



*This centre*

The South Yarra Day Nursery

By the beginning of June 1942 we opened the South Yarra Day Nursery in a church hall. We charged the parents 10/- a week and provided care from 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. The children had three meals a day and a very good program of activities. We paid a ~~xxxxxxx~~ nurse and a kindergarten teacher and an assistant from the money paid in fees by the parents, but lots and lots of work was done by a roster of voluntary helpers (women almost all). This was quite a pioneering effort as up to that time there were only a few half day kindergartens and very few creches. The ~~xxxxxxx~~ creches were very like orphanages and did not meet the needs of women entering the war industries, we catered for forty children from one year old to six.

The establishment of the example of the South Yarra Nursery greatly encouraged the campaign for Federal Government to take some responsibility for the children of working mothers. There was an organisation called the Council for Women in War Work and another one called The Co-ordinating Committee for Child Care in Wartime. I represented the South Yarra Day Nursery on the Committee for Co-ordinating Child Care in Wartime.

*Centre*

The South Yarra Day Nursery also helped other groups of women to work together to establish day nurseries and by the end of 1942 or early ~~in~~ 1943 there were similar nurseries in Kew, Caulfield and Hawthorn. All of these were run with the help of voluntary helpers, most of whom were young mothers like I was. We were able to take our children to the day nursery. For example I went to the South Yarra Day Nursery with my two year old and my baby and I helped every day.

The Committee for Co-ordinating Child Care in Wartime became concerned about the care of school age children and it was decided to establish some type of care for children in Brunswick. In August 1943 I started work as the organising secretary of the Brunswick Children's Centre. I was paid from a grant received from the Commonwealth Government. This was the first funding received for children's services from the Commonwealth Government.

The Brunswick Children's Centre

The Brunswick Children's Centre cared for children from babies to teenagers. My responsibilities included the co-ordination of the existing day nursery and kindergarten and the provision of a midday meal, after school activities and holiday play days for school age children.

*school*

*at the Centre*

The centre served children attending Albert St Central School, St. Ambrose Catholic School, the Brunswick Girls ~~and~~ School and the Brunswick Boys School. We served meals to about one hundred children. The meal was a hot two course meal with plenty of vegetables, meat, and fresh fruit etc. ~~xxxxxxx~~ I have some of the menus and some of the dietetic analysis of the food value of the meals. We had a cook, assistant cook, cleaner, two part time recreation leaders, at the School Centre and I cannot remember the staffing at the other two sections of the Centre, except that for the first time the creche employed well qualified staff and at the kindergarten (then opened all day) employed a number of women who were called "child care workers." The younger children were ~~xxxxxxx~~ cared for at the creche and the children aged from about ~~3 1/2~~ 3 1/2 were cared for at the kindergarten. The hall used for school meals, the school where we had a school activities and the day nursery and creche were located fairly close to each other and the three sections had a joint committee and numerous ~~xxxxxxx~~ joint social functions.

