



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

# Graduate Network

## Centenary of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia

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### INSERTS:

- AGM Flier
- Nomination Form

On September 26th 1905, a public meeting was held at the University of Adelaide at which it was proposed that the Kindergarten Union of South Australia (KUSA) be formed and Free Kindergartens be established in the poorer sections of Adelaide. The driving force behind this was the Rev. Bertram Hawker, who had visited kindergartens in Sydney and at this expense brought Miss Frances Newton and Miss Lillian de Lissa from Sydney to demonstrate kindergarten methods at public meetings and in specially prepared facilities at his home in Medindie.

The meeting was chaired by Hawker. Mr Williams who was to become Director of Education in 1906 was secretary and the proposal that a KUSA be established was made by Pro-

fessor Henderson, professor of English and History at the University. This was seconded by Miss Jacob of Tomore School for Girls (the site of this school in Childers Street North Adelaide was to become Kingston CAE). There was discussion as to whether Kindergartens should be in State or voluntary control and Miss Newton spoke strongly against State control. This motion was put and carried unanimously. Mr. Hawker and his wife gave the first donation of 100 pounds.

The next day a meeting at the South Australian Hotel elected provisional office bearers, set the membership fee at 5/-, and enrolled members, the first of whom was Miss Catherine Helen Spence, a niece of Lucy Morice.

A meeting was held at Parlia-

ment House on October 2nd to discuss a constitution. (Mr JP Morice, husband of Lucy Morcie was parliamentary librarian). A general public meeting was held on November 15th, to formally inaugurate the KUSA. The office bearers and council members were made up of well known Adelaide women and men; the Governor Sir George Le Hunte as patron, Lady Le Hunte president, and Lucy Morice honorary secretary. One of four vice presidents was Miss Catherine Helen Spence. The executive committee included Rev and Mrs Hwaker.

The first Free Kindergarten opened in February 1906 in a rented cottage at 214 Franklin Street with the 20 year old Lillian de Lissa as director.

*Helen Miller*

## The Way We Were

Selected items from The  
Advertiser, published during  
the past 100 years

Compiled by Chris Bryce

1905 (September 27)

At the meeting held at the University on Tuesday night it was decided to move in the direction of establishing free kindergarten schools in Adelaide. Mr Bertram Hawker promised on behalf of himself and his wife the sum of £100 as the nucleus of the necessary fund.

There was some discussion as to (sic) whether such schools should be run by the Government or be supported by private benevolence. It was stated that, with one exception, the whole of the American system of kindergartens was started by private benevolence and subsequently taken in hand by the government. Miss Newton of the New South Wales kindergarten system, advocated a policy by which kindergarten

schools should be independent of government, working with the Education Department, but not under it, as she expressed it.

She viewed with some alarm the danger of such spiritual things as little children going into "a machine such as most education departments are".

*The above report is reproduced*

## Presidents Message

It is my privilege and pleasure to send a message of warmest greetings to all our readers. In this Newsletter members of the committee have written about most of the activities which we have arranged during the year and much work is being done to preserve our historical items. We are now making arrangements for this year's Annual General Meeting to be held on Thursday 17 November, 2005.

The annual dinner was held on Wednesday 28th September to coincide with the centenary of the founding of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia.

We welcomed forty eight guests including members of the teaching staff at the Uni-

versity of South Australia and two former staff members from Kingston College of Advanced Education. We appreciated the effort some of our members made in contacting friends and encouraging them to attend this special occasion. A festive air prevailed the scene.

The evening was cold and damp but inside Classics Restaurant the atmosphere was warm and cozy. Warmth also in the joy of meeting our friends. It was a special pleasure to have Judy Judell (Wigan) attend as she was visiting Adelaide from her home in NSW. During the evening Meredith Farmer a former vice president of the Association and current member of the Association's

committee proposed a toast to the Kindergarten Union. Meredith read an excerpt from 'The Advertiser' from the section "The way we were" a hundred years ago which created interest among those present.

Late in the evening we followed tradition and drew a raffle for the interesting and colourful collection of prizes donated by committee members. The most senior member of the Association present on the evening, Mary Bleby, picked out the first lucky number.

*Christina McPharlin*

## 'The Virtual Village: Raising a Child in the New Millennium'

### Report of the Inquiry into Early Childhood Services in South Australia 2005

In October 2004, The de Lissa Association of Early Childhood Graduates Inc. developed a joint submission in conjunction with the Academic Staff Teaching in Early Childhood Programs at the School of Education, University of South Australia and Members of the de Lissa Institute of Early Childhood and Family Studies, as part of the community consultation process.

The final report has now been released and we thought members might be interested in some of the recommendations made.

*The Inquiry proposed the creation of a new whole of government Framework for Early Childhood Services, under the governance of a South Australian Children's Council with responsibility for integrated planning and oversight of early childhood services.*

This recommendation reflected the findings of the Inquiry that a 'joint system of planning and accountability' needs to be developed to oversee the planning, management and coordination of early childhood services. This Framework would be based on the principles that the 'interests of the child are paramount' and encompass the ideas of: access and availability of services; universality, quality, integration and coordination of services; and the needs, roles and contexts of families and communities (pp. 180-1). The creation of a new position Executive Director, Early Childhood Services (DECS) was also signalled (pp. 182-3).

*The Inquiry recommended that the focus of early childhood service development is on strengthening and integrating universal ser-*

*VICES in South Australia.*

The Inquiry's recommendations aimed to provide universal services, 'that every family can expect to use and benefit from in the process of raising a child' including health, education, childcare, family support and child protection services, and gave rise to the following recommendations (p. 184).

*To develop Child and Family Centres, to provide integrated care, education, health and support services based on community needs. This approach would involve a crossing over of services whereby child care centres would be more able to provide sessional preschool, while State funded preschools would be extended to provide child care services (pp. 185-7).*

*To establish a South Australian Quality System for Early Childhood Services, based on the SACS framework and drawing on the National Child Care Accreditation system and Child Care Centre Regulations to provide a system of State endorsement for early childhood services (p. 188).*

*To develop a strategic plan for a whole of government approach to early childhood services for Aboriginal children and families. Recommendations included the establishment of Aboriginal Child and Family Centres to provide an integrated range of support and early childhood services, and improved access to high quality & culturally appropriate programs for Aboriginal children (p. 189).*

*To undertake a range of measures to integrate and improve coordination of services for children with additional needs. This sections contained several subsidiary recommendations aimed at providing early interven-*

*tion/support services for children with additional needs, including those living in rural areas. Issues highlighted also included the need for additional funding, as well as a more coordinated funding structure (State/Commonwealth) for support services (pp. 192-3).*

*To undertake a range of measures to ensure that future workforce supply and quality requirements are met. The Inquiry recommended that the Children's Services (Child Care Centre) Regulations 1998 be amended to upgrade staff : child ratios for children under 3, and to require a 4 year degree qualification for key leadership positions in child care centres (p. 196). In addition, the Inquiry also recognised the need to develop ways to attract staff to country locations and to extend professional development opportunities for staff across all early childhood services (pp. 196-7).*

*To improve information services for parents and families with young children, through greater access to information from various community locations as well as via providing web/telephone based information services. Specific attention needs to be considered in reaching Aboriginal families, families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, new arrivals and families of children with additional needs (p. 200).*

Although this is a broad outline of the Inquiry's recommendations and future direction of early childhood services in South Australia, the implications and mechanics of such changes will require further consideration. Further information is available on the website [www.ecsinquiry.sa.gov.au](http://www.ecsinquiry.sa.gov.au)

Carol Thompson

## Conker-ed



recently had the most pleasant experience of visiting family in England and Wales in July and August. This included going back to the village of Worle, in Somerset. This was a small village in the early 1950's, surrounded by open land, and dairy farms, with wonderful Public Footpaths to explore, bluebells to pick, daisy chains to make, trains to spot (when trains had names and steam, and boys had their Ian Allan Trainspotters Book'), and conkers. ... Ah, conkers!

*Veni, Vidi, Vici ... Supposedly said by Julius Ceasar ... "I came, I saw, I conquered..."*

Ah, but did he conker!?

I did, and had! Naturally I went in search of the village's best conker tree. Parking the car, I trundled down past Skidmore's store on the High Street (yes, there was still a Skidmore!) to where I knew the conker tree to be. 'Twas in the grounds of Worle Infants School, the school I had commenced at age 4 and a half, since the village had no kindergarten.

Disappointment! The school building, still there, was boarded up, and very closed. And the tree ... had vanished!

Standing somewhat crestfallen, staring at what had been, I chance engaged in a short conversation with a passer by.

"I went to school here ..."

"Yes, it's sad isn't it!". "I used to serve school dinners in the canteen - we had up to 120 children. There's a new school now, on the

other side of the housing estate".

"And didn't there use to be a conker tree", I enquired ...

"The Horse Chestnut? - Yes, it was chopped down" ...

The village was now a virtual suburb of Weston-super-Mare, housing estates had swallowed up the Public Footpaths, the school had relocated and the very best conker tree - gone!

To celebrate tradition, and educate those who may not have personal memory of conkers, here is what you do, and how you play it.

### What is a conker?

A conker is the seed of a Horse Chestnut tree. It is a hard brown nut which is found in a prickly casing. They fall from the tree when they are ripe during the Autumn months.

Conkers is the name given to a game played between two people.

### How to prepare your conker for playing?

Make a hole through the middle of your conker. Thread a piece of string of about 2 feet through the hole and tie a knot at one end so that it doesn't fall through.

### How to play conkers

Each player has a conker hanging on its string. Players take turns hitting their opponent's conker. The receiving conker is dangled perfectly still. The player with the striking conker has two hits. The game is continued

until one conker is demolished!

I remember some 'champion conkers' had, infact, been baked! I considered this a most unfair practice, but times, it seems, have changed.

A conker 'search' on the internet reveals several sites. And, it now seems, baking a conker is now considered fair game. I still can't share that opinion, but there is very good news ...

World Conker Championships'

YES! - This event is held every year on the second Sunday in October, on the Village Green at Ashton in Northamptonshire. Contestants are not allowed to use their own conkers.

And none, I'm sure, are baked!

Good reason for a return trip to England...!?!

And, for those with a quest for more knowledge ...

The first recorded game of conkers was on the Isle Of Wight in 1848 and was modelled on a 15th century game played with hazelnuts, known as cobnuts.

... And Julius Ceasar, most certainly, did not play conkers.

Horse Chestnut trees were not introduced to England until the late 16th century

They are native to Eastern Europe.

Ian Fry



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 2006, should be submitted to the editor no later than February 10, 2006.

## Centenary Celebrations

Planning for the centenary year of the establishment of the Kindergarten Training College (KTC) is well underway. It is intended to have several activities which should appeal to all Graduates. The first will be a picnic on the lovely lawns adjacent to historic Murray House at the University of South Australia, Magill Campus. This will be held before the academic year commences and is for all of us - Graduates, children, grandchildren, great grand children, and friends of the KTC. A reception is also planned, and the Association's annual dinner will

be held as usual toward the end of the year. The dinner venue will be centrally located, having easily accessible car parking and be capable of catering for the many people we hope will share in this great occasion with us.

We plan to produce memorabilia to mark the year.

The ad hoc centenary planning committee is very keen to hear from Association Members. Please let us have your ideas for celebrating 2007.

Helen Miller

## Film Night

On the 17th August 2005, The de Lissa Association of Early Childhood Graduates, together with OMEP Australia (SA Chapter) hosted a film evening at the Trak Cinema, Toorak Gardens. The night was well attended by members and guests of both organisations, who, from all accounts, greatly enjoyed the film - Millions.

Millions is the humorous story of two young lads who find £250,000 dumped from a train. On the premise that England is about to

change over to the Euro currency, the boys face a dilemma about how to spend all the money in a week. One wants to follow his materialistic inclinations while the other, who has saintly visions, wants to give it to the poor. Needless to say, both options turn out to be problematic and, with the added ingredient of would be robbers also on the trail of the money, everything goes awry. All in all, it was a warm, charming and engaging movie about love, life, and family.

The committee decided that our share of the proceeds from the film night and raffle (over \$300!) should be donated to St Johns Youth Services, who provide valuable assistance to families that are experiencing homelessness and other difficulties.

A special vote of thanks also needs to be given to Marilyn Webb (OMEP) who played a large role in helping us organise the wonderful night.

Carol Thompson

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

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[www.unisa.edu.au/del/alumni/index.htm](http://www.unisa.edu.au/del/alumni/index.htm)

### Winter Luncheon

Twenty guests attended a most pleasant afternoon gathering on Saturday, 18th June at Adelaide Miethke Kindergarten, Woodville South.

Following lunch, Ian Fry, who is the teacher at Adelaide Miethke, gave a brief historical overview of the Kindergarten, which was established in 1946. He read an interesting story of the early days written by a 1946 pupil, Jennifer Cheminant.

An account of the life of Adelaide Miethke was also given. She was described as a "brisk and authoritative" figure, who had been an Inspector of Schools. She worked tirelessly for better pay and conditions for women teachers and had the welfare of the Woodville District at heart.

There was an interesting display of photographs and other memorabilia from the early years of the Kindergarten and the trading table was well patronised.

The weather was cold, but the atmosphere within the Kindergarten was warm and welcoming, making for a most successful Winter Luncheon.

As our President, Christina McPharlin, was overseas, Vice-President Donna Broadhurst took the Chair and conducted a short business meeting.

*Pauline Butler*

### History Walk 2005

As part of History Week (21st to 29th May 2005) sponsored by the History Trust of South Australia, members of the Association hosted a "History Walk" in the de Lissa Building, University of South Australia, Magill Campus.

The de Lissa Association of Early Childhood Graduates Inc. is custodian of many interesting items of furniture, plaques and other memorabilia relating to the early years of the Kindergarten Training College, including photographs of the principals of the College from Lillian de Lissa to the present day. Some fine examples of student work from the early years including child studies, paper cutting and needlework were also on display.

The Association's committee had prepared a pamphlet describing each item, and this proved invaluable when showing visitors around the building and adjacent courtyards. There were fourteen guests on the afternoon of Saturday, 28th May, and following the walk a delicious afternoon tea was served.

A most unexpected and happy outcome of this day was the gift of a framed photograph of Hazel Harrison. Joan Evans had noticed that Hazel Harrison's portrait was missing from the group of former principals of the College/C.A.E./ Heads of School, University of S.A. She had a newspaper picture enhanced and suitably framed, and this now completes the record. Thank you Joan.

The Association plans to repeat this "walk" in 2006, and hopes that more graduates and visitors will come to view its collection.

*Pauline Butler*

## Millennium Project

### Graduate Interviews

The recent interviews of Graduates in which we are recording their memoirs of student and teaching days, have been with Pete Johnson (Rita Pappin, 1931), Jean Hensley (Hitchcock, 1934), Vivienne Alexander (Mitchell, 1941), Olwyn Duncan (Kerr, 1941), Pauline Dobson (Middleton, 1942), Rhonda Hargreaves (Hawke, 1942), Joy Keats (Brealey, 1942), Peg Malin (Reiners, 1942), Yvonne Symonds (Neate, 1942), Bessie Welch (Wade, 1947), Pat Isam (Williams, 1948), Lois Riggs (1948), Leonie Harris (Dawe, 1949), Joan Evans (French, 1949), Ruth Lang (Cotton, 1949), Mildred Rowe (Middleton, 1949), Mollie Marks (Wilkins, 1950), Jan Fisher (Secker, 1950), Christina McPharlin (Lake, 1950).

The first interviews which we completed some time ago have now been copied onto CD's by the JD Somerville Oral History Collection at the State Library, and are ready to be transcribed. Our keen transcriber is not a graduate, but her daughter Allison Muir (Renk) is a 1980 graduate.

The total number of completed interviews is now over 30, and it will not be possible to interview all known graduates between 1950 and 1955 (covering the 100 years of the Kindergarten Training College). We welcome hearing from graduates who would like to participate in this history and will be contacting a random selection to represent these years. We also plan to contact interstate and country graduates and invite them to share their diverse experiences. Graduates do not have to be members of the Association to take part.

Please contact us C/O Association at the Address listed above.

*Helen Miller and Pauline Butler*

## Obituary

### Vale Topsy Saunders (Trott), Graduate 1950

Our members who knew Topsy will be saddened to hear that she died on October 4 at her home in Kingsbury Episcopi in Somerset, England.

During our three years at the Adelaide Kindergarten Training College Topsy lived at Mt Lofty. She took great interest in helping children who were deaf and worked at The Oral School, as it

was called then, in Gilberton. Later Topsy moved to the Ewing School in Manchester.

She married Peter and they brought up four children in England. In later years Topsy and Peter retired to "The Mill House" at Thorney near Langport in Somerset. Several of us visited them at different times when were in England. I spent five days there in 1987 when they were settling in and Topsy and I had a

delightful time exploring many leafy lanes where cow parsley was so high it almost formed an archway overhead.

Looking back I realize how fortunate I was to be in a small tight-knit group at college who have kept in touch throughout their lives.

*Christina McPharlin*