



The Crow Collection Association (Incorp.)

A Living Library to Plan for the 21st Century

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Planning for Elderly People

by Ruth Crow, July, 1994.

"Adding Life to Years that have been added to life."

(Aim of the United Nations International Plan on Ageing)

ACCESS TO THE CROW COLLECTION

The Crow Collection at the Victoria University of Technology (Footscray Campus) is in room P409. There is access to the Collection whenever the library is open, however, help from Ruth Crow, the donor of the Collection, is available only by phoning 380.1876 for an appointment.

The Collection has been catalogued. Books and periodicals on the shelves are CROW COLL. and pamphlets in boxes CROW COLL.P.. Manuscripts, in the four filing cabinets, are listed in the blue covered which is in the Crow Collection room (P409).

CURRENT DOCUMENTS ON PLANNING FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE.

The Crow Collection is gradually acquiring some current documents on planning for elderly people. Most of these have not yet been catalogued and so are not on the computers. Ruth can assist students to have access to these documents.

Most of these documents have been acquired through Ruth's membership of the following committees :-

- Princes Hill Village Residents' Committee (Footnote 1).
- Housing for Aged Action Group (Footnote 2).
- MAV Sub-committee on Housing in My Place (Footnote 3).
- North West Hospital Community Committee (Footnote 4)
- The Consumer Forum for the Aged (Footnote 5).

Ruth is also involved (but not as a committee member) in the Union of Australian Women (Footnote 5) and the Older Person's Action Centre (Footnote 6).

DOCUMENTS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST

Most of the documents that are specifically on planning for elderly people have been acquired in the last 4 or 5 years. However, as Ruth was involved in helping to establish community health centres in the 1970s and district health councils in the 1980s, there is some material about these community services. The Collection has a variety of information on urban planning and community development.

(Footnotes 1 to 6, see over page.)

PLANNING FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE
Footnotes.

1. PRINCES HILL VILLAGE RESIDENTS' COMMITTEE

The attached report "Ageing in My Place" provides some information about the inner urban "retirement village" where I live. As will be seen from the heading, this report was presented as paper at a recent MAV seminar (see footnote 3).

2. HOUSING FOR AGED ACTION GROUP (HAAG)

This organisation is mainly funded by the Office of Fair Trading from interest on invested tenants' bond money. Thus its main role is to assist elderly tenants.

3. MAV SUB-COMMITTEE ON HOUSING IN MY PLACE

Through this organisation the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) brings together some councillors, some council workers and some people who are involved in community organisations, to popularise the idea of planning to help older people to continue to live in neighbourhoods with which they are familiar.

4. NORTH WEST HOSPITAL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Recently I have been nominated by the Health Issues Centre to be a member of the North West Hospital Community Committee. I have not yet attended a meeting, The North West Hospital was formerly called Mt Royal. It serves a large area of the North/West of the metropolis (from Parkville to Greenvale).

5. THE CONSUMER FORUM FOR THE AGED

Until the beginning of this year I was a member of the Consumer Forum for the Aged, This was an advisory body to the Federal Minister for Health, Housing, Local Government and Community Services. Recent changes in Federal Departments resulted in the Forum being disbanded. I have been nominated, by HAAG, to be a member of the replacement, advisory body which is being formed by the Minister of Human Services and Health. It will be called the Older Australians Advisory Council. My nomination has been accepted. The Council has not yet met.

5. THE UNION OF AUSTRALIAN WOMEN (UAW)

This organisation was established in 1950. A large proportion of its members are now fairly elderly and thus it is involved around some issues affecting older people..

6. THE OLDER PERSONS' ACTION CENTRE (OPAC)

The Centre was established in the mid 1980s. In the 1990s OPAC helped to establish the Residential Care Rights Advocacy Service.

Ageing in My Place

M.A.V. Innovations Seminar 1994

June 8, 1994.

"No Regrets About Shifting to Princes Hill Village"

Contributed by Ruth Crow

Representing Housing for Aged Action Group and PHV Residents' Committee

Facts about Princes Hill Village

Since early 1990 I have been a resident at Princes Hill Village which is a five storey block of flats in Pigdon Street, North Carlton. It was built in the late 1950s as an annex of Mount Royal Geriatric Hospital.

There are about 90 self contained flats each with a floor space of 20 feet by 20 feet plus a small balcony. Most flats are occupied by one person, the majority of whom are women. There are some double sized flats for couples.

Each flat has a kitchenette, a bathroom (toilet and shower) and a reasonable supply of built-in cupboards. The dwellings are completely private. There is no overlooking and no over-hearing, and no supervisory visits.

The building is lavishly supplied with spaces for community use... foyers, sunrooms, lounge (with library, billiard table, tea making facilities and bowls mat), a well equipped laundry, a kiosk (managed by the residents) a large airy kitchen (not in use at present) and a craft room. Recently a spa room has been added. There is a large flat roof (with magnificent panoramic views of the city the Macedon Ranges, Christmas Hills and the Dandenongs). All floors are served with lifts. There is no garden space for outdoor relaxation but plans are being made for a barbecue and courtyard area to be built in the near future.

Since 1993 Princes Hill Village has been managed by the Royal Freemasons' Homes. Most of the accommodation is classified as "independent living unit". These are not subsidised by the Government. Residents pay an "economic rent" which is adjusted with cost of living. The rent is between \$70 to \$80 a week, and the residents are responsible for their electricity and telephone bills. Some low income residents receive a rent rebate from the Social Security Department, reducing their real rent to less than \$70 a week.

At present no meals are provided for most residents (although there are tentative plans for providing a midday meal). Those residents who have been assessed as in need of a "package" of hostel care do receive meals as well as other help. This subsidised care is managed by the Royal Freemasons' Homes and supervised by a supervisor who is in attendance at the Village 5 days each week (there is relieving staff for a few hours in weekends). Some other residents who maybe temporarily incapacitated receive meals-on-wheels and housekeeping services from the Municipal Council.

Why I Chose to Live at Princes Hill Village

1. It is in the district and the municipality (or was in the municipality) in which I have lived most of my adult life. Thus my long time friends and neighbours are within walking distance and I am (or was) familiar with council services, having been involved in several community consultations and thus knowing some of the elected representatives and some of the providers.
2. It is very close to the trams. I thus have access to the city, suburbs and country towns by public transport.
3. The rent is affordable on my income.
4. The flat, provides complete privacy if I so desire. It is compact and has north facing windows (with over hanging eave).
5. The building has an abundance of "community" spaces providing the potential of enabling me to mix with my neighbours in very comfortable surroundings, if I so desire,
6. My knowledge of what accommodation is available for people in my age group and income bracket (knowledge gained from being a member of some community organisations and also from visits to various "villages" and other such accommodation) helped me to realise that Princes Hill Village was the most suitable for me.
7. An added bonus was that it is close to very extensive parks which provide opportunities for walking as a recreation.

My Original Misgivings and Why They No Longer Worry Me

1. The stark institutional appearance of the building, both its exterior and its interior (the interior has changed dramatically ... see Annual Report of PHV Residents' Committee).
2. The old fashioned way the "Village" was administered, as if old age was an illness. As an annex of Mount Royal it was fossilised in geriatric hospital practices of the 1950s. I coped with this by taking advantage of the privacy of my flat and centring my social life beyond the Village. Recent changes have radically changed relationships in the Village community. (See Residents' Committee's Annual Report.)
3. My concern about how I would adapt to living with older people. I soon discovered that there is a wide age range of "Village" residents, spanning about 30 years and that interests (involvement in life beyond the four walls of the home) is as varied as in any other neighbourhood in which I have lived. (The social mix, however, does not include people from non-English speaking backgrounds.)
4. The possibility of losing my identity by becoming a "Village resident". The word "Village" implies an inward looking, old fashioned group of people dogmatically holding on to past traditions... nothing could be further from the truth. One of the symbolic ways I coped with this was to invent a street number rather being identified as "Village resident". (The end).



VILLAGE NEWS

Number 14

July 1994

OUR MID-WINTER BBQ

There will be music as well as food at our mid-winter BBQ. Resident organists, Bonnie and Elsa, and resident pianists, Betty and Ron and will take it in turns play.

Is there anyone else who would like to present an item ?

Can you sing ?

play a musical instrument ?

recite juggle or conjure ?

If you can,

please let Eileen know so that we can include you in our program.

As this is the United Nations Year of the Family we have asked folk singer, Robyn Lester, to sing the words of Kahlil Gibran's poem about children. Robyn included it in the items she gave at our Spring Flower Day last year. We have placed the words of this well loved song on the notice board in the mail room.

MID WINTER RAFFLE

The raffle will be drawn at 2.30 pm at our BBQ on July 4th.

Don't miss out on this chance of winning :-

a hair dryer, a handbag, an iced fruit cake,

a silver bowl, a broach, or a set of crocheted doilies.

THANKS AND THANKS AGAIN !

Thanks to Maud Gray, Sylvia Hobbs, Elsa and Fred Sherwell, Margaret Milne, Nancy Sparrow, Ann Low, Bonnie Lemm, Margaret Pratt for gifts for raffle and bingo prizes. A special thanks to Bonnie Lemm for the gift of a family sized brown teapot for the tea pantry and to Nina Lawton for the flowers in the foyer.

FLOWERS WHICH BLOOM IN THE WINTER.

Eye-catching cyclamens can bring brightness into our homes on gloomy winter days. Don't put them too close to the heater, and another hint is to put them out on the balcony when you go to bed. They like fresh air and cool nights.

