

WALDORF CLEARING HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Spring 1972

GENERAL NEWS

From the Toronto Waldorf School -

"The Experience of Learning at Waldorf Schools"

The Waldorf School Association of Ontario has produced a 25 minute film (16 mm. colour with sound) on Waldorf education, intended for use to introduce our schools to new audiences. It is a "soft sell" for Waldorf, giving an impression of the learning experience, the three stages of child development and changing teacher/child relationships, and some aspects of the 12 grade curriculum. In a 25 minute film, one can hardly hope to do more than stimulate the desire of the viewer to know more. In this, the film seems to be very effective and has been enthusiastically received by Toronto audiences.

Filming was done at Toronto Waldorf School and The Waldorf School at Garden City, New York by a professional crew directed by Italo Costa, a Toronto film producer. Prints of the film are available for rental at a charge of \$10.00 per day or \$25.00 per week, plus shipping expenses, for live audience showings. Television and distribution rights are held by the Waldorf School Association of Ontario, Inc. For information write W.S.A.O., 51 Limcombe Drive, Thornhill, Ontario.

From High Mowing -

We are most excited about our developing farming and gardening program. The arrival of Richard Atkinson from the Sacramento Waldorf School just after Easter was just what we needed. He has taken on the coordination of the farming and gardening programs, and next year he will also teach English and do Developmental work in trying to raise an endowment for High Mowing. This spring groups of students are seen daily working on the grounds getting the gardens

into full swing. One group has finished a big pruning project in our apple orchard, and we are getting ready to make a Pentagonal Garden, similar to the one at the Sacramento School. Crocuses are poking their heads up all over campus to announce the long-awaited arrival of spring.

On the farm a new barn stands completed, housing four horses, three goats, and four sheep. Some fifty hens are providing us with eggs.

Structurally our new library stands completed with new home-designed tables, wall-to-wall carpeting, and picture windows facing west. We have approximately 4,000 volumes and are getting ready to make a list of "wants." This may be sent in as a contribution for a future Clearing House bulletin. If other schools would like to take the time to make lists of books they wish to discard, we will take the time to consider them.

Our big approaching day is May Day, Saturday May 27th, when, in addition to our traditional Midway and Crafts Sale, we will observe the 30th anniversary of the founding of High Mowing. In the evening we will give an almost all-school production of Mozart's The Magic Flute.

From The Waldorf School, Garden City -

The Waldorf High School's Literary and Gourmet Society began in 1967 with a Robert Burns banquet. Oliver McLaughlin, our Latin teacher at that time who has since returned to Scotland, organized the evening, complete with haggis, bagpipes, and Scotch poems, and so inspired an Evening in Ireland (1968), a Civil War Evening (1969), a Medieval Dinner (1970), An Evening with Solomon Rabinowitz (1971), and this February, An Evening with the Brothers Grimm.

The theme of the annual dinner is decided upon by the English department. All high school classes are involved in the organization and arrangements. Well ahead of time, the committees, shepherded by faculty, plan the menu with cafeteria's head, Kay Leiser, decide on decorations and entertainment, and develop the chosen theme. The Medieval Banquet in 1970 invoked a mood of the crusades, knights and chivalry, religious music and poetry. The Juniors performed the medieval miracle play, Noah's Flood. This winter's An Evening with

the Brothers Grimm, featured roast goose on the menu, and hand-painted murals of scenes from fairy tales decorated the cafeteria walls. The juniors, simply costumed, enacted with great enthusiasm several tales of long ago. The students rehearsed as part of a daily English class with Andrew Leaf.

This annual evening, involving the effort and cooperation of all the high school faculty and students, draws on the talents of many, from the preparation and serving of food, to the end-of-evening clean-up. It has become one of the favorite social events of the year.

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Notes on a Paperback Book Fair

Perhaps you have held a paperback sale in your school and have been appalled by the books you received when you ordered by category such as sports, classics, or easy readers. Perhaps you have never held a sale and have not seen the joy children take in selecting and owning books.

There are many companies offering Fairs; most require no inventory, pick up all unsold books, and allow the school a profit of twenty per cent on all books sold.

The key to a good Fair is selection. If you order at least six weeks in advance, you may pick the titles you want. You may have to ask your dealer for his list. For younger children, quality books are put out by Dell YEARLING and Harper TROPHY, from which companies it is safe to order without designating titles.

Even when we had ordered by title, not all books arrived, and some undesirable substitutes had to be culled out; so order plenty.

Our Fair was open all school hours for two days. Three parent volunteers took turns as cashiers. A few seniors helped escort younger children. Librarians set up the Fair and helped children select.

On the first day, grades three through twelve came to the library at stated times to buy, reserve, or order extra

copies. At the end of the first day, extra copy orders were phoned to the dealer for delivery during school hours the next day.

The final day we took no orders, and all sales were for cash. This left no business to carry over after the fair was closed.

We were unprepared for the onslaught of eager lookers before school and during every recess. The younger children were the most enthusiastic. Could this be because they have more time to read for pleasure? Perhaps they are seldom taken to a book store. Some were content just to look and make lists for future birthdays. None seemed disappointed in his purchase, and all were stimulated to further reading. It was a strenuous but happy two days.

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Work Days in the Waldorf School

Usually the second Tuesday of each main lesson block is designated "Work Day." On that day a double period is set aside for one entire high school class (scheduled in rotation) to engage in some major effort for the benefit of the school's physical plant. In order to disrupt the schedule of studies as little as possible, the double period alternates morning and afternoon. The teachers whose classes are suspended for this time act as supervisors during the work period, under the leadership of our building superintendent. The students bring work clothes on that day.

Sometimes the entire class works on a single project. This year the Seniors carried every stage costume outdoors to racks where they brushed, aired, and sorted them, returning them to the costume room in the afternoon. (The double period was split to increase airing time.) In preparation for the new floor to be laid, the Sophomores spent a work day removing the old floor tiles and old cement from the 30' x 40' student room. More often, the class is split into smaller working units to do chores such as window washing, baseboard cleaning, compost spreading, leaf raking, transplanting, seeding, office work, etc. After the work day, each supervisor has been asked to report on the group's work. These reports are kept on file to guide us in the selection of future jobs.

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Operetta

In the gap between the basketball season and the beginning of gardening and outdoor sports, the high school concentrated its energies upon HMS Pinafore. For three weeks, five minutes taken from each period of the day and combined with the afternoon gym period gave a daily rehearsal time of about 90 minutes. Also during this time, scenery was painted and costumes were sewn.

Christiane Marissael, couturière extraordinaire, supervised the creation of the outfits for the sisters, cousins, and aunts, as well as short sailor jackets for the crew. Mme. Marissael cut each skirt, and a team of girls did the sewing. Several girls came to school in relays during one Saturday morning to complete the job.

Elizabeth Jennerjahn put a team of artists to work on an enormous backdrop, featuring the view off the port rail: the sky and sea illumined by a setting sun. For those interested in the technique, Mrs. Jennerjahn advises that photographic background paper (available in rolls 9 feet wide by 12 yards long) gives a more translucent effect than regular paper. For this project she recommends Artone poster colors made by Higgins Ink Company. Rolls of paper should be glued, where necessary, with Elmer's glue, never taped. The result is a backdrop strong enough to be moved and able to take frequent wetting in a mixture of wet-paper painting and veil painting. Preliminary sketches on the paper should be done with a light-colored wash and brush, not with pencil or chalk.

George Rose ably exercised his varied abilities as music director, stage director, and voice coach. Aside from one Sunday rehearsal and short coaching sessions after school for the leading roles, he was able to produce the whole operetta in three weeks.

From Denmark - (via a student who visited the Waldorf School, Garden City)

A new teacher training program will open September 1st, 1972, at Vidar Skolen, Rudolf Steiner Skolen, Brogardsvej 63, 2820

Gentofte, Denmark. The school will give a degree of kindergarten teacher in Rudolf Steiner pedagogy. The two year course includes 6 months of teaching in the school. Expected enrollment this fall is 24 students. The Director is Inger Laursen.

TEACHING IDEAS

Grade 3- Music

Introduction of the major scale in grade 3.

I am not much of a musician, but we did have a good deal of fun with this new aspect of our musical experiences, and so I'll pass it on.

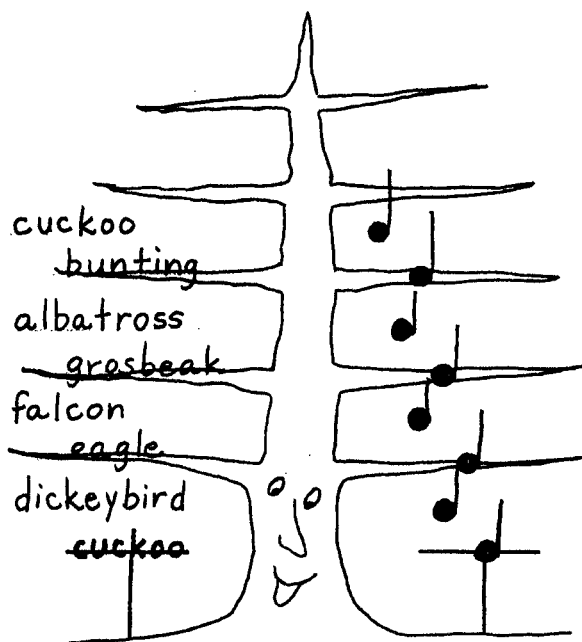
Background: In grade one, the children played the pentatonically tuned "Cantele," and in grade two, we began with the recorder. Most of our songs for the first 2½ years were pentatonic. The new element of the major scale, added in mid-grade three, therefore, was strongly experienced.

Steps in development:

- 1) October - A set of bells making a major scale; for each "Creation Day" in Genesis I, we rang a bell 3 times, lit a candle on the menorah, and recited the creative deed of that Day. The octave was rung for Paradise.
- 2) January - Sang the names of children in the class: Cameron, Dana, Erik, etc. Added adjectives: Ceremonious Cameron, daring Dana, eager Erik. (Great fun.)
- 3) Names changed into trees, into animals, birds, flowers. (Element of suspense: "What sort of bird would daring Dana change into?")
- 4) Concurrently we sang the initial letters; up slowly: CC DD EE, etc., down quickly: CCCC BBBB AAAA, etc.
- 5) During this time the children learned the eurythmy movements for the C major scale. C = "the tone of light,"

D = "the tone of separation," E = "the tone of land and sea," etc.

6) On the blackboard appeared a large oak tree with 5 mighty branches reaching out horizontally to the left and right. The birds were allowed to fly amongst the branches and to perch on them. The lowest sat on a bird feeder. Cardboard notes were attached for the notes the birds sang.



7) This being a very musical tree, it naturally sang a song.

8) We learned to coordinate the names of the birds and their places with the fingering on the recorder.

9) Then the whole tree was moved to the left of the blackboard so that there was room only for the branches extending to the right; these however were growing longer and longer, and the notes were dancing amongst them.

Anticipation had reached its peak. Now it was the children who convinced me that the whole tree would turn into "the lines that one writes music on," which I tried to deny, not without a twinkle in the eye.

10) Some boys climbed up the tree and with ropes constructed a treble clef and we were ready to compose our own tunes and to play them on the recorder, first with 3 notes only, then expanded.

(Helmut Krause, Toronto)

Grade 8 - English

For many years each succeeding eighth grade of the Waldorf School, Garden City, has compiled, edited, mimeographed, and sold The Globe, an informal collection of contributions from students in grades 1 - 8, which has appeared on an irregular basis three times a year, or so. Cost of each issue has varied from 10¢ - 25¢, and the modest proceeds have enriched eighth grade treasuries.

A new tack was taken this year, and The Globe put on a monthly schedule. Instead of the eighth grade teacher being the prime mover in collecting material from other class teachers, eighth grade students are assigned as class reporters for the eight grades, two reporters to a class. The third grade reporters, for example, check with the third grade students and teacher from time to time to see if there have been any class trips, class projects, special activities connected with main lesson or special subjects, and write up what small news items they uncover. They also encourage individual contributions - poems, vacation notes, pet stories, etc. They announce the deadline for contributions, day of sale, and sale price.

Older classes add intramural sports news, school-sponsored party news, and accounts of any other school activities.

Class teachers are asked to keep an eye out for good compositions, playlets, or poems which have been homework assignments for main lesson notebooks.

There is generally a puzzle page or two, with home-made crossword puzzles, mazes, word games, or an occasional riddle. The general policy has been to discourage jokes, cartoons, and any material that is not original.

Once the material is collected by the reporters and roughly edited by them, the teacher sorts the wheat from the chaff, the possibly-parent-written from the undeniably-student-written, the less-distinguished from the more-distinguished, puts the whole thing in order, cuts the stencils, asks one class artist to design and stencil the front page drawing, asks another to cut the puzzles and inside illustrations, if

any, and runs it off on the mimeograph machine.

A few students spend an hour after school collating and stapling the copies, and the issue may be sold on the day of an assembly, or the last Friday in the month. An average issue is 150-175 copies.

Ideally, the eighth grade students would learn to do more of the editing and sorting, were there time in the day to schedule it. Perhaps one day we can work out such an arrangement as part of eighth grade English classes.

(Anne Charles, Garden City)

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High School - English

In the high school, we have run for a number of years a weekly newspaper, The Waldorf Star, and last year came out for the first time with two special literary issues. We have since agreed that in our small school - where news travels fast to say the least - features, stories, and poems are really more to the point than actual news items. The Star, consequently, has gone through another metamorphosis and now appears once a month as a literary publication. News of our athletic contests, which used to be included in the paper, is now written up separately and posted.

One other feature of the original paper which survives in the new monthly issues is a regular series of profiles of the individual members of the senior class, written this year by two senior girls. Most of the other pieces come out of assignments for English and history courses, but we are finding we have some secret writers, who are now beginning to come forth with their work.

A member of the English department works as overall editor, the final copy is mimeographed by a secretary, and the students - on a very informal yet effective basis - collate, staple, and distribute the issues to subscribers. We charge ten cents a copy and usually manage to sell a large number to parents and friends at our assemblies; we run off 150 copies each issue and frequently sell them all. The money easily pays for a printed masthead, and