

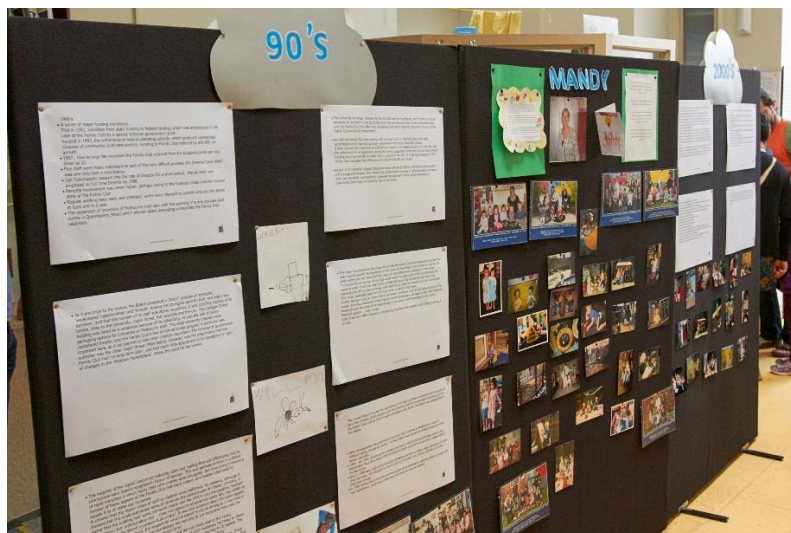
Melbourne University Family Club Co-operative turned 50 years old in 2015. Our annual fun day was a celebration of the history of the co-operative. Many past families, children and staff were present.

Excerpts from the forthcoming history book below

The Family Club emerged out of circumstances rather than design. It owed its foundation to an enterprising central committee, who persisted with the idea even as its viability was doubtful. The motivation was strongly embedded in an ideological belief about the best way of raising children and women's opportunity.

The key proponent was the resourceful medical student, Fedora Trinker. Her school careers advisor had discouraged her from even accepting a position at the university, because she was a woman and would naturally want to leave the workplace once she was married, inadvertently leading her into a long career of resisting advice about what was impossible. While studying she had married a fellow medical student, the similarly enterprising John Best who was elected the president of the Students' Representative Council in 1960, but had continued with her studies. Then, as she neared the end of her degree, Trinker found herself pregnant, dramatically narrowing her options. Trinker did not want to step away from her degree, which would only have served to confirm the view that women should not take up degrees with limited quotas.

Trinker found ten other families at the University of Melbourne who shared her situation. These families met for the first time on 26 May 1964, and formed the Melbourne University Family Club as a society of the University of Melbourne Union



Current Centre Director, Mandy Kelly (Left) and Dr Fedora Trinker

A leaflet distributed in Orientation Week, March 1966, carried these lines

'That boy meets girl and marries girl is not enough.
 Boy and girl quite often have a family.
 This isolates girl from her previous intellectual pursuits.
 Our crèche is the first of many ways by which girl can retain her
 individuality and identity without loss of the precious parts of family life.
 Therefore that boy meets girl and marries girl and that they are able to
 use the MU FAMILY CLUB CRECHE is more than enough. It's
 wonderful!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Family Club displayed the worthiness of a day-nursery and kindergarten for children of married parents, by the commitment and voluntary labour of its members. By the end of the 1960s, the Club had transformed from a voluntary organisation organised around improvised management into a viable centre with professional operations.

2012: The National Quality Framework is introduced.

The new curriculum is Nationwide and is a child focused framework with an emphasis on play based learning developed through the interests of the children.

The Early Years Learning and Development Framework (EYLF) has an emphasis on centres providing an educational program that should contribute to the following outcomes:

children have a strong sense of identity,
children are connected with and contribute to their world,
children have a strong sense of wellbeing,
children are confident and involved learners,
children are effective communicators.

There has been a full switch back to nature and an emphasis on providing a natural play environment. The EYLF philosophy of learning and education for children has many elements that have long been part of The Family Clubs beliefs.

We could say that everything has come full circle and the government has reached the philosophical and educational position of the Family Club from 1965.