

# History of the New Bedford Day Nursery



Dedicated to  
THE FOUNDERS  
of  
THE NEW BEDFORD DAY NURSERY  
1886

## PRESIDENTS of the NEW BEDFORD DAY NURSERY

1886 - 1889	Miss Bertha W. Mandell
1889 - 1919	Miss Elise Swift
1919 - 1924	Miss Elizabeth M. Hussey
1924 - 1932	Miss Alice Wood
1932 - 1933	Mrs. Richmond Wood
1933 - 1934	Mrs. Henry S. Knowles (Sylvia)
1934 - 1939	Mrs. Richmond Wood
1939 - 1966	Mrs. Timothy F. O'Brien
1966 - 1967	Mrs. William H. Potter (Marjorie)
1967 - 1969	Mrs. William R. MacLeod (Elizabeth)
1969 - 1971	Mrs. Roger E. Titus (Isabel)
1971 - 1973	Mrs. Philip Taber, Jr. (Janet)
1973 - 1976	Mrs. Horatio H. Brewster III (Eleanor)
1976 - 1981	Mrs. Waring C. Strebeigh (Nancy)
1981 - 1985	Mrs. John F. Coyne (Eileen)
1985 - 1987	Mrs. Robert H. Gardner (Patricia)
1987 - 1989	Mrs. W. Barry Hughes (Louise)
1989 - 1991	Mrs. Robert A. Markin (Anne)
1991 - 1993	Mrs. Charles T. Toomey (Mayse)
1993 - 1996	Mrs. Anthony M. Martin (Hope)
1995 - 1997	Mrs. Robert J. Beckmann (Jacqueline)

## PRESIDENTS of the NEW BEDFORD DAY NURSERY FUND. INC.

1997 - 2001	Mrs. Anthony M. Martin (Hope)
2001 - 2003	Mrs. Stephen Carter (Kathleen)
2003 - 2006	Mrs. Robert J. Lang (Kathleen)
2006 - 2012	Mrs. Carl Beckman (Tamara)
2012 -	Mrs. Gerald FitzGerald (Holly)

# PART I

## 1886 - 1966

Pasted in the back of an old notebook with the date Nov. 11, 1886, and written in a precise school girl hand, is the important document announcing the beginning of New Bedford Day Nursery. Twenty-four young women, none of them more than 20 years of age, carefully signed their names to the birth certificate of an agency which was to play a vital role in the public's growing social conscience.

The Day Nursery concept was young but not new in the late nineteenth century. A by-product of the industrial age in both Europe and the United States, it supposedly originated in Paris about 1840 with the establishment of "creche" or cradle for the care of young children whose mothers were obliged to work long hours in factories and mills. Other cities and towns throughout France quickly picked up the idea and a few years later similar organizations were started in England. Americans were slower to adopt a day care program in spite of the fact that the educated public was well aware that thousands of young children lacked adequate care while their working mothers, many of them unable to speak English, supplemented the family income with menial jobs.

In 1850 New York City acquired its first center for day care. While visiting in France, a woman from Troy, N.Y., noticed the nurseries in several industrialized centers and returned to establish a nursery in 1858. A third opened in Philadelphia in 1861 or 1862. The year 1878, marks the opening of several kindergartens in Boston which later broadened their scope to include day care for pre-school age boys and girls.

Hearing of these philanthropic experiments not too many miles away, a group of girls in New Bedford, seventeen to twenty years of age, conducted some serious research of their own. Cotton mills were booming in the North End of the city, and scores of mothers found ready employment and long working days. Young children in many cases went unattended or were left in the care of a slightly older brother or sister.

The young women, twenty of them, held their first meeting on November 11, 1886, when they recorded that "we, the undersigned, do hereby agree to associate ourselves together for the purpose of establishing and carrying on a Day Nursery in New Bedford. The name of the association shall be the New Bedford Day Nursery and the officers of the association shall be a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, and a board of managers of not less than ten including the above-named officers, all of which shall constitute the executive board."

Names of some of Greater New Bedford's most prominent families are found

among the officers and board members of this youthful group, young women who in later life would assume roles of leadership in the community and many of whom would marry civic leaders. The first slate of officers included the following: president, Miss Bertha Mandell; vice-president, Miss Nella H. Gifford; secretary, Miss Helen W. Prescott and treasurer, Miss Elizabeth S. Rugg, later Mrs. Albert P. Holmes, who was to hold office for thirty-three years. Other members were Miss Elise H. Cook, later Mrs. Frank H. Gifford; Miss Sarah S. Bullard, to become Mrs. C. H. L. Delano; Miss Clara G. Allen, in later years Mrs. George Kingman; Miss Mary A. Thornton, later Mrs. Otis M. Pierce; Miss Ida F. Cummings, to become Mrs. Charles Prescott; Miss Helen Gifford, Miss Elizabeth C. Murray, Miss Anna R. Taber, Miss Louise H. Macomber, Miss Louise C. Pierce, Miss Elise Swift, Miss Emma C. Taber, Miss Mary Hawes and Miss Elizabeth Hathaway.

It was during the second meeting of the Executive Board, held November 23 that same year, that the eighteen members present voted to charge a fine of twenty-five cents for absence each meeting, (a rule which was observed until 1982 when it was discontinued).

Some of the immediate problems which presented themselves to this serious-minded group were the need to rent or buy a house, to secure a competent staff and to bring the new organization to the attention of the public. Money would be the prime requisite for all three, and so a subscription list was composed of potential donors, 350 names in all, who were divided among board members for personal solicitation. Elise Swift and Sarah Bullard, who were appointed to ask Mr. Rotch for some money from the Arnold Fund, reported disappointingly that the interest had all been appropriated as of that date and that there were no available funds.

Between the first board meeting in November 1886 and one on February 1, 1887, a total of \$1,749.57 was raised. According to the meticulously-kept records maintained by the young sponsors, when the initial \$100 contribution came through, "there was such excitement among the young ladies that work was suspended for the moment."

Of the four applicants for the position of matron, Mrs. L. A. Masters of Boston was selected as the most experienced. A courtly reporter from *The Standard Times* wrote that "Mrs. Masters is thoroughly fitted for the position, having been engaged in similar work at Boston, and for some years was in charge of the Home at Wellesley in connection with work of the *Country Week*. She is a lady of very pleasant address and it is evident that her heart is wholly in her work. The management has been fortunate in securing a matron so well qualified for the place."

With the hope of opening the new community facility on May 1, 1887, the board

rented a house at 363 Pleasant St. as their first headquarters and secured an assistant matron at a weekly salary of \$3 and a cook at \$2. Repairs to the tenement included some papering, covering the floors with oilcloth and cutting a door to join two rooms. Committees were appointed to list articles needed by the Nursery and to have them published in the local press, to buy materials for making towels, curtains and other household items and to receive applications and interview families interested in placing their children in the Day Nursery.

Throughout the annals of the agency are astonishing accounts of the labors of the hard-working committees. No hired employees but the committee members themselves sewed the curtains. At this early date a Visiting Committee was appointed with duties identical to those carried on (until 1998) with the exception that the 1887 Visiting Committee also planned menus and brought the necessary provisions.

Their new headquarters in readiness, their staff on duty, with needed articles still pouring in from an interested public which had read of the Nursery's requests in the local press, the Board published the following notice in *The Evening Standard* and *The Times* during the week of April 23: "The Day Nursery will be opened at 363 Pleasant St., about the first of May, for the care of children between the ages of one and five years. Parents and guardians who are obliged to leave their children without suitable care may leave them at the Nursery, where they will be well fed and cared for at 10 cents per day for each child. All persons wishing to send children may apply at the Nursery Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, April 27, 28, 29 between 12 and 1 o'clock and on Saturday, April 30 between 3 and 6 P.M. when full particulars will be given. Applications may also be made by mail to P.O. Box 265 before May 1st."

With understandable pride in their attractive new home and with high hopes, the young board members slowly reverted from optimism to disappointment as applications failed to arrive. When at the end of April they learned that only two had been received, the Investigating Committee was instructed to put notices in local stores about the scheduled opening on May 1st.

A few months before her retirement Miss Harriet Perry, who served the Nursery for 45 years and had become an almost legendary figure because of her deep devotion to the agency and its children, drew a vivid word picture of those early days, culled from reminiscences of now deceased board members and from newspaper clippings.

"It was disheartening," she commented sympathetically, "that after all the plans and hard work just one child turned up the first two days, and only one more had appeared at the end of the week. In fact, for the first seven months the largest number was 11. It is a matter of record that is reluctance of mothers to entrust

their children to the care of strangers was encountered by every day nursery which was opened in that period. Many had to close their doors as a result of parental apathy. In our records of 1899 there is a brief mention of two nurseries which had been started about this time in Fall River, but they lasted only a short time.

“However,” she continued, “the New Bedford Day Nursery, thanks to the far-sightedness of its young board members had no intention of giving up. A study of the situation revealed that it was not located near enough to the mills where most of the mothers worked, and after a few years of moderate success they moved to a rented house on Cedar Grove St. Later a 3-story tenement house was purchased on Howard St. and remodeled to accommodate the increasing numbers of children being cared for.”

Although the mill families for whom the new facility had been planned were slow to adopt the nursery concept, civic-minded citizens and the newspapers were warm in their praises. Shortly before the opening of the first headquarters an enthusiastic reporter wrote the following: “This morning a Standard representative visited the Nursery and was courteously shown over the establishment by Mrs. L.A. Masters, the matron. And now perhaps a description of this children’s home will be of interest to our readers, certainly to those who by their donations assisted in its establishment.

“The visitor enters a small entry, neatly papered and carpeted and from this steps into the front room, which will be the sitting room and also a play-room for the children. It is a cheerful room - newly painted, papered and whitewashed, and carpeted with oil cloth of a neat, bright pattern. On the floor are numbers of playthings while in the closet a trunk of toys and picture books promise unlimited enjoyment.

“The remaining room on the lower floor is the kitchen, neatly furnished with stove, table and chairs, and out of this opens a closet, well-filled with dishes and a small sink-room.

“Upstairs there are three rooms and a storeroom. The rear room is for the children, and here are a small bed, two cribs and two cradles, where the little visitors will take their daily naps. One of the front rooms is for the matron and the other for her two assistants. All the upper rooms are carpeted with straw matting. At the head of the stairs a gate is to be placed to keep the children from danger.

“Everywhere the utmost neatness is visible. Every bit of wall and ceiling has been whitewashed and the woodwork freshly painted. Mrs. Masters expresses herself very much pleased with the condition of the house, and the young ladies must have spared no labor to bring things into such excellent order.

“In the rear of the house is a yard of good size, and this will be the children’s playground. Someone has sent a load of clean white sand, and all who remember their own childhood can readily picture the forts and houses that will be built, and imagine the amount of pleasure the children will take with their tiny pails and shovels.”

This enthusiasm of the press, however, did not allay the suspicions of the public for whom the Nursery had been designed; and many of the foreign-born parents who composed the portion of adults employed by local mills reasoned - if they were aware at all of the Nursery’s existence - that it was better to leave their young children in the hands of relatives or even uncared-for than in the hands of strangers whose motives were incomprehensible and therefore suspect. Sometime during the next six months attendance rose to nine but not daily. This pinnacle was not attained until every medium of reaching the apathetic public had been exhausted. Mill foremen in the North End were interviewed, notices were put in pay envelopes, the clergy were visited individually. In August of that first year the assistant matron was let go to cut down expenses. In October the Nursery was closed for two weeks because of a diphtheria epidemic.

Morale among the directors hit a new low this first fall, but in December members voted “positively” to keep the Nursery open for a full year before arriving at any conclusions. Other problems were soon to plague the directors. In spite of her high recommendations from previous places of employment and her professional deportment, Mrs. Masters quickly ran afoul of her board of idealists. First of all, ignoring the decision of the directors, she had moved a piano into the Nursery. This breach might have been ignored or even accepted had not a critical moral issue come to the attention of the young women: Mrs. Masters was providing room and board for a man whom she introduced as but obviously was not her son. Such iniquity could not be tolerated, and in April of 1888 she was replaced by a Miss Bella Randall at a salary of \$5 a week. Mrs. Rebecca Gooding, the new cook earned \$3 a week.

At the Executive Board’s first annual meeting, held in the Unitarian Chapel on 8th St. on May 9, 1888, Miss Bertha W. Mandell was re-elected president; Miss Nella H. Gifford, vice-president; Miss Helen W. Prescott, secretary; Miss Elizabeth S. Rugg, treasurer; Miss Mary A. Thornton, auditor, and the Misses Elise H. Cook, Helen C. Gifford, Elizabeth C. Murrar, Anna R. Taber, Sarah S. Bullard, Clara G. Allen, Louise H. Macomber, Elise Swift, Louise C. Peirce, Emma C. Taber, Ida F. Cummings, Mary Hawes and Elizabeth Hathaway, directors.

Reviewing its original purpose and its accomplishments that first year, the Board reported “that the day Nursery was established for the purpose of providing a home for children whose parents are obliged to be away at work during the day. A



year ago a small house on Pleasant St. was hired and simply furnished, a matron and two assistants were engaged, and on the 2nd of May, 1887, the nursery was opened. After the first four months one of the assistants was given up, as the number of children was too small to need the services of three persons.

“As it has been difficult from the beginning to make the working people realize the advantages of the nursery, the daily attendance of children at first was small. The number, however, has slowly increased, and the result of the first year’s experience has on a whole proved successful.

“During the year there have been 933 admittances, and there are now the names of 28 children on the list. The greatest number of children on any day has been ten. The nursery is open every day except Sunday from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M., and children from one to five years of age are received. A daily charge is made of 10 cents for each child, or 15 cents for two in one family.”

In addition to their business acumen and organizational ability the board claimed some expert seamstresses among its ranks who, during the summer and early fall of 1888, made new aprons and curtains for the nursery. During this period, according to the records, Miss Shuttleworth replaced Mrs. Gooding as cook at a salary of \$3.50 a week.

Financial problems continued to beset the Nursery in spite of the generosity of public-minded citizens and the board members themselves, who contributed to the annual campaigns. On Saturday, Dec. 15 of that second year of the Nursery’s existence two theatricals, “Morning Call” and “Sweethearts” were presented at the Trinitarian (Congregational) Church Home (now known as the Pilgrim United Church of Christ on Purchase and Spring Streets) as a benefit. Nursery annals reveal little information about this dramatic event except that tickets were sold for 75 cents apiece and the sum of \$200 was realized. This month is also noteworthy for the agency’s first Christmas party for its children and their mothers, complete with a Christmas tree, refreshments and gifts for the children - all given by the warm-hearted young board members.

Attended by laudatory announcements in the local press, an annual public campaign was to be conducted by the agency until 1920, when the New Bedford Day Nursery combined with four other agencies - the Family Welfare, Children’s Aid, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the Instructive Nursing Association - to form a Central Council for the hiring of one individual whose job it would be to raise funds for the maintenance of all five. In 1922 the Central Council was renamed the Community Welfare Drive, later to become the Community Chest and (in 1953), the Greater New Bedford United Fund. In contrast to the five organizations originally included, the present United Way has many more family counseling, youth, health and welfare agencies looking to it for

support in 14 greater New Bedford towns.

Ever concerned lest they not be reaching all the families in need of daytime care, the board voted at their February 1899 meeting to decrease the daily charge from 10 to 5 cents and for a half day, from 5 to 3 cents. A large number of children were being taken care of at no charge at all. Nevertheless, daily attendance continued to drop, and the question was raised as to whether or not the building was close enough to those who needed it most.

At the annual meeting that year Miss Bertha Mandell resigned and was replaced by Miss Edith Eliot. Elected as president was Miss Elise Swift, who was to continue in the position for 30 years. This same year the duties of the Investigating Committee were increased to include monthly visits by a member of each family in addition to conducting an initial interview with each applicant.

At the second annual meeting the secretary reported that "the work of the New Bedford Day Nursery during the second year of its existence has been carried on without interruption except for the diphtheria epidemic. The greatest number of children on any one day has been 13, and the total number of admittances has been 1,444, an increase of 511 over last year. It was decided to take no children under 1 year in the future. Expenses the past 12 months have been \$832.37, which was \$316.93 less than last year. It is noted that the annual subscriptions brought in \$737.50."

An "Evening Standard" write-up of the annual meeting of 1891 mentions the recent moving of headquarters to 355 Pleasant St. and a gradual increase in attendance. "Once a month," the reporter recorded, "each family that sends a child to the nursery receives a personal visit from one of the managers, and every applicant for admittance is thoroughly investigated. In this way the confidence of the parent is gained, and they become assured of the warm interest which is taken in their children. The history of the New Bedford Day Nursery during the past year has been one of steadily increasing prosperity. The struggle of the early years when it seemed almost impossible to make the working people understand the object and advantages of the institution, has terminated successfully; and the problem which now confronts the managers is no longer how to fill the Nursery with children, but how with limited resources to provide sufficient accommodations for the ever increasing number of applicants."

The minutes of several meetings during this period refer to "trouble with the heads of children." Cleanliness was an integral part of good care for their young charges, board members felt. Although it was an unwritten rule that all children be clean when brought to the nursery, there were many exceptions in the observance; and it was often found necessary to bathe not only the child but his clothes as well. The "head" problem was solved for a time by a board vote that all

troublesome cases be reported and that each manager see the mother of her child about the remedying of the matter. Throughout this agency's history a series of dedicated physicians gave close attention to the nursery pupils. Upon the death of Dr. William H. Taylor, the Nursery's first doctor, Dr. William N. Swift agreed to accept the assignment. When he resigned during the summer of 1896, Dr. Charles D. Prescott was elected to the position.

In the mid 1890's the Nursery began to be plagued by overcrowded conditions so that in 1893 a committee was appointed to look for a suitable house farther north. The following year Mrs. A. G. Pierce, Jr., offered to build a house for the Nursery on a lot on Cedar Grove St., containing 22 rods, to be leased for a term of five years at a rental of 10 percent interest on investment. The board abandoned the idea after further negotiations and decided instead to rent a house at 200 Cedar Grove St. at \$30 per month with the landlady responsible for necessary repairs. This same year (1894) Miss Grace Dana replaced on the board Mrs. W. L. Nichols, who had moved from New Bedford.

A mill strike rocked New Bedford in late August of that year, and the Nursery was closed Sept. 4 to be re-opened the following month when some of the mills renewed operations. The year ended with the usual popular Christmas party for the children the Saturday following the holiday, with boys and girls and their mothers invited for a noon dinner followed by a party complete with glittering Christmas tree and gifts for everyone.

In March of 1895 for the first time in history the organization was obliged to refuse further admittance for time being because the census was running at an all-time high. Nevertheless the following month the board voted to permit children to remain until the age of 7. Benefits for Nursery varying from ice cream and cakes sales to a stereopticon slide lecture by one Mr. Harper in the First Unitarian Parish House in August of 1896 enlivened the community's social life as well as enriched the treasury. The monthly minutes record the fact that the lecture netted \$175.

Far from satisfied with their cramped quarters, the Board continued their animated discussions on the pro's and con's of owning their own building. In 1897 Henry Crapo of the Advisory Board strongly urged that they continue to rent and also advised that it was time to be incorporated, an act which came to pass on March 22 of that year. On May 4, 1897, a meeting was held at the home of Mrs. William Swift for the purpose of ratifying the Constitution, "subscribed and sworn to before me" and signed Henry H. Crapo, Justice of the Peace. The first meeting of the subscribers to the agreement of the corporation took place at this time and by-laws were adopted by vote.

As a result of the election Elise Swift continued as president, Elizabeth Hathaway

as vice-president, Elizabeth C. M. Gifford as clerk and Elizabeth S. Rugg, treasurer. Members of the Executive Board, limited in the new by-laws to 18, were Elise Swift, Elizabeth Hathaway, Elizabeth C. M. Gifford, Elizabeth S. Rugg, Clara G. A. Kingman, Eliza H. Gifford, Helen C. Gifford, Mary A. Thornton, Louise C. Pierce, Emma C. Taber, Ida C. Prescott, Caroline Stone, Grace Dana, Alice T. Snow, Josephine G. Rotch, Sarah S. B. Delano, Sylvia H. Taber and Margaret E. Wood. Also elected were Clara G. A. Kingman as auditor and Edward D. Mandell, Horatio Hathaway and Henry H. Crapo as members of the Advisory Board.

This time it was the landlady rather than the property itself who troubled the board, and the harassed House Committee offered to resign when they were unable to get Mrs. Daly to make some improvements and repairs. Of course their resignation was refused. Offered an increase in rent if certain repairs were made, Mrs. Daly grudgingly accepted but refused to include painting in the renovations. The Nursery closed for two weeks while the improvements were being carried out including the much discussed painting, which was paid for by the managers.

Again in 1898 mill strikes plagued New Bedford. During February and March the Nursery remained open only on a part-time basis. In March the association voted to join the new National Association of Nurseries, and Miss Dana was sent to Chicago to attend the convention. In her enthusiastic report before the Board in May Miss Dana stressed as the main themes being emphasized by the relatively young Nursery movement the maintaining of a close relationship with the families of Nursery pupils, the observance of a wholesome diet and the sensitive and affectionate treatment of the children so that the benefits gained by nursery attendance might be reflected in family life.

It was probably as a result of the convention and more directly Miss Dana's report that monthly meetings of mothers were instituted with board members taking turns in helping and offering counsel. Fourteen mothers attended the first one which was held in a board member's garden where, according to the monthly minutes, "strawberries and cream were served." Very quickly the intuitive board members learned that refreshments and even games provided a tremendous inducement to regular attendance on the part of the mothers, and thereafter one or generally both were provided. In the minutes of one month a donkey's party is referred to as a recurrent popular feature of the mothers' gatherings. Talks on different countries, the playing of phonograph records and magic lantern shows were also resorted to.

Few of the benefit performances staged these early years received more than passing notice in board minutes or the press, but such is not the case with "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," of which several programmes are still in existence and in excellent condition. A grey and orange paper cover for the programme graphically depicts the exodus of Hamelin Town of a garish figure surrounded by chil-aid

drin; and the frontispiece announces that "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," adapted and presented under the personal direction of Miss Margaret McLaren Eager in aid of the New Bedford Day Nursery, at the Theatre, with matinees Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at 4:15 o'clock and Saturday at 3 o'clock, May 23-27th, 1899, Cafe supper will be served from 6 to 8 o'clock."

In addition to the famous Browning classic the elaborate benefit included "The Marie Antionette Fete," a lavish display of the court of Louis 16th and his queen at Versailles, with Russian, Alsatain, fire, court and pastoral dances staged in honor supposedly of visiting royalty. A woman of considerable talent of organizing community support behind a particular project, Miss Margaret McLaren Eager had been induced to come to New Bedford to put on a benefit for the Day Nursery. The success of her efforts is certainly indicated by scores of names prominent in New Bedford at the period which are listed among the cast for the play and other features of the entertainment. Far less attention is given to another money-making project, the "Mother Goose Quadrille," which was presented on March 21, 1890.

The board continued to send delegates to the National Nursery Convention and to listen with keen interest to accounts of the progressive steps being made by other nurseries throughout the country. In May of 1900 Miss Grace Dana, delegated to the New York annual meeting, reported that most nurseries opened the day with prayer and preceded each meal with a blessing, that the majority had a trained nurse as matron and that in many the teaching of good manners to the children was one of the staff objectives. National officials advised that mothers' groups be taught cooking and sewing by board members willing to go into the homes and to use whatever materials and utensils were on hand. In some nurseries, Miss Dana reported, children were assigned garden plots and had tremendous satisfaction of seeing vegetables develop and ripen. All these praiseworthy suggestions were taken under advisement.

A deep interest in the children on the part of the women of the board extended to the mothers, who must leave their little ones early in morning until the end of the day. In the winter months of 1901 the matron, at the board's request, began to serve hot chocolate to the mothers as they called for their children at the close of the working day. Monthly evening meetings for the Nursery mothers continued until 1904 when directors decided that in spite of varied entertainment and generous refreshments the attendance was too poor to justify continuance.

Late in 1901 the directors began to discuss seriously the opening of another nursery in the South End of New Bedford. The several clergymen interviewed reacted enthusiastically and offered their help. The management of mills in that section of the city were interviewed and were asked for financial assistance in the undertaking. By February of the following year the board decided conclusively

to open a second headquarters, the sum of \$1900 was raised by subscription; and in July 1902 a house on Howard St. was acquired. So overwhelming was the reaction on the part of the parents whose children were of Nursery age that this building soon proved inadequate. Therefore a lot was purchased on the east side of County St., now 210 County St., where a building impressive in size and regarded as ideal for its purpose was erected as the gift of Miss Ella M. Ivers, a wealthy resident of the city. In the spring of 1915 the entire structure was moved to its present location at 1060 Cove Road, where it has continued ever since to serve the children of the South End community.

In spite of an impressive amount of information imported by the various Board secretaries, there are tantalizing gaps which arouse the curiosity of the reader. One of these is the missing details of the actual physical removal of the entire South End Nursery building a sizeable distance. On yellowing paper brittle with age have been found the three bids made by local contractors for this intriguing assignment, all three dated in late November of 1914. Whether it was Peirce and Kilburn, F. B. Sistare and Son or Charles O. Brightman who was asked to perform the job, Nursery records do not reveal. However if the lowest bidder was accepted, it was Peirce and Kilburn who accomplished the removal of the edifice and completed certain specified alterations and enlargements at a charge of \$3,621.50. Correspondence for the transaction is addressed to Miss Alice Wood, referred to as "Chairman of the Moving Committee of the New Bedford Day Nursery."

But back to the year 1903, noteworthy for at least two reasons: the Board voted to increase its membership from 18 to 26 and a Miss Hodsdon was employed as matron at the South End Nursery for \$5 a week with the allowance of \$10 weekly for the operation of the Nursery. In that distant era the \$10 stipend was evidently sufficient to cover all expenses for a week including food and maintenance.

The January 1904 minutes report that the recent Christmas party for children and parents, by this time a much-anticipated event, had been held the day after Christmas at the Union for Good Works with 100 children and parents from both nurseries attending. A year later because of the prevalence of contagious diseases throughout New Bedford the holiday party was dispensed with and instead baskets of toys and food were sent to the families. The Christmas party of 1909 provided an added reason for rejoicing even though it had to be delayed a month. Scene of the festivities for both nurseries was the newly-completed dining room at the Cove St. headquarters.

Through the years financial figures and statistics were enlivened by mention of a fair and sale in August in 1904 at the home of Mrs. Stephen Delano, a musical in May of 1906 by Mrs. Pratt and Miss Howland, a Mother Goose entertainment in May of 1907, a daffodil entertainment and May basket sale two years later, concerts, recitals, strawberry festivals - all popular social events as well as a boon

to the treasury.

With the employment in 1911 of a part-time caseworker, Miss Celeste P. Thornton, the Board took a sizeable step in the direction of modern social practice. Daughter of a wealthy family, Miss Thornton came to New Bedford in 1893 after an artistic training in Paris. She had also taken some courses at the New York School of Social Work which, as well as a natural predilection, attracted her to the organizations occupied with helping people, among them the Children's Aid Society and the Day Nursery. In 1904 her aunt, Mrs. Otis N. Pierce, enlisted her as a member and clerk of the board of directors of the New Bedford Orphans Home, which closed in 1909 to be replaced in 1909 by a system of foster homes under the supervision of the Children's Aid Society. The records of that agency reveal that Miss Thornton served on the Children's Aid Society board in 1909 and 1910, joining the staff as assistant director in 1911. It was this same year that she accepted the Nursery assignment, devoting spare hours to investigating applications and conducting home visits - duties which up to this time had been carried on by the Board of Managers.

In her recollections of this era, Miss Harriet M. Perry, who was to join the staff nine years later, informs us that the New Bedford Day Nursery was among the first if not the very first Nursery in the country to employ a qualified caseworker. Social workers of the early 1900's had little in common with today's caseworker, who in most instances has done graduate work at a school of social work as well as experienced some training on the job under supervision in a social welfare setting. An interest in people and a desire to do good works were frequently the only requisites for employment. When, therefore, someone arrived on the scene who had actually taken university courses in social welfare, she was regarded to have the highest possible qualifications.

Miss Thornton, who was to become executive of the Children's Aid Society in 1920, was obliged to give up her Nursery responsibilities when her work load with the Aid Society became too heavy and was succeeded by Miss Helen Fiske, also affiliated with the Children's Aid, and in 1920 by Miss Perry. A native of New Bedford, Miss Perry moved with her family to Boston as a child. Like Miss Thornton she attended the New York School of Social Work where she was taken under the wing of a Miss Helen Compton whose theory was that the best introduction to casework was simply to learn by doing. In 1917 the Perrys moved to Fairhaven and in 1920 Miss Perry became caseworker for both nurseries.

For 45 years her name was to be nearly synonymous with that of the New Bedford Day Nursery. A warm relationship between parents and the superintendent - as she later preferred to be called - continued over the years and through the generations with mothers and fathers returning to reminisce with her over their happy early memories and some of them to enroll their own children.

“I’ve never seen a single child of ours become a juvenile delinquent,” Miss Perry commented proudly during one of the interviews she afforded this writer before her retirement. “In many, many cases we have been able to correct health problems and emotional difficulties so that the child was able to grow to be a normal well-adjusted adult.”

With appalling frequency during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century epidemics struck New Bedford, bringing the mills to a halt and requiring the closing of the nurseries as well as the schools, churches and other places where the disease might be transmitted. The worst one reputed ever to occur not only in New Bedford but also throughout the United States made its dreaded presence felt in the early fall of 1918. Microfilmed copies of *The Evening Standard* of late September and early October of that year - available at the New Bedford Public Library - give graphic accounts of the ravages of the disease. At the peak of the epidemic about the middle of October the daily casualty lists on the home front vied in numbers with those reported from the war in Europe.

Schools, barrooms, even churches were closed down so that people might not unwittingly spread the influenza germ, and temporary hospitals were established, one by one, at the Clarks Point Isolation Hospital, the North End Relief Station, Grace House, the Trinitarian Church Home, Unity Home, the Haley residence and Coggeshall House in Fairhaven owned then as now by the Colonial Club, where patients might be given care by doctors and nurses in the area, supplemented by scores of volunteers. A morgue was set up in Fire Station No. 1.

The courageous administration of the nurseries reacted strongly to the closing of the Nurseries by order of Mayor Ashley, urging that they be permitted to provide care, both day and night, for children who were unaffected or cured whose parents were ill or dead. The suggestion was welcomed and promptly put into effect.

The *Sunday Standard* of Oct. 27, 1918, carried a spread of eight pictures showing young children during play and mealtime who had been welcomed to the two nurseries for 24-hour daily care during the epidemic, some of them to remain many months after. A headline above the pictures reads: “Caring for the Children Orphaned by the Influenza Epidemic.”

Since the feature story gives a vivid picture of the nurseries tremendous contribution during this dreadful period, a few paragraphs are quoted here -

“At the outbreak of the epidemic the directors placed their resources at the disposal of the Children’s Aid Society and since then until the present time the workers in this organization have given unstintingly of their time and to the work, many working day and night in caring for the scores of children who had been made orphans or half orphans by the ravages of the dread disease. At the North End Day Nursery a corps of teachers under Mrs. W. E. Sargent took charge pathet-



of the work among the stricken children of the neighborhood and have been ready at all times to make life a bit easier for some little mite thrust out upon the world by the death of its parents.

“Many of the children who have been brought to this nursery have come in a most pathetic condition from hospitals for the period of convalescence. Doubtless many a child’s life has been saved by its being taken to the nurseries, for there they have been given the right sort of diet and in all probability if they had been taken to the homes of relatives or friends they would not have received the right kind of food or care.

“Miss Marion Jenkins of the Children’s Aid Society has been in charge of dietetic work at the North End branch, the Children’s Aid having given her this work. At the South End Nursery it has been the same story of the self-sacrifice and hard work on the part of the workers...At this branch five children from one family were received at one time...When the history of the epidemic is written, the work of the Day Nursery Association will loom large. This organization solved one of the greatest problems of the epidemic, that of caring for the homeless children until foster homes could be found - and did it well”

Miss Perry recalled that “when the nurseries resumed their regular work with children many were found to be underweight and apparently in poor physical condition. It was then that the board inaugurated an intensive health program. In place of free service which had been generously given by different doctors over the years, it was decided to ask one physician - it was Dr. Carl C. Persons - who was called upon - to give part of his time as the agency physician. Dr. Persons readily consented to take on the work at a nominal rate. He not only gave thorough physical examinations to all the children at both nurseries and examined all new children before they were admitted but often visited the homes when medical care was needed. After years of service to the agency his post was filled by Dr. Harold E. Perry. After his many years of service this position was filled by Dr. George William Starbuck.

“Nearly all the children were found to be suffering from malnutrition, diseased tonsils and enlarged adenoids and were in a generally weakened condition,” Miss Perry continued. “Very few, if any parents, were able to pay for operations that were needed or for other hospital care or treatment. With the parents’ consent children were taken by the caseworker, aided often by board members, to clinics at St. Luke’s Hospital and other clinics in Boston. When hospital care was needed, it was either given free or paid for by the local Board of Welfare or members of the Nursery Board or by other individuals interested in the welfare of children.

“Many of the undernourished children required only the cod liver oil, wholesome food and milk that were amply provided each day at the Nurseries to enable

them to gain weight and develop into normal little boys and girls. Others needed special diets prescribed by the doctor, and these were prepared in every case," Miss Perry reminisced. "Countless pages could be written about different children who received physical benefits through the Day Nurseries that helped to change the future course of their lives."

In later years when the New Bedford Health Department inaugurated its anti-toxin immunization campaign against diphtheria, the Day Nursery provided transportation for the children of parents who could not leave their jobs. Some of the present Board members remember providing their services and their cars for conveying boys and girls to the Board of Health building. Since that time hours of inoculations have been changed to accommodate working mothers.

In April of 1919 Miss Swift resigned as president after 30 years characterized by the growth of the nurseries, a modernization in concept of service and dedicated service to a large segment of children in the community. By formal vote this year the Board approved of the licensing of nurseries, a measure which had been strongly advocated for some time by the national organization. In July of this year the rate for children was raised to 20 cents a day, although then as now and throughout its history the Nursery charged according to a family's income and, in many instances, nothing at all.

In 1925 the Managers voted to change Miss Perry's title from field worker to caseworker; and in 1930 when the superintendent of the South End Nursery resigned, Miss Perry accepted that position and its title while continuing her other duties. "Superintendent" was the designation she preferred through the remaining 35 years of her service. In addition to her work with children, there was a sizeable plant to maintain, she asserted, with all the attendant problems, of cleaning, heating, lighting, etc.

Although the existence of the Community Welfare - to become the Community Fund in 1927 and the Greater New Bedford United Fund in 1953 - relieved the Board of the immediate responsibility of raising their own funds, nevertheless they were prompt to answer the call for assistance in carrying on the overall annual campaign. The newspapers of the 1920's and '30's carry pictures of parades publicizing the yearly drives, Nursery members marching valiantly along with other boards. Newspaper stories written to attract public sympathy to the campaigns leaned heavily on the human interest element provided by the Nursery and its tiny occupants.

The Chest continued to add voluntary agencies to its fold and to enlist public support, but the history of the era indicates that money-raising was never easy and that sometimes the goal was not met. At times like these the Board was asked to retrench and to submit a carefully-pared budget which allowed for little but

immediate necessities. Income from families of Nursery children also varied since from the agency's beginning until the present time no family was charged more than it could pay and free care was given generously in many cases. During times of layoffs at the mills, of depressions and other emergencies the staff and Board were obliged to plan with the utmost care and sometimes to close the Nursery for a period of weeks. When in 1953 surplus commodities were made available under the Commonwealth's School Lunch Program, the New Bedford Day Nursery was able at no cost to order monthly supplies which included butter, margarine, white and wholewheat flour, split peas and beans, powdered milk, rice and raisins. The boon to the budget has continued until the present day.

When her family moved to Boston in 1930, Miss Perry moved into the Nursery, which was to be her home until the fall of 1965 when she felt obligated to resign because of recurrent illnesses. For as long as many Board members can remember, Harriet Perry's name has been synonymous with that of the Nursery itself. The universal respect she commanded in the community, in influence she exerted on the life of every Nursery child, cannot be measured or fully expressed.

The high standards maintained by the Nursery from the time of its conception are indicated by the relatively few changes required when in 1962 all nurseries in the Commonwealth came under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Public Health and the amended Sections 58 to 62 of Chapter 3 of the General Laws applying to all nurseries. Thereafter each nursery was required to apply annually for a renewal of its license, the granting of which depended upon the results of a yearly inspection. Upon recommendation of State officials a new fire alarm system was installed and periodic fire drills instituted, cribs upstairs for the younger children were relocated in order to be the required two feet apart and all drapes were replaced by non-flammable ones. The minimum age of children accepted was raised to three years although in two cases the Department of Public Health made exceptions because of special circumstances. Another requirement, that all doors unlock from the inside, was readily complied with; and an isolation room was set up.

Inspectors from the Commonwealth office have consistently complimented the Nursery on its high standards and the devotion of its staff. Miss Perry's resignation came in the midst of the agency's adaptation to the new order of things; and it remained for her successors, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Ramsden and Mrs. Kathleen A. Leach, to complete the changes. During her brief stay in New Bedford Mrs. Ramsden, a trained and enthusiastic nursery executive, was responsible for encouraging staff members to attend training courses and for compiling a parents' manual. Her departure in January 1966 after serving as director since August of the previous year was greeted with genuine regret on the part of the managers and staff.

Miss Ellen Gill, a veteran employee trained by Miss Perry, assumed the role of temporary director until April of 1966, when Mrs. Leach was appointed to that position on a permanent basis. Another trainee of Miss Perry, Mrs. Leach has been "in and out of the nursery" for the past 30 years. It was in 1937 that she joined the staff, taking charge of the baby room for the first six months. In 1942 she became Miss Perry's assistant.

Loyalty of both Board and Staff has been characteristic of the Day Nursery throughout its history. Once asked to serve, a Board member invariably became engrossed with the agency's heart-warming work and continued as a member so long as she was able. It soon became tradition that daughters and daughters-in-law follow in the footsteps of their mothers or their husbands's mothers in service to the Nursery. Miss Elise Swift served as second president of the Board for 30 years, a record followed closely by Mrs. Timothy F. O'Brien, who resigned in 1966 after holding that office ably and efficiently for 27 years. One of the originators of the agency, Mrs. Albert W. Holmes was its treasurer from the beginning, resigned finally after 33 years when she felt that she was no longer able to continue. The Board of Managers is proud to have its ranks as honorary members Mrs. Clifford C. Fifield, Mrs. John C. Shaw and Mrs. Edward Drake and as active members, Mrs. James A. Collins, Mrs. Joseph M. Read, Mrs. Ralph C. Perkins, Mrs. Robert B. MacLeod, Mrs. Timothy F. O'Brien, Mrs. Abbott M. Smith, Mrs. Horatio H. Brewster, Miss Sally Hitch, Mrs. Amy W. Safford, Mrs. John H. Read, Miss Mary J. Kennedy, and Mrs. Ruth D. Whitin, each of whom has served a minimum of 20 years.

Today's visitor to the New Bedford Day Nursery finds brightly-painted, attractively decorated rooms, spacious and well-lighted, in which the contagious laughter of children follows from room to room, as small boys and girls pour over books at their play tables, engage in games with their adult leaders or enjoy the wholesome and appetizing fare, including a hot dinner at noon, which is provided every day. Recent statistics indicate that children are attending from Westport, Dartmouth, Acushnet, and Fairhaven as well as from New Bedford. Seventy-one little ones were registered as of February of 1966 with 47 the largest number to attend any one day. That same year applications were received, of which 111 were accepted. The 20 children refused were less than the 3-year minimum required by Massachusetts State laws. Of the total number 15 came to lunch daily from schools in the neighborhood.

Through the generosity of the Board the upstairs sitting room, formerly occupied by Miss Perry, has been transformed with new drapes, slip covers, a floor lamp and a TV into an attractive, comfortable haven for an occasional break during the long working day for staff members, some of whom arrive before 6:30 A.M. and remain until 5:30 P.M. when the last child has been claimed by a parent.

Over the months and years play tables have been painted and replaced, new toys and equipment added, TV's have been installed and the outside playground refurbished. Although changes have come with each year, tangibly, almost miraculously, the same spirit has remained which in 1886 prompted 24 young women to "associate ourselves together for the purpose of establishing and carrying on a Day Nursery in New Bedford."

## PART II

### 1966 - 1986

In her annual report for 1966-67, Mrs. Kathleen Leach, Director, reported that the increase of working mothers in the New Bedford area was reflected in the added numbers of children attending the Day Nursery. In October 1967, the enrollment was 37 boys and girls, who came from many areas of the city and neighboring towns.

An influx of children from non-English-speaking families were noted. "The language barrier does not seem to be significant," Mrs. Leach commented. "The staff adapts to their problems, and the children try hard to adjust to a strange situation." She added that when making application to the Nursery, mothers who can not speak English often came in groups with an interpreter.

The agency continued to receive an annual allotment from the Community Chest, (later named the United Fund, then The United Way) and surplus food commodities. Since June 1967 the Nursery had been the recipient of a milk subsidy from the State Office of School Lunch Programs.

Nursery records frequently referred to the generous donations in goods and services of Board members, certainly an important factor in keeping the quality of services high and charges low. Community clubs, churches, business and individuals gave toys, materials and equipment.

Continuing its policy of charging families on a sliding scale according to income and circumstances, the Nursery reported that in 1966-67, the highest charge per day per child was \$2.25 and the lowest, \$1.25. Three children were given free care through the year.

During the first 10 months of 1968-69 the Nursery continued to operate at near capacity. However, in September and October 1969 there was a decided downward trend in employment in New Bedford, attributed largely to the unsteady work of women in garment factories and industrial plants. Mothers tended to keep their children at home on days they did not work. Of the 94 children receiving

care that year, 89 were under five years of age and stayed at the Nursery all day, and five were young school children who came for breakfast, returned for lunch and remained all day during vacation months.

The Director worked closely with other community social welfare agencies. She reported to the Board on the monthly meetings of the Day Care Division of the Greater New Bedford Community Council. She described her participation in a United Way family survey to determine the number of children from New Bedford and surrounding communities served by community agencies. Mrs. Leach also assisted with a Community Council study to determine the percentage of families supported entirely by the mother.

The depressed economy continued into 1970 with widespread unemployment among textile workers. Attendance at the Nursery suffered because of the school lunch program established by Model Cities. Since the Day Nursery was located in the Model Cities target area, boys and girls attending three public schools no longer came to the Cove Street building for their lunch.

During 1970-71, enrollment increased in measure with improvement in the economy and steady employment for many mothers. Forty-two children were registered, and the aggregate daily attendance in 1971 was 3% over that of the previous year.

From even the earliest records of the Nursery are indications of the interest of Board and Staff in the social, emotional and educational development of the children. The theme of childhood growth and development was emphasized long before it became the subject of scores of books and a specialized field of education.

Outdoor equipment was increased in 1972 by three large sand boxes made by the students of New Bedford Vocational High School. During the same year 18 new stacking cots replaced 12 cribs on the second floor, allowing additional play room for the three-year-olds.

Staff education was recognized in February 1973 when two staff members received certificates from the State Department of Education for completing courses in planning programs for young children. ONBOARD, HEADSTART and other public programs sponsoring day care centers were also represented.

Again in the 1972-73 reports is mentioned the preponderance of children of first generation Portuguese parents. Nursery personnel expressed satisfaction that all their children have been entering regular kindergarten in the public schools, instead of a non-English kindergarten, proof of the language instruction they receive at the Day Nursery.

In the spring of 1973, the Cove Street building underwent extensive interior renovations on the first and second floors. Former paint-covered areas were scraped and either papered or paneled in compliance with a state statute calling for a comprehensive program for the control and prevention of lead paint poisoning.

When the job was completed in April 1973, Board and staff congratulated themselves on the new atmosphere. Cheery wallpaper and curtains brightened every room. There was new wall-to-wall carpeting in the office and staff room and a new dishwasher in the kitchen.

To carry out such extensive changes, special financing was necessary. The Nursery received a bank loan for a large percent of the charges and the United Fund increased their allotment to the Nursery. The Crapo Fund granted funding with the proviso the Nursery match their dollar offer.

In 1974, Nursery attendance reflected another downward trend. Requests were received for the care of only 89 new children, the smallest number in three years. An interesting statistic reported this year was the admission of four children whose mothers were at home and not employed. The explanation was that the children's physicians had decided that the children needed nursery school training and association with other children of the same age.

Fees were raised in 1974 an additional 50 cents a day; to \$3.50 per day for one child and \$5 per day for two children from the same family. In December, a loan was added to the mortgage to help cover running expenses. That year gifts from Girl Scout Troop 183 of Dartmouth included a portable stereo, 10 record albums and boxed toys.

In December 1974, the Nursery participated in the first fingerstick blood test program for lead poisoning under the supervision of the local public health nurse. Parents were asked to sign permission slips, and 28 children were tested. Only one child was found to have an exceptionally high reading and was referred for further testing to the family pediatrician.

A growing interest in the field of child care was evidenced in the spring of 1975 when nine young women from nearby high schools and colleges observed the Nursery children and helped with handcraft projects. These students came from Bristol Community College, Southeastern Massachusetts University, Northeastern University, New Bedford High School Day Care classes and Holy Name Church confirmation classes.

Through the years Board Presidents and Nursery Managers devoted much space in their reports to the health care of the children. Year after year they noted that there was little illness among the children, a condition they attributed in large

measure to the wholesome diet provided at the Nursery, the prescribed hours for rest and recreation, and the watchful care of the staff. When staff members detected symptoms of illness, they immediately contacted the parents.

In September 1975 the United Fund allotment was cut. The timing was difficult with the Nursery suffering from low enrollment. The Board decided it must either conduct money-raising projects or in some manner increase the number of enrollees. With the latter possibly in mind, posters were made and distributed to professional and mill offices. Donations in memory of deceased members and a gift from the New Bedford Assembly Association in 1975 defrayed immediate expenses.

In 1976, to try to attain a larger measure of fiscal independence, the Board of Managers sought the help of SCORE, a group of retired businessmen who advised small businesses. Raising additional money and raising salaries were identified as two prime necessities. Salary increases were in effect by January 1977 and at the same time Nursery rates were raised \$4 daily per child and \$6 daily for two children from the same family.

In March 1976 the state Office for Children conducted a survey to determine the immunization status of all children registered in day care centers in the Commonwealth. The staff reported that all children enrolled had received required inoculations. Again in March and December tests for lead poisoning were performed by the city's Board of Health and all results reported as normal.

New activities were introduced to the children in 1976. Children in the pre-school group were given the opportunity of walking once a week, under supervision to the Howland Green Library where the librarian provided story hours, puppet shows, and movies. One trip was filmed and videotaped so that the children could see themselves on the screen.

In August 1976, on the recommendation of the New Bedford Fire Department, an outside fire escape was installed from the second floor porch to the first floor porch and yard. The following spring the new fire escape was used in monthly drills. At this time also grants of surplus commodity foods from the Federal Government began to dwindle. However, the milk subsidy had been increased to six cents for each half pint served. And the Nursery began to receive reimbursement from the State Bureau of Nutrition, Education and School Food Services for meals served based on the parent's financial position.

Again in 1976 SMU college students used the Nursery as a learning center to further their education. In so doing, they made their individual contributions to the Nursery activities. Students expressed their gratitude for being allowed to observe and to work with the Director and to learn about program planning and to



gain new ideas in the creative fields.

Every fall, as the United Way made plans for its annual campaign, the Day Nursery was sought out by United Way officials and the media as a graphic and heart-warming demonstration of United Way dollars at work.

And every December the Day Nursery children looked forward to the annual Christmas party at which time a member of the New Bedford Fire Department played Santa Claus, distributing gifts and dancing with all.

The financial outlook began to appear rosier in 1978. The Boston Children's Theatre was invited to give a presentation of "Hansel and Gretel" at Dartmouth High School in April. The Nursery realized a goodly amount from this production. The United Way and Community Development Fund were both generous in 1978. To cap the picture, the Nursery was operating at full capacity.

New state licensing requirements were announced in 1978 and the Nursery complied promptly. The requirements included: emergency lights on the first and second floors, (required City Building Department); hot water temperature controls for the dishwasher and bathrooms, (required by the Board of Health); annual Food Service and Milk and Cream Licenses posted in the kitchen, and an approved health policy posted in the isolation room. A copy of the Nursery's certificate of incorporation must be posted in the building. The staff should take education courses, to be paid for in part by the Nursery and menus must be posted, and program reports kept for all children. The ratio of teaching staff to children must be no less than 1 to 10 at all times and attendance no more than 39 children at one time. At this time a personnel policy was compiled by the Board. Girls from the Youth Experience Program contributed their services through 1978, working two hours after school and 25 hours a week during the summer. Three staff members completed a one semester course in Child Psychology at SMU. Staff salaries were increased to meet the new minimum wage. The building and grounds saw needed improvements; a section of the backyard was black-topped, windows were wire-caged, locks repaired, cedar posts on the shed replaced and combination aluminum storm windows installed.

Another benefit performance was given by the Boston Children's Theatre in April 1979. Proceeds were used to fund a highly successful, weekly summer music program. Another popular enrichment program introducing art forms, colors and textures to the children was initiated at this time.

In 1980 Mrs. Leach, Director since 1965, announced her resignation due to her desire to spend more time with her family. Mrs. Judith Thornhill was selected as her successor. Mrs. Thornhill, Nursery Head Teacher, had had extensive experience at the Nursery in several capacities. At the time of her appointment she had

been on the staff at the Nursery 13 years and been cited for her outstanding job as link between the Nursery and Portuguese parents.

Nursery finances continued in excellent condition thanks to the United Way, the Arnold Fund and a bequest from one of our late Board members who specified her donation be used for recreational purposes. Due to increased operating expenses daily rates were raised to \$4.75 for one child and \$7.50 for two children from the same family. A capacity enrollment and long waiting list attested to the continuing need for quality day care.

As a result of an inquiry at The Office of Children in Boston, Mrs. Thornhill learned that the Nursery could enroll more children providing daily attendance did not exceed 39. This made it possible to accept applications from families in need of day care as little as two or three days a week.

Statistics compiled in 1981 indicate that about 25% of the Nursery children were from Portuguese-speaking families. All but a few had working mothers, and about half were from low-income families or single parents.

During the year the Executive Committee held one staff meeting at the Nursery and decided that this should be done more often because of the improved communication achieved between board and staff. For the same purpose, the Head Teacher would occasionally be asked to attend Board meetings.

In 1982 Miss Margery Walder joined the staff as Head Teacher. Eminently qualified with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education and several years' teaching experience, she was able to make some valuable changes in the daily program. The annual Board report for 1982 noted that "The children seem to be flourishing under a program which encourages spontaneity and learning through doing. The 4 year olds' program is geared more to preparation for kindergarten than it used to be. The classrooms have been rearranged to make better use of space. "The free play program in open classrooms proved successful in both the Junior and Pre-School Groups. The new system provided more opportunity for individual selection of activity. Nevertheless, the Director stressed, there was still discipline and structure in the classrooms. Field trips were instituted during the fall of 1982. A new monthly newsletter kept the Board of Managers and parents in touch with daily activities at the Nursery.

Personnel policies dominated many Board discussions in 1982. Decisions made included:

1. The Nursery would reimburse staff members 50% of the cost of each successfully completed academic course require by the state for certification.

2. A third week of vacation would be given to all staff members, retroactive to February 1, 1982.
3. Employees would be advised to subscribe to a Blue Cross plan used by many United Way agencies, since the Board could not afford to provide health benefits.

A new fact sheet for Board members was developed and the Board voted to abolish fines - its oldest tradition - for missing meetings.

Field trips continued to be popular. During the summer of 1983 children attended two productions at the Zeiterion Theatre, one movie at the Cinema and picnics at Hazelwood and Buttonwood Parks. The Director held a cookout at her home for boys and girls about to leave the Nursery for kindergarten. General refurbishing of the Nursery continued; staircases were carpeted, the kitchen and pantry papered and storage area painted.

In her annual report for 1983, the Director stated that the enrollment was 48 children with a waiting list almost as large. She said that the families we serve represent a cross section of the population of this city. We have single parents on welfare, single parents who work, parents who work in factories, office workers, nurses, students and sales people. The list is long and varied. These people are of different religious and ethnic backgrounds. The Nursery provides the children not only with well-balanced learning programs but also with a well-rounded introduction to society and its many different cultures.

Starting in 1984, three generous grants from the Polaroid Corporation made possible much needed improvements. In 1984 linoleum on the downstairs floors was replaced. In 1985 kitchen floor linoleum was replaced, and a new circuit breaker system added. In 1986, Polaroid's grant installed separate zoning for the second floor heating system and carpeted the porch.

And concurrently in 1986 a generous grant from The New England Telephone Company paid for a new furnace with separate zone heating, baseboard heat for the second floor porch, and the removal of the old furnace. The Nursery is indeed grateful for this wonderful support.

The Board of Managers is proud to have the privilege of serving the agency as it begins its second hundred years of service to the community. The founders of the Nursery were foresighted in their belief in the necessity for quality care for children of working parents. It is we, the Board Members of 1986, however, who see as the founders could not, that the same quality child care is not just for the benefit of a minority of parents, but a necessity for many as the social and economic changes in our society see more and more mothers employed outside the home.

May the confident feeling of parents as they pick up their enthusiastic, laughing child at the end of the day, be a testimony to the care given at the New Bedford Day Nursery.

*written by Marion Mitchell, 1987*

## PART III

### 1986 -

The Centennial year of the Nursery was a banner one, highlighted by a gala birthday celebration on October 8th of 1987. An Open House at 1060 Cove Road, attended by invited guests, was followed by a reception at the Rotch-Jones-Duff House on County Street in New Bedford with Mayor John Bullard and Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis present.

A second Open House on October 9th, attended by many fourth generation Nursery alumni, staff, and the Board of Managers, included a televised appearance of Nursery school children singing Happy Birthday on *Good Morning America*, a television program out of New York City.

In 1987, as the Nursery entered into its second hundred years of service with a waiting list of children, the Massachusetts Office for Children added two procedures to the hiring protocol; proof of citizenship and a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) check. The James Arnold Fund continued to support the financial well-being of the Nursery as did the United Way, Polaroid Corporation, New England Telephone Company, and, after 1953, the Massachusetts School Lunch Program, which provided surplus miscellaneous commodities for the pantry.

By the 1990's, however, a kindergarten program was initiated at a cost of \$65.00 per child, a measure taken to attract higher attendance. The New Bedford public schools had begun to provide free pre-school, kindergarten and after-school spaces. This forced a shift at the Nursery from full-time to part-time students, including after-school attendance as the Nursery struggled to compete. PACE (People Acting in Community Endeavors), a New Bedford Organization dedicated to assisting low income families, paid for slots whether children occupied the seats or not.

Simultaneously, the Nursery building was beset with problems that included a breakdown of the oil burner, a total replacement of the heating system and a newly shingled roof, followed by the replacement of ancient water pipes. The old structure was showing its age.

In addition to the increased expenditures for constant repairs to the seventy-eight year-old building, the minimum wage was raised forcing the Nursery to increase its rates to cover workers' salaries. Rising health and liability insurance costs, in addition to a devastating economic decline, further slowed enrollment, and the deterioration of the low income neighborhoods, infiltrated by drug dealers with vicious dogs in yards that surrounded the playground made it impossible for the Nursery to maintain a safe environment for the children. The final blow was the refusal of the United Way to continue providing funding to the New Bedford Day Nursery, which had been one of its original five founders. The Nursery was doomed.

As a result of its losing struggle with competing free public pre-schools, the Nursery's summer enrollment declined as did kindergarten attendance, and both programs had to be disbanded in 1995.

In spite of every attempt to revitalize it, by 1996 the Nursery was losing \$25,000 annually. When a violation notice from the Office of Children cited the Nursery for an incorrect teacher-to-child ratio, the Board of Managers held an emergency meeting and decided that drastic changes had to be made since only twenty-eight children had registered for the up-coming year. The Board of Managers reluctantly voted to close the Nursery at the end of the summer and initiate an in-depth reorganization and feasibility study to decide the future of this old and revered entity.

It was a sad, disheartening time. During the next few months many options were examined, but in the end the Board found that it had no choice and made the painful decision to close the Nursery permanently and sell the building. After 110 years, the third oldest day care facility in the United States shut its doors. Judith Thornhill had been employed for twenty-nine years, sixteen as Director. Many members had served on the board even longer.

At their Change of Purpose Hearing, the Board of Managers announced its intention to keep the name of the New Bedford Day Nursery and retain control of its funds so that the charity itself could maintain its own identity and remain exclusively in the hands of its Board of Managers. A Statement of Purpose (Mission Statement) was developed to use as a guide for the future. The business of the Board would center on keeping all of its investments healthy, so that monies earned from the endowment would be available for annual distribution to those charities that might request assistance via grants. In keeping with the original intent of the Nursery's founders, such grants would be accessible only to organizations working specifically in the interests of young people with special emphasis on - but not limited to - the children of the south end of New Bedford, the original home of the New Bedford Day Nursery.

The accounting firm of Meyer, Regan and Wilner was hired, and Mr. Francis Keohane of A.G. Edwards and Sons (now Wells Fargo) was invited to continue on as financial advisor. The transformation was the beginning of a lengthy process. Staff were dismissed with regret and given one week's pay for every three years of employment.

The language of the law, as stated by the Massachusetts Attorney General, reads that any land transaction must be completed with its funds going into the endowment prior to the change of purpose of the corporation. In September of 1997, the building was purchased by Anita Rocheteau of Professional Family Child Services of Wareham and Taunton. The selling price was \$170,000.00. The Nursery held a five-year second mortgage at an 8.4% rate of interest, with monthly payments of \$544.32 going into the endowment fund.

President Jacqueline Beckmann and Treasurer Kathleen Carter, diligently and effectively handled the "legalese" in conjunction with Attorney Scott Lang. In March of 1998, after the property's sale, the Probate Court heard the Nursery's petition to change the purpose of the organization as had been determined at an earlier meeting. Finally, in March of 1998, the New Bedford Day Nursery, honorably established in 1886, became the New Bedford Day Nursery Fund, Inc., a 501c3 non-profit charity.

It was with great pleasure that in September of 1998, the Board presented its first grant to the Dennison Memorial Community Center, located at 755 South First Street in the center of New Bedford's "south end Nursery territory". This gift of \$50,000.00 was enough to provide a state-of-the-art wooden basketball floor for their newly constructed gymnasium. A plaque on their wall denotes the gift but cannot begin to express the positive results that this and future grants would have upon that neighborhood.

In December of 1999, the 111th meeting of the New Bedford Day Nursery Board of Managers met, filled with great enthusiasm, hope, and the anticipation that this new endeavor might reap the same success that its predecessors had enjoyed. The Board decided that the Whaling Museum would house the Nursery's historic papers and W.H.A.L.E would be given the regulator clock for safekeeping. Then, devoid of its final physical possessions, the Board of Managers began to plan the process by which it could most effectively use its financial resources to assist the children of the Greater New Bedford area and improve the depressed climate of its neighborhoods.

Ironically, as the 21st Century dawned, the members of the Board of Managers found themselves facing many of the same issues and conditions as the very first Board had confronted one hundred and fourteen years earlier. A depressed economy, a high rate of unemployment, an influx of non-English speaking immigrants,

high levels of crime, and people living on the edge of poverty were circumstances common to both eras. While there were more facilities available to offer assistance in modern times, there were also more people, especially children, in need of help. However, most of these facilities were working on extremely limited budgets, particularly those that serviced children. The Board of Managers recognized the need and understood that this was the arena in which it could make a positive difference.

Once committed to taking the Nursery in this new direction, the Board of Managers designed a Mission Statement that clearly specified both the philosophy and the purpose of its restructured organization:

**MISSION STATEMENT: TO PROMOTE, ENCOURAGE AND MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN FROM ALL ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS FROM THE GREATER NEW BEDFORD AREA REGARDING CULTURAL ENRICHMENT PROJECTS, WHICH WILL HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON THEIR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL GROWTH; AND TO ALLOCATE SUCH MONIES AS BECOME AVAILABLE TO MAINTAIN THESE COMMITMENTS.**

Each year in mid-March, an advertisement is placed in the local newspaper announcing the grants that will be available for the following year, noting that applications must be received by the end of May.

The grant requires detailed information from the applicant including a specified accounting of its finances, a report of how the money will be spent, an acknowledgement of the Nursery's sponsorship in its literature, and a follow-up report of how the money was expended. Failure to comply with any of the requirements will make the organization ineligible for future funding.

Once grant applications have been received and the deadline has passed, Board members hold a blind selection whereby each member assumes responsibility for at least one of the award candidates under consideration. She visits the premises of that organization, meets and interviews at least one of its key leaders, then reports her findings at the first of two October meetings. She then offers her recommendations - pro or con - including the amount she would suggest for the grant and then takes questions from the Board.

After a period of review and reflection, and based upon the amount of money available from the endowment, the Board makes its final decisions at the second meeting in October in accordance with its Mission Statement.

The Board of Managers of the New Bedford Day Nursery Fund, Inc. is proud

of its achievements over the years and feels that these grants have impacted - in a positive way - organizations that have been recipients of its funding. Our members hope that its farsighted founders would be pleased with the assistance that is being rendered to the children of the Greater New Bedford area in their name, and, while the organization is different in form from the original Nursery, it remains true to the spirit and intent of those amazing 19th Century women whose influence is still felt with every gift given.

*written by Francine Weeks and Ruth Nicolaci, 2012*

The following organizations have benefited from grants awarded by the New Bedford Day Nursery Fund, Inc. to deserving charities throughout the area:

### **Artworks**

**Boys and Girls Club of Greater New Bedford**

**Burgo Basketball Association**

**Buttonwood Park Zoological Society**

**Community Boating of New Bedford**

**Dennison Memorial Community Center**

**Dreams Come True**

**Early Learning Children Care, Inc.**

**Grace Episcopal Church After School**

**Inner City Youth**

**John Hannigan School**

**Kennedy-Donovan Center**

**New Bedford Art Museum**

**New Bedford Historical Society**

**New Bedford Public Library**

**New Bedford Symphony**

**New Bedford Whaling Museum**

**New Bedford Women's Center**

**North Star Learning Center**

**Our Sister's School**

**P.A.A.C.A. (formerly New Bedford Prevention Partnership)**

**P.A.C.E.**

**Sea Lab**

**St. Andrew's Episcopal After School Program**

**Southeast Regional Network**

**Southworth Library**

**United Front Child Development**

**Y.M.C.A.**

**Y.W.C.A.**

**Zeiterion**



## Board of Managers New Bedford Day Nursery

Bertha Williams Mandell (Mrs. H.A. DeWindt)	1886-1889
Miss Louise Howland Macomber (Mrs. Wallace S. Clarke)	1886-1891
Miss Elise Howland Cook (Mrs. Frank H. Gifford)	1886-1942
Miss Sarah Spooner Bullard (Mrs. Charles H.L. Delano)	1886-1939
Miss Mary Allen Thornton (Mrs. Otis N. Pierce)	1886-1923
Miss Elizabeth S. Rugg (Mrs. Albert W. Holmes)	1886-1934
Miss Nella Howland Gifford	1886-1891
Miss Helen W. Prescott (Mrs. F. Stetson)	1886-1891
Miss Elise Swift	1886-1923
Miss Mary Hawes	1886-1891
Miss Anna Russell Taber (Mrs. Herbert Cushman)	1886-1896
Miss Elizabeth Hathaway (Mrs. C.O. Brewster)	1887-1900
Miss Helen Cummings Gifford	1886-1911
Miss Ida Cummings (Mrs. Charles D. Prescott)	1886-1900
Miss Louise C. Pierce (Mrs. James Kellogg)	1886-1897
Miss Emma C. Taber (Mrs. E. Bourne)	1886-1921
Miss Elizabeth C. Murray (Mrs. Nathaniel W. Gifford)	1886-1902
Miss Clara Gardner Allen (Mrs. George Kingman)	1886-1905
Miss Edith Eliot	1889-1891
Miss Caroline Stone (Mrs. J. D. Wood)	1891-1932
Miss Agnes Snow	1891-1895
Miss Anna Wood Haskins (Mrs. W. L. Nichols)	1891-1894
Miss Morgan Rotch (Josephine G.)	1892-1899
Miss Alice T. Snow	1892-1918
Miss Grace Dana	1894-1939
Miss Sylvia H. Taber (Mrs. Horatio Allen)	1896-1903
Miss Alice Wood	1898-1927
Mrs. Edmund Wood (Margaret Earle)	1897-1900
Miss Elizabeth K. Howland	1898-1905
Mrs. Charles Taber	1900-1908
Miss Ellen Hathaway	1900-1929
Miss Emily M. Hussey	1900-1937
Miss Mary B. Pierce	1901-1913
Mrs. Franklyn E. Smith	1903-1910
Mrs. William Perry	1903-1910
Mrs. L. W. Jenkins	1903-1910
Mrs. George Habicht	1903-1911; 1913-1929
Mrs. Albert Pierce	1903-1912
Mrs. William Hawes	1903-1913
Mrs. Charles Barney	1903-1906
Mrs. Charles White, Jr. (Mrs. Z. W. Pease)	1903-1925
Mrs. Walter Windsor	1903-1920
Mrs. Charles F. Wing	1903-1922

\* *Founders*

Mrs. Charles A. Pratt	1906-1909
Miss Mary Rotch	1906-1917
Miss Ella Ivers	1907-1908
Mrs. John W. Knowles	1908-1909
Mrs. John Howland	1908-1928
Miss Rebecca Hussey (Mrs. F. R. Brown)	1909-1927
Miss Beatrice Walmsley	1909-1916
Miss Agatha Snow	1910-1928
Mrs. Elizabeth Tiffany	1910-1920
Mrs. Abbott P. Smith	1911-1925
Mrs. William A. Robinson, Jr.	1911-1913
Miss Margaret Anthony (Mrs. Edward Drake)	1911-1951
Mrs. James A. Collins	1911-1968
Mrs. William F. Potter	1914-1928
Mrs. Everett Read	1916-1925
Miss Elizabeth Hussey	1917-1928
Mrs. Rudolphus A. Swan	1917-1948
Mrs. Edwin P. Seaver, Jr.	1917-1925
Miss Mabel Hutchinson	1918-1935
Mrs. Joseph M. Read	1918-1968
Mrs. Edward W. Baylies	1921-1930
Mrs. Richmond Wood	1921-1958
Mrs. Frank Howes	1922-1925
Mrs. E. O. Baker	1922-1929
Mrs. Arthur Delano	1922-1931
Miss Helen Wheaton	1924-1932
Mrs. William T. Read	1924-1932
Miss Eleanor Huston	1925-1960
Mrs. Charles S. Kelley, Jr.	1926-1945
Mrs. Edmund Leland	1926-1936
Mrs. Abbott M. Smith	1927-1931; 1950-1977
Mrs. Everett Davenport	1927-1931
Mrs. Oliver Prescott, Jr.	1928-1937
Mrs. John C. Shaw, Jr.	1929-1946
Mrs. Edmund Anthony	1929-1937
Mrs. Ralph C. Perkins	1929-1977
Mrs. R. Eugene Ashley	1929-1942
Mrs. Henry S. Knowles	1929-1968
Mrs. Benjamin F. Proud	1930-1937
Miss Ruth Delano (Mrs. Ruth D. Whitin)	1930-1931; 1950-1951; 1961-1999
Mrs. C. P. Harrington	1931-1933
Mrs. Charles Tucker	1931-1934
Mrs. Metcalf Kingman	1931-1957
Miss Elizabeth Read (Mrs. Robert B. MacLeod)	1931-1989
Miss Sally Hitch	1933-1977
Mrs. John C. Shaw, Jr.	1933-1946
Mrs. Timothy F. O'Brien	1934-1971

Mrs. Laurance C. Chapman	1934-1948
Mrs. C. Gardner Akin, Jr.	1934-1941
Mrs. Horatio H. Brewster	1934-1935; 1940-1967
Mrs. William T. Van Nostrand	1935-1948
Mrs. Amy W. Safford	1936-1969
Miss Eleanor Collins (Mrs. John H. Read)	1937-1977
Mrs. John B. Sherman	1938-1967
Miss Virginia Seabury (Mrs. Dermot English)	1938-1942
Mrs. Frederick P. Tucker	1938-1943
Miss Barbara Kelley (Mrs. Thomas G. Robbins)	1939-1944
Mrs. George B. Knowles, Jr. (Edith)	1940-1953
Mrs. Charles P. Golding (Mrs. Clifford C. Fifield)	1940-1964
Mrs. Andrew G. Pierce, III	1941-1946
Mrs. Andrew P. Doyle	1942-1952
Mrs. John S. Ashley	1942-1952
Mrs. M. Welsh Hurst	1944-1952
Mrs. John K. Herbert	1944-1946
Mrs. W. Myron Owen	1946-1948
Miss Mary J. Kenney	1947-1948; 1960-1972
Mrs. Robert J. Holden	1948-1953
Mrs. William H. Potter (Marge)	1949-1986
Mrs. Philip Taber (Virginia)	1949-1963
Mrs. John C. Shaw	1951-1956
Mrs. Joseph W. Bailey, Jr. (Frannie)	1951-1974
Mrs. Otis C. Stanton (Mary)	1952-1962
Mrs. James B. Buckley (Jean)	1952-1980
Mrs. Linden H. White, Jr. (Madeleine)	1952-1971
Mrs. Roger E. Titus (Isabel)	1952-1989
Mrs. George W. Parker (Marge)	1953-1969
Mrs. Richard H. Gee	1953-1967
Mrs. Charles F. Broughton	1957-1968
Mrs. Karl P. Goodwin (Caroline)	1958-1982
Mrs. Davis C. Howes (Polly)	1958-1964
Mrs. A. L. Rodgers (Lois)	1964-1973
Mrs. Eliot Spaulding (Nancy)	1964-1967
Mrs. Edgar C. Earle, Jr. (Libby)	1965-1974
Mrs. William R. MacLeod (Betsy)	1965-1971
Mrs. Philip Taber, Jr. (Janet)	1967-1973
Mrs. Bruce Alexander	1968-1970
Mrs. George W. Starbuck (Virginia)	1968-1970
Mrs. David H. Mitchell (Anne)	1968-1976
Mrs. Horatio H. Brewster, III (Ellie)	1969-1976
Mrs. George B. Knowles, III (Ruth) Mrs. John Nicolaci	1969-1977; 1986-
Mrs. Robert A. Makin (Anne)	1969-2010
Mrs. Arthur F. Buckley (Kay)	1969-2002
Mrs. Waring C. Strebeigh (Nancy)	1970-2002
Mrs. David O. Rankin	1971-1973

Mrs. Joseph S. Betts (Janet)	1971-1974
Mrs. Normand E. Olivier (Norma)	1971-1974
Mrs. George C. Perkins (Margaret)	1972-1974
Mrs. Everett B. Sherman (Pam)	1972-1974
Mrs. Robert H. Gardner (Patricia)	1972-
Mrs. Garth O. Styan (Christina)	1972-1981
Mrs. Scott C. Mason (Caroline)	1973-1978
Mrs. Peter O. Schultz (Gale)	1974-1977
Mrs. Gerald Smith (Sammy)	1974-1977
Mrs. Thomas H. Flynn (Amy)	1974-1977
Mrs. Peter L. Schofield (Judy)	1975-1986
Mrs. David K. Biddle (Phyllis)	1975-1977
Mrs. Anthony M. Martin (Hope)	1975-
Mrs. Andrew VanDyke (Ann) (Mrs. Wm. VanDyke)	1975-1989
Mrs. John Coyne (Eileen)	1975-2008
Mrs. William S. Brady (Claire)	1976-
Mrs. Wallace A. Walker (Mary)	1976-1981
Mrs. George B. O'Brien (Lucie)	1978-1981
Mrs. Peter L. Milliken (Birch)	1978-1987
Mrs. Brayton Lincoln (Rosamond)	1980-1983
Mrs. Robert Bailey (Jayne)	1981-1983
Mrs. Alex Williams (Ellen)	1981-1982
Mrs. Robert Howland (Jane)	1982-1984
Mrs. Charles F. DeMaily, Jr. (Judy)	1982-1989
Mrs. John L. Downey (Betsy)	1982-1986
Mrs. Richard W. Purdy (Nancy)	1982-1987
Mrs. W. Barry Hughes (Louise)	1984-1990
Mrs. Edgar H. Lindblom (Suzanne)	1984-
Mrs. Christopher Schmidt (Babette)	1984-1985
Mrs. R. William Blasdale (Mary-Jean)	1984-1985
Mrs. Robert J. Lang (Kathleen)	1985-
Mrs. Patrick T. Walsh (Heidi)	1985-1999
Mrs. Charles T. Toomey (Maryse)	1985-
Mrs. Hamish F. Gravem (Jay)	1985-1987
Mrs. Charles Burke (Susan)	1986-1992
Mrs. Joseph F. Burke (Linda)	1986-1988; 2005-2006
Mrs. Michael J. Caslin (Maureen)	1986-1988; 1994-1996; 2001-2003
Mrs. Gerald Huston (Linda)	1989-1993
Mrs. Jeffrey Morad (Jill)	1990-1991
Mrs. Stephen Carter (Kathleen)	1990-
Mrs. Robert Beckmann (Jacqueline)	1990-1999
Dr. Bonnie Bower	1994-1995
Dr. Pamela McKnight	1995-1998
Mrs. G. Franklin Fish (Joan)	1995-2000
Mrs. Scott Lang (Gig)	1995-
Mrs. Randall T. Weeks (Francine)	1996-
Mrs. Peter Hughes (Brenda)	1996-1998

**Board of Managers**  
**New Bedford Day Nursery Fund, Inc.**

Mrs. Robert Aisenberg (Kathleen)	2001-2007
Mrs. Carl Beckman (Tamara)	2002-
Ms. Deborah Kelley	2004-
Mrs. Gerald FitzGerald (Holly)	2005-
Mrs. Ronald P. Yates (Barbara)	2012-

*Membership Compilation Committee*  
*Patricia Gardner, Claire Brody, Hope Martin 2012*

And grateful Thanks to all Managers for their input of historical remembrances,  
and investigative expertise.



CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
of  
THE NEW BEDFORD DAY NURSERY

Established 1887

Incorporated 1897

Revised and Adopted in 1902  
Revised and Adopted in 1940  
Revised and Adopted in 1969  
Revised and Adopted in 1982  
Revised and Adopted in 1992  
Revised and Adopted in 1999

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
of  
THE NEW BEDFORD DAY NURSERY FUND, INC

Revised and Adopted in 2012

MISSION AND GOALS

To promote, encourage and maintain the highest levels of educational programs for children from all economic backgrounds from the Greater New Bedford Area regarding cultural enrichment projects which will have a positive effect on their mental and physical growth; and to allocate such monies as come available each year to maintain these commitments.

ARTICLE I      Membership

The members of the Corporation shall be the persons, who, from time to time, constitutes the Board of Managers and Officers of the Corporation as hereinafter provided and no others.

ARTICLE II      Managers

1. The Corporation shall consist of a Board of not more than 28 Managers who shall elect from their membership a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Social Secretary.
2. The Board of Managers, the President, the Vice-President, the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer, the Recording Secretary, the

Corresponding Secretary, and the Social Secretary shall be elected annually by ballot by the members of the Corporation. Two or more Offices may be held at the same time by one person.

3. The Board of Managers may fill any vacancy in any Office or on such Board by majority vote upon nomination of any candidate by a member of the Board.
4. In case of the temporary absence or disability of any Officer of the Corporation, the Board of Managers may appoint another person to exercise for the time being of the powers of, and perform the duties of, such Officer.

### ARTICLE III Meetings

1. The Annual Meeting of the members of the Corporation shall be held on the first Tuesday in February at such time and place as the Board of Managers shall direct. In the event that such Annual Meeting is omitted on the day herein provided for, a subsequent meeting may be held in lieu of thereof, and any business transacted or election held at such meeting shall be valid as if transacted or held at an Annual Meeting. Such subsequent meeting shall be called in the manner as provided for special meetings of the Corporation.
2. The Managers may establish the place of holding their meetings and the manner of calling and giving notice of the same. The Managers may provide for regular meetings of the Board to be held during the year at some definite time and place, and may provide that no notice of said regular meetings need be given to members of the Board other than a notice of the establishment of such regular meetings. All regular meetings of the Board shall be legal without notice when a quorum is present.
3. A notice of the Annual Meeting stating the time and place shall be given by the Social Secretary at least seven days before such meeting to each member.
4. Special meetings of the Corporation may be called, whenever occasion may require, by the President, or in her absence by the Vice-President. Should the President and Vice-President be absent, such meetings may be called by any two members.
5. The Social Secretary shall give notice of special meetings of the Board at least four days before the meeting stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting.
6. A simple majority of the board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If less than a quorum be present any meeting may, without further notice, be adjourned to a subsequent date, but no business may be transacted until a quorum be present.



## ARTICLE IV Power of Managers

1. The care, custody and management of the property and of the Corporation and all its business, and the execution of its charitable purposes shall rest exclusively with this Board of Managers who may exercise such powers of the Corporation as are not expressly conferred elsewhere herein or by law.
2. President: The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Managers. The President shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Corporation.
3. Vice-President: In the absence or disability of the President, the Vice-President shall preside at the meetings of the Managers, and shall, in general, perform the duties and have the powers of President.
4. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer of the Corporation and shall, subject to the direction and control of the Finance Committee, exercise general supervisory power over the financial affairs and transactions of the Corporation, including the care and custody of its funds, securities and valuable papers, with the exception of such papers as are required by vote of the Board to be maintained in the custody of some other person. She shall make a report on the condition of the treasury at each meeting and whenever required. She shall keep accurate books of accounts which shall be the property of the Corporation, and she shall perform all acts incidental to the position of Treasurer. The books of the Treasurer shall be audited annually by a Certified Public Accountant when legally required.
5. Assistant Treasurer: The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in the performance of her duties, exercise and perform her powers and duties in her absence or disability, and shall have other powers and duties as may be assigned to her by the Board of Managers.
6. Finance Committee: The Finance Committee shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Assistant Treasurer, Social and Recording Secretaries, and when necessary to break a tie, the Treasurer.
7. Recording Secretary: The Recording Secretary who is also known as the Clerk, shall record all votes and minutes of all proceedings of the Managers in books kept for that purpose. She shall attend meetings of the Managers and act as Secretary thereof. She shall prepare a report to be read at the Annual Meeting.
8. Social Secretary: The Social Secretary shall give notice of all meetings in accordance with the By-Laws, and shall perform such other duties as may be required of her by the Board.
9. Corresponding Secretary: The Corresponding Secretary shall handle all correspondence of the Board, press releases, and maintain such records and perform any other duties delegated to this office.

## ARTICLE V

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on January 1st and end on December 31st of each year.

## ARTICLE VI

These By-Laws may be altered, amended or repealed at any meeting of the Board by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided written notice of such intended alterations be given each member no less than ten days prior to the meeting.