

education otherwise



Issue no.156 - February 2004

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

TO THE FOLLOWING EDITORS:

LETTERS AND ARTICLES

Sue White, 2 Pretoria Villas, Eye Road,
Brome, Eye, Suffolk IP23 8AL
01379 870036 sue_white@tiscali.co.uk

BOOK AND SOFTWARE REVIEWS

Sally Hall, Nant-y-Gareg Farm, Saron,
Llandysul, Carmarthenshire, SA44 5EJ
01559 370908 sally@aecb.net

HOME EDUCATION in the NEWS

Vacant - volunteers please contact new acting
NL Co-ordinator, William Cairns (see inside
back cover)

ARCHIVE SELECTIONS

SARAH GUTHRIE. 01379 783678
(*NOT for back copies of NLS - see Publications,
inside back cover*)

**ADVERTISEMENTS/FLYERS (Acting)
(subject/envelope "EO Advertising" please)**

Gita Prasad, 21 Cozens Road, Norwich
NR1 1JJ 01603 765 730
georgegita@fugue21.fsnet.co.uk

EO BUSINESS

Martine Frampton, 3 Redesdale Mews,
Hospital Road, Moreton in Marsh, Glos.
GL56 0BQ 01608 812411
martine-frampton@macunlimited.net

REGIONAL DIARY

Anne Rix, Hembury Orchard, Fritelstock
Torrington, EX38 8JT
anne@annerix.demon.co.uk
or ring Jo Borthen on 01392 438876

CHILDREN'S PAGES *N.B. deadline 20th February*

Maria Garassino, 51 Beech Crescent, Surrey Hills Park, Tadworth, Surrey, KT20 7LY
devilshangel159@btopenworld.com

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS 1ST MARCH 2004

Please mark material 'for publication' and include your name, address, phone number and email (if you have it) as we may need to contact you to discuss your contribution (though details may be withheld from publication on request). **Email contributions will be acknowledged within a few days. If you require a postal acknowledgement please enclose ssae.** If no acknowledgement is received, or in case of queries, please contact the NL co-ordinator. *Please also ensure your EO membership is up to date.*

Please send contributions via the most appropriate section editor above.

DISCLAIMER

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All contributions (including advertisements) have been accepted in good faith and have not been in any way endorsed by Education Otherwise, which cannot be held responsible for the consequences of responding to any of them.

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CO-ORDINATORIAL

When I read in the October newsletter that Anne was looking for someone to take over her role, I leapt at the chance! Well . . . that's not exactly how it happened.

The truth is, after discussing the idea with my wife, I sent Anne a tentative email expressing my interest in helping out. I didn't think anything would come of it. At most, a polite reply informing me that due to an overwhelming response to her plea, the job was taken.

But no. I must have said something good, because here I am.

Introductions first . . . We live on the west coast of Scotland, tucked into a bank of the River Clyde. My wife Lisa and I have

four young children - seven and under. (Jack McConnell, our first minister, has recently been lamenting the decline in Scotland's population. He's obviously been looking in all the wrong places!) Judging by the trend for smaller families, we must come into the category of 'the exception that proves the rule'.

We're now into our third year of home-ed. Many people find it difficult enough to cope with the fact that we would happily have so many children; when they learn that we don't send them to school . . .

One of the pleasures of putting this newsletter together is that I get a sneak preview of the pages that follow. (That's not strictly true. *Archie* was sent straight to the printers.) Still, Ross Mountney's 'Diary' (p8-9) made up for it. As did Rebecca Kail's account of how to build a business from the ground - down! (p10-11). Details of World Book Day - and free book tokens! - can be found on p.19.

Erik, our first-born, provided the inspiration for this issue's cover. His interest in all things ancient Egyptian led us to a site that offered "your name in hieroglyphics!" Who could resist? Using their online translator gave us 'education otherwise' as it might have been rendered by ancient scribes. I won't vouch for the accuracy of said translation - we just thought it would look good!

William Cairns 19.01.04

Note: because the newsletter is a bit slimmer this time around, I've taken the opportunity to alter the layout of some of the sections - for the better, hopefully. But let us know what you think.

EO COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Annual General Meeting of Education Otherwise Association Ltd

will be held at Coalbrookdale Youth Hostel,
Shropshire

on Saturday 7th February 2004 at 2pm

The business of the AGM is to consider the accounts, to receive reports from officers, to elect members to the Council of Management and to appoint auditors.

The number of Council Members is set at between 14 and 19. As at October 2003 there are 15 members in post (see inside back cover), five of whom must stand down, but may seek re-election. The Council may recommend other candidates for election.

Signed-up members (i.e. guarantors) of EO may also propose candidates. In this case, written notice from the proposer and signed consent from the candidate (who must also be a guarantor) must both reach the Company Secretary no earlier than 12th January 2004 and no later than 2nd

February 2004. In the event of a vote at the AGM, guarantors present at the AGM are entitled to take part, provided that they have paid their EO membership.

If you wish to become a guarantor of EO, please complete the form on the last page of the May 2003 EO Handbook.

Company Secretary, Pam Bellinger, 56 Beech Drive, Braunstone, Leicester, LE3 3DA

There will be an Open Council Meeting of Education Otherwise Association Ltd

On Saturday 7th February 2004 from 10am
At Coalbrookdale Youth Hostel, Shropshire
All members of E.O. are welcome to attend.

For copies of or contributions to the agenda, please send SAE or return label with attached postage stamp to:
The Chair, Gary Podmore, 52 Rupert Road, Sheffield, S. Yorkshire, S7 1RP

E.O. NATIONAL GATHERING

Thursday 5th to Monday 9th FEBRUARY 2004
Coalbrookdale Youth Hostel, Telford,
Shropshire

Close to Iron Bridge and various museums, with walks along the River Severn
A chance to meet with other home educators from far afield.

Social events and discussion groups will be welcomed.

Costs tbc, to include all food and accommodation.

Day visitor rates and family rooms available.

For booking forms and information e-mail yeh@onetel.net.uk or send SAE or return label with attached postage stamp to:

Yvette Hartley, 17 Maes Ingli, Newport, Pembrokeshire, SA42 0TE

NEW TREASURER NEEDED

The treasurer will be completing three years in post at the AGM, and is looking to stand down from the council.

If there is anyone in the membership who is interested in taking on the role, please email the current treasurer (garryhumphreys@lineone.net) to discuss the job in the first instance.

It requires on average 10 hours per week, although you will need some flexibility. The job is unpaid, but expenses are available to meet costs. You will need to become a trustee of the charity. The job is an interesting and vital one, but you will need patience and tolerance to cope with the multiplicity of demands; you will also need storage space for seven years back paperwork.

Garry Humphreys, (retiring treasurer)

Someone needed to sell E.O. T-shirts

It's not onerous, but you need to be prepared to keep records of stock and sales, do postal banking, send out orders promptly, and order stock when necessary.

More information from Patricia Connor, tel: 0118 9662 123 or e-mail: tjj.connor@virgin.net

LETTERS

Making music

We are in the Skipton area, home educating Sally (5) and Billy (3). We would like to set up a social/music drama group very soon. I am a music teacher (primary) and have been inspired and reassured by talking to people from the local contact groups around us but most meetings involve a long(ish) journey. We hope to attend some meetings but please contact us if you are interested in making music and having some fun in the Skipton area.

*Judith Hargreaves and Earl Shepherd, 4 Sunnybank, Carleton, Skipton, N.Yorks
Tel: (01756) 791356*

Response to 'Defining positive male gender roles'

I am writing in response to a letter in the Dec N/L. I was greatly encouraged by this letter and agree with the sentiments expressed entirely.

One of the major reasons for withdrawing our son from school at the age of seven was the aggressive and foul-mouthed behaviour of the boys. He is a lively extravert child by nature and full of enthusiasm for life like most young boys. However, we had always taught him, prior to starting school, to respect others and to try to resolve disagreements in a non-aggressive way. However, at the age of four he then started school and discovered that the world in general today has a completely different set of attitudes towards boys.

For three years he suffered bullying because he didn't fit into the usual aggressive mould that boys seem to communicate in today. When we complained to the school about the bullying, they suggested that we send him to a martial arts class to toughen him up. We were told: "that's just the way boys are today". Even my father said that he should learn to fight back and that the bullying would "make a man of him"!

We feel that it is this attitude towards defining masculinity that may be the cause of many problems today. It seems generally accepted in society that boys need to express themselves in an aggressive manner in order to be considered real men. But is this really going to benefit them in forming relationships with women? Any attempt to show a more caring attitude at school is quickly defined as a weakness and will render that child's life a misery unless they are prepared to conform to the masses and become aggressive.

Also the failure of boys to achieve as well as girls in school is also, I feel, part of the same problem because if you work hard or appear fairly intelligent this is not considered to 'be cool' among the other boys. Rather, you should mess about and get into trouble to have any status amongst your peers.

Having removed our son from this unhealthy environment, we are seeing him develop into a very well balanced young man, who is able to communicate with adults and children alike. He has no problems relating to either girls or boys and is able to empathise with others and express himself on many levels other than by the use of aggression. However, he remains very much a boy and we are confident that he will continue to develop his masculinity in a much more positive and natural way, which will surely benefit him for his future life.

*Kim Pittman, The White House, High Street, Dalbeattie, Kirkcudbrightshire, DG5 4DS
Tel: (01556) 611414*

Play space in Derbyshire Dales

We live in 20 acres of meadows and woodland, with streams to paddle in, trees to climb and hens, ducks and horses. It is a beautiful place to visit.

For anyone who lives in Derby, Nottingham or Sheffield, and has a car, it is a great day out. We are two miles from the nearest bus stop and we can't always get out easily.

We welcome visitors. Lily, who is five, would love other home-educated children to visit to play.

Diane, Tel: 01335 372113

Room for a pony?

My son, Dan (5) and I, Helen (his mum) are desperate to keep a pony, to love and become part of our family. We are home educating in our council flat in Somerset. Although the area is rural and beautiful and we love it here, our home lacks the outdoor space that we would like to enable us to grow more of our own food and there are few safe places where we could ride or drive a pony and cart locally.

The whole family, that is Rod (my partner), myself and Dan, the dog, cat and rabbit, would love to move to a home where we could keep a pony/ies near to us and where we would feel more able to live in a more sustainable way. (Perhaps we could even get rid of the car!)

Is there anybody out there who may be able to rent us a house/cottage/log cabin etc. with a field nearby, preferably in the South West? We do claim benefits at the moment and we would certainly be willing to do DIY jobs, gardening, child minding, animal or house sitting and odd jobs in lieu of rent.

If you can help us or if you have any ideas of how we can live our dream please contact

Helen or Rod on (01749) 671955.

Helen Williams, 20 Harters Close, Coxley, Wells, Somerset BA5 1RE

How to have your cake and eat it!

Had it not been for the Scottish Executive foisting the Draft Guidance on Home Education on us, we might not have ventured to our first gathering at Cumbria in January 2002. We had only been home-ed-ing for a few months and somehow felt that gatherings would perhaps benefit us when we were more experienced and the children older or, at least, able to wield a knife and fork, plus (in the youngest's case) be big enough to go to the loo without falling down the pan! But the guidance was awful and we needed EO's help.

We came away from that weekend with the help we needed but also much more. For the first time, we'd met teenagers who didn't mumble and shun the rest of society. In fact, while we were ensconced in meetings, they had helped Robert polish up his newly acquired chess skills to a level that makes me sweat. He also mastered the knack of microwaving milk safely and making muckle cheese sarnies (which we lived on for weeks!). He knew for certain at the end of that gathering that he didn't want to go to the Grammar at 12 years old, as planned, and we now had the confidence not to send him.

Featherstone Castle was our first long gathering and I have to admit that I did wonder how the momentum would continue for a week after the weekend meetings had finished. It was wonderful! Lots of new things to try, make and dye, big trips, little trips, hours to bletcher (chat!), relax, unwind, give and receive support - a week was too short. But the most interesting part of an EO gathering is other people's reactions to our children when we get home. They always notice a positive change in them, whether it is mental, physical or spiritual - it's something that isn't there on returning from a conventional

holiday. So if you think gathering is just the icing on EO's cake – think again. It is the flipping cake!

*Jane Bathgate, Tudhope Cottage, Lanton Road, Jedburgh, Roxburghshire TD8 6RY
Tel: (01835) 862118*

New group in N. Yorks

We are getting a new group set up and we wanted to let people know about it. It is based in the North of North Yorkshire and we are planning to meet on a monthly basis at the village hall in Kirby Misperton (Near to Flamingo Land).

We have chosen this hall because we felt that it would be accessible for a larger number of people and therefore could be a meeting place for those from Whitby, Scarborough, York, Thirsk and any other intrepid persons who fancied joining us. It is a nice big hall, with a kitchen and an outdoor play area. There is also access via the coast liner bus.

The current age range is under ten, but I am aware of teenagers who are also looking to meet up, so am very keen to hear from older kids too.

I think it is very important for there to be a visible group meeting so that we can support each other and be there for people looking to start home educating. It is for that reason that I am hoping that those of you who have been home educating for longer will come along too. We are also arranging some outings in various places. So, if you do fancy coming along please let me know.

Tess Geall, Grosmont Gallery Front St, Grosmont, Whitby YO22 5QE Tel: 01947 895007

London in the Spring ...

My 13-year-old son and I are planning a visit to London in April and I wondered if there are any fellow home educators living there who would be willing to put us up for 4/5 days. I would of course pay for our board and lodgings. It would also be good if anyone could show us places of interest, etc. as we have never visited the capital before and it would be good to have someone who knows their way about. If you can help, please contact me on 01952 289770

*Shirley Austin, 27 Fifth Avenue, Ketley Bank,
Telford, Shropshire TF2 0AT
email: ann1952@blueyonder.co.uk*

A Joke

Teacher to headmaster:

"I can't believe what I have just heard. I asked the Smith boy 'who knocked down the walls of Jericho?' and all he could say was 'It wasn't me sir.' This is not good enough."

Headmaster to teacher:

"Well, I have known the Smith family for years and if the boy said he didn't do it then I believe he didn't do it."

The teacher was speechless and went to see the Chief Education Officer at the LEA. He told him what the Smith boy had said and then what the Headmaster had said and asked the Chief Education Officer what he felt should be done about this sorry state of affairs. The Chief Education officer looked at the teacher and said:

"I really don't know why you are making all this fuss. Just get the wretched wall repaired and send me the bill!"

J. Price, France

Learn about nature – by giving it a helping hand!

Getting involved in surveys, campaigns etc can be an educational experience for adults and children of all ages. Most have been designed to be fun and to encourage volunteers to participate. They cover a diverse range of subjects, provide valuable free information, materials and new ideas and can lead to more in-depth study of particular subjects. You will, of course, also be helping to provide support, statistics and data that will benefit the wider community and environment, helping us to understand the world around us. Here are just a few of the organisations looking for your help.

Plantlife

Last year, Plantlife ran the *Bluebells for Britain* survey. Everyone who participated will receive a copy of the results. The subject of this year's survey will be the **common poppy** (*Papaver rhoeas*). The aim of this project will be to find out more about the location and distribution of five different poppy species. These species used to be prevalent in arable locations, but changes in agricultural husbandry have resulted in them having to seek refuge in different habitats.

Plantlife continues to carry out its annual **Common Plants Survey**. This is the only national, annual survey of its kind in the UK. The recording season runs from March to September and, using the information collected, the health of the countryside can be assessed. Your task is to search out 65 common plant species in randomly allocated 1km squares. Identification charts and instructions are provided in an interesting and colourful survey pack.

Tel: 01722 342756. email: emma.pilgrim@plantlife.org.uk
www.plantlife.org.uk

British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)

Garden BirdWatch started in 1995 and now has over 15,000 participants. It is the BTO's largest year-round monitoring programme of garden birds anywhere in Europe. Every week, participants record the occurrence of bird species that visit their gardens. Results are sent in quarterly using paper forms or weekly via the Internet (Garden BirdWatch Online). The results provide important information on the seasonal use of gardens by birds and how this use is changing over time. A quarterly, full-colour magazine, *The Bird Table*, is sent to all participants, who fund the project by paying an annual fee of £12.00 – though you do not need to be a member of BTO to participate.

Migration Watch starts its third season this year. To participate, you will need to join the BTO (fees from £25 per year, which entitles you to a quarterly colour magazine). This survey involves logging onto the website to record your sightings of migrants, noting the dates of arrival and departures. This year's survey starts on the 16th February - in time for those birds that arrive early!

Tel: 01842 750050. www.bto.org
www.bto.org/migwatch
www.bto.org/gbw/gbwhome.htm

The Woodland Trust

The Woodland Trust is continuing with its Nature's Calendar Survey. It involves phenology - recording specific seasonal events (first flowers, budbursts, migratory birds, butterflies etc.). The spring survey has just started. If you would like to participate, contact the Trust as soon as possible. Records can be input via the Internet or by sending in a completed form. All participants receive a colourful identification brochure, a newsletter and recording information with detailed instructions.

Tel: 01476 581111. www.wooland-trust.org.uk
www.phenology.org.uk

If you know of any interesting surveys, please email full details to sally@aecb.net or post to:
Sally Hall, Nant-y-Garreg Farm, Saron, Llandysul SA44 5EJ

TRACKING

In our early years of home educating we found the most difficult times were when we had many continuous days of cold, damp weather, particularly late autumn and winter. The kind of weather where you don't really want to step outside or walk anywhere but then start to feel guilty that you are missing out on fresh air and exercise. A visit to a local second hand bookshop to purchase an old copy (1974) of the **Collins Guide to Animal Tracks and Signs – a guide to the tracking of all British and European mammals and birds** by Preben Bang and Preben Dahlstrom for just £2.00 helped us develop an on-going activity that is easier to do and most fun during the autumn and winter months, when lots of treasures are revealed in the bare undergrowth. It can be done on all but the wettest days and is particularly good in the snow. It is amazing what you can find. Most people have areas of woodland and hedgerows near them and places to investigate. Even a small garden can reveal surprises and every visit can reveal something different. You can follow tracks, look for feeding signs, identify droppings, food pellets, homes and shelters and look for other signs. From your discoveries outside you can move inside and record all you find as an ongoing project, for example undertake follow-on projects into particular species; dissect pellets and build up charts of the remains to see what a bird has eaten....

There is so much you can do and the education value and subjects covered are numerous and diverse. You become a detective and look for all kinds of signs. We have found evidence of many of our more common creatures but we have also had some surprises as well. We have discovered otter spraints on rocks in our river and by checking regularly we have found that otters are frequent visitors so we have built an otter holt to see if we can encourage these elusive creatures to breed on our land. We have also discovered hazelnuts gnawed in a particular way to reveal we have dormice in our wood. We are currently looking for signs of water voles, looking mainly for feeding and nesting sites but to date have not discovered any evidence of these fast declining mammals.

Books are immensely helpful and make this activity far more interesting. Unfortunately, there seem to be few books on this subject and I could not find any that covered only the UK. The Collins Guide has been re-printed and is now published by the Oxford University Press (June 2001) **Animal Tracks and Signs** (ISBN 0-1985-0796-8) by Preben Bang and Preben Dahlstrom - retailing at **£14.99**. This is an excellent book but, because it does not concentrate on just British species, there are areas that are not covered. There are some very clear prints and drawings. The section on tracks we found particularly useful. It is full of interesting facts and information that help with most identifications.

Another excellent book is a Helm Identification Guide, **Tracks and Signs of the Birds of Britain and Europe** (now in its second edition) by Roy Brown, John Ferguson, Michael Lawrence and David Lees, **£19.99** (ISBN 0-7136-5382-5), published by A C Black (www.acblack.com). We found a fresh killing recently and, using the book, we were able to identify the bird (a song thrush) from the few feathers that remained and its skull. We were also able to work out that a cat had probably killed it. The section on feathers is particularly useful with some excellent drawings to help identify feathers found. However, not all UK bird species are listed and we have found feathers that we have not been able to identify which is a shame.

Sally Hall

Diary of A Home Educating Nobody

I had a Home-Ed panic attack the other day!

I don't know about you but it doesn't take much to give me one!

By the end of it I was totally convinced that I'm an awful mother, an unfit parent, and a hopeless home educator. In fact, my children would be better off without me!

It all started with me being all jolly enthusiastic about the great things we were going to do that day - all the creative experimental stuff alongside the humdrum-daily-bread practice of basic skills. I had a wonderful picture in my mind of how it was all going to be: all rosy-cosy and everyone getting on!

Fatal mistake!

Firstly, what I think is wonderful and exciting isn't necessarily the same as what the children think is wonderful and exciting! A wrong conclusion we adults often jump to!

Secondly, just because I've managed to screw up enough enthusiasm to get on with the less exciting bits doesn't mean that they have - or are even going to entertain the idea!

And thirdly, familiarity breeds contempt and whereas our children might be more reserved about voicing their opinion, throwing a wobbly, having an 'attitude' or openly arguing with a teacher, they feel quite comfortable with blasting off at me.

They basically thought my ideas were boring, they weren't practising basics because it was a stupid waste of time, their tone suggested I was an idiot for even mentioning it and THEY JUST WEREN'T DOING ANY OF IT!

That's when I lost it!

I was so upset at having my worked-up enthusiasm crushed - yet again - I had a go at them back again. Out it all came, all the injustice I felt at their lack of appreciation, all the resentment that sometimes builds up at the sacrifice of my time, all the festering doubt that is inevitably a part of making the choices we do about stepping out of mainstream!

Then, even worse, I'm almost too ashamed to admit I swore I wasn't standing for this ***** attitude any longer and they'd have to go back to school! An appalling threat for me to make - totally out of order.

Then I slammed out and had a good cry, berating myself for having lost it and sobbing over the fact that the children would probably now beg me to go back to school - anything to get away from their neurotic parent!

It took several cups of tea and an aspirin to calm down. Trouble was, once the tempest had subsided, the cold honest truth began to creep over me: could I actually go on with this home-educating any longer?

I'm happy to say that by the end of the week I had got all this in better perspective. Because that's actually what it is about: perspective. About not letting one awful moment colour our view of years of successful time with our children. And the way in which it got back into better perspective was *contact*.

Being a parent is hard enough. Being a Home Educating parent is even harder. But the hardest thing of all must surely be being a Home Educating parent who has little contact with others to help us over these difficult moments.

Shortly after this episode I had a call from another Home-Edding friend. At first I thought I couldn't tell my shameful story - especially the bit about threatening them with school - but it all came out. She was quiet for a moment then burst out laughing.

It turned out she'd just had a terrible day too! Her children had refused point blank to do anything she suggested. She'd lost her rag and shouted and threatened them with school. And it ended up with her in tears and the children under the table!

I wasn't the only one then! We felt so much better having confided in one another. And strangely then went on to swap a long list of all the other things we'd done with our kids which worked out beautifully!

Then I happened to have a conversation with another friend whose children are in school. She was having just as bad a time. The children didn't want to go to school in the morning. They came home grumpy and tired and would not do their homework. And she couldn't stand the pressure any longer - school was ruining their family life!

Everything was in much better perspective when I heard that. Even with children in school there are just as many problems.

Yet *Home Ed* problems seem to be some of those things we are all so reluctant to own up to. There will always be problems for all of us whichever paths we choose. Pretending it's all rosy just makes them all the harder to bear.

I believe now that home educating our children successfully is not so much about how we'll get our children to learn anything. It's more about how we manage, as adults, while we're going through it! We have to manage those difficulties like resentment, self-sacrifice, time for ourselves, strained relationships and over exposure to each other. Just coping.

There is no doubt that coping is made easier with sharing. By listening to how others find the time for themselves. By just having a friend bring some perspective back into play. By us remembering that there are days when we do some *amazing* things. There are times when we don't. And there is the plethora of in-between days. And *it's all* part of the educating package. Just as it would be if our children were in school.

And I'm perhaps not quite such an awful parent. I perhaps just need to make sure that I keep it in perspective by keeping in contact with lots of others and when things get really tough; phone a friend. And be open and honest.

Let's all do one another a favour. Let's all share our difficulties as well as our successes. After all - we're all fumbling in the dark here! But maybe opening up about our fumbblings will help those who follow on behind us.

Thank goodness for contact with other Home Edders!

While we're on the subject of contact - my name is Ross Mountney and I've been writing this 'Diary' for a year now. I just wondered if it's of value to anybody and whether people feel it's worth continuing!

Ross - I love your contributions, and there's almost always something I can relate to from my own Home-Ed experience. I am quite sure that your insights are of great value to newer HE's also. Please do continue to delight and educate us all. And to everyone else - let's hear your thoughts also.

(Anne - retiring NL Co-ord.)

I got Ross to put an article on the EO website because I like her style of writing and the fact that she is realistic. New parents thinking about home education get a better idea that all is not going to be idyllic, but that there will be bad days as well.

(Jacqui Houlding)

THE FFJC MINING CO LTD.

We have a mine in our garden. Our son (Christy, aged 6½) spends a lot of time digging in it. We have always been happy for him to be getting fresh air and exercise all year round. We think, too, that it is important for him to structure his own time and be able to 'do his own thing'. We have not been concerned with 'educational value' – not because we do not want Christy to be educated, but because we know that he will learn what he needs to learn at a time that is appropriate for him.

It is only recently that I've considered how much has been learnt over the last 18 months or so of digging (since we moved to this house)...

Initially the digging area was quite small. Christy's main aim was to dig through the turf to make a hole. Our soil is sandy with pure sand about a foot down. The ease of digging and the enthusiasm of friends to join in, have led to the expansion of the digging patch to its present size of about 5m x 5m and over a metre deep in places!

The main activity has been mining. Holes are dug and the products sorted into different piles – grassy soil, sandy soil and pure sand, for instance. A mining company was invented – 'FFJC Mining Company Ltd' ('F' being friend Finn who is also an enthusiastic miner). Finn and Christy took turns to order lorry loads of sand via pretend phone calls, or to deliver it and ask for payment. The miners often head for the mine with specific ideas about what to do that day. Sometimes verbal plans are accompanied by a picture. I don't know if the plans are ever carried out!

The Mining Company now has its own symbol, website address, hand-drawn headed notepaper and badges for company members (now expanded to 4). Maps have been drawn, work rotas written down and lists of phone numbers compiled. Christy made a magazine with lots of mining photographs and he persuaded me to make a flag with the symbol on it. Christy has a folder for Mining Company business and he talks of 'staying in to do office work'.

The mine has involved drainage works, canals, waterfalls, ponds, swimming pools, tunnels and bridges. There have been several cycle paths constructed around the perimeter. As well as sand, the miners have dug up coal, pottery, glass, hinges, door handles, metal bars and wire, old broken toys and most of a very rusty bicycle! The pottery and other recognisable bits go to the museum (window sill).

The Mining Company has diversified into other things – mainly along a chocolate theme! The chocolate factory workers started by digging up soil and sieving it; then they gathered snow, mixed it with soil till it 'looked right'; filled pots and emptied out pots of chocolate. The pots were spaced out neatly in rows, and there were regular discussions about how many had been made and how much each would cost to buy. They took it in turns to be customers – until a recent auction where the adults were roped in to buy things.

The chocolate company also makes cakes, ice cream, chocolate spread, cold drinks and herbal teas. Sometimes time is spent gathering ingredients – 'nuts' (small cones), 'elderflowers' (any flowers) or 'candles' (sticks), or moving products from one area to another. An empty coalbunker is the main store.

All this activity is pretty much unsupervised. I overhear what is going on if I'm busy outside, otherwise I'm reliant on what I'm told or what I see when I'm asked to come and look. There might be whole enterprises that I'm unaware of.

So much seems to have been going on – using tools, health and safety rules, making plans, drawing maps, calculations, teamwork, business skills, manufacturing processes, archaeology, geology – with a whole heap of enthusiasm, creativity and sheer hard work. How much activity might I have curtailed by limiting endless days in the mine or persuading Christy to do something 'more constructive'?

I could never have contrived a way to teach these skills and knowledge that would have been half as compelling as this self-directed learning. Who would think of teaching business skills to a six-year-old anyway?

Digging in the garden has been an education for me as well as Christy. And what great fun all the miners have had too!

Thanks to regular miners Christy, Finn, Freya and Johannes, and to Ali, Margaret and Alison for providing transport to and from the mine. 3 Culblair Cottages, Dalcross IV2 7JJ Tel: (01667) 462772
© Rebecca Kail, February 2004

FROM THE ARCHIVES

*This month - the bi-monthly newsletter produced by EO's American counterpart, **Growing Without Schooling**. GWS was founded by John Holt in 1977 and its newsletter/magazine continued to appear until recently.*

From issue 55 (1987):

Preschools are pushing children too hard and too early to achieve academically, leading to childhood stress, depression, burn-out and learning problems, two major education organisations warned. The problem of scholastic force-feeding of pre-schoolers has become particularly acute over the past decades, officials said. Education is being conceived of as a race, and if you start early you'll win that race. It is stressful for children. There is a real danger that large numbers of young children will experience learning problems at an age when, in the past, most children were not even in school.

And separately in the same issue John Holt writes:

I am quite often asked, since adults are competing against each other all the time, if it is only a sensible and right thing that children should be made to compete against each other all the time in school. In the first place, tough competition is perhaps as close as anything we have to a kind of American religion. There is in fact much less direct personal competition in adult life than we like to think. There are really very few situations in adult life and work where one is daily and hourly being compared to a group of others with the results being made known publicly, as is the case with children in school.

From a discussion on standardised testing in issue 57:

The IQ test was developed in 1904 by Alfred Binet, who had been commissioned by the French government to find a way to identify children in need of help in schools. It is important to see how the IQ test has changed in value since his experiments. {Binet} protested against the idea that his test could be used to rank all children on a single scale to define the quality of their minds. He said that would be a dangerous use of his test: "{it} does not permit the measure of the intelligence because intellectual qualities are not superposable and therefore cannot be measured as linear surfaces are measured". Of course what Binet warned against is exactly what has come to pass. The IQ test in the United States has always been used to measure literally a fixed idea of intelligence. That intelligence cannot be measured in this way does not stop testers from doing so in millions of tests given every year.

Leile Berg (the writer, author of *Reading and Loving*) in issue 57:

I remember once having some children stay with me. You know how they sit on the loo with a roll of toilet paper in their hands? They often like to take it off the hook and hold it. And soon, somehow it's looping and twisting and coiling and winding . . . all over the bathroom. So I said to them brightly, with that awful patronising manipulativeness of a jolly adult: "What's the difference between an adult and a child?" I planned that they would say "I give up" and then I'd say, "Children use more toilet paper." But they stared at me and then (one of them) said: "Children live longer". I had invented a question to fit an answer I had; it was my answer I was really interested in. And there was this child whose answer was coming from her own real wondering about the world.

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REVIEWS

Friday and Robinson by Michel Tournier (translated by Ralph Manheim)

This is a new version (with new illustrations) of an English translation of a book published in France in 1971. The author originally re-wrote the classic story of Robinson Crusoe as *Friday*, a novel for adults that differs from Defoe's original storyline in certain key respects. *Friday and Robinson* sees him revisiting the story for children. Although the story is enjoyable and moves along at a great pace, it is very much simpler than the original. Of necessity, therefore, it leaves out many details and much of the time is collapsed (for example, by his 1000th day on the island he has, apparently, had only one harvest). We also found it difficult to stomach the stark description of how Robinson first treated Friday. Although Defoe's Robinson was not particularly pleasant, Tournier's is extremely unpleasant and arrogant. Tournier also gives Robinson's Christian faith very short shrift: it seems to inform only the worst parts of his character.

I'd be inclined to use this book with older children: for those who want to go on to do examinations in English literature it is an easy introduction to comparing two versions of the same story; for students of language, it provides plenty of scope for discussion of the skills of adaptation.

Shena Deuchars, with Katherine (11) and James (9)
£5.99, ISBN: 0-7445-9068-X, Walker

The Private Life of Plants by David Attenborough

This book is really great for all plant lovers; adults or children. It has all sorts of amazing plants from carnivorous (my favourite ones) to strangler figs; from flowers to how plants live together; from transport to the social struggle. It's an amazing book for facts, some even too amazing to sound true! I had wanted this book for ages but it was too expensive but my dream came true and I found it at a discount bookshop for only £4.99 and I had £5 birthday money to spend! I think plants are a really good hobby for children to have. I particularly love carnivorous plants and I have quite a few in my collection but I find all plants fascinating. This book isn't about how to care for plants but how each plant manages to survive in the wild. Did you know that if you touched the tendrils of a gourd within five minutes they will curl up because they think they may have found something to climb up? There is an amazing bit about a strangler fig. What goes up a tree is more likely to be its roots and usually two or more plants. The leaves are actually up in the canopy and slowly the tree that it climbed up dies leaving a hollow trunk and the strangler figs stand up on their own. Everything I have read in this book is brilliant.

Keith Hall (9)
£17.99, ISBN 0-563-37023-8, BBC

Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson

This is about a girl called Maia. Her parents died on an archaeological dig so she lives at Mayfair Academy for Young Ladies until she gets news that she is to go and live with distant relatives in Manaus in Brazil. On the way, she meets a young boy who is an actor in Manaus and they become friends. When she gets there, her cousins are not what she expected. They are mean to her and don't let her go out. So one day, on her own, she sneaks out and explores the village and an Indian boy gives her a lift along the river. But then she finds that he is really a rich English boy who is fleeing from his horrible grandpa and Maia tries to hide from his real background. It is full of suspense and adventure. I would recommend it to anyone. I could read it over and over again.

Iarn Fowler (9)
£4.99, ISBN 0-3303-9715X, Macmillan

Scooby Doo and the Phantom of the Knight

This game is based on collecting clues and solving the mystery. It was quite an achievement to complete the game. It is very exciting when you get new clues and discover the villain. The game can be set at harder/easier levels. I set it to the highest level and did not find it very challenging but it was lots of fun. It's a 'spooktacular' game!

Adam Greenhalgh (11)
Part of a double pack CD, £19.99, Mindscape

Arthur: King of the Middle March by Kevin Crossley-Holland

This is the third book of a trilogy - the first two are *The Seeing Stone* and *At the Crossing-Place*. I had not read the first two so wondered if I would enjoy reading this one. However, I did not find it too hard to work out what had gone before. As we have recently visited Venice, I found it interesting to read about the Venice of medieval times. The book is centred on Arthur de Caldicot who goes off to the fourth Crusade, which soon turned into a horror tale of bloodshed and disaster where Christians began to fight against other Christians. Arthur looks back into his Seeing Stone to the days of King Arthur and his knights. This book is full of conflict in one of the worst of the Crusades between Christianity and Islam, but apart from the gory element of the book there is love and romance between Arthur and his girlfriend Gatty. It has a bit of everything, including the early magic of King Arthur. There is a very dramatic ending, which is . . . Well, if you want to find out then read the book. I have to admit it is not the type of book I usually enjoy, but then, I don't like *Lord of the Rings*. I would recommend this book for boys 13+, especially those who enjoy Tolkien.

Simon Hoggarth (15)

£12.99, ISBN 1-84255-060-8, Orion

Pirate Pete by Nick Sharrat

This book has six press-out shapes for each double page and a slot to fit the image in the appropriate part of the sentence, e.g. "Pirate Pete looked down and saw a in the water". The choice ranges from 'shark' and 'mermaid' to 'giraffe'! All the children (aged 3 - 10) spent an enjoyable hour playing with this book. The younger ones chose the conventional pictures at first whilst the older ones enjoyed the really silly ideas. However, only Ivo has returned to the book since then. He commented, "I think it's funny". He has a well-developed sense of humour and he likes having control on the story each time. It is a book for supervised moments and for keeping on a high shelf (to keep the pieces safe) although this does limit its use rather as the children have access to most other books at any time (except pop-ups). It's a fun book for a careful toddler or for a grandparent to keep for a visit!

Kirsten Freiesleben, with Ivo (3)

£7.99, ISBN 0-7445-9276-3, Walker

Butterfingers by Roger Collinson

Kit says, "I think this book is quite funny but it isn't really my sort of book. A lot of the characters are rather stupid and talk in silly ways, but sometimes this can be quite amusing. I like the way that there are two stories that tangle together to create a quite interesting plot. When I was younger I would have found it very humorous." Jem says, "This book is mainly about a boy who is useless at cricket but it would be better if page 22 wasn't so rude. On the back, it says this may be the funniest book of the year but I do not agree as I did not find it that funny. Perhaps, say, age seven might though".

Kü (10) and Gem (9) Freiesleben

£4.99, ISBN 1-8427-0290-4, Andersen

Mystery in Sherwood by Geoffrey Palmer and Noel Lloyd

Six children, Tony, Sam, Peter, Stephen, Pauline and Felicity, think that the summer holidays in Eldwington are going to be boring. When the rain stops, the gang decide to go to Sherwood forest to play with their bows and arrows. When Stephen gets home he realises that the watch his dad gave him for Christmas is lost! Even though his grandma says he can look for it the next day he knows he has to get it back that night. So, in the middle of the night, he sneaks out, goes back into the forest and finds his watch. Just as he is about to leave he hears two men whispering something . . . This is the start of a big adventure for the gang, involving medieval treasure and lots more! The book was great. It was easy to read and I read it in two days.

Lara Fowler

£14.95, ISBN 1-8577-6749-7, Book Guild

365 Simple Science Experiments with Everyday Materials by E Richard Churchill, Louis V Loesching and Muriel Mandell

This is one of the best science books I have read - I have read a lot on this subject and it is my favourite. I really liked it as I could do most of the experiments on my own and from materials and equipment we already have. It has over 300 pages with very clear instructions in an easy-to-read format and I really loved the funny cartoon pictures. It is divided into sections covering different areas of science, e.g. 'leafy lessons' are experiments about plants, and 'water, water everywhere' is experiments to learn all about different sorts of weather. I also enjoy doing the experiments because a lot of them are more like tricks with some pretty amazing results. I am also very pleased because all the ones I have tried (and I have tried lots of them now) really work!

Keith Hall (9)

£8.99, ISBN 0-8069-1789-X, Gaia Distribution

Neena and her Magical Adventures by Ida Pearson

This book is about a young girl, Neena, and her kitten Sooty who have three magical adventures with (among other characters) a fairy, gnome and butterfly. They find a magic garden, take a ride on a magic carpet and discover a magic box in an antique shop. It is a sweet, gentle book that makes an easy read and although I found some parts of it rather repetitive this didn't seem to bother Chloe. The inside flap says that the book is "suitable for children learning to read with the aid of parents or teachers," which perhaps explains the repetition.

I feel that it would be a difficult book for a child to learn to read with. Chloe, as a beginner reader, certainly couldn't manage it. But she enjoyed hearing it read aloud. It has simple illustrations, which Chloe liked. Altogether Chloe was much keener on the book than I was, saying that she found "every single bit of it lovely". I think that this book would appeal to children aged six and under.

Emma Sibley, with Chloe (5)

£6.95, ISBN 1-85776-778-0, Book Guild

Robots by Clive Gifford

Rowan said he has learnt a lot from this book, the main thing being that robots do more than fight in robot wars!!! The book covers all sorts of robots from rescue robots, spy robots, robots in space, explorer robots and the more obscure robot insects - to name but a few. This book was easy to read and had pictures that represented the text well. It basically covers the different types of robots and what they do, making it ideal for the 3-5 age group, as this is about as much depth as this book goes into. Rowan liked the two craft activities at the back of the book and an activity associated with moving like a robot. Rowan did not lose interest in this book when it was read to him. If anything, the book prompted a lot of questions and discussion.

Kathleen Smith and Rowan

£5.99, ISBN 0 7534 0842 2, Kingfisher Young Knowledge

The Bee Man of Orn by Frank R Stockton

This is a book that makes you smile. It is a gentle story with an unexpected twist to the ending. The Bee Man lives in a house totally covered with bees and honey. A junior sorcerer tells him to find what he has been transformed from so that he can be transformed back. He travels through palaces, villages, and an evil mountain, trying to find out what he was. The book is beautifully illustrated and makes you feel you are right in the story. The olden-style pictures and the parchment-like cover make you feel you are part of the period. The book is brilliant. Everyone would enjoy it.

Karis Youngman (9)

£12.99, ISBN 0-7445-9612-2, Walker

Hands-on Science

This is the best science book I have come across. It is well laid out with attractive and clear hand-drawn diagrams and a photograph on most pages. It is good value and well worth buying. It covers 'Forces and Motion', 'Matter and Materials', 'Sound and Light' and 'Electricity and Magnets'. These sections are divided into different topics with a short introduction and usually three well-illustrated experiments. Each experiment is clearly explained with a box showing what you will need and how long it will take to do. Another box entitled 'What's going on?' gives a brief explanation about that experiment. One of the pages we did was 'Balancing', in the 'Forces and Motion' section. The first experiment was to make a perching parrot out of card to show how a low centre of gravity works. The second experiment was to balance a potato and by adding forks discover how the centre of gravity can be lowered. The third experiment was to make a magic box. A box is weighted down with a coin at one end, so that when the box overhangs the edge of a table it does not fall off because the centre of gravity has been moved. This is one of the easier activities. This book is aimed at seven years and upwards. Most of what is needed to do the experiments can be found round the house.

Clare Crane, with Natasha (9) and Anthea (7)
£9.99, ISBN 0-7534-0676-4, Kingfisher

The Big Adventure Back by Christine Perkins

This is a story about six children; James, Olly, Jimmy, Peter, Emma and Liz, who go to sleep one Saturday in the park and wake up in a strange place where they have adventure after incredible adventure. They meet both friendly and unfriendly aliens, are attacked by flowers, help some pupils out at a school who are circus performers, help a prince in a battle, escape from a giant spider and lots of other exciting things. Jack really enjoyed the book. His favourite character was Olly, who has a passion for food and a hobby of keeping disgusting insects! A good children's adventure book.

Carole Yeomans, with Jack (7)
£8.95, ISBN 1-85776-788-8, Book Guild

Ecology Crafts for Kids - 50 Great Ways to Make Friends with Planet Earth by Bobbe Needham

We all are really enjoying this book with its fantastic craft activities; bat boxes, birch bark canoes, light bulb puppets - to name a few. But this book offers far more than that. It is crammed full of information on environmental issues - 'endangered animals', 'paper or plastic?' - promoting lots of discussion. The book is always asking, 'What can we do?', 'What are you doing?', going on to give plenty of ideas and advice, letters to Government, joining local groups etc. Excellent photos and very easy to follow. Items needed for crafts are very easy to find in your garden or local area. The only disappointment - this is an American book, so all addresses and clubs to join are in the US.

Denise Ridgway, with Lewis (9) and Katie (5)
£9.99, ISBN 0-8069-02024-6, Gaia Distributions

Spirit of the Mountain by Shelley Davidow

This is a story about a girl called Emily, who lives in Durban, in South Africa. She has anorexia, which means she won't eat because she thinks that she's fat, even though she's not. She wants to go to stay with her uncle who lives on a farm, but her Mum says he's too much of an "overgrown hippy". She only lets Emily go when the doctor says it would do Emily good, but even then she's reluctant. When Emily gets to the farm she meets a boy called Joey, who is half Zulu, and even though they don't say so they fall in love. Joey looks after the horses on the farm.

One day Anna, the Zulu woman who is a herbalist, finds an abandoned baby on the farm, and Emily is told by the Sangoma (a wise man who lives up the mountain) that she should look after it until the mother claims it back. Looking after the baby makes Emily realise how silly she's being, and eventually she stops being anorexic. Part of the book is written in the form of Emily's diary, and some of it is quite funny. This book was really good and I thoroughly enjoyed it, but it was quite scary when Emily wasn't eating. It made me understand anorexia more, and sure that I never want to be anorexic, because what she goes through is seriously mad, and she gets very ill. I would say it's for ages 11 and up.

Jenny Allwood (11)
£4.99, ISBN 0-8631-5427-1, Floris

Tom's Pirate Ship by Philippe Dupasquier.

Aidan's comments: "It's fantastic! I liked finding all the things. I liked the doll figurehead on the ship".

This is a great 'spot the difference' book, which kept us amused for ages! Tom is inspired to make a pirate ship, and visits each room of the house in turn, collecting things for his creation. Each room is illustrated twice, before he visits it and after, and the reader has to work out what's missing. The house is wonderfully messy, and there are hundreds of items to trawl through. The first time we read it, it took hours to find everything! The end result of Tom's hard work is a marvellous pirate ship made from all kinds of bits and pieces. I really liked the inventive creativity in the book - a very good one for home-educating families! Philippe Dupasquier's illustrations are lovely, so full of life, and I would recommend this book for 3 to 8-year-olds (and the rest of their families!).

Meraylah Allwood and Aidan (3)

£4.99, ISBN 1-8427-0316-1, Andersens

Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi

This is a beautifully illustrated (by Sara Fanelli) sleeved hardback edition of the classic Pinocchio story. The RRP is a little high, but it would make a lovely present. This is a full version of the tale and is very well written. As a result it is quite long, but Holly raced through it in no time at all. She loved it! It would make a great bed-time read - beware that of course there is mild violence and name-calling - but we love this book, and, as with all traditional stories, some of the less savoury parts make for great educational discussions! For the artistic among us, the illustrations are lovely.

K McIntyre Bhatti, with Holly (5)

£4.99, ISBN 0-7444-5863-21, Walker

Sophie-Pitt Turnbull Discovers America by Dyan Sheldon Walker

Sophie-Pitt Turnbull is a fairly ordinary sixteen-year-old girl who lives in England with her parents and her brother Xar. Every year her family goes to France on holiday in the summer. But this year is different . . . Sophie's parents decide they are too busy so they will stay at home in London. Sophie is extremely upset and grumpy until her mother has a phone call from her friend, Jacqueline Salamanca. Jacqueline asks Sophie's mother if she would like to swap daughters for the summer. Soon Sophie is on her way to New York. When she gets there, everything is not quite as she expected. The Salamancas are not a very ordinary family. They have a pig, a cat, an iguana and several other unusual creatures. At first, Sophie is horrified, but eventually she learns to make friends and overcome her original feelings. This book is funny and interesting to read. It isn't a particularly difficult book, so it's good to read when you're not feeling very scholarly. It shows how people can get rid of their prejudices and learn to like other people.

Emma Whitehall (13)

£5.99, ISBN 0-7445-8326-8, Walker

No Shame by Ann Turnbull

This story is about the persecution of the Quakers and the love of William Heywood and Susanna Thorn. Susanna's father is in prison, leaving her and her family penniless. When the bailiffs come and take their most important possessions, Susanna decides to go to the nearby town of Hemsbury to find work. Meanwhile, William, who is not Quaker, finishes his studies in Oxford and comes back to his family in Hemsbury. His father has found a man called Nicholas Barron who wants to take him on as an apprentice for seven years to help him keep his business as a silk merchant. Susanna finds work with a Quaker called Mary Faulkner at her printing works. Mary takes Susanna on as a maidservant and teaches her to write. William goes to the next Quaker meeting - secretly, because he knows his father would disapprove. He sees Susanna and immediately likes her. When she is in the printing shop one day William comes in, pretending he has come to buy dance music for his sister, Anne, but really to see Susanna. He carries on going to the Quaker meetings at the Seven Stars and visiting Susanna in the printing shop. Just when they are getting to know each other well, a new law is passed that no more than five Quakers over sixteen can meet. The Quakers carry on meeting, so the Sheriff imprisons lots of them. Susanna and Will's love grows stronger as more and more Quakers are arrested and they dream of marriage. William's father finds out that he is going to Quaker meetings and is furious. As the laws against Quakers become stricter, more and more people are

arrested. When the meetings involve only the children, Will and Susanna plan to marry secretly. But when Susanna is given the punishment she has always dreaded the most, they decide they cannot marry in secret and Will goes to London to find work. The chapters alternate between William and Susanna. I thought this book was written very well and enjoyed it a lot. I learnt about the early Quakers and couldn't put the book down.

Molly Whitehall (10)

£5.99, ISBN 0-7445-9090-6, Walker

Jump Starters by Linda Nason McElherne

This is described as a boon to fill in those spare 15 minute periods in the classroom and is divided into five topics - 'Knowing Myself', 'Getting to Know Others', 'Succeeding in School', 'Life Skills' and 'Just for Fun'. It is an American book and there are sections such as 'Think about it, Talk about It' and in the 'Affirmation' part at the end of each project children are encouraged to be really positive about themselves and tell themselves how wonderful they are. I'm afraid that sort of thing leaves me a bit weary though perhaps it's just what I need at times! Some of the subjects are not really relevant to our situation as we are not in an 'artificial' environment of a classroom and don't have to deal with problems such as bullying and pressures at school. Nevertheless we had a go at a few of the activities and they were fun to do. Imagine you are a Pony Express Rider and do all the actions and try to make your face show different emotions for the others to guess. These made us laugh. Thinking about what we eat was quite good and the Egyptian Hieroglyph and Chinese alphabets fitted in with a project we are doing. I would recommend it if you are in need of ideas for things to do but personally I feel we can be overwhelmed with things we must do and don't want to feel guilty about wasting precious minutes of the day.

Susan Bain, with Gwenan (9) and Ceri (4)

Words of Discovery

Any EO member can review books for these pages. If you would like to be part of the review team please email or telephone Sally for more information.

Send in your reviews to **Sally Hall, Nant-y-garreg, Saron, Llandysul SA44 5EJ** or email **sally@aecb.net**

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FREE RESOURCES

If you are interested in trees, woodlands and timber products check out the web site www.foresteducation.org. This is an initiative by an organisation called *The Forest Education Initiative* that encourages children to make woodlands their open-air classroom. The web site includes downloadable worksheets and fun activities. The aim is to help young people make the connection between sustainable woods and forests, how products are used and the processes involved. *The Forest Education Initiative* is a partnership between the Forestry Commission, the Forest Industry's Development Council, the Timber Trades Federation and the Woodland Trust.

World Book Day

World Book Day is being celebrated on **4 March 2004**. Its main aim is "to encourage children to explore the pleasures of books and reading by providing them with the opportunity to have a book of their own." This opportunity comes in the form of **£1.00 book tokens**, which can be used to purchase the special WBD £1.00 books that are available at book shops, or towards the purchase of any other book worth at least £1.99.

Education Otherwise has been given **three book tokens per member families** - to be included in this newsletter. Those of you who have less than three children may want to share your tokens with those who have more! We hope everybody enjoys a visit to the book shop!

The World Book Day £1.00 Book Token is redeemable against a book or audiobook worth £1.99 or more in all bookshops participating in the initiative. **The Book Tokens are valid from 1st - 27th March 2004 inclusive.**

The World Book Day Book Token cannot be exchanged for cash or any other merchandise, nor used for school purchases or the settlement of school accounts.

Only one Book Token can be used per transaction.

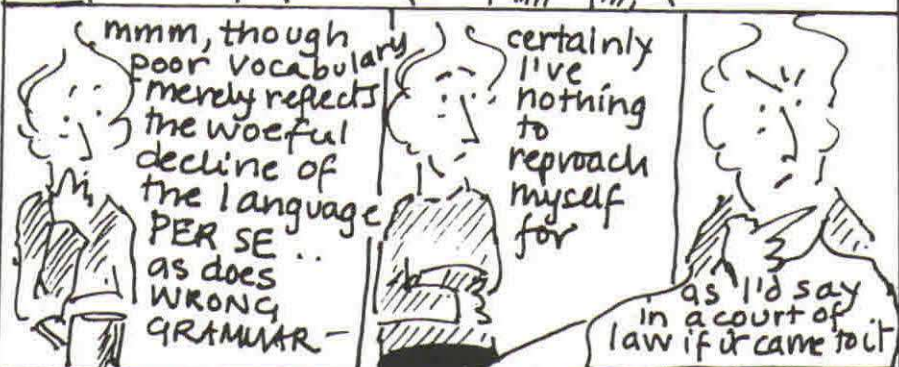
The offer only applies to titles in stock.

The Book Token cannot be photocopied.

Visit www.worldbookday.com for more information

Julie Ridley

Educating Archie - a totally new year!



ALYD

Regional Diary

All regular meetings listed below are included automatically in every issue, but if you have a local NL, please reduce your details to minimum.

Events organisers please remember when giving full details of events that the newsletter can be read by people who are not members of EO.

New members attending their first meeting should phone to check it is happening as shown.

Thank you to contact people who are keeping an eye on their local entries and letting me know if changes are needed.

Please do check every issue, it really helps.

- CHANGES BY LETTER OR EMAIL PLEASE -
to: Anne Rix, (see inside front cover for address)
or by phone to Jo, 01392 438876

BATH

H.E.L.P. group meets regularly for outings and activities. Contact: Louise Jensen 01225 840735

BEDFORDSHIRE

For full details of events programme in Bedford and other areas of the County contact June McDonald on 01234 341375 or

email info@Bedford-Home-Ed.org.uk

Roman theme for spring term. Lots of craft, drawing and art workshops, plus Roman Day, Verulamium, visit to Bath and other outings for Roman activities and events. Regular swimming, ice-skating, multi-sport, Open Houses and chat sessions in Bedford and other areas.

Website: www.Bedford-Home-Ed.org.uk

BERKSHIRE

E-mailing list for home educators in Berkshire and surrounding areas for events/activities

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BerkshireHomeEducators>
For Local NL/What's on Contact: Dawn 01628 783107
thirdEye1@compuserve.com Or New Web Site for Berkshire www.homeeducators.co.uk

Maidenhead Heros Club Holyport, Mondays 10-3 sports, dancing, pottery crafts and cooking. £29 month or £10 family/day. Dawn 01628 783107

Reading: Mondays, 10am - 12noon swimming at Central Pool, lots of teenagers Contact: Lynn 0118 972 1420 Thursdays, 5.30-7pm. Activities for teens incl. video

production, mixing decks, web design etc., Email becky.h@ntworld.com for more information

Fridays Caversham 12 - 5pm social, all ages, sep. rm 4 teens in hall with park outside and woods. £2/ family

Monthly, 2nd Tuesday, 11am - 6pm near Pangbourne chat and play, Adventure playground, animals. £3/family Also activities 4 teens. Contact Lynda 0118 961 4466 or Gail 01628 483895 or email hitchmans@ntworld.com

Bracknell Weds termtime, ice-skating at John Nike Leisure Centre, 2-4pm, £1.50 show EO card at reception. Contact: Angela 0118 9661331 (weekends only) or Edwina, email: wgodfrey@netcomuk.co.uk

Burghfield Common Thurs termtime Swimming at Willink Leisure Centre 1.30-3pm. Contact Angela (see Bracknell)

Windsor Leisure Centre, Fns termtime, organised sports session 5 yrs up, 11am-noon. Contact Muel 01628 664939

Windsor Leisure Centre, Fns termtime, family swim 12.30. contact Angela or Edwina (see Bracknell)

Newbury Group Contact Heidi 0118 9710176
Lambour. Weekly meeting on a farm for crafts, cooking and nature walks. group based on respect for each other and our world and an unhurried childhood. Contact: Tracey or Roge 01793 610448. roge.tracey@virgin.net

BRISTOL

Thursdays meeting at St Paul's Adventure Playground 1-3pm; Spanish, Science and Pottery happening on a

regular basis Contact: Carla 0117 9354389

Email list for Bristol and surrounding areas at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BristolHomeEducation>
Also local group website for more information about home education in Bristol: www.bristolhomeeducation.org.uk

BUCKS

Newsletter for Bucks/Northants Contact: Georgeanne on 01908 662256.

South Bucks: fortnightly meetings for craft, activities, play, speakers, drama, trips etc.

Contact: Jackie 01753 886924 or Dorothy 01494 782864

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Cambridge regular meetings and outings.

Contact: Penny 01223 526441

penny.k@ntworld.com

Monthly at Alconbury, activities run by Christian group. All welcome

Contact: Audrey Hill 01480 219881

Peterborough: weekly meetings on Wednesdays for art, craft, science, swimming, sports, play and visits. Contact: Sarah 01733 265043 SJLambert@aol.com

Cambridge/Norfolk border: fortnightly at Guyhim.

Contact: Pat 01354 656582 or Ruth 01945 480232

North Cambridgeshire Contact Jane 01354 677869.

CHESHIRE

Contact Sue 01270 883978

South Cheshire Meeting 1st Wednesday of the month for crafts games and activities. Contact: Sue: 01270 883 978 SueElaineDavies@aol.com

CLEVELAND AND DURHAM (see also DURHAM)

Contact: Pauline Butterworth 01642 570786

CORNWALL

Free events sheets every two months via Email or SAEs. Contact: Anna Wheeler, Cambrose Farm, Redruth, TR16 4HT 01209 890378

Email: Annawheeler@cambrose.fsnet.co.uk

Local information on our local home ed website:

Homeedinkernow.tripod.com

CUMBRIA

Informal gatherings for socialising, support and activities.

Cumbria Otherwise Newsletter, for full details of events throughout the county contact Martin 01539 732918 or email cumbria.otherwise@dsl.pipex.com

Kendal alternate Mondays Endmoor Village Hall

1-4pm, Contact Jo Collier 01539 567005.

Penrith alternate Tuesdays Castledown Community Centre 1.30-3.30 Contact: Sarah Cook 01768 896019

DERBYSHIRE

Chesterfield group meets every Wed. morning.

Contact: Kaz 01246 205463 or Yvonne 01246 555645

South Derby/N.W. Leics/E. Staffs :

regular meetings, socialising and days out.

Contact: Julie 01283 760800

DEVON

Devon Newsletter, full details of events throughout the County: E-mail copies free; £3.00 for 6 months by post. Contact Kate and Elsie 01392 851370

or email katefernhill@aol.com

NATIONAL TRUST (Devon) - Card held by Moira Kneale on 01395 279026 gives free membership/entry to NT sites to all Devon EO members for pre-booked 'educational' visits.

East and Mid Devon:

Local Contact Becca 01404 549479

Lots of varied activities – see Devon newsletter (above) for full details.

North Devon

Local Contact: Amanda 01237 422403

Bideford area Fortnightly social meetings on Tuesdays. Ring Louise 01237 441786

South Devon

Local Contact Bridget 01803 862158

Loads of activities for all ages – full details in Devon newsletter (see above)

DEVON EAST/DORSET WEST

Lyme Regis, Axminster, Bridport, Chard

Contact Habiba 0845 4582984 (local rate)

Regular meetings on Thursdays, Contact:

Ali 01297 443816 or Karen 01460 30461

DORSET

Regular meetings, keep in touch. Contact Christine 01258 880355 or Rosemary 01747 853593

Bournemouth area: local website www.he-ed.org.uk

Meeting every Monday for crafts, games, play etc.

Friendly, welcoming group. Contact: June 01202 827945 bugchick@btinternet.com

DURHAM

Durham based group, monthly newsletter £5 p.a.

We also have a yahoo chat group at

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/durhamhome_ed.

We meet weekly and have other less regular activities scheduled. Contact Schuyler Waynforth 01740 622499 or s.waynforth@btopenworld.com or Beth Cumie 0191 3735109.

ESSEX

Full details in Essex Epicycle newsletter, available from Corinne 07802 630693 epicycle@wavy.org

All over Essex trips (usually Thursdays) and workshops

Braintree Cheeky Chimps indoor play area

1st Thursday of the month (ex school hols) 2pm

Chelmsford Ice skating, Riverside Fris 3.30-5pm

Meetings social and activities Third Thurs of the month 1-4 pm

Colchester Meetings, social and activities, alt Weds, 11am to 3pm

Tiptree Meetings, social and activities Fortnightly Tues. 2-5pm

East London/Essex group Fortnightly meetings Contact Gill on 020 8597 8537

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Monthly social meetings open to all.

Regular workshops and outings. Website:

<http://members.lycos.co.uk/GlosHomeEducators/index.html>

Email list for events and forum for discussions, information and virtual activities. Contact Rob and Fiona 01684 290087 openhorizons@ntlworld.com Caroline 01242 890351 camrose@ieee.org Beverley 01242 524091 or Mhairi 01452 384104.

Gloucester meetings & swimming. Contact Dawn 01452 540019 dawnandmike@blueyonder.co.uk or Tracy 07941 612092

HAMPSHIRE

Portsmouth EO. Warm and friendly group meet Thursdays for art, craft, music, chat and outings.

Contact: Kirsten on 02392 428 952, or email kasturi@pkinteractive.co.uk

ACTIVE0 meet 3 times a week within 20 miles of **Petersfield**. All welcome. Contact: 01428 712394

FAREGOS HE Group meet weekly at Holbrook,

Gosport, for swimming or skating, weekly in **Fareham** for crafts and other activities. Other

outings on an ad hoc basis. Friendly, welcoming group. Contact Gayle 01329 823112 or Ros 01329

516482 or Email for more details gayle@timica.com

North Hampshire: Friendly group for children aged 0-13 meets Wednesday afternoons. Regular

themed meetings in Scott Centre, Andover; Ice skating in Basingstoke plus other educational visits

and fun activities in Hants and Wilts borders.

Contact Carol 01264 357650 email eo@azakit.com

Farnham/Aldershot Friendly group for under 10s, weekly meetings/outings/activities. Contact: Paula

01252 721348 or emmajevons@supanet.com

HERTFORDSHIRE

TOP Health and Education Together. Numeracy,

literacy and parenting health sessions. Literacy home study program 3-10 years at **London Colney**,

Casual Swimming Friday morning, term time only at North Herts Leisure Centre, **Letchworth**. Meet in

the pool 9.00am - 9.15am cost 60p per person on production of EO/HEAS card. Contact: Priscilla

01438 840674 olsandpjs@aol.com

Sandridge village hall, Sandridge, St Albans 2nd and 4th Thursdays, term time. 1-3pm Contact:

Carolyn 01727 851073

ISLE OF WIGHT

Contact Shara 01983 562313

Isle of Wight Learning Zone workshops, social events and newsletter, contact Sue 01983 241095 for details.

I.W.E.O. group: craft sessions, visits, swimming, theatre, picnics, barbecues, mutual support,

especially older EO kids but new members and visitors always welcomed.

Contact Jude 01983 531680

KENT

Wealden Home Ed website:

www.when.omnia.co.uk and email group:

wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.groups.com

For events listings send SAE : Amanda Mackenzie, 16 Brambletree Cott, Borstal, Rochester ME1 3TN

Canterbury Regular meetings and activities

Contact: Irene 01227 709570

East Kent including Dover, Canterbury and all surrounding areas. Contact Heather on 01227

370822 or email slimeheva@eurobell.co.uk for an up-to-date activities list.

Medway towns Contact: Bridget 01634 234938

Tunbridge Wells group meet every Monday from 10-4 for Tae Kwan Do, art and crafts, and many

other activities. Contact Kim 01892 863941 or Lesley 07900 503247
French for beginners through songs and games.
Yoga for children. Contact: Katherine 01892 863958
Bromley Contact: Claire 0181 460 7347
Claire@wadefamily99.freemove.co.uk
SE Kent Ravensbourne Community Centre,
Ravensbourne Est. Brangbourne Rd, Bromley.
Every Tuesday 10-12 for support and outings.
Contact: Lorraine 0208 461 0885
(9-10am only please)

LANCASHIRE

Fortnightly play sessions at Botany Bay: contact
Jacqueline 01204 361072 or Angela 01204 659634
Fortnightly badminton lesson followed by swim:
contact Angela 01204 659634 or Jacqui 461418
Old Cobblers Wed 10th Dec. contact Pam 01706
215585 davidandpam@ntlworld.com
Hoping to organise trip to Fudge Factory, Bacup,
early Dec, if interested contact Pam (above) a.s.a.p.
Martinmere Wetlands - Friday 16th, plus
Shakespeare4kidz at the Lowry, 11th March contact
Pam to book

Events on Fylde coast: Please contact Tracey on
01253 858840

Ice skating group on 2nd Wed every month at
Blackburn Arena. Cost £4.15 + £1 skate hire. 2pm -
4.30pm. Tel: Jackie 01695 424220 for information.

LEICESTERSHIRE

Frequent meetings for play, craft, walks, hanging
out, singing, swimming, science, skating and much
more. Contact: Lise 0116 242 5802

LINCOLNSHIRE

For a newsletter of activities and local events
contact: Donna 01472 752507
Christine 01507 338070, Kathleen 01522 869239
ashnkath@shhh.fsnet.co.uk

LONDON

Clissold Park. Tuesdays. All welcome.
Contact: Charlotte 0207 254 0419
SE London Wednesdays Honor Oak playground.
Contact: Steve 8680 2933
Lewisham Thursdays 11-1

Contact: Clare 8480 0740
rollerblading Kidbroke Contact: Fiona 020 8852
9756 bettleslake@clara.net

Sydenham Fridays fortnightly at 11.30-2.30
Contact: Chrystia and Keith 8776 8597

Forest Hill Nature Reserve Fridays alternate
fortnight 11.30 Contact: Dave 8692 4080

Plumstead Common Adventure Playground SE18
alternate Fridays, meeting at 12.30 pm.

Contact: Bev 0208 312 2160, Kim 0208 317 7262
NW London Otherwise Club Contact: Leslie 0208
969 0893 **Harrow** meetings fortnightly on Fridays

Stanmore events on Tues and Wednesdays.
Programme available from Vivienne, email

timsharkey@aol.com or tel. 0208 954 1885
or Vicki on Aceva@btinternet.com

N London Hornsey Home Educators Club

(currently under 10s, meet for arts, crafts, drama,
games etc) Thursdays 11.00-12.30
contact: Tina 0208 340 4212

W. London/Middlesex HE group every Tuesday
for social and educational activities and visits.

Contact: Betsy 020 8747 3911,
betsylanderson@aol.com

West London EO group meeting 1st and 3rd Tues
each month, at Chiswick Park, W4. Meet outside
the cafe, from 11am. Alternative venue if wet.
For full details contact Naomi 0208 5677 589 or
naomisandler@hotmail.com

MANCHESTER

Monthly formal art lessons at Stockport Art Gallery
£1.50. Also Monthly meeting at Stockport library
E-mail young writers group Ed Wilson
wilson-net@lineone.net

MADCOW newsheet, send SAEs: Gill Wilson,
20 Brook Rd, Heaton Chapel, Stockport SK4 5BZ
Computing Skills 1st and 2nd Saturdays at Moores
family home, limited places
Contact: Karen 01204 573136

NORFOLK

NEON gives details of all events £1.50 plus 4 large
SAEs. Contact: Steve Williams, North Cottage,
Crostwick, Norwich NR12 7BD

Workshops/social meetings 1st and 3rd Thursday
Contact: Sue 01603 738494

NORFOLK/SUFFOLK BORDER

Term-time, every Thursday 2.30 - 4.30
Swimming, indoor sports/play at Breckland Leisure
Centre, **Thetford**. Contact Fay 01953 681785

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

For email updates of activities and outings send
your email address to northantshomeed@aol.com
Regular meeting from 1pm to 4pm on the 2nd and
4th Wed of every month at North Park Pavilion in
North Park Drive off Bath Road in Kettering.
Everyone welcome, just come along, suitable for all
ages. For details phone Jane 01536 418885.
Want to get together with other local home ed
teens? Please contact Lynne Stewart 01604
454240 andrew.stewart77@ntl.com

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Weekly meetings. For full list, Contact: Wendy 0115
9114312 or Louise 01773 780634

OXFORDSHIRE

Classes in creative writing Monthly Newsletter.
Fortnightly Workshop group.

Local Contact: Wendy 01865-514973

SCOTLAND

Fife: Friday fortnightly meetings, activities and
social get-togethers. All welcome. Contact: Nicola
01334 478530 nicola.stubbs@btinternet.com

Irvine: For details of regular and one-off activities
please contact: Rhona 01294 273644
or Shirley 01563 540063 or Vivien 01563 537428

Highlands meetings Fortnightly meetings in
Inverness, plus occasional outings. All ages
welcome. Contact: Rebecca 01667 462772 or
Alison 01463 232571 alison@sauer.demon.co.uk

Lothian, Central and Southeast Scotland:
fortnightly group for meetings and outings. Ann 0131
556 6271 or <ann.samuelkell@blueyonder.co.uk>
or Jane 01835 863 118.

SHROPSHIRE

Activities and outings Contact: Val 01952 502225

South Shrops. regular meetings every Tuesday,
outings and workshops: Carolyn 01588 680503

SOMERSET

Frome and beyond (FAB) home educators support
group. Social gatherings, outings and newsletter.
Contact: Sally 01749 841554, Helen 01373 465260

Wiveliscombe/Taunton area - regular get-
togethers and outings: Maggie 01984 624651.

Wells and Glastonbury Area Regular social
meetings, weekly swimming, outings and nature
activities. Contact Lesley 01749 689241, Tanya
01458 834871 or Steph 01749 812959

SOMERSET NORTH - Regular get-togethers and
activities Contact Vicky 01275 848425 or Sarah
01275 842300 or e-mail hegns@btopenworld.com

STAFFORDSHIRE/SOUTH CHESHIRE/NORTH SALOP

Stafford every 2nd and 4th Wednesday in village
hall for games craft etc. 12-3.30 Contact Jane
01283 820642 jane@jackslane62.freeseve.co.uk
or Theresa 01889 563052

Alsager: 1st Wednesday of the month at YPCC
for craft, music, games, chat. Contact: Caroline
01270 875 633 or Sue 01270 883978

Suedavies@tesco.net

STAFFORDSHIRE NORTH meetings on 3rd
Tuesday each month, 12.30 to 3.00. Our aims are
to support each other and collectively provide a
variety of social opportunities for our children.
Contact Julie 01782 316434 or Helen 01782659112.

SUFFOLK

Felixstowe, group meeting fortnightly in town centre
location for socialising, outings, sports etc.

Karen 01394 279117 kjc88@whsmithnet.co.uk

Foxburrow Farm, Woodbridge Once a month,
activities organised by Suffolk Wildlife Trust

Wetherden meetings every 3rd Friday 10.30-2.30

£2.50 for family, shared lunch: Sarah 01379 783678

East Suffolk (Lowestoft/Gt. Yarmouth area)

Contact: Lin 01502 741097 or Jackie 01502 566266

SURREY

Banstead base but everyone is welcome. Weekly
meetings/activities. Contact Sue 01737 556683 or
Lindsay 01306 501229

near **Cobham** just off A3 - Learning Group for parents &
children 0-7, in 26 acres of private wood-land, based on
HighScope approach to independent learning and
problem solving. For more details contact Rachael

rachael.underwood@classicfm.net

or phone 01932 706191

Guildford area: Theatre bookings: Tisha 01483

898575. Skating during term time Friday 1-4: Jane

01420 88188. Under 10s: Nicky 01483 232080

Dorking/Reigate area.

Contact: Helen Burnett 01737 243606

Farnham/Aldershot Friendly group for under 10s,
weekly meetings/ outings/activities. Contact: Paula

01252 721348 or emmaeavons@supanet.com

North Surrey Home Ed group meets up in **Croydon**
once a month, Age range from 2-15, small group,

looking to grow. For more details, contact

Karen: karen_wilkins@hotmail.com

or Viv: viv@madtoyman.fsnet.co.uk

SUSSEX

Wealden Home Ed website:

www.when.omnia.co.uk also email group:

wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.groups.com

Local Contact: Isobel 01403 261178 (W.Sx)

Winnie Durdant-Hollamby 01342 826087 (E.Sx)

Many events and activities throughout the County.

Monthly newsletter gives full details: £8pa or £4 six

months, For NL contact Tula 01323 648127, email

asanababy@aol.com

Or ring one of the following local events organisers:

Lewes: Sylvia on 01273 474375, Hope 01273

401594 or Jan 01273 514528

Lindfield EO Friday club: Liz 01444 414058

Hastings HEDGE Group: Rachel 01424 422178,

Emily 01424 719570 or Ali 01424 814175

Brighton: Kathy 01273 685674, Lucy 01273 204764

or Jim 0779188343

Eastbourne Home-Ed Club: Tula 01323 648127

email asanababy@aol.com

Worthing/Shoreham Beach: Sam 01903 233799

Forest Row Area: Winnie 01342 826087

TYNESIDE

Monthly art sessions at the Laing Art Gallery - for

children over 6. Contact: Lilian 0191 2809150

lavendereco@aol.com

Regular outings, visits, etc. Contact: Becky 0191

478 5322 beckyfeeney@hotmail.com

WALES

South Wales

Cardiff area FREE email newsletter/contact list from
bev1.french@btinternet.com or Beverley 02920

797628. Monthly museum visit, organised by
museum.

Swansea Group For information on local activities

and events, contact Juliet 01639 760987; Frankie,

fran.kie@ntlworld.com or Geraldine, 01792 405894

or email: julafan1@ntlworld.com

Pembrokeshire EO swim & sauna: Haverfordwest

pool, Dew St. 3pm at main reception, fortnightly. Call

to check dates. Contact: Yvette 0845 458 9251

Cardigan area social meetings and outings on

Mondays - Contact: Yvette 0845 458 9251

Gwynedd Mondays swimming at Bangor

Contact: Louisa 01248 361254

Friday swimming at Porth Madog Weekly meetings

at Tremadog Thursdays. Contact Jo 01766 512330

Powys Weekly swimming/Tumble Towers in

Welshpool on Fridays. Contact: Julia Phillips 01691

648152 gwastad@lycos.co.uk

NE Wales/Borders weekly gym/trampoline in

Wrexham (Thurs) various meetings in Oswestry,

W. Cheshire/NE Wales. Also sports and ice skating at Deeside Leisure Centre.
Contact: Genny 01978 757489 49 Westminster rd, Moss Valley, Wrexham LL11 6DH - £2 for a year's listing. eo@7times7.freeseve.co.uk

WARWICKSHIRE

Usually 2 Thursdays a month; at Wolston nr Coventry and for an outing in Coventry/Warwick's area. Contact: Helen Hall 01926 771958

WEST MIDLANDS

Meetings, trips out, activities etc are held throughout each month at a variety of locations all over the West Midlands. The newsletter HELM lists many of them. HELM is available free by email or by post for a small charge and covers HE related articles and events throughout the West Midlands and surrounding areas. Contact: Joy Beasley 0121 585 6450 JoyBeasley@b-bunch.freeseve.co.uk

WILTSHIRE

Salisbury Friendly innovative group meets every Tuesday pm, (except last of calendar month) Lower Street Hall, off Netherhampton Rd., 2-5pm. £3.00 per session. Regular outings + visiting guest speakers: Contact: Miranda (01722) 320167
Swindon: Informal get-togethers twice per month; badminton weekly Contact: Shena on 01793 334673 or join email list at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NWlits_HE/ Last Thursday of the Month The Scout Hut, Southbroom Rd **Devizes**, 11.30-14.30, games, activities, support and socialising.

Outings most Thursdays Contact: Janet 01249 818672 email: janet.eldekvist@btopenworld.com
Jemima: 01380 727470 Helen: 01249 822958
www.geocities.com/wiltshirehomeed/index.htm

WORCESTERSHIRE

Local Contact - Rachel 01527 597809
Meetings, events, trips out etc happening all through the month throughout the county.
Meetings - Karen Raybould 01527 835384
Meetings - North Worcs/Kidderminster - Gail Tutchter 101562 822034 gail@tqmi.co.uk

YORKSHIRE EAST

Regular meetings and visits.
Contact: Alison 01405 769902

YORKSHIRE NORTH

Regular meetings and outings. Contact Karen 01904 400317 kkaensandy@aol.com
New group in Kirby Misperton (near Flamingo Land) first Monday of every month. Current age range 1-9 but keen to have teen group. Tess 01947 895007

YORKSHIRE SOUTH

Regular meetings for arts/crafts, visits, swims, hanging out and more. Contact: Jo 01709 820866 Denise 01226 733478 Gary 0114 2585702.

Tuesdays 12-3 term time at Highfield Adventure Playground. Free entry, small contribution for craft materials. Off London rd/Abbeyle rd. Contact: Annette 0114 2583502 or Fiona 0114 22751142

YORKSHIRE WEST

Bradford: Ice Skating Fridays (except 2nd Fri) from 11:00. Ice Arena, Cost £1.50/skater, skates included. Contact Judith (0113 226 5515).

Swimming in term time on Tuesdays.

Halifax: Gymnasium, Heath Training Centre, Free School Lane, every Monday except bank hols. 12 noon - 3pm. Meeting: Free-range activities + exchange of friendship and support for home educating children and parents.. Contact: Gill Kilner 01422 311876, email: GillKilner@aol.com

Huddersfield. Last Thursday of month, 11-1:30 at Civic Centre. Lunch & chat.

Huddersfield Sports Centre. Swimming, Weds, term time 12-1:30. Contact Tracy 01484 317176.

Leeds Monthly Meetings. 2nd Friday of the month (10:30AM-4PM) at West Park Centre, Spen Lane, (Classroom 9). Contact: Susan (0113) 226 3595.
Wednesday Science Club. Early Club (10:30-1:30).

Afternoon Club (1:30-3:30) at West Park Centre (see above). Contact: Judith (0113) 226 5515.

Group Outings. Contact Judith.

Gymnastics (12-1) Weds in term time. Carnegie Gym, Leeds. Coach-directed. Contact Sarah (01484 361 206) or Elizabeth (0113) 262 7786.

LOCAL CONTACT UPDATE

New acting local contacts

Cheshire Jo Lewis
Coventry City Nicola Haxell
(02476 471807)
Wiltshire Janet Eldekvist

Resigning local contacts

Berkshire Pat Connor
Cheshire Sue Davies

Areas needing a local contact

Berkshire
Carmarthenshire
Durham
Fife
Glamorganshire
Gloucestershire
Herefordshire
Hertfordshire

Humberside
Isle of Man
Manchester North
Strathclyde
Tayside
Tyne and Wear
West Midlands

If you want to volunteer

or are interested to know more about the job of being a Local Contact, please contact the Local Contact Co-ordinator (*see inside back cover*)

Education Otherwise Advert

SALE - EO VIDEOS only £4.50

Special reduced price of £4.50 for our videos.

Perhaps you could buy one and pass it on to a Teacher Training College or a library or anywhere that it might be looked at.

Please help us promote the right to home education.

If you can afford it please could you add £1 post & packing, but if money is short and you are going to pass this video on, this is waived.

Cheques payable to "Education Otherwise" to Diane Green, 18 Colne Cres, Warehouse Hill, Marsden, Huddersfield HD7 6AD

Resource listing

available based on National Curriculum materials available to parents.

Covering all primary levels, and some of secondary.

Most useful to parents looking for a structured or NC approach.

Available free from

henrietta.turnbull@btinternet.com
(rtf or wpd or doc file);

or please send a stamped addressed envelope plus £1 for printing costs to
H. Turnbull, Hadlow House, 2 Hadlow Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4AF

EO T-shirts:

Good quality cotton printed with logo in choice of two designs:

1. white shirt with E.O. logo
(red triangle kicked open by running children)

2. navy shirt with white slogan:

"home education - a real option"

£5 adult (M, L, XL)

£3.50 child (3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/11, 12/13)

Add p&p up to 6 shirts £2, 7+ £4

Cheques payable to E.O.Trading Ltd.

Pat Connor, 2 Whitegates Lane, Reading, Berks., RG6 1ED

EO Car Stickers

Help spread the word.

Please send a reasonably large SAE to:

Ali Willer, 28 Cozens Hardy Rd,
Sprowston, Norwich NR7 8QF

EO Hoodies and Mugs

Hooded sweatshirts

with the triangle logo and the letters SINC now available in navy blue and black children's and adult sizes

(£15 for children's and £20 for adults' including postage and packaging).

EO 25th anniversary mugs

available in white and red with a picture of Archie

(£5 including postage and packaging).

If you are interested in the above please

contact Jill.Fisher@care4free.net

or ring at 0116 212 8120 for further details

EO Seasonal Greetings Cards

Greetings cards are now available. They are blank inside for your own message, and have the message 'School is optional' on the back.

all profits from these cards go to Education otherwise, charity no. 1055120.

They come in packs of 10 with envelopes, and cost £3.99 per pack (inc. p&p), send cheques payable to 'Education Otherwise', to Garry Humphreys, Fairacre, Skidbrooke Rd., South Somercotes, Louth. LN11 7DD.

Please state which design you would prefer:

'Robins and Penguins'

or 'snow walk'

Now also available to view (if you missed seeing the designs in the February and April newsletters

(Children's Pages) and purchase via

EO's website: [http://www.education-](http://www.education-otherwise.org/GreetingCard.htm)

[otherwise.org/GreetingCard.htm](http://www.education-otherwise.org/GreetingCard.htm)

Advertisements

To place: Adverts should normally be limited to 1/8 page or 50 words and sent to the NL Advertising Co-ord. (see inside front cover). But please send cheque payable to 'Education Otherwise' to Treasurer (see inside back cover).

Advertising Rates: Non-members – (subject to space and interest to members) £35 per issue (50 words)
Members (please give full contact details) - small items/notices, free; commercial enterprises, £25 per issue
NB: DEADLINE FOR ADVERT COPY AND PAYMENT – 1ST OF MONTH PRIOR TO ISSUE.

MULTIPLICATION TABLES

An easy way to learn the two times table, three times table & so on, up to and including the twelve times table!

LEARN THEM OVERNIGHT WHILST SLEEPING!
This is a method which really does work!

Sleep-Learning CDs, each covering all of these tables, are available, with full instructions, from Bob Neill at 41, St. Luke's Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME24 5AS. (Tel. 01622-753600), only £10.00 each, including p.p. Cheques payable to Bob Neill.

Online Maths Tuition

- Based on the National Curriculum
- **Free Trial**
- For ages 7 - 14
- **Low Cost**
- Personalised to student's learning ability

www.meleto.com

HOME STUDY ART COURSES

LONDON ART COLLEGE has devised a series of courses to help your child develop their artistic talents. The courses are suitable for children between 7 to 13 years.

For further information please contact us on 0800 328 0465 or Tutor's Centre (Hed), London Art College, Freepost, Bristol, BS8 3FA or see our website www.londonartcollege.co.uk

HOLIDAY HOME IN TINTAGEL

A gorgeous little cottage set in the medieval village of Tintagel. 10 min. drive from the sandy surfing beach of Trebarwith 5 min. walk from the famous Merlin's Cave beneath the English Heritage site of Tintagel Castle. A wealth of outdoor activities locally and only a short drive away the fascinating Eden Project.

For further info. contact Jeri Barry

Tel 0208 2305758

5% discount to EO members

Sarah Ablitt 01536 510379

sarahablitt@dyslexia-lessons.com

DYSLEXIA TUTOR offers personal tuition by post, e-mail or fax.

- Suitable for age 3 to adult. Lessons are specially written for each person.
- Close monitoring of progress with individual feedback.
- Overcome even severe barriers to reading, writing, spelling and numeracy with fun, phonetic, multi-sensory methods.

Sarah Ablitt BA(Hons), PG DipSpLD/Dyslexia
01536 510379. www.dyslexia-lessons.com

Business to pass over

Ecological-educational products for children, with emphasis on non-competitive games, crafts and books. Visit our shopping website:

www.gaiadistribution.com.

Conditions are negotiable.

Interested contact us at mail@gaiadistribution.com

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) North West London Branch

- Meets 3rd Saturday of each month 2-4.30pm, St Mary's Junior School, Canterbury Road London NW6
- Aims to provide stimulating and enriching activities in a friendly supportive atmosphere.
- Welcomes children 3-13 and their families.
- **Event on 28th Feb- 1st timers free today!** Tapestry, Drama and a visit from Hydestile Wildlife Hospital

Juno is a new quarterly parenting magazine with a natural approach. Contains interviews, reviews, personal stories and children's pages.

Issue 1 features Michel Odent on birth, Sally Jenkinson on imaginative play and Lu Garner on celebrating the Winter Solstice

Issue 2 (out March 2004) features Aware Parenting, Gardening with Children and Spring cleaning...

Please send 12 1st class stamps for a sample issue or £11 for a year's subscription.

Juno Magazine, The Quarry House, Woodhill Lane, Ashurst Wood, West Sussex RH19 3RF.

www.junomagazine.com

Services and products advertised on this page have not been endorsed by Education Otherwise. EO does not make recommendations about any tutors or youth leaders, whether members of the association or not. Use of people in any such role, whether paid or unpaid, remains the responsibility of the parent.

Back Page Part Two

New volunteers for any of the groups most welcome - with expertise or just an interest.
For more information contact any of the council members listed (in bold)

Get involved and join a small group:

Finance: Garry Humphreys, Lynda Hitchman, Ann Samuel Till, Ali Willer, Helen Donaldson

Enquiries: Pam Bellinger, Geraldine Adams, Iris Harrison, Jo Borthen, Edwina Theunissen

Publications: Gary Podmore, Lucy Charlton, Ali Willer

Business Practice Group: Priscilla Park-Weir, Pam Bellinger, Martine Frampton

DfES Team: Anne Wade, Ann Samuel Till, Anne Rix

LEA/EA Group: Anne Wade, Gary Podmore, Ann Samuel Till, Keith Charlton, Lize Stevens

Communications: Priscilla Park-Weir, Anne Rix

Scotland Group: Ann Samuel Till, Lucie MacAulay, Anne Wade, Jill Fisher, Jane Bathgate

Information for other organisations: Priscilla Park-Weir, Anne Rix

Grievances and Complaints

Martine Frampton 3 Redesdale Mews, Hospital Road, Moreton in Marsh, Glos. GL56 0BQ 01608 812411
martine-frampton@macunlimited.net

Celia McDonagh, 169 Habershon Street, Splott, Cardiff, CF24 2LA 07763 729055

Anne Rix Hembury Orchard, Frithelstock, Torrington, EX38 8JT 01237 451535 anne@annerix.demon.co.uk
Lynda Hitchman, 31 Audley St., Reading, Berks, RG30 1BP 0118 961 4466 hitchmans@ntlworld.com

Media Contacts

Please contact one of the following people if you would like to volunteer to be interviewed, or are contacted by the media and would like help/advice/support on giving an interview;

Media co-ordinator: Belinda Harris-Reid (see S. West)

Scotland: Alison Sauer, Inverness.

Tel: 01463 232571

Fax: 01463 220 825

Mob: 07956 193 983

alison@sauer.demon.co.uk

Northern Ireland (VACANT) Volunteers please!

North West: (VACANT) Volunteers needed please!

North East: Eva O'Rourke, Wilsden 01535 274520
evaandmary@aol.com

Midlands: Helen Donaldson, Colwich, Staffs
01889 882043 serf@unappreciated.co.uk

Wales: Celia McDonagh, Cardiff 07763 729055
celiamcdonagh@yahoo.co.uk

East Anglia: Ali Willer, Sprowston, Norwich
01603 401020 simon.whitehall@tesco.net
mailto:webmaster@education-otherwise.org

South West: Belinda Harris-Reid, Buckfastleigh, Devon
01364 643343 bharrisreid@baselinedata.co.uk

South East: (VACANT) Volunteers needed please!

London(1): Linda Irene'schild, Stockwell, London SW9
020 7787 6692 lindaflora2002@hotmail.com

London(2): (Acting) Kathleen McLaren, Walthamstow.
0208 527 3296 krmclaren1@tiscali.co.uk

EO Email Lists

The EO Business list discusses the organisation and policies of Education Otherwise. Open only to EO members (memberships will be regularly checked to ensure that the list members are still members of EO) and only for the discussion of EO business. (General HE discussion can take place on the EO general list, which can be accessed via www.education-otherwise.org)

To join the business list, go to -
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/eobusiness>

Or send a blank email to:

eobusiness-subscribe@yahoogroups.co.uk

You will receive an automatic response from Yahoo asking for your full name and address. When you have responded and your membership has been checked as valid, you can be added to the list.

EO Home Education Cards

Extra cards are available from:

EO HE Cards,

5 Ridge Way, Aldridge, Walsall WS9 0HL.
Please send a stamped addressed envelope

plus 1 x loose 2nd class stamp
for each card required.

EO/NEC vouchers

- £30 discount per course -

A5 SAE to Sarah Cook, The Old Cottage,
Croglin, Carlisle, CA4 8RZ

(quote EO membership number)

or email: sarah@croggies.freeseve.co.uk

Who does What in EO

Council Members

- Geraldine Adams** (N. London) 0207 2634922
Jane Bathgate (Borders) 01835 862118
Pam Bellinger (Leics) 0116 282 7929
(Company Secretary)
Keith Charlton (Leics) 0116 259 2118
<kcharlton@care4free.net>
Martine Frampton (Gloucs) 01608 812411
<martine-frampton@macunlimited.net>
Yvette Hartley (Wales) 0845 458 9251
yeh@onetel.net.uk
Jacqui Houlding (Cheshire) 01925 654856
<jc_houlding@onetel.net.uk>
Garry Humphreys (Treasurer)
<garryhumphreys@lineone.net.>
Celia McDonagh (Wales) 07763 729055
<celiamcdonagh@yahoo.co.uk>
Gary Podmore (Yorks) 0114 2585702 (Chair)
<podmorefamily@blueyonder.co.uk>
Julie Ridley (Manchester) 0161 860 7589
<jasrcm6@yahoo.co.uk> (Vice-Chair)
Anne Rix (Devon) 01237 451535
<anne@annerix.demon.co.uk>
Jenny Stevens (W. Sussex) 01243 783469
<jennystevens@argonet.co.uk>
Ali Willer (East Anglia) 01603 401020
<simon.whitehall@tesco.net>

Membership

Membership and newsletter subscription enquiries, membership cards, address changes, new member packs, other queries or missing newsletters contact:

Database Administrator, Education Otherwise,
31 Audley St., Reading, Berkshire, RG30 1BP
Tel: **Lynda Hitchman** 0118 961 4466 or
0118 901 2215,
Email database@education-otherwise.org

Stationery

Leaflets, posters, membership forms, car stickers:
Ali Willer, 28 Cozens Hardy Rd., Sprowston,
Norwich NR7 8QF (donations towards postage
welcome, reuse labels £2.50 per 100, free for EO
business use)

Publications

Books, information leaflets and back issues of
newsletters. For a full list send SAE to:
Bridget Elgie, 14 Elizabeth Crescent, Bay Vista,
Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 6JQ 0845 4582075
bidelge@aol.com (please ring to check availability
of items before ordering)

Website and email lists: Jacqui Houlding,
01925 654856 jc_houlding@onetel.net.uk

Useful Contacts

Contact with LEA / Member Support / Other Problems.

If you need help in dealing with your LEA ring your Local Contact or any Council Member.

If you have a query not covered below please contact your nearest Council Member (list left)

Single Parent Family Contact: Sarah Martin,
Lammas, 34 Cowslip Drive, Little Thetford, Ely, Cambs,
CB6 3JD 01353 648716
(Assistant) Rowenna Williams rowenna73@hotmail.com
Berllan Gron, Llanycil, BALA, Gwynedd, LL23 7JG
Tel: 01678 521348

Special Needs: Christine Waterman, 85 Elfrida Rd,
Watford, Herts WD1 8AT 01923 464773

School Phobia: Geraldine Adams 0207 263 4922

Teenage Support: Geraldine Adams 0207 263 4922

College Contact: (Acting) Lianne Smith Ivy Mount,
Canny Hill, Newby Bridge, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12
8NU Tel: 015395 30716 (07717 301 887)

GCSE Contact (acting): Geraldine Adams
0207 263 4922

Autonomous Education Support: Sammy and Nick
Vidal-Hall, Home Croft, Brownston St, Modbury, Devon
PL21 0QR 01548 830716

Research Contact: Pam Vickers 25 Boxley Rd,
Walderslade, Chatham, Kent Home: 01634 671507
Work: 01227 712206 pjvickersscan@aol.com

Company Secretary: Pam Bellinger 56 Beech Drive,
Braunstone, Leicester LE3 3DA 0116 282 7929

Treasurer: Garry Humphreys 'Fairacre', Skidbrooke Rd.,
South Somercotes, Louth, Lincs. LN11 7DD.
garryhumphreys@lineone.net

EO Stalls: Lucy Charlton, 2 Wistow Rd, Newton
Harcourt, Leics LE8 0FT 0116 2592118

Coordinator for Local Contacts: Keith Charlton,
2 Wistow Rd, Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire, LE8 0FT
0116 259 2118 kcharlton@care4free.net

(Assistant): Liz Stevens, 96 Ivanhoe Street, Leicester,
LE3 9GW. 0116 2425802 kiss.it@lineone.net

Coordinator for Enquiries Secretaries: Iris Harrison
(Assistant) Jo Borthen 01392 438876 jo4eo@aol.com

Newsletter Coordinator (Acting): William Cairns
5a Union Street, Greenock, Renfrewshire, PA16 8JH
Tel. 01475 730889 williamcairns@freeuk.com

Chair: Gary Podmore 52 Rupert Road, Sheffield, S7
1RP Tel. 01142 585702 podmorefamily@blueyonder.co.uk

education otherwise

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation which provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of their children.

Our principal aims are to:

- encourage learning outside the school system;
- reaffirm that parents have primary responsibility for their children's education and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school;
- establish the primary right of children to have full consideration given to their wishes and feelings about their education;
- promote knowledge, understanding and acceptance of education otherwise than at school in the world at large.

For further information send an A5 s.a.e. to:

P.O. BOX 7420
LONDON N9 9SG

Helpline 0870 73 000 74

<http://www.education-otherwise.org>

Education Otherwise Association Ltd., Registered Charity No. 1055120

