

RECORDING SECRETARY'S REPORT  
AUCKLAND HOME BIRTH ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD AT AHBA OFFICE, 40A SUSSEX ST. GREY LYNN  
May 13, 1991

This year saw four major achievements for AHBA. The first was a fundraising performance of A Girl's Gotta Eat, a comedy revue, on October 6. It raised about \$ 000, shared equally between AHBA and the College of Midwives, who co-sponsored it.

Then in January the AHBA moved into an office, sharing with three Central Auckland midwives at 40A Sussex Street, Grey Lynn. This means we have a permanent venue for meetings and display of the goods for sale such as t-shirts, sweatshirts, bumper stickers, key rings and the like, as well as room for the typewriter, photocopier and the new computer.

We now have a Mac Classic computer, partially funded by a grant of \$2000 from the North Shore Presbyterian Hospital Trust. This will be invaluable in putting together the newsletter, keeping the membership lists up to date, and will soon be used to evaluate the services provided by the midwives, when the Consumer Questionnaire goes on line.

The fourth achievement, chronologically but by no means last in importance is that we now have a new Home Birth video. It was filmed by Nicky Wood. With contributions from several midwives and couples it is an excellent and long-awaited replacement for the other one. It is available for sale at \$55.00 and can also be rented for \$10.00.

The Domiciliary Midwives Standards Review Committee continues to go from strength to strength, with all the midwives reviewed last year on the standard form. This too will be able to be used to assess consumer satisfaction and contribute to statistics on safety, etc.

We continue to send in submissions to the Maternity Services Task Force, the Service Development Group on the Strategic Plan, and so forth.

Despite the fact that midwives have supposedly won autonomy there are still difficulties with payment, and they not only are unable to get contracts to practise in NWH, there is now a directive that will make transfers to hospital go into the care of the team of the day, so that not even the g.p. can provide continuity of care.

In 1986 there was a similar move attempted at NWH against the g.p.s, and at that time the AHBA sought legal opinion and was told that such a move would deny women their right to the practitioner of their choice.

Unfortunately this can be seen as part of the erosion of women's rights to birth as they choose. There is a plan to have antenatal screening "stream" women into high and low risk categories. Michel Odent, in a recent article in "Mothering" magazine cites statistics from Amsterdam which show that the perinatal mortality rate for women in obstetric care during pregnancy was significantly higher than those booked at a midwifery practice and giving birth either at home or in a small birthing centre.

There are now about 500 home births per year in Auckland, so the running of AHBA is a significant job for several of the committee members. It is unfortunate that we still have to spend so much time fighting these battles, instead of getting on with things.

## HOKIANGA BRANCH REPORT

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Over the last year there was an increased awareness towards Homebirths and Dominobirths. At the hospital, women get informed about birth options, e.g. Homebirth, Midwife of choice, early discharge and hospital birth.

There was one Homebirth, 2 Domino births and 2 early discharges. During the year there have been about 3 births, attended by women, not by the dom. midwife. There are four more booked till Sept. 91