, I can't remember what its called, oh I know, "zorba", the other Helen, well her arm was pretty sore as it was used that much lifting her drink up so much I can't really remember what everybody done, but for once, Kathy didn't have much to say as she bought a male friend along with her (Fred).



Well Fred had a terrific time, he even wore our hats and played the guitar, he even looked the part of a "swaggy" then he went out the back and down the slide, "sorry Lyn" but I think Fred was really educated that night, but he enjoyed himself, the same as we enjoyed having him and we hope he will return.

All the food eaten we decided to have a game of bingo, that was a mistake as Therese won all the money, if it wasn't her it was one of Bev's kids, I'm sure it was a fixed game.

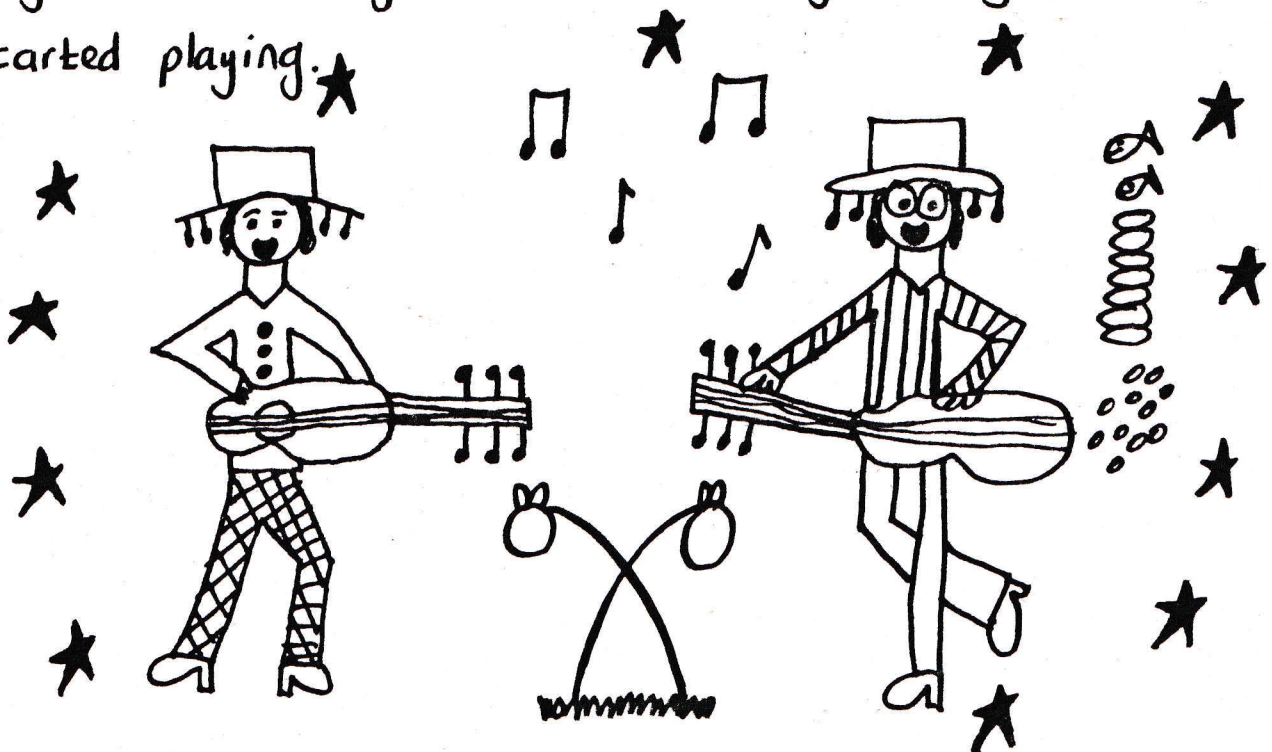


As the night wore on, people started going home, till I think there was only 4 of us left, out of the 15, Marg, Maureen,

## OUR AUSSIE Night - Beer

so we could dress up as a "swaggy", Well didn't we ever dress up, we even had old hats and as we couldn't get hold of any corks to put around the brim we had to use (excuse me folks) some meds, but they done the trick, all hanging and swaying around, we even had a stick over one shoulder and guitar on the other, some old wire made into braces to hold up our supposed baggy pants up, which I might add we kept losing, the braces I mean, not the pants, we even blackened out some of our teeth, Mavreen used boot polish and I used black mascara, "ugh", it didn't taste the best I can tell you.

Anyhow, pies heated up, fished cooked and all the salad stuff, on the table everyone got stuck in, but seeing as it was an Aussie night, anybody caught using a knife and fork got it taken away, it was fingers or nothing, I must say it was a bit hard for fish lovers. When most of us had finished somebody wanted a song so Mavreen and I got our guitars and started playing.★

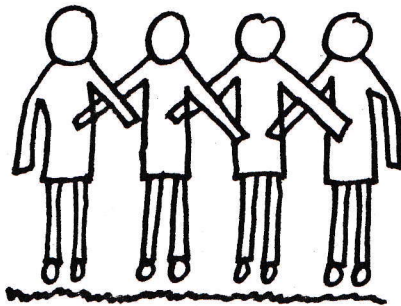


# OUR AUSSIE NIGHT -

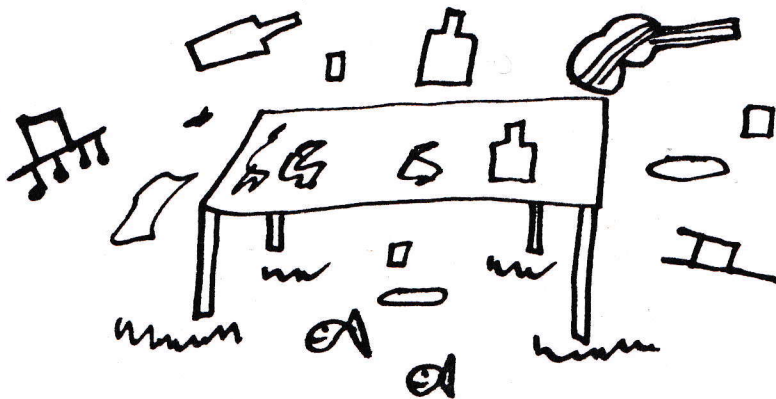
Shirley and myself, we couldn't really go as there was still a bit of drink left and it would have got really lonely by itself so we had to drink it, and Shirley drunk all the wine which



was supposed to be rotten, but oh boy it didn't taste it. Anyhow all happy and contented we called it a night, all we had to do the next day was come back and clean up. Hope to see everyone at our next dinner on Friday, its an Italian night, don't laugh, cooked by Bev, happy eating.



"Waltzing Matilda  
Waltzing Matilda  
We'll come a  
Waltzing with  
you....."



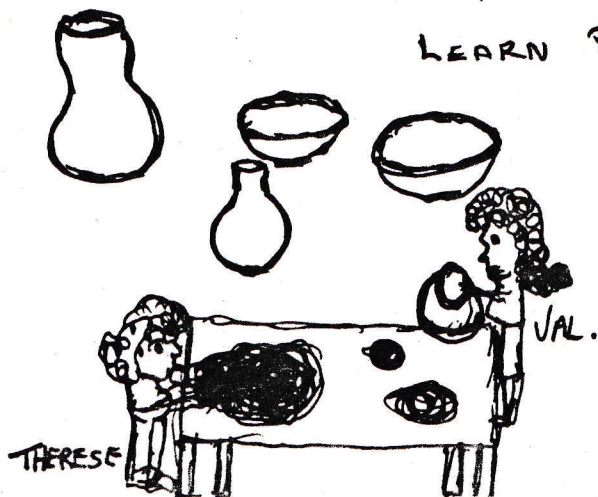
# POTTERY

MARCH '80

We STARTED LEARNING POTTERY ABOUT 3 WEEKS AGO, OUR TEACHER IS LYN KENNETT. I THOUGHT I WOULD BE THE ONLY STUDENT PRESENT, I ALSO THOUGHT THAT POTTERY WOULD BE BORING, THEN EDITH TURNED UP, FROM THAT MOMENT NOBODY WAS SERIOUS, IT WAS LAUGHTER RIGHT THROUGH POTTERY LESSONS. FIRST WE STARTED KNEADING THE CLAY, BECAUSE WHEN YOU KNEAD THE CLAY, YOU DONT GET ANY HOLES IN IT, WHEN YOU CUT THE CLAY. BECAUSE THAT'S THE FIRST, AND MOST IMPORTANT STEP IN POTTERY. SECONDLY WHEN YOU HAVE CUT THE CLAY, WITH A FISH LINE. NO! NO! IT'S NOT, THE LINE WE USE TO CATCH FISH. IT'S A LINE USED IN POTTERY. IT'S A SORT OF TREAD, EACH END OF THE TREAD, IS TIED ON TO A SHUTTLE. WHICH IS ALSO KNOWN AS A FISH LINE. THEN WHEN WE HAVE CUT THE CLAY, WE HAVE TO MAKE A PORTION OF THE CLAY INTO A SHAPE LIKE A BALL. WITH OUR THUMB, WE HAVE TO PRESS THE SHAPE OF THE BALL IN THE MIDDLE, TILL WE GET RIGHT THROUGH IT, BUT WE HAVE TO STOP, BEFORE WE REACH THE BOTTOM. THEN WE HAVE TO PINCH IT, FROM THE INSIDE, GOING RIGHT ~~THROUGH~~ ROUND. MAKING THE INSIDE ROUND AND HOLLOW. WHEN IT'S MADE IT IS KNOWN AS A PINCH POT.

SO PLEASE JOIN US NEXT TIME WE LEARN POTTERY.

IT'S FUN AND INTERESTING.



JUNE '80

# 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 being a dummy or  
even a pommie  
and she eats rice and curry  
in a hurry,  
and she thinks some  
Aussies are funny;  
For not liking curry  
She likes being Ceylonese  
Therese;  
And love having friends like  
Aussies and Pommies

BY THERESE.

# LETTERS



Dear Everyone at Kensington Women's Group, OCT '79

I stopped by Community Child Care today and Gail showed me your newsletters, both editions. Reading them made me smile ear to ear, and my heart (or whatever part it is that feels emotion) just grew so big, happy to see so many good and positive things happening in Kensington. The newsletter has so much. It is honest, humorous, positive, encouraging, questioning, determined, but overall the feeling of caring comes through very strongly. If you could send me a copy of each edition it would make me feel as if I was still apart of what I remember as my happiest times: when I was at Kensington.


The art work is great too, good to see some of the talent being displayed. Love to all, Helen Shiel.



Dear All,

OCT '79.

The C.C.C. Association & staff of C.C.C. wish to congratulate the Co-op. on its production of "Shoulder to Shoulder". Thoroughly enjoyed the article "Our trip to Sovereign Hill". Looking forward to your next issue. Good luck.  
Gail.



# LETTERS

OCT. '79.

Dear Editor,  
I wish to comment on an article in the last issue of Shoulder to Shoulder. The issue is an extract from Ripple on Children and Violence. I feel that this article is another stain on the pensioner and low income family. Why do people automatically assume that, because a person does not have money and a grand house to live in, they must also abuse their children. I feel, and I'm sure many people in the same circumstances would agree with me. I am personally fed up with such articles that so-called experts write. Statistics show that child abuse is more prominent in high income families, the one with money and prestige. yours truly a responsible pensioner & single parent.

\*THE ARTICLE WAS A COLLECTIVE EFFORT FROM PARENTS & STAFF AT ROBERTON ST. COMMUNITY CHILD CARE AGREES THAT CHILD ABUSE CAN HAPPEN AT ANY LEVEL OF SOCIETY, RICH OR POOR. |

PART  
6

# YOUTH NEEDS



Following the focus that this newsletter placed on the needs of youth in Kensington a group of interested people met at McCracken St. A date was selected for a meeting which is the subject of this report.

Members of the community were invited to attend at weleve, on Nov. 1st. Initially there were discussions about the appropriateness or otherwise, of police behaviour and attitudes towards Ken Kids. It was considered by the group that the kids did not get onto the juvenile ustice merry-go-round. The kids very easily found themselves in this position by simply being "flat kids". This situation very often arises because the kids are simply hanging around.

What about Holand Park? For some reason the kids choose not to go there unless they are playing one of the sports that the centre offers. Attempts are being made by the park to attract the kids because they are concerned about their needs.

When the kids did find something to do, such as riding mini-bikes down on the mud-traps there were objections form the community. And, the kids generally found themselves dealing with the long arm of the law.

The kids that we are particularly concerned about is the 12-16 year olds, while the times of concern are the weekends and after school.

It is very easy, however, to sit around and discuss "problems" endlessly. Action is needed. The group decided to meet after three weeks, (Nov. 15th, 12 noon) and other interested persons are invited to attend.

To this meeting, every person is bring their own contribution regarding what they consider the situation to be, and what perhaps it could, or should, be. Those that have access to statistic type information such as the numbers of kids in the area, of kids using Holland Park etc. are collecting that. The purpose of these contributions is to investigate the possibility of a youth worker, and other feasible alternatives.

Denise Jones.

# Community or Catastrophe?

FEB '80.

What is being a member of the community all about? Is it always agreeing with what's going on and praising people with powers? Or, is it being afraid to voice your opinion and being classed as an idiot? Or, is it shut your mouth and go along with what is going on?

Well, as far as I'm concerned, it's being part of what's going on around you, helping where you can, and having your say. But, in this community, it seems to be the same people running communities, who have been around for the last 10 years. Then, the question arises. Why? Well, no-one else will take the responsibility, but is this true? Or, is it that some people haven't the intelligence or the education? Or is it, that, these people are easily indoctrinated to the ways they are expected to go?

It seems to me that, in this community, people go around patting each other on the back and saying, "well done". What is happening? We have a Community Health Centre, churches, schools, Holland Park Community Centre and lots of other organisations and groups.

But why have we still got the same problems now as we had 5 years ago? Okay. On one level, Government funding hasn't exactly treated us kindly. There are lots of things around here, that we've tried to get funding for - eg. the C.S.D.O., and many more things we need, for example, a Preventative Youth Worker. Isn't it time we ALL got together and put pressure on the Government, not as individuals, but as a whole community?

If people can see things around them, being done, they will rally around in support, but it has to be something big that will be noticed and people have to understand what their supposed to be fighting for.

Here is one example. Kids between 12 yrs. and 17 yrs. have nothing around here to keep them occupied. So they just hand around and then are abused and condemned for what is not their fault. We could go on. Everyone is talking about it and everyone is aware. As well, the workers in the area feel they can't take on any more responsibilities, so it's up to the parents. Well! Why should parents have to be forced into this? Remember, they have these kids 24 hours a day and they need a break too. Plus, the majority have kids in different age groups that they have to care about. So who does try and do something for the kids? Well wake up Kensington,

# Community or Catastrophe?

cont.....

you have a long way to go.

If we are supposed to be a community which is progressing, well lets see something to shout about. Because, when this community has really got something going that is noticeable, where people in Kensington can see, then you will find they will support its community. I'm amazed at people who have come into this area with fantastic ideas, and tried their best to do something. They have gone to the right places and people for support, and told, "Oh yes, great". But that support has never been followed through, and then the person or persons has got pissed off and left the area, and put their time and energy somewhere else.

Well, I don't blame them, as all some people want around here is power. We have a worker in this area now who is doing a fantastic job and who knows what its all about. They have been rubbished a fair bit too.

So stop rubbishing people who are doing a good job, and look at yourself and see what you are doing first. Also, the reasons why you are doing it, "think about it", and when we all take a good look at ourselves, maybe, the genuine people can get together and do something worthwhile.

So, come on, Community Health Centre, Holland Park, Youth Workers, Holy Rosary, Kensington Women's Group, Uniting Churches, Schools, Migrants Groups, Tennants Union - have a think about what you are doing. Is it enough, why are you doing it? We're interested, are you? Then maybe we can put pressure on the Government.

Maureen Fagan.



# "youth needs"

DECEMBER 1979.

At the last Youth Group Needs meeting we were all asked if we could write something about how or why we feel the need for some thing to be done about the youth in the area, especially among the 12-16 year olds. Being a mother of 4 kids the youngest (6) the eldest (15) I sympathise with mothers who have kids between 12-16. Mainly there is nothing for their kids to do. Sure, we have a community centre, but for some reason (even not known to the Recreation Officer) they will not use the hall they say "there's nothing for us down there". To be honest as I'm writing this I can't name one damn thing for them kids to do in this area if there not sports minded. Therefore the kids are just roaming around with nothing to do. Speaking from experience with my eldest I'm nearly going mental (if I'm not already). He's left school, hasn't or won't get a job, so therefore just (as I call it) bumming around, because I won't let him stay in the flat all day, he's always got somewhere else to go, and especially at night, that's when I dread, as that is when there really bored of bumming around during the day. So they want something new to do. Well at the moment they are all getting that pissed its not funny (even some as young as ten). So when there that drunk they are scared to come home and face the music. So they just don't come home, and when they sobered up in the morning they think "Hell my mum will kill me", so therefore they don't come home that day or night either, and the longer they stay away the harder it is for them to come home. Eventually they do because you have to go around looking for them or put the word around to the other kids, so it will get to your son (or daughter) come home your mother's worried sick! No! Don't blame most of us parents as that is wrong I know for a fact, that I won't allow kids to drink in my flat as when they get older they will learn for themselves. But the trouble is there are a few (not all) who will let these kids drink, and get so pissed they don't know what they are doing, well I'm sorry I don't agree with that, they might think its funny, and have a laugh about it. (The parents). By God I would love somebody to do it to their kids, then they would know how it feels, waiting up for a kid who doesn't come home, we would be called all the B... under the sun, so if you'r one of those parents, why don't you have a bloody good think about it, remember it could be you son/daughter next? Don't worry they will soon get tired of grog, then I shudder to think what comes next (drugs, sex, etc.). Don't worry I get very drunk myself, not because I like it, but because you are damn well worried sick about your kids, you think if I get sozzled, I will forget sure you do, but you still have to wake up in the morning, with the same threat hanging over you. Oh God, I wish there was something interesting for my kid to do, to keep him out of trouble with a capital T. All the cops have to do is see the kids hanging around in groups and they pounce on them. What are you

# "youth needs" continued.....

doing, whats your name, where do you live, etc. etc. and God help you if something has been broken into and they are in the area, as most people know, the cops are really down on Ken. kids, why? Well I'm not sure, maybe it's because a few kids have had fights (mainly its the older ones too). But us adults are even worse for fighting than our kids? Well if the kids as I have said before had something going for them then maybe a few headaches would disappear with the kids restlessness, including the cops headaches as well so what can we do to make life for our kids as well as ourselves a bit easier, a couple of suggestions, have already been made, such as a Disco for kids between 12-16 (no grog) a few parents there not to hound the kids but to make sure older (or younger) don't try sneaking in and busting up there night. Another was most of the kids love roller skating, why the hell should they have to go out of their own community to another, just to find a roller skating rink surely to God somewhere in Ken. there has to be a place they could build a roller rink, thats one for the Government or whoever deals with that sort of thing. Another is for a place where they could ride skateboards, have competitions, who knows we might end up with an Olympic on our hands? Anyway as I said in the beginning we were asked if we could write about how, what, and why about kids, I'm not sure if this is what you wanted but its what I feel, there just isn't anything for kids 12-16 to do, so lets try to do something, anything before our headaches get bigger and our kids in deeper trouble all because they have nothing to do.

Val Martin.



DECEMBER 1979.

# G O S S I P

Why are we as people who are supposed to be human beings, so cruel to each other and the cruelest part of the body is the tongue, which causes so much damage. We are always eager to listen to gossip, and carry it further until some person is really hurt and then everyone is sorry but then it's too late as people can't handle it.

We see different people every day of our lives, we all look the same we all have the same senses and the same feelings, but there are always a few people who are different. Maybe its the way they were born, or they were in an accident, or even just the way they dress. Some people like to be different, but that's their perogative or their choice. Yet, we are always ready to laugh at them or condemn them. But what right have we got to make other peoples lives miserable? The truth is, we have no right, but we think we have. I know we are all guilty of listening to gossip and we all do it and that's part of life, but what happens when people are very deeply hurt by it.

Alright. There are times when we don't care and we can laugh it off, but there are times when we can't cope with it, and we suffer very deeply by it.

So, what do we do when you are accused of saying something you didn't say, but you are not accused by the informing person, but by different sources of information. Do you approach it directly, or do you ignore it and let them find the truth out for themselves. But you always find guilty people can't face you, they are suffering too, you can see it in their faces. Why should gossip go that far, that not just one person, but two are both feeling bad, because of idle gossip and what eventually happens is that you never find the truth at all, because there is no truth in gossip.

We find also, that if there are people around that nobody really knows much about, and won't talk much about their personal lives, they always seem to be people who come under fire from the gossipers and they will do everything in their power to make them suffer, because they feel threatened by that particular person yet they can destroy people and get away with it. They will lie till their hearts contents. So where is the justice in gossip? Do we all start to really think about it, and how many of us are strong enough to stand up and say, "I won't listen to malicious gossip again", or I will try to stop it, or do we just sit back and enjoy it?

Remember, we are human and people suffer very badly through it. So

# Gossip continued.....

the next time you hear of some person being gossiped about in a damaging way put yourself in their shoes and see how you feel. Also, idle gossip doesn't hurt anyone, "but beware of the malicious gossip, it can KILL".

Maureen Fagan.



## "TO THE TONE OF WALTZING MATILDA."

Uicious and malicious destructive and cruel gossip exists in many who have nothing better to do. They thrive on hearing talk about people who they know surviving at the expense of others, their characters are so low.

Talking, listening, seeing extending every bit, before they know what's happening, they're causing alot of shit.

People getting hurt, dragged into the mud, for reasons quite unjustified, they often crash with a thud.

And to those of you who listen, and lap up all you hear, you lose your credibility, with those you talk of so dear.

So think about your actions when talking about your friend, are you being honest, or is your mind bend... da da da da.... da da da da da.....



# AN INTERVIEW

JANUARY 1980.

These six questions were put to three young kids around the Housing Estate, we would like to thank our reporter (Bev) 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:

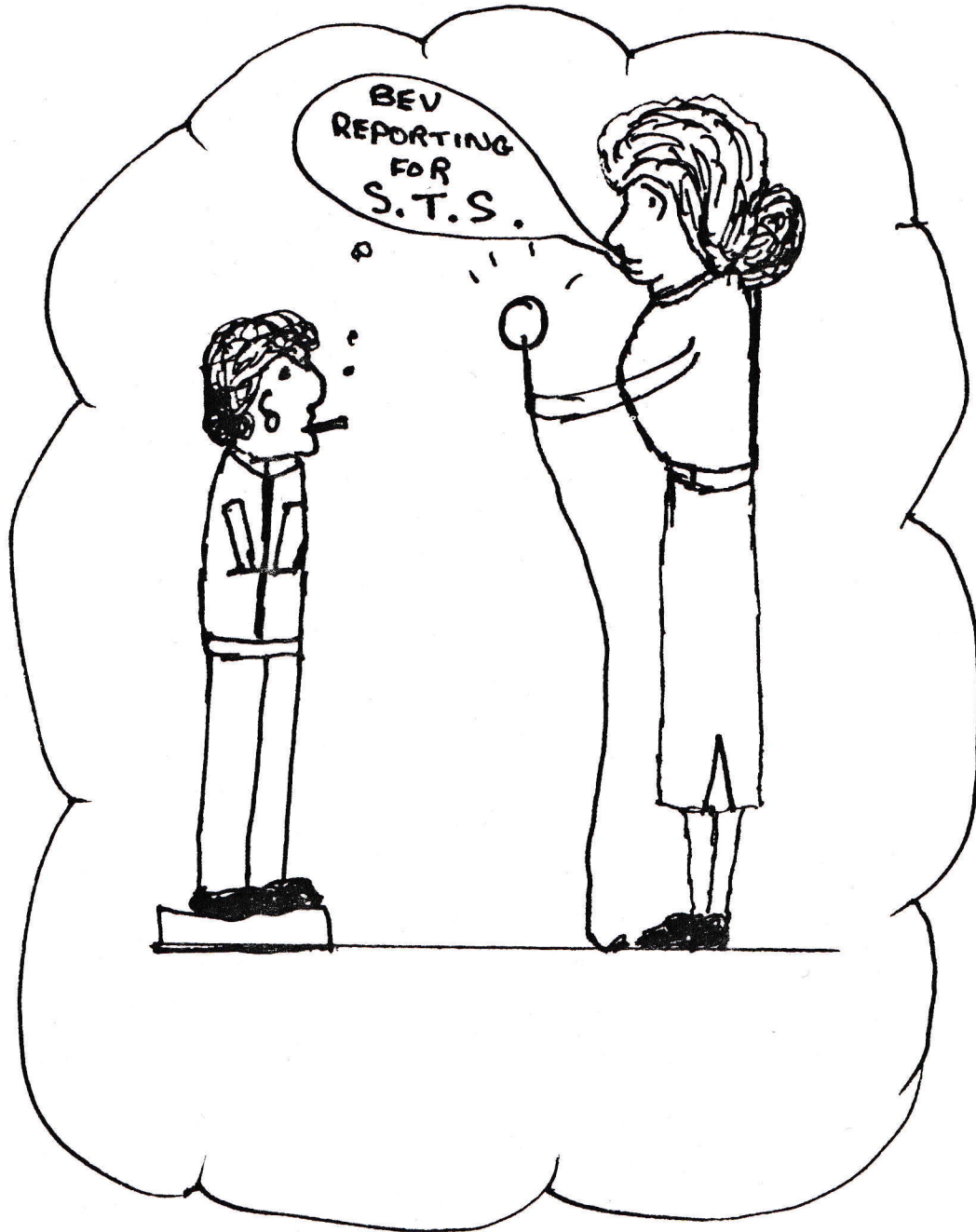
- (1) Are you happy?
- (2) What things make you happy and unhappy?
- (3) What problems do you face as part of a family?
- (4) What do you do in your spare time?
- (5) How do you feel about people?
- (6) How do you feel about the wars going on overseas, do you think we should be involved?

## The Answers went like this:

- (1) I don't particularly like living in Commission flats, I feel to 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 imigrant. 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 roller-skate.

interview..... cont....

- (5) I think people in general can be very, but you 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 with us.
- (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.



# unemployment

SEPT. 79

— WHAT DOES UNEMPLOYMENT MEAN TO YOU? AT THE MOMENT NOTHING.

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

— DOES UNEMPLOYMENT BOTHER YOU? 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 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 can't find a job, they lose interest in themselves and also 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 —

# ♂ - EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM - ♀ JUNE '80

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, girls, boys or a co-ed school they all have the same system. They influence girls to be dainty and not to play games like cricket or football were as boys can. "It's only natural!" Girls are supposed to play house and learn about domestic things women should know for when they get married.

They influence boys to keep on with their schooling as to aim to get a good job so as to support their families, which naturally brings us back to the 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 schooling is compulsory for both sexes why do they always 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 up our own mind as to what we are going to be (eg housewife or Engineer) and go ahead and do it.

The reason why haven't or hardly any woman as engineer or fireman etc. It's because people still continue to 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 your set on being a housewife that's a.k.

Marriage is very important for everyone but if you're going to be a bachelor or spinster is also important but just as long as it's your decision. When women's liberation say 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 allowed 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 their as good as the masculine race.

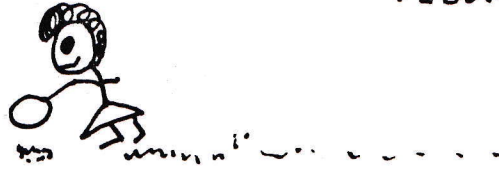
Sonya Green, 14.

May '80.

# The unfortunate road

## to awareness .....

FEBRUARY 1980.



In the past few months the women's group have been working hard, trying to get activities organised for kids between 12 and 16 years of age.

Unfortunately, it took violence and police harrassment to make other people in the community aware of the needs of these kids.

If that was the only way that the kids could let the community know they had nothing to do and get a voice for themselves, I think its sad, and ended on a sour note, with kids having to front up in court. Let's hope that the magistrate is understanding and gives the kids a go.

Since this has happened we have found that people in Kensington do care about the kids, and are trying to do something for them with the help of a few parents living on the housing estate. It is difficult for most parents and kids especially mothers, as 50% of the kids are without fathers or do have fathers around who don't worry about the kids.

It makes it more difficult as the boys don't have someone to look up to, or to foot them up the bum or clip them around the ear when they are doing something wrong. So it all falls back on the mother who tries her best but also gets shit put on her, that its all her fault. People are always quick to blame someone else and say that parents don't care.

What right have they got to put other people down? What are they doing? Parents have rights too, we all get angry and upset and condemn other people, it seems to be a part of life and we all have to live with it whether we like it or not. It doesn't mean that we don't care, or that every parent in Ken. gets out and starts to do something, as then we would complain there are too many or not enough room for all of us to be together.

So, stop condemning parents and do something practical for yourselves, or your kids and give the kids in Ken. a fair go.

From the first public meeting which was attended by parents, kids and workers, and other interested people, held at the community centre, it became evident that people would commit themselves to better the recreational and social needs of all those in Ken.

## the unfortunate road to awareness..... cont.

Many attended the Kensington Association meeting which was a more formal follow up to the public meeting, and a number of things were organised, as people split into interest. These groups are getting together and taking on different tasks, with kids themselves being involved.

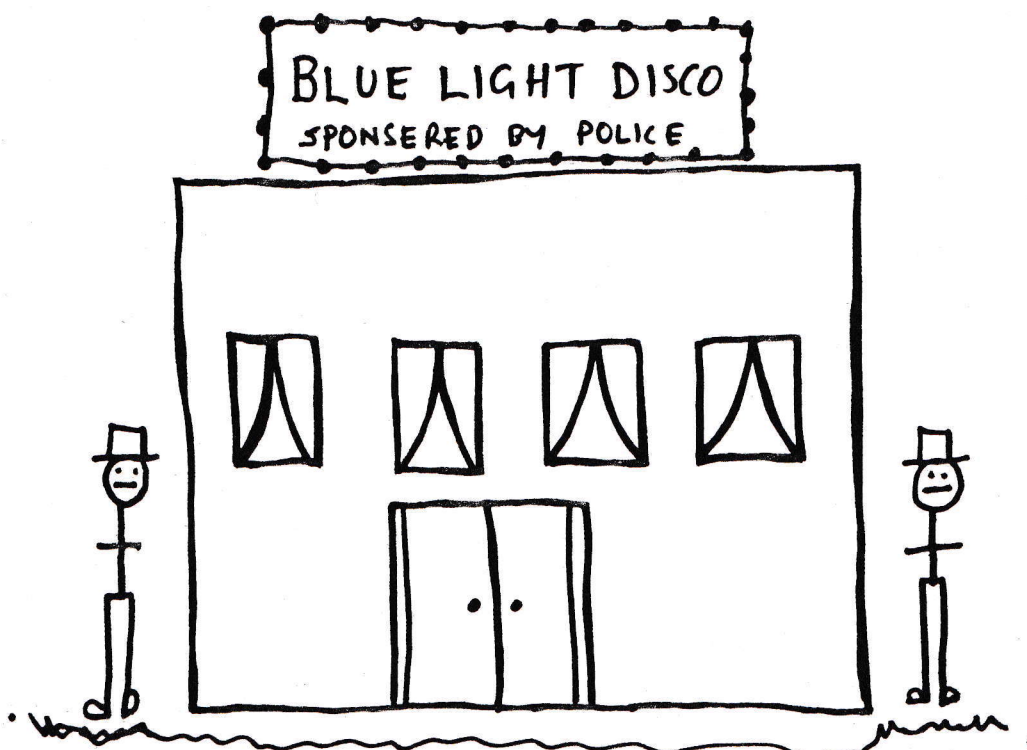
One group organised for some of the kids to go to a Blue Light Disco which is run by police, and let them see what its like with police around at a social event. About 15 kids went between the ages of 12 and 17 years, boys and girls, plus 6 adults.

The kids have an idea of what they want and the adults have further ideas on how to run a disco in our own community using our own facilities, so at least it's a start.

Another group is meeting to discuss trying to negotiate with the police by going to talk with them and sounding out their attitudes towards kids and other people in Ken.

So! at least people are more aware of the needs of kids and are joining together to do something, which is great, cause the kids themselves are taking on responsibilities too. We hope that we can get something organised with co-operation and real support from all Ken. who are keen to help.

"TO ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION WITH THE POLICE, AND IN DOING SO, WE DEVELOPED AND FOSTERED, OUR CONCERN'S AS A COMMUNITY, A POLICE CONCERN ALSO. POLICE SHOULD BE MORE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE COMMUNITY, EXPLAINING LAWS AND CARRYING OUT THEIR PROCEDURES CONSISTANTLY. NEW POLICE SHOULD UNDERGO AN INDUCTION INTO THE COMMUNITY, ITS FACILITIES, PARENT GROUPS, WORKERS, AND SO ON, WHO THEY COULD CONTACT."



inside of back cover

**S.T.S.**

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