



Graduate Network

Published by the de Lissa Institute Association of Early Childhood Graduates Inc.

Barker Kindergarten Celebrates 80th Anniversary

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Barker Kindergarten Celebrates 80th Anniversary	1
2007 Celebrations	2
Annual Dinner	2
Oral History	2
1906 - 2006—100 Years of Kindergarten Education in South Australia	3
Foyer Plaques & Photograph of Lillian de Lissa	3
2007 Committee Nominations	3
Dr Helen Jones—Guest Speaker General Meeting	4
Winter Luncheon	4

INSERTS:

AGM Flier

In 2006, Barker Kindergarten will celebrate its 80th anniversary. Located in Tynte Street, North Adelaide, the kindergarten was built in 1926 and replaced the Little Citizens Free Kindergarten which was situated in the Methodist Church Hall on Archer Street.

The kindergarten was built for the Kindergarten Union following the kind donation of Mrs E.S. Barker and Miss. E.K. Barker, in memory of Mr Alfred Edward Barker (Mrs Barker's husband) and his father Mr John Barker. The Barker family had a long history in South Australia with the first Mr Barker being among the first settlers to arrive in Adelaide on the Rapid. Mrs Barker continued her association with the kindergarten until her death in 1956.

Although North Adelaide is now considered a quite affluent suburb, the kindergarten in its early years served an important function in assisting poorer families of the area by

providing care, education, meals and health care for the children. In addition, financial assistance and paid work at the kindergarten were sometimes offered to fathers to help them provide for their families in times of unemployment. At the time it was not uncommon for 2 to 3 families to live in small 4 roomed workman's cottages. Children aged between 2 and 6 years attended the kindergarten until 2pm each day and were provided with a hot lunch, sleep, hygiene care and an educational program based on the Montessori method. In the 1930s milk and cocoa was being donated by the 5DN radio station located next door to the kindergarten.

Students attending the Kindergarten Training College in the 1930s and 1940s worked at Barker Kindergarten to gain practical experience and then returned to the college in the afternoons to attend lectures. Some students fondly remem-

bered going to the corner store to purchase cheese for sandwiches. Amid the cheeses displayed on the counter laid a very fat cat.

The kindergarten has seen some changes over the years. In 1944 the air raid shelter was removed from the grounds and in 1949 the eastern veranda was enclosed. In 1954 the Kindergarten Union was able to purchase the next door property to provide the greatly expanded outside play area that we see today. Today the building is Heritage listed.

Barker Kindergarten now operates as a half time kindergarten and still serves a small but diverse community of families. I have fond memories of 'my first kindergarten' as a teacher there from 2000-2002.

Carol Thompson

(Thanks to Win Frame who wrote A Short History of Barker Free Kindergarten (1982)) which provided much of the above information)

2007 Celebrations

The programme for our Celebration Year is now in place. It is with regret it became necessary to cancel the hoped for Children's Picnic in February for reasons connected with safety and liability.

Gala Cocktail Reception and Tree Planting Ceremony. This first event will be held on April 12th at 5.30 PM in the de Lisa building and adjacent lawn area. The Association is presenting the University of South Australia with three native *Calitris Pressii* trees, representing the Past, the Present and the Future of Early Childhood Education. The University is very interested and supportive of our Anniversary year and a

site has been agreed on. The site will include a seat made from sustainable sources and a plaque with details of the occasion. This will be immediately followed by a Gala Cocktail Reception to which appropriate UniSA staff from the Chancellery and Division of the Arts and Education, as well as local and Government officials will be invited as our guests. Invitations will be sent well in advance to members. There will be a cost for those attending.

The Gala Dinner will take place at the Pavilion Restaurant on October 26th. This will be a wonderful opportunity for graduates to gather their Year together. Start contacting them now and

make a date in your diaries! We hope there will be a group of former Kingston CAE staff as well as UniSA staff present. Numbers will be limited, so don't leave this too late!

Helen Miller

Gala Cocktail Party and Tree Planting Ceremony

April 12th 2007

Gala Dinner

October 26th 2007

Annual Dinner

This year a group of twenty two graduates met at the Kensington Hotel for an evening of fun and good food. We had a spacious private room which made it easy for us to converse without shouting.

We were very pleased that Mary Bleby one of our oldest graduates members was able to come. We heard that Ian

Fry had called for Mary the previous Wednesday evening thinking that that was the correct night and had dinner on their own ... and they came again the next Wednesday. We all enjoyed this story.

The raffle, which is a tradition at the annual dinner, with prizes supplied in colourful wrapping paper caused the

usual expectancy and mirth and raised \$50.

We look forward to the gala dinner in October 2007 to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the Kindergarten Training College.

Christina McPharlin

Oral History

Most interviews for inclusion in this collection have now been completed although there are some yet to be made. It is very exciting to have representation from as far away as New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia. These graduates are very enthusiastic and pleased to be taking part and those we will not be able to interview personally have sent us their written stories as well as won-

derful photos of themselves and colleagues from their student and teaching years. We are also receiving contributions from the families of some early graduates in the form of a profile and again, some beautiful early photos.

The State Library of South Australia is copying the interview mini disc recordings onto CD at no cost and a funding grant from the History Trust of South Australia is helping to pay for the

transcribing from CD to hard copy. We have applied for further funding from the History Trust and the Alumni Association of the University is also giving us some money.

The Association is receiving donations towards the publication costs and donations of \$50.00 or more will be acknowledged in the book.

Helen Miller and Pauline Butler

1906 – 2006

One hundred Years of Kindergarten Education in South Australia

As this is a significant year for Kindergartens in South Australia, the Graduates Association has been given permission by the Adelaide City Council to have a commemorative plaque placed on the footpath at 214 Franklin Street – the site of the first kindergarten. This was opened under the auspices of the then newly formed Kindergarten Union and Miss Lillian de Lissa was the first director.

In 1980, the Kindergarten Union placed a plaque on the wall of the building that now occupies the site. This commemorates the first kindergarten and acknowledges seventy-five years of service by the Kindergarten Union.

Our plaque is to be placed below this one and will be set in the footpath.

As the year 2007 is of major sig-

nificance for our Association, there will be no grand unveiling ceremony for this particular plaque. Once it is in place (planned for September), members are encouraged to view it and maybe raise a glass to the one hundred years which it commemorates.

The wording of the plaque appears below.

Pauline Butler

This plaque marks the site of

The First Kindergarten in South Australia

Opened in 1906
With Miss Lillian de Lissa as the inaugural Director

Placed here in 2006 by
The de Lissa Association of Early Childhood Graduates Inc.

To celebrate the Centenary Year

Foyer Plaques and Photograph of Lillian de Lissa de Lissa Building – Magill

When building alterations were made to the entrance of the de Lissa Building, the photograph of Lillian de Lissa and several commemorative plaques had to be removed from the foyer wall. These items have now been re-

located on a side wall of the foyer and set within a rather attractive frame.

Committee members are well pleased with this change and have expressed thanks to Dr. John Holmes Associate Head of

School, School of Education for attending to the re-location of these significant items of memorabilia for which the Association is responsible.

Pauline Butler

Nominations for the Associations' 2007 Committee

If you would like to nominate yourself or a friend please contact the secretary to obtain a nomination form before November 1, 2006.

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Klemzig 5087
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We would welcome member's contributions to the Newsletter. Items for inclusion can be sent to 'The Editor' - see address top page 4.

Items for the next Newsletter, due to be published March 2007, should be submitted to the editor no later than January 31, 2007.

The Newsletter of the de Lissa Association of
Early Childhood Graduates Inc.

The Hon Secretary
C/O School of Education
University of South Australia
GPO Box 247
Adelaide SA 5001



Dr Helen Jones

Guest Speaker General Meeting Held Tuesday May 9, 2006

Dr Helen Jones, a renowned historian and former lecturer at Kingston College of Advanced Education took on as her subject ... 'Reflections on Lillian de Lissa and the First Kindergarten 1906' ... for her presentation to members at the general meeting in May. What follows is a short report of her absorbing report—much of this information may not find its way into the history books.

The Kindergarten Union had a the good fortune to gain the services of Lillian de Lissa, a fearless spirit. Born in 1885 she grew up in Sydney. She was the daughter of well-to-do parents who were in the wine business. Her mother wanted her to be a society girl but Lillian had more serious ideas.

Lillian graduated from the Sydney Kindergarten Training College and in February 1906 at the age of twenty she was appointed director of the first free kindergarten in the city of Adelaide—located at 214 Franklin Street.

Dr. Jones quoted from a report in 'The Register' on Monday 5th February 1906 describing the cottage as unostentatious. Two former rooms were made into one which was tastefully decorated with an atmosphere of refinement for

"the little folk". A grand old fig tree shaded the yard and their was good play space for the forty children enrolled.

Another entry on Saturday 10th February reported that he kindergarten in Franklin Street was busily engaged with children 3-6 years old who were attending from 9.30 am - 12.30 pm. The building was not yet in apple pie order but was a model of simplicity getting the children to be interested in play. Cooperation and unity were being fostered and each child was given a small task to do. The religion was that of love.

The report went on to say that eager children were waiting to come. Some children had bad eyes. In one week Lillian had visited sixty homes in the district speaking with parents.

Lillian de Lissa was a 'practical idealist' who strongly influenced early childhood education in South Australia and her talents and her achievements have now become legendary.

Dr. Jones presented a copy of these newspaper articles to the Association for the archival collection.

Christina McPharlin

Winter Luncheon

On June 17th, we held our Winter Luncheon at Agnes Goode Kindergarten. Although the morning was pretty brisk, we had a beautiful winter's afternoon to enjoy the company of our many friends and enjoy some delicious food. The kindergarten is located on large grounds and surrounded by a park like setting.

The luncheon was well attended by 16 members as well as the committee. Well over \$300 was raised on the day and this will certainly assist with the ongoing operations of the Association. Our President, Meredith Farmer, also chaired a short business meeting on the day.

Agnes Goode Kindergarten was established in 1947 and celebrated its 50th year in 1997. Fortunately the kindergarten has kept some very interesting records from the kindergarten ar-

chives including original newspaper clippings and committee minutes from 1947 which detail the early operation of the kindergarten. Members were able to view these in an historical display set up on the day. The 'Great Fire of 1986' was also a notable event for those members who had worked at the kindergarten around that time. You may be interested to know that building extensions are planned for later in the year to accommodate the growing numbers of children who are now attending the kindergarten.

I must pass on my thanks to the members who contributed to making the day a great success through their contributions to the trading table, raffle and cooking.

Carol Thompson