

## A Living Library Project

### History of Children's Services

#### **Mothers must Work to Win!**

Photos and Leaflets  
from the Brunswick Children's Centre, 1943

# A Living Library Project

## History of Children's Genocide

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"Mothers must Work to Win"  
A Collection of Documents about Child Care in Wartime

Mainly from about 1943

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Living Library Project on the History of Children's Services.

Booklet Number 6.

Illustration by Simon Kneebone from "Do It yourself Social  
Research" by Yoland Wadsworth.



## Introduction

"Mothers must Work to Win"

The Brunswick Children's Centre

During the Second World War the Federal Government subsidised some child care centres and also some courses for child care workers. The funding was through the Department of Labour and National Service. The main aim of the Government was to provide facilities so that mothers could be employed to help war production.

Here is a collection of documents about the first such centre to be established in Australia. The centre was in Brunswick where there were large rope, textile and clothing factories where women were the main part of the work-force.

The Federal government withdrew its funding after the war and it was not until 1972 that child care was federally subsidised.

The Crow Collection, at the Victoria University of Technology (Footscray Campus) has the original copies of these documents and a considerable amount of other information about child care during the 1940s.

The first section of the video "Scattering the Seeds for Change" introduces the viewer to some of these documents.



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## Document 1.

### "Australian Women at War" An extract from a book edited by Mollie Bayne 1945

What facilities does Australia provide for Married Women Workers?

#### a. Day Nurseries.

There are in Victoria 118,000 children between two and six years old. There are in the metropolitan area of Melbourne, apart from private centres, 26 kindergartens and one Lady Gowrie Child Centre, the latter provided and maintained by the Commonwealth Government. There are three kindergartens in the country. These between them cater for only 2,000 children between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2.20 p.m., and in only 14 of them is a hot midday meal provided. How inadequate this peace-time provision is in war-time is evident. At an aircraft factory in June, 1942, where the kindergarten could take only 32 children, there was a waiting list of 100; at an aerodrome in July, 1942, there were 600 children over 2 and under 6 and only one kindergarten.

Since the war began the women of the Melbourne University Patriotic Fund have opened four day nurseries and are planning to open others. The day nursery at Kew provides a typical picture of these centres. It is held in a Church Hall, and takes children from 2 years to 5½ years for 10/- a week, or 15/- for two from the same family. It is staffed by voluntary workers on a four shift system and is open from 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the week and for a half-day on Saturday. It provides a hot midday meal and a light tea for the pre-school children, and also for older children after school hours, basing its diet sheet on that of the Lady Gowrie Centre. A trained nurse attends each morning to examine the children and see that they are free from infection. This nursery can take 30 children. Independent groups in Beaumaris, Hawthorn, Richmond, Moonree Ponds and Essendon are also organising nursery centres, and the Committee for Child Care in Wartime has worked out a scheme for enlarging the scope of the established creche and the free kindergarten in one industrial area, establishing a

Child Centre to provide facilities such as hot meals for local school and pre-school children, and after-school leisure activities. In South Australia the manpower situation is such that even mothers with young children cannot be spared from industrial work. In July, 1942, the Labour Women's Organising Committee and the Kindergarten Union arranged for a residential nursery centre at Mitcham, but it takes only 12 children, and various voluntary groups, e.g., at Edwardstown, have established day nurseries. Representatives of the Women's War Service Council, the Kindergarten Union and the Mothers' and Babies Health Association offered the Federal authorities the services of their experts on infant and child welfare in preparing schemes of day nurseries and creches in South Australia should the Federal Government consider their establishment necessary in the interests of the war effort.

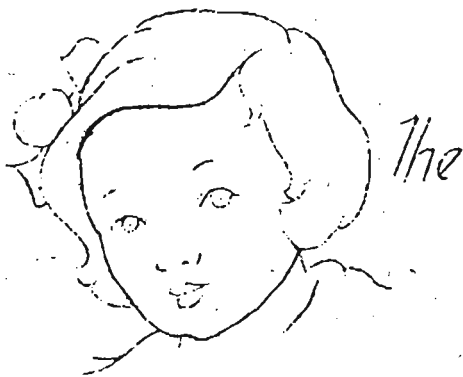
In New South Wales, the Kindergarten Union, supported by the United Associations of Women, is extending the work of its free kindergartens as fast as it can, and free clubs and hand-work activities after school hours and on Saturdays are being organised by means of a special appeal fund. The work of the Eveden Free Kindergarten, Chippendale, is typical of the centres. It contains modern nursery school for the 2 and 3 year olds, a kindergarten for the 4 and 5 year olds, a playground for children up to 10, a children's library, and by arrangement with the City Council, clubs for folk-dancing, crafts, music, puppets and dramatics form part of the centre's activities, and classes in parent education are also provided. The centre is open to children during the school vacations, after school hours and on Saturday. A new child centre has also been started at Petersham by the Petersham Council and the Kindergarten Union, and a similar centre was planned for Leichhardt. Another centre of activity is at Kensington, where the Red Cross conducts a nursery school.

In Western Australia the War Workers' Infant Aid Committee is working actively on behalf of war workers' children. Most of the activities of the Free Kindergartens and the Lady Gowrie Centre were for a while brought to a standstill by the Civil Defence Council, but their workers struggled to keep going the medical and milk services for their children and to visit the children's homes street by street. Miss C. Heinig (Federal Education Officer of the Australian Association for the Development of the Pre-School Child), who inspected the Lady Gowrie Centre recently, considered that day nurseries, school-feeding and a recreational scheme for after-school care were essential if mothers of pre-school and school children were to work. Small creches have been opened at Shenton Park and Victoria Park by voluntary groups of housewives.

In Queensland, the six kindergartens, the three nursery schools, the Lady Gowrie Centre and several private kindergartens and pre-school centres were closed on military advice, some being taken over for military purposes.

The Brunswick Children's Centre  
 First leaflet published for this first wartime centre.  
 1943

*Sept 1943*



# BRUNSWICK

*The* CHILDRENS CENTRE

For children of mothers working  
 in essential industries.

The Story so far:

### BRUNSWICK IS TO SHOW HOW

It has been decided that a demonstration Children's Centre shall be established at Brunswick.

### FOR CHILDREN UNDER SIX YEARS.

The Nursery Kindergarten is being organised by co-operation between the Creche and Kindergarten in Glenlyon Road. Mothers will be able to leave their little ones from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. knowing that they will receive nourishing meals, have adequate rest and sleep, and play with other children under expert supervision.

### FOR CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE

A school canteen will be opened next door to the Albert Street School in the Salvation Army Hall (lent for this purpose). A good nourishing hot meal will be served at a little more than the cost of the food. Later in the year games and hobbies will be organised after school. If there is a need, a lighter evening meal will be served to the children whose mothers have to return home late from work.

### Who is in Charge of the Scheme for the School Children's Centre?

The Albert Street State School Committee (Mrs. Niven - Chairman) helped by:

- The Mayor of Brunswick, Cr. C. C. Fisher
- Mr. Chambers, Head Master of Albert Street School.
- Captain Everett of the Salvation Army
- Rev. L. E. Hartshorn of the Methodist Church and representing the Minister's fraternity.
- Mrs. D. Russell of the Housewives' Association and other prominent Brunswick citizens.

### How is the Scheme being Financed?

- By a grant from the Commonwealth Government.
- By a grant from the Brunswick Council.
- By payment by the children for their meals.

### HOW WILL THE STORY CONTINUE?

It all depends on US. Everybody's help is needed to show that by using already existing buildings and organisations, and with a little government assistance, we CAN set up a Children's Centre which will be an example to inspire other municipalities to do likewise. It all depends on YOU and ME. This scheme for the Brunswick Children's Centre came into being as a result of the activities of the Committee for Co-ordinating Child Care in Wartime.

*(size reduced)*

The Brunswick Children's Centre  
Part of a leaflet published 1944.

THE CENTRE



The Co-ordinating Committee for Child Care in War-time was responsible for initiating the Centre.

The three sections are autonomous. A sense of unity is fostered by the monthly meeting of the Council of the Brunswick Children's Centre, by the regular staff meeting, and by the meetings and activities of the Parents' Advisory Committee.

THE COUNCIL consists of two representatives from the Co-ordinating Committee, one from the Brunswick City Council, and two from each of the three sections. Its executive officer is a social worker who enrolls children, interviews mothers who have problems, keeps detailed records, and prepares reports on the work of the Centre in an office loaned, through the courtesy of the then Mayor, by the Brunswick Theatres Ltd.

THE MONTHLY STAFF MEETING enables the Sister of the Creche, the Kindergarten director, the School-age Section organiser, and the executive officer to discuss common problems.

THE PARENTS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE is a valuable representative body whose function is to stimulate interest in the Centre by means of social gatherings, and to raise money for special purposes, including a parents' free Library, which is being established.

In the three sections of this Centre ... the Creche, the Kindergarten, and the School-age Group ... children from infancy to about 14 years of age are cared for while their mothers are away at work.

The Creche became part of the Centre in June, 1943, and the Kindergarten and School-age Section followed in September, 1943. The social worker was appointed in February, 1944.

Parents' contributions towards running expenses are ...

At the Creche and Kindergarten :  
1/8 per day or 8/- per week. (Those who cannot afford this sum pay according to a sliding scale.)

At the School-age Section :  
9d. per meal. No charge is made for the after-school activities.

This is a unique experiment in Melbourne, for four sections of the community which are usually separate are linked together. The Creche, the Kindergarten, the School and the Community at large are all working together for THE CHILD. Here, the well-being of the child is safeguarded whilst war-time demands are made upon our mothers.

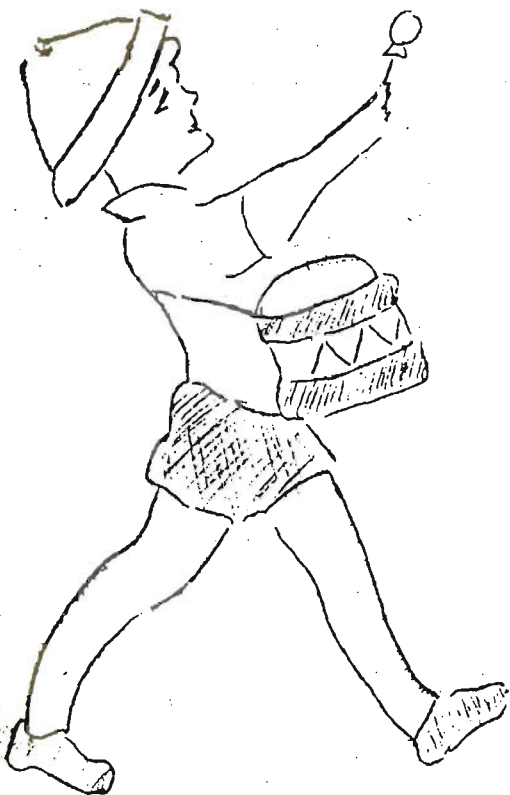


Document 4.

Children's Centre Concert  
1944.

THE BRUNSWICK CHILDREN'S CENTRE (SCHOOL AGE GROUP).

CHILDREN'S CONCERT.



If a man from France, Spain or Greece came to visit us, we would not be able to understand the words which he spoke, but when we listen to music which has been composed by Frenchmen, Spaniards or Greeks, we can share their feelings and ideas about life.

This was one of the stories which Miss Alison Rofe told the children one music night.

During the past weeks the children have listened to music composed in many countries, some very old tunes have been played, and we have also heard music which is quite modern.

On Thursday, July 27th, Miss Rofe's pupils will take us for a musical trip around the world when they play tunes and sing songs of the different countries. National costumes will be worn by the children.

REMEMBER:

CHILDREN'S CONCERT, JULY 27TH,

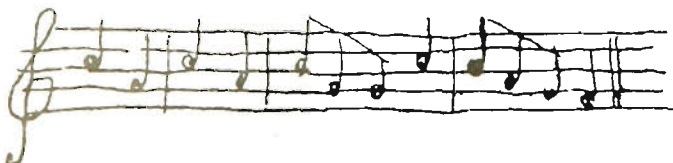
AT 4 P.M. 1944

IN THE SCHOOL HALL AT ALBERT ST. SCHOOL.

All children will be welcome.

Mothers are especially invited to come and listen to the concert.

S. CHAMBERS  
(Convenor of After School Committee)



R. CROW  
(Secretary Organiser).

School Holiday Leaflet  
1944.



# SCHOOL CENTRE HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

May holidays will soon be here. School breaks up on May 19. Many mothers will have to continue to keep the wheels of industry turning, and are therefore unable to arrange for the extra treats which make holiday time so important to the children.

During the May holidays, the Committee of the School Age Section of the Brunswick Children's Centre have planned a week of new adventures for the children. Here is the program:-

On Monday (22nd May) all the children will gather at the School Canteen in the Salvation Army Hall (Albert Street) at 9.30 a.m. After a hot cup of cocoa, we will catch the tram in Lygon Street to Princes Bridge. From the bridge, we will travel by ferry to the Botanical Gardens, where we will eat our picnic lunch. Then we will walk past the Shrine to catch the tram home. All the children will arrive back at the canteen by 4 p.m.

Tuesday (23rd May) will be PARTY DAY. The children will prepare a party for themselves. There will be many things to do, cakes to bake, caps to cut out, tables to decorate, to mention only a few. In the afternoon, the children will entertain each other with a concert.

Wednesday (24th May) plans have been made to take the children to the National Museum. All the children will gather at the canteen at 9.30 a.m., and after a hot drink travel by tram to the city. Everyone will be back in Brunswick by 4 p.m.

Thursday (25th May) will be a play day in the park if the sun is shining; if not, we will play indoors in the Hobbies room and Library. Maybe, we can arrange a tour of inspection of a local factory on this day.

Friday (26th May) will be long remembered by the children. The morning will be spent at the Aquarium, and after lunching under the trees in the Exhibition Gardens, we will all go to see the Firemen's Demonstration at Eastern Hill Fire Station. After viewing Melbourne from the look-out tower, we will return to Brunswick at 4.30 p.m.

On Saturday, Mum and Dad will be home from work and there are many things to do in the week-end. Monday is the last day of the holidays. So far no plans have been made to give the children a treat on this day, but if you would like us to arrange something for the children to do, please make a suggestion when filling in the form.

Your children can join in the holiday fun if you are a working mother. A charge of 5/- is being made to cover the cost of fares, entrance fees, food for party. During the vacation, no meals will be served at the canteen except on the Party Day on Tuesday, therefore mothers are asked to prepare a hot lunch for the children to bring with them each day.

The Brunswick Children's Centre  
A function for parents.



# BRUNSWICK

## CHILDREN'S CENTRE



1944

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT.

In 1939, 644,000 Australian women were working in industry.

In 1944, 840,000 Australian women are working in industry.

842,160 soldier husbands, brothers, sons, have left home for their battle stations.

There is a housing shortage of over 300,000 houses.

What can be done about it?

To help working mothers and to relieve mothers who are forced to live in homes too small, Children's Centres are being established where the little ones can be happily cared for all day.

In Brunswick there is just such a Centre - THE BRUNSWICK CHILDREN'S CENTRE.

On Tuesday, May 9th, at 8 p.m. in the Christ Church Parish Hall, there is to be screened a coloured film strip which will show how children spend their day in the Kindergarten Section of a Children's Centre. The Mayor, Cr. G. Hayes (Chairman of the Council of the Brunswick Children's Centre) will preside, and Miss A. Constance Duncan will also be present. Miss Constance Duncan, of the Children's Centre Section of the Department of Labour, is the main speaker.

Supper will be served. At the end of the meeting, a Parents' Committee will be formed, which will play a big part in the future in developing the Brunswick Children's Centre to more adequately meet the needs of mothers who are courageously working on the production front.

Write up the date:

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT .. MAY 9TH AT 8 P.M. IN THE CHRIST  
CHURCH PARISH HALL, GLENLYON ROAD  
(NEAR SYDNEY ROAD).

Some Pages from School Centre News  
1944



# SCHOOL CENTRE NEWS



JULY, 1944.

No. 3.

BRUNSWICK CHILDREN'S CENTRE

School Age Section

*Chairman:* Mr. C. C. Fisher.

*Hon. Secretary:* Mr. S. Chambers.

*Treasurer:* Mr. R. Pile.

*Secretary-Organiser:* Mrs. Ruth Crow.

## VICTORY WILL BE OURS

June, 1940, Nazi armies sweep through France and drive British forces from Dunkirk.

June, 1941, Hitler's hordes invade Soviet territory.

June, 1942, Japanese submarines attack Sydney Harbour shipping.

June, 1943, fall of Tunisia, capture of Italian islands Pantelerino and Lampedusa.

June, 1944, Allied armies open second front in Europe.

The world's three great leaders have planned the final blow to Hitler's fanatical dictatorship. In making their historic plans at the Teheran Conference they showed the courage of leaders who are confident that their people will fight for freedom.

On the invasion day the staff and helpers from the School Centre gathered with other Brunswick citizens in the Town Hall. Those of us who had seen "The Moon is Down" remembered how the wives and mothers of the ten hostages continued their hymn as their menfolk fell. This singing was a call to action to further struggle for which the men had died.

The British, American and Russian armies and our Allies in occupied countries are amongst the greatest heroes of all times. Like Mayor Orden, they are heroes not because they are made in a special mould, but because of their loyalty to each other and their understanding that all their actions must affect the lives of other people.

This turning point in the war should make us all think once more about our responsibilities in ensuring that victory will be ours. To-day the woman's task is not to wait and weep, but to work and win.

## THE MOTHER'S JOB

Several times he showed us treasures which his father had sent him . . . foreign coins, a Digger hat . . . but it wasn't until he brought his collection of photos that we realised the job his mother had to shoulder. He is a seven-year-old boy. "This is a photo of me and my dad when my dad went to the war." He held up a snapshot of a toddler holding a soldier's hand. His father is a P.O.W.; his mother is bringing victory nearer by her work at a factory bench.

## HATS OFF TO THESE WOMEN

Stories of how the helpers carry on their work at the School Centre would fill a large volume. The following stories are singled out as side-lights on the lives of all these women.

One mother of six young Australians continued to help even though her son was in hospital with appendicitis, and she herself was not well.

Another, a grandmother and factory worker from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., helps regularly one day each week. She led out her "squadron" on four days during the May holidays.

A Helper brought her husband to see the canteen and then encouraged him to collect books and crafts materials from his factory work-mates.

At present 120 children have their main meal of the day in the school canteen in the Salvation Army Hall, and over 80 children are kept happily busy after school each day. This work could not be carried on without the reliable help which is given by over 50 Brunswick women each week.

## FUN AFTER SCHOOL

There are lots of things to do at the Albert Street School every day when lesson are over. On Wednesday and Friday afternoon dancing and gym. groups are held in the school hall. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday the library and craft room are open, and every day Mrs. Amoore organises games in the playground. Every now and then the children plan special events with Mrs. Amoore, like the Pets' Parade, the production of Briar Rose, or a sports competition. Mr. Housden is making the library not only a room for reading, but a place where board games can be played, and sometimes people can come and talk with the children on their own special interests. Many things are being made by both boys and girls with Mr. Chambers in the Crafts room.

Mrs. Amoore, Mr. Chambers and Mr. Housden welcome all mothers, fathers, aunts and sisters who wish to see the after-school fun.

Helpers are needed to help with the after-school programme. Did you enjoy basketball when at school? Then come along one evening a week and help the Brunswick children in the game.

## HOLIDAY ADVENTURES

During the May vacation 116 children enrolled to take part in the Holiday Adventures. In the following story a ten-year-old girl tells of the happy time they had:—

"On Monday we went to the Botanical Gardens on the Mississippi. The Mississippi is the name of the boat. We went from Princes Bridge and went around two bends, and then got out and walked just across the road to the Botanical Gardens. We went for a walk. Mrs. Crow took us up hills and then made us run down. One boy fell in the pond. How it happened, the boy was leaning against a stick and the stick broke and the boy fell in. We went to the place where the four winds blow, then we went to the Shrine, and went home.

On Tuesday we had a party and concert. It was nice. We had cordial, a sponge, little cakes with icing on top, sandwiches, and the boys made the soup and scones. They were nice. The little ones made hats and serviettes. They made them nice. The big girls set the tables.

On Wednesday we went to the Museum, and in the afternoon we went to the playground and played on the things. Mrs. Crow and another teacher and some of the children paddled in the pool, then we went home.

On Thursday we went to the playground until lunch time. We had lunch and played races until 2 o'clock, then got the children into their groups and we all went to different factories.

On Friday we went to the Aquarium in the morning, and went to a display at the fire station in the afternoon. We went up the look-out tower, and then went home for the week-end.

On Monday we went to the Museum in the morning and the pictures in the afternoon."

Australia's war production benefited by the mothers of these children being able to stay on the production front. They knew that their children were being cared for by voluntary helpers who loved the children and who wanted to assist the war effort by social service at the Children's Centre.

## RADIO NEWS

The Kindergarten of the Air will soon be celebrating its first birthday. Although the programme is designed for the pre-school child, it is full of interest for all who are concerned with working for a richer life for the children. This session is heard over 3AR at 9.30 a.m. each week day. Talks to parents are given regularly on Sundays at 4.30 p.m. from 3AR. Homes where there are 'teen age children should encourage the youth to listen to "Over to Youth" from 3LO at 8 p.m. on Fridays. If you have a wireless in your back room which could easily be put into working order, give it to the School Centre so that we can form an after-school listening club for the children.

## IMPRESSION OF PETS' PARADE.

The scene reminded me of the "Pied Piper," but instead of rats we had fat cats, thin cats, pretty cats, and frightened cats. Dogs to the right of me, dogs to the left of me, and birds all round me. I think we can vote the day a great success — thanks to the children's splendid co-operation.



Block by Courtesy of The Age

Scone and cake making for the Children's Party during the May holidays, 1944.

## CHILDREN WELCOME IN KITCHEN

During March and April regular home help groups were held in the canteen kitchen. The children bottled fruit and vegetables for winter use in the canteen, and made jam for the Brunswick Prisoner of War Fair. They also baked scones for the Victory Picnic. The following stories were written by the children about their kitchen experiences:—

### TO MAKE PASTE FOR COVERING JAM

You get 9 tablespoons of flour (one breakfast cup), and then you get two pints of water; then pour the water over the flour and you stir it in the pot for two minutes.

### SCONE RECIPE

When making scones you put about half a box of flour into a basin, some butter, and mix it together. Then put some milk in and stir the whole lot together. Get a rolling pin and roll the dough, or do it with your hands. Then cut it into little squares, put them on a tray, and put them in the oven. Then your scones are made.

## CRAFTS FOR CHILDREN

All boys and girls love to make things, and at last we have a room which admits of children being able to satisfy that desire. It is not large enough, nor adequately furnished, nor is the supply of tools nearly what is necessary for the complete success of such a project, but a group of boys and girls is finding a place to spend joyous hours, and is making things worth-while. We are indeed grateful to all who have sent along tools or materials to help, and would be grateful if anyone who has spare equipment would send it along to the school. So far the range of work has been limited, but as the children gain confidence we hope to add boot-repairing, light metal work, and wood turning to our handicrafts. You can help first by giving every encouragement to your children to make things, and when they bring home an article be sure to make a point of using it in the home. Remember that much of our success depends on the value you put upon the children's efforts.

If you have a spare afternoon on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday, show your pleasure in your child's activities by coming along and having a look at them at work. I know that it may be a sacrifice on your part, but it is worth while, believe me.

## FILM REVIEW

"Journey For Margaret" is perhaps one of the most outstanding films about children which has ever been produced. The story is centred on the care of war-orphaned children in England. It showed the need for children's homes staffed by people who are trained to understand and love children instead of the children being billeted on strangers.



Menu for School Meals  
1944

13.

Tuesday

2/11/43

Helpers on Roster.

Menu.

M<sup>rs</sup> Niven

" Cushion

" Hicks

" King

" Jewell

" Doyle

" Duggan

" Russell

Braised chops &amp; macaroni

Washed potatoes

Steamed Cabbage

Std. Golden Pudding

Mustard

Wholemeal Bd. &amp; Butter

Milk

Piece of Apple

Present: 88 children

Wednesday

10/11/43

Helpers on Roster.

Menu.

M<sup>rs</sup> VincentM<sup>rs</sup> Lemmon

" Batt

" Childs

" M. Vincent

M<sup>rs</sup> Betty WaltonM<sup>rs</sup> Russell

Roast Lamb.

Baked Potatoes

Std. Cabbage

Rhubarb

Junket

Wholemeal Bd. &amp; Butter

Milk

Piece of Apple

Present: 82

The Brunswick Children's Centre  
Cost of Holiday Program.

BRUNSWICK CHILDREN'S CENTRE (SCHOOL AGE SECTION).      28/7/'44.

Statement of expenditure and receipts for May Holiday Adventures 1944

	£	S	D
<u>Monday</u> Fares in tram 110 children @ 2d		18	
" " " 10 adults @ 5d		55	
" " " " " "	1	1	
 <u>Tuesday</u> Hire of hall		7	6
Food Purchases	4	15	10
 <u>Wednesday</u> Fares in tram 108 children @ 2d		18	
" " " 9 adults @ 6d		4	6
 <u>Thursday</u> Fares in tram 40 children @ 1d		3	4
" " " 4 adults @ 3d		1	
 <u>Friday</u> Fares in tram 110 children @ 2d		18	4
" " " 11 adults @ 6d		5	6
Entrance to Aquarium	1	13	3
 <u>Monday</u> Fares in tram 60 children @ 2d		10	
" " " 7 adults @ 6d		3	6
Picture tickets (children)	1	10	
" " (adult)		27	7
 <u>Sundry Expenses</u>			
Telephone calls		5	
Postage		7	6
Duplicating	1	5	6
Dairy (for cocoa each day)	1	5	
 <u>Wages</u>			
Secretary Organiser	5		
Play Leader	3		
Cook's Helper	2	15	
Librarian	1	10	
[The Cook, Crafts Leader and Cleaner were on leave with out pay]			
 <u>Total expenditure</u>	£ 30	0	8
 <u>Receipts</u> 112 children enrolled @ 5/- (for 5 days)	£ 28	S	d
60 children " @ 1/- (for Monday)	33		
 <u>Total receipts</u>	£ 31	0	0

Some Letters  
1944

15.

2 Mary St.

Brunswick N.H.

Dear Mrs. Crow

I am writing to thank your fellow workers & yourself for the great success you have made of your part in the War effort, namely giving the children their hot dinners & looking after them after school, & especially during this holiday week, they have enjoyed every minute of it. I could not have carried on with my part of the work if I had kept on walking backwards & forwards at dinner times to give them their dinners & was a greater finding it beyond me & was thankful when you came along & took the worry off my mind. Thanking you all again and I do hope you will be able to continue until the end of the war.

I am Yours sincerely

Ella A. Coe

40 Holeproof  
Lyany Road  
Brunswick

Dear Mrs. Crow

On behalf of my workmates and myself I would like to express our appreciation of the splendid work done by you and your helpers during the school holidays.

If it had not been for the berth there would have been four out of six machines idle in our section, which, taken over the ten days would have meant a considerable loss in production.

Thanking you one and all

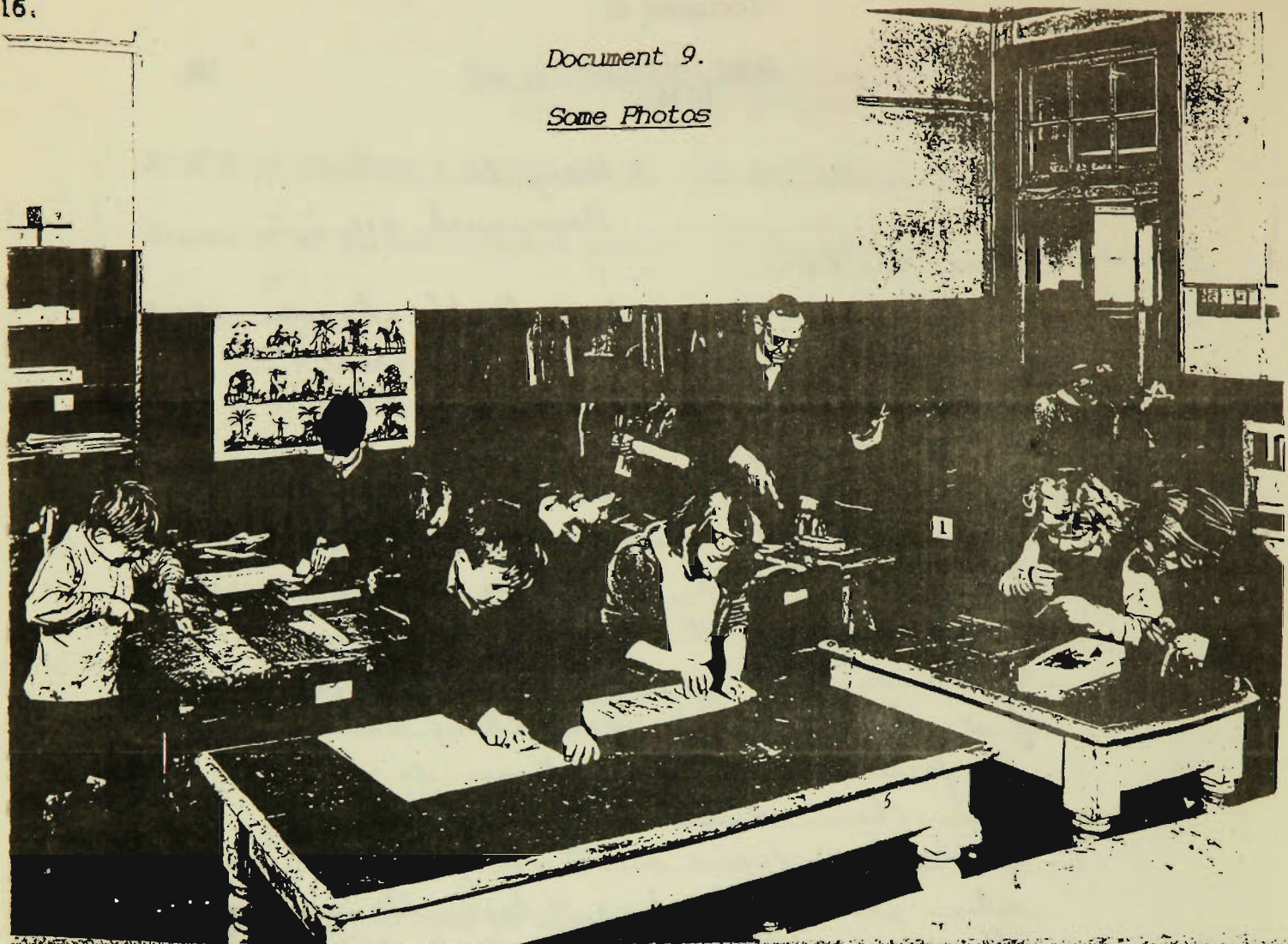
Yours sincerely,

G. Suggan  
J. Johnson  
B. Cardilini  
L. Koskelainen

May 1944

Document 9.

Some Photos



Crafts after school at the Brunswick Children's Centre.



Dinner time at the Brunswick Children's Centre.

*Herald* *Tues 10/1/44*

# Children's Centre

**WOMAN'S WORLD**

## Provides Hot Meals

The school-age section of the Brunswick Children's Centre, which began its work last September, has provided hot midday meals and recreation for children during the holidays and parents in the district have shown great interest in the scheme.



Voluntary helpers on the roster of the Brunswick Children's Centre school-age section assisting with the midday meals.

THE School Welfare Committee comprises Mr C. C. Fisher (chairman), Mr S. Chambers (hon. secretary), Mr R. Pile (treasurer), and Mrs R. Crow (organising secretary). Mrs Crow, who supervises arrangements for meals in the Salvation Army Hall, next to the Albert Street State School, which has been lent for this purpose, has a staff consisting of a paid cook, assistant cook, and a trained play leader (Mrs Trixie Amooore). A crafts and hobbies leader will soon be appointed.

Later a trained social worker will assist with enrolments in the four sections of the centre (creche, kindergarten, school-age and after-school recreation), and will give advice on family welfare problems.

More than 100 children from six schools, whose mothers are in war industry, get a hot midday meal, consisting of a meat dish, two vegetables, a fruit sweet, and milk and raw fruit, for 9d. a day.

A ROSTER of 50 voluntary women workers in shifts set up the tables, wash up, clear away, and help prepare the food. They represent the Mothers' Club, the local churches, the Housewives' Association, the Red Cross and other agencies.

Visits of inspection to pre-school child centres and demonstrations in the preparation of food are

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helping this group to take an intelligent interest in centre activities.

A bright little paper is also being produced — The School Centre News — and contributions from the children themselves are invited. In the present issue some mothers give reasons why they are helping in this work.

FACILITIES are available in the hall to serve up to 200 children, and existing equipment is being used as far as possible to lessen expense. Mrs Crow, who has had wide experience of catering, and holds a Diploma of Institutional Management from the Emily McPherson College, said today that an important factor in developing the scheme was the interest of parents in the locality. So far they had co-operated splendidly. The meals were being served in the most economical fashion, and were of the highest possible nutrition value. Half a small bucket of scraps was all that remained after the midday meal on Friday.

THROUGH the permission of the Education Department, the use of some rooms at the school has been granted for after-school recreational activities, and the playground has also been made available. The enthusiasm of the head teacher (Mr Chalmers) and his staff has greatly assisted the work of organising this section.

Splendid sporting equipment from the school is available, some of which has been bought from grants by the Mothers' Club.

It spoke well for the care exercised by the children, said the play leader (Mrs Amooore), that from all this equipment in one month the only loss was a tennis ball.

Mrs Amooore, who was physical culture teacher with the Education Department, and an interstate basket ball player in 1930, said that the children loved the recreation activities, and from 70 to 100 children daily had applied for these during the holidays. In the first group, boys predominated.

THROUGH the co-operation of the National Fitness Council, a vacation play centre is being held there now, and Mrs Amooore is working in conjunction with the staff provided.

She attends from 3 till 6 p.m. daily, and there have been physical culture, singing, games, and rhythmic dancing. She needs women with a love of and interest in children, to volunteer to assist her in her work, when the school term opens.

She has varied plans for transforming the schoolroom into a crafts centre, where she will teach felt craft work, barbola, and, perhaps, a little dressmaking. Easels will be placed round the room for young artists, and a carpenter's bench may be acquired.

Mrs Amooore said it was a matter of finding out the crafts which appealed most to the school age children, and then giving instruction in these.

A library corner is another project which is sure to prove popular.

1940

## Mothers, Don't Bother About Mr. Churchill

*"If mothers would concentrate on their babies and not worry so much about Mr. Churchill's affairs, it would be far better, for they are doing the best possible national work," said Dr. Vera Scantlebury-Brown, director of Infant Welfare yesterday.*

She was speaking at the 20th annual meeting of the Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria and the Tweddle Hospital at the Windsor Hotel.

Emphasising the need for financial help for the feeding of expectant and nursing mothers, and for children of pre-school age, Dr. Scantlebury-Brown said that the ratio of artificial feeding of infants under three months was far too high. In fact, she added, we should be ashamed that there is any artificial feeding at all during this period.

Figures showed that in the first three months of their lives 67 per cent. of babies were totally breast fed, 13 per cent. partially, and 20 per cent. artificially. Figures for babies between three and six months were respectively 47 per cent., 16 per cent., and 37 per cent., and between six and nine months 34 per cent., 16 per cent., and 50 per cent.

In a resume of the work of the society and hospital since its inception, Mr. J. Hume-Cook said that in 23 years more than 1,000,000 babies had received attention. In the last year more than 7,000 babies were treated at various individual centres, and more than 67,000 attendances had been recorded. This was an excellent indication to the public of the value of the society's work. In all that time, he said, not one complaint of inattention had been received.

Mr. Hume-Cook also emphasised the value of the Tweddle Hospital as a training centre for Plunkett and Primrose nurses.

For the first time the expenses had exceeded the receipts, and the cancellation of a grant of £300 per annum from the Karitane Society of New Zealand has been largely responsible for the deficit of nearly £500. Mr. Hume-Cook gave a donation of £7/7/-—a guinea for each year of his presidency—toward beginning the finances of the coming year, and he announced that from Mr. J. T. Tweddle, patron, who presided at the meeting, a cheque for £125 had been received.

At the Tweddle Hospital last year 108 babies and 52 mothers were admitted. Infant mortality rate was 1.7 per cent. The Central, Footscray, and Primrose nurses' auxiliaries had given excellent work towards the hospital. Thirteen trained nurses had gained the society's certificate for infant welfare, and nine Primrose nurses had gained certificates.

Not everyone agreed that  
"Mother Must Work to Win!"

Crow Collection Association  
Victoria University of Technology

Living Library Project on History of Children's Services  
Funded by the Lance Reichstein Charitable Foundation  
Sept. 1991 to May 1992  
Booklets Published as Background Material.

1. The History of the Carlton Refuge from 1850s to 1920  
First published 1920
2. Two Articles about Health of Women and Children :-  
"The Neglected Children's Aid Society"  
First published 1911  
and  
"The After Care Home and the District Nurses".  
First published 1925
3. Two Documents about Attitudes to Slums  
"Slum Babies and Slum Mothers"  
First published about 1914  
and  
"You can't lift every baby out of the slums  
The Slum Abolition Movement in the 1930s
4. History of Children's Services in Melbourne Municipality  
1910 to 1980
5. "Bread and Treacle Diet"  
Extracts from documents of the 1930s.
6. "Mothers must Work To Win"  
Photos and leaflets from the Brunswick Children's  
Centre, 1943.
7. "The Deprived West/ The Determined West" an extract from a  
report by Ruth and Maurie Crow, first published 1972.
8. "Creating Community in the Neighbourhood - Neighbourhood  
Houses in the Western Region", transcript of a tape by  
Meredith Sussex, 1978.
9. History of the Tweddle Baby Hospital, by Kathleen  
Codogonotto  
First published 1992
10. The past, present and future - Community Development in  
the Western Region, a report by Louise Gianville, 1992
11. "Magic in the Lives of Children, Participation in the  
Lives of their Parents" report prepared by Christine  
Carolan and Sheila Byard, 1992.
12. Kit on Federal Funding of Children's Services.

### About the Project

The Lance Reichstein Charitable Foundation funded the Crow Collection for a Living Library Project on children's services in the Western Region.

A Project Steering Committee has assisted the project worker (Christine Carolan) who has worked with providers of children's services teachers and students in the Region.

The project resulted in the production of a video which includes information on the history of child care, a kit about the way children's services are funded, a series of booklets describing community movements which resulted in initiating some of the present children's services and a display of photos of some of the people who have helped to establish these services in Melbourne's Western Region

A seminar on May 22nd 1992 marked the end of this project but the video and publications can be used well into the future.

### About the Collection

Ruth Crow and her late husband, Maurie were involved in movements on urban issues from the mid 1930s. Over the years they built up an extensive collection of documents :- books, pamphlets, posters, photos and working papers.

In 1990 the Victoria University of Technology (Footscray Campus) invited Ruth to donate the collection to the VUT Library.

The Crow Collection includes documents written and/or used by groups and individuals committed to social change. This store of information from the past is being used to generate ideas about the future.

A Crow Collection Association has been formed and incorporated. One of its aims is to enhance the comprehensiveness and accessibility of the Collection through Living library Projects.

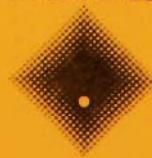


The Crow Collection

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*This kit has been funded by the Lance Reichstein Charitable Foundation*