

T S HAYA, 25 Hope Down St. Kensington

KENSINGTON WOMENS GROUP



NEWSLETTER

NO 28

MARCH 1982

CHILD CARE CO-OPERATIVE LTD.
89 M^cCRACKEN ST. KENSINGTON
PHONE: 3767280

EDITORIAL

Here it is folks the long awaited first edition of Shoulder to Shoulder for 1982. In our last edition Kathy wrote an editorial about economic problems facing all sections of our community. She went onto discuss developments in child care, in particular changes the Spender report foreshadows. One of our readers did not feel Kathy's views were correct and took the trouble to put pen to paper and write to us. That's great! The reader was none other than Senator Chaney, the Minister for Social Security. We're flattered that such a busy person reads what we the women of Kensington produce and is concerned enough to write back.

Shoulder to Shoulder is a way we have the opportunity to express to others things that concern us. Nothing is too trivial and no issue too remote or overwhelming if it effects our neighbourhood, house and the lives of the families in Kensington. Senator Chaney sent us a well argued point of view about how he believes the Federal

Government is not backing out of child
care. But we would like to say to
Senator Chaney we may not use
correct grammar, all of the time or
have the gift of rational argument
but our articles reflect the way we the
people on the ground, people on pensions
and limited incomes, perceive, feel and
experience things. Our perception
is our reality and that reality is
very different from the reality perceived
by Canberra politicians.

Shoulder to Shoulder will continue
to publish articles that reflect the
concerns and feelings of the women
of Kensington. Our readers are
welcome to send letters to us and
we will publish them. Here is Kathy's
original article, followed by
Senator Chaney's response and
Kathy's reply to the Senator.

The Cruel Face of the 80's

Victoria's people are under siege in all aspects of life. Householders supporting Alcoa by their high electricity bills. Our football clubs are in their death throes. Poor in dim sims. Our dairy farmers are leaving their farms or changing their land usage. Will our children be drinking artificial milk cream and eating costly imported cheese? Will we be able to clothe them when the expected indirect taxes come into force sometime next year. Will our state schools improve their standards or still fall heavily behind the pampered private schools, amply funded from federal funds. When will the federal government learn to give all the kids a fair go. The prospect of this seems further away than ever. The Spender report wants cuts in the child care field. Children are not high on federal government priorities. We are not allowed any effort to bring up happy children. There is a high price tag on quality child care. People will have to pay \$60 - \$80 a week or be denied access to care. A means test will allow very poor poor children in. Many families, all sections of the community have need for child care, full time, part time and occasional care and emergency day care. We can't judge the care of children in dollars and cents. The federal government is backing away from its own

Care of people and children can never be judged by money alone. Happy, bright children, outgoing to other people, forming friendships with other children, meeting their friends they will go to school with, slots these children into their future life. Sturdy, sensible children, knowing themselves and able to live well in their own communities and then be able in the future to use their skills to improve conditions in their own communities. But money being put into private child minding centres by the Federal Government shows their lack of judgment. The name of centres tells it all. All community run child care centres are just that. Child care!! is the word, the deed and the action, the effort of staff and committees to deliver to parents the friendliness and concern for children and their healthy upbringing in a happy place.



Commonwealth of Australia

Minister for Social Security,
Parliament House
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600.

Dear Madam,

I was most disturbed to read the editorial, entitled "the cruel face of the 80's", which appeared in the December 1981 edition of the Kensington Women's Group Newsletter. I would contend that the article was misleading and a disservice to your readers.

From the outset let me say that the Commonwealth Government remains committed to the maintenance of high standard child care services, available to the general community at a cost of the same order as that charged elsewhere in the community; ~~at least~~ for comparable services, with priority of access to special need groups and assistance by way of subsidies to those who would be unable to meet all or part of the cost of services.

Since the Children's Services funding commenced in 1973/74, the Commonwealth allocation has increased from \$8.9 million to \$80.1 million in 1981/82, a percentage increase of 800% over nine years. The 1981/82 allocation for the program of \$80.1 million represents an increase of \$6.07 million over the expenditure on the program in 1980/81.

No responsible government can continue to make available very large amounts of public money without a close look at the manner in which these funds are being used. With this in mind, I arranged for an examination and report of the operations of the Children's Services Program. While I am not prepared to discuss at length the contents of this internal document, I will say, that contrary to your editorial comment, the report does not call for cuts in the child care field.

Despite the \$6.07 million increase in the 1981/82 allocation to the Program, virtually all of the \$80.1 million will be required to maintain existing children's services. This, together with the current review of the Program, will mean that the 1981/82 financial year will be one of consolidation and review for the Program.

In line with its overall welfare policy of directing assistance to **those in greatest need**, the Government will examine a range of propositions including the development of a common income or means test and the subsidising of low-income families using private enterprise child care services. The objective of introducing a common means test would be to reduce the inequalities that are inherent in the wide range of means tests and fee scales that presently exist in funded centres. The possible provision of subsidies in respect of children of low income families attending private child care centres, stems from a legitimate argument that these children should not be excluded from a

Government subsidy simply because there is no Government subsidised centre close to them. At this stage, all that is proposed is a pilot test of this approach and this I must emphasise is still a matter for Government consideration.

I hope that the foregoing will illustrate that, far from backing away from its own commitments, the Government is looking to take its involvement in child care services more effective. The Commonwealth has no intention of withdrawing from the field.

I would hope that the publication of this letter in the next edition of the Kensington Women's Group Newsletter will allay some of the fears of your readers with regard to children's services.

Yours Sincerely,

F. H. Cheney,

What do you see.

Look from your window and what do you see. gathering clouds or a blossoming tree? A face that is frowning or smiling at you? The oncoming dark or the stars shining through? Our shoulder to shoulder was meant to be an avenue, where the women of the Kensington Neighbourhood House could express themselves, tell of their experiences of life, humour, poetry, short stories and the way they look at life. Am I one of the pessimistic people of the world, yes! and there are many things for me to complain about. The years ahead are going to be hard, loneliest, youth drug and dependency, high unemployment, more vandalism in High Rise Estates from bored young unemployed people, higher rents for welfare HCV flats, High electricity and gas bills, Many single parent families and other pensioners will have to go without many former pleasures, staying up to watch T.V. earlier to beat the curfew bills, less food and clothing. Also we are hoping that further sales tax will be dropped 2 1/2% taxes on essential such as shoes, clothing, books, magazines, building materials would hurt not only all pensioners, struggling now to survive but would hit clothing

manufacturers, importers shoe shops,
big stores, newspapers and the three
major women's magazines of Aust-
ralia also the builders, it will
make ordinary homes much harder
to buy, higher interests, and higher
prices. Young couples might just stop
buying, why should they battered
their heads against the wall of
higher prices, emotional strain
and penny pinching that would
continue for many years. Yes I
could moan on for years because
it is my nature, no rose-coloured
glasses for me, it's a hard world
to live in. There is a lot of little
people hurting in Australia now. Not
only pensioners with little or no
assets, the pensioners who own their
own homes, the working man and
his family, the unemployed youth,
the unemployed family woman who
can't get a job to help the family
budget, the Welfare groups trying
to cope with the upsurge in family
problems and cash demands. There is
a lot of problems for most of the
people. The falling passenger list
on Airlines is a pointer of people
having to tighten their belts &
after all necessities of life come
"First Moan" I could go on and on,
thank goodness, it is a privilege
I am allowed, Not all will listen,
or will like my views, That is
their rights, same rights I have
to express my fears of the
& eighties.

K. J. G.

A HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

The WORKING WOMEN'S CENTRE 258 FLINDERS LANE

OCT 1981 TEL (654-1228) MELBOURNE 3000

(CONTINUED FROM LAST EDITION) P/1

The outbreak of the Second World War and the subsequent necessity to replace men by women workers meant that the sex segregation of the workforce could no longer protect male jobs from cheap female labour.

In 1941 the Australian Council of Trade Unions adopted a policy of equal occupational rates based on the nature of the job and not on the sex of the workers.

During the war large numbers of women entered the workforce and undertook a variety of work previously denied them. The women who replaced men received special rates determined by the Women's Employment Board. The Board was constituted to award women doing "men's" work 50-100% of the male rates and its determinations were based on the concept of equal pay for equal work.

The Board awarded most women 90% of the male rate which created great discrepancies with women in the textiles, clothing and food preserving industries who were still receiving 54%. This resulted in great industrial unrest and constant strikes by women and an increase in union membership from 32.8% of the female workforce in 1939 to 51.9% in 1945.

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The Women's Employment Board had broken with the tradition of wage determination on the basis of sex and introduced the concept of work value. This was a great break through for women but it meant that they now had to prove their ability to do equal work.

After the Second World War, the female basic wage was raised from 54% to 70% of the male rate and the union movement had learnt that it was necessary to fight for equal pay.

In 1957 the Australian Council of Trade Unions Congress decided to convene a national conference of affiliated unions with women members to discuss equal pay and working conditions. In March 1958 that Conference used as a major argument the I.L.O. Convention and recommendation dealing with equal pay for work of equal value.

Calls to the Federal Liberal Government were unsuccessful even though the Government's own Minister for Labour had been the Chairman of the relevant sessions of the I.L.O.

In 1969 Equal Pay Cases were mounted

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and their own contribution to the economy had altered greatly over the 60-year period. Since the Commission no longer placed emphasis on needs of working people in determining basic wage rates, it was inappropriate to use a needs argument to maintain a lower rate for female workers.

The employers still argued that the difference currently existing between male and female rates was not simply on sex discrimination but, to a large extent, on family responsibility.

One group of employers said that if the claim were granted it might lead to a redistribution of income in favour of females. They argued that the court was being asked to implement a major piece of social engineering on theoretical and doctrinal grounds which would interfere with a wage system which had ~~operated~~ operated for many years.

The result of the Commission's decision was in fact that women school-teachers were the only sizeable group to be awarded equal pay. Women, with the support of the trade union movement, continued to

1/4 My bike By Edith Coffey
I'd was a beaut bike my bike,
I'd painted it bright green,
I'd ridden it for miles and miles,
A thousand spills we-d seen.

1/5 I was a beaut bike my bike,
A gear change smooth as cheese,
I'd pulled it down a hundred times,
Knew every single piece.

2/3 But that ^{was} still last Friday.

Lost Friday after school.

When some-one come and knocked
it off

While we were at the pool.

And now they'd claim they own it.

I so probably painted red.

You should have got a lock for it
Was all my mother said.

5/1 I was a beaut bike, my bike.

I'd painted it bright green.

I'd ridden it for miles and miles.

A thousand spills we-d seen.

"Who pinched my bike!"

Question. Riddles By Edith Coffey.

What goes up and never
comes down.

Answer

your age

Question. What lies under the
water and quivers.

Answer. A nervous wreck.

Halloween.

This is the night, this dark ee-rie
night, The only night of the year.
We come out of our holes like dreary
black moles, And walked on the
earth without fear. We're witches
and gnomes, and ghosts without homes,
We're goblins and banshees and elves
We're spooks from graves, and bats
from the caves. We're almost a-
fraid of our selves.

With shriekings and moans and
rattling of bones, We-ll laugh and
we-ll wail and we-ll weep. But
hours fly by, drawn creeps to the
sky. And we must return to our sleep.

By Edith Coffey.

Recipe. Coconut Slices.

One cup of coconut, one cup of
lightly crushed cornflakes, one cup
self raising flour, half cup sugar,
two teaspoons cocoa, 125 g butter.
Combine the coconut, cornflakes,
sifted flour, sugar and cocoa into
a bowl. Melt the butter and blend
into the dry ingredients. Press into
a well greased 28 x 18 cm shallow
tray. Bake at 180 Deg C for 20 to 25
minutes. When cold, ice with
chocolate icing and allow to set
~~it~~ before cutting into squares or
finger lengths.

Food Fun. By Nancy Baldwin.

Raisins Slices

Take 250 g raisins, boiling water, four tablespoons apricot jam.

Pastry: One cup of plain flour, half level teaspoon salt, one cup wholemeal self raising flour, 90 g butter or margarine, two level tablespoons castor sugar, one egg, three or four tablespoons milk.

Place raisins in a bowl and cover with boiling water. Stand five minutes and then drain. Blend in apricot jam. Sift the plain flour and salt into a bowl, add wholemeal flour. Rub in butter or margarine until crumbly. Add the sugar then beaten egg and enough milk to make a firm dough. Knead lightly until smooth, using a little more flour if the dough rolls to line the base and sides of a greased 28 x 18 cm shallow tray. Spread with raisins. Roll remaining dough and cover the top, pressing edges together to seal. Bake at 250 degC for 25 to 30 minutes until golden brown. Cool 10 minutes before turning out. Cut into squares, sprinkle with icing sugar. Makes about 18 pieces.

Sun was shining brightly for first camp. Young children love playing on the beach shore.

Excitement when two boats bought in two 12 ft. sharks.

Mothers enjoyed sunny days, just tanning themselves around the campsite.

2nd Camp

First day of travelling was 42^o C. took everyone. Beach was hit with a big splash.

Poor campers 2nd night wind came up - what a night 2 a.m. checking tents - while two slept on (their tent & way down).

Back to bed. S.S.S. sent out again while 3 slept on fixing tents. 5.30 a.m. a.m. - woke to find Phil's tent coming down - what a night. Weather still not the best - then the sun came out of hiding shining - trip to Geelong for more pegs. (80)

Trip to Back Beach (Ocean Grove)

Waves high for riding. A game of cricket enjoyed by all.

One night walking along the shore, thong thrown right out to sea, had to take a dip (bra and pants). Phil having heart failure (couple of little fish (garfish) jumping out of the water) - thinking a shark was coming.

Sun still shining.

Spent enjoyable evening in Park and beach-front - where we had tea.

One kid missing. Found near carnival (great relief)

Friday - packing tents - the joys campers have.

Phil, black with rolling over tents, making sure all is done right.

Back to the noise of the city - where peace was once held at Portarlington.



WHAT'S ON AT THE HOUSE

Child-Care

Part-time and full-time vacancies for 2-5 year olds.

Women's Group

MONDAY - learn to drive

WEDNESDAY - 10am Coffee, discussions

7pm Bingo (pension week)

THURSDAY - 9.30am Shopping (pension week)

FRIDAY - Playgroup.

Drop in any-time for coffee & chat
New Activities coming up soon
(we hope) - crochet, swimming, sewing,
art, knitting

Family outings

Camps - Easter, in the wild
May, Doxa.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, April 6th 8pm

Babysitting provided - all welcome

Friendships like the sun above
That's always shining bright,
Friendship like a golden smile
That warms the coldest night.

Friendship is a priceless gift
Of faithfulness and grace,
And nothing in the world can ever
Take true friendship's place.

By Patricia Emma.



Don't walk ahead of me,
I may not follow
Don't walk behind me,
I may not lead
Just walk beside me
And be my friend.

By Joybelle.

Memos.

Happy thoughts like
lovely flowers,
Light hearts and
brighter hours.

Love is made to share.



Nerves TAKE THEIR TOLL.

BY BERYL M^cIntyre.

I am a pensioner living alone and find it very lonely, but Phyll comes down a couple of times a week or whenever she can get down, which I appreciate very much.

I used to get up there a couple of years ago, but my legs have got that bad that I can hardly get around the flat and that gets on my nerves but I do a lot of knitting so if any one has any they want doing get in touch because half the time I sit around knitting for the sake of knitting so if anyone wants any done. apply →

→ Beryl M^cIntyre
Flat 11-112 Ormond St
Kensington

P.S. Any sort at all; mens women's or kiddies.

We the child care staff are pleased to say we have a new child care worker Marjorie. We also have a lot of new children. Unlike in the past the children are a lot younger most of them being the age of two. On the whole, they play well together.

We still go out every Friday while the play group uses the House and these outings are enjoyed by both children and staff.

We are pleased to say that we now have a new lawn in the backyard after a lot of hard work. We soon hope to have tambock around the swings and sand in the sand pit. We also hope to have a few more objects in the backyard for them to play with eg tyres - which are being given to us by Andreas father. John Murphy kindly donated some old drapes for the children to use as cubby houses. He also gave us some blankets in reasonable condition, if you are interested they are being sold at 50¢ each. If anybody has any old shopping baskets they do not need we can use them for certain things.

Unfortunately we are losing another highly valued member of our staff. (By the way Michal is fine and well and will soon be travelling around Australia.) Debbie will be leaving us on the 6th April she is returning home to New Zealand, we wish her lots of luck and happiness in the future.

Jenny, Andrea & Marjorie.

I would like to use "Shoulder to Shoulder" to express a few parting words. I leave here on 6th April to return to New Zealand after working at the House for just under two years. During that time I have enjoyed the contact and support of many people. the parents, the children, the people of Kensington, the women of the House but I would particularly like to thank my co-workers Jenny, Andrea, Michal, Phyl and Marjorie. We all know that child care does at times provide an element of strain and tension but our team always succeeded in keeping this to a minimum. Through their understanding and caring attitude my working hours were always happy and satisfying. I wish you all the best in whatever you do and hope that someday we will meet again.

Thanks Debbie Brilleman.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

1982.

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Thanks to : —

Edith

Rolyn

Dellie

Fiona

Kathy

Andrea

Beryl

Rita

Jenny

Viki

for work on this issue.