

The following pages are an extract from The Methodist Church of New Zealand Minutes of the Annual Conference .

The extract contains the reports to Conference for the following three Methodist Children's homes:

- The Auckland Children's Home and Orphanage, Mt Albert and Epsom
- Masterton Methodist Children's Home
- South Island Orphanage and Children's Home

---

# The Methodist Church of New Zealand

---

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Held at AUCKLAND, 1961

---

*Price: TWO SHILLINGS and SIXPENCE*

*Procurable at the Connexional Office*



Enticott, T. Hurrell, S. C. Peddie, N. Greenslade, Mesdames F. G. Colechin, J. Leask, R. A. Marsh, W. A. Megson, W. T. Blight, A. Ledsham, L. Lewis, R. Anderson, Misses M. Johns, P. Caulkwell, Plus Circuit Officials.

### III—Children's Homes

#### A.—AUCKLAND

We submit to our Church this 48th annual report. During the year there have been those times of joy, of problems, of trials and sometimes of disappointments, but through it all we have felt the continuous goodness and blessing of our Lord.

##### Our Family:

At 1st July, 1960, we had 50 children in residence at Wesleydale, one girl in a foster home, and two boys at Wesley College. At 30th June, 1961, there are 32 children in residence at Wesleydale, six children are in foster homes, five boys are at Wesley College, and three children are working. Our present total is 46 children in our care now compared with 53 a year ago. The 32 children resident at Wesleydale range from 4 to 13 years of age, those at Wesley College from 13 to 17 years, and those working from 15 to 17 years. Ages of children in foster homes is from 5 to 9 years.

Health of the children has been good and there have been no serious individual illnesses. Our thanks for this to our honorary doctor and our staff. Outside interests for the children at Wesleydale include Church, Sunday School and Bible Class at Mt. Roskill and Dominion Road Churches, kindergarten, boys' and girls' brigades, and local sports clubs. Our sincere thanks to all who organise and support these activities, and thus help local children so much, including our big family.

##### Our Staff:

Mr and Mrs Riley have completed their second year as Superintendent and Matron at Wesleydale. Our thanks go to them and their staff for the good work during the year. Staff changes have at times caused temporary difficulties. At such times a good deal of extra work and responsibility has been willingly shouldered by Mr and Mrs Riley.

##### Commission on Policy for Methodist Children's Homes Boards:

This Commission has been active in 1960 and 1961. We have appreciated the fact that we as a Board have been able to consider the draft copies of their reports for Synods and Conferences in 1960 and 1961. Their 1961 draft report has been well examined, a whole meeting being given to it with representatives of Northland and South Auckland present. We hope that our suggestions and constructive criticisms have been helpful to the Commission in reaching its recommendations. The 1961 Synods and Conference have the responsibility of considering and making important decisions. We as one of the Boards, will have the responsibility of implementing any new policy in the Northland, South Auckland and Auckland Synod districts. Our Board is happy to feel that before these reports had been presented to us we had already embarked upon the system of care in foster homes so strongly recommended by the Commission.

##### Our Pilot Scheme of Foster Homes:

In 1959 and 1960 we had one secondary school girl in a foster home at Morrinsville. She is now working in Auckland. Toward the end of 1960 our board approved of a pilot scheme of foster homes. We now have 6 children (ages 5 to 9) in 4 foster homes (2 homes in

South Auckland and 2 in Auckland suburbs). We feel that the experiment has been successful, and that invaluable experience gained will assist materially in any expansion in the future in foster homes under our supervision. Our aim is that there should exist where possible a happy triple partnership, in the interest of the children, among the foster parents, the natural parents, and our Board and its staff. The Board has considered the desirability of instituting small 'family homes' where a small number of children can be cared for as a family unit. Decision in this has been postponed until after the Commission's report has been presented to Conference.

##### Our General Policy of Children Returning to Care of Parents as Soon as Reasonable:

The majority of children with us are from broken homes. In these cases it is our general policy to develop and maintain good contact with parents with legal guardianship, and to encourage such parents to re-establish the happy family unit as soon as reasonable. When this is done it is a joy to us, the children and the parents. The number of children who returned to parental care this year is an endorsement of this general policy.

##### Our Finances:

At the time of this report, our Annual Accounts for 30th June, 1961, are nearing completion, and it appears that in a Revenue Account of over £12,000, including reasonable depreciation, we will have a deficit of approximately £475. School fees which show an increase this year, should be lower in the coming year. Some additional financial help is received for two of the boys from a parent and Heritage. Our decreased numbers resident at Wesleydale, and certain fixed items of expenditure there, are the subject of 1961/62 financial estimates now under consideration, and prudent economies will receive due attention in the coming year.

We thank all our supporters during the past year, for both large and small contributions. Our larger contributors include the J. R. McKenzie Trust Inc. £350, the Auckland Savings Bank £150, and our Ladies' Committee £125.

##### Commencement of Connexional Budget on 31st January, 1961:

The Connexional Budget this year made its first 5 months contribution. Circuits and Churches should note that their contribution takes the place only of our Annual Christmas Appeal for funds, and in no way suspends the valuable work and contributions made for the care of our children through the Ladies' Guilds of the Churches for the clothing of the children.

##### Our Friends and Supporters:

Besides financial support there are many ways in which you help the children and us. Always valuable for the gifts themselves and the personal contact that often accompanies them are gifts of clothing, books, toys, etc., gifts of voluntary services in many ways and often over lengthy periods in such as mending, sewing, knitting, and sundry personal services of time and interests. Often this is happily done as part of Stewardship, and prominent in this are many of the Women's Guilds, and other Women's Groups within the Churches, in the Auckland metropolitan area and in many provincial circuits.

##### Holidays and Hospitalities for our Children:

We would like to place on record our thanks to all who have assisted as holiday and hospitality hosts, and to state that they extend from Rawene in the north to Te Kuiti and Tauranga in the south. Particular mention can be made of the Ruawai Circuit where



as part of its Stewardship Campaign 15 of our children spent a happy 6 weeks holiday last December-January, amongst some 17 homes.

#### Old Girls, Boys and Staff Re-union:

A happy evening was held last October at Wesleydale. Anyone who is interested in this year's function please forward your name, present address, and date you were with us, to the Secretary of our Board at P.O. Box 5023, Auckland. We are hoping for a really big re-union function for our Golden Jubilee year in 1963.

#### Looking Forward:

Decisions that may be made by Synods and Conference 1961 may make for considerable changes in our work in the future.

Whatever changes in our administration may result from decisions on policy we look forward humbly and yet confidently that you will continue your support in so many ways. We shall seek God's guidance in all that we do, and do our best to be worthy of your support and His blessing.

R. T. GARLICK, Chairman.

R. K. STACEY, Secretary.

#### B.—MASTERTON

The Home continues to care for the needs of a large family. We now have 31 children under our care and have been full to capacity. During the year there were four admissions and seven departures, we have been reluctant to have to refuse applications for admission.

Rev. and Mrs J. B. Dawson transferred to Hastings and Rev. and Mrs Harkness have been welcomed to the Committee. At the Annual Meeting Mr F. I. Wells did not seek re-election as a member of the Committee. Eulogistic reference was made to Mr Wells' long years of service and as a representative to the Wellington Board. It was resolved to place on record the Committee's sincere and deep appreciation of his outstanding and valued services while a member of the Committee, part of which time he served as Chairman.

There have been several staff changes during the year, three of our assistants leaving to be married. We were fortunate to be able to replace them without any problems. Misses C. Wilmshurst and M. Orme are two new staff members, while Miss D. Preston is serving to qualify for the Order of St. Stephen.

With the completed painting of the roof the Home has been given quite a new look. The long awaited equipment for the laundry has arrived and been installed. We trust that these new machines and the improved layout will considerably lighten the work of the staff.

Up to the present time the Manager and Matron sleep on the same floor between the girls' and boys' dormitories. A tender has now been accepted to make alterations and provide a self-contained flat for them. This should add much to their comfort and privacy.

The Committee was again pleased to make the Home available for a Leadership School during a short period of the May holidays.

The Committee is experimenting with some short term admissions and also with boarding children in private homes when practicable.

We thank all who have supported our work in any way, especially in the provision of holiday homes for the children. Gifts of clothing, produce, donations and financial support from the Police Charity Day, J. R. McKenzie Trust Board, and Trust Lands Trust have all been helpful and acceptable.

We also again express our thanks to our Hon. Physicians, Drs. N. H. and O. F. Prior, and our sincere appreciation to the Manager, Matron, and Staff for the love and care bestowed on the children.

H. E. HARKNESS, Chairman.

W. H. SAUNDERS, Secretary.

#### C.—SOUTH ISLAND

We submit the following report for the year. Fifty-seven children are resident in the home and two are boarded out. The life of the home has moved along happily during the year. Good progress has been maintained by the children in their respective schools. Reports from the Intermediate School revealed a decided improvement in the work and interest of every child.

The health of the children has been good apart from the normal ills that come to an average family.

Outings for the children have been arranged by various organisations and the children have not been lacking in the sphere of recreation. We pay tribute to the work of Mr Earn Smith and his game helpers. Children have been allocated to holiday homes and this is greatly appreciated.

**Welfare Committee:** A Welfare Committee was appointed at the beginning of the year and regular meetings have been held, the more difficult problems associated with the children being dealt with. A decision of the Board to find homes for the children at an earlier age, and not later than the beginning of the Secondary Schooling, has, we believe, been a right decision and will allow the children to settle into normal home life at an earlier age and allow them to adjust themselves to non institutional life while they are in the early stages of Secondary School. Interviews and counselling with parents and people willing to give a home to children leaving our care, and with employers and prospective employers has been a very extensive part of the work carried out during the year and one that is most valuable. The oversight of the children who have left the home has been carefully carried out and especially in cases where special need has arisen.

The Rev. H. C. Matthews has continued good work as Chaplain and has given valuable assistance in Welfare work in addition to his ordinary duties as Chaplain.

**Staff:** We are happy to report that we are fully staffed at present and this is a great relief to the Management and the Board. We are grateful to the Staff for faithful work carried out.

**Repairs and Renovations:** The Board set aside a capital sum of £4000 for the long overdue renovations and much needed refurnishing of many parts of the home. This work has been carried out and we are proud to report that the home is now resplendent in a new coat of paint, and with new floor coverings, some new furniture and a supply of new beds, our property has been brought up to a standard that is more satisfying to the Board and to the Church.

We express our gratitude to God for the service of our Master and Matron, Mr and Mrs J. E. Scott and our Assistant Matron, Sister Rona Collins for their devoted service during the year and rejoice in the happy atmosphere of the home.

#### RESOLUTIONS

1. That the Reports and Financial Statements be received and adopted.
2. That Conference express its appreciation of the fine work given to the Church by Mr and Mrs N. W. Lloyd as Manager and



Matron of the Masterton Children's Home during the past six years.  
3. That the Boards for 1962 be as printed on page 7 herein.

## Commission on Children's Homes

### REPORT TO SYNODS AND CONFERENCE, 1961

#### 1. Commission's Approach and Procedure

Conference Resolution No. 3 page 168, Minutes of Conference 1959.

"That Conference appoint a special Commission to consider:

- (a) The whole basis and functioning of the Church's Orphanage work, with special reference to trends in New Zealand and overseas in the matter of accommodation, control and discipline of the children and their integration into the life of church and community.
- (b) To investigate whether Children's Homes would be more efficiently administered as units of Social Service work under the direction of Central Missions."
- a. Since the Commission was appointed by the Conference of 1959, it has studied the subject in accordance with its terms of reference, and in consultation with competent authorities in the field of child care. It has received, assembled, and considered information and material from various sources as follows:
  - (i) authorities administering Methodist Children's Homes in New Zealand;
  - (ii) authorities under the auspices of other Churches in New Zealand administering Children's Homes and other services for dependent children;
  - (iii) the School of Social Science, Victoria University of Wellington;
  - (iv) authorities under the auspices of the Methodist Church in the United States of America, United Kingdom, and Australia, concerned with the administering of Homes and other services for dependent children;
  - (v) persons with active interest and experience in the care of dependent children under the auspices of the Church and under other services.

b. An Interim Report by the Commission and presented to the Conference of 1960. It was received and has been incorporated in the Minutes (pages 179-180).

c. Further consultations have this year been held with the Boards and other authorities; information received has been considered and taken into account in preparing this report.

d. The Commission has now reached the conclusions and recommendations contained in this report which it submits to the Synods and Conference of 1961.

#### 2. Summary Information on Present Services

##### a. Brief history of services

The 1912 Conference passed this resolution: "In the judgment of the Conference the time has arrived when the Methodist Church of New Zealand should engage in some philanthropic work; and resolves that a Committee be appointed to sit during the year, to collect information and formulate proposals to be submitted to the Synods of 1912 and Conference of 1913; and that special consideration be given to the establishing of an orphanage."

##### AUCKLAND

The first of our N.Z. Methodist homes was opened 20th Decem-

ber, 1913, at Mt. Albert. The Rev. J. Blight as Overseer and Mrs Blight as Matron were in charge.

An additional home "Epworth House" was established at Mt. Albert in 1922. In 1924 the Epsom Home was opened. 127 children were being cared for in 1926—the three homes being full. A fine set of buildings at Mt. Roskill, "Wesleydale", was opened in 1955. The 63 children (21 girls, 42 boys) in the Mt. Albert and Epsom homes were transferred to the new Home.

##### MASTERTON

The Masterton Home was officially opened by the Hon. C. J. Parr, Minister of Education, on 29th October, 1921. From the early minutes it appears that the Home was intended for orphans only but this condition was later rescinded. When the Home was opened there were six children in residence, but in a year the number had increased to 24. Subsequent buildings and alterations include the opening in 1959 of a recreation block.

##### SOUTH ISLAND

The South Island Children's Home commenced on 25th April, 1914, and Sister Mabel Morley was the first Matron. The Home was apparently the result of her personal vision. There were six children in residence at the opening and the numbers grew until there were 63 in the home and nine boys in residence with the Presbyterians at their home which was for boys only. These were nine older boys.

The present home was established in 1934. The largest number was during the war when there were 80 children in residence.

##### b. Administration

There is no reference made in the Law Book to Children's Homes other than the inclusion of a question in the Conference Agenda.

i. **Boards:** Each Home is administered by a Board appointed by Synod and Conference. The Auckland and South Island Boards are large consisting of prominent Church members and an almost equal number of Ministers.

The Boards are independently responsible for the policy and property of their home. They report to Synod and Conference.

Each Board includes in its sub-committees one responsible for handling admissions and safe-guarding children's welfare.

The Church is grateful for the very generous assistance given to the Children's Homes by Board members over the years.

ii. **Staff:** Each Home is supervised by a Master and Matron and Assistant Matron. The Auckland Home employs 9 additional staff, Masterton 3, and South Island 8, together with 4 casuals.

In comparison with similar institutions the salaries and other conditions of employment seem inadequate. The Church has nevertheless been very well served by staff members for many years. It is now apparent, however, that social service of this nature calls for well trained and highly qualified people. If these are to be sought the Church should not rely on the sacrificial service of its members but should have a national staffing policy more in line with that of similar organisations.

##### c. Present Homes

The three Children's Homes now providing care for children, at Auckland, Masterton and Christchurch, consist of large buildings situated in good suburban areas on sections of land large enough for gardens and outside playing areas. They are conveniently located for attendance at public schools, Sunday School and Bible Class and at public entertainment, civic, and social functions. In two cases



the children all live in the one building and in the other case the boys and the girls live in separate wings joined by a central block for dining and recreation.

In each of the Homes the children sleep in dormitories, the boys and the girls each having their own. Two of the Homes have two dormitories for boys and two for girls while the other has four for each, thus providing for some classification on the basis of age. The capacity of the Homes is 64, 30, and 60, making a total of 154. At 31st December, 1960, the numbers in residence were as follows:

Under 1 year	Boys	Girls	Totals
1 year to under 3 years	—	2	2
3 years to under 5 years	7	3	10
5 years to under 12 years	57	35	92
12 years to under 15 years	20	9	29
15 years	2	5	7
	86	54	140

During the year ended 31/12/60, 41 children were admitted to the Homes and 44 children left them.

Applications for admission to the Homes are considered and dealt with by officers or special committees of the Boards and decisions on applications, as well as on discharge are made primarily on the basis of the estimated need, as well as the ability of the Homes to accept the children at the time.

In general the Master and Matron of the Home are in full administrative control of the children; they consult with the Chairmen and Secretaries of their Boards, the medical advisors, Chaplains and others as necessary for advice. The Master, Matron and other members of the staff fulfil the roles as far as possible of parents and generally provide care, affection, attention and guidance as far as possible while the children are under their responsibility.

It is the policy of the authorities of all the Homes to arrange for the children to spend their holidays in the individual private homes of members of the Church or of other interested people and usually all the children are able to be provided for this way at least for a substantial part of the summer school vacation.

There has, especially recently, been a developing interest on the part of the administering authorities in placing children considered suitable, in foster homes. Some appreciable progress has been made in using this method of care where suitable foster parents have been available.

The children are discharged from the care of the administering authorities when they become independent or no longer need that care, when their parents or other relatives resume care and control of them, or, in exceptional cases, when the Home authorities are no longer able to provide the care and control needed by them.

#### d. Legislation Affecting Homes

Part 1 of the Child Welfare Amendment Act 1927 entitled "Children's Homes", requires that the controlling authority of every children's home shall apply to the Minister for the registration of the home. This application has to give all relevant information concerning the premises, equipment, staffing, and the number, sex and age of the children to be maintained therein. On receipt of a favourable report from the Superintendent of Child Welfare the home is registered under this part of the Act. Each home must have a Manager, appointed by the controlling authority.

The Act requires that plans of new buildings or any structural alterations estimated to cost £200 or more must be submitted for the Minister's approval.

The Superintendent of Child Welfare or any of his permanent officers may at any reasonable time enter any children's home to inspect both the home and the condition of the children. The controlling authority is entitled upon written request to receive a copy of the inspecting officer's report.

The Manager of every children's home is required to keep records in connection with each child showing age, sex, date and reason for admission, names of parents, name and relationship to child of the person applying for its admission. The Manager must furnish a schedule of statistics at least annually to the Superintendent of Child Welfare. This part of the Act also provides for a Manager to assume control of a child for such a period and on such terms mutually agreed upon by him and the parent or guardian who makes such application.

All children's homes are entitled to receive the Family Benefit of 15/- per week for each child maintained therein. At the end of 1956 the Government agreed to provide a capitation subsidy of a further 10/- per week per child in any registered children's home. In order to qualify for the capitation subsidy two assurances are required:—

- That no child otherwise eligible and suitable for admission for whom care and accommodation are available will be refused admission merely because his parents or guardians are unable to meet the Authority's requirements regarding maintenance; and
- That the managing authority will make every effort to collect reasonable payments for the maintenance of each child from the parents or guardians.

Also since the end of 1956 the Government has agreed to provide financial assistance to children's homes by way of capital subsidies for new buildings and for major alterations or extension to buildings as approved by the Superintendent of Child Welfare and on receipt of certain specific undertakings by the controlling authorities.

As a result of its study and deliberations the Commission has reached the following conclusions:—

#### 3. Commission's Conclusions on Policy and Practice

- That the traditional method of caring for dependent children in single large institutions, as used by the Methodist Church in New Zealand up to the present, was no doubt in accordance with current thinking on the subject when the present institutions were established. Further, this has always reflected the desire and will of the Church to meet the urgent needs of such children.
- That developments have taken place in thought and practice in this field which can help our Church to provide more effective care for these dependent children.

These have resulted from:

- the great advances in knowledge and understanding in the field in recent years;
  - the marked development of social services for children, especially under the auspices of the State, in New Zealand during the last 25 years;
  - considerable social changes affecting family life in New Zealand.
- (c) That methods of care already established and proved by some other authorities, should eventually replace our present system. These methods consist of:



(i) a competent casework and counselling service for parents and children. The object of this would be to ensure that, if at all possible, the family unit is preserved. And that no child is removed from his home until every other possibility has been explored.

(ii) foster homes within the fellowship of the Church, and a counselling service for foster-parents;

(iii) for children with special needs the provision of "Family Homes" caring for say up to six children and located in the ordinary community.

(d) That there should be regular consultation and co-ordination of work with other social services for children, such as Child Welfare and Child Health Clinics, to ensure that—

(i) the children coming to the attention of the Methodist authorities in the first instance, have their needs and situation understood as accurately as possible before a decision is made;

(ii) if the child is to be placed other than in its own home, the placement is made where its particular needs will best be met—which may or may not be with a Methodist authority;

(iii) whatever the decision regarding each child, those who will care for him will know of and be helped to avail themselves of the best services available;

(iv) experience and resources are shared with kindred services to the fullest extent.

(e) That as caring for and helping dependent children is a skilled task, the Church should now establish a staffing policy including:—

(i) The recruiting of persons who have resources adequate for such difficult and demanding work, and who are prepared to undergo the best training available;

(ii) Conditions of service which would provide for and encourage continuity of employment;

(iii) Provision for training. For caseworkers, the Diploma of Social Science course at Victoria University (or other similar course overseas) merits consideration. Training and continued assistance for Family Home foster parents should be an integral part of the policy;

(iv) As Christian motivation and insight are essential in social service work, some special preparation and training, possibly with periodic 'refresher' courses, should be provided by the Church. This would probably best be done under the auspices of the National Council of Churches.

L. M. HODDER,  
G. C. BURTON,  
E. S. HODDINOTT,  
W. F. FORD, (Convener).

#### RESOLUTIONS

1. That sections 1 and 2 in the Report be received and adopted.

2. That section 3 be received and approved in principle. That the section be referred back to the commission for consultation and further consideration especially in relation to the question of finance and basic home units and allied matter and that the commission report back on these matters to Synods and Conference 1962.

3a. That Conference while recognising that the time required to put the policy into practice may vary, requests the Boards of our Children's Homes to continue their experiments in foster home care as outlined in their reports this year.

3b. That Conference authorise and arrange for a consultation (of

two days in Wellington) for the study of the suggested new policy and its implementations. The consultation should consist of:—

Representatives of M.S.S.A. and Boards—Chairman, Secretaries, Master or Superintendent of each Home. Consultants/Advisors—School of Social Science—one of staff; Mr John Morrison, of Social Service Department, Christchurch Diocese; Mr A. B. Allen, Psychologist, Canterbury Education Board; Child Welfare Division—one of staff; Connexional Secretary or Legal Adviser, and the Members of the Commission. (Suggested dates 4/5th May, 1962.)

The Agenda to include:

General introduction;

Casework service;

Reception procedure and practice;

Foster home practice;

Family homes;

Liaison with other social services for children—e.g., Child Welfare;

Staffing policy;

Property matters;

Finance.

3c. That Conference extend the appointment of the Commission for a further year and that it be authorised in consultation with the M.S.S.A. to:

(i) continue contact with the Boards and other authorities to assist as necessary.

(ii) receive and collate reports from the Boards and prepare a general report to Synods and Conference 1962.

3d. That the administration of the Church's care of dependent children be brought under the M.S.S.A., this work in the interests of the children, to be the immediate responsibility of a special sub-committee on the care of Dependent Children in each M.S.S.A. District.

4. That Conference records its appreciation and thanks to the Commission for the tremendous work already put into the reports.

5. That a grant of £30 from the Contingent Fund be made to cover the cost of the Consultation.

QUESTION LIH.—What are the Resolutions of the Conference with regard to (a) The Order of Deaconesses? (b) The Training of Deaconesses?

## Methodist Deaconess Board

### ANNUAL REPORT, 1961

#### Deaconess House:

With seven students in residence this year, the Deaconess section of the House has assumed its rightful place in relationship to the Hostel. The Hostel at present has twenty-three boarders, twenty of whom are Methodist. All students are doing satisfactory work. Two second-year students and one first-year are taking additional Maori lectures at the W.E.A., and two first-year students are taking the general English course at the Technical College. We are pleased to report that six students who took the examination in Home Nursing gained very satisfactory passes.

The Board has been pleased to make the House available during the May vacation to a Conference on Christian Education held by the Methodist and Presbyterian Departments of Christian Education.

Towards the end of last year, Mrs Gauntlett returned from a