

Elizabeth Stewart Hamilton

c. 1912-13 - 1995

Sources:

[link] Pre-School Education Centre, Dunedin 1940s

[link] Kindergarten Teachers' Association

[link] Three Teachers' Scrapbooks

Pre-school Education Vo. 4. No. 1. November 1973 – pp. 6-17

Helen May (2014) *People, places and play in the 'child gardens' of Dunedin, Dunedin Kindergartens - Mana Manaaki Puawai O Otepoti 125 years old*, Dunedin Kindergartens, 2014, pp. 54-62, 89-92.

Helen May (2013) *The Discovery of Early Childhood*, NZCER Press, Wellington (2nd ed.) pp. 290, 358, 360, 363-4.

Hocken Collections – Uare Takoka o Hākena, University of Otago

Principals' Reports 1946-1966, DKA Records Arc 0261, Ser 01442

Pre-school Education Centre Reports DKA, AG-287/031

E. S. Hamilton, Scrapbooks, DKA ARC-051

Margaret Just DKA, 85/153 and Phyllis Varcoe Scrapbooks (uncatalogued in 2016)

Miss Elizabeth Stewart Hamilton

Educated at Queen Margaret College,
Wellington

Trained as a kindergarten teacher in
Wellington: 1930- 31

Travelled to US and England on a Carnegie
Fellowship. Studied with Susan Isaacs at
the University of London: 1937-38

Teaching at the Taranaki St Kindergarten
Wellington:1939-40

Director Pre-School Educational Centre,
Dunedin: 1940-1945

Principal, Dunedin Free Kindergarten
Association:1946-1966



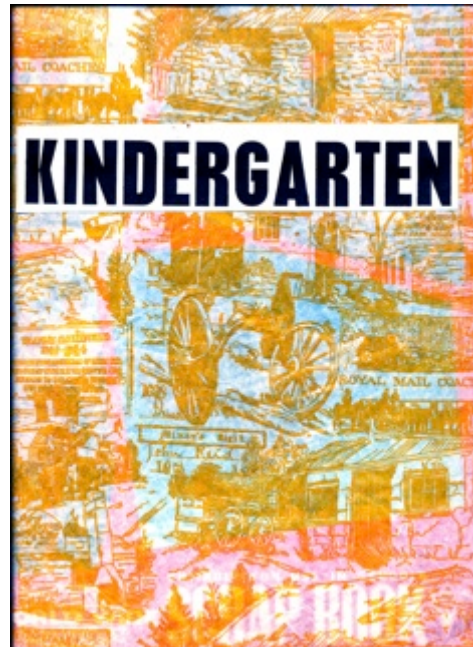
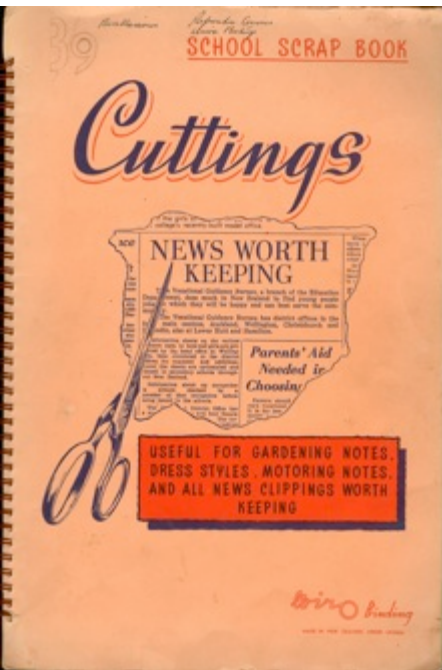
GA 287/095 (above)

E. S. Hamilton scrapbooks, DKA ARC-
051

Hocken Collections – Uare Takokao
Hākena, University of Otago



Compiled 9 scrapbooks of her work in kindergarten 1940s-1960s



E. S. Hamilton scrapbooks, DKA ARC-051

Hocken Collections - Uare Takoka o Hākena, University of Otago

Establishing a union for kindergarten teachers



MOTHERS' PART IN KINDERGARTEN CONSIDERED "TERRIBLY IMPORTANT"

"In Kindergartens mothers are terribly important," Miss I. J. Christison, the assistant supervisor of pre-school services, said on Wednesday night in an address to mothers at the Richard Hudson Kindergarten. Inside the kindergarten the mother could play a part that no one else could.

A mother should not feel that her responsibility ended when she handed over her child at the kindergarten door. She should stay with him for as long as he needed her.

For the child grew and developed. At birth, the tiny helpless being was entirely dependent on his mother. She acted for him, fed him, clothed him, and developed in him a feeling of belonging, of love.

The baby learnt by exploring the world around him, by finding out about things, people and himself.

But the world he learnt about must be a safe one, a dependable place. Above all his mother must be someone he could trust, for she, at this stage, was, to all intents and purposes, his world. He must learn, too, trust in himself.

If mistrust was learnt, however, instead of trust, then anxiety, aggressions and other beginnings of a neurotic personality might develop. The quality of all his future relationships depended on the quality of his relationship in childhood.

MOTHER STANDS BY

As the child grew, he became more able to do things for himself, he could grasp objects, he learnt to eat, talk and crawl by himself. The mother no longer acted for him, but stood by to help him, help himself, to reassure him that she was still there to assist if the effort was too much for him, and to encourage him to try again.

Otherwise, the child might quite well feel that the effort was not worth while and so remain at an infantile level of behaviour.

NEED FOR PLAY

The other great need of the child in those early years was for play of all sorts, with all kinds of material, and with companions of his own age. He learnt by play—but play needs could not always be met at home.

And this was where kindergarten came in. There he could get com-

panionship, space, time. He could even get the opportunity to use material he could not easily have at home, such as expensive toys, and apparatus which took up a considerable amount of room.

FIRST STEP ALONE

Obviously, the child must, for the first time in his life, leave his home—a very big step, during which, as Miss Christison put it, he should have "adequate mothering."

If his mother was not there to support him and reassure him when he made his first crucial step alone in the outside world, "all sorts of things could happen." He might, for example, become clinging and infantile, sticking fast to the nearest adult in the kindergarten who resembled his mother.

But with his mother in the background he was more likely to venture forth and join in the play, developing the attitude "I'm a big boy now, I'm at kindergarten."

Even though there came a day when the child could stand by himself and say to his mother, "You can go home now," while he settled down to enjoy the other children, he must have the mother's continued support.

Crises arose from time to time, so "we ask each mother to visit the kindergarten still occasionally, so that her child remains quite sure she takes an interest," Miss Christison continued.

If other children's mothers came, and his did not, "the feeling that his mother no longer cared might easily prey upon a childish mind."

"Mothers are wanted at the kindergartens," Miss Christison concluded, "above all for the child's sake, but also for their own sakes, so that they may share in the growing up of their children and not feel they have sent them away behind closed doors."

There was the staff to think of, too. "Nobody knows Billy Brown as well as his own mother, and if the kindergarten staff are to do anything at all for Billy Brown they must know the pattern of his home life."



KINDERGARTEN EXPERTS MEET: Miss I. J. Christison, of Wellington (left), with the principal of the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Student Training Centre, Miss Elizabeth Hamilton.

c. 1954

E. S. Hamilton scrapbooks, DKA ARC-051

1954 meeting of NZKTA, Dunedin. Elizabeth S. Hamilton front left



E. S. Hamilton scrapbooks, DKA ARC-051



‘Off to Kindy’ in the newly built Helen Deem Centre for Pre-School Education. Forbury Road, Dunedin 1955, [led by Elizabeth Stewart Hamilton, past Director]

E. S. Hamilton scrapbooks, DKA ARC-051

Sept 10th
1961.



Mornington kindergarten

Kindergarten is Opened in English Avenue

Many months of fund-raising efforts, and four years of hard work by local residents culminated in the opening of the Mornington Kindergarten in English Avenue yesterday afternoon. The Mayoress, Mrs Sidey, officially opened the new kindergarten, the fourteenth in Dunedin, before an audience of parents, children, and kindergarten authorities.

Tributes were paid to the work of Mrs F. T. H. McLean, president of the Mornington Kindergarten committee, whose efforts had enabled the kindergarten to open debt-free. The president of the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association, Miss Vera Hayward, added her congratulations on "a grand effort."

On behalf of the building committee, Mrs McLean thanked the City Council who had donated the section, so conveniently situated, the Kindergarten Association for their assistance, and the Mornington community who had supported all their "queer activities" to raise funds. She also thanked the voluntary workers who had done the fencing and concrete

work, and Mr George Anderson, the only builder on the committee, who had seen to it that the voluntary workers kept up to the necessary standards.

The one reward we ask is that a great number of pre-school children will get a great deal of pleasure and profit for a great number of years," she concluded.

Other speakers were Mr W. A. Hudson M.P., Mrs N. K. Thompson, president of the Mothers Club, and Mr L. W. S. Lowther, the architect for the building.

Prizes were presented to the speakers by pupils of the kindergarten.

After the speeches outside, the visitors inspected the kindergarten and afternoon tea was served.

THE PRESIDENT
of
THE DUNEDIN FREE KINDERGARTEN ASSOCIATION
requests the pleasure of the company of

Miss E. J. Hamilton

at the official opening of the new
MORNINGTON KINDERGARTEN
95 English Avenue

by
THE MAYORESS, MRS. T.K.S. SIDEY,

on
MONDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER, 1961,
at 2.30 p.m.

R.S.V.P. to:-

The Secretary,
P.O. Box 497,
DUNEDIN

OR Phone 78-230

by

Tuesday, 5 September.

E. S. Hamilton scrapbooks, DKA ARC-051

American Child Psychology New Zealand Teacher Finds Unique School

For the "New Zealand" -- "Lance."

WITH new and interesting ideas from America on child psychology, Miss Stewart Hamilton, director of the Wellington South Free Kindergarten, recently returned to Wellington from a two years' absence abroad.

After an enjoyable tour of England, Scotland and parts of the Continent, Miss Hamilton spent a year studying at the London University under Dr. Susan Isaacs, an eminent authority on child education. After her year of study, she went to America to observe the latest practical methods in nursery schools.

An innovation in Chicago was the incorporating of the nursery and junior schools. The fundamental idea was to give children at the ages of 11, 12 and 13 direct contact with very young children. In many cases the American family consisted of an only child, who knew little or nothing of the habits of the modern nursery. It is for these children



Miss Stewart Hamilton: "I have come back to the Dominion with fresh ideas and enthusiasm for kindergarten work."

that the course is specially beneficial as it includes child growth development, biology and dietetics. The last is taught by an experienced dietitian who supervises the junior pupils in the preparation of the nurseries luncheon. In quite a few cases entire families have moved to the Wimmera district in Chicago which is the centre of this system.

Subjects include carpentry, weaving in a specially equipped room with miniature looms; finger-painting, a form of expression with the finger and specially prepared paint as the mediums; potato printing on fabrics or paper; clay modelling; reading and studying of selected books and pictures; fancy dress designing; dressing dolls, for which ideas are drawn from a complete set of dolls of all nations; mural art, for which the students are equipped with step ladders and specially designed easels.

A rigid rule of the school bars all visitors. People interested in its work are invited to see the school after six o'clock when the children have been dismissed. A moving picture of the classes in action is then shown. Miss Pepper reasons that intruders spoil the atmosphere as children are apt to pantomime if given a suitable audience. The only person other than Mrs. Ford, a frequent and much loved visitor, to enter the school, is the charlady, who has proved her sincere understanding of the children and is therefore welcome to classes.

Of the school's success there is very little doubt. Miss Pepper is inundated with requests to lecture on child psychology all over the States. Through the summer holidays she visits refresher camps and summer schools imparting her knowledge to other teachers.

It is Miss Hamilton's earnest wish that through the medium of the Free Kindergartens some of these enlightening methods will be introduced to Wellington children.

BY BLUE DOMINO

New Venture.

DUNEDIN gains by Wellington's loss in the person of Stewart Hamilton, who has been director of the Newtown Free Kindergarten since her return to New Zealand from overseas. This clever girl is to direct an educational venture new to New Zealand, and is to have charge of the new pre-school educational centre to be opened in one of the cottages in the grounds of the Truby King-Harris Hospital at Anderson's Bay. This centre which will be attended all day by children from two to five years, will form a link between Karitane and kindergarten training for the trainees. Miss Hamilton, who left Wellington last week, received her early kindergarten training here, afterwards going abroad and specialising in child development at London University under Dr. Susan Isaacs, with practical training and observation at the Rachael McMillan School at Deptford, besides other up-to-date schools. For further study

she travelled to America, and attended the Columbia University, the Iowa Research Centre for pre-school children, and also studied in San Francisco under Dr. Louisa Wagoner.

NEW EDUCATIONAL VENTURE

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE AT ANDERSON'S BAY

Miss Stewart Hamilton, of Wellington, who arrived in Dunedin this week, is to have charge of the new pre-school educational centre, to be opened in one of the cottages in the grounds of the Truby King-Harris Hospital at Anderson's Bay. Twenty children from the ages of two to five years will attend and stay all day and have their mid-day meal.

In this way a link is to be formed between Karitane baby nursing and kindergarten training of the small child. The Karitane trainees will receive instruction in the school in pro-



MISS STEWART HAMILTON.

viding for the all-round development of the very small child and kindergarten trainees will get an insight into the physical welfare of the children under their care, specially with regard to general nutrition. Miss Hamilton received her kindergarten training in Wellington, afterwards going abroad and specialising in child development at London University under Dr. Susan Isaacs, with practical training and observation at the Rachael McMillan School at Deptford and other up-to-date nursery schools.

Travelling to America for further study, she attended Columbia University, the Iowa Research Centre for pre-school children and also studied in San Francisco under Dr. Louisa Wagoner.

It will thus be seen that Miss Hamilton brings a wide knowledge to the new position she has undertaken.

Since returning to New Zealand she has been director of the Newtown Free Kindergarten until coming south to commence her duties here next term.



Student group c. 1950s (above) and 1940s Graduates with Miss Hamilton 1958 (above) and 1940s

