

CHAPTER IX

Community Services

Child Health Clinic

Judith Timbs

On the 28th September 1948 an inaugural meeting of the Tarooma Child Welfare Association was held at the Old Public Hall. Councillor McPartlan introduced Miss M.C. Shoobridge from the Child Welfare Association who gave an outline of the Association's activities. Twelve mothers were present and at the conclusion of the meeting a Committee was formed. The Country Women's Association donated three guineas towards the initial function. Mrs Henry was voted as the President. The Clinic commenced in the Old Public Hall on the corner of Tarooma Crescent and the Channel Highway. The first annual report indicated that conditions generally were unfavourable towards running a Clinic and negotiations were already being made with Premier Cosgrove to move to a new building. The Clinic in 1948 was open on alternate Tuesdays but as attendances were growing it soon opened weekly.

Total attendances to the Clinic in 1951 were 503 with 209 visits to homes made by the Sister and eleven visits to expectant mums. During the years 1952, 1953 and 1954 attendances to the Clinic grew and the Committee was growing more anxious about the need for the new premises. Fundraising was a major activity and in 1952 Mrs English (Hon. Secretary) reported on a most successful Children's Fancy Dress Party which raised £10/18/0.

In 1954 it was reported that land was available in Tarooma on which to erect a new centre.

The numbers of young children continued to swell and as one Clinic Sister reported there were seventy five children under the age of five living in Tarooma Crescent in 1957. It was also in 1957 that the Child Welfare Association changed its name to the Child Health Association.

On the 5th December 1958 Dr. Murray Director of Public Health wrote to the State Secretary of the Child Health Association that the Education Department had agreed to make

a site available at the rear of the Tarooma State Primary School in Coolamon Road.

On the 15th April 1959 the Committee received information from the Health Department that a tender for the construction of a new Centre had been approved. The tenderers, Tasmanian Construction Company, quoted £1,530/10/6 for the erection of the new Clinic. At 2.30 p.m. on the 26th November 1959, the Clinic was officially opened and the Country Women's Association helped with the catering and provision of crockery and in 1960 they donated a new fly wire door.

In 1962 the Committee concentrated on helping the Hobart City Creche and raised £17 by holding a street stall, and numerous feeders, washers and cot sheets were donated to them. The Committee reported that they intended to introduce recipe and garden cutting nights at their monthly meetings. On the 21st November the same year, Dr. Ross of the Public Health Department wrote requesting use of the Tarooma Clinic to start a once monthly session of Polio and Smallpox immunizations. Permission was granted by the Committee and remuneration for cleaning was made by Dr. Ross to the Public Commissioner.

In 1964 an issue arose concerning the payment of the telephone bill for the Kingston Branch. The Tarooma and Blackmans Bay Clinic at this stage were not connected to a telephone and the Sister used the Kingston telephone in connection with her work for these branches as well as for Kingston. The State Secretary of the Association requested the Tarooma Branch to pay one third of the bill - £6. The Committee responded saying that they would like their obligation clarified and that in future they would be prepared to give Sister petty cash in order to use a public telephone. In this same year it was reported that the original curtains in the Clinic had perished and it was necessary to replace them. An American Tea at the home of the President, Miss Faye Smith, raised £13 towards the cost. As they were unable to find a representative to attend Central Creche meetings, they decided to send a donation of £15 instead.

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In 1965 membership exceeded twenty mothers. During the year the building was painted and the replacement of the external door was in the hands of the Public Works Department. Members maintained the grounds on a monthly roster system which resulted in an attractive property.

Mrs G. Lane, President in 1966, reported that the seat outside the front door had been renovated and painted. A notice board had been installed in the building to prevent damage to the walls when posters and notices were displayed. Money-raising efforts included a Beetle evening, cake stalls and a fashion parade. Cake stalls also had been held at the old Shopping Centre during the year but due to Government legislation which prevented shops opening on Saturdays, this money-raising source disappeared.

In 1967 an outside porch was erected by the Health Department, thereby improving the entrance. A blackboard was placed above the donation box showing the amount and atten-

dance figures for each month. During the year, the Committee purchased some children's books and magazines were supplied by members for the waiting room. At the request of Sister Lansdell, a steel filing drawer was purchased to replace the cardboard box.

As an aftermath of the February bushfires, the Clinic was rented for a sum of \$6 a week by Doctors Wallace and Boughey, who unfortunately lost their surgery as a result of the fires. The Committee expressed gratitude to the vestry of St. Luke's Church for making available part of their Church Hall to the Sister, enabling her to continue weekly Clinic. Members raised money by holding a Melbourne Cup afternoon tea, a Christmas dinner dance and an evening with the St. Johns Ambulance Brigade.

The main feature for the 1969 program was a novel fashion parade of lingerie and foundation garments at Hadley's Hotel where some 200 guests spent a very enjoyable and profitable evening.



The Child Health Association building when situated at number 2 Coolamon Road, 26th November 1959.

PHOTO JUDITH TIMBS.

In 1970 membership was twenty three and the results of the Annual Badge Selling on Appeal Day showed a remarkable decrease on previous years due to less volume of traffic through Tarooma because of the opening of the Southern Outlet to Kingston. The annual report stated that books and toys had been purchased for use by children whilst their mothers were being interviewed by the Clinic Sister, but this was not a very successful project as the toys were found to be too noisy, thus disturbing the Sister, and many of the books were missing. The toys were removed and in their place, Mrs Spinner gave a rocker for use by the children.

An active group of twenty four members purchased a second-hand Electrolux vacuum cleaner and stripped and refurbished the lino floor covering in 1971. The Committee introduced a system of sending flowers and a card on the occasion of the arrival of a new baby, sickness or bereavement. In 1972 the

Committee purchased new linoleum for the pram, waiting and washrooms.

The Tarooma Apex Club kindly maintained the lawns and gardens in 1973 and during that year Mr I. MacIntosh donated a swing for the older children. A new telephone was installed, metric scales placed on order and the Clinic repainted by the Health Department.

Two Life Members of the Association were elected in 1975, Mrs Eileen Spinner and Mrs Sandra Hickman. Members of the Committee were active in presenting to Council plans of how the Association could use the proposed New Community Hall e.g. as a part-time creche centre.

In 1976 three more Life Members were appointed, Mrs Helen Maine, Mrs Jill Williams and Mrs Anne Mainstridge as a token of appreciation for their hard work.

New carpet was donated for the Sister's Room in 1977 and Mr Martindill kindly laid it. A new lawn was sown around the Clinic with soil given by the Kingborough Council.



The Clinic Sister's Consultation Room in the new building, 26th November 1959.

PHOTO JUDITH TIMBS.

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The mothers purchased a new filing cabinet for the Sister. Attempts to grow new shrubs around the front gardens were thwarted by hungry horses in the adjoining paddock.

In 1979 new toddler scales were purchased with the assistance of the Southern District Child Health Committee. In the following year a generous donation was given to the Gagebrook Clinic and a tricycle was donated to the Mother Craft Home. In 1982 new curtains and a second-hand lawn mower were purchased. Attempts were made to grow more shrubs along the front of the Clinic but these efforts were again thwarted by hungry horses in the adjoining paddock.

A "Help Poland Appeal" box was placed in the Clinic in 1982. This appeal followed a moving talk given by a local mother Mrs Zofia Paluski. Mrs Paluski highlighted the desperate need for babies' clothes and nappies.

The annual report for the year mentioned thirty three new babies to Tarooma.

In March 1983, the first Child Health Week was organised State-wide and has since become an annual event in the first week of March. During 1984 the theme was "Be Wise - Immunise". The Tarooma Committee donated funds to the Ranelagh Clinic which was struggling to become established and a donation of \$100 was given to the Mother Craft Home. During the year a Mr Greedy Collection Box was designed by Jane Burrell and made by Gary Read. Its successful introduction into the Clinic has helped attract mothers to donate some funds for running expenses.

On August the 21st 1986, the Clinic building was relocated inside the playground adjacent to the New Community Hall. A luncheon was conducted in the Playground and the State Minister for Health, the Honourable Mr Groom, attended together with Child Health Association Office Bearers, mums and children.



The Community Playground

Patricia Roberts-Thomson

The Community Playground evolved from a grassy corner of the Tarooma Reserve into the small, compact and delightful playground that stands today as a familiar friend to all the young children of the community. It began and has been sustained through the efforts of the Playgroup.

Soon after the construction of the New Community Hall in 1980 the Playgroup approached the Kingborough Council to set aside the small parcel of land to the north of the Hall as a playground.

The first piece of equipment to be erected on the site was a playgym made of celery top pine and consisting of a swing, a stainless steel slide and fireman's pole, and a rubber tyre and wooden ramp. The playgym was designed and built by Mr Phillip Hillsdon. It cost \$755, of which the Playgroup contributed \$330, the Kingborough Council \$250 and the Hobart Town Lions Club \$175. It was opened on the 8th December 1981 by Councillor G.G. Hean and remains an old and reliable favourite with the children.

The next significant event in the playground's life occurred in the winter of 1983. For many years the Kingborough Council had resisted establishing modern playground facilities. However, this policy was changed with the assistance offered by the Commonwealth Government through the Community Employment Programme. As a result four fully-fledged playgrounds were established in the Municipality, one of which was at Tarooma.

Around the playgym were erected two swings, a spring mounted rocking horse and boat, a see-saw, and a small open climbing frame. A large circular, yellow slide - the bane of mothers whose children are too young to cope with its height and the source of much delight to children confident enough to enjoy its speed, was also erected.

As well as erecting the play equipment, the Council fenced and extensively landscaped the area. Picnic tables and seats were placed around the perimeter, lawns were established and garden beds, trees and shrubs planted.

Soon after the establishment of the playground Mr Craig Coombs, then proprietor

of the Tarooma Hotel, offered to maintain the playground as a community service. His support gave the playground an auspicious beginning. It ensured that the area was always well maintained, clean and tidy, and his care and attention enabled the trees and shrubs to become established. This, and the high standard of maintenance set early on, have contributed greatly to the attractiveness of the playground today.

In the spring of 1985 the playground was upgraded again, an indication of the importance in which it was held by the parents of the community. A playhouse was constructed and the swings moved to the north-eastern corner, where they were surrounded by a safety fence. This was to prevent any toddler wandering into their path. The fence doubled as a piece of equipment in its own right and, in addition, provides a welcome seat for weary parents right in the middle of the playground.

The cost of the playhouse, designed by Juliet Allingham and built by the Council, was \$925, of which the Playgroup donated \$75, the Child Health Association \$100, the Hall Management Committee \$100, Mr Craig Coombs \$150 and the Kingborough Council \$500. An attempt was made by the Playgroup parents to paint the playhouse, but the day set aside was so cold that the attempt had to be abandoned.

After this upgrading the playground was officially opened by the then warden of Kingborough, Mr G.G. Hean on the 10th November 1985. The opening celebrations were combined with a playgroup barbecue and wine bottling. The function was attended by a large gathering of parents and children.

In the autumn of 1986 the playground environment underwent some minor changes when the Child Health Clinic was re-located to the rear of the existing playground. The perimeter fence was moved to encompass the new building and paths were constructed to provide suitable access. Thus all activities associated with young children came to be centralised within one area.

At Playgroup sessions on Tuesday morning large numbers are to be seen scrambling happily over the equipment and at other times of the week a steady stream of children come and go. As well, the playground has provided a welcome meeting place for parents. Its safe

and interesting equipment, the attractive layout of the grounds, its sunny location, pleasant views and general cleanliness have ensured that it has become a much loved friend of both children and parents alike.



At the opening of the new playground are from L to R, Mr Peter Tavender from the Hobart Town Lions Club, Mrs Annette Robertson the President of the Playgroup and Kingborough Councillor Mr Jim Hean.

PHOTO "THE MERCURY".



The Community Playground taken from Tarooona Park, with the Child Health building on the right and the new Community Hall to the left, 1986.
PHOTO CARL WOOD.