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ECOSO EXCHANGE NEWSLETTER

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In this Ecoso attention is drawn to the United Nations Earth Summit and Global Forum which are being held in Brazil next year. Extracts from articles by Richard Mohr and Jenny Wills provide some basic background material on sustainable futures.

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The 1992 Earth Summit

An Earth Summit of official delegates and a Global Forum of community organisations will be held in Brazil next year to consider how to follow up on the recommendations of the 1987 United Nations Commission on the Environment. The UN report, officially called "Our Common Future" is popularly known as the Brundtland Report, taking this name from the chairperson of the 1987 conference which was held in Norway.

The conference is to consider "international responses to environment and development issues and the integration of environment and economic decision making on a global scale".

In Australia, after the Norway Conference, the Prime Minister's environment statement included goals of "the provision of equity within and between the generations" and the words "ecologically sustainable development" (ESD) are popularly used. However the main emphasis is on managing conflicts between environmentalist and industrialist.

This is resulting in a piecemeal approach to ecological issues. For example, nine separate, draft reports are being prepared for the Brazil Conference...agriculture, energy production, energy consumption, fisheries, forestry, manufacturing, mining, tourism and transport. There is considerable concern about this lack of integration, and, more importantly, that such sectors as education and health have so far not been included.

In the October issue of the Australian Society John Dargavel and Val Brown, who are researchers in the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies at the Australian National University, have raised a number of critical issues in regard to the way the Australian Government is out of step with the main findings of the Bruntland Statement.

In recognition of the importance of the community preparing for the 1992 World Summit and Global Forum this Ecoso Exchange Newsletter has summarised Rick Mohr's paper "Time Space and Equity". This Ecoso also draws attention to the principles on sustainability which have been endorsed by the 1991 Conference of the International Union of Local Authorities.

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Time, Space and Equity

Intergenerational and Intragenerational Equity

In June this year Dr Richard Mohr presented a paper on "Time, Space and Equity." in which he deals with ideas about intergenerational and intragenerational equity and ecological sustainable development. He points out :-

- * quality of life and social justice issues cannot be separated from discussions of economic efficiency; and
- * Inequity can set up barriers to changes in behaviour required by environmentally sustainable development (ESD)

Equity and sustainability are complex issues which can properly be addressed by economic analysis only if the following limitations are recognised :-

- * spatial inequity, combined with lack of perfect mobility of labour, capital and resources, inhibits the achievements of efficiency by market forces alone ;
- * uncertainty and rapid changes in environmental, social and economic circumstances of which the environmentally sustainable development process is a part, mean that approaches must be adaptable and able to be monitored over time against specific performance goals; and
- * markets, for example the finance market, may be focused on short term outcomes and are, therefore, not fully equipped to take account of long term costs and benefits.

Simplistic or exclusive use of pricing and taxing interventions is likely to have a regressive impact on equity entrenching existing market barriers. A simple compensation approach would be counter productive, as well as highly unlikely to be able to take full account of the variations expected over space and time. However it is accepted that some combination of taxing and subsidy measures could be appropriate under certain circumstances, where they are properly designed to take account of all factors, including barriers to market access and market failure.

Ric Mohr proposes a range of policies which include :-

- * investment policies - public and or private - to assist in recapitalisation at all levels, from household to the city, for optimal efficiency and economic scale;
- * intersectoral approaches to regional restructuring and urban design which integrate the efforts of all players to ensure optimal efficiency and political acceptability of ESD measures; and
- * availability of information and genuine choices among viable options - through subsidies or direct provision as necessary - to ensure ecologically sustainable behaviour is feasible and able to be understood.

These points are illustrated with reference to transport policy, domestic energy use, regional restructuring and urban form, with proposals for :-

- * urban clusters and corridors allowing access to jobs, commercial and retail facilities and community services (health, child care) by means of efficient transport;
- * Public transport systems developed to the best international standards;
- * retro-fitting advice and direct provision as appropriate to ensure availability and use of energy efficient practices; and
- * regional adjustment measures, where dependence on one or a very few non viable industries threaten severe dislocation, by means of a integrated approaches among all levels of government, labour industry and community interests.

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Ric Mohr prefaces his paper with this quote from "Capitalism, Socialism and the Environment" written in 1976 by Hugh Stretton :-

Between taxing and regulation and public ownership and pricing and rationing and subsidy different problems will attract different solutions. But in choosing them two general points are worth remembering. Professional advice is likely to be systematically biased against serious consideration of the distribution costs. Environmentalists give priority to the effective reduction of pollution; orthodox economists tend to favour market mechanisms and disregard social distributions. Between them they will often propose methods which combine effective control, of pollution and continuing efficiency of production. Both those aims are important, but politicians and administrators may have to trample on their experts to insist that distributive equities are also given the weight they deserve". (emphasis added by Ecoso).

(Photostat copies of Ric Mohr's fifteen page speech may be purchased through the Crow Collection for \$1.50 -includes postage)

Local Government and Sustainability
and
Local Government and the Aftermath of Thatcherism

Jenny Wills, director of social policy for the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) attended the 30th World Congress of the International Union of Local Government which was held in Oslo a few months ago. She reported on her impressions in an article in the October Australian Municipal Journal. Here is a summary :-

"Thinking globally and acting locally" was the Conference slogan. The themes discussed were health, environment and life style. Three of the nine points in the Congress Declaration of Fundamental Principles state :-

* In a sustainably developed society environmental quality of life must be seen as basic parameters more important than the standard of living, which is merely an expression of consumption. Industrial nations need to commit to not exporting obsolete and unsustainable technology to developing nations and to not using developing nations as deposits for hazardous materials. (underlining by Ecoso)

* While international concerns over growing environmental threats in the developing countries are recognised, the industrial nations have a special responsibility to take exemplary action in view of much heavier demands which their societies place upon the world's resources.

* In recognition of the imbalance in international trade and of the unjust distribution of the debt burden, the wealthy societies must assume solidarity with poor societies.

Financial Imperatives and False Rhetoric

In the same article Jenny reports on visits to other European cities and in particular her impressions on local government in England. She wrote :-

"In the aftermath of Thatcherism the councils are coping with yet another review of local government. Although some of the arguments are couched in terms of needing to examine the dual structure of county and local authorities, my impression was that the government, even after abolishing the Greater London Council and metropolitan councils and the poll tax fiasco, remains concerned about the power of local government." (underlining by Ecoso)

Jenny points out that the 1989 British Government publication on "Caring for People" lists as an objective "to promote the development of a flourishing independent sector along side good quality public services. She warns :-

"My impressions were that, although there are positive elements of the Community Care Agenda, for example municipal, care planning, it is essentially driven by financial imperatives, dressed up in false rhetoric of consumer choice and without any real sense of societal direction." (underlining by Ecoso)

Women, Unions and the Environment

The Victorian Trades Hall Council has appointed Ellena Galtos as its Sustainable Development Officer. Writing about women and the environment Ellena states :-

"It seems to me that quite often, when people refer to women's interest in environmental issues they are referring to women's domestic and caring responsibilities While these are important, it would be wrong to assume that individualising the problem to the household will resolve environmental crisis whose origins lie in industrial production. It is also wrong to ignore the reality that most women also participate in the paid workforce and have a right as unionists to influence the environmental practices of their employers." (emphasis added by Ecoso)

To find out more about what the unions are doing about waste reduction, recycling, control of industrial pollution and environmental education phone Ellena Galtos at the Melbourne Trades Hall (03) 662.3511.

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"Medicine as Magic"

"Rich Men" and Bypass Surgery

In the September copy of the "Health Issues Magazine" an article called "Medicine Magic" is about the cost of coronary artery bypass grafts.

The introduction points out that, although reliable data is hard to locate, coronary artery bypass graft surgery (CABGS) accounts for a significant proportion of health care costs. The conclusions to the article states :-

"In summary we have an operation which is performed more frequently on rich men. It continues to be performed even when studies have indicated no clear benefit over other contemporary medical therapies, and despite questions about whether the benefits outweigh the problems it causes.

"The uncertainty of the benefits of CABGS, and concern that it is being inappropriately applied to many people, mirror the concerns of health service researchers that many other medical procedures are applied despite doubts of their usefulness. Acknowledging that a health treatment is ineffective does not appear to diminish the volume of treatments performed. (underlining by Ecoso)

The Victorian Health Issues Centre is an independent, non-government health policy and advocacy organisation, Its overall aim is to help to create a more equitable health care system which is more responsive to users, particularly those who are disadvantaged by current arrangements. More information about this very important organisation write to HIC, 1st floor 257 Collins Street, Melb 3000 or phone (03) 650.7511.

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"Markets, Morals and Public Policy"

Hugh Stretton's thoughts provide the focus and the themes for the 16 chapters of a book that has recently been published by Federation Press.

"Markets, Morals and Public Policy" has been published as a tribute to Hugh Stretton to mark his retirement from the University of Adelaide. The sixteen essays are divided into four sections :- History, Values and Education; The Mixed Economy in Theory and Practice; Housing, Cities and Public Policy; Equality, Choice and Rights - Theoretical and Policy Perspectives.

The book will be a useful handbook for all those who are involved in community movements. For students interested in greater detail it includes a bibliography of Stretton's main works as well as very informative notes at the end of each essay.

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Post Industrial Cities

"Post Industrial Cities : Politics and Planning in New York, Paris and London" by H.V. Savitch, has recently been published by Princeton University Press. It costs about 30 dollars.

Leonie Sandercock describes this books as being a wealth of fine grained comparisons from which urban planners could learn much about the shifting relationships between politics, planning and markets. she writes :-

"Savitch sets out to understand how Paris, New York and London have responded to the demands and pressures of economic transition, and with what consequences for their urban fabric and for different classes of people living in these cities..... Savitch provides abundant material on the intricate and often changing relationships between politicians, planners, the market place and resident."

(Quote from "Spring Books Supplement" of Australian Society)

"Australian Childhood - An Anthology"

"Australian Childhood", compiled by June Factor and Gwyn Dow, published by McPhee Gribble, is a book to read again and again.

The cover advertisement of this anthology states that it :-

"celebrates the wide range of writing about Australian childhood. With knowledge, sensitivity and an eye for significant detail the editors have brought together scraps of unpublished memoirs, outbursts from administrators and extracts from oral histories, autobiographies and fiction... It is a book which provides unexpected connections for the scholarly reader and rewards dipping into and browsing through. This rich collection speaks to the child in all of us."

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Some Documents in the Crow Collection
About
Women, Children, Family Life and Community Movements

Malnutrition, Cost of Living and Home Life in 1930s/40s

1. "Food and Health" by Marjorie Coppel published by the Left book Club 1941. Marjorie gives credit to Ruth Crow (for her research on nutrition).
2. Miller Family Budget 1931, a detailed statement on the cost of living for a family of six which depended on teenage bread winners.
3. Budgets of Several Brunswick Families in the early post war years.
4. "Housewifery" a handbook published by Victoria Education Department for the teaching of domestic science in 1924 and used in 1930s/40s.
5. A few books, published in 1930s, on food and nutrition, not much, but enough to give an idea of current knowledge.

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Women and Children During the Second World War (1939...1945)

1. "Women and War Work" by Mollie Bain et al, 1943, published by the Left Book Club. This publication has a small section on the need for children's services with reference to the establishment of such centre as the South Yarra Day Nursery (Ruth was the Hon Sec of S.Y.D.N. in 1942/43).
2. Scrap book and folder of reports from the Brunswick Children's Centre 1943...1945 (a federally funded centre providing care for 100 (+) school age children and about 80 preschool children...the first Federal funded centre). Ruth was the Secretary Organiser of this Centre.
3. Articles about the Brunswick Children's Centre by Ruth Crow
4. An article by Dr Lynne Davis on the Brunswick Children's Centre which includes information on the then current parliamentary controversies about federal funding of such centres.

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Post War Plans from the Mid 1940s to 1950)

1. "The Women's Charter" by Jessie Street (2 issues, 1944 and 1946).
2. "We Must Go on" by Os Barnett, plans for post war housing, 1944.
3. "Housing the Australian Nation" published by Left Book Club, 1943.
4. Pamphlets from building unions on housing in the post war period, and pamphlets about local plans in various suburbs etc. from 1946...
5. Reports by Ruth Crow on "Exhibition Youth Centre" 1947 and 1948 which provide information on organising community recreation centres.

6. Some documents on the Day Nursery Development Association which was established in 1945 to campaign for the continuation of the war-time child care centres.

7. "Tomorrow is a Glorious Day" draft of a handbook on leisure time activities for girls and boys aged 10 to 16 year, by Ruth Crow 1950.

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Women Who Pioneered New Types of Community Organisations in the 1950s

1. Pen portraits written in 1989 by Ruth Crow about her friends :-

Ailsa O'Connor, artist, foundation president of the Union of Australian Women. Ruth helped to edit Ailsa's book "Unfinished Work" (published by Greenhouse in 1983). This book includes a section on the Asian Australian Art Exchange in the mid 1950s.

Margaret Walker, dancer, founder of the Unity Dance Group. The Collection includes a bibliography of the documents available from Margaret's archives. Margaret was awarded the OAM for her contribution to dance (1984).

Margery Nunan, founder of the Combined Pensioner Association. The press coined the phrase "Marge the Magnificent" to describe the way she lead the pensioners' movement for "half the basic wage".

Doris McRae, educationalist, one of the first women principals of a secondary school and a vice-president of the Teachers' Union. In the Collection there is a speech by Joan Kirner at the memorial gathering for Doris in 1988. This supplements the pen portrait.

2. "A Proletarian Life" autobiography of Audrey Blake (1985). Audrey and Ruth worked together on many projects with children and youth.

3. "Bread and Roses" by Audrey Johnson, published by the Left Book Club 1989 "an inspiring and often humorous look at the lives of three militant women and the pioneering role of women unionists from the 1920s onwards".

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Recognition of Changes in Living Standards (expectations ?) late 1960s and early 1970s

1. Reports from the Coburg Education Committee on the need to plan for municipal children's services, 1964. Incomplete documentation but the scrappy material in the Crow Collection shows the beginning of local organisations recognising the deprivation of western and northern suburbs.

2. "Chaos or Planning" report from the Living Standards Convention 1968, compiled by Maurie Crow. This includes sections on housing and community services. The Convention was based on "commissions" of trade unionists, planners and people involved in community organisations.

3. Newsletters and reports from Action for Adequate Child Care 1968 to 1972, edited by Ruth Crow. This organisation included trade unionists, municipal councillors and people active in the newly emerging community action organisations.

4. "Plan for Melbourne Part 2" 1971, by Ruth and Maurie Crow which includes a section on community services with detailed plans for changing the way preschool services were provided.

5. "Centres for Young Children Which Also Serve the Needs of Their Parents" by Ruth Crow 1972. This challenges the idea that the "child's needs are paramount".

6. "Plan for Melbourne Part 3" 1972, by Ruth and Maurie Crow. This includes ideas on women's liberation and urban planning.

7. Reports from a variety of community organisations to the State Government's Inquiry on Preschool Child Development 1972. These fifteen reports are significant as the inquiry was originally intending to listen to evidence from preschool organisations, ignoring other community concerns about government sponsored preschool services.

8. Initiating documents of Community Child Care including minutes of a meeting of Action for Adequate Child Care, 1972 at which the idea of forming a new type of organisation was canvassed. Documents include information papers by Ruth Crow and articles written by her for "Ripple" (Community Child Care Magazine in the 1970s) and for other publications.

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Local Plans for Local Children and the Conservation of Urban Energy from the mid 1970s to the 1990s.

1. "Seeds for Change", 1978 and documents based on this book. Maurie Crow was one of the six authors of "Seeds for Change". The idea of "cluster and connect" places the "neighbourhood centre" as the basic unit of micro urban planning.

2. Several articles by Ruth (and or Maurie) Crow on themes around International Year of the Child. Various articles published in magazines and newspapers relating needs for changes in children's service delivery and the needs to conserve the world's scarce resources.

2. Six reports of the Melbourne City Council Consultation on Children's Services 1980. These include four reports from neighbourhoods, a report on decentralisation and participation and a report on planning for the whole municipality. Ruth Crow was a significant member of the team which prepared these reports.

3. Reports from community organisations to the Victorian Government Review of Children's Services in mid 1980s. Ten reports which complement the reports prepared for the 1972 Inquiry (see above about the limited intentions of this earlier State Government review).

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Tapes in the Crow Collection (Home and community)

These vary a great deal in their standard of presentation. Some are recordings of radio talks, others of forums, some of interviews and several are tapes to family members. Here are some examples of tapes, for different purposes, which may provide useful supplementary information:-

1 "Another Time Another Place" an interview on 3 RRR about Ruth's personal life (mainly about 1930s and 1940s).

2 "Tributes to Maurie" a recording of the memorial service to Maurie Crow in 1988. This includes talks by Winsome McCaughey and Ann Morrow.

3. "An Exciting Forum About Children's Services" a talk to Julie Crow (in Canada) about a mid 70s conference of the Australian Preschool Association at which Community Child Care representatives presented alternative ideas to traditional services. Although recorded for one listener this tape may be useful to others as Ruth Crow tried to explain to her daughter the excitement of changing attitudes.

4. "Happy Families", a talk by Ruth Crow on "Home Life in the 1940s and 1950s". Ruth used posters of slogans used by community organisations to illustrate the talk. These posters are in the Crow Collection.

5. "A Young Mother During the Second World War" an interview with a student who was doing a thesis on this subject.

"The Cold War and Community Movements" a talk to students.

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Supplementary Material (Children and Aesthetics)

1. Children's Art Exchange The Crow Collection has some unique books of coloured reproductions of children's art from China, Germany, Rumania and Hungary as well as a book about art of Aboriginal children and several documents about how to organise children's art exchanges in addition to the material in "Unfinished Work" by Ailsa O'Connor (referred to earlier).

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Subscription to Ecoso Exchange

Please send \$10 (and donation if possible) to the Crow Collection Association, Hon Sec Sheila Byard, Urban Studies Unit, Victoria University of Technology, Box 64 Footscray 3011.

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode.....Phone.....

For more information about Ecoso Exchange Newsletter and the Crow Collection phone Sheila, 053.688.4754 or Ruth (03) 380.2318

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Documents in the Crow Collection on Children's Services

From 1930s "Putting Magic in the Lives of Children"* to
1980s "Putting Participation in the Lives of Parents"**

This chart is based on Ruth Crow's participation in community movements, thus the column "result" lists Ruth's commitment on "issues" listed.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Issue</u>	<u>Prevailing Attitude</u>	<u>Alternative</u>	<u>Result</u>
1936	Malnutrition	Due to ignorance	Due to poverty	Research on Food/income and helped publish booklet
1942	War Effort	Must not make a need	"Women must work to win".	Fed. Govt "funded centres"
1946	Post War	"Women back to home"	Re-establish wartime services	Some success but Cold War intervention resulted in loss of these.
1968	Expansion of sub-standard child care. Deprived west.	Mother should not be in work force. Child's needs paramount. More 1/2 day kinders.	TU/community campaign for full day care Federal Funds	Action for Child Care
1972	unmet needs... migrants... parents in workforce... sub. isolation ...high-rise	child's needs paramount. Little recognition of changing needs and changing abilities	variety of neighbourhood services, <u>controlled by parents.</u>	Community Child Care
1980s	Municipal resp. for children's services	child's needs paramount Car access.... no clustering of services	Involve community. Decentralise services	Melb C.C. Consultation "Planning for the Nineties" /"Local Plans for Local Children."

* "Putting Magic in the Lives of Children" was a popular slogan during the campaign for more effective government funding for preschool services in the 1930s and early 1940s. The Victorian Preschool Act was passed in 1944.

** "Putting Participation in the Lives of Parents" was a slogan used in the 1970s and 1980s in the campaign for community child care centres. The Federal Government passed the Child Care Act in 1972.

What slogans will be used to express ideas for changes in children's services in the twenty-first century?

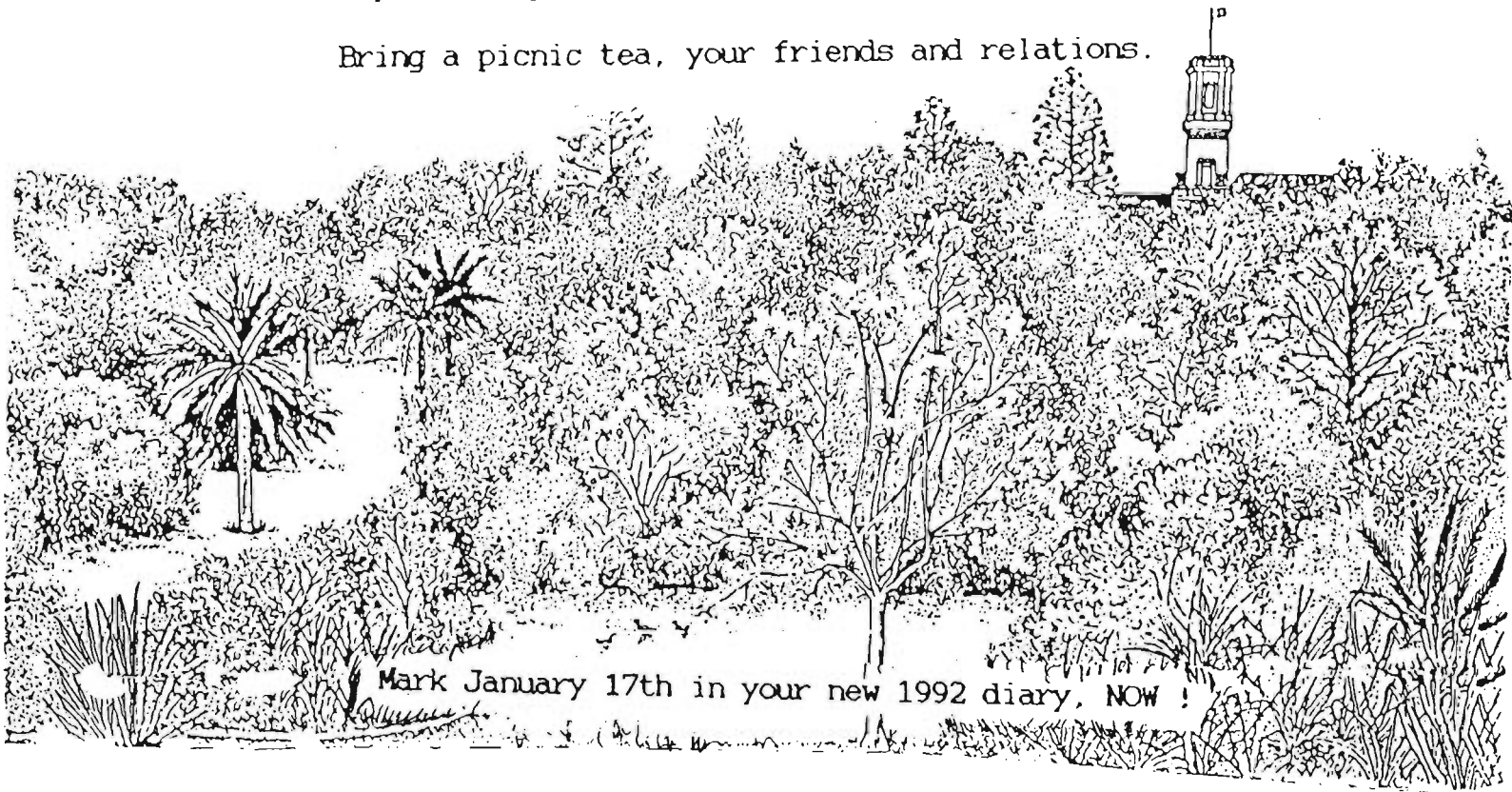
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Ecoso Gathering in the Gloaming

At the Royal Botanic Gardens, near the Kiosk

Friday, January 17th, 1992, from 5.30 pm to 8.30 pm.

Bring a picnic tea, your friends and relations.



Mark January 17th in your new 1992 diary, NOW !



The Crow Collection Association (Incorp.)
A Living Library to Plan for the 21st Century

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