

plastic strip maze P13
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newsletter:

august 83

Educare

THE ROBIN.

In a quiet hall,
In a quiet house,
In a quiet street,
In a quiet town,
In a quiet city,
In a quiet world,
I heard a little robin
Singing to ME.

By Kirsten Marie Green.

Age 9.

BUTTERCUPS IN THE SKY

I see buttercups in the sunshine
with a light shining down;
the birds singing merrily,
the flowers beginning to grow.
The zoo is in town,
the lions and giraffes;
and there's a house nearby
with friend Sally living in-
She works in Oldham.

Helena Blackwell.

Age 4.

Other

n° 30

wise

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The editor for the next issue is Midge Whitelegg,
53 Derwent road, Lancaster, LA1 3E3. tel: (0524) 631 75.
All copy should arrive by 1st of September and should
be clearly marked " For publication ".

Please note that the ideas expressed in this issue are not necessarily those of the Editors, the Core group or the EO membership in general.

Short editorial.....

When we decided to edit the Newsletter I think we all imagined that we could exercise our creative and editorial powers to a wondrous degree, so it was something of a come down to realise the limitations upon us and the wholly practical skill editors need, especially considering the fashionable new super slim style. In spite of this, however, it has been an enjoyable and instructive experience I urge others to try, AND we have read the newsletter before any of you! (An innocent pleasure in these harsh times.) We have even read some interesting articles for which we had no room, which will probably appear in future issues.

"We" are some Nottingham Members with lovely E.O. children. Together we read and chose articles. Karl and Carolyn Svarc did typing, Helen Fletcher arranged the format and I was ascribed the happy lot of first page spokesperson. Considering I have nothing of earth-shattering importance to say (at the moment) it sits easily with me I must confess.

You might feel it to be an interesting educational experience to design your own illustrations in any neglected spaces, but you will probably be so interested in the articles that you will not need to be entertained! We hope you find what you like in this co-operative issue. As mere blameless tools of our material we welcome any praise forthcoming.

Helen Fletcher,
Karl and Carolyn Svarc,
and Barbara Clohessy.

P.S. We have been able to extend the number of pages a little bit. Thanks for the many many contributions!!!

Impressions of an EO Week in North Wales

The taxi driver has 6 children under five ("My mother thinks I am an animal!") and I can't get the gate to the Ozanam Centre open. Hardly an auspicious start to a week in Llanllyfni with 40 other adults, teenagers, children and babies. But a hot meal and a warm welcome (or should it be the other way round?) await us.

I enjoy my early encounters with interesting and seemingly dynamic people with talent and resources to share (and some pretty unusual names too!) The following day, exhausted from the journey and lack of sleep, David Leland's film on a family's struggle with the Education Authorities and the Courts upsets me.

The ice is broken by a five-year-old's attempts to watch the women in the shower ("I can see your willies, all of them") and I forget the snores, the scratchy blankets and the creaking bunks. I begin to relax and am both cheered and stimulated by the NVDA (Non-Violent Direct Action) workshops (even the Desert Island dilemmas).

Computers, country dancing, cookery (do Jack and Stephen really never wash their hands?); maths, electronics, creative writing. There's stream-paddling, puppet-making, glitter and glue. A windswept afternoon on the beach, a slate quarry, fleeting glimpses of Snowdon through the mist and my youngest wants to go to the potty - sorry, pottery - again. Discussions by the open fire, chilly dawn breakfasts and giggles in the kitchen when it's our turn to feed 40+. Endless (delicious) vegetarian burgers, but never enough baked beans! Indians in igloos, and small willies full of mud. To cap it all, an eye-catching bobble hat and ... and ... Simon's shorts!

Everywhere people are kind, gentle, enthusiastic and supportive and, by the end of the week, I feel convinced and inspired.

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Allen
Margaret



Regions ... news ... regions

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Somewhat bashfully we've emerged from our crystals ... and I'm reporting our third meeting which was a Nature Walk and waterplay day at the Clitheroe's House (2 Villa Corner Cottages, Upper Basildon). It was a very happy day for all of the six families who came. Apart from Nicholas Clitheroe all the children were under 5.

The Clitheroes provided a map of their favourite local walk. It took us through oak, beech and pine woods, through a field of bullocks and another of wheat, through an overgrown stretch of common and several footpaths and a country lane. We collected and tried to identify caterpillars, snails (which escaped) stinkhorns, foxgloves, cranesbill, bladder campion, eglantine, elderflower, pineneedles, oxeye daisies, ferns and a large collection of small pebbles courtesy of the under 2's!

We picnicked on the lawn with inevitable mishaps of small people sitting in plates of food whilst foraging for themselves amongst the scraps. The sprinkler provided another hour of fun in the afternoon followed by a grand session of teaparties/mud pies, and pouring sessions by the back door tap. We were shown around the Wendy House Museum (curators Nicholas and Jonathan Clitheroe) with its impressive collection of local archeology from the garden.

There was a recipe-swapping session for the cooks over a largely vegan/vegetarian tea (which was delicious) before we made our way drowsily home happily planning our next 20 encounter on August 14th at Brinner House, Stoke Row, South Oxon ... the Hollands have defected to Berkshire...

Peggy Holland



WEST MIDLANDS REGION. The summer gathering will be held in Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Meet at around 2.00p.m. outside the West Midlands Arts Centre (inside if wet) on Saturday 30 August. New members have joined since the last meeting, so this will be a chance to share ideas, hopes and problems, and for the children to enjoy the Park. Other regions welcome. Ring 021 772 7165 for directions.



General advice available from a qualified teacher for those who either wish to (or have to) organise structured lessons or time tables for their children.

Also independent assessment of primary English and Maths, by post, so that you know how and where to start. For older children I do regular coaching in "O" level English language, if you would like to do a kind of correspondence course with me (books and syllabus at your own expense, according to which exam board you choose).

If anyone is interested, please send S.A.E to Veronica Coath, 77, Oak Hill Road, Sevenoaks, Kent. (Kent Co-ordinator). Charges will be very reasonable.

Unstone Grangeweekend.

"Can we come again next weekend?" said Ben (1) as we drove away from Unstone Grange. "EO is brilliant" was written on a bit of paper I found in the Unstone Grange dining room, and I think most of the children on the weekend would have agreed. The house is big and old with plenty of room for children to run freely indoors and outdoors. One of the best features as far as the children were concerned was a fire escape ladder leading from the porch up through a trapdoor into a bathroom! There were some loosely organised activities for any children who wanted to join in - hand puppet making, painting, musical games, cricket, a treasure hunt, owl pellet dissecting, computer programming, wood chopping. The rest of the time the children organised themselves into small groups of bosom friends who spent a lot of time rusing about together. there was very little argument among the children and they all seemed full of joy most of the time.

There were various EO business meetings going on during the weekend which I attended parts of - it was interesting to see how loosely structured EO has been, and how few members take any part in running it.

One evening there was a demonstration of maths games, another a discussion of early reading schemes and methods, for any parents who wished to attend.

The place for discussing personal EO problems turned out to be the kitchen, and most parents had the opportunity to air any doubts they had about their own methods to a sympathetic ear. I was delegated to write about the Unstone Grange weekend because I have never been to an EO gathering before, and I was rather apprehensive about it, we only decided to go as our son sometimes seems lonely and we thought he would enjoy it - he certainly did! We ~~enjoyed~~ enjoyed it too. The atmosphere was very relaxed and friendly and the house is so big that there was no need to chat to people if we didn't want to.

Betty Ball, who organised almost all the children's activities and deserves a medal, asked me to arrange something. I felt daunted but when she said "playdough" I thought I could manage. I was wrong - my playdough went slimy and disgusting and had to be disposed of humanely.

So don't be shy - attend an EO weekend, especially if it's at Unstone Grange, and ^{even} volunteer to do something ~~even~~ - you can't do worse than me!

Sue Hart



WEST YORKSHIRE NEWS.

We held our first meeting since the loss (not bereavement, I hasten to add.) of our last co-ordinator, Ivan Sokolov, and it says much for his powers of organisation that he kept things going while we had for some months since. Anyway we hope to keep the momentum now we started and our first meeting was around a 'theme' of board games. Six families attended and the children enjoyed games of a wide variety including backgammon, yahtzee, bingo (!) and many more. Next we are holding a meeting for parents only (27th of June) with a view to planning a few meetings in advance and organising some form of fund raising to finance meetings and outings. Even during the absence of meetings we have kept in touch on a personal level and I'm sure we have the basis of a very good group. (Of course Yorkshire people are always friendly!). Linda Cooper, co-ordinator.

THE WALLACES HIGHLAND WEEK.

We all had a super week. It only rained once - a miracle in these parts. We had picnics; explored the sea shore; wandered around; sat talking for hours; and sampled each others home made wine. In Diabaig all the kids spent hours on the beach playing in an old lifeboat: there were dramatic rescues at sea; cosy family meals in the cabin; and battleships all over the place! Kirsty says her best bit was 'playing with all the other kids on the old boat and Gavin was the funniest bit being the ship's monkey'. One night was spent at the youth hostel at Craig - a three mile walk. There we paddled and splashed in the river and followed up with a communal meal before bed. Calum says that his best bit was 'throwing huge boulders off the bridge into the river and making ginormous splooshes'. It was so quiet after everyone had gone. Maybe they'll all come back next year and stir us up again!

Bruce and Christine.

STOP PRESS..... STOP PRESS..... STOP PRESS.....

Please note John Elenor's new address:
31 Anson Road
London NW2



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for children of all
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TEACHING OLDER CHILDREN AT HOME, A NEW APPROACH ?.....

When a family decides to deschool its children how does it tackle the problem of teaching them specialist subjects? Some EO members may say that there are no subjects only knowledge so I confine my remarks to those parents who are considering providing their children with 'O' or 'A' levels outside the confines of the School system.

The chances that an EO parent could provide a wide range of subjects from his/her own resources is the stumbling block of this kind of home education. Some parents have the personal resources to teach a limited range of subjects, others provide their children with a tutor, others still will have bought in Correspondence Courses which consist of the course material and postal contact with a tutor who marks and comments on all assignments and homeworks. It is not easy to ask your tutor a question and response is necessarily slow and lacks spontaneity.

An interesting recent development in the colleges of Further Education is Distance Learning. Students enrol for the course of their choice there is no set time for enrolment, buy a learning package direct from the College and are assigned to a tutor. The student then works at home on the course, telephoning the tutor for help when necessary, submitting work for marking and coming along to the college for personal tutorials or to meet in small groups. Thus people who cannot enrol for conventional full-time and part-time courses, for instance nurses, long distance drivers, oil-rig workers, and anyone doing shift work, because of the practical difficulties caused by their jobs can gain access to Further Education by this more flexible system. However, in addition to those who find difficult in fitting into the conventional course pattern because of the job they do, there are those people who may find it difficult to become full-time students after several years out of the school system and for whom Distance learning could provide the answer to their educational needs.

The idea of Distance Learning will already be familiar to those who know how the Open University operates. The O.U. started in response to a need for Education at Degree Level to be more accessible - less remote - to ordinary people. The similarity between the O.U. and Distance Learning is clear enough; the Colleges of Further Education are attempting to make the courses they offer more accessible by adopting a student - centred approach and a large measure of flexibility. Thus the system will be made to fit in with the student rather than making the student fit into the system.

It may well be that 'deschooled' 16 year olds would find this style of course quite acceptable especially if they hadn't been to school in some years as the amount of contact with the College is limited by the student.

What of younger children? The Further Education system doesn't cater for those under 16, so this system would not be available to the 'deschooled' 14 year-old, however distance learning materials do exist at 'O' level, etc in a wide range of subjects from a number of sources of which the National Extension College is a good example. Thus there is material available for the 14 year-old which could probably be made available through EO at a worthwhile discount as a membership service. I believe Distance Learning could benefit many EO families and I would like to suggest that as an Organisation Education Otherwise could provide the structure for a system of

volunteers who would be the tutors in a Distance learning system similar to the one which I have described but adapted to the special needs of EO members.

For deschooled children the greatest difficulty is often said to be social isolation (since the peer group spends its time beavering away at school) and in a rural County this isolation is usually compounded by the fact that EO families are thin on the ground anyway. The tutor would provide a focus for children and families who would otherwise not meet. The children would be in telephone contact with the tutor and perhaps more important, with each other discussing difficulties and helping and supporting each other. Tutorials would give an opportunity for the children to meet and sort out their problems directly with the tutor.

I often felt that I would like to be doing something to help other EO families educate their children, in my case, with Maths and Statistics.

Perhaps many of us who have included academic subjects on the Resources List would feel the same way and would be willing to contribute their time and talent to such a scheme?

Finally, I wonder whether a voluntary tutor system would be helpful to the parents of much younger children. The tutor might advise the parents on the choice of books, the subject matter and on methods and concepts or might work directly to help the child where this was possible.

I would welcome comments on the validity and practicality of these suggestions. In particular, I would be glad to hear from any Norfolk families who are interested in participating in such a scheme.

ROY GILBERT, Cherry tree cottage,
Morley field lane, Morley Saint Botolph
Wymondham, Norfolk.

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*** A TEACHER SEES THE LIGHT ***

STANDING AS I OFTEN DO IN FRONT OF UNWILLING AND REBELLIOUS CHILDREN I ASK MYSELF WHETHER I HAVE ANY RIGHT TO BE A MEMBER OF EDUCATION OTHERWISE. I AM A TEACHER AND HAVE BEEN FOR 20 YEARS. I SEE NO IMMEDIATE PROSPECT OF DOING OTHER THINGS. MY QUALIFICATIONS ARE PECULIARLY USELESS TO ME IN ANY OTHER WALK OF LIFE - A NONDESCRIPT GENERAL DEGREE AND A TEACHER'S CERTIFICATE AWARDED IN THAT STRANGE TRANCHE OF THE EARLY SIXTIES WHEN IT WAS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO FAIL. I HAVE HAD A CHEQUERED AND NOT ASTONISHINGLY SUCCESSFUL CAREER, AND I HAVE PROBABLY DONE MORE HARM THAN GOOD SINCE THE DAY SOME FIFTEEN YEARS AGO WHEN I REALISED THAT WHILST ANY IDIOT CAN CONTROL CHILDREN AND GET THEM TO DO MORE OR LESS SCHOLASTIC WORK, THE SPECIAL THING WHICH IS EDUCATION CALLS FOR CLOSENESS, LOVE, LISTENING, TOUCHING.

IT USED TO WORRY ME THAT, AS A TEACHER I WAS INVOLVED IN WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY MICROSCOPIC FASCISM. I SUPPOSE IT STILL DOES, ESPECIALLY WHEN I HAVE SPENT THE GREATER PART OF A LESSON SIMPLY HOLDING THE CHILDREN DOWN.

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FOR A PERSON IN MY POSITION, THEN, E.C. SEEMS TO OFFER A WAY IN WHICH I CAN TAKE PART IN AN EDUCATIONAL VENTURE IN WHICH REAL PEOPLE ARE DOING SUCCESSFULLY WHAT I KNOW THE SCHOOLS OUGHT TO BE DOING. THIS GIVES ME HOPE THAT ONE DAY THE MAJORITY OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS WILL REALISE A SIMPLE TRUTH WHICH IMPRESSES ITSELF ON ME SO INSISTENTLY. IT IS THIS: EDUCATION IS FOR THE CHILDREN AND FOR NOBODY ELSE. IT ISN'T FOR THEIR PARENTS, NOR FOR THE AUTHORITIES. IT ISN'T FOR THE TEACHERS AND ABOVE ALL IT ISN'T FOR 'SOCIETY'. SOCIETY HAS CLAIMS ON WHAT THE CHILDREN BECOME, THAT THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO AVOID HARMING OTHERS, BUT IT HAS NO NATURAL RIGHT TO DETERMINE BY WHAT ROUTE AN INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVES ADULTHOOD.

THIS REALISATION MAKES MY PRESENT POSITION A MOST EQUITIVOCAL ONE. I CANNOT SIMPLY 'GET OUT' BUT EVERY DAY I SPEND IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION, WORKING WITH UNWILLING CHILDREN, IS A CONSTRUCTIVE BETRAYAL OF MY CONVICTIONS.

WHAT, THEN, ARE THOSE CONVICTIONS?

FIRST, THAT EDUCATION IS A CHILD'S RIGHT AND HIS PARENTS' REAL DUTY.

SECOND, THAT EDUCATION IS FOR THE CHILD'S BENEFIT ALONE, AND THEREFORE THAT ANY PART OF IT WHICH THE CHILD FINDS BARREN AND REBARBATIVE HE IS ENTITLED TO LEAVE UNTOUCHED.

THIRD, THAT THE CHILD IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DETERMINE WHAT HE NEEDS TO KNOW OR DO, AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MEETING THAT NEED BY THE USE OF HIS IMMEDIATE RESOURCES.

FOURTH, THAT ADULTS ARE FACILITATORS AND PROVIDERS, NOT CONTROLLERS.

FIFTH, THAT BEYOND PROTECTION, LOVE AND MATERIAL PROVISION, THE EDUCATOR'S ONLY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO LISTEN, EXPLAIN AND CLARIFY.

SIXTH, THAT VICIOUS, SELFISH AND UNSOCIABLE BEHAVIOUR IS GENERALLY A REACTION TO AN OPPRESSIVE ENVIRONMENT.

THE LAST POINT IS A FRIGHTENING ONE. I DISCOVERED THIS SIMPLE TRUTH FOR MYSELF WHEN CHILDREN WHO WERE UNCONTROLLABLE IN THE CLASSROOM WOULD SEEK ME OUT AND CONVERSE WITH GRAVE COURTESY AND GENTLENESS WITHIN MINUTES OF A SCREAMING CLASSROOM ROW. I ASKED MYSELF THEN AND I ASK MYSELF AGAIN NOW WHAT SORT OF A HALF-CONSCIOUS COMMUNITY WOULD INVEST MILLIONS OF POUNDS IN SHUTTING UP ITS YOUNG IN A PLACE WHERE THEY FEEL AN UNCONTROLLABLE URGE TO BE UNSOCIABLE.

I THINK I CAN SUM UP MY FEELINGS ABOUT SCHOOLS WITH A SIMPLE ANECDOTE. SOME OF THE 'WORST' OF THE CHILDREN WHOM I HAD SIGNALLY FAILED TO 'TEACH' CAME TO ME ONE DAY TO TALK. ONE OF THEM SAID, QUIETLY AND WITHOUT INSOLENCE, "WE HATE MR. X. HE LIKES HURTING PEOPLE." JUST THAT. MY REPLY WAS EQUALLY SHORT AND TO THE POINT. "I DON'T. WHO DO YOU TAKE NOTICE OF IN THE CLASSROOM, HIM OR ME?"

NO ANSWER WAS NECESSARY, AND NONE WAS GIVEN.

C. R. SHUTE.

HOW DO YOU RECOGNIZE AN E.O. PARENT?

John Elenor

The answer is that you probably dont. The diversity of attitude, philosophy and life-style among its members is a standing joke, making it particularly difficult to give pat answers to journalists. It is possible, though, to discover certain categories into which the majority of parent-members will fit, however uneasily. This article is based on research done by Sandra Blacker in 1981, for her MA in Education.

On the basis of 16 interviews and 84 questionnaires (out of a membership at that time of around 450), Sandra suggests three categories of parents to which she gives the provocative ~~xxxxxx~~ labels 'Competitors', 'Compensators' and 'Rebels'. Even without knowing quite who fits into which category, it is interesting to note the proportions in each:

Competitors:	5	interviews,	35%	of questionnaires
Compensators:	10	"	45%	"
Rebels:	1	"	20%	"

'Competitors' are those who see themselves in competition with the schools. They are mostly middle-class, with the ability to take maximum advantage of any system; they refer to "good educational practice" (with the implication that schools generally dont follow it), they are prepared to take on the teachers role and will employ tutors for areas - especially music - where they feel they lack expertise; their teaching follows the 'transmissive' method, though they make their planning flexible enough to follow the childs particular interests in a way that can transcend traditional subject-boundaries and include wide areas of knowledge. They see education as a "mastery of knowledge", and emphasize the meta-skills which are seen as basic to all learning.

'Compensators' are those who withdraw their children from school in response to problems that the school wont or cant deal with; these include bullying, fear of school, bright child being frustrated, and the use (or over-use) of corporal punishment. The parents aim to compensate their child for what they feel the school should give but doesnt; their use of tutors and correspondence courses is similar to the Competitors, though they are more concerned with balance than with breadth in the curriculum. Their view of education is "manpower to equip people to do jobs"; their children often return to school when the problem has been solved.

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/contd.

'Rebels' are those who reject what schools usually stand for, at the same time favouring 'alternative' life-styles. Their belief in self-regulation and autonomous education often brings them into conflict with the LEA, especially if there is no formal planning and the content is left to the child. They view education as a "social service", and prefer the 'facilitator' role to that of 'expert'.

The other findings of this research confirm what one had always suspected; it is "the milieu rather than the method" that is responsible for the child's success; most of the children are of primary age (my own quick survey of the latest Contact List puts it at 49%, with 21% of secondary age, and 30% under five); it is mostly the mother alone who supervises the education, sometimes resulting in loss of income (though no one has reported giving up home education because the financial burden was too great); very few parents regard lack of resources as a disadvantage, though the lack of socialization is a constant worry.

As far as the authorities are concerned, EO parents have little impact on the system; they are regarded by administrators as an irritant, out of proportion to their numbers. (NB: this was in 1981; the current rumblings from Gwent - see 'Education Through The Press' in the June newsletter - suggest that the attitude is changing). Nonetheless, the educational experience gained by such parents could be of great value to schools - how soon will they be prepared to make use of it?



Computers Otherwise

A large number of people have now got a home computer. Some have a lot of expertise also. Yet others need help. This newsletter is not really the place to put these two groups together. So I am proposing to start a newsletter just about Computer Education to be self-financing. I am preparing issue number 1 and hope it will grow with your help and ideas. If you wish to receive this send 4 x large a.a.e.'s and A1 (cheques made out to E.Ball) to cover duplicating costs on 1st 4 issues. Also a postcard with details of interested individuals (including children + their ages). State clearly if you have a computer which make and your expertise. Offers of help in producing newsletter required. Send also articles, educational programmes, or just cries for help to Betty Ball, 1 Fenton Road, Warboys, Huntingdon, Cambs.

and they said unto him, "Teacher teach us,"
Learning and that gained from it knowledge is not something that can be taught
but a rhythm which must be followed. Knowledge is not an accumulation of
facts but a way of being, not becoming, awareness though self knowledge.
To know oneself in the spiritual and material world and our place in nature
which is the pearl of great price, this is the way of the Buddha.
To live in the spiritual, we must also live in the political. If we live
in the light then surely we must shed that light. May all of us shed that light
and not the warped twisted world we see.

AS THE SPIRIT LEADS
DIG THE GARDEN
PLANT THE SEED.

And as he left the summer sun darkened and his light was cast upon the
Earth no more.

WILL THE MASTER COME?
We are all teachers on different levels,

MAN - CHILD
CHILD - MAN

Life is a continuous circle,
a movement of one event into another.
The first becomes the last,
And the last first.
The disciple follows his teacher
to find his true self
at it's highest level.

But I would say, with all faith and conviction that the child is the teacher
to the man, the child is pure emotion without rights and wrongs. Let us not
twist such a fragile state with our morality. Rather, let us watch them grow
and develop into maturity. Let us learn from their play the secrets of joy.
The laughter of an unblemished soul above all let us learn to be truly HUMAN.

So the children play, fetch wood for the stove, play guitar, help make the
pine tables and bookcases, make stories to pictures in books, take photos,
play Micks Bass, visit friends.

WE DIG THE GARDEN
THEY PLANT THE SEEDS.

Dance, ah yes dance,

DANCE, JOY, LIFE.

To become yourself, far beyond the confines of what you or I thought we
could be.

This is Life, This is Education.

A never ending process of one event leading to another.

This section is from a book of poems and thoughts by Karl Svarc, to be finished
sometime early 1983.

We welcome correspondence.

Karl Svarc,
4 Main Street, Shelton, Nr. Newark, Notts.



YOUR POEMS.....

A POEM FOR PEACE

Lesley m. Downie
3 March 1983

The bomb is a symptom
Of our ailing society

The bomb
Is a symptom
Of our ailing world.

The world is sick
With selfishness and suspicion
The world is pained
With greed and competition.
Where there is injustice
There can be no peace
The world is feverish with our fears.

We must cure the disease
Not just treat the symptom.
Banning the bomb
Will not give us peace.

The disease is within us all;
Let us start with you and me.
The cure is within us all;
There can be no other way.
The treatment is built out of trust and understanding
It is built out of respect for all life
The treatment is built out of cooperation and sharing
It is founded on justice and love in the world.

The cure will take time;
But it is the only way
To PEACE.



THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

I'm a tree
reaching up to the sky,
reaching up to where the birds fly.

I'm a tree
with my roots in the ground
holding me steadfast, firm and proud.

I'm a tree
with branches that ustle
when the wind blows through far from city bustle.

I'm a tree
growing in every direction
and I know more than standard education
for I talk with the sky, the ground and the wind
and I've learnt the secrets of nature's mind.
Yes I know the secrets of every nation
all the truth since the dawn of creation
for I'm a tree
and you'd do well to listen to me.

Katherine Holmgren 1982

Ads, more ads...

- We would like to set up a small E.O./ ecological life style minded community (3-4 families maximum). The object is to create a stimulating living and working environment for both adults and children.

Our strategy at present is to purchase a large country house in the Lake District/ Scottish Borders area (Price c.£80,000), to create separate family units as well as communal use of workshops, garden etc. Preferably those interested would have specific skills and business experience which would be supportive of the lifestyle envisaged. Mutual support and interaction is considered to be a major objective in setting up such a group.

Enquiries. (0900) 826676

- We are an expending family, (Henry-9months, Sarah - 2 years, Kerri-25 years, Tim - 36 years), at present living in South London. Tim is Deputy Head at a local Primary School and although he has found much of his work rewarding, is now feeling that the time has come for change. What we would like to find is a home and work somewhere greener and less lead-polluted than Erixton. We have little capital, few practical skills but are eager to learn. If anyone has any advice or suggestions please contact us. Kerri and Tim Fitzgerald, 45 Ballater Rd, Erixton, London. SW2

- Beginnings of Community Ideas. Over 15 families came to Tormes Hood Fair Weekend in June, to meet and discuss ideas of setting up a community that will offer a lively home base from which our children can learn. Apart from enjoying incredible Summery weather and lots of Mediaeval Festivities, we managed to fit in a couple of group meetings, as well as several camofire gatherings that went on into the early hours.

The outcome of the weekend was that the group agreed to meet again for a week long camp at the end of July, so as to have more opportunity of getting to understand one another. Everyone was happy to swap addresses, thereby enabling contacts to be developed, and a couple of families were keen to take on various responsibilities.

If you would like more details please contact Ken and Jill Beagley, 15 Salem Road, Winterbourne, Northaven. ES17 1QF. A LARGE S.A.E. WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

- I am desperately looking for a cottage, bungalow or house to let at reasonable rent. As I am a one parent family, preferably outer London. Telephone Mrs. Scott. 01474-7382 anytime. Also can offer help to any E.O. members e.g. History, Geography, Scottish Dance, Gardening, Wig Making, Embroidery, Farm Husbandry.

- Divorced Ex. E.O. subscriber living in large grotty farm house with 3 spare bedrooms, (2 with double beds, one empty) would welcome any family wanting a free holiday - two lovely daughters (Betty 6, Sue 4) and one quite nice ex wife (Jane 32) are weekend visitors. Antony Williams, Treddiog Fawr, Mathry, Haverford West, Dyfed. SA62 5HU

- Plastic Strin Maze for E.O. festival stalls. If you would like details of this 30 foot square maze, please send a stamped addressed envelope plus one 12p stamp to cover the cost of photocopying to: Ken Eleyley 15 Salem Road, Winterbourne, Northaven. ES17 1QF Overall cost of materials approx £7. The maze at the Tormes Hood Fair made £10. profit as well as giving everyone lots of fun. Looking forward to reading the next E.O. newsletter. Many thanks. Ken Beagley.

- Holiday Opportunity. Large ex-working narrow boat (non-Mobile) moored on the beautiful Kennet and Avon Canal just outside Bath. Sleeps five or more, has heating, cooking, shower, loo etc. Original boatman's cabin. Use of rowing dinghy. A wonderful opportunity for E.O. families to share the rich variety of life on the canal. Also, when we are on the boat, part of house (three bedrooms) available in centre of Bath, with garden. Rates and dates negotiable. Enquiries to Simone and Tom Wilson, 15 New King Street, Bath, Avon. Tele: Bath. 316677

and more ads !

⊗ Living space wanted in London for about a year - perhaps a house share or is there rented accomodation near you? I can afford upto £25 a week. ANY IDEAS? I have one more year at L.S.E. and would very much like to spend it in London hopefully with support from another E.O. Family - who would also gain support from me. Emmie aged 7 is de-schooled but Julia aged 12 is not. Please write to Gina Holman

⊗ I am interested in getting together with like minded people to form an E.O. community, starting in my own large house in Brighton. This is a nice area with lots of activities available and a thriving E.O. Group. Eric (aged 9) is already deschooled but it is just him and me at the moment which has its disadvantages. I am interested in various alternative subjects (medicine, education etc.) and skilled in maths, science, computers and doing up old houses. We eat a fairly wholefood diet and don't smoke or take drugs. If anyone is interested I would love to hear from them. Linda Pilgrim, 72 Beaconsfield Villas, Brighton. Sussex. BN1 6HE

⊗ John, Gabrielle Harwood and Rupert 77 c/o 2192 Crestview Drive, Laguna Beach, CALIFORNIA, 92651, USA; would be happy to have visits from EO families or children.

STOP PRESS..... STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....

CARAVAN ON SITE NEAR ST TROPEZ FOR SALE.

Any offer: ring Caroline Grant , (0286) 881865.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letters to the eds.

Dear Editor,

I feel I must reply to Ted and Marg Carter's article "Do it yourself"- please as I feel there is a slight misunderstanding in their statements about the S.E. Wales Group's invitation to the LEA.

We didn't invite advisors to attend Group meetings . Members expressed an interest in having an LEA representative as a speaker at one meeting. Whether we like it our not the LEA do have a responsibility in regard to the education of our children. Section 37 states "If it appears to a Local Education Authority that the parent of any child of compulsory school age in their area is failing to perform the duty imposed on him it shall be the duty of the authority to serve upon the parent a notice requiring him to satisfy the authority that the child is receiving efficient full time education etc." While I appreciate points made in N/L 23 pg 6 I would maintain that the only way that the LEA can judge whether the parent is failing to perform his duty is by applying to the parent for information. Thus the LEA and the parents do have joint responsibilities. That is not to say that the LEA has any duty or right to become involved in the actual education of our children. This was not the subject of our invitation and is an area in which we would not wish the LEA to interfere.

It is important, too, to look at our local situation. Home education here has expanded rapidly, taking the LEA by surprise. As a result it was in the process of forming a policy for dealing with home education families. One family had already been taken to court (the case has since been dropped) and the appearances were that LEA would not be co-operative. The group felt that a meeting between the LEA and us would give us a chance to show ourselves to be concerned parents but, at the same time, parents who knew their rights in law. We felt there was a chance of influencing LEA policy while it was being formed and that we should take the opportunity. After all, not all members feel strong enough to face a legal battle over the right to home education. We should be helping these members who feel uncertain about standing up for their rights.

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That is one of our stated aims.

Far from giving the impression of weakness to the LEA, our invitation resulted in a heated meeting of the Education Committee at which the views expressed suggested great concern about the strength of E.O., its expertise and its organization. Resent publicity in the press in South Wales has spread E.O.'s message widely (and at no advertising cost!)

Unfortunately, the LEA has refused to send a representative who do so would strengthen our hand by making us "official".

A show of weakness? - I think not. Rather an assertion of our rights, rights about which our LEA would have preferred to have kept quiet.

Yours Sincerely, Annie Wilton - Jones,
Tyddyn y Mynydd,
(Formerly Greenlands),
Llanelly Hill,
Gwent.



My name is Suzanne Heinze. I am nine years old. My address is 37 William St. I live in St. Albans. The State I live in is Victoria and I live in Australia. I wonder if you could get me a pen-friend from England. My interests are "Famous Five" and horses and dogs. My post code is 3021. My mum and dad work. I have three sisters and one brother. My birthday is 15th February.



Acorn Village Community School, 63 Dwyer St, Clifton Hill 3068, Victoria, Australia.

My name is Taos. I am 9 years old. My interests are BMX riding, surfing, reading and coin collecting. I would like to write to a boy.



Dear Editor,

I agree with Mr and Mrs Carter (newsletter n^o 29) for to include discussions with the LEA would be a recipe for disaster. Certainly the suggestions were not from people who have had attacks of LEA itio (a debilitating complaint). When to me every telephone call and every unexplained knock on the door invariably meant more aggro from "that lot" am I to assume that these suggestions of love with the LEA that the LEA is creeping into EO through the back door. Seriously though perhaps I shouldn't give them ideas!

No matter how pleasant they are, there is much more to EO than cups of tea and a chat at regular intervals and perhaps a newsletter of cases of members who have had troubles with LEAs (there are more of us than you think) would soon dispel any ideas of "love thy LEA man". We should also remember that if it wasn't for the efforts of the pioneers such as the Harrisons how many families would have had the courage to go it alone for. Until we learned of EO and Iris it was a lonely path.

EO has a role to play in the education of children. This in my mind does not include trying to balance a both sides of the fence.

Yours sincerely, Mrs Margaret Lewis.

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Adverts Adverts..

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And now the winners!

Draw held in Wales on 26th June 1983.

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| 1st. | ZX Spectrum 16k Computer. | R. & G. Parker, Bow, London E3. |
| 2nd. | Chemistry Kit No.4.
(Donated by Thomas Salter.) | W.G. Smith, Rushden, Northants. |
| 3rd. | Equality.
(Donated by Peter Pan Playthings) | Mrs. Davidson, Needlesham, Suffolk. |
| 4th. | Space Lines.
(Also TouchDown, Donated by Invicta Plastics Ltd.) | Helen Spencer, Frome, Somerset. |
| 5th. | Touch Down. | Brindle, Shefford, Beds. |
| | <u>Dylon Colour Fun Fabric Paints. (5 sets)</u>
(Donated by Dylon International Ltd.) | Helen Kippax, Sheffield, Yorks.
Kate Blinston, Langport, Sommers et.
Robert Ford, Pfestiniog, Gwynedd.
The Gibbs Family, Danbury, Essex.
K.J. Hill, Rayleigh, Essex. |
| | Fungus the Bogyman. (pop up Book)
(donated by Andy Jackson, Cambridge E.O. Member.) | M.W. Gilbert, Earlsfield, London. SW17 |
| | Grandmothers Footsteps.
(Donated by Orchard Toys) | Meg Bidmend, Bristol. |
| | Rug Making.
(Donated by Sue Nixon, Cornwall E.O. Member.) | Mrs. M. Carter, Alfreton. Derbys. |
| | Usborne Books. (13 books donated by Usborne Ltd.) | |
| | Ivan Sokolov. Ormskirk, Lancs. | Rainbow. Oxford. |
| | Mrs. A. Moss. Mecclesfield, Cheshire. | Irene Harris, Chelmsford, Essex. |
| | Mrs. S. Williams, Royston, Herts. | Ruth Lamin, Guisborough, Cleveland. |
| | Julie Blewett, Plymouth, Devon. | Fleuriot, Bristol. |
| | Mrs. L. M. Bramwell, Cheltenham. Glos. | (2 prizes) |
| | <u>Discovering Local History (6 Copies)</u>
(Donated by Shire Publications) | |
| | L. Windass. Addenbury, Oxon. | R.L. Virgo, London. SE3 |
| | Welch, Norwich, Norfolk. | Eileen Haines, Langport, Somerset. |
| | Joan Hoare, Sheffield. | E. Aberdein, Kincardineshire. |
| | Patchwork Box. | Miss. S. Sharp, Newport, Saloo. |
| | Two paperback books. | J & J Adey, Sutton on Trent, Notts. |
| | Card Game & Soap Crayons. | John Matthews. Old Windsor, Berks. |
| | (The Last 3 prizes donated by E.O. Members, Clawley, Birmingham and Anna Powell, S. Devon) | |

Thank you ALL for the generous donations of prizes which enabled more of the profits to towards supporting. E.O.



E.O. Draw Saves a Newsletter!

Profits from the draw which took place at the E.O. week in Wales will pay for one of the threatened newsletters (see Core Group minutes and Treasurers Report).

<u>Expenses.</u>		£		
Licence.	20.00		Ticket Receipts.	705.90
Printing.	75.90		Less Expenses.	- 221.38
Computer.	99.95			<u>484.52</u>
Postage.	20.53		Donations.	+ 36.65
Book Tokens.	5.00		Total Fundraising	<u>521.17</u>
	<u>221.38</u>			

E.O. member selling most tickets was Betty Ball (Who?) with £16. and David and Vicki Willow were second with £14.50. So the £5.00 book token has been shared between them. About 30 people sold more than the 2 books they were sent - many thanks for the support and enthusiasm. Over half the members did not buy or sell any tickets. Fifteen people wrote saying they were opposed to draws but were happy to make donations instead. Several people commented that selling draw tickets had been good advertising for E.O. and they had been asked about the organisation as a result.

The draw made less than I had hoped, over £2,000 was possible, but I feel it was worthwhile in helping to clear E.O.'s debts. However I see fundraising in future as a means of being able to provide extras - either activities for members, or resources for promoting E.O.'s work further a field. I would be prepared to consider doing a draw again next year but would hope for more widespread support. Alternatively has anyone any other ideas? E.O. is a difficult organisation to fundraise for.

A few ideas have been suggested, they are with my comments:

- Donations and /or increased subscriptions. A few people suggested these as alternatives to the draw but did not make them. These have the disadvantage that they only come from E.O. members-many of whom have their budgets well stretched anyway.
- Auctions. Although good for local fundraising I would have thought difficult for E.O. with members so widely scattered. Also difficult to get good things from people not involved in E.O. Organise one and prove me wrong.
- Small fundraising event at each local meeting. Suggested book swap table expanded to include jumble, clothes, toys and bric-a-brac. Good idea but I find people forget to bring while happy to buy.
- Suggest sell educational ideas and resources at any E.O. event. If you have a good idea for a game or activity make it a few times and sell it or duplicate a fact sheet on some educational topic e.g. family tree, notes in this newsletter. Has the advantage that it shares good ideas as well as making money. If you have access to free offcuts or cheap paper, fabric etc. sell excess.
- Selling advertising in newsletter. This is being looked into by Julie Duff, Glos. Please contact her with any ideas on this.

Sit down with a cuppa and think. Then send your fundraising ideas to me now while you think of them to: Betty Ball, 1 Fenton Road, Warboys, Huntingdon, Cambs.

Notices.

Sussex Mailing List. If you would like to receive regular news of meetings and other activities in East and West Sussex please send £1.00 to Helen Hollend. Inholms Farm, Plumpton Green, BN7 3EE.

E.O. New Comers.

Kirsty was born to Annette and Mike McCoy in the 14th May 1983.

To Martin Hant and Elaine Addey, a daughter Camilla Caterina, was born on May 27th, 1983, sister of Melissa and Ben.

NFW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARIES.

Bruce and Christine Wallace (Co-ordinators, please note!)
But Janet Everdell is still responsible for publications. E.O. Newcomers.

AN INVITATION FROM THE TREASURER.

E.O. began this year with over 650 members subscribing between them a total of just over three and a half thousand pounds to the organisation's funds. But it also began the year with a debt to the bank of more than £1000 as a result of overspending last year. This debt and the heavy expenses of the early part of the year combined to bring E.O.'s funds down to little over £800 by mid March. Then in April (my first full month as treasurer!) the finances took a sudden plunge. Of the various officers of E.O. almost all sought during that month to be reimbursed for the expenses they had incurred during the first 3 months of the year. An extra-ordinarily large printing bill - not only for the April Newsletter, but also for the new contact list, the new membership forms and introductory leaflets and new stationery, had to be met. The distribution of the Newsletter cost more than usual because of the inclusion of the contact list. By the beginning of May it seemed that we would hardly be able to get the June Newsletter out without having to borrow money. However things did not work out quite as badly as expected for various reasons. The cost of hiring Unstone Grange for the Core Group Meeting was met entirely by those who were there during the weekend, and only one claim was made for travelling expenses in connection with that meeting (in contrast to the seven claims made in connection with the previous meeting at Glastonbury). The June Newsletter was slightly cheaper to print and considerably cheaper to post than had been expected. The recruitment of new members continued. And above all, at the eleventh hour the draw replenished the dwindling funds. So that at the time of writing (June 26th) E.O.'s bank balance is approximately £800 in credit!

The foregoing is a brief outline of E.O.'s financial ups and downs during the first 6 months of this year. The future now needs to be considered.

It is expected, that taking the next 18 months as a whole, E.O.'s receipts will balance its payments without any extra-ordinary action being taken. Considering the overspending of last year and the financial history of the first half of this year such an expectation might seem naively optimistic. However two factors do in fact make it not unreasonable. First, the subscription has been increased and next year all but a few members will be contributing £10.00, where as this year the vast majority of members renewed or joined (which ever was the case at the old rate). Also the last

Core Group meeting agreed that for the next 18 months a number of economies should be made at the margins of spending. (These you will find outlined in the minutes of the Core Group Meeting). However though the financial outlook for the next 18 months as a whole may be reasonably good, that for the next six months taken alone is definitely not. E.O. can expect to receive during the next 6 months approximately one tenth of the total income it will receive during the next 18 months. (This will come mainly from the recruitment of new members and from the sale of publications). But it must expect its expenses during the next 6 months to amount to approximately one third of its total expenses for the next 18 months. What is obviously required is a "Staggering" increase of the next 18 months income.

I therefore invite any members who wish to do so to send in their subscription for 1984 to Bob Emmett (whose address appears on the back cover of this newsletter) NOW! It would be very helpful (and possibly save them from being troubled by an unnecessary reminder half way through next year) if anyone accepting this invitation could, at the same time, indicate whether or not they normally pay by bankers order.

It is worth noting that the healthier the organisations finances are the fewer wearisome articles of this kind there will have to be taking up space in the Newsletter and so the more space there will be to devote to the ends (rather than the means) of E.O.!

more notices

⊗ REVISION OF 'SCHOOL IS NOT COMPULSORY'. Ivan Sokolov is in charge of this revision. The principle task is to bring the case histories up to date. If you have any relevant material to contribute, write to Ivan c/o 62 Greetby Hill, Ormskirk, Lancs.

⊗ ANY SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS SHOULD BE SENT TO BOB EMMETT (ASSISTANT TREASURER).

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PLEASE READ THIS!

At a meeting held at Unstone Grange on the afternoon of Saturday May 28th, 18 members of E.O. heard Mr. Michael Collier Bradley of Inter-Action outline the process of becoming a registered charity and discussed with him the advantages and disadvantages of so doing.

Machael Collier Bradley explained that having charitable status means being registered with the Charity Commission - a government appointed body whose headquarters are at 14 Ryder St, LONDON. He went on to explain that there are three types of organisation which may be registered as charities. There are:

1. A charitable trust set up by a minimum of three people signing a charity trust deed. The trusteeship that they there by take on is for life or until they resign, and they are responsible for seeing that the organisation funds are used for the purpose for which they were intended. They are also personally liable for any debts etc. incurred by the organisation.
2. An unincorporated association administered by a committee appointed by the members or elected annually. In an organisation of this kind (which is what E.O. is at present) the liability for debts, etc. can fall on all or any of the members, the officers being particulary at risk.
3. A company limited by guarantee. This type of organisation is also administered by a committee, but the committee is chosen according to a procedure laid down in a written constitution which also outlines how the committee is to act. The constitution itself must conform to the requirements of the companies Act 1948. The liability for debts in an organisation of this kind is limited to a nominal sum from each member. (Machael Collier Bradley added in connection with this third type of organisation that it is possible to obtain a "dispensation" which permits the omission of the word limited from the organisations title.)

Michael then explained that application for registration with the charity commission involved sending an outline of the aims and objectives of the organisation concerned or, in the case of an organisation of the third type, a draft constitution (which would of course, contain an outline of the aims and objectives) to the charity commission who, as well as having power to accept or reject an application, were entitled to comment upon a draft constitution. Michael was of the opinion that E.O.'s aims and objectives as he understood them would be acceptable to the charity commission, and he offered to E.O. the benefit of his experience in "steering" an application and if required, in drafting a constitution. He pointed out that registration as a charity automatically imposed certain restrictions upon an organisation's activities - mainly on "political" activities. Although a registered charity is not debarred from political activity altogether it is prevented from engaging in various kinds of political activity.

Michael Collier Bradley then pointed out the advantages which E.O. would be likely to gain from having charitable status. These were first and foremost financial. E.O. would be likely to become richer because:

- a. It would be able to benefit from various tax concessions such as exemption from V.A.T. and recovery of income tax when donations are covenanted, (there was some doubt as to whether subscriptions could be covenanted or not.)
- b. It would be able to use the services of the Charities Aid Foundation (Headquarters at 48 Penbury Road, Tonbridge, Kent) and;
- c. Donations from individuals and from other organisations would be more readily forthcoming since, in the eyes of the world, registration as a charity automatically offers respectability to an organisation. The other principle advantage was that, as a result of increased funds and increased "respectability", E.O. registered as a charity could be more influenuel than plain "E.O."

When F.O.'s present position as regards liability was disclosed consideration of its implications occupied the discussion for some time. Some of the Office holders, who

are obviously the most vulnerable under the present arrangement, expressed personal anxiety and all but one of the members present agreed that it was undesirable. Michael Collier Bradley advised that the only way of avoiding the risks of legal liability that was both certain and workable was to become a company limited by guarantee.

It was seen that the question of becoming a limited liability company in order to avoid the risks of liability was, technically, a separate issue from the question of whether or not to seek charitable status. However it was hardly treated as a separate issue by the meeting which seemed to be unanimous in feeling that a change in E.O.'s organisation should be "all or nothing!"

Michael Collier Bradley did not suggest any disadvantages likely to result from E.O. becoming either a company limited by guarantee or a registered charity but several disadvantages were suggested by the members present.

The following fears were expressed:-

1. That the present flexibility and catholicity of E.O. could be lost by its becoming an organisation with a written constitution.
2. That E.O. might find irksome the restrictions of its political activities which would result from its becoming a registered charity.
3. That being a limited company and/or being a registered charity could lead to E.O. becoming institutionalized and administration bound.
4. (By the Treasurer) that E.O. simply could not afford at the present time the costs that would be involved. (Registration as a charity involves a fee of approximately £10, and the legal costs of becoming a limited company amount to approximately £170.)
5. That for E.O. to be richer and more respectable could prove not to be a good thing for the well-being of the actual practice of home education - in fact quite the reverse.

In answer to the first of these fears Michael Collier Bradley said that though this was a risk it was not inevitable and that the constitution could be framed in such a way as to preserve the present "climate" of E.O. and, moreover, that, whatever the risk was in that direction, the fact still remained that to become a limited company was the only way of changing the present, undesirable situation as regards liability. In answer to the second of these fears Michael outlined very briefly the sort of political activity that was forbidden to registered charities and it did not appear that E.O. would in fact find itself unable to do anything which it at present, wishes to do. To fear number 3 Michael answered again that though this might be a risk it was not inevitable. Of the members present some cited examples of organisations which suffered in this way from becoming a limited company and/or a charity, whilst others cited examples of organisations that had not. Michael Collier Bradley said he had himself had plenty of experience of organisations that had not. Fear Number 4 was regarded as being based on a too short term view. Michael suggested that the £250 involved should be regarded as an investment as in his estimation it would be very soon recovered after charitable status had been achieved. Fear number 5 remained unanswered but was not pressed.

Michael Collier Bradley's advice at the end of the meeting was that E.O. would serve all its interests best by becoming a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

Alison Mafham.

MINUTES OF THE CORE GROUP MEETING.

Held on Sunday 29th May, 1983 at Unstone Grange, Nr. Sheffield.

Present: Bruce Cox (chair), John Elenor (minutes), Michael Collier-Bradley, Janet & Nigel Everdell, Simon & Caroline Grant, Joad & Richard Hoare, Ann Moss, Rob & Ann Wade, Bruce Wallance, Midge Whitelegg.

Apologies were received from: Julie Duff, Bob Emmett, Helen Holland, Cherity Laniado, Stephanie Leland, Alison Mafham, Roland Meighan, Ivan Sokolov.

1. Minutes and matters arising.

- 1.1. ref:3.3e 1f - the phrase 'EOers do it out of school' has been replaced by "Education Otherwise". (see 2.7. below)
- 1.2. ref:3.3f - Alison Mafham was appointed treasurer with effect from the end of March with Bob Emmett assisting by dealing with Sub.renewals.
- 1.3. ref:3.3h - Since Andrea Harrison resigned as mem.sec. after the last meeting, the question of the honorarium no longer arises.
- 1.4. ref:5.2 - Some advertising had appeared as an enclosure with the April Newsletter; the matter was further dealt with lower down the agenda (see 2.5.3. below)
- 1.5. ref 10.2 - The membership form/questionnaire has been redrafted and is now in use.

2. Reports.

- 2.1. Treasurer. The organization is in dire financial straits, with barely enough expected income to cover three more newsletter before December, let alone other running costs. Alisons report (outlined the previous day) suggested the following economies, which were then debated:-
 - 2.1.1. To cut out one newsletter in the current year, or reduce the newsletters to 6 in the next 18 months; the meeting felt that, since the newsletter is considered by most members as the major benefit from their subscription, it would be a retrograde step to cut out any issues. It was, however, agreed that the size should be reduced to 32 or 28 pages with paper cover so that it could be posted for 12p; this would save approx. £50 on postage and approx. £50 on printing costs. An exception to this would be if advertising were included, since the charge for adverts would more than pay for the increased costs.
 - 2.1.2. That members should bear the cost of all their phone calls, since this represented the biggest proportion of running costs. It was agreed that this would be unfair and unreasonable as it would penalise the most active members. We all know that many members, co-ordinators in-particular, subsidize E.O. generously in time and in kind. No co-ordinator should feel guilty about claiming genuine expenses provided these are kept to a minimum. We decided that a) letters should be preferred to phone calls; b) expenses beyond the petty cash level should be cleared first with the treasurer; c) claims for phone calls should be itemized according to date, time of day, length of call, to whom and on what business, with a special note to justify any long-distance calls during peak or standard rates.
 - 2.1.3. That ways to found of raising money in addition to subscriptions. Betty Ball (Who is organizing the draw) joined the meeting at this point to say how disappointed and frustrated she had been that the serious financial plight of E.O. had been played down in the minutes of the previous meeting, since she felt that consequently members had no sense of urgency about selling tickets for the draw - although costs had been covered, the profits so far were poor. There was general agreement that ways should and could be found of raising extra funds, but that a better time to do it would be at the week in Wales - Petty agreed to co-ordinate this.

- 2.2 Mem. Sec.
- 2.2.1. Present paid-up membership stands at 906; there were 162 old members who failed to renew.
- 2.2.2. Of new members, 12½% are joining at a reduced rate; the meeting felt that this was a tolerable proportion.
- 2.2.3. 197 new members have joined since January, at a rate of 1.4 per day. This entails not more than 5 or 6 hours work a week; the meeting agreed with Janet's suggestion that until the joining rate increases substantially, the job is not worth regionalizing. However, Janet wished to pass the job on since she had only undertaken it temporarily; Bruce Wallace agreed to take it over, and the meeting offered a hearty vote of thanks to Janet for taking it on so ably at short notice.
- 2.2.4. The electric typewriter has not yet been received from The Burntlands - agreed to ask Helen Holland to follow this up. Also agreed that the machine is not necessary to the job and should be sold for the benefit of funds.
- 2.2.5. The report concluded as follows: -"I consider Caroline Grants efforts in the last four months to have been outstanding. She has worked very hard for all of us with much hassle and in difficult personal circumstances, re-editing the intro. lit., membership form, and publications list, compiling the new contact List, arranging the printing and posting of two newsletters and stationery, and organizing a new batch of SINC and its delivery to me. I have reason to be extremely grateful for her marvellous efforts and cheerful cooperation. During these months we have exchanged enough letters to paper a large wall!"
- 2.3. Enq. Sec.
- 2.3.1. Enquiries average 25 per week; many are routine, but a good proportion come from distressed parents (this involves many hours of offering sympathy and suggestions - NB not advice!), journalists, researchers, etc. Many letters end with appreciative comments.
- 2.3.2. The Nationwide programme in January brought only two new members; Janet felt that this sort of publicity, in emphasizing difficulties, was bad for membership, even though the problems needed airing.
- 2.3.3. A free-lance journalist - Carol Baker - hopes to have an article on E.O. in 'Living' magazine in December including interviews with various members.
- 2.3.4. At least one LEA (Gwent) is alarmed at the "highly organized nature" of E.O. (At this remark the meeting erupted in hoots of laughter). A local newspaper article to this effect had been sent to Janet; parts of it are quoted in the June 'Ed. Through The Press'. The meeting was gratified at this amount of attention, though taking note of the problems it was likely to entail for local members.
- 2.3.5. In another authority (Cambs) a member who initially met total hostility found that the official she was dealing with changed his tune as soon as he learned she was an E.O. member.
- 2.3.6. Some problems had been caused when Roy Prescott, one of the Cheshire Coordinators, moved from his previous address and the new occupants were upset at receiving E.O. phone calls; Janet had written to apologize.
- 2.3.7. Finally, Janet offered her thanks to all those who had taken trouble to send her articles, information, etc., all of which made her job much easier.
- 2.4. Coordinating.
- Simon Grant reported that Bob Emmett is now compiling the resources and skills list.

- 2.5. Publications.
 2.5.1. The Digests are selling a little better, but only just.
 2.5.2. We have about 900 back copies of various newsletters which need to be sold; it was agreed that they should be offered cheap to members (eg. 4. for £1.), and put on stalls at fairs, etc.
- 2.5.3. Advertising in the newsletter: The loose leaf insert for June had arrived too late for inclusion. Julie Duff had reported that advertisers would much prefer to take space in the NL, rather than supply inserts; she proposed rates of £50 for a full page, £30 for a half and £20 for a quarter - these were agreed. The actual amount of space taken up by adverts would have to be negotiated with each editor (though it was felt that four pages should be a maximum); it was emphasized that this would not encroach on editorial content as agreed in item 2.1.1. above.
- 2.5.4. GWS: Stephanie Leland had reported that she must give up dealing with GWS; Midge Whitelegg agreed to take it over, and the meeting offered its thanks to Stephanie for doing the job for so long.
- 2.5.5. Action Pack.
 John Elenor outlined a suggestion (originating from another London member) that E.O. should emulate the Campaign for State-Supported Alternative Schools in producing an Action Pack to consist of SING, Early Years, Teenage Years (when Ready), Digest 9-12, a specimen Newsletter, and the introductory letter, all to be packaged in an attractive cover (for which a design exists). This sounded like a good idea, and John was asked to go ahead with it.
- 2.6. Renewals.
 Bob Emmett is now Assistant Treasurer dealing with subscription renewals. A note to this effect appeared in the June newsletter, but it was agreed that the information, together with his address, should appear regularly on the inside back cover of the NL.
- 2.7. Steering Committee.
 Since January it has been responsible for compiling the letter which appeared in the April NL referring to Andrea Harrison's resignation; and for changing the T-shirt slogan from EOers do it out of school (which slipped through the January meeting but on mature reflection was considered offensive) to a simple 'Education Otherwise' in the same style as the new letterhead.
3. REVISION OF SING.
 Ivan Sokolov, who is compiling a book on home education, has agreed to mastermind the revision in the light of his work on the book (and in consultation with Ivan Geffen). Agreed that:-
- 3.1. The next newsletter should appeal for comments from members to be to Ivan c/o his previous Ormskirk address:
- 3.2. The draft revision should be circulated to various members, in particular to the enquiries secretary;
- 3.3. Dick Kitto to be invited to write a 2-page insert with up-dated information to go in the next reprint of the present edition.
- An appeal was made to all who might be concerned with this to co-operate urgently, since too many things had been held up in the past when members did not cooperate.
4. The Future of E.O.
 The questions for discussion were a) should E.O. seek some form of charitable status, and b) should the organization acquire legal protection against liability, the arguments for and against had been lucidly set out the previous afternoon by Michael Collier-Bradley on behalf of Interaction (a Trust which, amongst other things, supports voluntary bodies in applications for legal and charitable status), and the feelings of most members had been aired; this discussion will be reported in the next newsletter. The discussion and decisions of the Core Group may be summarized thus:-

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- 4.1. Charitable Status.
 Certain funds are known to be available (and others are likely) to promote home education, but can only be claimed by a registered Charity. If EO became a charity making use of such funds it could expand its work considerably for the benefit of the many parents and children who at present regard home education as impossible (largely through unawareness of their own potential). At the same time, of course, it could allow itself to follow the downward path of some other charities, and lose its distinctive voice in a morass of bureaucracy. The meeting accepted this as a possible danger to be avoided, but not as an obstacle to charitable status. The two most useful forms were a) to make E.O. itself a charity, or b) to set up a Charitable Trust which would support E.O. It was decided that for administrative simplicity we should set up a Trust with a certain number of officers as ex-officio trustees - details to be worked out later. (see 4.2. below.)
- 4.2. Legal Liability.
 At present, any and all members are equally liable to be sued in the event of a claim being made against E.O., whether for injury during a meeting (though we insure against this) or for the ordering of goods whether in good faith or fraudulently - that we don't have funds to pay for. Those opposed to the idea of legal incorporation put forward various ingenious suggestions for providing security against such claims, but it was found that in the end none of them provided a genuine safeguard; it was therefore agreed that E.O. should become a Limited Liability company whereby, in return for a legally-imposed constitution, the liability of any member is limited to a nominal sum. It had previously been agreed that E.O. needed a better defined working structure (which is the implication behind 'constitution'), and it was generally accepted that the constitutional requirements involved in becoming a Limited Company would not be constricting.
- 4.3. The majority of the work involved in setting up the Trust and registering as a Limited Company will be done by Michael Collier-Bradley and Interaction, assisted by an E.O. subcommittee consisting of John Elenor (to coordinate), Joan Hoare and Rob Wade. They were instructed to present the draft constitutions for the above to the September Core Group meeting; any comments from members should be sent urgently to John. They were also instructed to investigate sources of funding, especially Hambros Bank which was believed to have offered to pay the registration costs (£250) as well as giving a substantial donation.
5. Research.
- 5.1. Roland Meighan sent in a report from the three-person working party set up in April 1982, of which he was the sole survivor! It listed the research needs of E.O. as:-
- 5.1.1. An advice service, based on case studies of members;
- 5.1.2. A compilation of information to give to the media;
- 5.1.3. Feedback from members on the services offered by E.O. and assistance in decision-making.
- 5.2. All this depends on a workable policy - what should it be? It was agreed that this policy could best be devised by a reconstituted working party: Roland is to be asked to convene it, Ann Wade and Ann Moss offered to join it. The results of all research should be summarized in the newsletter.
- 5.3. At the moment the new-style membership forms (which include a brief questionnaire) remain with Bob Emmett since Simon Grant is no longer analysing them. Ann Moss agreed to take on th's job, provided that

6. she was given advice on what information to extract from them.
Next Meeting.
According to precedent this should be in London over the last weekend in September (24/25). It cannot be held at Trent Park any more since John Elenor will by then have resigned as a Polytechnic Lecturer (to become a free-lance musician/EO Gen. Sec!); John agreed to find another suitable venue for this weekend, preferably with accommodation.
7. AOB
- 7.1. The transcript of the legal meeting held in January needs editing - Rob and Ann Wade agreed to do this.
- 7.2. Great appreciation was expressed at the success of the weekend, both in the accommodation and the events organized - many thanks to Joan Hoare and Betty Ball respectively. It was felt that E.O. ought to make use of Unstone Grange again, hopefully with a better turn-out - to that end it was agreed to look for a volunteer to write an account of the weekend for the newsletter (Sue Hart later agreed to do it).

Meeting closed approx. 2pm.

F.O. WEEKEND 24th 25th SEPTEMBER, 1983.

The venue for the London meeting has moved into town, to:

University of London Students Union,
Malet Street,
LONDON. WC1.

The rooms will be available on Saturday 24th from 11 am. The only fixed activity is a discussion meeting from 2 to 4 pm (perhaps followed by a co-ordinators meeting if it is needed); other attractions include -

Leila Berg's Bookstall

Use of Indoor swimming pool

Badge-making, face painting, etc.

Cafeteria

The Core group meeting on Sunday 25th will be held at 31 Anson Road, NW2, from 10.30 to 4.00. Directions for finding it will be available on the Saturday (or from John Elenor).

CCST

Since we have to pay for the hire of the Student Union rooms it is necessary to charge a small amount, £1.00 per adult, 50p for one child, £1.00 for two or more children. There is no booking form - simply send details and money (cheques payable to Education Otherwise) to:

Bill Blaik, 44 Alexandra Park Road, London. N10. 'Phone. (01) 4440823

The use of the swimming pool depends on us providing qualified life-savers; please contact John Elenor if you can help.

E.O. Weekend..... E.O. Weekend.....E.O.Weekend.....E.O. weekend.....

ACCOMMODATION.

This will be provided by local members; send your requirements to:

Bill Blak, 44 Alexandra Park Road, London. N10.

SATURDAY MEETING: 2-4 pm.

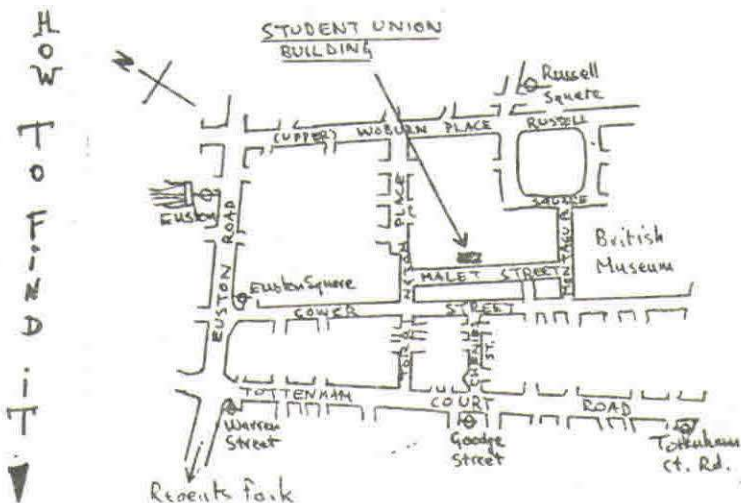
1. The Constitution (a written proposal will be circulated)
2. Election of new Steering Committee.
3. Official approaches to IEA'S - what works best?
4. Should we have an annual conference, with guest speaker(s), to appeal to the public and press?

SUNDAY CORE GROUP: 10.30 am - 4.00 pm.

1. Minutes and matters arising.
2. Reports from officers.
3. Election of new Steering Committee.
4. Approval of a constitution (proposals to be circulated in advance).
5. Any other matters from Saturdays meeting.
6. AOB.

Please bring a copy of the minutes printed in this Newsletter.

ASPECIAL APPEAL TO LONDON MEMBERS. IF YOU CAN OFFER ACCOMMODATION, CONTACT BILL.



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EDUCATION OTHERWISE OFFICERS.

TREASURFR. ALISON MAFHAM,
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Cambs.
PE18 9AN.
Tele: 0480 63130 Do not ring after 9.30 pm.

Members with enquiries should contact their co-ordinator in the first instance.

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Nr. Lewes,
Sussex.

Publishers please send copies for review to this address.

EDUCATION OTHERWISE.

BRUCE AND CHRISTINE WALLACE,
25 Diabaig,
ACHMA SHEEN,
Wester Ross,

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation whose principal aim is to provide a support and information network for families whose children are being educated out of school, for those who wish to support the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of children.

Our principal aims are as follows:

- * To encourage the provision of alternative learning situations outside the school system.
- * To reaffirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school.
- * To establish the primary right of children that full consideration, with due allowance for their age and understanding, shall be given to their wishes and feelings regarding their education.

For further information send a 9" x 4" s.a.e. to the address given above.