



THE CANBERRA HOMEBIRTH ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 88, O'Connor, ACT 2601 • Phones 486624, 470110, 476448

A member group of The International Association of Parents
& Professionals for Safe Alternatives in Childbirth
&

The International Childbirth Education Association

NEWSLETTER MAY / JUNE 1986.

<u>BIRTHDAY</u>	<u>NEW PARENTS</u>	<u>BABY</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>MIDWIFE</u>
December 21	Caroline Dawson Duncan Stevenson	boy	Robin R.C.H.	*by choice A. Hosking
February 22	Stina and Gary Kerans	boy	Gregory	Joy
March 2	Peter and Dianne Auckram	girl	Leannah	Denise
March 2	Tracy McPartlin	boy	Arryn	Cheryl
March 5	Liz and Jan Van der Valk	boy	Rick	Denise
March 8	Belinda Bartlett and Antonio Marques	girl	Olivia	Jane
March 15	Lyndy Delian	girl	Kitty	Jane
March 16	Lurline and Greg Payne	boy	John Alexander	Beverley
March 18	Vicki and Terry McAndrew	girl	Caitlin	Queensland
March 23	Ann-Claire and Colin Stoddard	girl	Jessie	Cheryl
March 31	Anna Borg and Peter Munday	boy	Max R.C.H.	*by choice Beryl Rich
April 3	Wendy and Steve Hodgman	boy	Sean	Jane
April 17	Kym and Graeme Bryce	boy	Kitt	Megan
April 19	Laura Smith and Bob Anderson	boy	Dane	Jane
April 23	Sue and Ross Pettersson	boy	David	Jane/ R.C.H.
April 29	Judith and David Wye-Dvorak	boy	Ry	Cheryl
May 4	Ray and Carol Drew	girl	Savannah	Denise

Page 2. EDITORIAL.

Dear Friends,

Our group seems to be expanding in all directions at once! The number of new people coming to our Saturday public meetings is really heartening. The discussion topics seem to be particularly stimulating at the moment: we've just had a really thorough and provocative look at ourselves at the March meeting - a report is in this edition. I feel proud to be a part of such a healthy group - a group that can examine any shortcomings in a positive and productive manner.

Even more exciting to me is the increasing interest in 'parenting' and new mothers 'discussion and support' groups. As Sally Pope said in her letter to me, (Page 4), "parenting seems hard in comparison" (with birthing). I firmly believe that our strength lies in the fact that we continue to be interested in, and of interest to our members long after their babies have grown.

I have no doubt that the effective way we operate here in Canberra is in part due to those people in the group who make their homes and hearts open to new and old members at the various meetings. Home-based meetings where we can communicate warmth and acceptance to others are 'secret weapons' for *peacefully* changing the world!

- Love

Maureen Tully
(MAUREEN TULLY) Ph 518159.

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION FORM.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE HOME: _____

WORK: _____

FEES: \$20.00 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP. \$100.00 LIFE MEMBERSHIP

C.H.A. ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 88 O'CONNOR A.C.T. 2601.

Minutes of Assn. Meeting 2 APRIL 1986 Fiona Prideaux's home.

1. Incorporation. First meeting very useful, another 2 weeks time 16 April.
 2. Statistics book. Lorraine organising.
 3. Midwives reply to letter. 4 points raised. *Suggestion that first half to three quarter hour of monthly meetings and first half hour of Assn. meetings be left clear by midwives "reciprocal sensitivity". * Discussion of Associations Registers - use of names and confidentiality. Safe custody of the Register book. Lorraine to have custody. *Maureen prepared to create a disk backing up the register on computer and keeping it up to date. * Custody of records to be discussed at next midwives meeting.
 4. Equipment. Libby and Jane conducting a review - working party suggested.
 5. Grant application. In and acknowledged.
 6. Birth therapy group. Maxine Fern has agreed to run - looking at paid enrolment. Date to be set.
 7. March monthly meeting. Alan and Lorraine took notes - Maureen to include in newsletter. To be repeated every six months or so. Described as a great leap forward for the group in taking responsibility.
 8. 10th birthday celebrations. C.H.A. ten in October. Reunion? Picnic? 'Pling and Graeme to look into a venue.
 9. CCAE. Student to research, design implement and evaluate a health care program for us. Invited to next Assn. meeting.
 10. Seminar on the Family. Institute of Cultural Affairs - putting together knowledge on what makes the family work. ICA people very good at facilitating. Boo happy to set it up and set a day/seminar. Meeting at Boo's Wed 9 April, lunchtime.
 11. Marjorie Tew. CCE has agreed to sponsor. We have her on the Sunday Assn members invited to Afternoon Tea 8 June with Marjorie at Maureen's home. 513159.
 12. Rosemary Knight. Writing to her suggesting she provide us with an outline of her project and negotiate design with her.
 13. WEL. Jennifer Rainforth running "Women's Health" session at National Agenda for Women. Need to formulate resolutions re birth - being done. Shane and Boo will probably attend.
 14. Women's Health Centre. Lisette went to meeting. Hoping to have CHA member on planning committee. Push for salaried midwife to be employed.
 - 15 Conference. Shane's report: Next years conference at Bunbury W.A. - Canberra in 1988. Shane to write a report.
 16. Shane requested inclusion of two birth notices in next newsletter.
 17. Midwives status discussed. Cheryl noted changes in training, switching from hospital-based training to college-based training. Cheryl voiced concern at future status as a registerable profession as "midwife" rather than "registered nurse" as in Canada.
 18. A.G.M. and positions changeover. Joy and Libby suggested reports on different areas of Assn activities be submitted for a short A.G.M. at the beginning of October meeting. All reports to be published in following newsletter. List of all jobs to be vacated to be published in newsletter prior to A.G.M.
- Meeting closed at 11pm

HOME BIRTH MIDWIVES MEETING 21 MARCH Debbie Cameron's home.

1. Cord blood. Apparent differences in procedure between N.S.W. and A.C.T. noted. Positive mothers in A.C.T. tested for Rh group Coombs and thyroid function. N.S.W. collected but no tests performed routinely; kept in fridge, discarded if no further follow up regarding Guthrie 10 day.
2. Forceps. Peter amenable to carry forceps and pudendal needle. Beryl still to be contacted. Megan to approach Kippax re autoclaving. Laryngoscope kept by midwives.
3. Blue Stats Book. Concern expressed re confidentiality. Suggestion that numbers be used to identify clients. Denise to write to Assn.
4. Womens Health Centre request for midwife to attend.
5. Midwife on roster basis to attend homebirth meetings.
6. Midwives wanting minutes leave SAE.
7. Practitioners list. A list of homeopaths, acapuncturists etc to be drawn up.

8. Concern expressed re clients who do not abide by the regulations of C.H.A.
9. Birthkit changes. Individual sachets Hibitane to replace bulk. Savlon sachets to replace red hibitane. Distilled water to be replaced by tap water for oxygen if humidification necessary. Xylocaine 20ml ampules replace bottles. Sincere thanks to Jane Reid for ideas and Sue Hearn.
10. Community nurses to be notified when clients discharged; Bennet House in A.C.T. and Health Centre in N.S.W.
11. Judy Fordham is always willing to discuss her ante natal programme with midwives.
12. Letter from Libby Bell discussed: Midwives prefer individual meetings with clients rather than trying to talk at public meetings. Assn members to midwives meetings: welcome when specific issues are on agenda.
14. Ante-natal screening. Midwives are happy to be resource persons but not happy to check women who are not their clients.

NEXT MEETING DENISE TRAINOR'S 1 MAY 7.30PM.

MINUTES OF ASSN MEETING MAY 7 FIONA PRIDEAUX'S HOME.

1. 10th birthday Venue. Last Saturday October. 'Pling checked Western Park and Hall showground. Maureen's shearing shed could be used as a backup venue in case of rain.
2. Incorporation. Difficulty with the 'Core Group' concept for inclusion in the constitution as far as decision making is concerned. The telephone tree to be updated and used for difficulties in decision making. The group felt strongly our 'consensus decision making' should be relected in our constitution.
3. National Agenda for Women. Boo's report. W.E.L. arranged conference. Covered many issues. Two hour session on women's health. Important decisions and resolutions made, including(draft)
 1. that domiciliary midwives be recognised by the Federal Govt.
 2. That fees for midwifery are refundable under the basic medical benefits schedule in the Medicare system.
 3. The nature and rate of medical intevention in childbirth be critically re-evaluated and monitored.
 4. that women be actively involved in the decision making about the management of their pregnancy and labour.
4. Marjorie Tew. CCE committee produced pamphlet. Speaker to be confirmed is David Thomas, Westmead Hospital Sydney. Friday 6 June. Afternoon tea at Maureens on Saturday 7 June.
5. Rosemary Knight. Boo to telephone her and extend our warm regard.
6. National Homebirth week, ends with winter solstice 22 June. Press release to be written, a display may be mounted at Dickson library. A party to celebrate- Ph Boo for details.
7. Bronwyn. CCAE. Interested in working with Assn. Needs to provide a work programme as part of her course and would like to look at our needs, develop a programme, run and evaluate. Possible area kit for school and college visits.
8. National Conference. Bunbury next year, Canberra 1988. Monday 30 June Conference meeting Shane's home, 12.30-3pm to plan 88 conference. Suggested venues should be accomodation included or billets? ring Shane with ideas. International?
9. Visitor outlined her interests in upcoming conference on Reproductive Technologies.

MARJORIE TEW VISIT.

BIRTH - A NORMAL PROCESS ?

THE HAZARDS OF MEDICAL INTERVENTION.

SEMINAR ROOM A, CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

FRIDAY 6 JUNE 1986

ORGANISED BY THE C.C.E. IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE CANBERRA HOMEBIRTH ASSN.

REGISTRATION FEE (INCLUDING LUNCH) \$55.00

\$25.00 CONCESSION FOR STUDENTS AND THOSE NOT IN PAID EMPLOYMENT

CLOSING DATE FOR ENROLMENTS 23 MAY 1986

FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE PHONE 492888, 493006

**SPEAKERS WILL BE DRAWN FROM MEDICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND HEALTH
RESEARCH BACKGROUNDS. THE SEMINAR WILL HOST VISITING RESEARCH STATISTICIAN
MS MARJORIE TEW, M.A. NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY, ENGLAND**

PUPIL MIDWIFE WANTS TO WITNESS HOMEBIRTH.

Pupil midwife at Canberra Hospital, Cheryl Thuilliers, is very keen to witness a homebirth. If anyone can offer Cheryl the opportunity to do so, please contact her on 413459 or leave a message at 417260 anytime.

SOUTHSIDE PARENTS.

The Parenting group met on the Southside of Canberra (or North Cooma as it must have seemed to those brave souls who ventured forth from Hackett and Belconnen) for the first time on Wednesday 23 April. There seems to be a lot of support for regular meetings over this side, with a total of 9 "Southerners" turning up. A very special welcome to Laura Smith and partner Bob, and baby Dane, who came along for Dane's second-ever outing at 4 days old. With this amount of interest we would like to try to make a Southside group a regular event. We have volunteers to host fortnightly meetings for the next few months. Dates and addresses are as follows:

27 May, Jenny Chioatto, 4 Farrelly Pl Oxley Ph 318873, (Jenny has asked people to bring cushions to sit on) **10 June, Kirsten Lindsay**, 27 Goble St Gughes, 813230. **24 June Laura Smith** 33 Grimshaw Cr Richardson. Remember, you can drop in at any time after 10am and stay as long as you like. Please bring your lunch if you want to stay on over lunch time, and anything special for your children to eat or drink.

T-SHIRTS AND CAR STICKERS

are now available! Support your group's fundraising and buy an armful! T-shirts are white 'Swan' brand (100% cotton) with our local design printed on the front. They come in a choice of colours, orange, blue and brown so far. Priced at \$10.00 for adults, \$7.00 child - they look terrific on. Car stickers are in black writing on white with "Homebirth - a Natural Choice" printed on them. Costing \$1.00 each, they look really effective. We hope to keep stocks all over the place to maximise sales; hopefully at Saturday meetings, Association meetings, video nights as well as at Robyn Reed's with the sterile bundles. - **Fiona Prideaux Ph. 486028.**

NEW PLAYGROUP!

To be held weekly on Southside, Phone Barbera Cooper on 821870 for more details. A warm welcome assured. The venue will rotate around to avoid 'burn out'.

HOMEBIRTH CONFERENCE IN CANBERRA 1988- PLANNING MEETINGS.

Shane would like to welcome any interested members to her home on Monday 30 June to help plan the '88 Conference. We will have to decide many issues, including whether or not to arrange 'convention centre' type facilities, or billet style arrangements. Please support Shane in her quest for efficient, early planning. Ph 470110.

CHILDCARE FOR MARJORIE TEW CONFERENCE.

A block booking could be made at the occasional care centre. Enquiries to Boo or Shane. 486624 or 470110

6. "TALKING POINT" ph 513159

"Games for babies / toddler's "

NEXT ISSUE: "Handling Afterpains" (Or more opinions on this topic)

- * Leave tupperware cupboard open or underwear draw! - Helen
- * Big brothers and sisters! - Sue
- * "Eating and drinking" a dice game. - Stina
- * I sing to , cuddle and hold my babies/toddlers nearly all the time, but don't worry about organising particular "games" preferring them to have unstructured play. -Maureen.
- * Finger painting - Julie (see Fiona's recipe)
- * A book "More games' babies play" is really good - Fiona.

Birthing Feedback

Please feel free to anonymously comment on any disappointments/delights you may have experienced with your birthing. Your comments could be included in this column in future for the benefit of other parents. Phone Jennifer Rainforth 543125 or Maureen Tully 513159 and be assured of confidentiality. Good handy hints and tips equally welcome. Here are some comments received

- * For after the birth, make a list of people and dates on which they will bring meals.
- * During the birth, we found it essential to have adequate preparation and organisation of birth equipment so that things were directly to hand.
- * Preparation of my bed for after delivery was much appreciated, i.e. pillows and plastic sheets down.
- * I like the idea of having the midwife deliver the baby. With my first the dr. arrived to deliver and with my second the dr. was too late and it was nice not to have another person arriving and having to fit into the energy environment. I think that if the midwife does all the hard work, she should be able to deliver the babe.
- * An idea - Rosehip and/or Raspberry leaf tea ice cubes to suck and crunch on (even if the weather's cold you may get quite hot giving birth.)
- * A good tip is to walk as much as you can- I did this because I didn't have a car at the time and I'm sure it contributed to my perfect birth.
- * I really wish I'd had my birth video'd.
- * Immediately afterwards I was so elated, I didn't realise I was allowing others to do everything for my baby - now I wish I'd done more of this myself e.g. I wish I'd bathed and dressed her... I'm sure it didn't affect my bonding with her or anything drastic like that - it's just a small regret.
- * I appreciated our daughter's umbilical cord being cut as soon as possible as it was tightening around her neck, but when our son was born without such a complication a few years later, I would have liked to have seen the connection to the placenta.

Dear Maureen,

We would like to express our immense gratitude for the support we received from other members today, (5 April) at Cheryl's in Michelago.

Special thanks to Jane Reed who was very understanding and a great comfort to me in my effort to come to terms with my previous hospital birthing experience. Also to Cheryl for making us feel at ease and for being hostess to us all.

Nick and I were touched by the kindness and concern of all the wonderful people there even though they hardly knew us. Thank you to the homebirth Assn for being such a supportive organisation. We look forward to the birth of our second baby at home in a peaceful and loving atmosphere.

Thank you so much,

Heather King, Nick Holywell and Simon.

Dear Maureen,

Thank you very much for both your and Sue's contribution to our training course.

I have had very positive feedback from the group and I personally enjoyed the session immensely,

Regards,

Wendy Churchill,

Family Planning Association

A.C.T. Inc.

Dear Maureen,

We are not members of the homebirth group, but we are writing in to you as we are trying to get in contact with a mother who would consider conceiving, carrying and birthing our baby for us. We want to communicate the respect love and warmth we would feel for such a wonderful person who could enable us to have a baby of our own.

We would like to reassure anyone considering becoming a surrogate mother for us of the confidentiality and support we would offer her, and the love and security we would offer the child for the rest of our lives.

For further information please write to us at P.O. Box 297 Kambah A.C.T.

-Chris and Daniel.

Dear Maureen,

For about the last five years I have contemplated undertaking homebirths. In Sydney where I originally started thinking about it I was deterred from the idea as: 1) I was unable to go to any homebirths as an 'apprentice", and 2) Each midwife had to supply her own equipment.

The combination of these two factors was a big deterrent at the time as I was reluctant to outlay the money for equipment without even the opportunity to attend a homebirth.

In Canberra, I was attracted by the advertisement in the R.A.N.F. Journal and so contacted Joy Gibbs. Joy was able to arrange for me to attend births and to those families who gave me the opportunity to be part of their births, I thank you sincerely for the privilege.

The other homebirth midwives I also thank for providing me with much warm , caring support and for answering my 1001 questions!

The Canberra Homebirth Association also earns my gratitude for being so efficient! The equipment which is available for hire to the couples and the equipment on loan to the midwives is concrete evidence of the effort and the care which the members of C.H.A. have put in to the Association.

Midwives, doctors and couples who are explaining the idea of a homebirth can only be impressed by the C.H.A. Not only from the point of efficiency of organisation, but more importantly from the care and support provided.

Love to you all -

Beverly Hayward.

Hi Maureen,

Thank you very much for the video, it was such an inspiration to so many pregnant ladies. I have personally seen the films three times now and enjoyed them each time.

At present I'm staying in Lismore at the home of a midwife/friend, waiting for my second baby to make an appearance. It could be any day now, (today I hope!). Gillian, (midwife) gave me an internal exam 3 days ago and found the cervix was completely effaced and 3cms dilated, she could feel baby's head. Yet I'm still here with big tummy and only the occasional mild contraction. I'm going to take a long walk into town to post this video, maybe that will help!

Thanks again for the films, Maureen, and best wishes to you and the Canberra group. I shall let you know about the addition to my family soon after it happens - Love, **Lyn Jongen, South Grafton**

Dear Maureen,

Well hello there! We've been back from our trip for 7 months now and have produced a beautiful girl, "Cassandra Joy Pope", (she is nicknamed Cassie or Cass). Bruce and I had a great time on her birthday. Tuesday 11 March - a wet and rainy day here and our midwife, Rosalie Sharon came in the morning after I'd had leaky membranes and mild contractions the night before.

After a walk in the Karri forest and the morning spent in the family room sitting, kneeling, chatting - we went into our newest room - (just completed!), the mudbrick west bedroom, where Cassie was born at 4-40 pm. (One hour of "pushing " stage). She looked around at the three of us, had a bath and was cuddled, weighed 7lb 7oz (3374 grams.) and 21" long (53.3cm).

I found massage (alternating front and back as she came through the pelvic cavity), and ice chips with honey drizzled on were the most helpful things. Also a bag of things to smell! (peppermint oil, pomander clove ball, a lavender bag, nice sandalwood soap). My positions were all fours and then I tried a birthing stool. We ended up in the standing supported squat. (Bruce standing behind me with arms wrapped around me).

Anyway, as you can tell, it was an easy and enjoyable day. Parenting seems hard in comparison!! We're just beginning to understand Casssandra's cries and needs. She's started smiling in response to our smiles (about a weeeek ago) but its still unpredictable.

We enjoy your newsletter - Denmark hasn't really got a homebirth support group although there are lots of homebirths planned for 1986. (Rosalie is based 50 kms away in Albany and travels widely to deliver about 3 babies a month along the south coast.

Must go - feed time! Best wishes, - **Sally Pope.**

p.s.- I'm breastfeeding successfully despite the inverted nipples apart from a big crack which doesn't want to heal. Could you tell Lynn Keen our news please as she was very helpful to us with advice.

Dear Maureen,

As you can see we've moved again, (a new address to send the newsletter to). The move is partly explained in the enclosed birth report.

Although ours wasn't a Canberra homebirth, I feel we owe much to the Canberra Homebirth Association for it: their organisation and physical and moral support helped make our first two births so wonderful and the light

of those experiences has been kept alive by the newsletter which we've continued to receive for the two and a half years since we left Canberra.

So when it came to really having to organise a birth ourselves, (no sympathetic doctor, no 'referrals' to midwives, no equipment provided etc) we know it was worthwhile; and ultimately, when we had to deal with a hospital, we had our own and others research and experience to back up our convictions. So if you do publish the report, I'd like you also to register our thanks to everyone down there - the whole thing could have been very different (and I think much worse) in a hospital or as an 'irresponsible' homebirth.

Enclosed is a cheque for some C.H.A. T-shirts - its still 'nappy and singlet' weather here! You dont know anyone who wants to buy a farm do you?

Love,

Vicki McAndrew.

(Congratulations from all of us here in Canberra - Maureen xxx.)

Dear Maureen,

This is not a birth report, nor is it intended as such, but I feel a great debt of gratitude to the Canberra Homebirth Association, and would like to say "thank you" to all those members of the Assn. with whom I have been in contact.

Matthew is our third child, but our first baby to be born at home. It was a big decision for us, but any apprehensions/fears were soon allayed by the warmth, interest and enthusiasm that each person we contacted, extended to both David and myself. To those people concerned with membership, fees, video nights, the birth kit hire, the sterile bindles, ante-natal classes, and the hiring of the Safety Capsule, we say "Thank You". We were truly appreciative of all your efforts. Your warmth was a lovely prelude to what we considered to be a very special event.

To the three people who actually assisted when Matthew arrived, I wish to say "Thank You " publicly.

Megan came in as bright and cheery as always despite being called at 5.30am. and arriving shortly thereafter. Her thoroughly professional and sensitive approach was fantastic. And to her, a special "Thank You" for taking note of Kimberley's reaction to seeing her little brother for the first time, and for telling us later on what she had said, when we had calmed down, (ever so slightly).

Dr Rich arrived shortly after Megan phoned her and was so incredibly calm throughout. There was no hurry, she was quite prepared to wait (and wait

she did) for nature to take its course. The constant monitoring of the baby's heartbeat was very reassuring. "Thank You" for the lovely way in which you brought Kimberley (nearly 4) and Christelle (22 months) to see their little baby brother.

It was following discussions with our trusted family doctor, and knowing we had his full support, that we finally decided to have our baby at home. We were really thrilled when he arrived on that Sunday morning just past dawn. His encouragement and help in the latter stages of labour were greatly appreciated.

To be told that progress could actually be seen with each contraction was a great morale booster, and he finally coaxed me to take a peek in the mirror he had been holding for some time. What a wonderful sight! Thank you for your continued care of our family.

To be perfectly honest, I must admit to feeling quite pampered by all the close personal attention - I loved it!

Finally, to all concerned, "Thank You" again, for making such a special event into an absolutely wonderful occasion.

- David and Jenny Stone.

Dear Maureen,

Homebirth on the Far South Coast is alive and well, with a couple of midwives attending at least one birth every month, unfortunately there are no doctors willing to become involved as yet. There are regular meetings, video's tapes, discussions and lots of support amongst the local community.

I wish I'd read Lorraine's account of the first few months of a "full on" baby before we had a little boy like that. I have one thing to add - don't try to renovate and move house when they're very young either. -Crazy!

We're all thriving in this climate - I was thinking of babies in utero as I floated in a warm calm ocean yesterday.

Regards

- **Lisa Brown.**

P.O. Box 747
BEGA N.S.W. 2550

Dear Homebirth Members,

I was concerned to read, in the last newsletter, that the only reference to my proposed research was that I "warned that the results might not be favourable to the C.H.A." I would like to take this opportunity to clarify my intentions and plans regarding the project and hopefully cast it in a more positive light!

For many years, I have been interested in the issue of birth and how it affects women and their families. My interest in homebirth was stimulated when in my capacity as Research Psychologist for the A.C.T. Health Authority I was asked to advise the Obstetricians and Gynaecologist's concerning payment for midwives. It quickly became apparent to me that much of the data needed to give informed advice, was lacking (e.g. why do women choose homebirth, what are the relative benefits, disadvantages and costs involved in different birth styles). Some information is available on some aspects, but most of it is overseas data, or not recent, or done by researchers with a committed a priori bias. (My only bias in this field is that I believe all women should be able to choose whatever birthing style they prefer, with good support and access to a variety of birthing styles should be freely available. Hence, I have in mind to do a local Australian study comparing homebirths with hospital births, (including those which take place in a birth centre if possible).

My plans concerning the methodology are still fluid. I would be grateful and interested in any suggestions you might offer which reflect your own or others birth experiences. I am also happy to gather data which the C.H.A. needs and does not currently have, as long as it fits within my broad aims. I believe in 'participation research' in which the clients of any research study may have access to the data for their own purposes if so wished and therefore I'm happy for you to use the research afterwards in a social, informative or political context. My own aims are **not** political. I do not wish to push any particular barrow and I am interested in this project because of my intellectual curiosity and my recognition that here is an area which has not been well investigated in a systematic, objective way. Certainly therefore it is true that I cannot guarantee that all the results will be favourable to the C.H.A. It is my intellectual honesty that forces me to make this declaration since I believe you should only give "informed consent", but I am also confident that no other academic researcher could guarantee his/her results, unless operating on doubtful premises. I will be 'led' by the data, by what people tell me of their experiences, and the statistical evidence available for each birth.

For those of you familiar with Adrienne Bennett's (and colleagues) recent work on birth in Sydney, I plan to use a similar approach. That is, I will collect routine information re type of birth, age, parity, labour length,

foetal distress, drugs used etc.) but will also combine this with interviews with families concerning their perceptions, beliefs, joys, sorrows about births in a particular setting - I would argue that both kinds of information are necessary for a complete picture.

I intend to apply for research funds to do this project (having another full-time job and being engaged in parenting as well!) and if I do not get approval for funds, or from the hospitals and C.H.A., will obviously not proceed with the project. I hope to commence the study early in 1987 but would plan the details, methodology etc later in 1986. I hope this explanation will reassure you of my aims and intentions. It is my belief that this is a unique opportunity to participate in some important and relevant research and I hope you will be in favour of the work. I am always available to answer questions about the research, either publicly or privately and I would hope this research could be of mutual interest and benefit. I will insist on maintaining my independent and neutral position throughout the project, but I am happy to be educated and informed along the way as much as is possible.

- Dr Rosemary Knight.

Barbera Chevalier.

58 Miller St. O'Connor.

Dear Barbera,

Adrian and I certainly enjoyed meeting with you and quite a few other lively women during our last visit to Canberra. It was a pleasure to hear of their many concerns and ideas regarding a healthy family life today. We hope we will have an opportunity to work with them in the future.

Have you done any talking following our conversation at Joy's (Cameron's) place? I'm sure you must have thought about it off and on, just as we did. We would be pleased to do some sessions with you and others related to the H.B.A. (or including even other friends should you so desire) on the theme of "Family - What Makes It Work Today?" The idea of a weekend with 2, possibly 4 hour sessions on Saturday on Sunday, like from 10-2 still appeals to me. As I was thinking about it I discovered that also a set-up of 3 evening sessions during consecutive months might be an option that you would like to consider. They need to be three hours each I imagine, maybe 7.30 -10-30pm or whatever suits most people. The weekend model (A) would give us 8 hours to work with, the evening mode (B) 9 - thats about equal. Both ways have their advantages and disadvantages, as I see it.

The four hour session for the weekend model would be split up into two sessions with a snack/break in between so that we would have four sessions total. The first one would focus on a conversation, sharing experiences and possible approaches and plans. The second one would deal

with communication skills- How to hear, express and create together what is needed or hoped for. The third session could look at pressure points and options - How to allow for and deal with different values, interests and conflicts. The fourth session could look at decision making and the creation of events and symbols (from budgets to stories, planning to celebrations).

There might be a few variations in the three session evening model: I could picture the first session dealing with 'Pressures and Possibilities - Sharing Experiences and Equipping Ourselves for the Future'. The whole second evening would well be worth spending on two-way (or even "multi-modal") communication between all partners in the family including 'Conflict Resolution - How to practise a philosophy of wholeness, respect and consensus'. The third session would be more or less equal to the fourth one of model A and give leave some time for actually creating some of the symbols and other support tools mentioned above.

As we mentioned before, 8-10 couples would probably be a good number. More would be quite possible, but require two facilitators to allow for more group work. Participation of spouses/partners is not a must but would be desirable. As you know we have skills to offer that are life affirming and practical or effective for many situations, and indeed can lead to deeper growth as a person or to more fulfilment in life. We love to share them with others. Programs such as this do not only pay for our expenses but also are our major source of income to sustain ourselves. The minimum we have to request for either one of the series would be \$300.00 total which divided by participants is not much for this type of training.

In terms of timing I can see a few options:

Model A Weekend, either Sat/Sun May 24/25 or June 14/15 or July 5/6

Model B Evenings. Mon, Tue, Wed in May 19-21, June 9-11 and July 7-9.

Please talk all this over with your husband and friends and see what you come up with. I regret that I did not reach you by phone to hear of your initial response before putting it down on paper. I sense though that I should get this in the mail to you as soon as possible since the time is urgent for some of the options suggested in this letter. I would appreciate it very much could you call me some time during the coming week (any time of day) and let me know of the responses you got.

Good wishes for a fulfilled every day adventure of family life in our time.

Greetings

- **Maria.**

INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

GPO Box 1792

Sydney N.S.W. 2001. ph 02 558 8508

Dear Editor,

At the present time, the only means of entry to the profession/career of midwife is through the completion of a specialist course which follows the completion of a nursing qualification.

A survey is being carried out in order to identify the need and the likely demand for a direct entry course into midwifery. "Direct Entry" means that nursing training would not be pre-requisite for entry into the course. The course would involve three years full time study (or part time equivalent).

The questions in this survey are grouped into two parts:

1. Your present occupation and experience.
2. Midwifery training and registration.

All information obtained from the survey will be strictly confidential and the data collected will help determine whether the project is worth pursuing. Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible.

-Catherine Willis, Project Co-ordinator.

(Questionnaire's available from me, Maureen Tully 513159)

Corrections to statistics printed last Newsletter.

Delivery forceps should read:	4	2	2	1	1	1	3	14.
Premature (page 2)	3	1	2	2	2			10
A.P.H.	1							1
Breech	3		1	1	1	2	1	9
Anencephalic	1							1
Placenta praevia			1					1
P.E.T.					5		1	6
Previous stillbirth				1				1

SPRING BABY

On a warm spring afternoon thunderclouds gathered
And I brought you forth into the dark stormy night.
Like my cousin the mare or the deer
Seeking the cover of rain to protect your new life.
Spring rain for your birth, bursting forth with new
strong growth.

Your first summer - warm and gentle:
My golden girl in the golden sun
Loving and laughing together in the long warm days.

Your first summer is over now,
The days grow shorter;
How can I explain to you that soon the warmth
will be gone?
I promise that my arms will always be there to hold you
And you laugh
Never suspecting that they may not be enough.

-HELEN RIGHTON.

BIRTH OF NAOMI MARGARET

In the last few days I had begun to get impatient with waiting, so did Kaya, our three and a quarter year old daughter. My friend, Kathy arrived on Friday from Canberra, to help at the birth (which week to come was a big question with a due date of 6 - 26 May!!) and it was good to share time together gardening and talking about first births, pregnancies and children. I was lucky to attend the Homebirth Conference the month before which was great, and very inspiring.

I felt a bit sick on Sunday, during tea and went out to our bush toilet. On the toilet I felt a bit frightened and uneasy. I came back and talked to Kathy and Simon and they reassured me and we chatted for a while. This baby would come tonight. I rang Berry my midwife to tell her that I might interrupt her 'mahjong' night down at Thora (35 mins away) and Lee, who was to help with Kaya. We cleaned up and got firewood etc and all went to bed early to get some rest. We'd moved our bed down from the loft about 4 weeks ago. I was finding it quite difficult and tiring on my leg/pelvic floor muscles climbing up and down the ladder (I have more than enough exercise around here!)

I had been having lots of contractions every night in the first week of May which made me excited but the baby wasn't quite ready. My stomach hardened a lot each time. One night I had a really clear dream of labouring and being fully dilated; when I woke up I felt very open and ready to have this baby.

I slept for about one hour then awoke to strong contractions 8 mins apart. I lay for a while visualising opening up, and the possibilities of a good book to read, (I was serious!) I got up and dressed, stoked the fire; it was a lot easier to breathe through contractions standing, and I potted around, did a wee outside and checked out the stars. I also took some Arnica, which I believe helped relieve me of a lot of that 'bruised and swollen' feeling that I had after my first birth.

Simon woke at 11.30 and got up, the contractions had sped up from me being up and around, and we told Kathy that I was starting. I thought I would still have a while to go. I rang Berry, (12.30) and she'd got back and was having a cuppa, I told her there was no hurry, take your time.

I was breathing and concentrating on contractions, leaning on the fire rail 'til it got too hot. Simon was massaging my lower back. It felt lovely and helped if I held my tummy. Kathy was timing contractions, and when she massaged my back her touch was very gentle, smooth as silk and cool.

In between contractions I was amazed at how aware and clear I was, talking and laughing; my first labour seemed so hazy and such a concentrated effort all the time.

Contractions came and went, they were very intense at the beginning, then eased off. Berry arrived at 1.20am, it was good to see her. We had a laugh at her arriving all dressed up, clothes on clothes. When I rang I had said it was cold, half of our place is not lined and doesn't heat up very well, and here I was greeting her half naked at the door. I had worried about being too cold in labour and tensing up because of it, but that didn't happen at all.

I was finding it difficult to relax my bottom because there felt like a big poo and I didn't want to let go. I tried but held back. I was feeling very uncomfortable and wanted to find a different position. Berry suggested squatting, as I changed a contraction came. The position felt horrible so I jumped back to leaning over my sewing table, it felt uncomfortable having my thighs and tummy touching. We tried bending over pillows and then utilised Kaya's small table. That was good. Berry was giving me eye contact while Simon massaged my back. Berry's hands

BIRTH OF NAOMI.

were very soft as well. Kathy got some lovely cold face washers. Berry checked the baby's heartbeat. I was breathing in deeply and having longer out breaths and making groaning noises on the outbreath. I tried saying 'open up' but it didn't flow, so out came these deep 'aaaah's'. At one point my voice became very high and tight, and I told myself and helpers to keep it low and deep.

There was still a poo that had to be done and I had to relax my anus. I did. My mucus plug came out and that poo (which was of course the baby's head) descended further down. I still thought and was visualising opening up: I didn't realise I was in transition.

Kaya's table broke and they wanted to take it away and put a pine chest in its place - I didn't want my support gone and said so, but allowed them to swap when Simon said if I didn't it would break completely and I would end up on the floor!

Berry went and washed her hands, my waters broke which felt warm against the side of my leg and a great relief. The crowning was really intense and hurt. I tried really hard to relax and was holding on to Simon, I think he feared for his arm when I said "I have to bite something". I asked for a washer which was great to bite and suck. I hadn't wanted to push and strain in second stage like my first birth so I panted and 'willed' the lower half of my body to relax totally.

Kathy said "the baby's nearly here", and Berry touched the baby's head and asked me if I could feel it. I was amazed that we were nearly there.

Kaya awoke during transition, wide eyed, and knew that I was having the long awaited baby, we cuddled and she stayed on the bed, (it was incredible that she hadn't woken before with all the movement and light around and on the bed, although our 12 volt lights were getting quite dim. Kaya held the torch for Berry to see the head. When I looked at Kaya she glowed and looked incredible and very confident. We had spent a lot of time talking and reading with her beforehand and she felt very happy and ready for the birth. We went through, actually making the possible noise levels, and so it didn't worry her to hear me doing that now.

Berry asked me to move my bottom back but I couldn't quite comprehend which way was back, although my head seemed clear, that was quite a puzzle. She guided me and we laughed. I was amazed to feel Naomi's head, and then her body plopped into arms on the bed, I knelt back and put her on my tummy and a lovely warm towel was placed over us.

Berry asked if Simon wanted to massage my perineum and deliver the baby but I wanted and needed him up front for support. He was quite happy with that. Everyone encouraged and reassured me throughout second stage which was really needed as the crowning took everything in me to stop from exploding.

Lee arrived as Naomi was born and I felt disappointed I hadn't called her earlier. Naomi was born at 2.22am on the 27th May, and started to suckle 10 mins later. Simon held Naomi whilst I squatted to deliver the placenta at 2.55. It was a lovely feeling of letting go. Everyone had cups of tea and toast and there was lots of energy. I became very tired and cold and wanted to snuggle under the doona and sleep. Lee was looking after Kaya as she bounced happily around the room, she came back to see the placenta delivered. Berry and Lee left at 4.30, it was great to have Kathy still with us to help Kaya as she needed someone other than me or Simon.

I didn't tear or graze at all, but I still used a lot of calendula lotion on my vaginal area. I rubbed 'pokeroot' on my breasts on the lumps before they became sore or swollen and my milk came in very smoothly.

18 BIRTH OF NAOMI.

We were very fortunate to have Kathy stay until the Friday and I got lots of rest (even with visitors) and had a lovely time looking at and holding Naomi.

I'm glad to be able to write about our wonderful, warm and loving homebirth. It has had a great benefit on all of our family.

Lots of love and preace to all our friends in Canberra.

-Wendy Haynes and Simon CLarkson.
DORRIGO, N.S.W.

Recommended Reading:

"Transformation Through Birth" Claudia Panuthos.

"Mom and Dad and I are having a Baby" by Maryann P. Malecki.

INTERNATIONAL CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

I.C.E.A. CONFERENCES IN AUSTRALIA

In the past, ICEA Conferences have been offered only in the United States of America and Canada. However, in 1986, ICEA will present a series of Conferences in Australia. This is a significant step in ICEA'S international development and if the conferences are well supported, could become regular events in Australia and other countries where there are adequate numbers of ICEA members.

Please direct your support and interest in participation to Jan Cornfoot, 42 Lenori Road, Gooseberry Hill, Perth WA. 6076.
or telephone her on - 619 293 4001.

The highlight of these conferences will be participation by Dr Charles Mahan, Director of Maternal and Child Health in Florida and Professor, Department of Obstetrics, and Gynecology, University of Florida College of Medicine. As Dr Mahan is also an ICEA consultant (1982-present) and has served a term on the ICEA Board of Directors, he is an ideal guest to have here for our first ICEA Conferences outside North America. Charles Mahan is an extremely popular speaker in North America and was one of the international speakers at the recent International Childbirth Symposium in London.

The two day conferences will be held in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane and other evens in Perth, Alice Springs, Albury and Nambour during September/October 1986.

NOTICES DIRECTORY : WHO'S WHO AT A GLANCE! 19

NEWSLETTER EDITOR _____ - MAUREEN TULLY 513159

"EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION"

TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP _____ - JENNY HENTY 479985

STERILE BUNDLES

BIRTH HELPERS _____ - IAN AND ROBYN REED 548916

BIRTH KITS _____ - SUE HEARN 544951

REFERRALS TO DOCTORS AND MIDWIVES) _____ - BOO CHEVALIER 486624

RESEARCH AND STATS LIBRARY _____)

Ante Natal Group Sessions and New Mothers Support Group.

HOME BIRTH MIDWIVES SUPPORT GROUP _____ - LORRAINE FIELDING 587781

VIDEO INFORMATION _____ - MAUREEN TULLY 513159. JOY CAMERON 302204

VIDEO VENUE _____ - ROBERT AND RAHINI BEAUMONT 541741

PUBLIC MEETINGS _____ - OCCASIONAL CARE CENTRE (SEE NOTICES)

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS /hire of Capsules _____ - PRIDEAUX FAMILY 486028

PARENTING MEETING/ Sales _____ - ROBYN REED 548916

PLAY GROUP _____ - JENNIFER RAINFORTH 543125

ANTENATAL CLASSES _____ - JUDY FORDHAM 583020
- CHERYL NEKVAPIL 813947

ANTENATAL YOGA _____ - VEDANTA 479187

PARENT EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING _____ - JENNIFER RAINFORTH 543125

'TALKING POINT'

HOME BIRTH AUSTRALIA _____ - SHANE MARSH 470110

FOR MORE DETAILS PLEASE READ RELEVANT NOTICE.

Nursing Mothers' Association of Australia.

The Homebirth Association would like to heartily recommend the counsellors of the Nursing Mothers Association of Australia.

Services are offered on a mother-to-mother basis: each member is welcomed and cared for as an individual.

The groups provide a sociable and social environment where breastfeeding is the accepted norm and where education in the art of breastfeeding is promoted.

Please telephone Lynn Keen on 477635 or Pam Cunningham on 477612 for more information on local activities or for breastfeeding counselling.

NOTICES.**HOME BIRTH SUPPORT GROUP.**

In Grecian times the word DOULA became a title for individuals who supported a woman at any time within the perinatal period; which included pregnancy, birth and lactation. If you're not able to find support within your network of friends and family, then the support system may be able to help you. If you need contact with others who live in your area, or a person to help you at the birth or afterwards - contact Robyn on 548916. **BIRTH HELPERS DESPERATELY NEEDED - WE ARE COMPILING A REGISTER - PLEASE PHONE NOW!!!!!!**

Doula/Support Person... * a woman who goes into the home and assists a newly delivered mother, cooking, helping with other children, household chores, someone to talk to. *She does so voluntarily and on a temporary basis. *She is willing and able to be supportive.

PARENTING GROUP. A number of people are sharing the parenting job on a roster, welcoming parents and children to their homes fortnightly. The informal meetings tend to act as a terrific morale boost! Questions such as immunisation, nutrition, car seats, Grandparents, sleeping patterns, (or rather the lack of them!) jealousy and home schooling are discussed. We enjoy listening, arguing, supporting and just generally watching each others children grow up.

NORTHSIDE May 20 :Robyn Reed, 30 McIntosh St Scullin 548916. For list of venues and telephone Nos phone Robyn. **SOUTHSIDE:** May 27 Jenny Chiotto, 4 Farrelly St Oxley.

10 June, Kirsten Linday 27 Goble St Hughes 813230. 24 June Laura Smith, 33 Grimshaw Cr. Richardson. 919689. All groups after 10 am - they usually finish at 1pm Bring a snack if possible.

PLAYGROUP. *Southside playgroup: Phone Barbera Cooper on 821870
*Playgroup in the Park - Phone Jennifer Rainforth 543125

STERILE BUNDLES. Available from Robyn and Ian Reed, 30 McIntosh St., Scullin, ph 548916 Please ring and arrange to book your bundle a month in advance, as well as a convenient time at to pick up and return your bundle. *It should be returned freshly laundered at your earliest opportunity after the birth, with your name and phone no. on....* (this is a good job for your birth helpers!)

Please don't leave them on Robyn's step to alert housebreakers!

Our hiring policy is:

- * You must be a member of the Canberra Homebirth Association
- * You must bring your receipt for birth kit hire
- * A registered midwife and/or doctor must be present at your birth.
- * You should give Robyn four weeks notice by phoning her.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION/BIRTH KIT FEES.

Please contact Jenny Henty on 479985 for information on the payment of these fees, membership queries or changes of address.

BIRTH KITS This job has been taken over by the Hearn family. Sue may be contacted on 544951. Please book your birth kit a month in advance of need. Please phone to arrange a convenient time to pick up or return your kit. Her address is: 8 Bridge Pl., Latham.

our hiring policy is:-

- * You must be a member of the Canberra Homebirth Association.
- * You must bring your receipt for birth kit hire, (currently \$40.00).
- * A registered midwife and/or doctor must be in attendance at your birth.
- * Out-of-area hires must pay a \$20.00 deposit.

VIDEO NIGHTS Members and their friends are invited to Robert and Rahini's home, 16 Ashburner St Higgins, (entrance to Rumpus Room through garage. Bring a pillow!) to see a selection of our video's of Canberra Homebirth's. Donations to the group are voluntary. 7.30pm sharp!

Next evenings to be held on: July 16 September 17 Ph 541741.

Books and old Newsletters for sale. Video's may be hired by members only. Cost \$5.00. Usually they can be kept for a few days. ph 513159.

MONTHLY PUBLIC MEETINGS.

Commencing at 2.00pm on the last Saturday of the month at the Civic Occasional Care Centre, at the intersection of Marcus Clarke, Rudd and Childers Sts., in Civic.

Next Meetings. If there is time after news and birth reports we could discuss the following topics or others as the members prefer.

May 31 : "Ideas" -things you may find useful at your birth and afterwards.

June 28 : Now you're a family: building your family traditions etc.

July 26 : What are my chances of avoiding an episiotomy?

August 30 : Getting started with breastfeeding.

Suggestions for topics accepted by Joy Cameron on 302204.

This is where we can meet each other, hear first-hand birth reports, share our experiences and see each others children grow.

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS.

These meetings are open to all members. All we ask is one evening a month! We discuss policies, problems and the future of the group. Come along and help with your group's decision making. Coming along doesn't necessarily 'dob you in' for a job or ongoing responsibility!

Held at the Prideaux family home, 217 Philip Ave Hackett ph.486028.

Next meetings:- June 11 July 9. August 6.

time: 7.15 for 7.30 prompt!

ANTE-NATAL GROUP SESSIONS and NEW MOTHERS SUPPORT GROUP.

These are informal, warm gatherings for pregnant women to relax and chat about pregnancy, nutrition, labour, birth, siblings... whatever you would like to discuss. Midwives may be present to give prenatal checks

After the birth too is a time when women need to express themselves in an atmosphere of acceptance and care. This group seems to be meeting the mutual needs of both expectant and new mothers through exchange of personal stories. These meetings are held fortnightly, every second Thursday, 11.00-2.00 bring your lunch.

Venue: Ring Boo for more details on 486624. Meetings at 58 Miller St O'Connor.

May 29 June 12, 26. July: Please phone Maureen 513159 for venue/dates.

P.S. The library is available at these meetings.

YOGA.

Vedanta offers classes in prenatal Yoga, relaxation and meditation. Contact her on 479187 for more information and details of class times.

JUDY FORDHAM

Judy is offering homebirth classes/discussion groups, covering practical physical and psychological preparation for homebirth - includes breastfeeding, care of the newborn, preparation of helpers and siblings with strong emphasis on the power of mind and emotions during labour, and choices of birthing style.

"Please phone me after 6pm and we can talk about what you want from birth classes and whether these will fill your needs. An individual early pregnancy class is also available. All classes are quite small and friendly. I would also like to welcome any birth helpers to my special 'helpers nights' whether or not they are attending my classes. Next evenings: June10, July 29. Please phone me first to confirm on 583020. "

CHERYL NEKYAPIL has taken over childbirth preparation sessions from Beverly Haywood for the time being. Cheryl is a very experienced and highly regarded childbirth educator, and has helped many homebirthers in the past to prepare for their individual labours. She may be contacted on : 813947, Deakin .

For several nights I went to bed thinking tonight would be the night. This particular evening I felt quite sure and even phoned Joy, our midwife, feeling a bit silly as the contractions were an hour or half an hour apart. After getting up and down all night I was quite disappointed when morning came and no real change.

As usual I went in to see Beryl, that weekly Wednesday morning ritual, expecting nothing and was delighted to hear I was 4 cm dilated and my waters bulging. I had 'sent' Alex off to work and Ben and I were going to do the weekly grocery shopping. We did this and by the time I was pushing the trolley to the car "it" was really becoming hard work, requiring me to stop to breathe through the contractions. Ben, in his usual manner chattered on about this and that.

Determined to keep busy and perhaps "help it along" we put the shopping away, brought in washing etc until about 12 midday when I noticed the contractions were about 5 mins apart and I felt I wanted Alex home.

We called Joy who came promptly. In examination Joy very kindly and diplomatically said I was 5cm dilated. We'd also phoned our helpers Andrea and Rosie and were very quickly all gathered in our lounge. Both Andrea and Rosie had made arrangements for their children to be cared for; an extra caring gesture on their part which we appreciated.

Our son Ben conveniently has a mid-day sleep and was asleep while we all gathered. My mother Margaret was coming to care for him. I had decided I would prefer that Ben went to her place during the birth and returned shortly after. Conveniently Margaret arrived just after Ben woke, however Ben went off very unhappy - he had sensed the activity and has always been very close to me. We did most things together and he has had little experience of being cared for by others. This all made me feel a bit teary, somehow it signalled the breaking of the special closeness we had shared while he was an only child. Part of my wish to have a home birth was to prevent any unnecessary separation as I knew Ben would find it difficult. I am fortunate that with his grandparents I knew the tears would only last to the end of the street and was reassured soon after that this was the case.

By that time I was into the business of this birth and felt our decision to not have Ben there was appropriate. I feel his presence and interest - "why", and "what are you doing", and clambering over me would have been a distraction from my concentration and our enjoyment of the birth.

I sat in our rocking chair feeling completely comfortable and at ease while our helpers, Joy and Alex brought together all our goodies. Then with a hot water bottle on my lower tummy and cold face cloth on my forehead, sips of apple juice and ice, glucoden, massage and gentle reassuring words from all, I "deep breathed" through the contractions and chatted during the breaks. The pampering felt wonderful and I felt I was a bit of a sham. I said I thought I should do something to hot it all up and Joy suggested a walk. Alec and I set off. Fortunately Alex, always thinking ahead and caring, suggested a short route with no great slopes and we set off. One quarter way round the track I felt nauseous, dizzy and faint and knew I was in transition. It was a slow walk home.

From here on it becomes a bit vague and hazy for me. I returned to my comforting rocker and each contraction became more difficult to deal with. I attempted to continue my deep breathing, although it was very difficult at the peaks. Keeping my mind focused (I had my eyes closed) on relaxing and opening up was a great help. I really became aware of my surroundings it seemed there were no breaks between the contractions. Through all of this though I could feel the soothing massage and changing of hot water bottle and face washer. At times I felt, and said I couldn't go through with it all. My waters hadn't broken and it was a great pressure between my legs. It was instant relief when my water broke.

I felt completely "comfortable" and between the pain and concentration I quite vividly remember having thoughts about how amazing birth is, that our baby was working its way down and out and how great it was to be home.

Continuing their great care of me I opened my eyes and there was Beryl. I hadn't been aware she'd been called. It was so good to see her, reassuring and a sign that I must be nearly ready to push. I hadn't had any further examinations (I think). This was very different to Ben's birth when I was wanting examinations to know "how much longer". This time I was happy to just go with it.

At this stage I was feeling really uncomfortable, finding it difficult to relax through the contractions, and was overbreathing at times. Beryl examined me and I had only a slight anterior lip and shortly after it was suggested I could push if I felt ready. I was very happy with this approach because I had specifically asked that there not be a "coaching" approach to pushing. I was unsure and tried for a few pushes. Shortly after my body unmistakably took over and pushed for me – an amazingly strong sensation. (I had felt unsure after Ben's birth whether I had really had a pushing urge or was doing only as asked.).

At this point I was feeling restricted by the sides of the rocking chair and asked to try the birth chair. This too was very uncomfortable for me. Alex was supporting my head and put cushions behind me. I felt I couldn't get hold of anything to push down and my legs had gone completely to jelly. I felt most insecure. I demanded to get onto the floor. Someone suggested I try squatting (although I had told everyone that I wanted to deliver squatting I very unceremoniously squashed this idea. I have some regret about this but I felt my legs couldn't support me and the idea of the supported squat had completely vacated my mind). I lay on my side. I had delivered Ben in that position and it felt safe and supported by the ground. I have always like to lie down to read, watch tele etc. though, perhaps this had something to do with it.

By this time Kate was almost ready to arrive. I took great comfort from gripping Alex's hand and feeling free to cry out and groan. He was supporting my head. The hard cold feeling of his watch was very comforting. Andrea supported one leg and I pushed and pushed. It felt like a long time and I vacillated between crying out that I couldn't do it, groaning and thinking between pushes that it was so wonderful. As she was crowning Beryl coached me to push and not to push, massaging my perineum. I was very pleased with this as having had an episiotomy before, I wanted to attempt birth without that. I ended up with a tear apparently because Kate delivered with one hand on her shoulder. Certainly she took some pushing out. Kate was born at 4.42pm.

There she was on my tummy, lying so quietly. Beryl was concerned for her as she had swallowed some fluid. She was covered on my tummy. As requested no one had mentioned her sex. I thought she was beautiful and both gurgled and worried at Beryl's quiet concerned look. I kept asking if she was all right. Beryl and Joy gave her oxygen and sucked her out further. She was breathing but apparently not fully or deeply enough. This soon changed and after an attempt to breast feed she was rapidly dressed to keep her warm.

So many wonderful things come to my mind at this time. She looked so perfect and so much like Ben I thought we had another son. Everyone's eagerness for me to find out her sex was exciting and I was thrilled when I felt her and we had a girl. It was great to find this out for myself even if I was the last to know.

Beryl's quiet concern, her frankness with us about her concerns and her gentle treatment was greatly appreciated. She and Joy dealt with it all so calmly and while she was snuggled on my belly. In retrospect I couldn't help but think that in hospital Kate would have been whisked off to the crib.

Lastly, while all this happened Alex had contacted Margaret and she and Ben had arrived home very quickly after Kate's birth. Kate was still on my tummy and Ben could share that experience. His words - "I didn't know Kate would be come out of your tummy today" and then the complete switch to showing me the latest additions to his robot family reflected his continued acceptance of Kate's addition to our family. After everyone had gone Ben asked to cuddle "his little sister" and has continued to be the loving big brother, introducing "his little sister called Kate", telling me whenever she cries etc. All during this Rosie took some fabulous photo's - an extra surprise and great memory.

We all had a small celebratory drink and somewhere in the proceedings Joy and the helpers cleaned up, another great caring gesture. It was all so peaceful and quiet and this continued throughout the evening.

Many thanks to all who helped make Kate's birth such a beautiful occasion. A big thank you to the home birth association who, even before I was pregnant, made me feel so welcome at their meetings and provided so much information on both home and hospital birth. The video's and library are great. Most of all I appreciated the birth helpers' service. I was shy to use this but the caring way Prue, Rosie and Lisette offered their assistance and made me feel at ease was especially appreciated.

- Sue Hearn.

A FATHER'S VIEW.

We had discussed a home birth at the time Sue was pregnant with our first child but it did not seem feasible where we were then living: the home birth movement was not very strong and the local doctors, including Sue's otherwise excellent doctor were not sympathetic. We were also nervous about stepping outside the norm with our first.

Although we were fortunate in our doctor and in the midwife we scored in a smallish catholic hospital, the hospital atmosphere did intrude into the experience. The absolute refusal of the hospital staff to allow the baby to stay overnight in Sue's room and her proximity to the crying from the nursery were particularly upsetting.

When we decided to have another baby, the decision was relatively easy as we realise how much worse our first experience might have been, and that the larger "institutional" type of hospital available in Canberra did not appeal at all. Sue had joined the Home Birth Association and discovered how much support was available. Given that we had no difficulties with Ben and that Sue was well, we anticipated no problems this time. We were satisfied that backup facilities were excellent. The only negative aspect was the unreasonable inability to claim medical benefits

We were getting a bit impatient when Sue was a few days overdue, so when she felt some activity one evening, we were ready to go. But nothing happened overnight and the next morning we decided I should go to work. I expected a phone call any minute and came straight home when Sue rang at about noon. Ben was tired from the morning's jobs so I gave him lunch, put him to bed and arranged for Sue's mother, Margaret, to collect him about two.

Joy, the midwife, was called and confirmed that things were happening so I rang our helpers, Rosie and Andrea. Fortunately both could come. They were soon here to help unpack the birth kit and get the room ready. Contractions were increasing in strength and frequency so we gradually spent more time stroking and otherwise helping Sue. Another check by Joy suggested that Sue had reached a plateau so we decided to go for a walk down the street. A few hundred yards really got things going and we returned to the living room. Two helpers then became very

important as Sue wanted me beside her all the time. Rosie and Andrea were kept running to provide towels, drinks and all their other thoughtfulnesses.

The doctor, Beryl was called and, as the baby began to come, Sue moved to the floor and I concentrated on encouraging her. Beryl did her work very well with a minimum of fuss but keeping us informed at all times. Andrea provided invaluable support, both encouragement and by keeping us supplied with all that we needed. Rosie helped Andrea and also took a wonderful series of photographs.

Kate was born and looked whole but Beryl was clearly concerned that she was having difficulty breathing. I felt privileged to be able to help suck her out. We were all relieved when she began to breathe.

While Sue cuddled her and began to relax, I rang Margaret to bring Ben home. It was good not to have him present and chattering during the birth but wonderful to have him there immediately after, while Kate and Sue were still on the floor. A few minutes later our neighbours, who had guessed that it was time, dropped in a bottle of champagne and family members came over during the evening. Beryl checked back to ensure all was well.

In all, I found our home birth to be a more intimate, personal affair than our hospital birth. It was great to be surrounded by our own environment and to have the warm support of Andrea and Rosie. And the aftermath was a tremendous improvement: we could settle down as a family in our own home, uninterrupted by hospital routine, to get to know our new daughter and sister, Kate Conor.

-ALEX

A HELPER'S VIEW

Sue had let me know that this would probably be "the day" so I wasn't surprised when Alex rang about 1pm to say that he and Sue would like me to come over. I'd been collecting the washing when he rang and I literally threw the clothes basket and Dale, 20 months, into the car and we were off. It took me all of 5 minutes to get there. When I arrived Sue was just getting out of the shower and all seemed calm and relaxed, although with a definite tinge of anticipation and excitement. Sue had on her "labour" T-shirt and settled comfortably in the rocking chair in the lounge room. That is where she then stayed for most of her labour. There wasn't a lot to do at this stage, as her contractions were not overly painful or frequent (or so it appeared to me). Helen, whom I'd rung before leaving home, came over to take Dale to her place, which was most appreciated. Soon Joy the midwife, and Rosie, the other helper, arrived, and we chatted and laughed while having cups of tea.

Everything seemed to be going really smoothly. Joy examined Sue and told her that she was half-way there, which was very encouraging for everyone. During this period Sue was very relaxed and talkative between contractions. A contraction was signalled by Sue closing her eyes and taking a deep breath. We all stopped talking and concentrated with her until it was over. There was no need to remind her to stay relaxed, as she was doing wonderfully, and silence was our main contribution at this point. Ben woke up from his nap around 2 ish and Sue's mother came around to pick him up. Ben wasn't very impressed by this at all, and Sue was a bit upset by his crying. Poor little boy, I'm sure he realised that he was missing out on something important.

During those first couple of hours I was mainly struck by how 'normal' it all seemed to be. It seemed so natural to be labouring in a quiet, relaxed, loving atmosphere with people that you care about around you. The feelings of love and caring in that room were so tangible that it reminded me of being engulfed by a warm woolley rug, a very secure, happy feeling. As you can see, it was very hard to describe. The other thing that I felt strongly was that all our

energies, both physically and mentally were focussed on Sue with nothing extraneous to impede them.. Another difficult feeling to explain, very positive however.

Somewhere around 2pm we tried using a hot water bottle on Sue's tummy, which she said was very comforting. About 3pm Sue and Alex went for a walk, and upon returning to the rocking chair the contractions had increased in duration and intensity. Sue was working really hard on them and all of us were involved in massaging her body, keeping a cool washer on her forehead, and keeping the hot water bottle in position.

In between contractions Sue drank sips of juice or sucked on ice cubes. She was conserving all her energy at these times but still managed to smile and whisper that we were really helping her. It was very encouraging to know that we were doing the 'right thing' and not irritating her by our actions. From this time on we were kept fairly busy, but we all seemed to work well as a team even though I'd never attended a birth before and didn't feel as if I knew Alex or Rosie or Joy terribly well. It didn't seem to matter, everything just fell into place.

A bit after 4pm, Joy examined Sue and said that she was very close. Joy rang Beryl Rich not long afterwards. At this point Sue was having a bit of trouble keeping relaxed and was saying that she didn't think that she could make it. She seemed to appreciate our encouragement that the birth was very close and that she was doing really well, which she was. She tried the birthing chair for 10-15 minutes but didn't feel comfortable and so asked to move to the bed which we had made up in the lounge room. That was about 4.30pm.

Sue lay on her left side. Beryl had arrived and Sue was definitely in second stage. It was hard work but she seemed to be able to relax better in that position between contractions, than in the chair. I was holding her leg up so that Beryl could deliver the baby and therefore I got a close look at the birth. I asked Alex if he wanted to change places so that he could see better, but Sue had him near her head in a vice-like grip, so that he decided that it was more important to stay where he was. At 4.41pm gorgeous Kate Conor was born onto Sue's tummy. She didn't start breathing straight away so there were a tense few minutes while Beryl and Joy calmly and efficiently used some suction and oxygen and stimulation to encourage Kate to do the right thing.

After what seemed like forever (probably 5 minutes or so). Kate decided that it was time to get on with this breathing business and then all was well. Throughout this time her colour had stayed good and Beryl said that her heart beat was fine which was comforting, but I think that we all held our breath as well until it was obvious that Kate was breathing as she should have been.

After this slightly unconventional introduction to the world, Kate seemed fine and very peaceful, although not interested in feeding straight away. Everyone was elated and after Sue was stitched and cleaned up a bit, we all had tea and cake and champagne. Sue's mother arrived a few minutes after the birth, with Ben, who was much more fascinated by the blood and stitches than his new baby sister. I unfortunately had to leave earlier than I would have liked to and therefore missed the spinach lasagne and more champagne. From what I heard all went well for the rest of the evening.

I feel privileged and honoured that Sue and Alex allowed me to be part of Kate's birth, and feel that there will always be a special relationship between us as a result. Kate's birth was one of the most wonderful experiences of my life.

Thank You Sue and Alex.

Love,

Andrea

Dear Parents,

Professionals and parents all over Australia are currently working to improve the status of homebirth and midwives. For many years homebirth midwives have been keeping records of the births they attend so that we can all know how many births are being planned at home, and their outcomes. However, we need more information about the parents who have homebirths - who they are and why they choose to give birth at home. We need the information to back up the statements we make to government departments, the media, etc, and as a basis for future research.

You could help by completing this questionnaire or passing it on to someone else who might be interested. If you would like more copies, there is a space to indicate that on the last page. Anyone who has planned a homebirth in the last few years could fill one in, including those who transferred to hospital in labour and whether the birth was attended by a midwife or not. Any extra comments by you or your partner (one questionnaire only per family please) are welcome on the back of the last page or on extra pages. All information will be treated confidentially - if you provide your name and address, it will only be used for the purposes you indicate.

Many thanks for your co-operation. I appreciate your help.

HILDA BASTIAN
PO Box 107
Lawson NSW 2783

FAMILY DETAILS

	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Father/Partner</u>
1. Date of birth:
2. Place of birth:
3. Are you an Australian Aboriginal?	YES/NO	YES/NO
4. Level of education:	Primary/Secondary/ Tertiary/other.....	Primary/Secondary/ Tertiary/other.....
5. Present occupation:
(If now at home, previous employment):
6. Religious belief:	Atheist/Christian/ other.....	Atheist/Christian/ other.....
7. Do you consider yourself a feminist?	YES/NO	YES/NO
8. Family structure at the time of your last homebirth:		
nuclear/single parent/other.....		
9. Length of relationship with partner before last homebirth:		

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10. Are you married to your partner? YES/NO
(If yes, for how long at time of last homebirth?)
11. Location of household at time of last homebirth:
city/suburban/rural/farm/religious community/other community/
other.....
12. Approximate gross annual income of family at time of last homebirth:
\$.....
13. Total number of: miscarriages
abortions
stillbirths
live births
newborn deaths
14. How many of your children were born:
in a hospital after a planned homebirth? Dates of births:
.....
at home? Dates of births:
in a birth centre? Dates of births:
in a hospital? Dates of births:
15. If you breastfed your babies, how long for each?
.....
.....

YOUR LAST HOMEBIRTH

16. During the pregnancy did you follow any special diet? (eg vegetarian)
YES/NO (If yes, please specify:)
17. Did you attend childbirth education classes?
YES/NO (unavailable)/NO (other reasons)
18. If yes to Question 17, did your partner attend with you?
YES/NO (unable to)/NO (other reasons)
19. If yes to Question 17, what kind of classes?
PCA/CEA/practitioner's own class/hospital/other.....
20. Did you obtain prenatal care? YES/NO
If yes, from whom? (Check as many as applicable)
registered midwife/unregistered midwife/general practitioner/
obstetrician/hospital clinic/other.....
21. Do you believe homebirth is (check one only):
safer than hospital/equally safe/less safe
22. What is your attitude to traditional medicine?
strongly committed/favourable/undecided/rejection

23. What is your attitude to alternative health therapies?
strongly committed/favourable/undecided/rejection

29

24. Why did you decide to have your baby at home? Check one or more, eg ☒
(a) wanted a natural birth; (b) didn't want to be separated from baby, partner, family; (c) wanted privacy; (d) wanted total care by a midwife; (e) wanted to maintain control; (f) dissatisfied with prior hospital birth; (g) dislike of hospitals in general; (h) religious reasons; other.....
.....

25. How much reading in preparation for birth have you done?
mother: none / 1 book / 2-4 books / 5-7 books / 8 or more books
partner: none / 1 book / 2-4 books / 5-7 books / 8 or more books

26. Who was the main birth attendant?
registered midwife/unregistered midwife/GP/obstetrician/
partner or friend/other.....

27. Do you feel registration or official qualifications for a birth attendant are: essential/fairly important/not important/desirable

28. If you chose to give birth without a professional birth attendant, why?
no one suitable available/other.....
..... (continue over page if necessary)

29. How did your birth attendants meet your expectations?
totally/very well/mostly/not well

30. How far were you from your nearest hospital?hoursmins

31. Did you book into hospital in case you needed back-up? YES/NO

32. Who else was present at your last homebirth? father/partner YES/NO
friends (how many) relatives (who)
your children (ages) others

33. How well did your homebirth meet your expectations?
totally/very well/mostly/not well

34. Would you have your next baby at home if you were able to make satisfactory arrangements? YES/NO

35. If no suitable attendants were available, would you consider going it alone in preference to going to the labour ward of your local hospital?
YES/NO

36. If all of the following options were available to you in an uncomplicated pregnancy, which would you choose? Check first choice only, eg ☒

(a) homebirth attended by registered midwife; (b) homebirth attended by unregistered midwife; (c) homebirth attended by GP or obstetrician; (d) homebirth attended by parents and friends only; (e) birth centre; (f) hospital labour ward; (g) hospital labour ward attended by your own midwife; other.....
.....

(OPTIONAL) Your name:

Address:

☐ I wish to be kept informed of results of this survey

Please send me further copies of this questionnaire

BIRTH OF CAITLIN 18 MARCH 1986.

We had planned to have a third child.....but we were going to wait until the time was 'right', and using lessons learned from our two pregnancies and birth, make it 'perfect'. (In planning like this I was ignoring the fundamental lesson of motherhood - that there are some things that can't be shaped by will or wishes.)

Thus our third conception came in the middle of physical, financial and emotional chaos - a shock for me who thought I knew my body but had no idea where (or rather when) this new being originated. The pregnancy forced us to reassess our lives, confront issues we'd tried to ignore, and for me to search my soul many times over, not always with satisfactory findings. As a result we changed our lifestyle. Terry moved south to return to vetting while I remained on the farm with the boys until he found us a place to live. We were separated for three months, then had a mere three weeks to settle on the Gold Coast, arrange our homebirth and re-establish our relationships as a family before they were to be realigned by the addition of the new member.

On Wednesday morning, eight days before due date I had a moderate show. While I tried to let go of expectations, I felt that labour must be about to begin. (I knew I shouldn't, but I kept thinking, "Last time...."). But no. The days went by with more show, a few contractions, nothing for a while, then more show, etc. etc. I grew frustrated and impatient, and I felt others did too - Terry had taken time off work, Mum had come down early from Brisbane, Belinda, the other vet, had to stay in town in case 'something' happened.

Then on Tuesday morning, around 3am, the contractions started again, gentle but regular. They were still going at 7.30 so I rang Elaine our midwife, but she was at another delivery. I told her husband not to bother paging her, but she rang me an hour later to hear that contractions were mild short, 2-3 minutes apart, and I was losing quite a lot of blood-stained mucous. By mid-morning when she arrived everything had stopped altogether (again!).

She stayed awhile. We chatted. She gave me a massage. She had previously explained that she didn't do many internals, and she didn't feel one was necessary now as this sort of labour could go on for days! That almost drove me to despair, but she went home to sleep after being up all night, while we went on waiting.....

Raph and Krispin, who were also getting tired of waiting for 'this baby', obligingly decided to both have an afternoon sleep at about two or so. Leaving them in Nana's care, Terry and I decided to go for a walk along the beach to try to relax me. When I got out of the car I had one fairly heavy contraction, felt a slight 'pop', and suddenly had water dripping all down my legs. We still had our walk (I pretended it was sea water soaking my dress) and that, coupled with the sensation of leaking and spurting which made me laugh, did a lot to improve my temper. Home we went and I thought something must surely happen now.

But it didn't. An hour or so went by. I read the paper, pottered about, tried not to get angry and impatient again. Then sometime after 4pm a friend rang, and while I was talking to her I thought I felt things starting up again. (By this time I'd so lost faith in my ability to tell what my body was doing that I said nothing to anyone and dared not even dwell on it myself). After half an hour I hung up and yes... they were contractions which suddenly seemed to pick up intensity. After a couple I was having to breathe over the peaks of them, and Terry had to ring Elaine and Amanda who was to take the photos.

We started with the hot nappies, which took a while to get right with just the two of us and Terry trying to do last minute organising as well. Amanda arrived a little before Elaine but I'd already lost track of time. (It must have been around 6 because it was getting dark). Elaine felt position (transverse) and checked the baby's heartbeat, but still did no internal. Then she left Terry and me to labour together while she and Amanda had a cup of coffee. I loved being alone in our darkening room (with occasional interruptions from the boys, which were now becoming a

BIRTH OF CAITLIN 18.03.86

bit annoying), full and flowing with the feelings that have kept us together for nearly twelve years, intensified by the special emotions surrounding birth.

I tried to keep walking about but the contractions came too quickly that way. By sitting on the edge of the bed and hugging Terry (along with hot water bottle and nappies of course) we seemed to handle them pretty well. But we soon needed eye contact, and after a few more contractions, a trip to the toilet where I concentrated on 'letting go'. While sitting there I thought I had a double-peaker, but we both felt it was too early for that, and I said to Terry (so he tells me) that I wished Elaine would do an internal just to reassure me that something really was happening, and to give me a bit of encouragement. Just then between contractions, I felt an odd sensation of a 'lump' passing my tailbone.

From the next room Elaine heard the catch in my breathing and came in just in time to help me off the toilet, out of my half-mast pants, and into a squat beside the bed (I had intended to deliver there and had a shower curtain ready on the floor.) And suddenly there was a baby! I hadn't even felt like pushing. My body did the work, and so quickly that Amanda got no pictures until we had already scooped up our squirming beautiful baby girl, who coughed and grizzled as we rejoiced.

Nana had taken the boys out for dinner an hour before, assuring them on Elaine's advice, that we wouldn't have the baby while they were away, and they arrived home at this point, rushing in to discover that they had a sister whom they could stroke, cuddle, and get to know.

I was ecstatic, especially that we had our little girl this time, but I couldn't get comfortable (different from my previous experiences), until I got rid of the placenta, which I did, plop onto the bed. It was only then that Terry and Elaine cut the cord.

Of course, the biggest surprise (to put it mildly) was to follow. Through the haze of my elation I was aware that Elaine was worried about the amount of blood I was losing, and I remember agreeing to an injection of syntocin, but I didn't realise the gravity of the situation - even after I haemorrhaged while on the toilet and passed out onto the bedroom floor.

When I 'came to' I felt woozy but still amazed and happy, and my main concern was for my new baby, who was in fact being well looked after by her brothers and Nana. I still didn't realise that anything was really wrong. But again Elaine and Terry were obviously concerned and I was injected again, given 'Rescue Remedy' and some hot sweet water (which I promptly brought up), and Terry put in a drip while Elaine called the ambulance and hospital.

Caitlin was born at 7pm. By 9pm I was in the ambulance with Terry nursing Caitlin still wrapped only in her bunny rugs, and Elaine by my side, on the way to hospital. Raph and Krispin had been a bit upset when I left ... We had prepared them extensively for the birth, but I had never imagined for a moment that anything would happen to ME. Fortunately, our reading had included a number of books where 'mummy' went to hospital to have the baby so I don't think they thought what was happening too extraordinary, and they slept with Nana that night. She had explained things to them as best she could but she was only made fully aware of what had happened after Elaine returned from the hospital around midnight.

For someone who had never been to hospital, and had had three babies at home, Southport Public proved a bit of a shock. But I had lost well over a litre of blood and needed a transfusion, although they didn't start giving it to me until morning. We spent the night in the labour ward, but had to fight to get them to let Caitlin stay with us... in fact we were rescued by a friend of Elaine's who came on duty at 11 and managed to fend off the required procedures until much later.

Generally the staff were reasonable - but the routine was paramount. Despite notices all over her crib, they still tried to talk me into letting them 'comp' Caitlin that night so I could rest (as if I would've). The separations from her were the worst part. I felt so impotent, tied as I was to a drip, and angry that someone else was giving her her first bath and changing her first nappies, and even that she had to wear the rather stiff and anonymous hospital clothes. My greatest worry was that she was being handled with anything less than the overwhelming love we felt for her.

Anyway, after 40 hours they removed the drip, and when we'd talked with Elaine and the hospital doctor, we decided to sign ourselves out 'against medical advice'. I felt I'd get better a lot more quickly in my own comfortable bed with my baby by my side, sleeping as I liked and not being woken for 'the 4 o'clock feed', and eating an iron rich diet rather than the overcooked hospital food (my haemoglobin count was only 9.3 even after the transfusion). I did improve fairly speedily; and I learned a lot about dreams and expectations.

A couple of people have since asked me how I feel about homebirth now (silly question) and I have replied that had I foreseen it all, I'd have done everything exactly the same way. Except one, I'd not have wasted all the worry about how we'd accomodate a third child that I did during pregnancy. Because Caitlin has shown us that surprise packages can often be even nicer than those you'd pick yourself.

VICKI McANDREW

HOME BIRTH PUZZLE

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K X M O T H E R I Z H H S H N D F P L M
G M B P S F U Q B R S B C U B X C A F G
B Z C K K N Y D Y Y D O W I N E D Y G Y
D D V I J D O J X O C O T O R M K N D P
A A L N R N V I C H O N N R E M I T V E
Q P N D O D B T T P P Z A L O R Z J X W
V N Z U Q I O V L C T P Y N A P H N X P
P K I E P R T E I N A Y U H G O P U S B
K Z A N C L S A E C O R S D T E R U G U
Y V O W X E A M R F A Q T N K Z R L S S
Z N I K N P E R S A A V A N Q R V F G E
V J P Y M T L T U V P P C K O V C N F F
T P V L I K L O K T P E G Q P C I I A A
J C C C A L X M V I A H R F I L W T L B
F Y X C A C D S E E K N F P E D H U P F
N E B B G X E S A K N X P E I E O F W A
H I O A C K X N I Z H H F M R D C H N D
F U P L B M G M T B P F U Q B R S E C U
R B X C A F G B Z A C K K Y D Y O W I N
E Y R E V I L E D D Y Y D D V I J D J X

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FIND THESE HIDDEN WORDS IN THE ABOVE PUZZLE:

BABY

DELIVERY

EXCITEMENT

LABOUR

MOTHER

PREPARATION

CONTRACTIONS

DOCTOR

FATHER

LOVE

NATURAL

SHARING

DOULA

FEELINGS HOT NAPPIES

MIDWIFE

PLACENTA PREGNANCY

SUPPORT

RECIPES

33

'GOODY GOODY YUM YUMS'.

Preheat oven to 375°.

INGREDIENTS:

1 and a half cups wholemeal flour.
half cup coconut.
1 cup honey
half cup sesame seeds, half cup sunflower seeds.
1 cup sultanas, raisins, chopped dates.
1 tsp cinnamon, 1 tsp baking powder
threequarters cup oil.
1 egg.

Combine all ingredients and press into a shallow baking dish. Bake at 375° for 10-15 mins until golden brown. Cut into squares when cool.

'YUMMY DAIRY -FREE ICE CREAM'.

..which is very easy to make.

INGREDIENTS:

6 large very ripe bananas.
one third of a cup of cold-pressed oil
3 tablespoons maple syrup or 2 tablespoons honey.
4 tablespoons soya milk powder
one third cup water
1 tablespoon fine carob powder
2 tablespoons almond flakes.

Method. 1. Place all ingredients in blender and blend thoroughly.

2. When liquified, pour into refrigerator container, cover and place in the freezer. It does not require a second beating.

Alternatives: The carob powder may be replaced by pitted dates (a handful) or soaked seedless raisins, grated carob or any similar variations.

To serve. Delicious by itself or with any sweet. This ice cream will keep indefinitely. If it does thaw, it can be refrozen without any loss of flavour or quality. (No commercial ice cream can do that - speaking volumes for the purity of the homemade product.)

PLAYDOUGH.

2 cups white flour.
1 cup salt
1 tablespoon oil, few drops oil of cloves (optional), food colouring or 'Edicol' dye (optional).
Water.

Mix together flour, salt and enough water to make a workable dough. Mix in oil thoroughly and oil of cloves. (Helps keep it fresh longer.) Mix colouring with water if you want coloured playdough. Store in a plastic bag in fridge.

FINGER PAINT.

half cup cornflour
2 tablespoons sugar
2 cups cold water
food colouring or 'Edicol' dye

In a saucepan mix flour and sugar together then add water.
stir over low heat until well blended. Divide mixture into three or four parts and add a different food colour to each.

You can use pastry brushes or cotton buds to paint with too.

-FIONA PRIDEAUX .

34 Classified Ads. A free service. Ph 513159

*Hire and Loan of Safe n' Sound Baby Capsules and Car Seats.

A number of families in our group are sharing their Safe'n'Sound baby capsules and car seats. Fiona and 'Pling Prideaux have offered to co-ordinate this service and may be contacted on 486028. We thought a hiring fee of \$20.00 would be a fair amount and would help capsule owners to save up for a lay-back car seat. Alternatively you may like to donate some or all of the money you get from hiring your capsule back to the Homebirth Association. \$20.00 is a good price for the 20 or so weeks that a capsule is useful. Please let them know if you have a capsule or car seat for hire, or if you would like to be put on the waiting list for one. Alternatively, if you have approved gear you have entirely finished with, you may wish to donate it to the group for hire or sell it through them. As sharing seems to be working so well, we thought it would be a good idea to extend this to other gear as well.

Please bear in mind that the Assn. cannot accept any risk of injury or damage!

ITEMS FOR HIRE FOR SMALL DONATION TO C.H.A.: Rocking Cradle, Bouncinette, Pram, Bassinette, Bassinette restraint net. 2 front packs. Meh Tai baby sling. Ph 486028.

* Farm for Sale. Queensland tropical fruit and small crops farm.. 52 fenced acres, good red frost-free soil. 250+ fruit trees; mostly commercially bearing Avocados and mangoes, more young trees available for planting. Solid 3br home with ph, electricity, septic, school bus, sheds, yards, perm water from huge dam and spring, pumps, irrigation equipment, tractor, 9km country town, 35 mins Bundaberg. \$92,000 ono Ph (075) 354250

*The Tuggeranong Infants Restraint Loan Service is also hiring capsules to any parents in the Tuggeranong Valley. Operating out of the Richardson Family Centre, they may be contacted on 921905. Please contact them as early as possible to ensure a capsule. Their charge is also \$20.00, with a deposit of \$10.00

*THE CIRCLE BOOKSHOP- 7 WAY ST, O'CONNOR PH 491408 SECONDHAND BOOKS ON PREGNANCY, BIRTHING, CHILDCARE, NUTRITION, YOGA, SELF-HELP, PERSONAL GROWTH ETC OPEN THURSDAYS 12-6 SATURDAY 1-5 RING 491408 HARRY OLDMEADOW.

*N.M.A.A. Besides encouraging and promoting breastfeeding, N.M.A.A. also sells nursing aids, booklets, books and other baby wear. To order or obtain more information on Tarweena Lambskins, puddle suits, cook books etc please phone LYNNE BEAN ON 412326.

*RECYCLED BABY GEAR - toys, clothes, books, 'nic nacs'. Bring to Allan and Robyn's place, 26 Swainsona St, O'Connor, and they'll be made available for sale at monthly meeting. Proceeds to Canberra Homebirth Assn.

*DAIRY GOATS milking goats, kids and goatlings for sale. Top quality Saanen and Toggenburg bucks at stud. Phone Maureen Tully on 513159. I'm also pretty cluey with horses and chooks and may be able to help with advice on them also.

*FOR SALE. One CINDICO Baby Bouncer in excellent condition. Please ring 'pling or Fiona on 486028. Plastic padded baby change mat, folding baby change table, possum pouch (parents centre) Cane baby basket with mattress, assorted baby blankets/bunny rugs. Baby bouncer (the sort that hangs from a doorway) any reas offer Jennifer Rainforth 543125 after hours.

*WANTED TO BUY/BORROW 'Gerry' child back-pack preferably the type with waistband and shoulder straps that don't move. Please phone Susan McCarthy on 479853.

WANTED TO SWAP!!!! 3 Bedroom Govt house Red Hill. Swap for same 'Inner South, Inner North or Inner Belconnen'. Phone Lisa 956187

*BABYSITTER REQUIRED O'Connor /Lyneham area. We're looking for a mature person to look after our eight months old baby for about ten hours each week. Money negotiated Phone Robyn or Allan on 470930.

*BIRTH REPORTS, ARTICLES, HANDY HINTS, RECIPES : PLEASE SEND TO MAUREEN TULLY, 'HILLYVIEW', SKINNER ST COOK A.C.T. PH: 513159. THANKS FOR ALL YOUR VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS ...KEEP THEM COMING !!!!! DEADLINE: JULY 9 for JULY/AUG Newsletter. Set in Macintosh "Geneva" and "New York" and "London" by me and my Apple computer! - Maureen xxxxxx

House in O'Connor available to rent
for 3 months from July. Suitable
for a family considering a Canberra
homebirth.

PHONE: 513189