



Services à l'enfance  
**Andrew Fleck  
Child Care Services**

since – depuis  
1911

A LOCAL SUCCESS STORY

*Celebrating 100 Years*

**Andrew Fleck Child Care Services**

Memorial Building  
195 George Street, Ottawa

613-736-5355

[www.afchildcare.on.ca](http://www.afchildcare.on.ca)

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# PRESIDENTS

Mrs. Andrew W. (Gertrude) Fleck	1916-1917
Mrs. L.N. Bate	1918
Mrs. Gerald Brown	1919-1920
Mrs. W.H. Rowley	1921-1923
Mrs. S.A. Luke	1923-1925
Mrs. W.H. Rowley	1925-1927
Mrs. C.Jackson Booth	1927-1929
Mrs. A.J. Freiman	1929-1932
Mrs. A.W. Fleck	1932-1937
Mrs. Lyttleton Cassels	1937-1940
Mrs. Maxwell Edwards	1941-1943
Mrs. E.S. Sherwood	1944-1948
Mrs. N.Wainwright Cleary	1949-1952
Mrs. B.M. Alexandor	1952-1956
Mrs. Francis T. Gill	1957-1958
Mrs. C.Rowley Booth	1959-1960
Mrs. P. (Francis)Smellie	1961-1963
Mrs. F.Wallis White	1964-1965
Mrs. A.M. (Genevieve) Laidlaw	1965-1968
Mrs. J. Barry O'Brien	1968-1970
Mrs. H.S.M. Carver	1970-1971
Dr. June Pimm	1972-1973
Mrs. S. Nelles	1973-1974
Mrs. A.R. Winship	1974-1975
Mrs. Roslyn Burshtyn	1975-1976
Mrs. Marilyn Wilson	1976-1978
Mrs. Pamela (Bruce) Macdonald	1979-1982
Dr. Maureen Roberts	1982-1985
Helen Brown	1985-1988
Janet McLaine	1988-1990
Susan Johnson	1990-1992
Pierre Gallant	1992-1994
Mary Sinclair	1994-1996
Susan Hodgson	1996-1998
Nancy Richardson	1998-2000
Anne Mason	2000-2003
Dr. Ann Croll	2003-2005
Dr. Monique Lussier	2005-2007
Constance Johnson	2007-2009
Louise McGoey	2009-2011

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## CHAPTER ONE

# The Early Years

As it approached its hundredth anniversary in 2011, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services provided care and a wide range of services to 6,123 children and some 45,000 families annually. To carry out its mission it operated eleven programs in six locations across a city whose population was fast approaching one million. Contrast this with the situation one hundred years ago when this private, non-profit, multiservice, early learning, child-care, and family support organization was born. In that bygone era, Ottawa was a raw, infant capital and the forerunner of today's Andrew Fleck Child Care Services was but a small day nursery that occupied two rooms in Ottawa's Settlement House.

When Flora McNeill set up the Ottawa Day Nursery in Settlement House in 1911, the city boasted a population of only 87,062. Steamboats still plied the lower Ottawa River. So did barges laden with sawn lumber, tangible evidence of the prominent role played by the wood-products industry in the city's economy. In fact, visual reminders of the industry were everywhere, most notably on the Chaudière Islands, where piles of lumber, mountains of yellow sawdust, and whining sawmills dominated the landscape.



Ottawa had made great progress from the days in the 1840s and 1850s when it was seen "as a wild and turbulent village, full of lumbermen, Irishmen, and liquor." British poet Rupert Brooke wrote in 1913 that the city possessed "a certain graciousness." Long gone was the rowdiness and raunchiness of earlier days. Great importance was now attached to family, religion, and summer cottages in the Gatineau. There was skating at Rideau Hall, the residence of the always British governor general; a Ferris wheel at the Central Canada Exhibition; and automobiles that proceeded at a stately pace along city streets. Under construction was the impressive Château Laurier Hotel, built in the French-Gothic style intended to evoke the grandeur of the Loire Valley's old chateaus. Across the street was the newly opened train station, whose massive columns, pilasters, domes, and arches made it a

*J.R. Booth of the Canadian Atlantic Railway, 1900-1925 National Archives of Canada / C-046480*



THE OTTAWA DAY NURSERY  
urgently needs \$8000  
To FEED, CLOTHE AND  
CARE FOR THE CHILDREN  
OF WORKING MOTHERS  
IN THIS CITY

Excerpt from the movie  
*"An Appeal for"* made  
in 1932 and shown in 6  
theaters



Grace Mather, Directrice 1915-1947

Beaux Arts landmark. The charming, well-spoken Wilfrid Laurier had been the Liberal prime minister since 1896, but in the controversial election of 1911 he would be defeated by the serious, somewhat dour Robert Borden, the leader of the Conservative Party.

Ottawa may have been assuming a certain graciousness, but it was also developing some of the problems that often accompany rapid growth. Between 1901 and 1911 it added some 30,000 people to its population. Part of this rise could be attributed to the federal civil service, which increased almost threefold in size during this decade in response to Canada's phenomenal expansion at the time.

Thanks to a huge surge in immigration, cities from Montreal westward were booming and none more so than those in the West. Thousands of new settlers arrived in Canada's ports and from the United States eager to obtain homestead land on the prairies. The rapid, unplanned growth of Canadian cities in these heady decades came at a price, however: grimy cities, worsening living conditions for the urban poor, and skyrocketing land prices,

particularly in the downtown areas of the larger urban centres.

Newly arrived immigrants were conspicuous among the poor in Canada's cities. Having escaped political and religious persecution, grinding poverty, repressive class distinctions, and lack of economic opportunity in their home countries, they now faced discrimination, exploitation, and often squalor in cities such as Toronto. Here, landlords often turned their properties into high-density, low-maintenance housing for the hordes of newcomers. Ottawa was not immune to such developments. Lack of housing accommodation for the poor, high rents, and "no children wanted" restrictions exacerbated the plight of many of the clients served by the Ottawa Day Nursery – often impecunious young mothers. In 1925, for example, the Nursery's Mrs. Mather (Grace) reported that, at 7 a.m. one morning, the agency's nurse arrived to find a mother shivering in the cold with a baby in her arms. The nurse asked, "Why are you here so early?" The sobbing mother replied that her child was sick and that it had cried all night. She was afraid to meet the other roomers in the morning, so had crept away before they were up.

In the early years of the twentieth century there was no mother's allowance and no unemployment insurance. Moreover, there were few agencies or organizations to assist either immigrants or the residents of underprivileged neighbourhoods, which were often overlapping groups. Churches and individual good Samaritans tried to help, along with the YMCA/YWCA, which, since its founding in late nineteenth-century in England, offered temporary housing, English classes, and a variety of sporting and mentoring activities. Once the settlement house movement came to Canada, however, the situation improved dramatically.

The progressive, reformist settlement house movement began in London in 1884 with the



founding of Toynbee Hall, an agency for the poor. From England the movement soon spread to the United States, where Hull House was established in Chicago in 1889. Hull House and the other houses spawned by this movement were specifically designed to improve the lives of the urban poor by providing them with a wide range of services related to vocational education and recreation. They were not charitable institutions, but showplaces of democracy and social equality with roots in the Progressive movement. At the height of their influence – from the 1880s to the 1930s – there were approximately four hundred such houses in the United States.

Settlement house workers – usually well-educated, middle-class, young women – lived in these houses, which were located in areas populated by poor, often recently arrived immigrants. This proximity enabled settlement house workers to relate to the poor as neighbours and personal friends, rather than as merely well-meaning benefactors.

The establishment of the settlement house movement in Canada can be traced to 1902, when Libby Carson, an American settlement worker, and her Montreal-born friend Mary Bell founded Evangelia (1902-22) in Toronto. The first city in English Canada to become heavily industrialized, Toronto eventually became home to six settlement houses, half the total in Canada.

The most influential period in Canada's settlement house movement, 1900 to 1914, coincided with a period of heavy immigration. Thanks largely to the aggressive immigration policy pursued by Laurier's government, newcomers, many from Central and Eastern Europe, poured into Canada in these years. In 1913, the peak immigration year, some 400,870 people arrived, at a time when Canada's population was only 7,632,000. In Ottawa, many of these newly arrived immigrants settled in Lower Town, no doubt because of the availability of affordable

housing. Among them were increasing numbers of Jews escaping from Russian pogroms and discrimination in the Pale of Settlement, where Jews were effectively excluded from public service, the professions, and employment in attractive industries. For Jewish newcomers the Byward Market provided inexpensive housing as well as goods for peddling – a traditional Jewish occupation.

When they arrived, many of the men knew nothing about vegetables, fruit, rags, or horses, but for them, claims writer Norman Levine in *Canada Made Me*, it was a question of survival. Levine, who grew up on Lower Town's Murray Street in the 1920s and 1930s, describes a street that was much like the adjoining ones – a street of "dull shabby boxes with wooden verandas" and walls so thin that you could hear every word your neighbour said. He recalls the dung yards that were frozen hard in the winter, the "warm-smelling stables," and the washing lines.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT MOTION PICTURE BUREAU  
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE  
**DELIVERY RECEIPT**  
Ottawa, 14. 1. 38 19

Order No. 2459  
Consignee: The Ottawa Day Nursery,  
87 Albert Street,  
Ottawa.

Number of Packages 1 How shipped Called for Charges

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLES	VALUE
28 ft.	Negative	
28 ft.	Positive Motion Picture Film	
	Six Trailers " Day Nursery Campaign "	
	Rideau Theatre	
	Center "	
	Regent "	
	Capitol "	
	Imperial "	
	Avalon "	
TOTAL		

Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_ FOR CONSIGNEE

DUPLICATE—TO BE RETAINED BY CONSIGNEE



Ottawa's Settlement House was located at 318 Rideau Street, close to the Byward Market and not far from Murray Street. It was established in 1909 by Mary Bell and a group of public-spirited citizens headed by Mr. Justice Walter Cassels. The men's committee included E.R. McNeil, H.S. Southam, and W.D. Dwyer. Lady Davies, Mrs. Walter Cassels, Mrs. Gilbert Allan, Miss Nina Hartley Gibson, Mrs. G.S. Maunsell, Mrs. H.S. Southam, and Mrs. C.A. Eliot made up the ladies' committee.

There were only four permanent staff members, and they lived in the residence and were assisted by volunteers. The head resident was Ottawa-born Flora McNeill, who had been educated at a local school and at Macdonald College in St. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec, as well as at the Bible Training School in Northfield, Massachusetts. Before coming to Ottawa's Settlement House, she had done social service work in Toronto and Montreal.

The scope of services provided at Settlement House was impressive: It included child care, weekly classes in cooking and sewing for both mothers and children, religious classes and services, self-governed boys' clubs that promoted sport, playground activities, problem solving, and excursions to the country. Settlement House was supported by members' fees and club dues, but principally by private subscriptions. It never made a public appeal for funds, believing that,

by so doing, "the position and influence of Settlement House would be affected." This thinking prevailed until the Day Nursery became a separate institution

Not surprisingly, many immigrant mothers sought assistance from Settlement House, which set out to provide "considerable instruction, recreation, and assistance for mothers and children of the neighbourhood." In fact, the influx of non-traditional immigrants (newcomers from places other than Britain, the United States, and Northern Europe) in these years was so large that, in its 1917 annual report, the Nursery drew attention to the substantial "foreign

element" among its clients – Armenians, Romanians, Italians, Jews, and Poles.

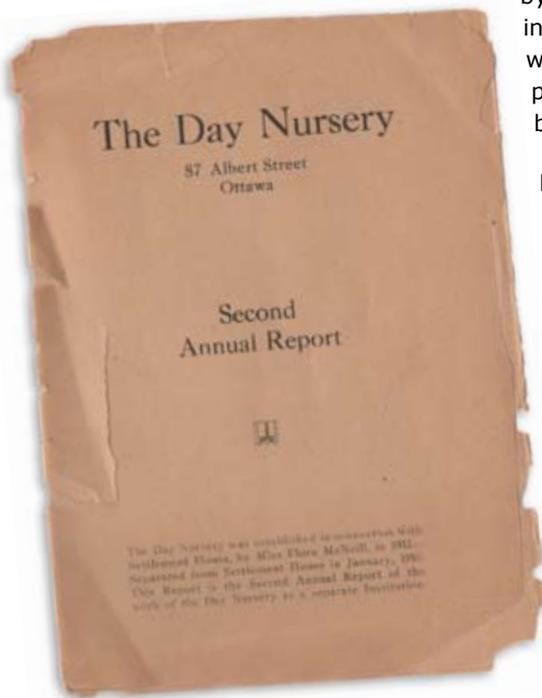
The plight of some of the immigrant women living in its immediate neighbourhood was of real

concern to the Nursery, which noted in this same report, "Sometimes a woman may be living in one room, where there is little or no heat, and she has no means of sewing or doing her necessary laundry work. Once a week women so situated come to the Nursery and are allowed to use the laundry facilities, and, incidentally, have a warm and cozy place for a little social chat." To supplement this aid to its adult clients, the Day Nursery launched a sewing club to help them "in habits of neatness." The mothers were encouraged not only to make children's clothes but to keep "buttons sewn in place."

The Day Nursery itself – its formal name was the Day Nursery Club – was established on November 7, 1911, to provide day care for the children of working mothers who sought assistance from Settlement House. While the mothers were at work, it sought primarily to provide a healthy physical environment for their children. At this juncture, it, like other nurseries across the country, did not see its role as also supporting the children's social, emotional, and intellectual development. And, as was the case with other Canadian day nurseries, its organizers received no directives whatsoever from a municipal or provincial government. The only state intervention took the form of municipal fire regulations. This independence would continue until 1942, when the Dominion-Provincial Day Nurseries Agreement was implemented.

The Nursery occupied two rooms, where rows of clothes baskets served as cribs for the infants. An employment bureau that furnished domestic day work for the mothers (cleaning offices, doing sewing or other domestic tasks in private homes) supplemented the Nursery's child-care services. To be eligible for care for their children at the Nursery, the women had to be Ottawa residents who had been forced into the workforce to augment the family income. This need could arise because the marriage had broken down, the mother was unmarried or widowed, or the father's salary was inadequate to meet the family's needs. Even if these conditions did not apply, however, a short-term placement for a child could be arranged if a mother was in hospital. Whatever the reason behind the need for care, the children had to be between the ages of one and seven. Fees for the children were set at 10 cents a day per child, and five cents a day for each additional child in the family. No fee was charged if the situation warranted it.

By 1913 the two rooms in Settlement House had become so crowded that the Nursery was forced to move, relocating to 459 Besserer Street. In this new location, a large playroom, dining room, and yard supplied accommodation for twenty-



Annual Report 1917

five to thirty children, who were looked after from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. by a kindly matron, Mrs. Richardson, and her staff.

The work at Settlement House continued in this fashion until the beginning of 1916, when the participants at the annual meeting of Settlement House and the Day Nursery Club unanimously decided to separate the Nursery from Settlement House. Neither the meeting's minutes nor the 1916 annual report provide any explanation for the split, but in all likelihood differences in views about funding were the reason. During the First World War, as more women began to enter the workforce, the need for additional day care increased. In 1916 the average number of children using the Nursery rose by 233. With a heavier work load, the Nursery required additional funding, but Settlement House refused to accept any government monies. The prospect of receiving a grant from the city must therefore have appealed to the Nursery. In any event, immediately following the split, it received a city grant of \$400. That figure would rise over the years.

At that landmark meeting, held on January 17, 1916, Mrs. A.W. Fleck was elected president of the Committee of Management of both Settlement House and the Nursery. The decision was made to hold monthly meetings of the Nursery on the first Tuesday of each month and to change the name of the child-care branch of Settlement House simply to "Day Nursery." With its establishment as a separate institution, the Nursery moved, on February 1, 1916, to a rented house at 87 Albert Street. The monthly rent of \$40 was raised to \$106.66 after changes were made to the building. In this move, Mrs. Fleck, Mrs. J.W. Robertson, and Mrs. Allan Mather played leading roles. They were assisted by a paid staff, headed by the new superintendent Miss Elizabeth Anderson, a graduate of the Royal Alexandria Hospital in Fergus, Ontario.

That same month also saw the Nursery mail out circulars inviting annual subscriptions. The monies obtained from these subscriptions would be supplemented by fees contributed by members of a Day Nursery Club. Initially there were fifty-two club members who each gave \$12. Board members each contributed \$60.

Gertrude Fleck would play a pivotal role in the life of the Day Nursery. A woman whose Karsh photo reveals a face with character and kind-looking eyes, she devoted much of her time to good works in the community, all the while shunning publicity. Born into a wealthy Ottawa family in 1856, she was the eldest of five daughters



of John Rudolphus Booth, the Ottawa lumber baron and entrepreneur who had amassed the largest timber limits in Canada and had become the biggest manufacturer of dressed timber for both the American and British markets. Gertrude was educated at Berthierville, Quebec, and at Miss Harmon's private school in Ottawa. When she was twenty-five, she married Andrew W. Fleck, an Ottawa businessman, and they had four children – two boys and two girls. A staunch Presbyterian, she was active in the Canadian Red Cross and the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire. In 1936 she was made a Commander (Sister) of St. John of Jerusalem, a chivalric, charitable order with a worldwide mission to "prevent and relieve sickness and injury, and to act to enhance the health and well-being of people of all races and creeds anywhere in the world." As a good friend of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, Gertrude Fleck sometimes gave dinner parties which he attended, along with members of his Cabinet. When her father incorporated his Ottawa Valley business in 1921, he appointed Gertrude to its board of directors. At the time of his death, four years later, she was his only surviving heir. Although she may not have made a significant contribution to the family business, she was of huge importance to the Day Nursery.

*Gertrude Fleck, photographed by Yousuf Karsh*

At the first meeting of the Day Nursery Committee on January 17, several members were present who would figure prominently in the work of the committee over the years. Besides Mrs. Fleck, they included Mrs. Allan Gilmour Mather, Mrs. J.W. Robertson, Mrs. Llewellyn Bate, Mrs.

Frank P. Bronson, and Mrs. B.M. Armstrong. Mrs. Bronson, a member of the prominent lumbering family, was elected as secretary and Mrs. J.W. Robertson as treasurer.

Among these women, the English-born Grace Mather deserves special attention. She took over the management of the Nursery in 1915 after Elizabeth Anderson resigned for health reasons. A well-to-do Rockcliffe resident, Mrs. Mather supervised and coordinated the staff and was active in all the other Nursery services: the clinics, the dispensing of relief, and the employment bureau. In her many roles, Mrs. Mather proved to be a woman of "unflinching determination," unflinching industry, and "cheerful faith." Commenting on her contribution to the nursery that the Ottawa Day Nursery established at the Central Canada Exhibition in 1923, and which she supervised (see below), Mr. Burnett, the welfare supervisor of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, said, "In the course of my work I have seen many scores of Day Nurseries, but never one so efficiently run, down to the smallest detail, as was the Nursery over which you presided." His sentiments were echoed by the Ottawa Journal, whose comments on the work done by Mrs. Mather were also mentioned in the Day Nursery's 1923-24 annual report. According to the newspaper: "Most of the success of the Day Nursery was due to the splendid work done by Mrs. Allan Mather, who worked from early morning until midnight each day. She was assisted by a staff of eight nurses and the work they accomplished was amazing, not only in the amount but in the careful and scientific way they handled the infants and children entrusted in their care."

At subsequent meetings of the Day Nursery Committee, three new committees were appointed, one each for sewing, buying, and advice. The sewing committee would contribute enormously to the smooth running of the Nursery. Not only did it provide new items of clothing for the children and new drapes and other necessities for the building but it also raised funds at an annual money shower. In contrast to this committee, the Advisory Committee included only men (often relatives of Day Nursery Committee members) – Andrew W. Fleck, Dr. J.W. Robertson, Gerald H. Brown, and Wentworth Greene – and was appointed in response to an appallingly high rate of mortality among babies. At this time all children, whether cared for at home or in nurseries, faced a high risk of death from illness and disease. The greatest threat to children, particularly infants, in nurseries, was posed by outbreaks of such contagious diseases as measles, influenza, scarlet fever, polio, and mumps.

Before long, the Day Nursery Committee recruited members for the Committee of Management, as it was known in January 1917, and subsequently as the Board of Management. Among those who agreed to join were Mrs. Topley, Mrs. Gerald Brown, Mrs. J.A.D. Holbrook, Mrs. W.H. Rowley, Mrs. C. Jackson Booth (Gertrude Fleck's sister-in-law), Mrs. C.H. Thorburn, Mrs. William Scott, and Mrs. A. J. (Lillian) Freiman. Anyone familiar with Ottawa's history will instantly recognize these names as those of the city's establishment families, whose ranks boasted doctors, ministers of religion, merchants, and lawyers. Often these women were responsible for the management of large households, but because their homes were well staffed they could afford to devote considerable time to community service.

This volunteer work provided these women with an outlet for their energy, but it also allowed them to observe the dictate common in their social circle that women not take on paid work. Many of the women attended St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, the first church built in Ottawa. It was there, no doubt, that they absorbed the basic tenets of Scottish Presbyterianism, which emphasized the duty of all Christians to manifest God's will in everything they did. Not surprisingly, this mission translated into a divine calling to work – yet one more demonstration of the Protestant work ethic. Along with this ethic went the concept of stewardship, the belief that individuals should use their talents and whatever wealth they had to benefit their fellow brothers and sisters. Although many of its early members were Presbyterian, the Nursery chose to be nondenominational. As a result, it received support from both the Protestant community and Catholic and Jewish groups. In addition to their role as the wives of well-off, respected men, a few of these women were also prominent in their own right.

One of these distinguished women was Lillian Freiman, who was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1934. She was also known as Ottawa's Jewish Nightingale because of her selfless devotion to helping others less fortunate than herself. The daughter of Moses Bilsky, a leader in the Jewish community, and the wife of wealthy department store magnate A.J. Freiman, Lillian not only played an important role in the life of the Day Nursery but also helped to establish a home-training centre for domestic workers and the Jeanne d'Arc Institute, then a residence for young girls and women. In addition, she worked as the city's emergency administrator during the flu pandemic of 1918 and later became the only woman on the Dominion Poppy Committee. In 1936 she was presented with the



*Lillian Freiman,  
President – 1929 - 1932  
She was active on the  
Board and other committees  
from the beginning  
up till her death in 1940.*

Vimy Medal for her devoted work on behalf of First World War veterans.

If there is one constant in the history of the Andrew Fleck Child Care Services, it is change. The Centre has always striven to improve its services – and add new ones – to respond to the needs of the community and its families and to meet operational challenges. One major challenge occurred in 1918, when the world-wide influenza pandemic struck Ottawa in late September. At the height of the pandemic, over 10,000 Ottawans were stricken and, during a three-week period, 520 succumbed to influenza and pneumonia.

In an attempt to halt the spread of the virulent virus, Mayor Harold Fisher banned public meetings, closed the city's schools, churches, pool halls, theatres, and laundries, and instructed stores and offices to shut their doors at four o'clock. So serious was the shortage of hospital beds and so desperate the need for nursing care that George Foster, Canada's acting prime minister, asked the deputy minister of the Department of Justice that October to appeal to his female clerks to volunteer a few days of home nursing.

Among the privately run institutions that came to the rescue was the Ottawa Day Nursery, which was converted into a hospital for a month during the pandemic. During this time, it cared for thirty-eight child patients and eight healthy children, and it had only two fatalities. Despite the Nursery being closed for a month, its year-end report noted that 812 women had been on its register in 1918, an increase of 117 over the previous year. And the report continued with evident pride and gratification: "We had during the year 9,976 children and the earnings of the mothers for 1918 [were] \$9,476.00, an increase of \$83.10 over 1917. The money paid by the mothers for the care of their children was \$750.35, an increase of \$144.74 over last year."

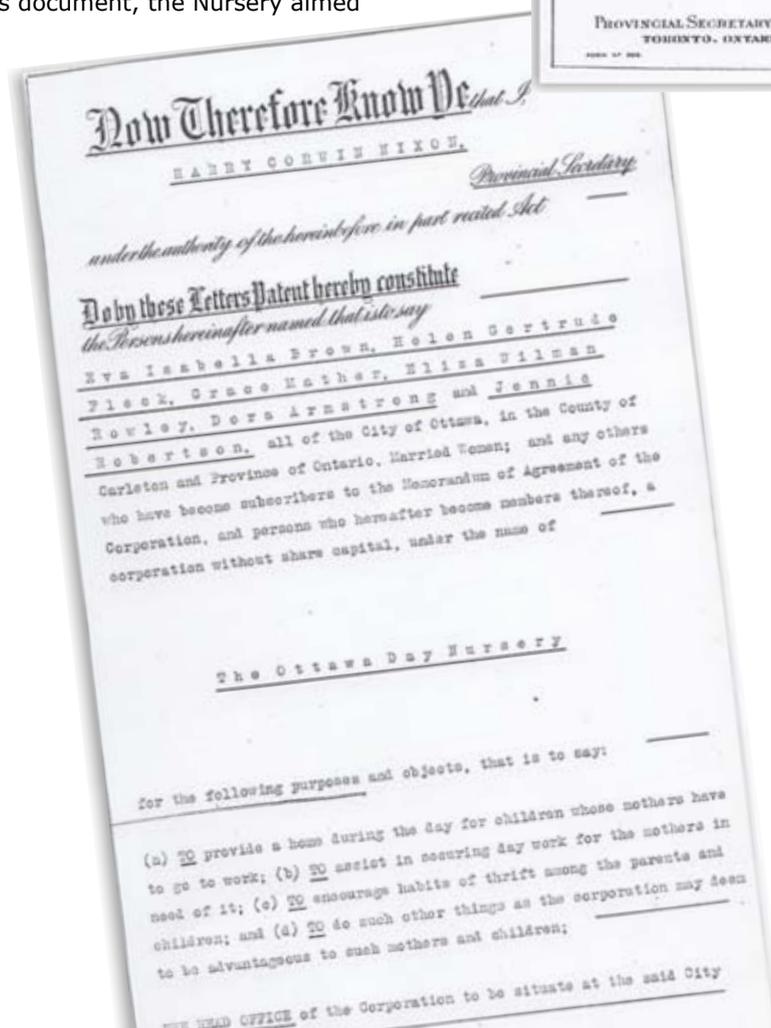
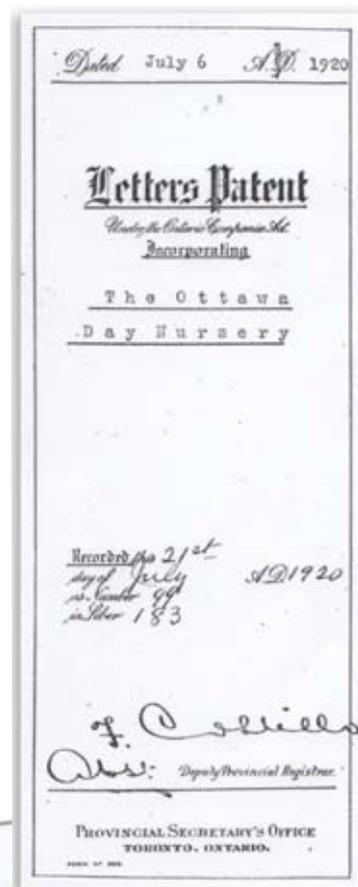


The year 1920 inaugurated a decade of social, cultural, and artistic upheaval. The growing sense of Canadian nationalism gave prominence to the artists of the Group of Seven and led to the birth of new magazines, among them Maclean's. Jazz flourished, the flapper came to symbolize modern womanhood, and, in 1929, the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council ruled that women were indeed "qualified persons" and therefore eligible for appointment to the Canadian Senate. But the state of the Canadian economy left a great deal to be desired. While some Canadians indulged in conspicuous consumption, others found it difficult, if not

impossible, to eke out a living – especially in the years 1921 to 1923, when Canada suffered a recession triggered by the closing of factories that had made war weaponry. The Ottawa Day Nursery was not immune to the recession's impact. Lack of work during the winter of 1922–23 posed such a serious problem that the agency engaged a woman to investigate cases of need and to report them to Mrs. Mather.

For Ottawa, the 1920s were also years of political and social change – Mackenzie King's Liberals defeated Arthur Meighen's Conservatives in 1921, and the United Church of Canada was founded in 1925, when the Methodist, Congregationalist, and many Presbyterian churches decided to merge. Homes could still be found in the Byward Market, but lumber no longer dominated the city's economy. The automobile continued to stir up controversy, and the Ottawa Football Club won the Grey Cup in both 1925 and 1926.

While Canada's national capital was expanding sedately in the 1920s, the Ottawa Day Nursery was growing. In 1920, when Ottawa's Capitol Theatre opened, the Nursery was incorporated in the Province of Ontario. On the incorporation document, the following names appear: Eva Isabella Brown, Helen Gertrude Fleck, Grace Mather, Eliza Wilmand Rowley, Dora Armstrong, and Jennie Robertson – all from the City of Ottawa and all married women. As spelled out in this document, the Nursery aimed



"to provide a home during the day for children whose mothers have gone to work; to assist in securing day work for the mothers in need of it; to encourage habits of thrift among the parents and children; and to do such other things as the corporation may deem to be advantageous to such mothers and children."

Caring for the children of these working mothers was tiring. Maizie Hill, a caregiver, later recalled that she would lie down in the afternoon with the infants to "have a sleep, because I'd be exhausted running after them ... because there would be ten or fifteen of the under-two-year-olds running around." According to Donna Varga, an authority on day care in Canada, this kind of exhaustion resulted not only from the high ratio of children to staff members but also from the prevalent idea that children were competent beings. As such, they were responsible for creating their own entertainment. Children knew that they could approach an adult for help, but the adult did not direct their play. In the Nursery, the children had a piano, books, and puzzles to entertain themselves.

As a private, non-profit organization, the Ottawa Day Nursery was primarily concerned with maintaining the traditional view of the family – despite the immense changes that were occurring within society in the role of women. This objective was made abundantly clear in the 1917 annual report, which stated: "On reviewing the work of the year, in this brief report, one is impressed with the importance of this work in that it enables the mother to have a safe refuge for her child while she is at work away from the home, and also by being able to have her child with her at night and on Sunday she is able to keep her home together."

The Nursery's success in bridging the gap between the emerging "new woman" and the traditional family was undoubtedly one of its major achievements. If it is judged on the basis of its ability to care for children and to furnish employment for their mothers, the Nursery met with remarkable success during its second decade. In 1920 it cared for a total of 7,465 children, with an average daily attendance of twenty. That same year it provided mothers with 14,414 days of work, allowing them to earn collectively \$27,819. Eight years later the Nursery cared for 12,346 children, with an average of forty-three per day, and furnished mothers with 13,150 days of work, enabling them to earn collectively \$26,302. In caring for its young charges, the Nursery set great store by nourishing food, cleanliness, fresh air, medical attention when warranted, and keeping the children amused.

Even in the 1930s during the Great Depression, the Nursery managed to find employment for the mothers, although with considerable difficulty. At the onset of the Depression in 1929–30, the Nursery underscored this challenge when it stressed the importance of providing work for the mothers who, without this opportunity, would have to appeal to the municipal government for the bare necessities of life. Contending that work for pay enabled mothers to retain their self-respect and prevented the "pauperization" of their families, the Nursery repeatedly urged the city to find and create work for "the many unemployed."

Hitherto, "indigence, not unemployment," had been "the chief criterion for receiving public assistance." From time to time the city provided relief works, but unemployment assistance, or at least its delivery, was considered to be the responsibility of private agencies such as the Ottawa Welfare Bureau. Not until 1933, did the situation change. In that year the Public Welfare Department was organized and the burden of providing relief to the unemployed was transferred to it.

Ottawa, as the seat of the federal government, did not experience the full brunt of the Depression, which, in 1933, saw a quarter of Canada's labour force unemployed. Nevertheless, unemployment did rise in the city, especially after 1932 when the federal building program ground to a halt. As result, the Nursery's task of finding work for its clients took on a new sense of urgency. Job loss in Ottawa was at its worst between 1932 and 1935, particularly at the bottom rungs of society concentrated in Lower Town and the Chaudière. In 1931–32, when there was a "marked decrease in the number of days work" provided for mothers, the Nursery pleaded with Ottawa's housewives to create more domestic service jobs – "to make a small sacrifice so that half a day a week or even one day a month more work could reduce the need for direct relief." That same year the Nursery also spent about \$500 in direct relief to its client families. The Civil Service Federation of Canada supplied \$400, and the balance came from the Nursery's own Relief Fund. In addition, the Nursery provided free meals, clothing, and drugs – a not uncommon service even in non-depression years.

The Nursery also distributed cheer at Christmas by delivering Christmas baskets to the homes of needy families. From its location on Albert Street, the agency dispatched Santa Claus in a Model T Ford loaded down with hampers and Christmas trees. In 1931, food supplies to meet a family's need for a week, as well as toys,



*Maizie Hill with Elenor Terrio at the AFCCS 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary – September 1992*



clothing, apples, oranges, books, games, and “any little special comfort that was needed by a particular family,” were packed into a basket. This bonus came in addition to the annual Christmas party organized for both mothers and their children.



From the time that it became a separate institution, the Nursery realized that members’ dues, public subscriptions, clients’ fees, and an annual grant from the city would not provide all the funding necessary for its operation. In November 1916, therefore, it staged its first “pound party,” to which members and interested friends contributed a pound of something: vegetables, groceries, and the like as well as cash donations. The party became an annual event, with the proceeds supplemented by rummage-sale earnings and, in the summer of 1917, by \$400 raised by the sale of flowers at a stall in the Byward Market. A tea house in Rockcliffe (1920–21) was another brief money-maker. Acting as an unofficial fundraiser, Mrs. Mather wrote to the Westboro Presbyterian Ladies Aid Society, calling attention to a Three-Day Penny Hunt to be held from November 25 to 27, 1919. “Organizations such as yours are always interested in paternal work – and we know of no cause more worthy of assistance than this one.” Then, after describing the Nursery’s mandate, she concluded, “Any

member of your Organization can surely afford to set aside 1 cent a day to help this cause.”

As an organization deeply embedded in the community, the Nursery received donations, be it funds or gifts in kind, from many sources – from private individuals, companies, and public bodies. One of the private individuals was Her Excellency, the Viscountess of Tunis, wife of the governor general. In 1951 Lady Alexander gave an electric train set. That same year Lieutenant K. Weatherly of Number 2 Station, Ottawa Fire Department, donated twenty-seven musical instruments. Every donation was dutifully noted and acknowledged by a letter of appreciation. Not even a jar of jam was left unrecorded. One donation in 1919, for example, included two packages of corn starch, fifteen pounds of rice, thirty pounds of butter, six coats, two dresses, and a dog!

The largest source of revenue by far, however, was money raised by public fundraising campaigns. As early as 1919 the need for such a campaign was obvious, given the increasing demands made on the Nursery and its parlous financial state. That year a well organized campaign, conducted between November 25 and 27, set a goal of \$6,000. To everybody’s delight, the campaign netted \$10,000, one-tenth of which was contributed by the city. In 1927 the annual campaign netted \$8,000, no doubt greatly assisted by a large Easter Offering Campaign

*Santa Claus in a Model T Ford loaded with hampers and Christmas trees.*



April 1927 Easter Campaign

ad that enjoined newspaper readers to send their contributions to 87 Albert Street between April 12 and 14. A contribution was hailed as "an Investment Which Neither Moth Nor Rust Shall Corrupt, Nor Thieves Break Through and Steal." From 1923 until 1933 these campaigns were staged annually. By that time, \$10,000 was required each year to operate the Nursery and, when it wasn't raised in an annual campaign, the city made up the difference. An exception to this practice occurred in 1933. That year the United Children's campaign provided the bulk of the Nursery's funding.

During the Great Depression, funds supplied by the Community Chests (later known as the United Way) became crucial. Established in 1933 by assorted voluntary agencies and the Ottawa Welfare Bureau, this organization funded local agencies that sprang up to meet the needs of the slightly over 174,000 people resident in Ottawa. It soon provided the major part of the Nursery's operating costs. In years when the Community Chests failed to reach its campaign objectives, however, it provided less funding to the agencies it served. That happened in 1938, when the decrease in funding was regarded as "one of the most menacing obstacles" that the Nursery had to face that year. Forced to reduce its budget and to resort to cost-cutting, the Nursery transferred some of the older children onto relief. That recourse was taken only when it resulted in no hardship on the child's home. Although the children were bitterly disappointed at not being able to come to the Nursery, their places were filled by "tiny tots" who became the recipients of extra care and attention.



In October 1916, during its first year of operation as a separate institution, the Nursery established a kindergarten. Presiding over it was Dorothy Stevenson, who had been given six weeks' training in elementary kindergarten work the previous spring. Each morning a member from the Day Nursery Club volunteered for an hour to help amuse, teach, and entertain the youngsters. By the late 1930s a member of the May Court Club, a women's service club, managed the kindergarten, which held classes from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. three days a week. Two or three May Court members looked after the entertainment for the children.

In response to needs in the community it served, the Nursery decided in the early 1920s to provide free medical clinics for its clients. As Dr. Flegg, the Nursery physician, noted, few of the clients it served could afford to buy drugs. Moreover, most of them had neither the knowledge nor the means for following medical advice at home. Three clinics – one for ear, nose, and throat, one for sick children, and one for blood and nerve conditions (it treated syphilis) – were opened in 1923. They were conducted in a large front room of the Nursery, which was furnished and equipped by the Red Cross. This organization "[viewed] with sympathy [the Nursery's] efforts for the betterment of health in the community." Doctors, some of whom were specialists, provided their services free of charge.

The blood and nerve clinic, which owed much to the devoted service of Dr. George Fenton, operated for twenty-five years and was discontinued only when all clinic work was centralized in Ottawa's hospitals. Even before it was closed, however, the clinic was providing far fewer treatments than it had previously. Reporting on figures for 1946, Dr. Fenton wrote: "This lessening is noticed in other clinics throughout Canada, and probably is evidence of the diminution of incidence and better control of the disease. In contrast to the almost epidemic wave that struck us after the first German war is a most startling fact."

Another well-patronized clinic was the eye clinic organized and funded by the local Lions Club, the service club associated with the Nursery. Established in early February 1937, this clinic proved so popular that there was a huge waiting list. By the end of May that year, when it closed, more than one hundred pairs of free glasses had been distributed. Despite the clinic's popularity, however, the Lions Club decided not to reopen it in the autumn. In the years that they operated,

# Andrew W. Fleck: Businessman and Philanthropist

By Valerie Knowles

It's not often that one has the means to donate a brand new building to a favourite charity. Nevertheless, in 1931, Gertrude Fleck announced that she planned to do just that. To honour the memory of her late husband Andrew she revealed that she would finance the construction of new headquarters for the Ottawa Day Nursery, a public day nursery with which the Flecks had long been associated.

Thanks to this generosity the Nursery was able to realize a longstanding dream. In 1932, it moved out of an aging house at 87 Albert Street that it had occupied for years and into a commodious, architect-designed building at 195 George Street.

Still, it was not until decades later that the name Andrew Fleck, hitherto little known outside Ottawa establishment circles, was immortalized. This occurred in 1970, when the Nursery renamed itself The Andrew Fleck Child Care Centre.

Today, it is commonplace for wealthy benefactors to have buildings and institutions named after them, but it is highly unlikely that modest, unassuming Andrew Fleck would have subscribed to such a practice. If there is one thing the Free Mason shunned it was publicity in relation to his benevolence. As *The Ottawa Journal* quaintly expressed it, "He was a public benefactor, although as far as he was able to exercise control, his benefactions were always carried on in a manner that drew as little public attention as possible."



In this respect, Andrew Fleck resembled his public-spirited wife. Until she died in 1941, wealthy, dignified Gertrude Fleck steadfastly opposed newspaper stories about her family and her philanthropic work.

Her husband, who died in 1924, was not a native Ottawan. Andrew Walker Fleck was born on October 17, 1848 in Montreal, the son of a wealthy businessman, Alexander Fleck, and Lillias Walker. In 1869, while still a youth, the junior Fleck moved to Ottawa, where he initially worked for an iron foundry established by his father on Wellington Street.

Fleck spent only a few years in the foundry's employ, however, before entering the lumbering business. His first job in the lumber trade was with the firm of Alanson H. Baldwin, an American who had established a big-time lumbering operation after arriving in Ottawa in the 1850s. Fleck subsequently went to work for J.R. Booth (profiled in an earlier *Capital Lives* piece), who, by the 1890s, was regarded as the Ottawa Valley's premier lumberman. In this phase of his career, Andrew Fleck was chiefly involved with the administration of mills in the Ottawa Valley's Madawaska district.

After helping to manage mills for Booth, Fleck turned his attention to the management of the Canada Atlantic Railway, a creation of the lumber baron, who had helped to form and finance it in 1879. For 21 years Andrew Fleck served as secretary-treasurer of the 394-mile road that linked Ottawa with railways in Vermont and Ottawa with Depot Harbour on Georgian Bay, where Booth operated a fleet of grain ships.

While working for the Canada Atlantic Railway, Fleck became actively involved in the construction of another Booth road, the Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound Railway. Built between 1892 and 1896, it was later merged with the CAR, which Booth sold to the Grand Trunk Railway in 1904.

Mr. Andrew Fleck

all three clinics proved to be a great boon to mothers, who found it difficult to find either the time or the money to obtain treatment at the city's two hospitals. Summing up the good done by the clinics, the 1922-23 report observed: "It would be difficult in any printed report to convey an adequate estimate of the comfort and lasting benefit brought within reach of the mothers and children through the clinics. One has to see the joy on the faces of mothers when they or their little ones have been relieved from pain."

In 1923, at the request of the Kiwanis Club, which provided the funding, the Day Nursery set up a nursery in a large upstairs room in the Grandstand Building at Lansdowne Park (later it would occupy space in the Horticulture Building). During the week-long summer exhibition each year, this off-site nursery provided a welcome reprieve for mothers who wanted to stroll through the exhibition in comfort. As one overjoyed mother observed, it was the first time in three years she had been free to enjoy a holiday with her husband. In the summer of 1923 the Nursery provided care for 2,083 youngsters – a number that rose steadily over the twenty years that it offered this service at the exhibition, with a peak attendance during one week of 6,000. In the summer of 1927 the Nursery was tempted to abandon the idea of operating a nursery at the fair, but an urgent appeal from its directors induced a change of mind. What sealed the Nursery's decision was the directors' offer to finance the undertaking and provide good accommodation.

In the late 1930s, efforts were made to find out whether a second day nursery was needed in the west end of the city. These inquiries culminated in an arrangement made with one of the Well Babies Clinics to open a west-end nursery over the summer of 1939. It was then discontinued, however, because of insufficient interest.

Soon after the Nursery became a separate institution, it realized that accommodation was a problem. There was little playground space at 87 Albert Street, and the house had simply not been designed to serve as a child-care centre.

Once management concluded that it was not practicable to renovate the old building, they petitioned City Council in 1921-22 for funds to erect a new one. The request was turned down.

Undeterred, the Nursery launched plans to raise funds for a new building on its own, assisted by the Lions Club. To help in planning the new quarters, Gertrude Fleck, Grace Mather, and Mrs. Currier, all Board of Management members, visited the West End Creche in Toronto. The information they assembled was later used to help plan the Nursery's ideal home – a model building of its kind designed by architect J.A. Ewart. The dream came closer to becoming a reality in 1931, when Mrs. Fleck announced that she would donate a new building and its grounds in memory of her husband, who had died in May 1924.

Andrew Fleck, who was born in Montreal in 1848, had been a businessman and outstanding philanthropist who, like his wife, avoided publicity. While still a youth, he came to Ottawa, where initially he worked for the iron foundry established on Wellington Street by his father, Alexander. After a few years there, he entered the lumber business, working first for the A.H. Baldwin interests and then for his father-in-law,

*Andrew Fleck  
Memorial Building*



*Group care  
children taken  
at the opening  
of the new day  
nursery built in  
1932*



*Individual cots  
designed small  
size*



*Ornaments - statues  
of children*

J.R. Booth. After Booth founded the Canada Atlantic Railway, Fleck served as its secretary-treasurer for twenty-one years. He also became actively involved in the construction of the Ottawa, Arnprior and Parry Sound Railway, another Booth creation.

Fleck would become best known, however, as a "public benefactor," although he tried as much as possible to work behind the scenes. Among the many Ottawa institutions that benefited from his largesse and that he served as a trustee or a board member were the County of Carleton

General Protestant Hospital, the Ottawa Civic Hospital, and the St. John Ambulance Association. He was also, as we have seen, a founding member of the Nursery's Advisory Committee, where he was highly regarded for his sound judgment, kindness, and unfailing sympathy.

The new Nursery building, the "noble monument" to Fleck, was formally opened on July 20, 1932, by Mayor John J. Allen in a ceremony attended by 150 guests. Among those present was the Hon. J.M. Robb, the minister of health for Ontario, who addressed the guests along with the Nursery's acting president, Mrs. C. Jackson Booth, and Dr. George Fenton. Tribute was paid not only to Andrew Fleck, described by Mayor Allen as "a man of broad sympathies and sound judgment," but also to his widow, his daughter, Jean, and his two sons, Gordon and Bryce. The three surviving Fleck children provided the furnishings for the Nursery, which was much more spacious than the one on Albert Street. At 195 George Street the rooms were "furnished in miniature to accommodate even a ten-month old, and [have] tables that small chins and elbows can rest on, chairs that allow tiny toes to touch the floor, and individual cots designed small size. Even the wash basins - and toilets too - are constructed to scale for these wee folk." Three statues of children were installed on either side of the Nursery's main entrance. These ornaments were no doubt inspired by similar figures that adorn the spaces between the nine arches of the Hospital of the Innocents in Florence Italy.

In the days following the ceremony, the Nursery welcomed a flood of guests, including several prominent women who were attending the Imperial Economic Conference, then under way in the capital. All were enthusiastic about what they saw and "spoke of how pleased they

would be to advise their fellow workers in the far distant homes of the practical and concrete work being done at the Day Nursery in Ottawa." With its heightened profile, it's not surprising that the Nursery's annual campaign objective was exceeded by nearly \$600 – despite the poor economic climate. No doubt this surplus was due in part to the creative fundraising efforts of the Day Nursery's board. Early in 1932 the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau (now the National Film Board) produced a movie trailer on "the day nursery campaign," an appeal for funding that was shown in six local movie theatres.



Just as the First World War had caused a profound transformation in Canada and the city of Ottawa, so did the Second World War. The latter, however, had an even greater impact on the country and its national capital.

In Ottawa the war greatly accelerated the city's transition from an urban centre with a decidedly provincial, small-town character to one with the air of a truly national capital. In the interwar years wood-based industries had declined in importance, and the civil service had become the city's principal employer. Then, during the Second World War, the federal government really "came to dominate" the capital. The modern Ottawa we know today – the home of a large bureaucracy and an interventionist federal government, a seat of diplomatic activity, and a city of increasing urban sprawl – dates from the war years. This trend was augmented by the establishment of modern airports, a high-technology sector, a publicly owned mass-transportation system, and the National Capital Commission – the federal Crown Corporation charged with planning and creating a capital that would be a laudable meeting place for all Canadians. The war also spelled the end of the Great Depression and promoted a rapid turnaround in the economy. In Ottawa, business expansion was generated not only by the presence of large numbers of soldiers and the filling of war orders but also by a huge expansion of the federal bureaucracy to run the wartime economy. As a result, by early 1941 Mayor Stanley Lewis was able to declare: "No family headed by an able-bodied and employable male [is] now ... receiving relief in Ottawa."

The improvement in the economy reaped benefits for both the Nursery and its clients. In 1941 the "girls" on its household staff had the 10 percent that had been deducted from their pay cheques during the Depression restored. The financial position of client families also improved. More fathers were now employed, and wives

## The Ottawa Day Nursery

87 Albert Street

On Wednesday, January 14th, the Ottawa Day Nursery launches a three-day campaign for \$8,000 in order that its many activities may be continued in 1931. The unemployment problem last year was serious, but the Nursery Employment Bureau provided 13,222 days work for Ottawa Mothers, thereby bringing \$25,984 to their families.

While these mothers were earning, the Nursery fed and cared for the little ones left in its care, fed the school children, and when necessary, provided clothing. Last year 36,374 meals were served, 5,175 special feedings provided, and an aggregate of 13,475 children were cared for, a large increase over the previous year.

Some 2,000 patients benefitted by free treatments and medical care in the Day Nursery Clinics, and our Doctors rendered free services in the homes of Nursery families when required through more serious illness.

Nearly 100 baskets of Christmas Cheer were distributed by the Nursery.

Total Expenditure 1929 and 1930.....	\$10,829.43
Grant from City .....	2,000.00
Campaign Receipts .....	8,866.69

Lack of employment in 1930 and the consequent distress greatly increased our task. The supply of work fell so far below the demand that much more assistance has been given from our Nursery Funds.

Once more the Day Nursery comes before the generous citizens of Ottawa. This year the need is greater, the demand more urgent, and we appeal to each and all in confident assurance that the need will be met and that we shall be able to carry out our ever increasing task on behalf of the Mothers and their little ones. These little ones of today are the citizens of tomorrow. Will you give them their chance?

Contributions may be sent to Campaign Headquarters at the Canadian National Railways Office, 93 Sparks St., or to the Treasurer, Miss Agnes Macfarlane, 87 Albert Street.

engaged in domestic service experienced more demand for their services. As a result, there was a slight increase in the work provided for mothers in 1940, and a corresponding increase in earnings. The following year mothers were also able to ask \$2 for a day's household work, up 25 cents from the previous year. By then, however, mothers' fees (money paid to the Nursery for child care) had been adjusted upwards. In fact, they were now the highest since the Great Depression, when they had slid to practically nothing.

Nothing illustrates the improvement in household finances better than the distribution of Christmas baskets. In 1933 the nursery delivered 120 baskets to the most needy of its client families, and in 1934, a total of 134 baskets. By 1942, however, the economic picture had improved so dramatically that the Nursery delivered only six baskets to client homes that Christmas. A few specially selected homes received small cash gifts.

## Deeply Mourned



—Photo by Karsn.

Late Mrs. Andrew W. Fleck, one of Ottawa's most respected residents, whose passing occurred today. Among her many fine charitable efforts was the founding of the Ottawa Day Nursery Home, one of the Capital's most beneficial institutions.

## Mrs. Andrew Fleck, Beloved Resident, Called By Death

Daughter of Late J. R. Booth Had Taken Deep And Sincere Interest In Charitable Works.

In the death this morning, at her residence, 500 Wilbrod street, of Mrs. Andrew W. Fleck, daughter of the late J. R. Booth, pioneer Ottawa lumberman, and mother of J. Gordon Fleck, vice-president of J. R. Booth, Ltd., the Capital loses not only one of its oldest and most prominent residents, but a woman who throughout the years had endeared herself to her friends and to the public generally through her deep and sincere interest in the activities of charitable and community enterprises of many kinds.

Mrs. Fleck, who was in her eighty-sixth year, was the founder of the present Day Nursery building at the corner of George street and King Edward avenue. The extensive property and the fine building were presented to the Ottawa Day Nursery Board in 1932 by Mrs. Fleck in memory of her late husband, who from 1916 up to the time of his death had been a devoted friend of the institution.

(Continued on Page 14, Col. 7)

### Tribute to Lives.

The structure, and the important work that it has made possible, stand not only as a tribute to the memory of Mr. Fleck but to the memory of his wife who throughout the years had continued to foster and widen the scope of the organization's activities.

Mrs. Fleck passed away at nine o'clock this morning following a brief illness. Although she had not been in the best of health for some days she had been able to be up and about her home until yesterday noon when she took seriously ill.

Born in Ottawa in 1855, daughter of the late J. R. Booth and Rosamond Cook, Mrs. Fleck was educated at Bertherville, Que and at Miss Harmon's private school in Ottawa. She married the late Andrew W. Fleck in 1881, whose father Alexander Fleck founded the well known Ottawa firm which bears his name.

Throughout her long and active life Mrs. Fleck had two main interests — her family, and her philanthropic and community activities. She was for years active in the work of the Red Cross Society and also in the work of the St. John Ambulance Association.

### Honored By the King.

In 1935 she was honored by the King when the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem was conferred upon her in recognition of her outstanding work with the association. She was interested in many other local organizations also.

But the good that she did and the assistance she rendered throughout the city was not always within the sphere of organized charities. Her private philanthropies were many and touched all walks of life.

Mrs. Fleck's husband died in 1924. She is survived by two sons, J. Gordon Fleck, vice-president of J. R. Booth, Ltd., and Bryce W. Fleck, president of Fleck Brothers, Ltd., Vancouver, one daughter, Mrs. Gregor Barclay of Montreal, wife of Mr. Justice Barclay of the Quebec Court of Appeals.

Her brother, C. Jackson Booth, president of J. R. Booth, Ltd., is the sole surviving member of the family. Another brother, the late J. Fred Booth, died in 1930, and a sister, the late Mrs. J. A. Seybold, passed away in 1918. A daughter, Rose, who married Major the Honorable W. D. Herdridge, K.C. died in 1925.

Mrs. Fleck was a member of the Royal Ottawa Golf Club and of the Country Club.

She was a member of Chalmers United church.

### Funeral on Saturday

The funeral will be held from the family residence, 500 Wilbrod street, at 2.30 o'clock Saturday afternoon, to Beechwood cemetery. The service will be conducted by the Very Rev. Dr. John W. Woodside. Interment will be made in the family plot.

### Tribute From Mrs. Mather

Heartfelt regret at the passing of Mrs. Fleck was expressed by Mrs. A. G. Mather, convener of management of the Ottawa Day Nursery. "She was a wonderful woman," said Mrs. Mather, generous, kind and considerate, and she gave us a nursery which benefits the whole community. It was her wish that it be non-sectarian so that all might be served. Personally I shall miss greatly a friend of many years standing.

ing and to support the development of new nurseries. The province's twenty-eight centres received kudos from child-care advocates, as Ontario alone developed regulations under the agreement. These rules stipulated that each centre had to be staffed by at least ten people, including a full-time cook and a janitor as well as workers trained in "nursery education." The nurseries established under the program also boasted such features as organized play and regular outings.

Although the wartime day nurseries set up under this agreement served only a

The Second World War introduced gas rationing, power dim-outs, an extension of the working day, and a conscription crisis. When this crisis erupted in late 1944, riots broke out in Quebec towns, and the federal Cabinet came close to splitting into two camps: English-speaking and French-speaking ministers. In Terrace, British Columbia, a brigade of soldiers recruited under the National Resources Mobilization Act went on strike when it was directed to impose compulsory service for home defence.

The war also spawned a massive increase in the number of women working outside the home. For a comparatively small number of these women, the Dominion-Provincial Day Nurseries Agreement of 1942 proved a godsend. Initiated by the federal government, it provided for subsidized day care for mothers employed in essential wartime industries. Costs over and above those covered by the parents' fees were shared fifty/fifty by the federal government and the participating provinces, which became responsible for establishing and operating the nurseries. However, only Canada's two most industrialized provinces — Ontario and Quebec — took advantage of the agreement with Ontario establishing a Day Nurseries Branch to administer the fund-

small number of families, they nevertheless had a significant influence on child care in Canada. No longer was the placement of children in day-care nurseries considered an unacceptable option. For the first time ever, group child care was touted as a normal support for Canadian families. One headline of the day read: "Share Their Care, Mrs. Warworker, With Your Able and Willing Helper, the Day Nursery." A film produced by the National Film Board, entitled *Before They Are Six*, extolled the benefits of day nurseries for children and their mothers. In short, the wartime day nurseries made group child care an acceptable and appropriate option for working mothers.

Like its counterparts elsewhere in Canada, the Ottawa Day Nursery was filled to capacity during the war years. Average attendance was high and, on one day alone, the Nursery might look after as many as 115 children. "Overcrowded" was the operative description when the Nursery took care of seventy or eighty children in a day. Often twenty-six of these youngsters would be less than eighteen months old. Occasionally, the demand for the agency's services was so great that some babies had to be doubled up, two to a cot: one at the foot, one at the head.

Often the mothers who placed their children in the Nursery's care were women who needed outside employment because their husbands were on active service. But the Nursery also found itself serving an increasing number of mothers who realized they could leave their children in its care when they were undergoing treatment in hospital or were visiting a patient in hospital. As this service became more widely known, it was increasingly used during the war years.

The role of nurseries in wartime was highlighted in an address on January 30, 1941, at the Nursery's annual meeting by a Miss Goold of the Social Welfare Council. In England, she reported, nurseries had become a necessity in every community where women were replacing men in war work. In Toronto, too, day nurseries were seriously affected by the war, their services taxed to capacity. "In times of peace the nursery is based on the economic need of the mother's earnings," Miss Goold continued; "in wartime [on] the patriotic need." She continued: "We might ever remember that the family is the smallest democracy and it must be maintained. Hitler's system strikes at the love and loyalty on which family life is founded and which the nursery defends and strengthens."

By its own admission, the Ottawa Day Nursery was well equipped to accommodate the larger number of children it had to care for during these years. In doing so, however, it faced additional challenges, such as staff shortages, rationing, and inadequate annual grants from Ottawa Community Chests. The lack of an adequate grant certainly made itself felt in 1943. In that year, spending and expenses had to be cut so drastically that reserve household supplies were exhausted. Some consideration was even given to curtailing the work of the deficit-prone blood and nerve clinic. However, since it was serving an increasing number of children and was regarded as a vital service, the board decided to retain it – at least for the time being. Fortunately, a series of conferences with Chest officials in 1944 resulted in an agreement to raise their agency's annual contribution to the Nursery.

The Nursery could now be considered an economical unit, according to Miss Goold's definition, because it cared for a daily average of forty or more children. In 1944 it had an average of sixty-eight children each day, though the next year the average fell to fifty-one. Interestingly, many male graduates of the Nursery were serving overseas in the Canadian Forces. The agency took great pride in this fact, remarking in the 1940 annual report:



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*We are justly proud of the twenty-four young men who are at present in the army, who grew up at the Nursery. These boys when they presented themselves for service were all accepted, found physically fit and of good intelligence. Two of them had always made a point to come back to the Nursery at Christmas to help with the distribution of baskets, and they were very much missed at Christmas.*

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During the war years the Nursery faced increased challenges and experienced losses. On June 19, 1941, its "great and good friend" Gertrude Fleck passed away following a heart attack the previous evening. As the annual report for that year observed: "Much recorded here would not have been possible of accomplishment had it not been for the foresight, deep interest and thoughtful generosity of the late Mrs. Fleck." Another loss was that of Lillian Freiman, who was forced to relinquish the presidency of the Nursery when her heart condition worsened. She died on November 2, 1940. Seven years later Grace Mather, another great mainstay of the Nursery, died. At the agency's annual meeting in January 1948, the Nursery's president, Mrs. Sherwood, paid tribute to her, noting that "everything about the Nursery reflects Mrs. Mather's spirit, her humorous outlook, and her innate understanding of human nature."

As ever, the one constant in the Nursery's history has been change. And, in the immediate postwar years, change would play a starring role.

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**AFTER DAY NURSERY MEETING**—Members of the Ottawa Day Nursery Board of Management are photographed at tea, after the annual meeting Tuesday afternoon at the Andrew Fleck Memorial. Presiding is Mrs. Duncan MacTavish, and reading from left to right are the Nursery supervisor, Mrs. Elma Nelson; Rev. Terence

Finlay, who was a guest at the meeting; Mrs. W. L. Cassels, Mrs. F. O. Weeks, the new president Mrs. N. Wainwright Cleary, Rev. Father J. A. Macdonald, a guest; the retiring president, Mrs. E. S. Sherwood; Mrs. G. Maxwell Edwards, Medical Health Officer Dr. J. J. Day and the retiring treasurer, Mrs. C. E. Watts.

—Photo by Newton

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Mr. Allan and Mrs. Grace Mather, 1899



Andrew Fleck Child Care Services



CHAPTER TWO

# Growth and Change

The immediate postwar years were a heady time for Ottawans and their fellow Canadians. The 1 million men and 50,000 women who had served in the Canadian armed services overseas and survived came home. In the wake of their return, there were marriages that had long been deferred and a significant growth in the Canadian population. The birth rate, which had been rising steadily since its low point in the Great Depression, began to rise more swiftly. In the first year of peace, 1945, it reached 24.3 per thousand of population; two years later, it shot up to 28.9. For the first fifteen years after the end of hostilities it would remain higher than that of any other industrialized nation. Immigration also increased, climbing to an annual average of 80,000 for the first five postwar years.

In Ottawa in 1945, jubilant residents flocked to Lansdowne Park to welcome thousands of these returning servicemen and women. Victory celebrations spilled over into the following year for the last groups of veterans returning home. The city, although still small and shabby, emerged from the conflict with a bolstered self-confidence thanks to the growth of the federal government and Ottawa's huge contribution to the war effort. With this new assurance came a desire to create a grander and more effectively administered

national capital. Following a visit to the city in October 1945, Jacques Gréber, the well-known French town-planner, agreed to serve as a consultant to the National Capital Planning Committee. Established in 1946, it was authorized to design a badly needed overall plan for the development of the National Capital Region. In 1950 the city formally annexed large parts of Nepean and Gloucester. A major new subdivision, Manor Park, came into being, and significant growth occurred around Uplands Airport as well as in industries such as tourism, telephones, and communications. A number of refugees and displaced persons (DPs) - people who had been languishing in European shelters maintained by the United Nations - arrived, and many settled in Ottawa. Along with them, the first Lebanese and Chinese immigrants appeared on the scene.

After the Second World War, a robust economy and an improved social safety net meant that the Ottawa Day Nursery's client families were no longer destitute. Starting in 1950, therefore, the





should experiment with any system that seems sensible to her.

In March 1949 the Board of Management decided that a new staff member should be hired, to bring the total, along with the supervisor, to nine. The addition of this new staff person would enable the supervisor to investigate parents' homes and determine their need for services offered by the Nursery. Up to now, only obvious welfare cases had been accepted. Salaries also commanded attention. Mrs. Nelson believed that the matron's weekly salary should be raised to \$25, and that the salary of other workers with a high school education should be increased gradually from the current \$12 to \$18 a week. By year's end, salaries had been boosted by a total of \$1,000. Fortunately, the estimated food costs were down by \$300 from the previous year, and the city had agreed to increase its annual grant by \$600.

The vexing question of salary levels had earlier led the Nursery to apply to the city for a grant of \$4,500, knowing that, under the **Day Nurseries Act**, Ottawa could recover half this amount from the province. In applying for the grant, the Nursery's president, Mrs. Cleary, made a telling argument for additional funds:

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*Since writing the earlier letter, it has been (forcibly) brought to our attention that we may not be able to keep our present well-trained, efficient and loyal staff if we do not increase their wages; we can only manage to do this if the City grant is enlarged to at least \$4,500.00. We have known for some time that our staff wages are low as compared with those paid by similar institutions, but our endeavour to economize in every conceivable way has penalized a number of our staff.*

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The 1949 annual report reveals that the Nursery received grants of \$3,600 the city and \$10,828 from Community Chests.

December 1949 saw the resignation of Mrs. Nelson, who left to get married. Her replacement was Mary Laing, a Dundas, Ontario, native who had supervised the Hamilton Day Nursery after receiving her training. Previously she had worked several years as a law office secretary. In her new position, Laing was to be paid \$2,000 a year, subject to revision.

Ottawa, in the 1950s, was still a capital with a small town feel to it. The defeat of a Sunday sports plebiscite in 1952 and again in 1956 bore witness to this provincialism. In 1951 the city debated the merits of introducing parking meters. But significant change was on its way. Construction began on the Queensway, parking meters were finally installed, and streetcars were banished. Westgate, the first shopping centre, opened at the corner of Carling and Merivale, and the first plan for LeBreton Flats was devised. Canada's long-serving bachelor prime minister Mackenzie King died in 1950. That same year the voluble and outspoken social worker Charlotte Whitton ran for Ottawa's Board of Control and topped the polls.

During the time she was a controller, Whitton attended a regular Day Nursery board meeting in March 1951. Acting on behalf of the Board of Control, she asked if the Nursery would im-



Mary Laing,  
Nursery Supervisor

mediately undertake a survey to determine the number of working mothers in the east and west ends of Ottawa who needed day-care facilities for their children or who would be interested in entering the labour market if such a service existed. The Nursery, with the assistance of various Ottawa social agencies, conducted the requested survey, but the results were not encouraging. In fact, they revealed that there was probably a greater need for more nursery schools than for additional day-care centres. The Nursery's board therefore wrote to Dr. Whitton stating that the



survey's results did not justify the establishment of additional day-care nurseries in those parts of the city at this time.

The excellent facilities at the Ottawa Day Nursery encouraged more and more parents to enrol their children there. The optimum daily average attendance of 58 to 60 children meant that between 78 and 80 children should be registered. To help meet this goal, the Nursery began enrolling more toddlers in 1950. By 1954, average daily attendance had increased to 74, with from 90 to 101 youngsters registered. To avoid having to hire more staff, the supervisor rotated the work and free time of employees.

A typical day at the Nursery in these years began at 7:45 a.m., when the children began arriving. They played until 8:30 a.m., when the older boys and girls left to attend the kindergarten classes at the nearby public school. The pre-school children who remained at the Nursery went through the bathroom routine at 8:30 a.m., then dressed and went outside to play. At 10 a.m. they came in, removed their outer clothes, washed, and went to the playrooms. They played with educational toys until 10:55 a.m., then put away their toys, selected a book to read, and sat quietly until they were summoned to assemble in a circle for organized games and music. At 11:20 a.m. they gathered for a hot lunch, preceded by the recital of grace. At 2 p.m. they settled down for a much-needed nap.

When observing the unfolding of a typical day, a bemused Ottawa Citizen journalist reported:

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*Everything works in relays at the Nursery. The number of children makes this necessary. While the babies (1 to 2 yrs.) are eating, the juniors (2 to 3) are playing with toys or listening in on a story cycle. When the super-seniors (5 to 7) are back from nearby schools for lunch, the seniors (3 to 5) are probably climbing or dangling from the Jungle Gym in the playgrounds. The kids take turns at washing up, watching television, drinking their juice, listening to stories, or playing music games. The only time everybody works in unison is after lunch. That's when the children settle down for a nap. Otherwise the days are quick-change relays from the morning when parents leave their children till around 6 p.m. when they pick them up.*

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When this story ran in 1958, the Nursery's enrolment statistics revealed a most heterogeneous clientele: 'Canadian-born English 37, Canadian-born French 38, from Scotland 2, Irish 1, English 5; New Canadians from France 1, Germany 11, Polish 3, Jewish 3, Hungarian 3, Ukrainian 3, Dutch, 3, Italian 3, Spanish 2, Portuguese 2, and Singapore 1.' The Nursery had become a true melting pot.

The new systems, regulations, and methods dictated by the provincial Day Nurseries Act posed challenges, but the Nursery managed to keep on top of these developments. The 1954 annual

report stated: "Visitors to the nursery this year have been numerous and we have noted with pride that their unanimous opinion of this institution has been that not only is it efficiently run, but that a most happy atmosphere pervades."

Indeed, increasing numbers of individuals and organizations were expressing an interest in the Nursery, a development no doubt partly attributable to the Community Chests Come and See Us tours. In 1952 alone, thirty-three nurses in training at the Ottawa Civic Hospital and a group of third-year Carleton College journalism students toured the premises. Case histories used by Community Chests in the publicity blitz surrounding a recent fund raising campaign stimulated still further interest in the agency.

In 1958 the Ottawa Day Nursery boasted that it had experienced the most successful year in its thirty-eight-year history of caring for pre-school children of mothers who had to work. Some of its buoyant mood was no doubt attributable to the excellent condition of the Andrew Fleck Memorial Building and to the absence of any legal, financial, or administrative crises. The building's sound infrastructure was not easily come by, however. Because of defective plaster during construction, all the interior walls had to be stripped and the entire building replastered in 1952. With no funds available for this purpose, the Nursery had no alternative but to dip into its capital investment fund. Three years later, in 1955, the walls required repainting. When the maintenance budget could not meet this cost, the Nursery applied to the Welfare Council of Ottawa for funds. Fortunately, the necessary monies were found, and in January 1956 the Nursery was able to report that all major repairs to the building had been completed without the Nursery having to resort to a public fund raising campaign.



The 1960s are remembered in the Western world as a decade of Vietnam War protests, counter-culture rebels, and smoking pot. It was also the decade when men abandoned their barbers and women their bras, and when protest songs became commonplace. In Ottawa the decade began with the opening of a new National Gallery in a temporary home on Elgin Street - the Lorne Building. The National Capital Commission approved plans for a pedestrian mall on Sparks Street. The federal government meanwhile was constructing a huge bomb shelter in nearby Carp that would become known as the Diefenbunker - a name inspired by the prairie populist John G.

Diefenbaker, who was then the prime minister. After a four-year absence, the feisty Charlotte Whitton returned to the mayor's chair and immediately began fighting fellow controllers and local developers. Eight years later, in 1968, the charismatic Pierre Trudeau would ride a wave of Trudeaumania into the Prime Minister's Office.



Significant change was also under way at the Ottawa Day Nursery. At the urging of Mary Sinclair, Margaret Rowan-Legg, and Genevieve Laidlaw, the vice-president, it appointed a part-time social worker, Majorie Plewes, to its staff in 1961. As an intake worker, she was required to interview all parents who applied to have their children admitted to the Nursery. If the family met the admission requirements and the Nursery felt that enrolment would be in the child's best interests, the parents and the Nursery staff worked together to make the placement as happy an experience as possible for the youngster.

The appointment of a social worker to the Nursery staff marked a milestone in the agency's evolution, even though it was emulating the example of the Montreal Day Nursery, which had first put a social worker on its staff in the 1940s. At the Ottawa Day Nursery, also in 1961, a new salary scale for the supervisory staff, based on the one employed by the provincial government's Day Nurseries Branch, was another important development. Among the supervisory staff were several assistant supervisors who had enrolled in nursery school courses at Carleton University the previous winter and who would be pursuing further training for another year.

The year 1961 also saw Charlotte Birchard, a social worker who had been working for the Betty Hyde Nursery School in Ottawa, join the supervisory staff for six weeks. Two years later, in 1963, this pioneer in early childhood education with socialist leanings became the Nursery's full-time executive director, replacing Mary Laing, who resigned in August. Dynamic, hard-working, and excellent with children, Birchard was the ideal choice for the job. She brought to it a wealth of nursery school experience, a vision for the Nursery, as well as a fine sense of humour and a deeply ingrained optimism.



*Board of Directors 1958 - Sitting Mrs. Frances Gill, President; Mrs. C. Rowley Booth (sister-in-law of Gertrude Fleck), First Vice-President. Standing - Mrs. Peter B. Smellie, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Mark Gillin, Treasurer; Mrs. J.J. Heney, Corresponding Secretary.*



*Charlotte Birchard, Executive Director from 1963 to 1977*

"Charlotte was always jovial. I don't recall her ever being sad," reported Brigitte Ferris, who knew her well. (Both she and her mother, Frigga von Luczenbacher, also worked for the agency.)

Mrs. Birchard wasted no time in making her influence felt. Within fifteen months she had succeeded in implementing many adjustments among the staff and in programming, changes that resulted in a marked improvement in child care. Moreover, she did so without disturbing the daily routine. She also managed to bring board members and other friends of the Nursery closer to the day-to-day problems of families who had children in the Nursery's care.

Children learn through play, Mrs. Birchard contended, and, as a devout believer in early childhood education, she pressured governments to make it more widely available in the community. In Ottawa she met with striking success. After convincing Mayor Marion Dewar of its value, she obtained her support on many related initiatives requiring funding. At the local level, Mrs. Birchard's advocacy work was never-ending, involving radio and TV interviews and membership on assorted committees such as the Social Planning Council's Technical and Advisory Committee on Day Care and the Advisory Council to the Department of Family Studies at Algonquin College. She also attended conferences, seminars, and meetings, some of them in out-of-town locations including Toronto, Washington, DC, and even Manila, the capital of the Philippines.

From time to time this advocacy work led to direct approaches to the provincial government in Toronto. Janet White, a Nursery president in the 1960s, who later taught early childhood education at Algonquin College, recalled that she and Mrs. Birchard once journeyed together by train to Toronto to hand-deliver a petition to Queen's Park. Fortunately, Charlotte Birchard had the backing of a powerful board in her various endeavours, and that smoothed the way for her to implement many important changes in the Day Nursery's operation.

The agency's boards have always featured a large complement of deeply engaged members, often from Ottawa's establishment circles. Having interesting colleagues with whom to discuss and decide agency issues perhaps explains why a significant number of members have chosen to remain on the board year after year. They might not have had any choice in the matter, however, if an idea floated in 1971 had been approved. That January, board member Frances O'Brien asked the Board of Management to consider instituting a "definite term of office" for its members. This idea was endorsed by her cousin Janet

White, also a board member, who speculated that, if members could serve only for a specified period of time, they might be motivated to take on responsible jobs during their term of office. The suggestion never got beyond the discussion stage, however.

In the late fifties and early sixties, the Nursery received many requests for placement from European families, mainly Hungarian refugees, who had arrived in Canada in 1956-57 following the brutal crushing of the Hungarian uprising by the Soviet Union. In many of these families, both parents wanted to work so they could better themselves financially and become more quickly established in their new country. By 1963, however, another trend had developed as ever more requests were received from single-parent families - in some cases where the single parent was incapacitated. The families served by the Nursery were no longer destitute, however, thanks to such legislation as the **Unemployment Relief Act** (1935), the **General Welfare Assistance Act** (1957), and the federal **Unemployment Insurance Act** (1941). These Acts, along with Family Allowances, which were introduced in 1945, provided for a sufficiently large social security net to prevent outright destitution.

Shortly after her appointment in 1961, Mrs. Plewes and Miss Laing set about planning and implementing a new clear-cut standard of admissions and a new scale of mothers' fees based on local living costs. These regulations replaced a rather haphazard system whereby untrained board members checked admissions, fees, and family case histories. Within a year, these women, assisted by the Case Study Committee, arrived at an admissions policy for the Nursery. They decided that first priority should be given to one-parent families, where the parent was ill at home or in hospital; next to two-parent families in financial need because of debt, inadequate income (many fathers took home less than \$200 per month), or the father's unemployment. When the Nursery was not full, it would accept children who otherwise it might not accept, but always for a limited time and on the understanding that, if space was needed for a family with a higher priority, these children would be withdrawn.

The Nursery felt its main role was to strengthen family relationships by helping to relieve stress and tension caused by poor health, inadequate housing, behaviour, financial problems, and the loss of one parent. In short, the Nursery sought to act as a support to the parent striving to keep a family together on her own. To do this, it offered a developmental program designed

to promote the child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth. It also provided individual and group counselling for parents to help them understand their children better and to strengthen family life. All this additional support was carried out within the limits described in the Ontario **Day Nurseries Act**. This Act made no provision, however, for the province to share in the cost of the social work or counselling component of the Nursery's service, so donations to the United Appeal (formerly the Community Chests) had to meet the cost.

At the opening of the 1960s, more than 50 percent of the children served by the Nursery came from single-parent families, in some cases from families headed by a father. No family was served whose annual income exceeded \$5,000, and all parents who could pay were charged a daily fee. The fee ranged from 25 cents to \$2.00 a day, according to the parents ability to pay.

The Case Study Committee continued to review admissions, fees charged, gaps in service, and possible future development, and, in 1964, noted that the agency did not have as long a waiting list as in the past. As a result, it was able to accept more children from families with higher incomes, for whom the full cost of the service was paid by the parents. Also, thanks to its highly qualified staff, the Nursery was now able to provide special services to some children with physical or emotional disabilities. But the perennial problem of inadequate funding still persisted. After carefully scrutinizing its fee scale, the agency twice increased its basic rate so that it approached the actual cost of feeding each child. There were some changes in family fees, but only a small portion of families paid \$1 or more a day.

In 1963 Mary Laing, who had been the Nursery's executive director for fourteen years (1949-63), resigned to take up a position in the editorial office of **The Nurse** in Montreal. Janet White, then recording secretary for the board, saluted her with the observation: "Miss Laing's contribution to the welfare of the children under her care over the years can hardly be calculated."

Laing's leave-taking was followed by that of Margaret Fleming, the much-loved matron, who retired in 1964 after serving the Nursery since 1919. "There is no praise high enough for the dedication Margaret has shown to the Nursery," White wrote. "There is, however, a remarkable record of excellent meals prepared at minimum cost and little bodies more robust as a result." Shortly after Mrs. Fleming first joined the staff, Grace Mather, the convenor of management, had recognized her ability and placed her in charge of the children as matron. As the years rolled by, she was given more and more responsibility, until she gradually assumed much of the burden of housekeeping.

A significant part of this responsibility involved meal preparation. Christmas dinner presented a special challenge. One dinner, held at Trafalgar House, was devoured not only by client families but also by friends and relatives. Mrs. Fleming, with her usual aplomb, faced up courageously to the task. Not a crumb was left. All present had sufficient and were happy - all except Mrs. Mather and her staff. There was literally nothing left for them to eat. To rectify the matter, the board dispatched four turkeys the next day, and Mrs. Edward Fauquier sent a complete, ready-to-be-served hot dinner.



*Christmas without a turkey is not Christmas!*

The Ottawa Citizen

**Person to person**

By Muriel Flexman

**Matron says farewell**

There was a little something added to the chocolate pudding set before the youngsters at the Ottawa Day Nursery at lunch time today. The special "fixing" was a surprise planned by the matron, Mrs. Margaret Fleming as a parting gesture, for this was the last meal she prepared for the children before her retirement.

Matron Fleming—known all over town as "Margaret" can look back over 44 years of brewing soup, preparing lunches, making jellies for the hundreds of children who have spent their days in the nursery while their parents are at work.

There have been a lot of changes during these years and Margaret Fleming is reminded of them several times a year and especially at Christmas time when her mail is extra heavy. "Some of the children have married children of their own now and occasionally drop in to show me the new baby in the family," Mrs. Fleming said.

Margaret Fleming joined the Ottawa Day Nursery in 1919 when it was on Albert Street. There were about 40 children being cared for at that time. As times grew harder, more and more children were absorbed until during the last war they sometimes numbered more than 100.

Often there was no place for the youngsters to go they remained with the nursery until they were into their teens. Mrs. Fleming reminisced. "It was a great time for beans then," she chuckled.

Those big, husky boys would polish floors or do any other job they could to give me time to make them a pot of beans."

What are the nursery children's favorite foods? Serve rice and bacon bits with stewed tomatoes and there's never a bit left, Mrs. Fleming says. Jelly desserts are top favorites, too, unless there is a rice pudding full of raisins.

The slightly-built woman whose job it has been for all these years to buy this food, prepare it and take charge of the housekeeping will live with her married son-in-law and daughter Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Mentzell after her retirement and will no doubt give extra attention to her two grandchildren.

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*—Citizen-UPJ staff photo*

**Mrs. Fleming "Margaret" is many**

**In the news . . .**



In addition to Margaret Fleming, several other long-serving staff members retired in the 1960s. They included two caregivers - Clara Savage, who had worked at the Nursery for forty-five years, and Susie O'Neill, who worked there for fifty years. Interestingly, all three of them were related to each other and lived in the Andrew Fleck Memorial Building.

New additions to the staff also occurred in these years. A notable one was that of Frigga von Luczenbacher, who was appointed educational supervisor in the summer of 1963. A native of Hungary, Mrs. von Luczenbacher immigrated to Canada in 1953 with her young family. At the time this remarkable woman knew no English, but she soon mastered it. Although she boasted a degree in child development from infancy to school age from a German university, she was first employed in Canada as a nursemaid in Rockcliffe. From this position, she made the leap to the Betty Hyde Nursery, where she came to know both Betty Hyde and Charlotte Birchard, with whom she worked. This nursery was her stepping stone to the Ottawa Day Nursery.

Frigga von Luczenbacher was a creative, artistic woman with a wide-ranging curiosity. Like Charlotte Birchard and Betty Hyde, she respected children for being individuals with their own rights and feelings. Unlike many other child-care workers in this period, however, she was knowledgeable about the various stages of child development and learning. The 1960s, after all, marked a time when the science of early childhood development was gaining recognition, leading to the belief that child care should involve educational and creative activities as well as nourishment and rest in a safe environment.

*Mr. Barry O'Brien, a local businessman, performed Santa Claus from 1950 to 1971*

The Christmas party was a highlight of the year, especially for the children, who were treated to a visit with Santa Claus. For many years this role was performed by a local businessman, Barry O'Brien, well padded, rosy, and dressed for the occasion. When he first presided as Santa Claus in 1950, O'Brien was a bachelor, and he wore a costume provided by Freiman's department store. After he married, he donned a red velvet suit sewn by the redoubtable Mrs. Birchenhoff, head of the Nursery's Sewing Committee. In 1971 he celebrated his twenty-first year as Santa Claus at the Christmas party, assisted on this occasion by his young daughter, who helped out with the festivities. His wife, Frances, had become a board member in 1963, and later she took on the role of president.

► *Illustration by Claudine 3 ans "Bonhommes" september 1966*





Mrs. von Luczenbacher insisted that the Nursery's program have an educational component. Under her direction, many "out trips," were arranged in 1964: picnics at Lac Phillipe, visits to the Museum of Nature and the Central Experimental Farm, and even a train trip to Ottawa West. Expeditions such as these played no small part in enlarging and enriching the children's experience. Mrs. von Luczenbacher served as both a staff member and a member of the Headstart Advisory Committee, a subcommittee of the Ottawa Day Nursery board, before she left the agency in 1968 to become director of Algonquin College's demonstration nursery school, part of its early childhood development program. Interestingly, the Nursery later acquired a tangible reminder of her, a colourful music box from her vast collection, which her daughter Brigitte gave to Kim Hiscott when the two women served on the Ottawa Accreditation Committee together. Hiscott became the agency's executive director in 2008, and the music box was among the items she brought to her new office. Only later did she learn that Mrs. von Luczenbacher had been an important person in the Nursery's history.

The Nursery's caregivers had become better trained by the 1960s, and they had acquired more authority. With more authority came greater participation in the agency's administration, a fact remarked upon in its 1965 annual report:

◀  
Chris Beaton  
Judith Rose  
Pierre Guertin

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*While in the past it was necessary for this [case study] committee to be available to the staff to discuss and give advice on many details, we are now faced with a change of role. It is the staff who must lead us and educate us in the needs of the agency and to help us in making decisions necessary to the development of its optimum potential.*

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Members of the Board of Management and other volunteers, along with the staff and the children, joined in welcoming Empress Farah Pahlavi to the agency on May 20, 1965. She and her husband, the Shah of Iran, were then on a state visit to Canada. Despite a frenetic schedule, the empress took time out when they were in Ottawa to visit two institutions: the National Gallery and the Nursery. During her morning tour of

Empress Farah Pahlavi,  
wife of the Shah of  
Iran, visiting on May  
20, 1965

The Ottawa Citizen - Tuesday, May 18/65

## Empress of Iran has wide interests

During the state visit May 19-21 of Their Imperial Majesties from Iran to Ottawa, time has been set aside for the Empress to view two of her special interests. Included on her busy itinerary is a visit to the Ottawa Day Nursery and the National Gallery.

Farah Diba was just 21 years old when she married Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi Shahanshah of Iran. Still in the midst of her studies, the dark-eyed daughter of a colonel came to the attention of the head of the special office for student affairs when she sought to continue her studies in architecture in Paris. It was five years ago this

month when a meeting was arranged which led to an introductory dinner with His Majesty. They were married in December.

During her Teheran school days, the young girl who was to become Empress took an active part in social welfare activities and as well excelled in sporting competitions. She set track records in the broad jump and the high jump and was captain of the school champion basketball team. She also excelled in swimming and diving.

Continuing her interest as a Girl Scout, Empress Farah and her royal husband strongly encourage scouting activities in their homeland.

In her regal role the Empress still finds leisure for drawing and painting. Her library of the history, of art is extensive. She is fond of music and plays the piano well. She is fluent in French and has recently become quite fluent in English.

At home she devotes much time to welfare and social services and is guardian of the Farah Pahlavi Welfare Association in Teheran and the provinces—an association that embraces 50 orphanages with an additional 12 institutions being provided each year.

Other important activities of the Empress include presidency of the Annual International Medical Congress; presidency of the Association for Protection of TB victims; guardianship of the Office for Translation and Publication of Books, and patronage of many private charitable organizations. Her Majesty has also donated generously to projects such as the Lien's Club Home for Blind Children and individual needs.

*Her Imperial Majesty  
Empress Farah of Iran*

the building, she made such a forceful impression that, decades later, Janet White recalled her graciousness, charm, and beauty.

In 1967, Canada's Centennial and Expo year, the Nursery rented an empty city-owned building adjoining its playground to accommodate two new programs. One of the programs in the newly christened Annex (it was renovated and redecorated in 1978) was an after-four program for neighbourhood children, then commonly referred to as latch-key kids. The other was a bilingual, half-day Head Start enrichment program for four-year-old, culturally deprived pre-school children living in the Lower Town urban renewal area, where more and better accommodation was being provided for low-income families.

The program drew its inspiration from Child Development Centers that had begun springing up in the United States in 1965 as part of President Lyndon Johnson's Anti-Poverty Program. Funded by the U.S. office of Economic Opportunity, they sought to improve the levels of education and skills of many of the children living in the black ghettos and white slums of large cities. In Canada, the Jewish Council of Women operated several Child Development Centres Higher Horizons for four - and five-year-old children from disadvantaged homes. In Ottawa a Higher Horizons program ran three mornings a week at McNab School for several years, beginning in 1965. The Ottawa Day Nursery, however, was the first institution or organization to establish a Head Start program in the national capital.

Charlotte Birchard played a leading role in launching this initiative. She corralled representatives from several social agencies in the city to pull it together. Then meetings were held to discuss health and other issues relating to such a program, recalled Genevieve Laidlaw, who took a great interest in this pioneering undertaking and even journeyed on her own to Harlem to see first hand its Head Start program. In Ottawa she chaired an enthusiastic Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from social agencies, church groups, the Public School Board, and the Fédération des Femmes Françaises.

The expertise of these members would prove invaluable to the Head Start program, which involved children in a two-hour daily structured learning environment five days a week. Under the direction of Mrs. von Luczenbacher, staff members and volunteers focused primarily on helping these youngsters to acquire an interest in learning as well as some basic social and other skills appropriate to their age level. The first children to participate in the program were chosen by Mrs. Birchard and a public health

nurse who visited homes in the Lower Town Urban Renewal area and invited parents not only to enrol their youngsters in the program but also to attend a weekly parent discussion group. Later, children were referred to the program by Social Services, Lower Town Urban Renewal Program, social workers, school nurses, and others. Because parents were considered important in the success of the program, they met with a group leader with training in public health and family life education to explore their concerns about their children and family. Funding for these weekly discussion groups was provided by the Collegiate Institute Board as part of its adult education program. Initially the Head Start program ran only on weekday mornings, but in 1969 the Nursery instituted an afternoon Head Start program for another group of children.

It was hoped that a research program conducted by graduate students in psychology at Carleton University would establish the effectiveness of the Head Start initiative. But although these students observed the children in the Nursery, using a detailed research instrument, no conclusive results were obtained. Some idea of the children's progress could only be gleaned by conversations with their teachers. Favourable comments were expressed, however, by teachers attending meetings of the Advisory Committee to the Head Start program. Certainly the program proved to be of inestimable benefit to some of the mothers. Five who had their first group experience while their children were enrolled in the program decided that they had to have more! In 1969 they enrolled in a ten-week course on Family Pressures at Algonquin College.

The Head Start program lasted only five years. Its end was signalled in June 1972 when the Board of Management decided to axe it, as of September. This decision was reached after a representative group of people working with children and families in the Lower Town East area concluded that the program was no longer needed. Kindergarten classes for four-year-olds were increasingly available, and municipal day-care centres were expected to open in the area in September. It was felt, however, that the agency should explore the need for a Head Start program for three-year-olds in Sandy Hill. Nevertheless, after consulting a wide range of parties, it was determined that no such program was needed there. Commenting on the demise of the Head Start program, Charlotte Birchard wrote, "We feel that, although we have been providing such a service in an area of the community where need existed, we cannot sustain a program on tradition when no need appears to exist." She then lamented the loss of three staff members, notably Kay Liston, who had been the



▲  
Mary Way  
Diane Bird  
Bahl Burke  
Carmen Briscal,  
1968

◀  
Errol London  
Sylvie Jubinville,  
1968

program's head teacher throughout its five-year existence.

The Nursery also ran a Summer Head Start program. The first one was funded by the Ottawa Department of Social Welfare and was held in École Ste. Anne for six weeks in July and August 1969. Thirty children were enrolled in the morning session, thirty in the afternoon. Nursery teachers and volunteers staffed the program. After six weeks the children were performing at the average level for their age except in dramatic play, implying they had limited imagination. Frigga von Luczenbacher commented, "If only we could get them at three years old!" The program ended, along with the other Head Start initiative, after the summer of 1971.

The Country Bound Summer Day Camp was introduced in 1968, to serve six- to nine-year-old children in the agency's care. For many of these children it opened up a whole new world of sunshine, green trees, and sparkling water - far removed from the dust and asphalt playgrounds of their gritty neighbourhoods. To enter this world, the children travelled by bus to Gatineau Park, where the Nursery had the use of the Camp Fortune Lodge. Qualified staff provided a varied program that included crafts, hikes, games, and quiet activities, as well as swimming and canoeing, which could be enjoyed on nearby Meech Lake. From time to time a party

was also enjoyed by all. Writing to a vacationing Anne Carver, the Nursery's president, Charlotte Birchard, described the "howling success" of a parent night at Camp Fortune in July 1971:

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*The children put on a circus program resplendent in the Sewing Committee's clown costumes as well as their own costumes for monkeys, tigers, lions etc. The monkeys were in panty hose, but because the stubble was rather rough they had slacks on underneath the panty hose and brown shirts on top and as Lance Goranson put it its hot being a monkey. A good group of parents turned out and following the circus performance we all had a picnic supper together on the grass in front of the Lodge and then everybody, parents, staff, etc, indulged in games of chance! The whole event ended with a very tired happy bus load of people singing their way home. All in all, it was really a very successful event.*

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When Lucie Legault joined Andrew Fleck Child Care Services twenty years later, participants were still bringing tennis balls and empty yogurt containers to the camp. The containers were used for play in the sand or were recycled for use in the crafts program. Executive director Rosemary Somers insisted that, whenever possible, used items be given a new life.



Hard on the heels of these initiatives came a pilot demonstration project in Family Day Care (later called Home Child Care), defined as day-time care in the home of another family, selected and supervised by a welfare agency. The Nursery and other day-care centres had long recognized that Ottawa was in dire need of a program of supervised day care for infants, because the existing centres were not equipped to handle children under two-and-a-half years of age. In low-income families, particularly those in which the mother was the major or sole bread winner, the difference between the family remaining self-sufficient or becoming dependent on public assistance over a lengthy period of time hinged on the availability of adequate day care for the infants. Care in private homes might have met this need, but private arrangements were often unsatisfactory as private day-care homes were not monitored. Moreover, no government provided a subsidy to fund the cost of care.

The Nursery began devoting serious attention to the problem in 1964, and, two years later, it approached the Ontario government with a request for funds to conduct a pilot project in Family Day Care. The request was turned down. Evidently, in July 1966, there was just too much uncertainty surrounding the distribution of funds under the revised *Day Nurseries Act* and the establishment of the Canada Assistance Plan (which made federal money available for day-care children) to justify proceeding with the project.



*Mary Sinclair attending the 1997 Provider Dinner in company of Rabia Ajar*

As soon as both these pieces of legislation became fully operational at the end of 1968, however, the Nursery initiated discussions with a variety of community agencies regarding the provision of Family Day Care in Ottawa. These discussions culminated in the establishment of an advisory committee

chaired by a Day Nursery board member, the energetic and imaginative Mary Sinclair. Its task was to prepare a brief for the Department of National Health and Welfare requesting a grant to conduct a three-year pilot project in Family Day Care. The brief was submitted in July 1969 and, the following month, the Nursery was pleased to learn that the minister of national health and welfare had approved its request.

The way was paved for the only Family Day Care demonstration project in the province. As such, it would serve as a model for the development of new services in Ontario. In fact, government lawyers from Toronto visited the project while writing legislation that enabled Family Day Care to become a recognized and funded day-care service.

During the course of its life, 1969 to 1972, the demonstration project served from twenty-five to thirty-five children. To be eligible, a participating family had to be on welfare and have no more than three children. The children had to be between the ages of three months and twelve years, and at least one child had to be under the age of one. It was also a requirement that the parent seek employment, retraining, or further education. Two part-time Ottawa Day Nursery social workers, one of them bilingual, coordinated the selection of families and the placement of children in the day-care homes. These social workers also monitored the caregiver homes, counselled the parents of children involved, conducted day-care parent discussion groups, and organized the research aspect of the project. Four agencies took part in the project: the Ottawa Day Nursery, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton Social Welfare Department, the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Area Health Unit, and the Children's Aid Society of Ottawa. It was the Ottawa Day Nursery, however, that coordinated and administered the project and that assumed ultimate responsibility for it.

After the project had been under way for a year, many unexpected findings came to light. The organizers discovered, for example, that a surprising number of families on welfare did not respond to the offer of such a service. In some cases the mother was so poorly educated that work outside the home was not a viable alternative to remaining with her children. The organizers also found a substantial resistance on the part of husbands to having their wives return to school or to work. The ostensible reason was that they wanted them to stay at home with the children. When the family situation was examined more closely, however, it became apparent that, in many cases, the care of the children by others was too threatening to the male role.

That was especially true in cases where the wife was more employable than her husband. In some cases the wife became pregnant with a second or third child. Many times the explanation for not participating in the project was given as, "My husband wants me to remain at home until the children are in school."

The initial lack of response on the part of families referred through public welfare hampered progress in the opening months of the project. So did the difficulty of securing Family Day Care homes scattered throughout the city. Unlike other projects, which were usually confined to a neighbourhood, almost the entire city was involved in this one. Faced by the poor response from referrals, the agency decided to abandon the random selection of families and to work instead with a more highly motivated group of parents, 90 percent of whom were single- or sole-support mothers who wanted to keep their children and work to support them without public assistance.

Eventually, enough homes were obtained, and the project picked up steam. It succeeded in demonstrating its value and, after it ended, in November 1972, Ottawa's Board of Control purchased the service from the Nursery on a temporary basis. The city later agreed to fund Ottawa's first licensed, monitored, in-home day-care program permanently. The program would assign top priority to single parents in financial need and provide fully subsidized care. As more funding became available and additional staff could be hired, the program expanded to serve as many as 600 children.



Although a Family Day Care pilot project commanded a lot of attention from 1969 until 1972, the Nursery's primary concerns were financial in nature, a recurring phenomenon since its very beginnings. To provide the best possible developmental and family-care support, it mounted large budgetary increases between 1965 and 1971. In 1965 the total budget was \$58,810, while in 1971 the funds required for all programs reached well over \$200,000. The increased budgets were needed to enable the agency to provide day care that met certain goals: an appropriate staff ratio to children in the group program; good monitoring of the family-care support program;

# Here at last

## Home care project set up for infants, toddlers

By Eleanor Dunn  
Assistant manager's editor  
Family day care — the supervised care of infants and toddlers in private homes other than their own — is finally coming to Ottawa.

The Ottawa Day Nursery in co-operation with the regional welfare department is undertaking a three-year family day care project with the assistance of a substantial grant from the federal department of health and welfare.

"It's a feasibility study," says project supervisor and social worker Mimi Wilson. "We hope to find out whether community agencies can successfully operate this kind of service, is it satisfying to the child's own parents, and is it satisfying to the day care parent."

It took three years of study — having requests to the provincial government turned down, and finally meeting with acceptance from the federal government — to get the project underway.

The project has been set up to involve families receiving welfare assistance and women receiving the provincial mothers' allowance.

### First families

"We have selected, with the help of social workers from regional welfare, an initial sample of families to which we will offer this service," says Miss Wilson. "We are also using the services of the Children's Aid Society to find suitable day care homes, but after they have been found, the entire administration of the project will rest with the Ottawa Day Nursery people."

The families to which the service will be offered have to meet certain criteria. They must be receiving welfare assistance, either full or partial, at the time of

contact. They must have one child born in 1966, and they can have one or two parents in the home.

"Although we haven't approached any of them yet, we have selected nine one-child families, six two-child families, and three three-child families. We have insisted that none have more than three children between the ages of three months and 12 years of age."

"Most of the one-child families have single parents — usually the mother — in the home, but the ones with two or more children have both parents in the home so we are getting a good cross section," Miss Wilson says. Children from these families will be placed in day care situations in private homes in their neighbourhoods. Miss Wilson plans to make use of women receiving mothers' allowance to act as day care parents.

### Back to work?

Siblings attending school will go to the day care home for lunch and for care after school.

One of the ideas behind the project is to determine how many families on public assistance would be motivated to go back to work or seek job retraining if they knew their children were being well cared for during their absence.

"It's not imperative that those receiving the service go back to work. There may be emotional or health reasons why day care is important for these families, and we want to find this out as well," Miss Wilson says.

A control group of families, matched by the age of the youngest children, will be established who will not get the actual service.

"This is going to be a difficult area, but we want to find out how effective substitute parents are in the child's development."

"We're also interested in the development of young infants, and that's why the control group will be matched through the youngest child's age. We intend to have continuing contact with all the people involved over the three-year period," the social worker says.

### First in March

Miss Wilson says there is a demand for this type of day care. Most day nurseries will admit children at the minimum age of three, and working parents with children under that age must make private arrangements: with relatives or neighbours — arrangements that are not supervised or regulated by any agency — and arrangements that may not be the best for the child.

The first home will be in operation by the end of March; approximately three children will be placed in each home, but not more than one infant.

The day care mothers will receive assistance in the way of a salary in proportion to what will be the current rate paid for 24-hour foster care.

Day care mothers will also be able to use the services of the public health nurse. The project workers, Miss Wilson and perhaps an assistant, will give them some training.

"It's custodial care with a difference. The day care mothers will be given a knowledge of child development, and they, in conjunction with the project workers will keep a diary on each child."

"We plan to keep close records on what happens in the child, his own family, his day care family, and the liaison between these families and the agency."

"At the same time we may also find out how hard

or easy it is for people to get job retraining. A lot of these families don't know what channels are open to them or what alternatives they have," Miss Wilson says.

No project like this has ever been undertaken in Canada before, although family day care has been established in other centres as an adjunct to an existing agency.

Family day care has never

been set up to combine the facilities of different agencies, using families on welfare, or using a control group, and it has never been set up for the purposes of a detailed study.

"It's a combined approach," says Miss Wilson. "If it does work we would like to see either the Day Nurseries Act amended or some other legislation developed to support it in the future."



AFCS Board member

Project supervisor

Mimi Wilson

play equipment suited to children's physical and intellectual development; peer groups appropriate for each child's particular stage of social development and self-identify; teaching methods to facilitate each child's cognitive learning; and counselling staff to lend support to families as needed.

From 1933 until 1969, Community Chests and its successor, the United Appeal, were the principal source of funding for the Ottawa Day Nursery; at the end of each year, they shared the agency's deficit with the City of Ottawa. In 1969, however, the Nursery became, in effect, a government-subsidized agency, with nearly all its funding provided by and shared equally by the City of Ottawa and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton's Social Welfare Department.

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## Day care's neighbors care, too



Alderman Georges Bedard to the rescue

Andrew Fleck Child Centre has two kinds of neighbors — those it does business with and those it annoys, but both came to lunch Wednesday anyway.

As part of the province-wide Day Care Day activities, Charlotte Birchard, executive director of Andrew Fleck decided to invite the neighbors in for a buffet luncheon and visit.

Among the guests were Ivan Steps, caretaker at the nearby Bank of Canada, who thoughtfully picks up stray toys and returns them before cutting the Bank's lawn; Alra Bestion of the Superfluity Shop which not only donates funds to the centre but also unloads evening gowns so the children can play dress-up; and Paul Cepello who has sturdy record players in his electronics shop.

Aldermen Toddy Kehoe and Georges Bedard also dropped by although the mayor had not officially declared the special day.

Irving Taylor from Rideau IGA came to lunch since most of the centre's food is bought at his

store. Ed Twoddy, principal of the York Street Public School, said many of the young faces at the centre are also in his kindergarten program.

Although he was unable to attend, Leo Quinette of the Union Smoke Shop was delighted with the idea of a get-together. Mrs. Birchard said the

children always exchange greetings at his door when they go by on the way to the Rideau Street Public Library. "We've been dealing

with these people for years, they have been so helpful and it was about time they saw the inside of Andrew Fleck," said Mrs. Birchard.



Alderman Toddy Kehoe and Andrew Fleck Centre friend

By 1971, approximately 73 percent of its funding came from the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, 19 percent from the federal department of National Health and Welfare, 4 percent from the United Appeal of Ottawa-Carleton, 3 percent from parents, and 1 percent from gifts and bequests to the agency. Remarking on this transition to almost entire government funding, Frances O'Brien, the Nursery's president in 1969, observed: "It was a whole new territory for us and there was a fair amount of paperwork to handle."

Paperwork was indeed increasing, and not just because the largest proportion of funding was now supplied by government. The Nursery had provided little more than good food and comfortable shelter in its early years, so there had been little need for office records. But as the concept of what constituted good day care broadened, slowly during the 1930s and 1940s, and rapidly during the 1950s, the agency was forced to take on additional responsibilities that placed increasingly heavy demands on its executive director.

By the early 1960s, the executive director had to deal with a wide range of issues: the annual budget, staff employment, staff training and scheduling, housekeeping, and the intake and

social problems of client families, to name only the more conspicuous ones. All these tasks required that more and more records and forms be filled out. As a point of comparison, the Montreal Day Nursery had, for the past fifteen years, employed a full-time secretary/treasurer to handle these office details, yet even in 1963, the Ottawa Day Nursery lacked any office help whatsoever. Francis Smellie, that year's president, deplored this gap in the staffing, noting: "It is both unwise and uneconomic to submerge our Director's talents in this field of paperwork". She recommended that a full-time secretary be hired, or at least that a call be made for volunteer office workers. In 1964 Margaret Edwards joined the agency's staff as a part-time typist-bookkeeper, thereby greatly [facilitating] the paper work previously assumed by the Director.

A rapid increase in the amount of paperwork was only one of several significant challenges that had to be met in these years. Another was the inevitable tension that develops between an agency such as Andrew Fleck and the government bodies on which it depends for most of its funding. This point was remarked on in a brief prepared by president Marilyn Wilson in 1977. In her brief, Mrs. Wilson said:

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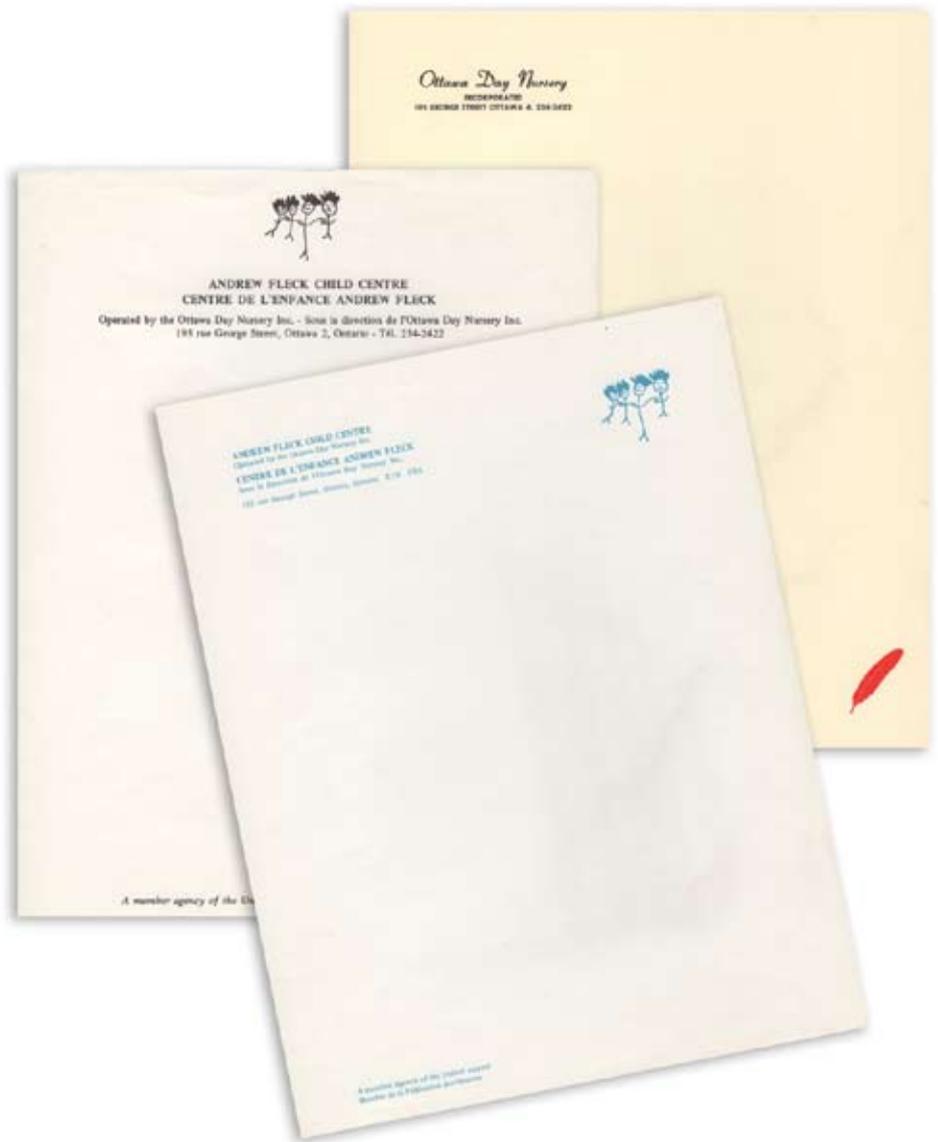
*As politicians frequently remind us, the voluntary sector is, or should be, a theatre of diversity and innovation, providing new approaches to service which can eventually be adopted or underpinned by government. Agencies such as ours recognize and accept the need to account for the public funds which support us, but we often feel that we have the worst of all possible worlds. We are, in effect, controlled by government, but are responsible for the consequences of that control. We are often under pressure to meet the demands of a multiplicity of government agencies while at times we seem to wait interminably upon their convenience.*

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In 1970, the fiftieth anniversary of its incorporation, the Nursery realized that its name had become obsolete. It had served the agency well before the Second World War. Since then, however, the Nursery had outgrown its original frame of reference and extended its services in directions not even contemplated fifty years before when the emphasis was on a custodial role. With the launching of many new programs came the recognition that a child was part of a family unit and that the Nursery's service was clearly supplemental to the parental role. As such, it was supportive of the entire family, be it a one-parent family and one child or a larger family. For the parental role to be shared, closer contact with families was imperative.

Contrary to the thinking that still existed in many quarters, working parents were not too busy to participate in agency activities. They could now join in parent-teacher interviews and serve on board-staff ad hoc and continuing committees. They could also serve on their own planning committee for all parent activities or on the Board of Management, just as they could man information booths at public functions, be interviewed by the press, or attend seminars and conferences (in June 1971 three parents would become registered delegates to the first Canadian Conference on Day Care, held at the University of Ottawa), thereby becoming ever more knowledgeable about the Nursery and its role in the community. Particularly invaluable to some sole-support mothers was a parent discussion group led by one of the Nursery's social workers. As a result of their participation in this



group, the parents acquired a greater understanding of both themselves and their children. In recognition of all these many changes, the agency decided to change its name.

*Letter head showing name changed*

In January 1970 all board members were sent a memorandum that asked them to choose a new name for the agency. Three possible names were presented for their consideration. Nevertheless, not all members indicated a preference by the time the Board of Management met on February 17. At that landmark meeting, board member and lawyer Alan Winship pointed out that it would be much simpler and less expensive for the agency to continue to operate for business purposes under its current name; otherwise, a new seal and letterhead would be required, among other things, and the present name would appear on letterhead paper in a secondary position under the new one.

If the agency changed its name but continued to operate for business purposes under the old name, however, it would be required only to notify the province of the change in title. After some discussion, Helene Tolmie moved that the Nursery adopt the name "Andrew Fleck Child Centre". This suggestion was seconded by

Margaret Rowan-Legg and carried. Anne Carver then moved that the agency arrange the change of name without altering its incorporation as the Ottawa Day Nursery - that the agency become the "Andrew Fleck Child Centre," operated by the Ottawa Day Nursery Inc. Mrs. Nixon seconded this motion, and it was carried. With this move, the agency acquired a new name that both recognized its greatly expanded mandate and honoured the family to whom it owed so much.

To mark the Centre's fiftieth anniversary of incorporation, parents of children in its care decided to hold an open house to which all former students and parents who could be located would be invited. At an invitation bee, the parents wrote up and mailed invitations whose covers has been constructed and coloured by Nursery children. Several organizational meetings were held and, finally, the night before the grand event, the organizers assembled to make sandwiches and punch for refreshment.

Although board members had decided to change the Nursery's name earlier that year, they did not use it officially until the day of the open house. On that occasion, the playground, which had been renovated during the summer break, was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony performed by the youngest child in the agency's care and one of the earliest members of the Board of Management. Some two hundred people, aside from the organizers, attended the event. According to Erna Coleman, the proud head of the parents' committee, it was a smashing success. Inspired by the open house, some parents volunteered to form a Parents Planning Council to arrange meetings that would interest all the parents of children in the agency's care. This suggestion led to monthly meetings with Charlotte Birchard to discuss developments at the Centre and to determine if there was anything that it wanted the parents to do.



The year 1970 was notable for still another reason: significant developments in the field of day care. Throughout Canada, day care was in the news. In June the Canadian Council on Social Development organized the first national council on day care and invited interested Canadians from coast to coast to discuss common concerns. Several Andrew Fleck Child Centre board, staff, and parents were directly involved both in the planning and the running of the conference program. In addition, the Centre was visited during the conference by a large number of out-of-town delegates.

Concern for child care was also reflected in

important federal and provincial legislation. New federal income-tax legislation allowed personal income-tax deductions of up to \$500 per child (\$2,000 maximum per family) for the costs of child care. At the provincial level, the *Day Nurseries Act* was amended to provide assistance in two additional areas: the province would now cover 80 percent of the costs involved in the construction of new municipal day nurseries; and it would also absorb 80 percent of the cost to municipalities of providing or purchasing family day-care services, now called "private home "day-care services. This last provision was of particular interest to the Andrew Fleck Child Centre because it promised the means of funding a continuing Family Day Care program as a full-fledged service when the demonstration project ended.

These developments were not the only breakthroughs in children's day care in 1970. The Royal Commission on the Status of Women, reporting in December, issued far-reaching recommendations relating to the development of a nation-wide network of day-care services. At the national level, both the Canadian Council on Social Development and the Vanier Institute of the Family devoted time and resources to the study of various aspects of day care. At the provincial level, the Ontario Welfare Council's Action Committee on Day Care concerned itself with representations to government for the needed amendment of day-care legislation. Developments were also taking place at the local level. At all these levels national, provincial, and local board members, staff, or parents from the Andrew Fleck Child Centre were involved.

The recent amendment of the provincial *Day Nurseries Act* heralded the implementation of a permanent, fully fledged Family Day Care program at the Andrew Fleck Child Centre in 1973. Anne Mozersky, who began working for the program that year as a social worker (she retired in July 2010), recalled that, in those early days, its entire staff consisted of herself and Isobel MacKenzie, who was hired as an early childhood specialist and became the program's supervisor. Now called a Home Child Care consultant, Mozersky's job, then as now, was to arrange, monitored, in-home child care for children from infancy to ten years of age in the home of a child-care provider. The two workers were tucked away in the back of the old Annex, where they worked amid the authentic din created by lively kindergarten children.

Like everyone who works in this program, in the beginning Mrs. Mozersky was overwhelmed by the complexities, responsibilities, and possibilities of the job. Included in these early



Anne Mozersky, home child care consultant from 1973 to July 2010

responsibilities was instructing Family Day Care providers individually in child care and child development in their own homes. One tool in her kit box was a family day-care newsletter that she could distribute to Family Day Care providers. Compiled by day-care staff, it contained helpful hints for play materials, cooking recipes, ideas for places to visit, and news of programs both at the Andrew Fleck Child Centre and other places. She was also assisted in her demanding task by two volunteers from the Centre's board of directors. Not content just to preside on the board, they visited with children in the homes of day-care providers.

With so many cultures and backgrounds represented in this program, good communication can easily become a challenge. Mrs. Mozersky recalled a caregiver who was frustrated because two little girls would arrive every day at her home all dressed up. They would be attired in party clothes, shiny patent leather shoes, frilly white socks, and pink, ruffled dresses. A great outfit to meet the Queen, she thought, but not suitable for a child going to the park, playing in the sand, and painting. The caregiver asked the mother many times to dress the girls in play clothes, with no result. In the end, she simply changed the children during the day into play clothes that she provided. Then, towards pick-up time, she washed the youngsters and dressed them in their own clothes before their mother arrived. Finally, Mrs. Mozersky arranged to meet the mother to discuss the situation. After the Home Child Care consultant explained why it was important for the children to be dressed for sand play, the mother said, In my country only poor children play in the dirt. Once she said that, the misunderstanding was clear, and Mrs. Mozersky and the mother could talk about it.

When the agency celebrated its eightieth anniversary, Karen Swinburne, who trained and monitored caregivers in their homes, was interviewed by a reporter. She explained that Andrew Fleck had the largest new-Canadian contingent in Ottawa and that she had recently helped to complete a training program for people who were not only learning English but also seeking a caregiver's licence. The multicultural program is really one of a kind. We've sent it across the country, she observed.

As the Family Day Care program expanded in Ottawa, more programs were introduced to allow parents to place their children in licensed, monitored homes that adhered to the regulations of Ontario's *Day Nurseries Act*. In 1978 the Andrew Fleck Child Centre provided this type of care for 387 children in 269 homes throughout



eastern Ottawa and the City of Vanier. As the program grew an office in south end of the City was opened in 1986 on Heron Road managed by Pam Waddington. Seven years later the program served 490 children. About 89 percent were from single-parent families. To provide service to francophone and anglophone families alike, the Centre initially employed two francophone staff and three other staff members who were competent in French.

from left to right  
*Pam Waddington, 1976-2005*  
*Karen Swinburne, 1974-2002*  
*Isobel MacKenzie, 1973-1993*

In 2007 Neeka Barnes became the manager of Home Child Care. She had previous ties to Andrew Fleck: in 1978 she began to provide home care for children herself through the program, but was soon encouraged by her consultant, Rae Smith, to complete the Early Childhood Education Program at Algonquin College. Later, she became the coordinator of the Home Child Care Program in the Continuing Education Studies Program at the college. This journey has now brought her back to the place where she began her career in child care three decades ago. Over the years, other child-care providers have also become staff members in many of Andrew Fleck's programs an indication of the strong partnerships that providers develop with the agency.

In 2009 Home Child Care celebrated its fortieth anniversary. There are now some 140 child-care providers who look after an average of 555 children each day; approximately 25 percent of the families require non-traditional hours. To acknowledge the importance of the providers in the early learning and care sector, Louise McGoey, on behalf of the Board of Directors, sent them all a congratulatory letter:

***"The Andrew Fleck Home Child Care program has been in operation for forty years. We could not have undertaken and achieved our level of success without the care that providers have offered over the years.***

***There are never enough opportunities to express our appreciation for the partnership that we have with you to provide high quality early learning and care for all children. We want you to know that we greatly appreciate your professionalism and commitment to families.***

***Our agency serves approximately 700 children every year. The care that you provide ultimately supports parents in fulfilling their career goals and opportunities as well as enabling them to provide for their family's needs. In addition, the unique nature of home child care is advantageous for families as they have the opportunity to work extended hours and their children benefit from smaller group sizes. We recognize that the care you provide is a second home for children. Your attention and nurturing relationship with the families in care have not gone unnoticed. We thank you for your dedication, the wonderful home environment that you provide, the hugs and special moments that you share with children.***

***We are looking forward to the continued success of licensed home child care and our partnership with you to provide the Ottawa community with the best care available."***

*When I was a mother of twins and quite desperate for child care (not many providers are comfortable taking on twin boys) Pam Waddington and Andrew Fleck were our lifesavers. Pam came through; she went through the files and convinced a caregiver, who had been quite intimidated by the thought of caring for twins, to agree to take care of the boys for six weeks until they found a permanent caregiver. They didn't have to look again as the six-week caregiver ended up providing a loving second home to our sons until they started school and I was home with our third child on maternity leave.*

**Charlyn Monahan, RECE**

Andrew Fleck's Home Child Care department has established several significant partnerships with other similar agencies. One is with the Licensed Home Child Care Network of Ottawa, which was established in the 1980s to link sixteen such agencies in the Ottawa area. The City of Ottawa Community and Protective Services, Child Care Subsidy Program is also part of the network. The group meets every month to discuss home child-care issues related to providers and to

advocate for children and their families. The network includes many subcommittees, such as the Education and Training Committee. Through this committee, the Home Child Care sector is developing an accreditation process that will support agencies to provide the highest level of quality care for children. The network also established two city-wide training programs that Andrew Fleck helped to establish the Home Child Care Training Ottawa program; and the "I Care for Kids, I Care for Quality Self-Assessment Tool" for providers.

Through the network, licensed Home Child Care agencies developed a partnership with the Ottawa Catholic School Board in 2002 to pilot a three-year project to support children entering kindergarten. It was a logical fit, because Home Child Care consultants were already visiting families in most Ottawa communities. During these visits, consultants assess the child's readiness for school and suggest ways that parents can best support the child's development before school begins. In some cases the consultant will refer parents to community resources such as First Words, Ontario Early Years, and to the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. At the beginning of the school year, consultants are available in the classroom to provide additional support to children and the teachers.

Andrew Fleck offers several playgroups in the community. Partnerships with local churches, other child-care services, and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board have been maintained for many years to ensure that providers have opportunities both to meet with each other and to access support services that enhance their own child-care programs. Home Child Care staff members are also involved with external committees and boards in the community, including the South East Ottawa Community Health Centre and Better Beginnings, Better Futures. In 2007 they participated in the provincial train-the-trainer program Reaching In, Reaching Out, which teaches child-care staff to help children enhance their resiliency skills.

In 2008 the Home Child Care department of Andrew Fleck began work on a strategic plan to guide it through to 2013. Staff soon realized that they needed to review policies and procedures and adapt to the changing landscape in the child-care sector. The implementation of full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds in Ontario, along with the expectation that extended day programs will be available in all school locations within the next five years, will increase the availability of spaces for younger age children. Fleck advocates such as Home Child Care manager

Neeka Barnes and supervisor Cheryl Nolan hope that there will also be changes to the licensing requirements - to raise standards and expectations, increase access for families, and enable self-employed providers to earn a respectable living.

By 2010, the Home child Care program had a staff of nine consultants, a manager, a supervisor, an administration support person, a contract delivery person, a play-group leader, and a resource worker.

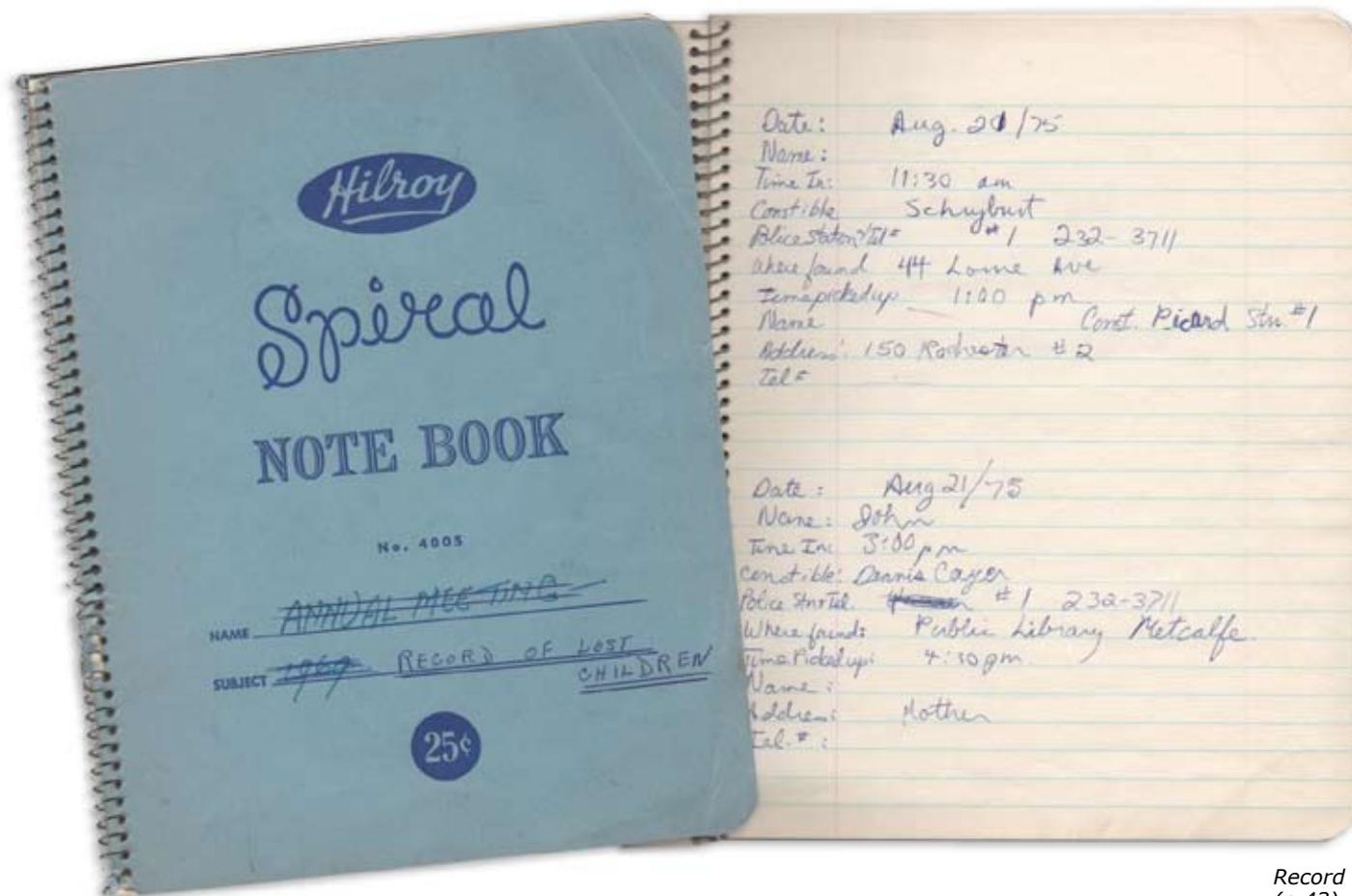


The Before-and-After-School program in the Annex underwent a conversion in 1973. It became a kindergarten program for children attending half-day kindergarten in the area. Fortunately, salaries for teachers at the Centre were now competitive: beginning in 1971, they underwent a substantial increase that brought them in line with the scale established by the Ottawa Nursery School Association. The Centre's basic rate of pay was now close to the starting salary given to similarly qualified elementary school teachers. Teachers with a university degree or special training in music and art received an additional allowance.

When Mary Laing was appointed director of the Ottawa Day Nursery in 1949, she began the tradition for excellent directors to remain in office for significant periods of time. Charlotte Birchard, who resigned in late 1977, served as executive director for fifteen years. She was followed by Rosemary Somers, who filled the position for sixteen years. A warm and politically savvy social worker, Mrs. Somers had trained in the United Kingdom, where she worked in mental health and with mothers of newborns. In Canada, before coming to the Andrew Fleck Child Centre, she was employed by the Medical Centre of the Department of National Defence. Like Mrs. Birchard, she soon became involved in the community and worked hard to make the Centre grow. The agency had to expand if it was to meet the continuing needs of children and families in the region - and expand it did during her term of office. Indeed, this dynamic, visionary manager with kid gloves would preside over not only the unionization of the Centre's paid staff but also the implementation of several new and important programs, some of which were located in outlying areas.



Rosemary Somers, Executive Director from 1978 to 1994



Record of lost children (p.43)



*Outside the car: Sandy Lafave, Denise Chadala, Anne Ricard, Cheryl Nolan, Kathryn Wilson*

*Back Seat: Kathryn Maloney, Shelley Vermette, Mary Duff*

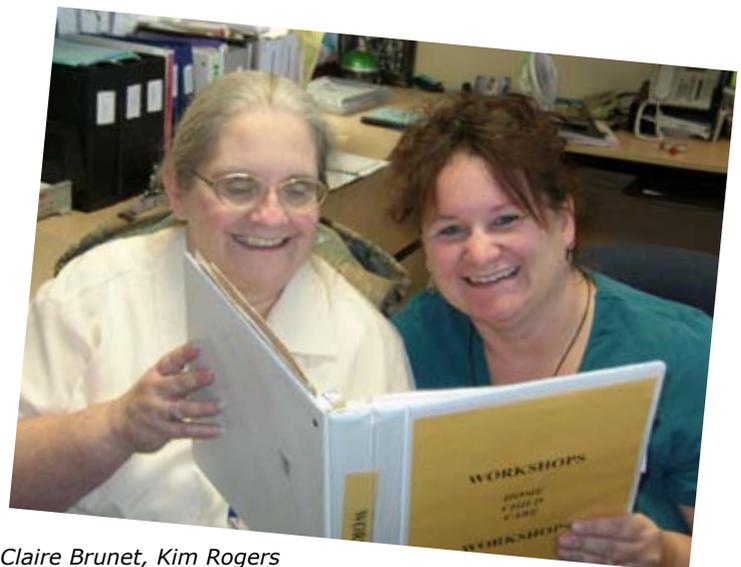
*Front Seat: Kim Rogers*



*Susan Conner.*



*Jean Brockwell*



*Claire Brunet, Kim Rogers*



CHAPTER THREE

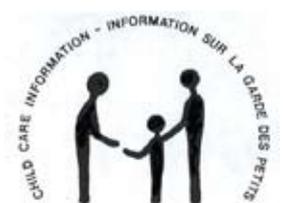
# Blazing New Trails

On taking up her new position at the Andrew Fleck Child Centre, Rosemary Somers faced two major challenges: lengthy union negotiations and a massive overhaul of the Centre's aging building and adjoining playground. Unionization, which she supported, proved to be by far the more demanding.

Although municipal day-care centres dating from 1972 had been unionized for some time, private facilities still remained outside the union fold. In the summer of 1978, however, a drive to unionize Ottawa's private day-care agencies got under way. When 70 percent of the Fleck Centre's staff expressed support for the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the Board of Management agreed that October to negotiate. After twelve months of strenuous, time-consuming talks, the Centre signed its first collective agreement. An overall improvement in the agency's compensation followed immediately, including group life insurance, adequate provisions for sick leave, an annual month-long holiday for all staff members, and staggered pay increases that would boost salaries to municipal levels within three years.

A combination of financial circumstances – a bequest, additional funds from the city's Day Care Reserve Fund, and a healthier financial position in 1978 – enabled the Fleck Centre to continue to refurbish and redecorate the building at 195 George Street. Even more important, the forlorn-looking playground – a perennial source of concern – was vastly improved. In November the cement covering the ground was replaced by grass, sand, trees, and bushes. This revamped area was much appreciated not only by the children registered at the Centre but also by the occasional "lost" children. Ottawa constables delivered these youngsters into the agency's temporary care when they ended up at police stations. The Centre had been providing this service for many years, and, in 1978, it cared for four lost youngsters in all.

Continuing its practice of responding to community needs, in July 1982 the agency established a child-care information program. Many people who were looking for information about child care contacted the Andrew Fleck Child Centre simply because its name was the first to appear under "child care" in the Ottawa telephone directory. This information program was designed



Local 2204 Child Care Workers



*Helen Brown, Board member 1980 - 2008; Lyn Williams, staff; Rosemary Somers, Executive Director; Linda Clippingdale, Board member 1986 - 1992; Dr. Harry MacKay, Board member 1981 to 1989*

to help parents identify and choose good care for their children. It grew to include telephone and personal interviews, English- and French-language information booklets, and community workshops on child care. The service began answering inquiries in September 1982 and, by March 31, 1983, had responded to some 1,230 calls and made 1,300 referrals to day-care programs and nursery schools. In 1985 Child Care Information received a total of 4,468 requests for information and assistance (an increase from 3,363 calls the previous year). When a full-time bilingual telephone counsellor joined the staff in June 1987, there was a huge increase in French-language requests. By 2009 the number of inquiries had soared to 53,868.

*One hundred years - I remember celebrating seventy-five years - I also remember the renovation of the main building, union negotiations, interviewing Elsie. I remember AFCCS being approached by the Province to be the pilot project for integration of seriously challenged kids, and the eagerness with which we took to the task. To this day, I draw from my experience at AFCCS as a board member and president.*

**Pierre Gallant**

Jane Joy, a former manager of children's services for the City of Ottawa who was involved with Child Care Information for years, recalled the first Steering Committee meeting she attended in 1987. She remembered most vividly not the purpose or content of the discussion but the bowl of fresh strawberries on the table. "Now this was a cause I could really get behind," she thought, especially if it involved strawberries!" Over the years she watched the program grow tremendously as it became a vital source of information for parents looking for quality child care in the community. Fortunately, whenever it could, the former regional government provided additional funding and resources to the Fleck

Centre when it suggested innovative and well-researched ideas for new programs. The City of Ottawa, in recognition of the Centre's excellent administration and quality programs, has been equally supportive.

In planning and coordinating its new programs, the Fleck Centre relied on the monthly statistics it collected on requests for information and services. One program that grew out of this data was the Short Term Emergency Child Care that provided working parents with care for healthy and mildly ill children. The idea for this unique Ontario service originated with Dr. Harry Mackay, who in 1986 was the senior research adviser for the Canadian Council on Social Development, and from 1981 to 1989 a Fleck Centre board member.

To secure the initial funding, Dr. Mackay worked with Rosemary Somers, who became well known for her development of innovative and high-quality child-care services. Ms. Somers, like others in the child-care field, knew first-hand the dilemma faced by parents when regular care arrangements broke down or a sick child was unable to receive care in a day-care centre. In March 1987, with federal government funding, she introduced a small emergency service at the Fleck Centre called Short Term Child Care. In this program, screened caregivers looked after children either in their own homes or in a Fleck Centre Family Day Care home. When the provincial government offered funding for flexible child-care services in 1989, the Centre joined with the Children's Village of Ottawa-Carleton and the Gloucester Child Care Services to form a larger emergency child-care service, Short Term Child Care (STCC). A not-for-profit charitable corporation with a voluntary board of directors, it offered excellent emergency care with licensed providers. It also had a purchase-of-service agreement with the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton to provide care to the sick children of families receiving subsidized child care.



During its first three years of operation, the Short Term Child Care program established strong ties in the community and acquired a growing list of clients. When recalling this early period, Valerie Bryce, its first executive director, observed: "One of my greatest areas of satisfaction was providing care to families receiving subsidized child care, people who otherwise couldn't

afford this type of care, were in jobs where they could not be paid if they did not go to work or who didn't have family support. We were able to provide these families with high-quality, back-up child care."

One of the champions of the new service was Elsie Dzau Chan, the manager of Home Child Care Services at the Children's Village of Ottawa-Carleton and a future executive director of the Fleck Centre. She believed strongly that an emergency child-care service was necessary to meet working parents' needs and that all three agencies (Andrew Fleck, Children's Village of Ottawa-Carleton and Gloucester Child Care Services) should be equal partners in the Short Term Child Care program. When she moved on to the Fleck Centre, she strongly supported this commitment.

Although the program was a huge success, in March 1993 wide-ranging Ontario government cutbacks forced the termination of the three-year pilot project and the closing of its office. The program could not survive on client fees alone. If it were to continue, its organizers had to devise an alternative and viable funding structure. Support from a consortium of public and private-sector organizations held out the most promise. As it happened, one such organization, the Ottawa Civic Hospital, had already linked up with the program when it negotiated a pilot emergency child-care contract with the service for its nursing and administrative staff. Determined to create a new funding structure, the Short Term Child Care board and its hospital partner began exploring new ideas and opportunities. In the absence of Canadian models, they looked at those in the United States, which had several work / life initiatives in operation. A New York service – a consortium of fifteen organizations that had partnered to obtain emergency child care for their employees – caught the team's attention. The Ottawa partners decided to develop a consortium similar to the New York one, but initiated from within the community and supported by both public and private funds. To this end, the board and the Ottawa Civic Hospital led a series of community consultations with more than fifty organizations and individuals in Ottawa-Carleton from the fall of 1993 through the winter of 1993-94. After intense consultation and negotiation, the new Short Term Child Care program and the National Capital Region Emergency Child Care Consortium (NCR-ECCC) were formed in June 1995.

In addition to the Ottawa Civic Hospital, the charter members included private companies, Nepean Hydro, and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. In 1998, with start-up funding

from the Trillium Foundation, the Short Term Child Care program also began to provide regular child care for Interval House, a shelter for abused women and children. In the years ahead, other funders would join the initiative to support women's shelters. And, on November 1, 1999, Short Term Child Care ceased to be a separate corporation when it became a fully fledged program of Andrew Fleck Child Care Services – a year after the release of the research report *Emergency Child Care: Its Impact, Practice and Innovation – A Canadian Story*.

This community-based program is designed to serve families' needs twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and to offer care in either English or French. If a child is sick, care is provided only in the child's home. When regular child-care service is interrupted, licensed home-based and centre-based child care becomes the available options. In all cases, skilled caregivers are carefully screened and trained to provide short-term emergency care. Employers / organizations / unions pay an annual access fee that entitles their employees or members to participate in the program. Parents who use the service are charged a reasonable fee, which may be subsidized partly or fully by their employer or union.

The Employee Child Care Assistance Project was another new and exciting service that traced its beginnings to this period. Designed, said Lyne Tremblay, the manager of Child Care Information, "to offer tools to employees to balance work and family life," it was launched in 1990 with funding from the Child Care Initiatives Fund of the Department of National Health and Welfare. In 1991, after the fund was abolished, the program became financially independent. It signed contracts with a number of Ottawa-Carleton employers, including the federal government, to provide child care and parenting workshops. That same year it staged a conference that brought together more than sixty employers to discuss strategies and services to assist employees with children. This conference



Lyne Tremblay, Manager of Family Services which includes Child Care Information, the Centralized Waiting List, Short Term Child Care

Work and Family Partnership Conference



was the first to be held on employer-supported child care in Ottawa-Carleton. Another early highlight was the project's involvement in the planning and start-up of Dow's Lake Daycare, a forty-space pre-school centre for families employed by Agricultural Canada and Energy Mines and Resources which opened in 1992. Two years later, under the title of Work and Family Partnerships Program, it was expanded and restructured. By 1997 it had achieved its three-year business goal of financial self-sufficiency. In 2001 the program was known as the Child Care Consulting Services.



As a result of their efforts, the Children's Integration Support Services (CISS) was established – a service for both the francophone and the anglophone communities. Its guiding principles, formed after community review, continue to guide the Fleck Centre:

- All children have special needs at certain times.
- Supports must be available throughout the system to ensure that children have access to them as required.
- The nursery staff should be provided with the support and resources necessary to respond to the needs of children, thereby enabling them to reach their optimum level of development.
- Parents must be recognized as the primary and long-term case managers who should be involved as equal partners in decisions affecting their child.
- An integrated system is required which is flexible, responsive, and able to fulfill the needs of all pre-school children and their families.



Following a two-year community review of the integrated program in Ottawa-Carleton in 1989, along with the completion of the program review of the Ottawa and District Association for the Mentally Retarded Preschool Support Program (ODAMR) the same year, the Andrew Fleck Child Centre was presented with another opportunity: the operation of specialized pre-schools. Once the Association had decided it would no longer operate specialized pre-schools, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Regional Municipality had to find a suitable agency to take on this responsibility. Given its record in the community, the Fleck Centre was the ideal candidate. It helped that its executive director, Rosemary Somers, was a trail-blazing social worker who had participated in the development of the Child Development Clinic in the early 1970s. She

*When I arrived at Andrew Fleck in the mid-1980s, I was unaware that I would leave with a basketful or should I say teapot of memories. As a French Canadian, I was certainly in the minority and I quickly learned that at around 3 p.m. every afternoon time stood still while everyone headed to the kitchen to have a cup of tea. Not the vulgar bag quickly dunked in a cup but a strong, sturdy tea, steeped in a good old-fashioned Brown Betty. This came as a shock to me as I was a coffee drinker but after weeks and months of this ritual, I came to look forward to it, so much so that when I moved on to my next job I instituted the same custom in my new workplace and one of my first purchases was a brand new Brown Betty.*

**Suzanne Dugas**  
**La Cité collégiale**  
**Director, Children's Support Services, 1990-1995.**

understood the necessity for early identification of children diagnosed with special needs and the support needed for parents of these children. Two of the board members shared her views and compassion: Helen Brown, who had worked with her as the psychologist at the clinic, and Dr. Ann Croll, a psychologist from the Ottawa Separate School Board. Together they worked to integrate children with special needs, with extra support, into regular child-care programs.

These principles were visionary at the time and moved the child-care community away from a segregated model where pre-school children diagnosed with special needs had to travel long distances to find the support they required in both segregated and integrated programs. In 2010, in contrast, parents are supported with information and knowledge that will assist them in making informed choices about child care which are based on their and their child's needs. It is accepted that support should continue to be flexible, able to adjust to the changing needs of children and their families.

Ms. Somers's communications skills were a tremendous asset in the early development of the model for the Children's Integration Support Services, enabling her and the Fleck Centre to connect with key players in already established services and with parents, staff, and the community. She understood that change was difficult, but was able to get the right people to support this opportunity. She was assisted by the Fleck

board, which set up an Integration Steering Committee composed of staff, board members, and parent representatives. Its chair, Dr. Ann Croll, later observed: "We tried to be very respectful of the parents' needs and desires and to proceed on a timetable that they were comfortable with. Still, the diversity of opinion in the community made establishing this service a real challenge." Part of this disagreement stemmed from the continuation of the original model for inclusion – using part-time resource teachers in designated child-care centres – even as the new model was being developed and implemented.

In July 1991 the service took over the management of the specialized nursery schools previously operated by the Ottawa and District Association for the Mentally Retarded. One of these programs was closed because the children it served were attending school or were being integrated into licensed child care. The funding for this program was therefore used to implement the CISS model. Susan Spence, who was seconded from the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, and Moira D'Aoust arrived to find an empty office with two phones sitting on the floor. The instant they walked into the room, the phones began to ring. They exchanged a knowing glance, picked up a phone each, and set to work. As the need for families to have access to segregated schools lessened, more funding was redirected towards the increasing demand for services and support through the Children's Integration Support Services. It took time, but eventually the segregated nursery school at the John Butler Centre (1992), the Putnam Segregated Nursery School (1994), and the Cumberland Hub Segregated Nursery School (1996) all closed.

In 1997, when the province decided to download the responsibility for child care onto the municipalities, the Ministry of Social and Community Services centralized the funding for special-needs child care under the Fleck Centre. This decision meant that the funding for the remaining six resource-teacher community child-care programs, which had been transferred to the Fleck Centre, would now fund only the itinerant CISS model. Funding for purchasing speech / language consultation for the Ottawa-Carleton Headstart Association of Preschools (OCHAP) also became the responsibility of the Children's Integration Support Services.

The goal set by many parents of children with special needs had finally been realized: the opportunity to enrol their children in licensed child-care programs with appropriate supports in their own neighbourhood. The dollars that had

supported fifteen children in a half-day pre-school in the first year of the model's operation now supported forty-five children in programs that met both the children's developmental and social needs as well as the parents' child-care needs. The Children's Integration Support Services made the important decision to assist children from six weeks to ten years of age, thereby ensuring seamless support for families and their children.

Over the years, the Children's Integration Support Services would grow and evolve, as it continued to conduct program reviews and evaluations that engaged both parents and child-care workers. In 2003, for example, it published a manual, *Intervene before Reacting: A Positive Integrated Approach to Behaviours in the Child Care Environment*, followed the next year by the French edition, *Intervenir avant de réagir: une approche positive intégrée face au comportement de l'enfant en services de garde éducatifs*. All child-care agencies and early learning and child-care programs received copies of the manual, which was used to assess training. When evaluation and staff feedback identified gaps in services, CISS lobbied locally and provincially to have these deficiencies – and their possible solutions – brought to the attention of interested parties and funders.

The Children's Integration Support Services also supported changes in the network of children's services in Ottawa. Ontario's blueprint for restructuring services for children and adults with developmental disabilities, *Making Services Work for People*, was one such initiative. Another was *First Words*, an integrated system of pre-school speech and language services serving the City of Ottawa. CISS has been a member of the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Steering Committee, the Success by 6 Steering Committee, and the Blind Low Vision and Infant Hearing Screening Program. All these initiatives assist families who have children with special needs. CISS also boasts a long history of partnering successfully with other services. In 2007, for example, it completed a review of the Early Childhood Integration Support Services Program for the Community Living Association of the Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry area. To address a funding gap in services, CISS partnered with the Child & Youth Network at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) and the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) in developing a proposal to secure funding to provide nursing support for pre-school children who have complex medical needs. Regrettably, this gap in service still persists in 2010.



CISS Team, 2008

In 2008 CISS was asked to facilitate an initiative to explore models for recreation, leisure, and social programs for youth between the age of twelve and eighteen who have multiple and complex needs. This investigation led to a comprehensive report whose recommendations could be used by the province and the City of Ottawa to address this service gap and thereby reduce the social isolation of youth with special needs.

When the introduction of full-day kindergarten for four-year-olds was fast approaching, CISS's program supervisor, Sylvie Tourigny, and manager Moira D'Aoust were asked to serve on the Provincial Special Needs Reference Working Group, designed to support the Full Day Learning Implementation Committee. It was essential that this working group be established because families with special-needs children wanted to ensure that no steps were taken to limit their child's ability to attend full-day learning. The

fact that these two dedicated and talented Fleck Service staff were asked to join the provincial reference group attested to their skills and reputation in the early learning and care community. To reinforce its vital partnerships with families, the early learning community, and its community partners, CISS has hosted two dynamic conferences to inspire and celebrate inclusion and all that it encompasses.

Sharing knowledge has been an integral part of the Children's Integration Support Services. Over the years, it has helped both La Cité collégiale and Algonquin College to review course



content, expand course delivery, and design course content to support inclusion practices and principles. It has also provided guest speakers. When educators asked why sign language was used to bridge communication when a child was not hearing impaired, for instance, CISS responded by instituting an annual training plan whose workshops are attended by 1,700 people each year.

After one program review, the Children's Integration Support Services developed the Positive Outcome Program (POP). Initially this pilot project helped to support early childhood educators in addressing their concerns about children with challenging behaviour who had not been diagnosed with special needs. The service subsequently became an integral part of the CISS program, which employs two behavioural consultants for this purpose.

In its first year of operation, 1991, CISS supported forty-five children. By 2010 this number had grown to five hundred youngsters annually. The team consists of a manager, a supervisor, seventeen integration consultants, administrative support, a dedicated intake and resource coordinator, two behaviour management consultants, and a training and resource coordinator. Although Moira D'Aoust, a member of CISS's management team since 1991, and Sylvie Tourigny, on staff since 2002, have experienced many changes in the early learning sector, they continue to strive for effective inclusion practices for the benefit of all children and families.

As 2011 approached, CISS began making plans for a celebratory conference to mark its twentieth anniversary. It continued to explore ways to meet the complex requirements of children with special needs, their parents, and staff. As the early learning sector is once again being transformed, CISS staff envision a future where geographically based inclusion teams will be in place to assist supervisors in providing high-quality inclusive early learning environments for all children.



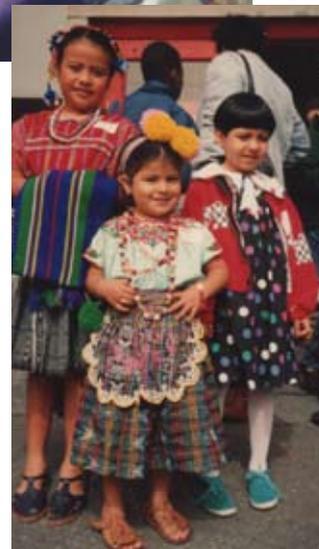
The year 1991 was also a year of expansion at the Fleck Centre, both in programs and in physical locations in Ottawa-Carleton. The implementation of the Children's Integration Support Services gave new urgency to the Centre's search for administrative space to handle the growth in programs. That year suitable, affordable space was eventually found at 294 Montreal Road. In June the administrative staff and the Family Day Care staff serving central and northeast Ottawa moved there, followed by the CISS staff. That al-

lowed the Group Day Care Program to move part of its senior program into the renovated former office space at 195 George Street.

Amid all this expansion, the board felt it was appropriate to change the operating name of the Centre to reflect the many services it offered to the community at various locations around the region. In June 1991 the title was officially changed to Andrew Fleck Child Care Services, with the Group Day Care



On September 18, 1992, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services celebrated its sixtieth year in the Andrew Fleck Memorial Building. Months of planning went into a reception for invited guests, followed by a big street party for adults and children on a closed-off portion of George Street the next day. The program included clowns, performers (such as the "Singing Policeman" Dominic D'Arcy), a barbecue, artisan stalls, a special café where children and parents in national costume served desserts, and performances by the New Star Children's Theatre Company, Kids on the Block Theatre, Highland dancers, and other groups. Activities for the children included games, pony rides, and face painting.



*Celebrating 60th year at 195 George Street and 80th years of AFCCS*

One parent whose children had been cared for by the Andrew Fleck Child Centre, but who missed the festivities because she was away in Africa, wrote in September 1992 expressing her gratitude for the help she had received years earlier:

Program at George Street continuing to use the previous name, Andrew Fleck Child Centre. The new name would not be legally changed, however, until 2003.

This growth spelled an increased role for Fleck Service's committees, charged with communicating and exchanging ideas and helping to set policy. Although the Ad Hoc Committee on Organization and Planning held its last meeting in September 1991, other committees were reconstituted or reactivated. The House Committee, renamed the Facilities Committee, was mandated to supervise the maintenance of the ever growing number of buildings owned by the agency in different locations. The Public Relations Committee scheduled regular meetings to raise public awareness of Fleck Service's role in the community.

*Summer of 1967 seems so long ago and yet some memories are always so fresh. As a recent single parent mother, I had gone to Andrew Fleck to have my children accepted. I was told that Wayne at 18 months was too young, he would have to wait until he was two. The thought of separating the children was heart rending. When I pointed out to Charlotte that he was toilet trained and well behaved she recanted. They were all accepted. In the years to follow this was my home away from home for my children. I could take them to the Centre and go on to school myself not worried about the quality of care they would be receiving during the day. They all had their favourite teachers and vice versa. At the end of the day love, healthy meals, discipline was [sic] the norm. This is just another one of my thank yous. And today, where are we all? ... Debbie, a Community Activist, Bobby, a Physicist, Jessica, a Marketing Consultant, and Wayne, a Social Worker. And me, the mother, an International Development Consultant. All of us have College and University education. I could not have received my degrees without Andrew Fleck taking care of my children.*



*Saturday, March 6, 1993 – Evelyn Gigantes, MPP, Tony Silipo, Minister of Community and Social Services, Al Looney, Chairperson from Social Services Committee and Pierre Gallant, AF President. Money awarded to do major repairs 195 George Street*

In 1994, a pivotal year, Andrew Fleck introduced pay equity for all its staff members, carried out a major renovation of 195 George Street, and formed new partnerships in the community with the opening of the Cornerstone Hub. It also experienced a change in leadership. The renovation was prompted by a 1990 architectural study which revealed that, although the aging building was structurally sound, its windows and its mechanical, electrical, and ventilation systems needed to be replaced. Work on the building began in November 1993, after the agency secured a financial commitment from the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, and the City of Ottawa. The renovations were proceeding well until a disastrous fire broke out on February 22, destroying the roof and attic. Fortunately, most of the costs were covered by insurance, and the renovations were still completed on schedule. By August, president Pierre Gallant and Rosemary Somers no longer needed to don their hard hats and rubber boots when they entered the building.

Even more important, the children and staff were able to return that month to their customary second home, now bright, better ventilated,



*Cornerstone Children's Centre, 2330 Don Reid Drive*

and equipped with up-to-date fire-protection measures. For ten months they had been coping with catered food, a poorly equipped playground, and security and cleaning problems at the temporary location in DeMazenod School. The official celebration took place on December 2, 1994, when friends and supporters gathered in the renovated building for a party. Despite the physical move and an unprecedented number of seven new staff joining the Group Program, the children and their families continued to receive top-notch service.

Another cause for celebration in 1994 was the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Cornerstone Children's Services building at 2330 Don Reid Drive. Intended to serve as the South East Ottawa hub, it opened the following year. Its space was designed to accommodate both Hawthorne Meadows Nursery School and two of the Andrew Fleck's programs: the Home Child Care Program and the Family Resource Centre (FRC), which provided play groups and a toy library offering infant toys, pre-school toys, toys for children with special needs, a large equipment rental service, and a resource library.

The Family Resource Centre occupies a spacious, sunny room in this building. Here, on any weekday morning and several afternoons each week, can be found happy preschoolers immersed in painting, constructing collages, or demonstrating their physical prowess on the climber and the slide. Other youngsters are in the housekeeping area, dressing up and engrossed in imaginative play. Babies, not yet ready to walk, play with stimulating, attractive toys and equipment in a specially protected area of the room. Next to the playroom is a well-stocked toy and game library, where, for a small annual fee, members may borrow equipment and toys for children in their family or for child-care groups. In 1995 a grant from the Ministry of Community and Social Services enabled the centre to expand its toy and game library, and the City of Ottawa renewed its



*Playgroup at Cornerstone*

sustaining grant for the school-aged toy library. In 1999 the Family Resource Centre, Short Term Child Care, Child Care Information, and Work and Family Partnerships were restructured to operate under one umbrella – the Family Support Services.

In 1994 there was a change in leadership at Andrew Fleck Child Care Services. Nearing retirement age, Rosemary Somers left in August to accompany her husband on a two-year posting with the World Health Organization in Switzerland. Before her departure she was feted at a party at City Hall, where 150 friends and colleagues gathered to honour her and express their appreciation for all that she had accomplished during her sixteen years at Andrew Fleck. In the words of staff member Nancy Bean, Somers had “taken a day care centre with its roots in the early 1900s plus a fledgling Family Day Care program and turned it into a multiservice agency model where parents [could] come to find a



*Rosemary Somers' retirement party*



*Rosemary Somers receiving the Award of Excellence in child care in Canada. By her side Nancy Bean and Lyne Tremblay, staff*

wealth of services to best meet their individual family needs.” In 1993 the Canadian Child Care Federation awarded Somers the Award of Excellence in Child Care in Canada.



Into Somers’s shoes stepped Elsie Dzau Chan who was appointed director of the Fleck Centre in August 1994. She held a degree in social work from Hong Kong University and had three years’ experience in the field before she immigrated to Canada in 1968. Once arrived, she built up wide experience in different parts of the country. Initially Chan worked with unmarried mothers at the Children’s Service Centre in Montreal. She next moved to Saskatchewan, first to Yorkton and then to Saskatoon, where she was employed by the Department of Social Services to focus on protection, child welfare, and social assistance. When she moved to Toronto, she worked with seniors at the Woodgreen Community Centre. In her last job before joining Andrew Fleck, she was manager of Home Child Care Services at the Children’s Village of Ottawa-Carleton. As executive director of Andrew Fleck Child Care Services, Elsie Chan wanted to see the agency expand, diversify its services, and strive for excellence in everything it did. She was also determined that it continue to be progressive, innovative, and responsive to the voiced needs in the community. For Chan, it was important that the centre play a leadership role in the child-care field and that it remain rooted in Lower Town, where it had always provided services to underprivileged families and their children. In performing these roles, however, the centre must also be a caring employer and be financially accountable and administratively efficient. In other words, it should attempt to balance a business focus with high-quality, responsive early learning and child-care services.



*Elsie Chan, Executive Director from 1994 to 2008*



Heather Lund

Some of these goals would be difficult to achieve. No sooner had Chan settled into her new position than the Conservatives under Mike Harris defeated Ontario's Liberal government in the 1995 general election. The political climate changed dramatically, and fiscal constraint became the order of the day. Many provincial responsibilities, including child-care funding, were downloaded onto already cash-strapped municipalities (January 1, 1998). For Andrew Fleck, the resulting reduced funding spelled severe cutbacks in its programs and great uncertainty about the future of child care. To make up for the shortfall in funding, the agency sought to develop new models of service delivery and to explore private sector partnerships. The realization of these goals owed much to the proficiency of the Manager of Finance and Administration, Heather Lund, who worked for the agency from 1984 to 2007.

Andrew Fleck Child Care Services thereupon restructured and expanded its consulting program, Work and Family Partnerships, removing it from the Child Care Information section and making it a separate entity with its own advisory committee. The agency's computer system was upgraded to enable it to create a website to market its services aggressively. To facilitate communication and improve services to its clients, the agency also acquired an email address – one of the first in the child-care community to do so. All staff members who required computer competency for their jobs attended training courses to enhance their skills in word processing, data management, and electronic mail. In 1996 the Home Child Care East Office, Children's Integration Support Services, Child Care Information, and the Work and Family Partnerships program were consolidated and moved to a relatively modern building at 700 Industrial Avenue, thereby improving both efficiency and staff morale. This new location had other

700 Industrial Avenue, Suite 600



benefits as well. Along with savings in rent, the space provided a more user-friendly, accessible, and client-focused environment.

Despite these positive developments, concern continued about the sustainability of the agency's programs. Both Ms. Chan and her management team were dismayed by developments on the political front and their implications for child care in Ontario. Some of their concern crept into the executive director's 1996 report:

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*The unprecedented review of the child care system by the Provincial Government dominated the agendas of all Ontario child care organizations in 1996 and AFCCS was not exempted. As an agency that prides itself for being innovative and responsive to community needs, it is not wedded to the status quo but has difficulty supporting changes that are regressive and erode quality and high standards.*

---

In an attempt to persuade the government to adopt a more progressive stance on child care, the agency met with politicians from all parties and participated in lobbying efforts across the region and the province. It also contributed to the restructuring discussions initiated by the different child-care sectors and submitted a thoughtful response to the "Child Care Review" document released by the Ministry of Community and Social Services in August 1996.

As a leader in the child-care field in Canada, Fleck Services not infrequently receives visits from foreign dignitaries. In 1997, for instance, an eight-member Japanese delegation visited the agency, eager to learn about the Child Care Information program. When the delegates arrived armed with gifts, the welcoming group faced an awkward question: "Should the presents be opened before or after their presentation?"



Japanese Delegation

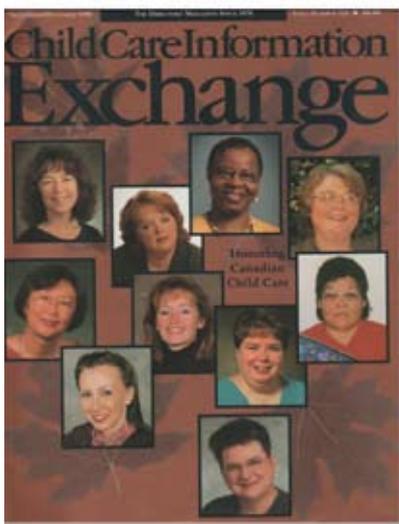


Madame Aline Chretien, wife of Prime Minister, Jean Chretien with Diana Fowler LeBlanc, wife of Governor General of Canada

A quick call to the Japanese Embassy provided the answer: the gifts should be opened right away. Canadian luminaries also visited the agency during the 1990s, notably Madame Aline Chrétien, the wife of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, and Diana Fowler LeBlanc, the wife of Governor General Roméo LeBlanc.

In 1998 the child-care spotlight shone on Fleck Services when two of its programs received official French Language Designation from the Ministry of Francophone Affairs. Child Care Information and the Children's Integration Support Services were both recognized by the lieutenant governor of Ontario as official providers of French-language services. There was also special recognition of another sort in 1998, when the respected American magazine Child Care Information Exchange profiled Elsie Dzau Chan. She was chosen to be one of ten Canadian

child-care directors featured in the November/December issue. In describing early childhood initiatives across Canada, the magazine saluted Fleck Services for its innovative programs, strong infrastructure, and the supportive team delivering its client-focused and inclusive child-care services.



Among these innovative services was Child Care Connect, a database for child care developed in 1998 for which Fleck Services holds the licence for the software. Indeed, the agency

*Celebrating 100 Years*



French Designation certificate

was one of the first child-care organizations to use information technology, initially to create a website, obtain a domain name, and develop a customized data-management system for its group and home child-care programs. Technology was next used to manage child-care information and a centralized waiting list. The new technology also simplified the operations of the Children's Integration Support Services.



New logo and web site designed by Jacques Anka from Graphik Anka



Riverview School Age Program

Among the inclusive child-care services was the before- and after-school program initiated in 1998 at Riverview Alternative School. As a result of provincial cutbacks to education funding, families in the agency's immediate service area (Riverview Park) had been deprived that year of school-age care. Fleck Services was quick to respond to the crisis. With little lead time, it worked with Riverview Alternative School parent council to develop a licensed program to meet the needs of children and families. The program immediately operated at full capacity, caring for twenty-seven children from four community schools.

The crowning event of 1998 was the purchase of the Annex building, which Fleck Services had been renting from the city since 1967. Negotiations to purchase the building at 185 George Street and secure the necessary financing from the agency's funders had been going on for years, but they took on a sense of urgency in 1997 after the City of Ottawa delivered an ultimatum. Eager for both parties to arrive at a fair and affordable price, Fleck Services mounted an intense lobbying campaign directed at the city councillors. On February 25, 1998, the negotiators finally agreed on a purchase price of

\$138,040. Once accomplished, the administration drew up a schedule for all the maintenance and upgrades required and launched a fundraising campaign to pay for them.

Another significant development occurred two years later. In 2000, at the request of the francophone community, Child Care Information began developing a francophone Centralized Waiting List for all the francophone child-care programs in the City of Ottawa. Parents interested in finding a French-speaking, licensed child-care centre and/or provider could then register on this one list and avoid having to place their child's name on multiple waiting lists. When Fleck Services began managing the list in 2001, it became the first organization in Canada to develop and implement a centralized waiting list.



Centralized Waiting List – logo on web site

Purchase of the Annex, 185 George Street



From the start, the agency planned to extend the service to the entire Ottawa community. It was not until 2005, however, that the infusion of cash under the "Best Start Plan," and leadership furnished by the city, made it possible to begin realizing this goal. Initially, Fleck Services spent an entire year consulting with a steering committee, listening to the child-care community, developing a database system and web access, and expanding Child Care Information to meet the list's requirements. The following year the expanded Centralized Waiting List was in operation, providing one contact point for parents seeking child care, reliable and accurate statistics on the demand for child care, and support to child-care organizations in managing their waiting lists.

The creation of this list was an enormous undertaking, but Fleck Services worked with its stakeholders to respond promptly to the identified issues. In the years since, the list has been expanded and refined. In 2008, at the request of the City of Ottawa, Child Care Information staff conducted a telephone survey of 550 active Centralized Waiting List clients. That same year, in consultation with Ontario Works, the agency reviewed and streamlined the list's application form to better serve the hard-to-reach population. To keep abreast of these developments, Fleck Services hired more staff. At the beginning, the staff dedicated to the list numbered 2.5; by 2010 the number had grown to eleven. At that point, the data base of parents waiting for child care recorded more than 350 licensed child-care services, composed of 250 child-care centres, 87 nursery schools, and 16 home child-care agencies. More than 18,000 children were recorded in the database, with an ever-increasing number waiting for placement.

Meanwhile, Fleck Services was also participating in an international three-year project representing a partnership of several non-governmental organizations in Canada and Argentina involved in education, support services for children, community development, and child protection. The project, which bore the cumbersome moniker "Innovative Child Care Practices for Children at Risk: Argentine and Canadian NGOs Learning Together," was funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The initiative sought to enhance the ability of its Argentine partners and their communities to provide quality child-care services in San Miguel, an economically deprived area in the outer suburbs of Buenos Aires. It was hoped that this demonstration site would help other communities in Argentina to improve the quality of their child care and protection services. As one of the initiative's sponsoring Canadian partners, Fleck Services helped first to develop the basic proposal and later played a leading role in training child-care workers in San Miguel.

In late 2001 the Ontario government announced a major new initiative: the establishment of Early Years Centres. These centres would support parents and caregivers by offering early learning activities and information on children's learning, behaviour, and health. Seven centres were slated to be established in the Ottawa area, and Fleck Services was selected and funded by the province to operate the one in Ottawa South. Following months of preparation and anticipation, the centre began serving clients in the spring of 2002. It offers a full range of English and French services to the Ottawa South



community, including training, information and referral, playgroups and drop-in programs, family and caregiver support groups, along with a resource library and a toy library.

*Ontario Early Years Centre – Ottawa South – 2330 Don Reid Drive*

Known as Ontario Early Years Centre: Ottawa South, the centre offers many of its programs in the Cornerstone Building at 2330 Don Reid, but, to deliver services at the neighbourhood level, it also has sites elsewhere in Ottawa South. Right from the start, its staff recognized the need to work with the community and to establish partnerships in delivering services with the Hunt Club Riverside Community Association, the Military Family Resource Centre, South East Ottawa Community Health Centre, and the City of Ottawa Early Years Program. In 2002 the Ontario Early Years Centre: Ottawa South served 585 families or caregivers and 600 children, providing service where previously none had been available.

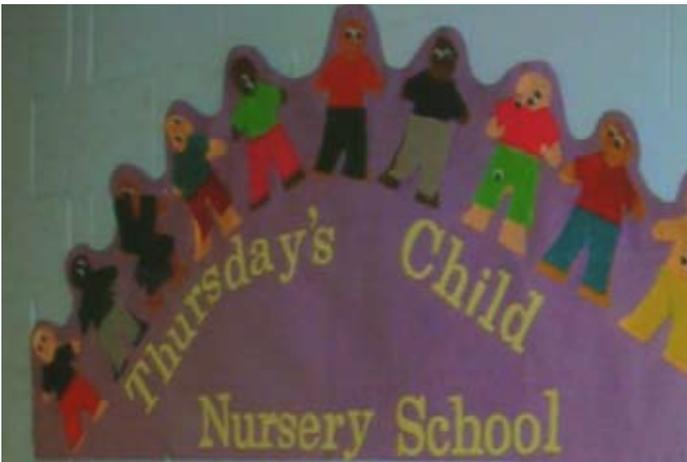
By 2009 these numbers had increased to 1,305 families and 1,735 children. In collaboration with the Data Analysis Coordinators of Ottawa, the centre consults data provided by the Census and the Social Risk Index to determine the needs in Ottawa South and the neighbourhoods at high risk. Using these findings, it searches for adequate space in which to deliver a variety of supports and programs in those neighbourhoods to ensure that all children have the same early learning opportunities and are able to begin school ready to learn. In their early learning programs, such as playgroups, families often have access to resources or information from Ottawa public health nurses or a dental hygienist, speech and language pathologist, lactation consultant, early literary specialist, and early years educator to help them in their parenting or caregiver role.

Early years educators play many roles at the centre. They help parents to connect with other

parents in order to minimize the isolation of being at home all day; they reassure caregivers about certain behaviours at particular ages; they guide new immigrants searching for child care or registering their child for kindergarten; and they teach groups of new parents how to make baby food or how best to navigate various stages in the sometimes challenging toddler years.

In 2004 the Ontario Early Years Centre in Ottawa South tripled the number of workshops it was planning to offer in the community. These workshops are open to parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators in a variety of settings: on site in a Fleck Services location, in the community at different events, or in a child-care setting or workshop. Today, the centre is heavily involved in the Best Start initiative, playing the leading role in the Best Start Planning Table for Ottawa South. In 2010 Kathy Knight-Robinson was appointed supervisor at the Ontario Early Years Centre in Ottawa South. She had been with the program since early 2006, and had good experience as an early childhood educator in multiple other programs. Thanks to her capable leadership, Fleck Services has diligently and creatively responded to the increased interest in all its programs and services.

autism spectrum disorders. Using a multidisciplinary approach, which includes engaging parents as partners, this program provides a high-quality, consistent, learning-through-play environment that meets the individual needs of the children. When Thursday's Child reviewed the program, family members praised the school. One enthusiastic parent observed: "Teachers are amazing, insightful and proactive and understand the complexity of Autism and individual child's needs." Another, whose son had been attending the school for two years, reported: "Before our son joined your school, he was absolutely anti-social. He was petrified of people, most kinds of noises and any type of gathering. Due to his diagnosis and subsequent behaviour we were in a very dark and hopeless place in our lives. Compared to where he was and where he is today, there is a huge improvement. I thank you for giving us hope." The early childhood educators who work with these children are assisted by an occupational therapist, a speech-language pathologist from the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, and a behaviour consultant from Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre. They enable the educators to provide a language-rich, sensory-supportive program that assists in the development of the whole child.



*Thursday's Child  
Nursery School -  
TCNS*

*Carolyn Lavigne,  
program coordinator,  
TCNS*

In 2002, at the request of the City of Ottawa, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services took over the management of Thursday's Child Nursery School (TCNS). As a result of restructuring in 2001, children's developmental services had been placed under the umbrella of the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre (OCTC). As a stand-alone program, Thursday's Child Nursery School thereupon became isolated and no longer financially viable. Fleck Services agreed to take over its management: the school was funded with child-care dollars, and some families still chose to use its particular services.

In 2010 the Thursday's Child program supported up to fifteen pre-school children from two to five years of age who had been diagnosed with

In 2006 funding was received from Ronald McDonald House Charities to help finance a multisensory gross-motor room known as the "Jane Boni Multisensory Room," in tribute to an occupational therapist who was committed to improving the lives of children enrolled in the program. This room gives the children a top-notch learning-through-play opportunity, and it can be altered to offer a variety of sensory and gross-motor experiences. The program coordinator in 2010, Carolyn Lavigne, noted that, when the children first entered the new room, two youngsters who did not relate to each other asked if they could climb into something best described as a stretchy pillow slip, an article designed to provide a "sensory hug" for the child inside it.

After they had each experienced a sensory hug, they interacted visually with each other, thereby persuading the staff that significant results can be expected from the program.

The evolution of Thursday's Child Nursery School has been partly guided by a planning process called "Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope." This process facilitates the participation of all stakeholders and, along with parental feedback, has helped to shape exciting changes in the program. The "Coffee House" mornings, for instance, support parents and provide an informal opportunity for them to share information with team members. These gatherings have been supplemented by topic-specific evenings at Fleck Services' main office – occasions that also allow parents to link with services provided at that location. One such service is the Children's Integration Support resource library. In time, Thursday Child's Nursery School will ideally be able to share a more centrally located facility with another early learning and child-care program, thereby supporting reverse integration.

In 2002 Andrew Fleck Child Care Services participated in the City of Ottawa's Task Force on Home Child Care and the Elora Partnership, a provincial consortium of multiservice organizations committed to regulated home child care. This participation was no surprise, given that the agency had always played a role in shaping policy at both the municipal and the provincial levels in the best interests of children in the Ottawa community.

By 2003 Fleck Services had served the Ottawa community for ninety-two years. Since 1911 it had evolved and expanded to provide a comprehensive range of child-care and family-support

services, all in response to the changing needs of that community. To meet these needs, it offered ten programs and operated out of six locations. In formal recognition of these developments, in 2003 the agency finally changed its legal name from the Ottawa Day Nursery to Andrew Fleck Child Care Services.

In September 2006 Fleck Services launched yet another new program, this time at Stittsville Public School. This initiative provided space for twenty kindergarten and thirty school-age children. With this move, the agency was able to meet the needs of this west-end community while also supporting the "Best Start" concept of integrating school and child care.



Stittsville Public School

Two years later, in 2008, the agency hired a full-time human resources specialist. With a staff complement averaging 120 full-time and part-time individuals, Fleck Services obviously required such expertise. Ronna MacPherson quickly immersed herself in the agency's daily operations, providing support to nine other managers. Communication among eleven programs in six locations sometimes poses a challenge, but the very competent administrative team, including financial manager Sharon Rye, dealt effectively with the day-to-day tasks presented by the agency.



While rolling out new services, Fleck Services was also planning for the future. The key priority was a new building, to replace the one it owned at 185 George Street, as it had come to the end of its useful life. In 2004, when the Board of Management decided to investigate replacing the Annex with a new structure, it requested a feasibility study, concept plans, and exploration

The image shows a scanned document titled "APPLICATION FOR SUPPLEMENTARY LETTERS PATENT" (REQUETE EN VUE D'OBTENIR DES LETTRES PATENTES SUPPLEMENTAIRES). The document is dated MAY 23, 2003. It includes a header with the number 17979 and the text "New/Old Corporation Number / Numéro de l'ancienne/nouvelle société". The document is a form with multiple sections, including a grid for the name of the applicant corporation and a section for the date of incorporation. The document is signed by a person whose name is partially visible as "Sharon Rye".



of funding options. Raising the funds for such a project would pose the greatest challenge, but the agency never lost hope that, one day, its dream of a model child-care facility would become a reality. In 2005 Andrew Fleck Services submitted a comprehensive funding proposal to



AF Soirée

the City of Ottawa and launched a major fundraising event, the Andrew Fleck Soirée, to support the building fund. The following year it staged a second Soirée. At this October function, guests enjoyed live and silent auctions, hors d'oeuvres, and dancing. All the money raised – \$23,442 – went towards the new facility. Elsie Chan met frequently with Ottawa's

city manager to negotiate the city's contribution to the undertaking. Ultimately the city stepped up to the plate and provided most of the funding for the undertaking, although a sizeable contribution came from the Andrew Fleck Child Care Service's Memorial Fund.

Robert Froom, the architect hired to design the building, soon came to share Elsie Chan's enthusiasm for the project. Robert Froom, the architect who designed the building and is a specialist in child-care facility architecture, soon came to share Elsie's enthusiasm-

Elsie Chan Building



asm for the project. For him it was the ideal commission because the building's design was innovative and exciting — an inspiration for similar facilities elsewhere. In fact, he and Elsie were so committed to the project that when they presented the architectural plans to the AFCCS annual meeting an exuberant executive director referred to their "mutual passion." No sooner had she said this than an embarrassed silence filled the room. Then the room broke into laughter when Elsie explained that she was speaking of her shared passion for the design of the new child care centre.

In 2010 the bright, functional Elsie Chan Building accommodates a toddler and a pre-school program for thirty-one children, each in its own self-contained area. There is an electric fireplace, to give the children an attractive, homey environment, and a kitchenette that functions not only as a meal preparation area but also as a learning area where older children can do some cooking and baking. The large basement provides space for laundry facilities, a rest area, an adjoining work station used by staff members, and a storage space for toys used by Home Child Care. A spacious outdoor play area allows the children to freely explore large outdoor play equipment. Except for a cement area where the youngsters ride their tricycles, the rest of the playground is covered with sand and wood chips. Kate Carradine, manager of the three group locations, was thrilled to see the building completed. Since joining the agency in 2003, she had experienced not only two moves, she had also coped with years of din and inconvenience caused by construction on King Edward Avenue.

After fifteen years of dedicated service, Elsie Chan retired as executive director in October 2008, knowing that Fleck Services enjoyed a sterling reputation both for its high-quality child services and for its sound financial management. To replace her,

the board chose Kim Hiscott, a dynamic and enthusiastic young woman from Ottawa's child-care community. After graduating from Algonquin College's Early Childhood Education program, Hiscott worked first as a pre-school teacher in the YM-YWCA's integrated headstart program, then in a new headstart program launched in the Pincrest Queensway Community Centre in Ottawa's west end, and, in 1988, she was appointed director of the program. She also became a faculty adviser for students on placement for Algonquin College. In the mid-1990s she joined Canadian Mothercraft, where she coordinated the home child-care caregiver training program. In 1999 she moved on to develop an employer-sponsored, not-for-profit, licensed child-care program on a high-tech campus. This position involved partnering with the local school board to offer an onsite kindergarten program. In the fall of 2008 she joined Andrew Fleck Child Care Services.

Hiscott soon realized that the organization's strength had always been its board, management team, and staff and their commitment and flexibility in responding to the ever-changing needs of families for good child-care services. She vowed to build on and continue this commitment. The first opportunity came in 2008, when Children Integration Support Services, at the request of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, supported a mini pilot project to assist two children with medical needs who required nursing assistance while they attended their different nursery-school programs. That same year the City of Ottawa and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services asked Children Integration Support Services to facilitate exploration of a model bilingual program to support youth with special needs who attend recreational, leisure, and social programs. In 2009 Fleck Services developed a partnership with Riverview Alternative School to pilot a seamless collaboration between child care and kindergarten in preparation for the full-day learning program. The agency also implemented the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) curriculum framework in all its programs to ensure a more comprehensive approach to child development and parent engagement.

With the support of current partnerships, Fleck Services began providing additional Ontario Early Years Centre services at Marius Barbeau School and also began offering the Children's Integration Services model of supports in the Petits pas à trois (Little Steps, Three by Three) program offered by the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est. Petits pas à trois is a French-language program for three-year-olds who attend

school half-days every school day. Children Integration Support Services also provides consultation, training, modelling, coaching supports, and resources to teaching teams at Petit pas à trois. The program was first offered in 2009 at three schools, but parental interest was so great that, by September 2010, it was extended to an additional seven schools, with CISS remaining an active partner.

The Fleck Services' greatest accomplishment in these years, however, was its focus on understanding itself – an agency of highly committed individuals dedicated to providing quality, inclusive services for children and families. After investing time in internal evaluations, strategic planning activities, communication plans, and external comparisons, individual teams and the agency as a whole felt revitalized and effectively connected. As such, they are well prepared to continue responding to the needs of children and families in the community.



*Kim Hiscott,  
Executive Director  
2008-*



As a full-service agency with broad community connections, both the board and the management of Andrew Fleck Child Care Services embraced the recommendations in the 2009 report, *With Our Best Future in Mind*, prepared by Dr. Charles Pascal, the special adviser on early learning, for Ontario premier Dalton McGuinty. The report sets out twenty recommendations on implementing full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds, improving education for children up to twelve years of age, and increasing support for young families.

*My experience working in the group care program opened my eyes to what child care was all about and how important the relationship with the families is. Now, as a parent of a four-year-old, I am still attached to AFCCS as my son has the support of the Children's Integration Support Services in his early learning setting. After all these years, it feels great to still be connected with AFCCS.*

**Robin McMillan, RECE  
Senior Consultant  
Canadian Child Care Federation**

The most successful and innovative societies of the future will also be the best educated, according to Dr. Pascal. More than one in four Ontario children who enter grade one are significantly behind their peers. Many of these youngsters



*Dr. Charles Pascal*

never close the gap and later become disruptive in school, fail to graduate, and are incapable of fully participating in and contributing to society. Ontario cannot satisfactorily meet the challenges of the new millennium if a quarter of its children are left behind in school. It is essential for the province to establish a strong learning foundation in every child's early years and build on it.

In his comprehensive plan for early learning in Ontario, Dr. Pascal outlines four key components:

- . Full-Day learning for four- and five-year olds. School boards will offer full-day learning for these children, starting in September 2010. The program will be available province-wide within three years.
- . Before- and after-school and summer programs for school-age children. This type of programming has been found to bolster academic success, particularly for disadvantaged children.

- . Quality programs for younger children. To support children and families during the earliest years of development, the report recommends that the many existing child and family programs be consolidated into a network of Best Start Child and Family Centres under the systems of management of municipalities.
- . Enhanced parental leave by 2020. Enabling parents to spend additional time with their baby creates a strong foundation for the child and decreases the need for costly infant care.

As Kim Hiscott sees it, this report inspires the child-care community "to dream big, to think of the possible and the positive, and to move from reflection to action." As part of the road to action, she served as a moderator at an educational forum in Toronto in the spring of 2010 and delivered a riveting power-point presentation on the concept of child and family centres. Dr. Pascal attended the workshop and, in his closing remarks, referred to her as a "brilliant and sophisticated child-care service provider who is a natural transformational leader."

With its professional staff and committed board, Andrew Fleck Child Care Services can look forward with confidence to meeting the challenges posed by the Pascal Report. It can confidently predict that it will continue to provide excellent support to children and their families by means of high-quality, inclusive services that meet their diverse developmental, early learning, and child-care needs. As Dr. Pascal observed, "Canada would be a healthier and more prosperous nation if all families has access to the quality of programming offered by AFCCS."

# HELEN GERTRUDE FLECK

Daughter of Rosalinda Cook and John Rudolphus Booth, Lumber Baron

## “MY GRANNY”

By Joan Barclay Drummond

1924 / 25 was a devastating time for Granny. She had lost her husband, her daughter and her father, all within months of each other. I believe that my birth, in February of 1925, gave my Granny a new life to cherish.

I was 2 or 3 years old when I recall my Granny. We arrived on the doorstep of 500 Wilbrod Street with my mother, Jean Fleck [Barclay], my dad, Gregor and my brother, Ian. It was then that my first memories of Granny were formed. There she stood arms outstretched, ready for a hug, in her long dress and BOOTS. Boots which I later found out were made especially for her. You see, she had very poor circulation. Oh, her boots were stylish, either laced or buttoned, but they were boots! She was a character!!!

One prerequisite of travel with Granny was that one must be well-behaved. I must have met the criteria because I went most summers to England and France with Granny. She had such wonderful and exciting stories to tell.

Her love and knowledge of the “classical” arts extended to the contemporary as well. She adored Maurice Chevalier, and Beatrice Lilly brought hysterical tears to her eyes.

From her Canadian home, one of Granny’s favourite outings was to Atlantic City, where she could relish and participate in the fun and excitement of the casino and auctions along the boardwalk. With a stop in New York City, on the way home, she would enjoy the musicals, the opera and the dramas - featuring the likes of Victor Borge, Carl Brisson and Edith Piaf.

Granny, unable to play sports herself, encouraged all of us to become involved in all forms of sports; be it hockey, football, golf or tennis; be we male or female. Granny loved to fish. Men-Wah-Tay, on Rock Lake in Algonquin Park was her favourite spot to drop a line. Her love of nature has been instilled in me, and I’m certain, in everyone she met along life’s path. If ever you stepped over the line with Granny, you WERE chastised, but a tender forgiveness always followed.

She never forgot the humble beginnings of her father, who arrived in the Ottawa area with only nine dollars in his pocket, a new bride at his side. Thus began Granny’s philanthropic endeavours, with her husband, Andrew Walker Fleck, supporting her - every step of the way.

Her philosophy has had a tremendous impact on my life.



# APPENDIX A

## Board of Directors 2010-2011



**Sitting:** Vera Brun, Mireille Fontaine, Louise McGoey, Connie Johnson, Gayle Preston

**Standing:** Kevin Butler, Susan Pisterman, Rachel Brouillette, Alex Rnic, Susan Johnson, Ann Croll, Janet McLaine, Dan Carson, Lise Ouimet, Monique Lussier, Gloria Blaker, Kim Hiscott

# APPENDIX B

## EMPLOYEES



### October 21, 2010 – Agency Wide Meeting

**Sitting:** Tanya Terrade, Pina Giovannitti, Sylvie Tourigny, Moira D'Aoust, Anjou Delplancke, Marie- Josée Landry, Kim Rogers, Sandy Lafave, Carolyn Lavigne, Leah Kiil, Sheryl Lee Curkovic, Sandra Crawford, Lyne Tremblay, Kate Carradine, Chantal St Louis, Rachel Juneau, Amanda Kovacs, Katye Donoghue, Bahereh Yazdani, Nancy Power-Fardy

**Standing (middle row):** Penny Miller, Lisa Sletcher, Sylvie Giroux, Jocelyne Desbiens, Sharel Stanley, Christine Stevens, Kathryn Maloney, Anne Ricard, Cindy Campbell, Mary Duff, Kathryn Wilson, Kim Hiscott, Sheri Iseler, Josée Arbour, Cheryl Brisson, Caroline Landry, Ronna MacPherson, Lucie Legault, Crystal McConkey, Michelle Halpin, Tracy Way, Deiss McDonald, Joyce O'Brien, Linda L'Orange, Zahida Begum, Sandy Desjardins, Tricia Fortin

**Standing:** Debbie Hanna-Jacklin, Rebecca Vosper, Darlene Donnelly, Nadine Ouellet-Scott, Susan Spence, Roxane Desjardins, Julie Kanter, Denise Chadala, Neeka Barnes, Susan Conner, Jean Brockwell, Cheryl Nolan, Maria Neves-Pantano, Danica Tourigny, Kathy Knight Robinson, Julie Fréreault, Annik Hurtubise-Leduc, Betty Stickl, Natalie Kent, Julie Cloutier, Mira Zarzycka Cwilka, Yvonne Thompson, Ginette Bédard, Mary Boileau, Jela Vojnovic, Lisa Carry, Greg Taylor, Tammy Linder, Lydia Burwell, Sarah Peterson

**Absent:** Claire Brunet, Ceilidh Caverley, Ainslie Curzon, Ingrid Fish, Susana Garcia, Nancy Hayes, Suzanne Kember, Cynthia Lessard, Suzanne Macdonald, Rory Magill, Adrienne McCallan, Jennifer Miller, Samara Rose Nadeau, Kendra Ray, Sharon Rye, Meghan Wright

**New Staff up to March 2011:** Kristina Baturan, Ana Bettencourt-Machada, Ernest Blais, Tessie Blouin, Karen Brown, Elizabeth Clifflen, Shauna Hanratty, Doris Hernandez, Lara Jones, Paul Landry, Brooks Leach, Jennifer Li, Clarissa Mason, Joanne Smith, Brad Snow, Emily Warrick

Thank you very much  
for your contribution to  
our commemorative history  
book! *Ky. Hiscott*



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e-mail: [canampainting@magma.ca](mailto:canampainting@magma.ca)



[www.oms.ca](http://www.oms.ca)

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Canada 

This project is supported in part by the Support for Interpretation and Translation sub-component at Canadian Heritage

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