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education otherwise



NEWSLETTER 38

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Also an 8 page 'pull-out' on HISTORY by Alison Mafham
Betty Ball, Dianne Anderson, and others.

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The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors or of Education Otherwise as a whole.

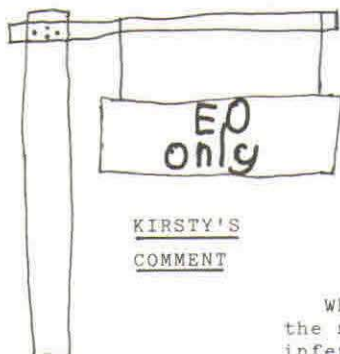
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EDITOR FOR THE FEBRUARY ISSUE IS:-

LINDA BAILEY
59a MILTON ROAD
CROYDON
SURREY

Entries for the next edition should be forwarded to Linda by 1st JANUARY '85 and all material intended as such should be clearly marked 'For Publication'

EDITORIAL



CALUM'S COMMENT

I like Betty Ball because I had such a nice time with her at Unstone.

KIRSTY'S COMMENT

FOR THE REST OF US

When word got round that we were going to do the next newsletter, various folk made comments inferring that we must be very organised: if they could see the house now they would never mention the word again !!!!!

Ruari has got 'cow-gum' in his hair, Kirsty is covered in black ink and Calum is now convinced that newsletters are as boring as baby brothers! As Bruce's typing has progressed from two to four fingers so his typing mistakes have increased and I'm sure we haven't found them all yet. Maybe we should pretend its a competition to spot the deliberate mistakes.

We were swamped with materials (it was lovely, we've read at least three N/L's worth) and as a result this issue has been increased in size slightly to squeeze in a bit more.

It occurs to us that many of the forms filled in by new members which often have requests for contact with others having a similar interest, problem or religion. We have included some requests that we received for publication (much edited I'm afraid to fit them in).

We'd like to thank local EO'ers Eleanor and Phillip; Esther and Amy, Calum, and especially Kirsty who painstakingly inked in the others's pencil drawings with which we have enlivened the pages of print. I managed to draw the amazing pattern on the front cover but the rest belongs to them! Also we have not labelled various items with folks ages; after all we don't intend to put 'Edited by Bruce and Christine Wallace, age CENSORED do we. (I'm not afraid to learn something new at 40, and show it, B.)

However, in spite of the hassle we have (mainly) enjoyed it. "You must be mad" said Betty Ball to Bruce at Unstone. I'm beginning to think she might be right.

Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas and a Good New Year!!!!!!

Love from Bruce, Christine, Kirsty, Calum & Ruari.

LAPSED BANKERS ORDERS

A number of people who used to pay their subscription by Bankers Order are still receiveing regular copies of the newsletter, and still appear on the contact list even though their subscription has lapsed some time ago. This is because the bank has not always made it clear which Bankers Orders have come through. If you are one of these people, please would you write to BOB EMMETT at 8 Queensway, Liddell Park, Llandudno, Gwynedd, telling him that you are, in fact, no longer subscribing.

THIS WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED.

EDUCATION THROUGH THE PRESS, with contributions from:-
Janice Owen, Caroline Grant, Nadine Edwards, Julian Bruce.

HOME IS BEST.

September saw the publication of a study by Barbara Tizard and Martin Hughes: YOUNG CHILDREN LEARNING. They analysed hundreds of conversations between 4 year old girls and their mothers, and nursery teachers. They concluded that a home -even a working class home is a far richer source of intellectual growth than a nursery class. "Mothers speak to their children nearly 3 times as often and what they say contributes far more to their child's development than the questions teachers tend to ask." The researchers say that while nursery school may be an ideal play environment, following Piaget's theories, continual play does not allow for children to learn by watching and taking part in the adult world. They point out that the 4 year old has to ask questions, not be constricted by a setting in which answers are expected of them. They flourish best where there is an unhurried one-to-one relationship free of educational 'aims' -and in the home, literacy and numeracy are natural acquisitions. Educators, despite knowing that children learn fastest when applying themselves to tasks which bear some meaning, devise ever more devious toys to stimulate them. At home, the same children are doing all sorts of tasks and developing skills because they feel an impelling need to emulate adults. No nursery teacher, they say is capable of matching the patience and pace with which mothers answer their child's constant questioning. And the researchers assure parents that, whether they try or not, the child goes on with the learning process. Playgroups- while not included in the study- must inevitably share most of the characteristics of nursery school. The researchers do feel that nursery school has a role to play - predictably, in preparing the child 'for the demands of school'. However, 'we just want people to realise that the quality of learning at home is so high, and that schools are far from effective'. (edited version of articles appearing in TES 14-9-84 and the TIMES 3-9-84. anyone wanting a copy of the full article, send an SAE.

AND YET

More than 400,000 children under the statutory age of 5 entered primary classes in September, despite warnings from experts that starting school too young is damaging, (OBSERVER 2-9-84) Local Authorities are disregarding government circular which recommends special provision for under 5's, in their haste to fill falling rolls.

AND MEANWHILE

Cardinal Hume called upon the schools in his diocese of Westminster to end corporal punishment as soon as possible (TELEGRAPH 9-7-84) ...the Conservative back-bench education committee warned Sir Keith Joseph that they would probably vote against any bills which would give parents the right to prevent their children being beaten in school (front page story, SCOTSMAN 25-10-84)....A mother who kept her two teenage sons away from school in protest against them being caned was being threatened by Mid-Glamorgan council with a care order (TELEGRAPH 21-7-84). "I know we are said to be the caning capital of Britain but there has actually been a tremendous decline in the county" said the chairman of mid-Glamorgan's working party to look into alternatives to corporal punishment, (TES.14-9-84) A letter to the EDUCATION GUARDIAN (30-10-84), said The Government wants to make corporal punishment optional. Another burden for the hard-pressed teachers in the State schoolsI believe that corporal punishment for boys between about 6 and 14 years , under proper safeguards, is essential for the conduct of non-selective, non-fee-paying education, the education of the great majority of our children...." And a letter to the TES. (27-7-84) from a teacher

who is also a parent: "All teachers... should stop hitting all children with leather straps and with their hands all of the time. They should not wait, they should simply stop giving children the worst possible lesson for future life and refrain from hitting them"

NEWS IN BRIEF: Spain has abolished homework and official exams for its 6 million children, ^{JAMES} 14 (TELEGRAPH 14-9-84)... An 11 year old boy saved his friend from drowning a month after failing a school life-saving test (TEL 2-8-84)... A man who carried a grudge about a 'D' grade for 14 years after leaving school travelled 3,000 miles to shoot his former teacher, in New York (TELEGRAPH 13-8-84)... an award winning steel and glass high school in Hunstanton, Norfolk, has to be extensively renovated at a cost of £200,000. Its structure, supposed to herald a new era when designed 30 years ago- affords little or no sound absorbancy, and because of the glass walls, children sometimes faint as temperatures reach 100F.- or get very cold in winter (TELEGRAPH 17-9-84)

TALKING ABOUT SCHOOL

"At no point did I make any decision of my own... I simply went to school and the system did the rest. When I thought about it after, I thought... How did I get here? This is my life. And I was infuriated" (Frances Morell, leader of ILEA, TES 27-7-84). Of her later teaching, she says: "I was shocked by the institutionalised wastefulness, the way the grammar schools wrote off the bottom streams and the appalling lack of personal choice. It was a question of staying in teaching and trying to help working class children or recognising that the system would frustrate the attempt and trying to improve the quality of education from outside".

"...in many schools education ... shows no sign of becoming a natural and enjoyable part of growing up. If the education service were a business and its consumers had a free choice, it would go bust. But it is a monopoly... The service is, in fact, an adventure playground for the Educationists." (Clive Priestley, director of special projects at British Telecom and earlier of the DES., TELEG. 21-9-84)

Anti-social behaviour could make this country an impossible place to live in and I should like to see human behaviour in the school curriculum (Sir Monty Finniston the industrialist, TELEGRAPH 22-9-84)

"Before term starts, explain that all children go to school, that they (your children) are not different... finally, remember, a school day is long and tiring. Your children may be rude and irritable in the evening and may regress and want all your attention in other ways - cuddles, or food." (article advising parents on how to cope with school, TELEGRAPH, 7-9-84).



STOP PRESS FROM THE PERRY FAMILY.

We lost the appeal to the High Court, because the judge couldn't find sufficient evidence to prove the LEA's unfairness. However our barrister advises an appeal to the Court of Appeal as the judge appears to have ignored our specialist reports. We are uncertain whether we'll get legal aid a second time, so is there any chance of assistance from EO, please.? The barrister also advises, if necessary, to go to the European Court, because of the "registered and not attending" syndrome. The LEA have also threatened to start magistrate court prosecution again, because they say our daughter Elizabeth is still registered !!!!



NEWS FROM THE REGIONS



LINCONSHIRE

As the new co-ordinator for this area I'm intending to print in the next N/L a list of venues with dates (probably Sundays) so that members can get together. Any suggestions will be gratefully received! - please bear in mind the need for a picnic area and facilities for wet weather, and let me know fairly soon.

JAN MARSHALL 24 KING ST, WEST DEEPING, PETERBOROUGH tel 0778-347793.

WEST MIDLANDS

There will be a meeting at 2.00pm on Saturday 19th January '85 at Sylvia and Bob Jeffs' house, 16 St Bernards Rd, Solihull (tel 021-706-6460). Old members are invited to come and meet some of those recently joined in our area and share experience. Bring some food or drink to share, too. Other regions welcome. If any of you out there would like meetings held at other times or venues, please let me know.

Hazel Clawley tel 021-772-7165.

WEST YORKSHIRE

Linda Cooper is intending to rove the world in a motorhome. We wish her and Steve and the girls well and thank her for all her work and enthusiasm.

New Co-ordinator:-

Peter Williams
2 Kent Ave.
Pudsey West yorkshire LS28 9ED
tel Pudsey (0532) 568940

West yorkshire's Curriculum for Home Education for Middle and Secondary Age Children, which Margaret Patching compiled, is still in great demand. We will send a copy on the receipt of £1 (to cover copying) and an SAE.

We plan to have a Christmas party for children of members on Thursday 20th december. Please telephone me for place, time and details. A minibus is available to ferry those with no transport. A meeting to discuss ideas for 1985, and to say farewell to the Coopers will be held on Wed. 2nd January at 2 Kent Ave Pudsey
Peter Williams

LOTHIAN

the second of two informal get-togethers was held on a very warm August afternoon in Edinburgh. This particular region has had very little EO activity up until now, and as yet has no local co-ordinator, so it was very encouraging to see so many friendly faces! In all about 11 adults and 14 children battled through the crowds if the Edinburgh Festival, and squeezed into a rather a small flat. After this enthusiastic response, we hope to meet regularly, and with more organised activities for the children
Lindsey Condry April Cott. West End Gordon Berwicks.

Editors Note

The Edwards, of 16 Market St Haddington have been 'pressed' into the co-ordinators job for Lothian.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE EO GROUP

We had a useful and pleasant meeting at 25 Moor Oaks Rd Sheffield in October. I'm sure we all have a lot to offer each other. At this meeting we decided to meet next at the house of Steve and Carol Morris, 15 Davis St, Clifton, Rotherham, tel 70925 on Saturday 12th January '85. Please bring along any books, resources, ideas etc., which you have found useful in home education, so that we can pool our information and learn from each other's experience. Arrive at Carol and Steves from 10-30am onwards - bring some food to eat for lunch which we can pool and share together. It will of course be OK to come for the afternoon only. In the afternoon those that wish can go to the nearby museum (which has Roman remains from the camp at Templeborough.) Please ring Carol and Steve if you are coming.

If any other South Yorks member has any ideas about how we should get together and where, then please let me know. Notices of meetings will only appear in the newsletter so please always read the regional news to see if anything is happening. Mailing each member separately is expensive and time consuming, and as far as I am aware no-one wants to undertake this task. Any volunteers welcome!

Joan Hoare 25 Moor Oaks Rd Broomhill SHEFFIELD S10 1BX
tel 666605

BUCKS/BEDS

Two meetings were held to take advantage of the glorious summer weather: a kite flying picnic on West Wycombe Hill in the south of the county, and another picnic at Jo and Vince Wests in the north where we had access to a swimming pool. Both were attended by many families and enjoyed very much.

The next meeting will be at Julie Webbs, 28 Churchway, Haddenham, on Sunday December 16th, (2-00pm) -all welcome but preferably 'phone first (Haddenham 290773) We hope to discuss changing co-ordinators and would like volunteers, one from Milton Keynes and one from the southern part of the county.

WILTS MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE!!

Oliver and Kate Freeman (Wilts Co-ords) together with Amelia, Russell, and Alex have moved to ; WAYSIDE FARM, ETCHILHAMPTON, DEVIZES, WILTS, tel. Cannings (038-086) 355. They will be at the old address till the New Year, also.

SOUTH DEVON MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE!!

Sue Farrow and Tony Jones and Ginny, Sarah and Jake have moved to ; 7 YELLANDS PARK, KINGSTON, Nr MODBURY, S DEVON. They would welcome any contact other families who have moved or are thinking of into the area with "A Village" as an aim. They are still tuned in on the idea!!

STRATHCLYDE SUPPORT

This year we have had 4 family gatherings, 2 in Glasgow, 1 in Paisley and 1 in Neilston, and have met a variety of new and familiar people at each. Folk have travelled from as far afield as Mull and I hope have gained support and confidence from meeting and talking with others while the children have had scope to play and explore and make new friends. For the meeting in November we notified not only EO members locally, but also the Scottish co-ordinators. However the distances made things difficult.

Lesley Downie

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

I had been stuck in a rut over communication for many years. I thought I was good at it. I'd been accused at times of being able to talk the hind legs off a donkey, and certainly I was seldom lost for words. So it was odd to slowly realise that much of the time I was not getting through to people. After nine years of marriage it was a shock to become aware that my partner and I had often spoken a different language. When I took my children out of school it came as quite a surprise that the only problem we had was my apparent inability to understand and be understood by my two small sons. I knew that had I wanted to teach them anything in a structured way I would have fallen at the first hurdle.

Prior to deschooling I had run a couple of workshops for play leaders on attitudes to children and childhood. In them I'd started to look at the question of equality between children and adults, and the process of good communication between big and little people. So, living as a single parent with two small children out of school seemed like a good moment to really explore the issues and put some of the different ideas into practice.

One of the most interesting books I'd come across was by an American who had abandoned therapy for problem children in favour of helping members of families to communicate better. He'd taught parents how to listen to their children's needs, how to be honest and open about theirs without hurting their children's feelings, and above all how to develop mutual respect and understanding in the place of either conventional authoritarian or permissive approaches to child rearing.

I knew I didn't want to be a power minded parent, laying down rules about everything, insisting my boys did always what I said without any question. I didn't believe I had the right to misuse the influence and authority I had by virtue of my greater knowledge and experience - the right to turn such authority into power. I believed that a relationship based on external discipline, rewards and punishment, wielding big sticks and carrots, would ultimately become bankrupt. I'd seen others run out of power over their teenagers and lose their respect and love.

I also knew that I didn't want to be walked over by my children. As a single parent it was important that my boys help meet my needs as well as me theirs. I had no intention of being their slave, being pushed around by them, having them promise good behavior in return for rewards. I was aware that they could wield sticks and carrots too!

I was relieved then to have stumbled on someone saying that children are 100% important AND parents are 100% important AND relationships are 100% important. Dr Thomas Gordon was offering practical skills to help people listen accurately, really understand what their children were saying, help the children work out for themselves what the causes of their problems were and find their own solutions. He was suggesting a way to help people like me make my needs known to my children without having to shout and blame, label or put down. As I slowly started putting the ideas into practice I realised how much I'd attacked my children for being inconsiderate, uncaring and too demanding. Now I could start to tell them what I needed in our relationship AND sure enough, by giving them some responsibility for helping me, they started to become more understanding and less demanding. It was as if before they had never known that their behaviour gave me problems.

Even now, there are occasions when our needs are in conflict, when I need peace and quiet and they need to romp and scream. In the old days we would usually have ended up fighting over who got their way. Now I have new skills to resolve these sticky problems. Contained in Dr Gordon's model is a simple yet powerful process for solving problems so that both sides win. Whether the problem is about bed times, food, or tantrums, or who plays with what, or when and where you do things etc all the common conflicts in families; or whether they are between me and other adults about how we share time and space, roles and obligations, even values and beliefs, I now have an effective democratic way to resolve conflicts.

Three years on I am no longer a full time parent. My two sons went back to live with their mother after 12 months. I went on to develop my interests in communications, building new skills at work, in play, in new relationships as well as with the boys in our times together. Not having found a better model than Dr Gordons, I finally took the plunge and flew to America earlier this year to train with his organisation. Since my return I have started running communication courses for parents and other people.

The courses are very practical, aiming to give people basic skills in communicating and problem solving which, with practice, will help you relate to children and other adults on a more open and honest level. They are not an instant cure for major behavioural problems though they have helped other parents to realise that even apparent psychological problems are often no more than total communications failures. They are primarily about helping normal families with normal problems have a happier and easier time of growing up.

The training is based on Dr Gordons Parent Effectiveness Training, modified in language and style to suit the British home. Courses are available in various formats, weekends or day/evenings over an extended period, in different parts of the country depending on demand. Contact me for details on courses and Dr Gordons books;

Ivan Sokolov 7 Hawley ST, London NW1 8BY tel 01-267-5469.

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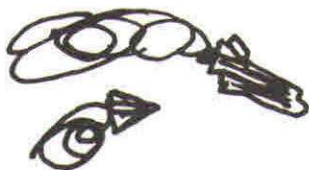
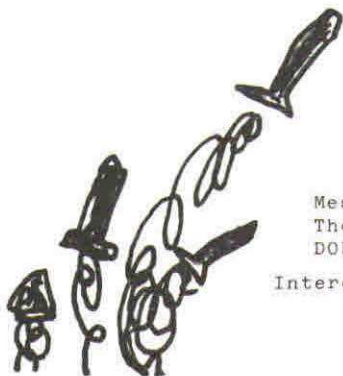


CONGRATULATIONS are due to Helen Hollanu and family on the safe arrival of their newest member THEODORE CHARLES STEWART. Born at home on the 14th August and weighing 9½lb.

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INTERESTING QUOTE

"They have no sympathy with youth; their object was to stuff our brains and turn us into erudite apes like themselves. If any pupil showed the slightest trace of originality, they persecute him relentlessly, and the only model pupils whom I have ever known have been failures in later life" We'd thought about giving a prize if anyone guessed who said this, but couldn't afford anything that was suitably extravagant!!! See end cover for answer.



Message from ANDY ANDERSON!
There are co-ordinators needed for NORTH DEVON
DORSET, HAMPSHIRE, POWYS AND CHANNEL ISLES!

Interested parties contact Andy as soon as possible!

at an EO Christmas party Mrs G meets a teacher...

and you teach 20 children
all by yourself? How do
you have the
PATIENCE?



£i don't you worry about
them mixing only
with their peer
group?



what about when they're older
& have to sit
exams?



and supposing we ALL
kept our children
in school?



don't get me wrong - I'm
just fascinated, that's
all



I couldn't do it, I must
say, but I take my hat
off to you



EDUCATING ARCHIE
at Christmas

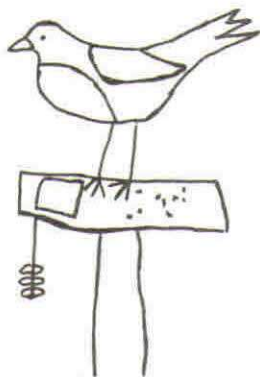
by SEG



REVIEWS

There is a spate of books on home education at the present. Their very titles make encouraging reading and their contents will certainly keep your spirits up between issues of the EO newsletter!

If you wish to review a book for the N/L please request it through our Reviews Editor, Helen Holland. Send her the details then she will make an official request to the publishers asking them for the book to be sent direct to you, the intending reviewer. If you do receive a review copy in this way PLEASE DO write the review. Publishers are understandably reluctant to send out further books for review if reviews that have been promised do not materialise.



"BE YOUR CHILD'S NATURAL TEACHER" by Geraldine Taylor
Published by Impact Books and distributed by Harrap at £3.95.

This is not strictly a home schooling manual but it does underline how well a parent can teach his or her own child and gives detailed advice on working with a young child at English and mathematics. This could be very helpful to those families embarking on education otherwise as Geraldine Taylor shows exactly how to tackle each step and stresses how pleasurable the experience can be. She envisages a parents supplementing of the child's schooling as she herself has done; but her final comments make clear all the positive advantages and joys of teaching one's own children--- "When I started to teach Peter I knew only that it was necessary for me to do so; I did not expect that it would be such a joy, that my love and respect for his personality would deepen so much as a result - or that it would bring us all such continuing happiness and fulfilment."

So why not do it full time?

Helen Holland

"FOR THE CHILDREN'S SAKE" by Susan Macauley
Published by Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois, U.S.A. \$6.95.

Available from L'Abri Bookstore, Manor House, Greatham, Liss, Hants. GU336HF

Susan Macauley is a member of EO and daughter of the founder of L'Abri Fellowship. Her book thus combines a practical knowledge of home schooling with a profound Christian faith. In fact Susan herself was educated at home from the age of 12 and is one of the people to whom I point whenever asked if I've ever met a survivor of such an untoward experience!

In her book Susan shows how to put into practice the ideas of Charlotte Mason, founder of the PNEU (now renamed Worldwide Education Service). She asks anyone concerned with children to consider them as people who matter, quoting Charlotte Mason's proposition "Children are born persons" as a central truth.

"there has never been a generation when children have so desperately needed their parents' time Thoughtful creativity, and friendship." But the time for lessons need not, indeed must not, be long. Children should have short, interesting lessons then be let out to play, outside if possible. There is plenty of detailed advice here which will be of great help to home schooling parents who want to base their family life on a Christian foundation. And this book, too, emphasises the richness and joy of learning with your children. Do read it.

Helen Holland

BETTER THAN SCHOOL by Nancy Wallace; introduce by John Holt
Published by Larsen Publications Inc., Burdett, NY at \$14-95

Let me say straight away that, whether you are a hardened alternative-thinking deschooler or an anxious parent wondering whether you have it in you to allow your child to learn out of school, this book is well worth reading if you can get hold of it. If you come into the first of these categories and cannot afford \$12-odd, it would be worth trying to get it from your local library: I doubt whether it would do more than confirm what you will undoubtedly know already, but it is invaluable to find so many levels on which one can identify despite the differences in culture and environment - social attitudes remain much the same and so of course, do children.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of this book is that Nancy Wallace manages to convey through her own personal experience the essential elements of both the individuality of every different homeschooling situation and the common causes which unite all homeschooling families. As John Holt says in his Introduction, there are no 'typical' homeschooling families, and it is in this pursuit of individual initiative and philosophy of self-sufficiency (I don't just mean growing your own veg.!) which is so stimulating. Had this book existed (and been known to exist) when we first set our feet on what was then an officially unsignposted, unpublicised track towards the indistinct horizons of learning, I would have gone to great lengths to acquire it for myself, and would probably have read and re-read it with the intensity I used to apply to Dr Spock fourteen years ago in the early years of motherhood.

It is not, as its author takes pain to point out, a book which tells you how. Quite the reverse: it provides, always through personal analogy, the means to acquire self-confidence in ones own chosen methods of bringing up children within an existing realworld community, and, through personal experience, provides inspiration to the uninitiated (and the hardened variety too) on how to make the most of community resources and work towards more and more rejection of the 'expert' theory:

"For too long, it seems to me, we have all been encouraged pushed, or even compelled (in the case of schooling, for example) to go to professionals with formal training and 'expertise' for advice about how to do even the most ordinary tasks - to doctors lawyers, dentists, teachers, experts telling us how to lose weight eat right, or have happy or well behaved children. We even seek out expertsto help us decorate our houses or organise our closets. But the more we rely on these experts, the more helpless we become and the more useless we feel. This is a syndrome that I don't want to be a part of, any more than I can help, on either end."

I am sure most people readingthis newsletter would heartily agree with these sentiments, particularly in the realms of home schooling. But this book goes further , I think, in helping to create an awareness of other areas in which we may unconsciously have been abdicated our potential in individual thought and creativity to so called 'experts'.

Denise Mutter

THE RURAL RESETTLEMENT HANDBOOK (Third Edition)

Edited by Dick Kitto, Illustrated by Lucy Kitto.

Styling itself as "a tool for those who are thinking of moving to the countryside, for those already there, and for those who share a concern about rural problems", the book consists of over 300 pages packed with practical information and advice about moving to and living in the country. In addition to a 37 page long list of useful addresses and publications, each section yields a wealth of detail concerning how to go about more or less everything and where to go for help and further information. The various sections - for which different members of the Group took responsibility - have been carefully researched and cover topics such as Choosing a house, Planning and Building Regulations, Earning, co-operative Enterprises, Community Action and children, to name but a few. A closer look reveals sub-sections on anything from Maintenance of Rights of Way to Home Birth, Windpower to Car-sharing.

About a quarter of the book is devoted to a number of personal accounts of moving to the country (some by EO members) and these are as lively as they are varied.

As a recent "resettler" and having come up against at least some of the trials and tribulations, pitfalls and problems that are addressed in this book, I wish I had read it three years ago; but even so, reading it now has served to remind me of what I am trying to do and why, renewed my enthusiasm for the same, and given me further ideas for extending my co-operation with others and involvement in the local community. If you are thinking of making a move in the direction of the country, then this book could save you a lot of time and trouble.

Despite the introductory apology that much of the book lacks entertainment value, its style in general is far from dry; nor is it lacking in humour and poetry. I found it a highly stimulating read, and a pleasant combination of optimism, sound (green) politics and practical realism.

The book is published jointly by Prism Press and Lighthouse Books, costs £4-95 in paperback, and £10-95 in hardback.

Caroline Grant

EXPERIMENTS ON AIR POLLUTION, by DI Williams & D Anglesea.

Published by Wayland Publishers Ltd, 49 Lansdowne Place, Hove £3.95

this is one in a series of four books entitled 'Experiments in Pollution and Conservation' - the others deal with water pollution, land pollution and projects in conservation. This book is set out in the form of 23 experiments, graded from simple(*) to complicated(*****). It shows in a clear, graphic and scientific way, the effects of pollution caused by soot, sulphur dioxide, car exhaust, noise and so on. The introduction is concerned (as so indeed it should be) and well-written; the Further Reading section lists a number of useful books; and the illustrations are of uniformly high quality. A welcome and very worth while addition to any bookshelf, EO or otherwise.

Charles Mutter

ANYTHING SCHOOL CAN DO YOU CAN DO BETTER

By Maire Mullarney, published by Arlen House- ISBN 0905223 38 1

Should EO ever get around to printing a list of "set-reading" for prospective EO families, then this book will probably be in there somewhere. The book is "...the story of ordinary people who had unusually prolonged and varied opportunities for own child watching" This vast understatement refers to the fact that Maire Mullarney had ELEVEN children. After we read the book we couldn't help but a few feelings of inadequacy creep into our conversation - as we thought of how we cope with our two!! Inadequate feelings apart, this book is not only very interesting to read, but it also contains a wealth of information and ideas that a lot of parents will find of use and above all, practical. There is a core of Montessori principles throughout, and the book is a practical demonstration of aspects of her work. At the end of the book is a specific chapter on "Resources", and this in particular readers might find of value.

Whilst one might not agree with everything that Maire did, one cannot at the end feel, that she was a person of the utmost dedication and perhaps a model that some might try to emulate,

Steve and Gill Masefield.

YOUNG LEARNERS AND THE MICRO-COMPUTER

By Daniel Chandler, Published by Open University Press
ISBN 0 335 10578 5

Working as I do with computers in the State System I have already come across several reviews of this book. Each of them has reported most favourably upon the presentation, content and style. The latter being especially so, as it really is easy on the brain to read.

As a book for people considering the road to "micro-computerisation" it is a book that can be well recommended. In particular, the treatment of the new range in computer happenings - "Logo" - is well covered. Seymour Papert is given his reference (& reverence).

For a personal opinion, it rang a few alarm bells in the predictions for our children and society with the growing "micro-population. Some of his ideas - whilst, no doubt, made in good faith - donot for me sound like ideas for a society I would want to live in or for my children to be part of.

Whatever your feelings about the subject, the book gives a clear insight into the present state of the art (if ever such a thing is possible in computer books). The choice is yours to make, but whatever side of the fence you jump (or fall) - this book should give you a push!

Steve Masefield.

SOME MORE BOOKS FROM FIONS

21Napier St Edinburgh EH10 5AZ

Firstly some new reprints; CHRIST LEGENDS by Selma Lagelof. These were first published in 1904 and were inspired by stories told to her by her Grandmother when she was small and a subsequent visit to the Holy Land.

Lillah, who is 8½, says they are some of the best stories she has ever had. I think some might appeal to children a year or two younger and certainly to anyone older. I found them enthralling- they are so

vividly written conveying the might of the Roman Empire and giving a strong impression of what it would have been like to have lived in those days - whether crossing a desert, visiting the Temple in Jerusalem or shepherding flocks on the hillside, yet with the addition of something more elusive and spiritual which gives them the power to touch deeply

BROTHERS AND SISTERS

THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF THE CHILD

) Karl Konig
)

Brothers and Sisters is an account of the different qualities to be expected in a child's social behavior, according to his place in the family. There are several sets of statistics and references to other psychologists' findings but for me the most telling aspect was how much his descriptions of the first, second, third child and so on, fitted so closely with characteristics we'd noticed in our children. It is necessary to read the book to learn fully what these are but roughly speaking the first child is the one more bound to the things of this earth, upholding traditional values and forming the bridge between the parents and the other children whom he has the responsibility to look after. This seen as his task, rather than something to be apologised for. The second child is seen as being connected with the world he has come from, and will "fill our lives with joy and beauty and help us to overcome the heaviness of all existence". Third children are the visionaries who often sow the seeds of the future though they are often rather irrational and can over-reach themselves - "they consume themselves for the sake of others".

The First Three Years of the Child is a reconsideration of walking, talking, and thinking in the light of Steiner's teaching and requires much more careful reading. He shows how most scientists have certain preconceptions - about such areas as evolution or instinctual behaviour or the child's ability to think in an abstract way - which have permeated current views about child development. He brings us back to the miracles inherent in these activities and shows how they are gifts, present from before birth but which unfold each in due course.

Two other books with Christmas and children in mind:
FELIX FIRESTITCH by Cordelia Büttcher (HB @ £4-95) with illustrations by Peer Rugland which are full of life and colour. This is a story about a journeyman tailor who sets off on his travels with the aim of learning how he can free the people of his country from the law which compels them to wear black clothes. It can read on more than one level and would appeal to the 4-10 age range.

THE HEALING ART OF GLOVE PUPPETRY by Gisela Bittlestan gives very clear instructions on how to make glove puppets from cloth, and a wooden theatre (not tested yet) and gives 4 plays which can be performed. There are various helpful hints about positioning of puppeteers, use of props, types of movement and so on.

Last year the book ADVENT FOR CHILDREN by Freya Jaffke (£3-95), was reviewed and I notice that Fions have also re-issued a story by Gunhild Sehlin - MARY'S LITTLE DONKEY (ages 4-10) Price £4-95, HB.

10% is to be added to postage for surface postage.

The Botton Bookshop are stockists of a Swedish Advent Calendar based on the first story in CHRIST LEGENDS; price £2-95 inc. carriage
Botton Bookshop, Botton Village Danby, Whitby, N Yorks

reviewed by Jackie Fearnley.

THE DRAMA OF THE GIFTED CHILD AND THE SEARCH FOR TRUE SELF

by Alice Miller published by Faber 1983 at £2-95.

I'd like to urge anyone interested in child development to read this book. Although it is written within a psychoanalytic framework, it is easily understood and the deep humanity and wisdom of the author always shines through.

The title is possibly misleading as the relevance of the word 'gifted' here is intended to express the especial sensitivity of certain children rather than in any particular talents they may have. This may make them very prone to abdicating their 'true self' at an early age in response to adult expectations and needs. The 'true self' is that core of the individual which responds authentically to the world, knows what it feels and is not afraid to feel it. But it can only be experienced in adulthood, says Alice Miller, if in infancy the parents or central adults, allow the child to enjoy a healthy narcissism. This means not requiring the child to be too good or too clever and so deny his or her actual feelings and their expression. This will inevitably often be the negative ones of obstinacy, rage, jealousy and so on.

Parents who have themselves been so damaged in their own childhood (which is almost everyone in our society to some degree) are not capable of offering the necessary unconditional nurturing to their small children and so a 'vicious circle of contempt' is set up - contempt for the true self and reverence for false personality constructs which include only those traits deemed desirable by the parents such as politeness, generosity, intelligence, beauty, or special skills. The book argues that real generosity, courtesy etc is not possible unless it springs from the true self. Anything else is merely learnt good behaviour and not based on genuine feeling. The loss of true self results in the disturbances of either grandiosity or depression, both founded in a deep lack of self-esteem stemming from the original contempt for the child's real feelings.

So how can this vicious circle be broken? Only, says Alice Miller, by working towards a re-experiencing of the original grief which was repressed when, as a child the true self was rejected. When the child was not loved for itself but only if it was good, beautiful or clever. And that means not really loved at all.

I've tried to sketch the main ideas in this very important book but can't begin to do it justice, so do read it yourself!

This book recommended and reviewed by WENDY RAZZELL

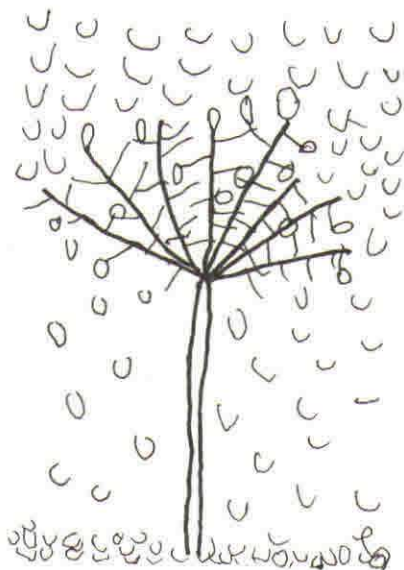
RAIN

Comes in a drop,
Hits water with a plop
Hits the ground with a splat
Wetting the flowers, soaking the mat.
Down the trees it splutters,
Trickling along the gutters.

THE CLOUDS

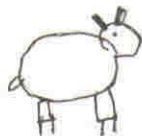
All fluffy and white like a dream,
A sky full of whisked cream.
Reminds you of a fairy tale land,
So clear, so white so bland.
Like a thick blanket creamy grey,
Singles you out like a stray.

written by Edward Lockington
(who has never been to school)



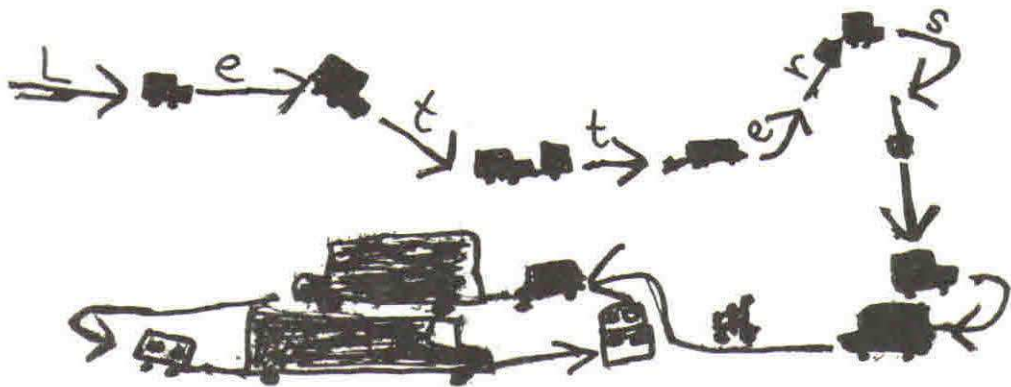
Helen

my head is round my feet are long,
what d'you think of my new song.
Piper and Fiona are coming today,
well at least I think they may.
I'm watching rainbow ho what fun,
I say it's Sippy to my mum.
It's finished now oh what a shame,
but Helen Bridgeman is my name.
The Sulivans is starting now,
that girl Kitty's such a cow.
Alise is in love with Jim,
Katey also fancies him.
I'm doing somersalts in my room,
as Basil Brush would say boom boom.
mum's off on a shopping trip,
hope she comes back with a drink to sip.
Ronda has just made a call,
stick-insects wanted for Tors School.
It's one oclock on wensday now,
time is passing quickly, how?.



HEDGEHOGS HIBERNATING
BY MELISSA

Editors: thankyou Melissa
(we agree B.)



32 Pillmawe Circle
Malpas
Gwent

Dear Editor

No doubt readers will remember previously an account of the trouble we have had with the LEA who have been prosecuting for 'registered and not attending' and despite us submitting reports from independant experts, the LEA refused to reconsider the matter. However, we have successfully been granted leave to appeal in the High Court for a Judicial Revue of the LEA's decision about the standard of education we provide David. The date has now been fixed for November 6th, but no further details are available until after the hearing.

yours faithfully

John and Linda Perry.

**** SEE STOP PRESS **** (p.3)

Stanborough Park
Watford
Herts

Dear Editor

In my work as Education Director for the Seventh-Day Adventist in Britain I have recommended EO to a number of parents. This indicates my sympathy with de-schooling as an option to parents.

What disturbs me a little about your magazine is the sometimes rather cheap attacks on the conventional educational education system. For example, Parents Guide to School Jargon, admittedly only half serious, and SEG's cartoon on page 35, of October 84 Newsletter. I think the Newsletter should be a magazine which a school teacher could read with profit. SEG's cartoon is unjust to the great majority of teachers. Yours case stands on its own merits. It is not helped by abuse of others!

Yours sincerely

H.I.Dunton.

Dear Editor

We were one of sixteen families attending the EO camping weekend about which a complaint was received regarding adult nudity. I don't feel separate weekends for naturists would be very successful (as suggested by Jean Shepherd) since this involved only a few adults present- some of whom were friends of the hosts and were not (to my knowledge) members of EO. All I can say about the weekend is that we had a lovely time..... nudists or otherwise. Thanks, Ruth And Ed, for making it all possible.

Incidentally, I hope the move went well!

Rest wishes

Sandie Cottee

(Essex co-ordinator)

Dear Readers

My name is Natesha Bhana, I left school last September, to work at home. I do adult education classes and my mother teaches me French and some maths. I left school because I didn't get on with the teachers, they were too strict for me. Although I don't learn as many subjects at home, I learn the ones that interest me. I study child development, sociology, English, French, maths and I sometimes cook and work on my project. I enjoy reading books.

I'm 15½ and I am looking for someone who lives by the sea or far away from London, who would like to come to London and visit me and visa-versa. Write to me ;Natesha Bhana, 24 Harold Rd London N8

So any girl around the same age as me who enjoys dancing, soul music and is studying at home, who would like to come to London to visit, PLEASE WRITE.

Yours hopefully, Natesha Bhana.

18 Canadian Ave
London SE6 3AS

Dear Editor

Here are our experiences of part time schooling. My daughter was studying 7 'O' Level subjects at home. We were finding Maths and Chemistry rather hard going so she returned to school for these. History was later added as it fitted in with the timetable. We wanted to continue with the rest at home.

I must say that the Head was most liberal minded and understanding. Most of the Staff were helpful and the pupils soon got used to my daughters unusual timetable. She achieved the 'O' Levels she was studying at school ; plus one other. However it was, I think, a mistake.

Because; 1/ We had not realised how much time would be taken up going to and from school. The lessons were scattered throughout the week

2/ There was so much homework. My daughter had never had to spend her evenings studying and was most reluctant to do so now. Inevitably her home education suffered.

3/ Because she was taking exams at school the examining board would not allow her to sit others as a private candidate. One head of department allowed her to sit a subject she was studying at home but the others refused.

So I would advise anyone thinking of mixing EO and school education to work out the mechanics of it very carefully. We found it very difficult indeed to combine the two ways of life.

Yours Sincerely
Jane Chaudhuri.

FROM Sandy Leigh, Oakhill Lane Cottage, Calverton, Bucks

I would like to make all EO members aware of the existence of a little book called "Magical Child" by Joseph Chilton-Pearce, published by Granada. This book has been the greatest support and inspiration to me and I feel all parents would benefit from the help and advice it holds. If anyone has difficulty obtaining a copy please write to me and I will forward one to you for the price of the postage (80p).



From Miller Family, Waun-lywd, Cynwyl Elfed, Carmarthen, Dyfed.

We are a family of 13 people, 7 are small children aged 7,6,5,5,5, 2, and 1. We are pacifists, feminists and strict vegans. Our politics are to the left. Some of us are atheists, some are agnostics, and one a Buddhist. We are anti-abortion. Our two youngest children are adopted and both have Downs Syndrome (mongolism). We live as an extended family on a co-operative basis.

We decided not to send our children to school when the first child was born. We did not inform the LEA of our decision. When the first was 6 years old the SWO. (school Welfare Officer), who we already knew came to see us. She said she assumed we were educating the child ourselves, but had to check up. Next we got a letter asking us to write and ask permission! We wrote back stating that under the relevant acts, which we quoted, we were entitled to educate the children at home and intended to do so. We all signed the letter putting our letters after our names if we had any. We received a letter to say a Miss M, education advisor, would come and see us. Then we got another letter asking us to send in a list of books, materials, and equipment, we did this and heard no more for another year, when we got a phone call from the SWO to say that Miss M was coming to see us. We made the appointment and on the day Miss M arrived. We liked her straight away. We explained that we did not believe in formal methods for children under 7 or even 8 and that we had only encouraged the eldest two to read as a compromise between what we really wanted to do and what we knew the LEA would want us to do. Miss M quite understood. She heard the two eldest read and looked at their books and said she was more than satisfied! She was very helpful and encouraging. We even confessed that we did not stick to the plan of work on the timetable, she said it didn't matter, the children were being educated and were happy and self-confident. She asked us why we were keeping them at home and we said because we could not bear to be parted from them. We didn't go into all the other reasons! Miss M is going to visit next year and hopes the eldest will be able to write sentences by then!

The Educational Psychologist visits us to see our youngest children and we think approves of our plans to keep them at home.

We have one person who has a degree and teaches piano for a living, one person at university reading for BA ed (hons) in her fourth and final year, and an RMN and RNMS.

The children have formal lessons with an unqualified person. Formal sessions start at 7.30am and go on until 10.30 approx. Individual teaching is practical as much as possible. Art, music and crafts are happening at any time.

Our children run "wild and free" for most of the time, we have a 1/2 acre garden. Obviously we keep an eye on them. We go on "trips" to exhibitions, theatre, museums, swimming etc. the eldest has violin lessons.

We would like to add that we got our two babies through the "Be My Parent" book. We are holders of the book for this area. If anyone is interested in adopting a child they can phone 01-407-9763 to find out where their nearest book is. There are over 100 children in the book at any one time who are waiting for families. You don't have to be married, or in work to adopt, and its obvious from this families experience that you can be EO'ers as well!!

THE OTHER PLACE

Write plays and perform them, gymnastics, French, Italian, German, Dutch, Turkish, barn dancing, cooking and eating together, clay, yoga and meditation, these are some of the suggestions at the brainstorming session to help us launch a new Family Workshop in Hove (Sussex)

Members in East Sussex are quite fond of getting together (is it because we are all quite fond of each other? or do we need to talk more than most?) and over the past few years, have met for picnics, barn dances, workshop days in houses, sailing and paddling and lots of times to talk.

We are about to embark on a regular workshop on Wednesdays from 1-30 to 5-00 at the YMCA, Marmion Rd Hove. Open to anyone, but because we have rent to pay and equipment to gather, local families have committed themselves to pay £2 a family per week for 10 weeks, others may drop in at £3 per family.

After our initial session, it was decided to have our first workshop on Sep 26th, with a very loose programme of trampolining for under 8's and for over 8's (does that mean Mums and Dads? came a plaintive cry - of course it does, this is a family workshop), some country dancing, a range of craft activities freely available, cooking for communal tea at the end and a space for "non-competitive" games and a chance for all to come together in a closing circle, to talk about the day and encourage everyone from oldest to youngest to participate in the evaluating of the day, and contribute to the running of the workshop.

Some of us have a long way to travel, and will meet for swimming in the morning and have lunch as one of our first activities, some will come from morning playgroup or Steiner school.

Part Two..... We have now met twice and are in the process of sorting our various problems. The meeting and talking of the closing circle needs to be re-thought, I think the children need some food before we begin. Cooking together is fun and works well but we are not sure how to charge people for food, should it be an inclusive fee or pay as you eat? Trampolining class was great fun, two adults joined in the first time and four the second, a great activity across the ages. We have lots of ideas but are letting things grow slowly. Anyone is welcome to come for the afternoon but of course we hope that families will be able to commit themselves for the whole term so that we can pay the rent without worrying each week whether we have enough. Do hope we'll see you there!

Written by Maxine Toff

PS Could I recomend the booklist 'Ms Muffet flights back' books chosen by Rosemary Stone which are non-sexist. It is free from Penguin books.

Editors apology. Sorry Zachary, I appreciate the effort but the typewriter ribbon was not black enough.

ABJECT APOLOGIES FROM BRUCE:

To Susan Macaulay of Switzerland. I'm afraid I've lost the article you sent, which we fully intended to include in this newsletter. Can you do it again? And hopefully the next editors will be more organised!

INFORMATION LIBRARY

Andy and Diane Anderson, 95 Derrington Ave, Crewe, Cheshire.0270-664060

The information lists now need up-dating and this will mean working on the computer discs so unfortunately no lists will be available until the February newsletter although we will do our best to give any help till these are ready and you are of course, still welcome to visit us. However, we would still like to receive your recommendations, ideas, etc, and from those who have had information from the library, your comments as to how this service could be further improved. Two new lists we hope to have ready for February are Maths and History 'Without a Textbook' but your ideas are needed for these as well ~~as well~~ as those ideas for other subjects 'without a textbook' for the future. These lists will be especially useful for children who do not like textbooks so YOUR SUGGESTIONS PLEASE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the following publishers for books generously donated to the library.

E.&W.Bleasdale for 'Reading by Rainbow'

A.&M.Bagenal for 'Box of Delights Packs'

Kingfisher Books Ltd. for 'Kingfisher Guides', 'Factbooks', 'Pocket Books', 'History as Evidence', 'Datelines of World History', 'Children's Bible' and 'Question and Answer Encyclopedia'.

Wayland Publishers Ltd. for 'Endeavor', 'Life and Times', 'Growing up in Other Times', 'Eyewitness History', 'Famous Names', 'Kings and Queens', 'History Makers', 'Pioneers of Science and Discovery', 'Picture History', 'People, Politics and Powers', 'Festivals', 'Looking at Art', 'Planet Earth', 'Families Around the World', 'Original Peoples', 'Young Explorer', 'You and Your Body', 'Young Scientist', 'Young Engineer', 'Investigations', 'Observing Nature' and 'In Profile'.

Also from Wayland a series of books in both an easier version (1st title) and a more complex edition (2nd title). 'My Country' & 'Living Here', 'Seas Around the World' & 'Seas and Oceans', 'River Journeys' & 'Rivers of the World', 'Looking at Transport' & 'Transport and Society', 'Food Around the World' & 'What the World Eats', 'Down on the Farm' & 'Farm Animals' and 'In the Wild' & 'Animals of the World'.

Samples of their magazines from The Young Archaeologists Club, Current Archaeology, The Junior Astronomical Society and The Cousteau Society. Membership forms for these and other clubs etc. from the library - please enclose sae.

The George Philip Group for a selection of atlases - see their catalogue for the most suitable.

John Bartholomew & Son Ltd. for pictorial and other maps donated for the History weekend.

ARE YOU OVER 5 AND LIVE IN NORTH LONDON?

The Wightman Rd Childrens Group are looking forward to meeting tou. We are a group of children and grownups who have been meeting twice a week from 10-30am to 3-00pm since September 1983.

At the mament there are 10 children in the group, the youngest 6 mths the eldest almost 6 years of age. Some of the children come twice a week to the group whilst their parents come one day.

Our main interest is to meet together as a group of different ages on a continuous basis and share our skills, interests amd need to socialise. Some of us have made the decision of EO, others are in the process

We meet in a private house in Wightman Rd in North London. We have the use of two large rooms and the enormous garden. We pay one pound per child per day to meet the rent and heating bills and pay for any materials needed.

We would very much welcome some more people of 5 years and older. So if you are interested please contact P ien, at 01-348-0653.

HISTORY AT UNSTONE GRANGE by Alison Mafham.

It was also rather pleasant to get together over a question of common interest, exchange information and ideas and work things out in a spirit of co-operation. Nearly everyone present had something to contribute, including some of the children who, despite the lateness of the hour, took a lively interest in what was going on. There was much to look at as well as to listen to. Having been given notice by Betty Ball some two weeks before the event that such a discussion was to take place many people had come prepared with wall charts, specimens of children's work and photographs relevant to the work; Andy and Di Anderson had brought a splendid collection of books, etc. from the history section of the information library as well as a copy for each person present of their very comprehensive list of history sources.

At the end of the meeting the possibility of having a supplement on the teaching of a specific subject included in every, or nearly every, newsletter was suggested and met with great enthusiasm. Immediately a host of suggestions as to what subjects would lend themselves to such treatment was forthcoming. Since there happened to be present members willing to take on the editorship of supplements on Maths and Languages it was agreed that those should be dealt with in the February and the April Newsletters respectively.

The discussion ended a little before midnight with most, if not all, of those present comfortably convinced that progress had been made.

HISTORY OTHERWISE.

An E.O. supplement on history and the teaching thereof.

From the Editor.



The idea of having a discussion on the teaching of a particular subject during a Core Group weekend and of following it up with a supplement on that subject in the Newsletter originated with Betty Ball, who organised the history discussion which took place at Unstone Grange on Sept. 29th and provided the inspiration necessary for the realisation of this supplement. My aim as editor has been to (a) reflect faithfully the scope and spirit of the discussion and (b) be of some help to members seeking new ideas for their history lessons and projects. I would like to thank all those who have contributed material for this supplement.

If your children have an interest in history it provides a fund of stories and questions. For me the main interest is in seeing the continuum and yet also seeing the possibilities of other turnings that a culture could have taken (and still could take perhaps). History may provide no absolute answers but it can provide powerful clues to the possibilities.

So in trying to encourage an interest in the past in my children I try to help them see how it relates to today and to them - whether it is a building or a decision. Secondly I try to set it in its chronological context but not worrying too much if they do not get it right - rather I would like them to get a feel for the sort of period a particular culture or event fits into (and be constantly surprised by the anomalies).

I won't try to tell you how to encourage an interest in history - much will depend on whether you are interested in people or places, kings or peasants. I am interested in place and like Thomas Hardy I always seem to picture people in a landscape. So I like to see the places where people lived, the things they wore, the objects they played with, the tools they used. You could rightly say that this emphasises differences in peoples of different times who were essentially similar. It is up to you.

Recently, because of a BBC Schools Television programme we became interested in the Norman Conquest. In general this period has much less vigorous material than the Viking or the Medieval periods but it is interesting as a transition and emphasises the view that most changes throughout history are much more gradual, complex and subtle than period headings like Norman and Saxon indicate. Therefore I would recommend you do not use an old school text book as a basis for work. Rather visit real sites, modern museums or use books like the Usborne or Longman/Zigzag books listed below.

I have listed some possible sources, many of which we used. This list is obviously very incomplete and biased towards "English" history.

A. Sites and Buildings

1. Churches. Many local churches are part Norman. A number of Cathedrals (e.g. Peterborough and Durham) are still very Norman in character with the heavy rounded arches. The reasons why the pointed arch became preferred is interesting and easily found in books.

2. Houses. There are few Norman houses remaining. Stone Norman houses include the "Jews Houses" at Lincoln and York. It is well to remember that the majority of the people continued to live in "Saxon" houses. I believe there is a reconstructed Saxon village at West Stow in Suffolk but I have no further details, the Saxon huts in the Weald and Downland Museum had been dismantled when I visited early this year.

3. Castles. None of the very early castles survived as they were wooden (you cannot put a heavy stone castle on a recently made mound). Castles with Norman sections remaining include Conisborough, Pevensey, Castle Rising, Chepstow, Richmond, Tower of London, Castle Hedingham, Colchester and Rochester.

4. Bayeux (Normandy). Well worth a visit if you are visiting France. It is possible to buy a complete copy (reduced in size!) of the Bayeux Tapestry in book form. (Tapisserie de Bayeux, Centre

Guillaume le Conquerant, rue de Nesmond, Fl4400, Bayeux, France for a catalogue)

5. Battle (near Hastings). The battlefield is worth seeing especially if you know the main details of the battle. (Incidentally the modern embroidery at Hastings depicting the history of England since the Conquest is a marvellous piece of work). The local guides - 1066 Origin of a Nation and the children's guide to Battle Abbey are nicely presented. A special edition of the "Hastings Observer" pretending to be written just after the battle is good fun - obtainable from the Tourist Office.

B. Museums, etc.

Look out for special exhibitions - they are often expensive but very well done.

1. British Museum. Especially Sutton Hoo Treasure.
2. Museum of London. This museum retells the history of London. It has a small Norman section.
3. Drusillas Zoo, Sussex. Has an interesting collection of old farm animals to give some idea of domestic animals of the past. Other rare breed zoos and parks probably do something similar.
4. Local Museums. Many local and regional museums have sections on Saxon, Viking and Norman times. (Remember the Normans were Vikings who had invaded France a century earlier).

C. Information Books

The age groups shown are very approximate - I enjoyed reading them all.

Norman Times, Norman Conquest, Norman Castles. Small well illustrated books 6-10 years (Longmans (BBC Zig Zag series) 95 pence)

Time Traveller Book of Knights and Castles. Up to Usborne's usual high standard. Strictly after the Norman period but still relevant 6-12 years

Living in Castle Times (Usborne) Simpler version of the above.

Saxons, Vikings and the Norman Conquest, Norman and Medieval Britain. Mitchell and Middleton. 8-13 years. These are part of the History in Focus series of school textbooks but bright and well illustrated with source material.

The Castle Story. Sheila Sancha. Useful in trying to picture how castles used to look. 11 - Adult (Penguin £3.95)

Castle Life. Althea. Nice cheap little book with clear simple pictures which might stimulate children. (Dinosaur)

1066. T. Wise. Plenty of source material. Text mainly captions. 9 - 13 years. (Wayland Eyewitness Series).

Domesday Book. (Phillimore). Now available divided into counties with original and typed text. Should be available in your library. Interesting for details of your town or village.

SWORDS OF THE NORTH

HENRY TREECE

PUFFIN

In 1034 Harald Hardrada sailed across with his many men to Byzantium to offer his services, and join the Byzantine Army. In a constant battle with Michael Catalactus, a Greek (also in the Byzantine army) his good friend is killed.

Later after rescuing his love, he loses half his army through his ship not being able to jump. A very good story but it brings tears to your eyes in places.

by Tom Ball

LIVING IN THE PAST BY BETTY BALL.

Many of us will remember the television series of this title which recreated life in the Iron Age. For a year an adventurous group of people lived in much the way people lived in the past. There are now an increasing number of opportunities for you to go back in time yourselves.

Kentwell Hall, Suffolk

Each summer for three weeks Kentwell Hall goes back to a specified year in Tudor times and recreates the crafts, the people and the atmosphere of everyday life in Tudor England. Two hundred volunteers seek to live, dress, behave and talk as their Tudor predecessors did using Tudor-style tools and artefacts. Last year two EO families took part, one member in particular was very sad at returning to the twentieth century. Participants provide their own costumes at their own expense but are then fed for the three weeks and live in tents. Participants are required to read and research their roles but special sheets on costume, work of the times, language and past 'current affairs' are provided. A series of open days helps you to develop your character. One EO child loved the excuse to stay filthy in filthy clothes legitimately for three weeks!

Send a stamped addressed envelope for an application form to Kentwell Hall, Long Melford, Suffolk, CO10 9BA. Telephone 0787-310207.

Visiting Kentwell for the day at weekends to observe is unfortunately expensive - adults £4, children £3. Party rates are available for school parties during the week, perhaps a local EO member could organise a visit next summer via the newsletter, please!

National Trust Buildings

The National Trust in East Anglia recently organised a day in the 1930's at Blickling Hall with the Young National Trust Theatre group. Five actors adopted characters related to the house in the 1930's i.e. a butler, the owner, an American actress wishing to buy the house and take it back to America, an airman working for the war effort wishing to take over the house for a hospital and the man from the National Trust who had been asked to consider taking over the property. Each actor adopted a group of children who went with them to see their side of the events take place. The children were invited to dress in period costume. Worth looking locally as these events could be taking place near you.

The Sealed Knot

We recently went to a display by the Seige Group of the Sealed Knot. Cavaliers and Roundheads battled it out on the lawns of Hinchinbrooke House, Huntingdon. The costumes were magnificent, the children learned a lot as they watched a Cavalier dressing nearby, and the action was very realistic. A mutineer found guilty of carrying a political leaflet was hanged from a tree in full view with many onlookers almost believing he was dead. The weapons also look and sound genuine - my twoyearold found it all too much! It was exciting to watch but for all the volunteer members of the Sealed Knot it was reliving history. Several children were in cost me among the camp followers. It would be worth finding out how to join or at least going to watch the Sealed Knot. The Sealed Knot, Hupple Cott Cottage, Berrow Green, Martley, Worcs.

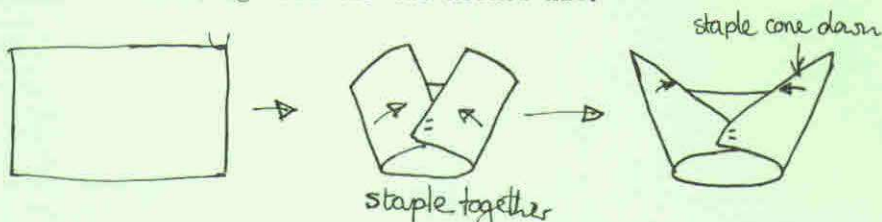
Mediaeval Feast by Lesley Downie.



We had a persuasive phone call from Ewan and Kathleen's grandparents last New Year. They had been given 2 quail, 2 pigeons and a hare and needed help to eat them!

We needed no better invitation to have a Mediaeval feast. The Children and I read and looked up books for costumes and quickly raked through the dressup box. With sugar paper hats for the women and a balaclava or upsidedown shorts for the men's hats we really felt the part, and though we did use plates and some of us used cutlery instead of slabs of bread and fingers, we all had fun.

Here is the design for the two-horned hat.



A Stoneage Day in Epping

Last summer we were invited over to an EO friend's "Stoneage Day". It had been Laura's idea, and our invitation included instructions to take any furs, skins and other "stoneage" paraphernalia. I can't imagine what the neighbours thought, seeing all these "people" clad in skins and barefoot - but when you live next door to an EO family I guess you eventually get used to this kind of thing. We spent the first hour or so making necklaces out of seeds and berries and used self hardening clay to make beads. "Stoneage" toys were made out of sticks and bark torn into strips, the bark used to tie the sticks into crude doll and animal shapes. We decided it was time to prepare the food, so the children took turns crushing the corn between stones so that we could make bread. They all agreed it was hard work and eventually the corn was put through the grinder! They then finished off making the bread, without yeast, since we were trying to keep it authentic where possible. Meanwhile an open fire had been built and the meat (we cheated here - we decided the neighbours might object if we hunted the local wildlife) was put on skewers to cook. Hollowed out marrow shells proved excellent drinking vessels, scallop shells served as plates. When the fire had died down a bit, the children found sticks that were charred one end and these proved first class "pencils". Soon the garden path was covered in charcoal drawings, berries were squashed and the stain used as another drawing medium. Who knows? Perhaps these works of art will - in some distant future - be uncovered. What will be made of them then, I wonder?

Sandie Cottee

HISTORY HISTORY EVERYWHERE.

History from the News by Lesley Downie.

Discussing current events is something I find gives a good lead into talking about the past in Britain. Looking at the conditions of life in developing countries can easily move on to "What was life like here before electrical gadgets and the internal combustion engine took over. When Granny was a girl there were no telephones or televisions or washing machines. When Great Granny was a girl there were no cars, no electricity, a loo at the end of the garden and a pump for water in the street.

Life is still like that in some parts of the world. What inventions do you think have improved life and which have made life worse?

There is a History to Everything by Jean Lovius.

Our interests as a family cover boats, magic, typewriters, and dance and the cultivation of tropical fruit in our house. Some of these interests have a lot written about them, others virtually nothing. Sometimes the history is picked up incidentally. The movement of magicians between America and Europe during the American War of Independence gave me a new outlook on population mobility!

We have covered the globe historically with our interests. Wars as such become less emphasised, Social change and the effect of discoveries comes more to the fore. The clothing considered necessary for a botanist in the 19th. century caused us great amusement:- not only because of the invention of modern insulating materials but because, even without such materials we would not wear so much! Gombreich's History of Art is a good, readable introduction to this sort of attitude. The Institute of Race Relations, 247/9 Pentonville Rd., London, L19NG produce the non British point of view.

History in Everything by Alison Mafham.

At Unstone Grange a member spoke most eloquently on the impossibility of isolating history from other branches of knowledge, in particular the essential link that exists between history and geography.

It would I suppose be possible to acquire a knowledge of history without ever deliberately studying the past but rather as a by-product of studying other things, though this might give a fragmentary, unsystematic picture. However, this connection can present the possibility of approaching other subjects via history, a method used in a number of very successful children's books on science and technology where they trace the history of human enquiry in the subject.

Let me give you one example of my use of history to enlighten another subject. My children find it hard to realise large numbers. They have a fair idea of what a thousand is 'like' but to imagine a million is, or was until recently, quite beyond them. They do, however, have a fairly well developed sense of historical time and of distance in time, probably due to their having devoted much attention to ancient history. So I have tried to help them to gain a realisation of the size of a million by pointing out that it is almost exactly a million days ago that Homer wrote the Iliad and three-quarters of a million days ago that Christ was born.

BOOKS.

From the Editor:-

It was unfortunately impossible to include in this supplement all the book reviews that I received. I have selected for publication Arne Lovius' account of some of the books he has read because of the enthusiasm with which he recommends them. The others I have sent on to Andy and Diane Anderson for use in their information library.

History Books by Arne Lovius.

Over the years I have read quite a few history type books in times spanning from the Ancient Greeks to American settlers including the stories of King Arthur.

Roger Lanceleyn Green has written 'Tales of Ancient Egypt' 20 stories with reasonably accurate bases also 'The Tale of Troy' literally the tale of Troy from young Helen to Odysseus returning home; he has also written, but I have been unable to read, 'The Luck of Troy', 'Tales of Greek Heroes', 'Myths of the Norsemen', 'A book of Dragons' and 'A book of Magicians'. I am not sure of the historical possibilities of the last 2 books but they could be very interesting with his previous track record.

Next author is Howard Pyle whose book on Arthurian legend 'The Story of King Arthur and his Knights' is by far the best 'translation' of these tales I have ever read. Published by Dover, I.S.B.N. no 0 486 21445 it is rather expensive at £3.13 but a wonderful book.

R.J. Unstead's 'History of the English Speaking World' series now sadly out of print but if found very useful for individual periods in time. Nine very informative books.

Leon Garfield and Eduard Blishen have written 2 books on Greek mythology, 'The God Beneath the Sea' which is about the 'blacksmith' God Hephaestus from his birth to becoming old and 'The Golden Shadow' about the life of Heracles, both books have excellent drawings.

'A Story Like the Wind', 'The Heart of the Hunter' and 'The Lost World of the Kalahari' are of more modern day history than any of the other books but sort of illustrate the white domination of the Bush people of southern Africa a sort of autobiography but not quite.

Lastly but by no means least Laura Ingalls Wilder's series of books about travelling across America in a covered wagon is definitely good reading for all ages an incredible autobiography.

PLACES TO VISIT.

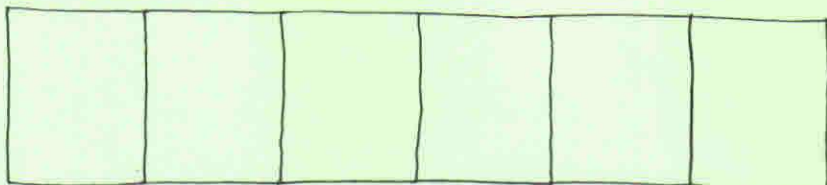
Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, Ironbridge, Telford, Salop TF8 7AW. Series of museums dealing with the Industrial Revolution, iron, pottery.

Grimes Graves, Nr. Thetford, Norfolk. Neolithic flint mines.

Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire. Mediaeval jousting.

Weald and Downland Museum, Nr. Singleton, Sussex. Reconstructed buildings, many very early, craft demonstrations in summer.

Beamish Museum, Nr. Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham. Very good, open-air, industrial museum. 27



The above sketch is not of empty pigeon holes but of my most useful and least expensive teaching aid. It consists of a strip of cotton sheeting 8ft by 2ft marked off into 6 equal sections. I call it a 'time map' and the scale of the 'map' can be varied to suit various purposes. Each section can be made to represent a millenium, a century, a decade, a year or whatever length of time is most suitable to the subject in hand. The time map can be laid on the floor or, better still, pinned to the wall or framed and hung from the picture rail and all manner of things can be pinned onto it.

Whenever we set up the time map we first decide what scale we are going to use and then pin on a few date cards (i.e. cards with dates written on them) in appropriate places - (I find the children enjoy making these date cards; it gives them a chance to try out 'fancy writing' and, of course, the correct placing of them is an instructive exercise in itself) As we discuss a topic we gradually fill up the time map with cards pinned in appropriate places. Some of these cards bear illustrations, some words only; in either case the children enjoy making them.

One can usefully discover how much of a discussion a child has absorbed by getting out the cards at a later date when the time map is in use either with the same scale operation or, perhaps better still, with a different scale, and asking him/her to pin them in the appropriate places.

I am hoping that by repeated and varied use of the time map the children will be assisted in building up a mental time map, which is of course even more flexible, and on which they will throughout their lives be able to 'pin' historical facts as they encounter them.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Maths Supplement to Appear in February's Newsletter.

The maths supplement will not have the benefit of having been preceded by a discussion. On the other hand it will have the advantage of being able to receive contributions from any members, not just from a few as was regrettably, though unavoidably, the case with this one.

Jill Gillings of Gay-Dy-Shee, Cooil, Eraddon, Isle of Man is the editor of the maths supplement and all contributions to the supplement should reach her not later than January, 2nd, 1985,



My own children learned to read of their own accord before they went to primary school (the teachers then were angry to have 5 year olds who could read). Similarly, one of my grandchildren at 3½ began reading, literally, overnight. She had had read to her, at bedtime, the Pam Adams Childs Play edition of "There were Ten in the Bed" (the one with the wheel that you can turn as you sing the song, making each child tumble out). In the middle of the night she woke up, took the book out from under her pillow, and by the dim light of a night-lamp began to read it out loud. She read each word phonetically, putting the sounds together over and over again until they made a word, then moving on to the next. She did this for nearly an hour and a half, starting at the beginning again when she had reached the end, then fell asleep from exhaustion. (Two current educational shibboleths gone at one swoop).

My son reported this in amazement at breakfast (they were staying with me). I said "Lets see if she really can read" and took down a childrens story book from my bookshelf. She read through it. In fact she read right through every unknown book we showed her, until she got tired.

After breakfast, everyone went out. I had to go to a solicitors, and had to take A. with me. I was afraid she was going to be very bored. But all the way there- street. bus-stop, tube station, first train, second train- we were surrounded by reading material. And she read it all - out loud- phonetically- every typeface, capitals, lower case, italic, gothic fanciful (another shibboleth gone). Everyone on the bus or train became involved, held in suspense as she added each sound, and heaved a sigh as realised the word. It was impossible to keep her quiet; she had a new skill, and she was surrounded by things to try it on. She was utterly oblivious of everyone around her, and of her fascination for them.

When we got to the solicitor's, I said to her "sit down in the chair, love. I need you to be very quiet, because this man is going to explain something to me that I don't understand, and I have to concentrate". She paid no attention to her toy that I put in her lap. She was surrounded by reading matter- legal certificates on the walls, photocopies of documents. She wriggled out of the chair, and began walking round the room, reading aloud phonetically as she went. I put my hands over my ears, trying desperately to concentrate on the paper in front of me. The solicitor, an old-fashioned impersonal man, said nothing. After a while I could hear, through my hands, that she had got stuck on a word, and was repeating it over and over again like a scratched record. I took my hands away. "B-r-i-g-h-t-o-n" I heard. The "h" had the power of a steam engine. "Its Brighton" I shouted across the room, and clapped my hands back to my ears. (The solicitor still said nothing).

As soon as we got home, after a mind-bogglingly literate return trip, she said "Can I get a book?" I took one down from the shelf, one of the numerous story books that came out a year or two ago about teddybears, a glossy hardback, large typeface, clean charming innocent text and pictures. (It had very good reviews) Looking back without malice, I would guess it was written by an infant teacher. She began to read- and after a few seconds, began to yawn! It was very startling. The books she had read earlier, she had read dramatically, "with good expression" (and to hear a 3½ year old, reading phonetically books she is seeing for the first time, with expression, is an extraordinary experience); but now her voice was dull and flat. "I don't think you like that book" I said, taking it from her. "No I don't", she said; "it's very, very boring". She was in fact so bored she was almost asleep, and could scarcely get the words out. "Well choose one yourself" I said. And she did. And she was again reading eagerly away. (The new reader had instantly become a literary critic. Would teachers like this?)



A. had had no teaching of reading as such, no consultation with teachers about "the right method". We had played games, recognized letters- both capitals and lower case- on notices on street signs car registrations (letters that are important to her like A, and V for her mothers name, and P for her dads), we played I?Spy on buses and trains, and we had stories, not at a set educational hour, in a set place, but for fun, whenever we felt like it, as part of normal life. She is alive, and in that life there are cars, packets of cereals and teas on the tables and in the cupboards, notice-boards above shops and tickets on goods in the window, placards and posters in stations, and street signs on walls; and there are books, magazines, newspapers, football coupons and catalogues, on peoples beds, tables and shelves- quite apart from the telling of stories that goes with cuddling up with someone at any hour of the day. She is surrounded by real-life "educational material", supplied by the whole of our society from birth; and her "motivation" is to become more and more competent in her real-life affairs, which are interlinked with the real life affairs of other people, of all ages and competences, who are important to her. Reading helps her living in a practical way, and enriches it in an artistic sensual way, not after she has worked through Introductory Book, and Book 1, and *a, and Book 2, etc etc, but right from the start, and entirely on her own terms (NO EXIT, she reads out- "oh, we'll have to find another door". REFRESHMENTS "now can I get my lolly?") "Motivation" is one of the educational-jargon words that teachers use constantly. They remove all motivation from learning to read, by snutting the child away from the real world (I dont blame teachers. It's the State, and our schooling system that does this. Incidentally, babies who go to institutions like day nurseries are removed from the real world almost from birth), and then they deplore the fact that "the child has no motivation", and think up some cunning way of putting motivation back, like awarding stars! -which, honestly, is a pretty pathetic substitute (and an alarming one) for real life.

A, as well as being very competent in real life- she is now 5½- reads books a great deal (She learned to read "to herself" very early on, a few weeks after she learned to read- a second feat we all found extremely impressive - simply because A reading out loud for sheer pleasure, an hour at a time throughout the day, began to be a strain on the household and her mother suggested she tried to read aloud inside her head. So she did). But she has never seen any Reading Scheme book, thank heaven. Reading Schemes, I have always said- picking up this idea from a very able black infant-school head who was a friend of mine - were invented for teachers, not for children. As soon as you get a child out of the home and the world, and into a school of hundreds of children, and into a class of 25, 30, 40 all of the same age, you have to have a Reading Scheme or the teacher wouldn't know what to do. As soon as you have Reading Schemes, you put a barrier between children and books; with some children this will stay for ever. When I was working on Nippers, I was always adamant there was no Reading Scheme attached. Teachers were constantly asking me to work one out, and I always refused. Perhaps this is why Nippers have gone out of print, though children and many able teachers love them, while Reading Schemes continue.

I was sitting with A the day before yesterday on a N London railway platform, waiting for a train. In her child's voice which still rings out like an alarm clock on a startled world, she said "Do lice say to themselves 'what a long journey to the end of these hairs',?" She was standing on the platform with her head between her legs at the time, her hair hanging all round her, so I suppose it was this that prompted the wondering. "Perhaps," I said (I didn't know what else to say) "How many lives does each person have? Lives, not lice" she added, seeing I needed clarity. She was right way up now. And "Have you got a nail file, because my nails are getting messy? I'm growing them long, so I can scratch peoples backs for them". How can a child with such questions be satisfied, let alone "motivated", by a Reading Scheme.?

When I was doing Nippers, 15 years ago or so, there was an outbreak of head lice among schoolchildren, something that hadn't been known for many years. all the LEA's vehemently denied it, while at the same time they issued combs, had head inspections, sent notes home there was a lot of drama and conflict in the situation. I thought of doing a Nipper called "The Incredible Giant Nit", and even began to rough one out, but I dropped the idea. The children would have loved it, and it would undoubtedly been too real for the adults.

A enjoys listening to a cassette or record, and following the words from a book or leaflet on her lap; but this is not a package made up by an educational firm- it was something she organised herself. The first time I found her, age 4 and a bit, listening to a cassette of childrens rhymes, and reading the leaflet whose print was so minuscule that I, with my reading glasses on, couldn't decipher it, I was bothered. She said she could read it perfectly easily, and instantly showed me she could. But I said that if she went on reading it, it might hurt her eyes (she would of course have stopped when it did, her conduct being governed not by institutional rules but by her own enjoyment, but I didn't want to chance it). I took the leaflet to a photocopying shop to have the print enlarged to a reasonable size, but it was so tiny that each page would have to be enlarged many times over, and the cost seemed absurd. I then decided to copy out all these rhymes, each record in a separate notebook. I saved the job for trains, and station platforms, when I was on my way to schools or childrens libraries to do talks or storytellings. But there were so many rhymes, I only completed one record. She loved the one book and kept phoning me for a little while to if I'd done the next one, but it didn't really matter that I hadn't and never did, because she had so much else to read.

She plays board games with any child, teenager, or adult, on equal terms, reading the instructions as easily as the other players. (No-one has ever bent any games rules for A; they have always been helpful but uncompromising. She likes winning but almost equally enjoys losing- it would seem stupid to her to mind losing, since obviously only one person will come first; and in games based mainly, though not solely, on chance, everyone has a turn at winning). Such games, which are not Reading Games made by educational firms, but can be found in any toy shop on the street, are part of her life which she shares with others, and the reading is naturally part of the game.

One "educational" game I have used a lot, by the way, is Alphabet Lotto, made by Orchard Toys. Under-fives or sixes love it and I recommend it. Oddly, I don't think I've ever seen it in a school- probably because teachers would say a child can turn letters like p and b over, and get confused. They can turn them over, but there's no reason why they should get confused- in the home that is; in a school class, many things are more difficult.

If the child is not shut away from real life, and if real life whatever it is, is enjoyed for what it offers- if the older people who are important to the child are literate, and enjoy books or stories even if they are not ravenous readers- if they enjoy children but also have a life of their own so that their love for the child is true and unmartyred, and unobsessed - if they have no professional, moral, or neurotic investment in keeping the child's competence under control- then I believe most children without physical defects (and even many with) would be reading without having come near a Reading Scheme.

I vaguely remember research done years ago that showed that children not taught reading, but treated with warmth and respect, and helped to become competent in other areas, learned to read far more easily than children given reading lessons.

If this natural situation were allowed to happen, it would cause quite an upheaval in our school system.... and in our teacher training. Lets talk about it. © Leila Berg



THE WES HOME-SCHOOL

The World-wide Education Service is part of the educational charity the Parents' National Educational Union (PNEU), which for nearly a century has provided both UK-based and expatriate families with the necessary guidance and materials to educate their children at home to a high standard.

The WES Home School programmes cater for children aged 5 to 13. A Nursery Package for 3 and 4 year olds will be available from January, 1985.

Features of the WES Home School programmes are:

- . the full endorsement of the Department of Education and Science
- . the allocation of an experienced teacher as tutor to provide guidance and advice at any time
- . an assessment sheet to be completed by the parent-teacher and sent to the tutor for further comment at the end of each term

Other advantages of the WES Home School programmes are:

- . they allow a child to work at his/her own pace
- . they can be adapted according to the needs and aptitudes of the child
- . they encourage families to take advantage of all that can be learnt from their surrounding environment

If you would like to find out how the WES Home School can help you to educate your child at home

Contact Miss Norma Taylor
at the above address

CAN YOU HELP

I am at present involved in a course of Herbal Medicine with 'The School of Herbal Medicine' at Tunbridge Wells. Is there anyone within that area who could possibly provide accomodation for my daughter Joanne (5 approx., who enjoys other childrens company) during 4th to 9th August '85, when I shall be involved in a weeks seminar at the school. We eat additive free food because Joanne has special dietary needs and I have been having difficulty in finding any place that provides anything that would meet our needs.

JACKY THORN 8 Purbeck Rd Chatham Kent.



WINTER

AGAIN

Gone/ going/ intending to go through ILEA's inspectors? Raymond(32) Kim(24) Gretta(4) and Oonagh(nearly 2) would appreciate Practical/ tactical/ moral support/ contact/ wisdom from you.

The LAIFEARTAIGHS, 273 UXBRIDGE RD, LONDON W12 01-740-9425.

AND AGAIN

IS THERE ANYONE OUT THERE interested in carrying on the good work of Julie Duff with regard to 'special needs'. Organising, getting the newsletter together, looking into the legal side(possibly being part of the legal group) and keeping the network going. Please contact the Grants or the Wallaces if you are interested.

AND YET AGAIN

VENUES FOR NATIONAL EO GATHERINGS/ COUNCIL MEETINGS

We need to know of more places suitable for large national EO gatherings and business meetings. What we need is a meeting room, sleeping accomodation for 50-70 people including children, somewhere for children to do craft work etc., somewhere to display educational resources, and also if possible self-catering and with camping for tents and vans. During the last Unstone Grange weekend there were up to 103 people attending, including children and babies, and so gatherings of this sort are obviously becoming popular. Currently I am making enquiries with the YHA and the YMCA. Arrangements for large meetings have to be made about a year in advance, so we need a good selection of places throughout the UK so that the largest spread of members possible may attend without having to travel too far.

If you know of anywhere suitable please let me know.

JOAN HOARE, 25 MOOR OAKS RD., SHEFFIELD S10 1BX tel 0742-666605 33

- R E S E A R C H -

First of all, thank you for answering questionnaires, many of them late at night or in the midst of EOing. It has been a much better response than expected, and any latecomers would be welcome, as we are still working on them.

We started off from this point: a lot of parents join EO when their children are tiny, but then, to judge from entries in the contact list, they send them to school as usual. Is this the state of affairs, and if so, is it in any way due to lack of support which we could, at the present stage of development of EO, give each other?

The questionnaire went out, hopefully, to all families with a child who reached six during the last school year, and who were in EO when the child was under school age. The most striking thing on working through them is that the majority of them are out of school. Please, could you keep Bob Emmett (8 Queensway, Liddell Park, Llandudno, Gwynedd LL30 1YJ) up to date with amendments to the contact list? When people use it, as many do, to contact EOers in areas they are visiting, the main thing they are looking for is children of a similar age to their own who are also out of school, and if people do not have an accurate entry the contact list loses a lot of its value.

Were the people who didn't answer mainly the ones with children in school? You are the ones we would particularly like to hear from. Are the children and you happy with the situation? If not, what stopped you EOing? What solutions could you picture, now or in the future?

There were somewhat distressing references to "us and them", distressing even though complimentary, because it means people don't appreciate that it's all "us": there is no-one to fall back on. Some of us may be able to rally round and help with some problems, especially when someone is starting off - and you will, of course, pass on such help in turn - but basically what EO can give us is intangible and, in proportion to what we put into it: friendship, confirmation of our perceptions of our children's development, and support for an alternative style of upbringing.

Money: one family, who said they were speaking for others, felt they had poor value for £10. Another stressed that they would gladly pay more because they valued the support so highly. Many are living at social security level or below, either because of unemployment or from choice because they have adopted an alternative life-style; they have difficulty paying the full rate although they think it is worth it. There seems to be more danger of members dropping out reluctantly because they are embarrassed to ask for a reduced subscription, than of EO being exploited by people joining on the cheap when they could afford the full rate.

Talking of dropping out, and not connected with the questionnaire: one of the reasons people leave seems to be that they have had what they needed, at least to some extent. During the first few years of deschooling they have gained confidence, established a network of EO friends and no longer need the support of the organisation. They might be happy to continue as a reservoir of support on the contact list but do not feel morally obligated to the tune of £10 a year. Is there some way of keeping in touch with this pool of experience, rather than letting it leak away?

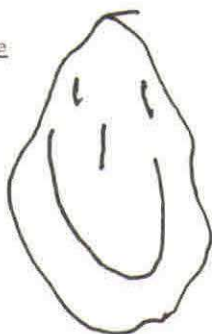
We expect to be ready with a full report on the questionnaires in the next newsletter. After that, it has been agreed by Core Group that we should send out another questionnaire to the 11+ group.

This will only go to home educators, as it will be concentrating more on the day-to-day practicalities, so please check and if necessary update your entry in the contact list. We hope to hear from the teenagers as well as the parents. What are the 11-16s doing, how are they doing it, what happens to them after 16, how do families feel about home education when they've "finished", was it a success, what would they change? What are relations with LEAs like at this age, do they make specific demands, what resources have you found valuable, what would you appreciate having access to, what problems and solutions have you found? These are some of the questions at the moment - what do you want to know? Let us know what information it would be most useful for us to be sharing.

Please write to:

6 year olds' questionnaire

Anne & Rob Wade
Flat A, 55 Madeley Road
Ealing
London.
W5 2LS
(01-) 998 5562



11+ questionnaire

Anne Moss
98 Victoria Avenue
Hull.
HU5 3DS
Hull (0482) 445728



TELEPHONES



It was agreed at the last Core Group (sorry COUNCIL) meeting that we're planning, by general request, to include telephone numbers on the next Contact List, where these were included on the membership form. If you do NOT want your number included please get onto Bob Emmett. Also if you suspect that Bob does not have your number and want it included do let him know.

We have had several requests for newsletters from people who have been accidentally missed out. We've passed on all letters to Bob who produces the mailing list, but if anyone else is short of one do let him know. He will then check your entry in his machine and make sure things are put right. You'll also get your missing newsletters!



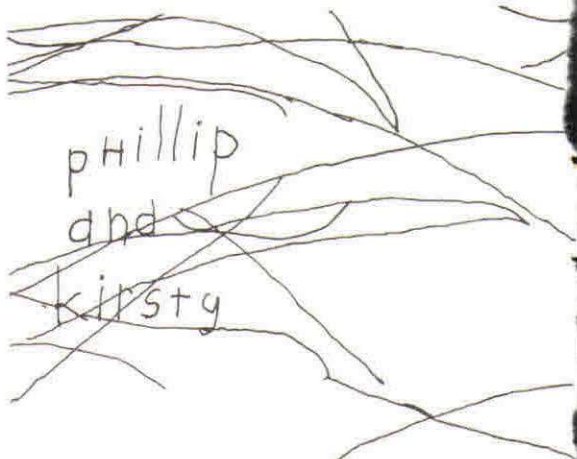
ADVERTS



Please route all enquiries about advertising through Jean Shepherd the new Advertising Secretary. See back inside cover for address.

ADVANCE NOTICE
UNSTONE GRANGE

There will be another EO gathering at Unstone 3rd-6th May 1985 (Bank Holiday weekend) Workshops for adults and children, resources display, business and core group meetings, social get-together. Please make a note of these dates. Booking form and further details in the February newsletter.
(Please, no bookings before February 1985.)



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EO TEENAGERS WEEK

Simon Grant says that a few people at Unstone were very keen, but no-one else has contacted him since the newsletter. He fears that if he hears from no-one else by the end of the year the idea will have to be dropped.
So get in touch with Simon as soon as possible.



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TREASURERS REPORT



In this 4 month period EO's expenditure has for the first time since October 83 exceeded its receipts. This is due more to the increase in expenditure than to reduction in income, though there is also a slight reduction in receipts compared to the earlier part of the year (see N/L 36 for comparison).

The cost of producing the Newsletter is rather higher than before. This is accounted for by the increase in the cost of paper and the cost of producing the Contact List supplement, which was agreed at the May Core Group meeting. These being the causes it seems likely that, other things being equal, the increased cost of producing the Newsletter will not be temporary. In fact the next balance sheet will probably show a further increase on account of the rise in postal charges.

The total cost of meeting officers expenses remains almost unchanged, but this time a greater proportion of this total has gone to meet co-ordinators expenses. This might indicate a measure of decentralisation and increased activity in the regions(?)

There have been several extraordinary expenses during this period £54 was paid to Surrey University to enable John Elenor (General Secretary) to attend a conference on human rights as EO representative. The annual subscription to Growing without Schooling has been paid also.(see balance sheet)

There has been no revenue from advertisements during this period but income from sales of EO publications have increased considerably

FINANCIAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

19th May '84 to 18th September '84

Expenditure

Newsletter and Contact lists(prod. and dist.)	1378-70
Other publications and stationary	40-00
Purchase of TYO	273-60
Subscription to GWS	527-08
Donation to S.T.O.P	20-00
Textbook (See report)	85-00
Stall Expenses	45-00
Hire of Unstone Grange	305-00
Bank Charges	34-90

Officers Expenses

General Secretary	121-50
Treasurer	20-32
Membership Secretary	233-00
Publications Secretary	26 -00
Enquiries Secretary	79-20
Ass. Treasurer	8-10
Co-ordinators and Co-ord. Secretary	<u>231-60</u>

TOTAL 3429-50

Income

Subscriptions	2098-97
Sale of EO publications and stationary	306-80
Sale of TYO	376-60
Subscriptions to GWS	17-20
Bookings for Unstone Grange	256-45
from London Meeting Sept '83	11-50
Unexplained Credits	48-75
TOTAL	<u>3116-27</u>

cash in hand on 19th may '84 6385-20
TOTAL 9501-47

Less total expenditure 3429-50

Cash in hand 18th September '84 6071-97

ff

FOR SALE!!

Linguaphone Swedish course (on cassettes) in original case ,contents complete; £30. I also have on cassette the New Testament Book of John, in Swedish- together with the printed text. Also some other bits and pieces for anyone serious about this language. Price by agreement- fairly low.

Phone or write to Tony Taylor, 78 Petworth Gdns, Hillingdon Middlesex UB10 9HH. Telephone Uxbridge 39794.

Holland Park is in Kensington, on the western fringe of central London. We have booked the Orangery, an elegant and spacious heated summer-house, for informal events such as displays, stalls, workshops and children's activities throughout the course of the weekend. For our meetings we have the use of the YHA common room in Holland House close by. The park also has an adventure playground (no parents allowed!) which includes a room where teenagers could meet for coffee (by special arrangement) and join in with the centre's own activities (or not, according to taste). Elsewhere in the park there are rabbits, peacocks and other ornamental fowl. On the edge of the park is the Commonwealth Institute, an interesting and attractive place for kids to look around - and it has its own picnic room which we could have access to if necessary. Kensington High Street is a short distance away - a notable shopping centre which includes a good children's bookshop. It's about a mile to the South Kensington museums (Natural History, Geological, Science, Victoria and Albert) and we hope to lay on an organised visit during the course of the weekend. (Please note that the Commonwealth Institute and S. Kensington museums are closed on Sunday morning.)

As usual, the two fixed points in the programme will be a discussion meeting on the Saturday afternoon and a Core Group (i.e. Council) meeting on the Sunday morning. We also hope to find time for a co-ordinators' meeting and a legal group meeting. Other events have yet to be arranged at the time of writing, and as always, any offers of ideas or energy will be gratefully received (see booking form). Actually, there are such a lot of things we could do that we think we'll have a job fitting them into the time available. We hope as many people as possible will be able to stay for the whole of Sunday, so the weekend isn't too much of a rush.

Accommodation

A residential weekend? In London? This time we hope to prove once and for all that this idea isn't a contradiction in terms. Inevitably the prices can't compete with Unstone Grange, but we hope at any rate that they won't prove prohibitive. And look at the benefits! (Cultural heritage, big red buses, dirt, noise... - sorry, I meant museums, exhibitions, of course.)

The solution to the problem, as we see it, is Holland House Youth Hostel. It contains plenty of reasonably priced beds and lies within the park, a short distance from the Orangery. Adult non-members will need to join the YHA (see below), but the overall cost is still relatively low. Amenities are better than the average youth hostel (e.g. good heating, hot water). Accommodation is in single-sex dormitories, but we have special permission for under-5s to be admitted. There is a good members' kitchen, so self-catering is possible - but not essential, provided any meals required are booked in advance (see below). No access to the main hostel during the day (between 10.00 and 5.00), but there are lockers available for daytime use, and the Orangery will be open to us throughout the day. **PLEASE BOOK NOW!** Never mind the Christmas cards. The sooner we know who's coming, the more chance we have of being accommodated as a group. We aim to make our main booking in early January. Anyone we hear from after that may have to be booked separately, subject to the availability of beds. Sorry: we can't guarantee refunds unless someone else needs the place.

HOLLAND PARK WEEKEND, February 9-10 1985 : BOOKING FORM

Please read the accompanying notes carefully before filling in both pages of this form.

To be sure of your accommodation, please complete and return as soon as possible.

It would be very helpful if intending day visitors could also let us know in advance, with details of who is coming and payment of basic charge.

Please make out cheques and POs to Education Otherwise, and send with completed form to:

Rob & Anne Wade, Flat A, 55 Madeley Road, Ealing, London. W5 2LS
Tel. (01-) 998 5562

1. DETAILS OF PERSON MAKING THE BOOKING

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

2. WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN HELP

Can you: help with children's activities or a workshop?

- lead expeditions to museums or other places of interest?
- escort children between the Orangery and parents attending meetings in the YHA?
- lead a folk singing session (guitarists?) ?
- bring a sideshow-type activity?
- contribute to an educational bring & buy?
- send us EO press cuttings to display? (Send them with your booking, and we'll copy and return them if asked.)

If you live locally, can you lend toys for younger kids? (If so, get in touch with Linda Bournnell, 30 Windmill Road, Hampton Hill, Middx. TW12 1RH; (01-) 979 3038.)

Any other ideas or suggestions?

Please tell us what you can do below (or enclose a note):

3. DETAILS OF THOSE ATTENDING, WITH REQUIREMENTS AND PAYMENT

Name									
Sex (M or F)									
Age if under 21									
BASIC CHARGE for whole weekend (Please tick column for each <u>adult</u> and enter total)								AMOUNT	
								£	p
ACCOMMODATION (Please tick relevant column)									
FRIDAY 8	Supper								
	Bed								
SATURDAY 9	Breakfast (state "E" or "C")								
	Packed lunch								
	Supper								
	Bed								
SUNDAY 10	Breakfast (state "E" or "C")								
	Packed lunch								
	Supper								
	Bed								
MONDAY 11	Breakfast (state "E" or "C")								
	Packed lunch								
Sleeping bag liner									
YHA membership (non-members aged 21+)									
BOOKING FEE (waived for day visitors)									
TOTAL									

CHARGES FOR HOLLAND PARK

(Please read in conjunction with the booking form)

1. Basic charge £1.00

This will go towards the hire of the Orangery. The charge applies to all adults, whether residents or day visitors, and covers the whole weekend (even if you only come for one day).

2. Accommodation (per night)

age 21 and over	£4.55
age 16-20	£3.70
all children under 16	£3.10

(For comparison, the London Tourist Board quotes £10 as the current minimum for bed & breakfast.)

3. Meals

supper	£1.80
breakfast: English	£1.40
continental	£0.50
packed lunch	£0.95

(Self-catering is a possible alternative.)

4. Hire of sleeping bag liner £0.50

Use of a "sheet sleeping bag" to the YHA's own specifications is obligatory.

5. YHA membership £5.00

We will enrol anyone who doesn't already have a membership card. Membership lasts a year. For present purposes, those aged under 21 need not enrol.

6. Booking fee £0.50

This will go towards postage, stationery and similar expenses. We are not asking day visitors to pay this charge; but everyone who sends us a booking form will get further details sent back to them.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!

from Robert & Jill Gillings

We are intending to compile a four page pull-out on maths to be printed in the February N/L. It will be on any subject concerned with maths, eg advice, potholes, good (and bad) books on the subject. In fact anything that you consider is connected with maths. All contributions will be gratefully received.

Please send them to:-

Robert and Jill Gillings, Creg-dy-Shee, Cooil, Bradden, Isle of Man.

E.O. LEGAL GROUP

I don't know when you last looked over the official "Aims and Objectives" of E.O. (particularly 3b and 4 - on the introductory literature): you may never have noticed that E.O. does officially aim to help members in various ways legally and with the L.E.A.s. Now, we hope to be doing something rather more definite than in the past. In the last core group meeting, a few of us volunteered to form a legal group, which intends to start off by clarifying the details of the relevant law to its own members - very few people have really studied the intricacies of such knotty problems as deregistration - and then sharing any insights with interested coordinators and other members, as well as publishing anything particularly worthy in the newsletter. We intend to spread the shouldering of legal difficulties, which have in the past tended to fall unnoticed onto the enquiries secretary or one or two other noble champions of the cause. We now wish to act as a focus for specifically legal problems, and we would be very grateful if anyone who has records of legal proceedings, or threats by the L.E.A., would let us have copies of letters, judgements, etc.

Later (not yet - we're still at the learning stage) we may be in a position to channel specific help towards families where, in our collective view, the parents are clearly within their rights and the L.E.A. is clearly abusing its powers. We will use whatever funds become available, but initially this assistance will be personal support and knowledge rather than money. Too often, we believe, parents have been bullied into sending their children back to school when they could have educated them perfectly well and legally at home. Sometimes, parents feel unable to risk a court case because of the financial or personal strain, even though they think they would probably win in the courts. We would like to know of any such instances. We would like to liaise with any L.E.A.s with whom members are having problems, with the aim of getting better long term cooperation and understanding of the problems involved.

Should any member be able to think of sources of money to back these ideas (bearing in mind that E.O. now has charitable status) we would be delighted to know. Also any other information that might be relevant will always be most welcome.

Please get in touch with any of our members:

Andy Anderson	Ann Moss	Ann Wade
95 derrington Ave	98 Victoria Ave	Flat A
CREWE	Hull	55 Madeley Rd
Cheshire	HV5 3DS	Ealing
CW2 7JA	0482-445728	London
		W5 2LS
0270-664060		01-998-5562

Simon Grant	Alvena Hillier
3/4 Tanyrallt Cottages	8 Church Park
Llanllyfni	Kingston
Caernarfon	Kingsbridge
Gwynedd	Devon
LL54 6RS	TQ7 4QB
0286-881868	054-881-592

(Because of differences in the law, would members in Scotland please continue to contact their coordinators.)

Dear Editor,

I have recently joined the EO organisation, even though I do not have any children that I could home-educate. I am in fact a 4th year student at the College of St. Mark and St. John, Plymouth, studying physical education and geography.

Since attending a lecture delivered by one of your members on home education, my interest has steadily increased towards the idea of alternative education. From reading books such as 'Teach Your Own', 'The Underachieving School' by John Holt, 'Young Children Learning' by Barbara Tizard & Martin Hughes, and the Education Otherwise magazine, one particular fact has come to light, that is the lack of articles and discussion of physical education and home schooling.

As I believe that physical exercise is extremely important for a child's healthy development (in mind and body), I would like to base my final dissertation on discovering the views of home educators towards the inclusion of physical education (play or games of a more natural form) in their home programmes and how parents provide and encourage sporting activities, if they do believe exercise is important, and do the Education Advisors ever inquire about the provision of physical activities and programmes for these children?

I would be grateful for any views that our members have on physical education and the home education situation.

Thank you for opening my mind to such an interesting and wonderful alternative to the daunting and ever depressing traditional form of education. Children at last may be able to enjoy learning, and will have time to appreciate all the good things in life instead of battling with the continual pressure presented by the exam system.

Thank you.

Carole Wykes.

If anyone has any views on this subject, please send them to :
Miss Carole Wykes, B.Ed.4, College of St. Mark and St. John, Demford Road,
Plymouth.

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CREATIVE LEARNING



Primmy Chorley

THURS. NOV. 1st

A DAY FROM OUR DIARY

Drawing and writing, looked at books of birds, books of Grey Rabbit, elephant pictures by man and lady that lived with elephants for some years, sewing buttonholes, dressing up dolls, bicycle ride. Colours out of doors, and changes. Saw a heron in the ditch just close to us. Explored the depths of puddles. Played fairies under the trees and continued the fantasy as we walked home. Counting the curtain rings. Talked about 'half'. Joey helped me to grate fruit and chop nuts for muesli. Jessie sewed a fairy's bag. Joey made a series of bags within bags to sew on his new coat and embroidered 'Joey' on them all. More drawing. Long walks with dogs and found more toadstools to look up - very bright ones. Radio - Medicine Now and current affairs. Jessie crying for a real baby of her own. Talked about babies and age and death and a broken pelvis, cremations and burials. Talked about Mrs. Gandhi's cremation and how each country has its own rituals. Grandmother story (collage pictures). Talking to P. on the telephone. Read 5 chapters of 'James and the Giant Peach'. Singing 'The Seven Joys of Mary'.

.....

I suppose I've always felt that my main aim was to pass on my creativity to my children. We've never had any toys (except some old passed-on cranes and lorries). We've made everything we use to play with from what's around us. To begin with, it was piles of logs and bits of wood and stones (as we mended a cottage in Kent and built walls and fences). Joseph has always known what he wanted to do, set things out in a particular way, had an eye for anything useful out of someone else's rubbish. Thus we live in a constant muddle of boxes of bits and piles of wood and for the children's sake we last year uprooted ourselves and moved next door to Caroline and Simon Grant in North Wales, so Joseph and Jessie now have a workshop in the loft.

A year later, we are surrounded by piles of objects that Joseph has made and when the Education Officer came to visit he was taken aback by his skills, by the sheer amount of things he'd made and by their innocence and simplicity. Joey is teaching himself through his making and his art. He started to learn to read by making huge letters from the tree prunings in the orchard and can now write very neatly and likes to draw ornate letters. He is on the verge of reading. Usually his machines need some names or directions written on them and inevitably we cover some history, geography and maths etc. without the children ever knowing that they are learning.

A PAGE FROM OUR DIARY

MON. OCT. 29th

Patterns, gipsy caravans. Yesterday J. and I made a small gipsy caravan (wooden box on wheels) and Jessie and I helped J. to decorate it - today talked about gipsies then and now and lifestyle and its changes, remembered all we could of book of gipsy photos from library. All busy making things to go in the caravan. Joey made furniture, Jessie made a wooden settee/bed, mattress/elderdown; I wove a little mat. Crayoned carpets, peg-doll gipsies, dressed up other dolls as gipsies. Then I helped Jessie to convert a small farmhouse (made by me long ago) into a gipsy caravan. Painting, crayoning and some woodwork to convert it. Her caravan is for fairies. I embroidered a carpet for her. Joseph writing about gipsy caravans. Play with the caravans, travels, setting up camp, meals, horses grazing etc. Making tiny tea sets out of paper. Entire day spent on caravans. Magdalene came to play but J. & J. were too engrossed in the caravan so I took her back. Walks in heavy rain and wind. Played unblocking streams in flooded water on the track. Listened to radio - music, Science Now, stories. Read Mr. Rabbit story and the last chapter of 'What the Neighbours did' (Phillipa Pearce); re-read 'The Twits'.

(Joseph Chorley 22.12.77; Jessie Chorley 12.2.80)

NORTH WALES GATHERING on SATURDAY 19th JANUARY

at the homes of the Grant and Chorley families (Tanyrallt Cottages, Llanllyfni, Caernarfon). Please bring a contribution towards whichever meals you will be here for, any interesting ideas/books/games etc. you'd like to share, and your wellies. If anyone wants to come from further afield we may be able to put them up on the Friday and/or Saturday nights. Please let us know in advance if you're coming, and ring for details of where exactly to find us. Looking forward to seeing you!

Caroline, Simon, Magdalene & Chloe / Primmy, Peter, Joey & Jessie
Penygroes 881868 Penygroes 881923

THE NEWSLETTER

We now have editors lined up for next year's issues - what we need next are some lively articles for them to include!

There was quite a lot of talk at the last Unstone Grange weekend (in the kitchen) about how the newsletter could be made more interesting, lively and inspiring. A lot of people (not me...) find anti-school talk off-putting, and most of us dislike any kind of 'internal bickering'. Various people have said they would like to see more items directly concerned with the education of children out of school - what people do in practical terms, different members' ideas on child-upbringing/development; in other words, your views and experiences. I suspect that those involved in the most wonderful things are perhaps those with the least time to write about it all, but if you do have time to put pen to paper, and are keen to help improve the newsletter, then (1) write to me (briefly, and please don't expect a reply) about the sort of things you would like to see more or less of (I'd like to continue the discussion about newsletter contents at the next EO weekend), and (2) write something for the newsletter itself (and send it to the appropriate editor).
Caroline Grant (3/4 Tanyrallt Cottages, Llanllyfni, Caernarfon, Gwynedd LL54 6RS).

My Debt. by Gijubhai. (reprinted from Resurgence)

Children have honoured me with their love
Children have given me new life
While teaching children I have learnt much
While reading to children I have read much
As a teacher I have learnt that children are the true teachers
This is not poetry, this is experience.

From 'Hugo and Josephine' by Maria Gripe

.....In the end, she (the teacher) has to interrupt Hugo to make herself heard at all. She realizes that Hugo doesn't understand, she says, but in school children have to sit still and be quiet. The teacher does the talking, and the children just answer when the teacher asks them a question. Hugo listens attentively to this, but looks frankly astonished. 'Now that's odd' he says. 'What's so odd about it?' the teacher asks. 'There's no sense in our answering when we don't know anything' says Hugo. 'We're the ones who ought to ask the questions!'

THE DISEASE OF SCHOOL-REFUSING

by Roger Downie

As a biologist, I don't often see research papers dealing with people, but a recent article in the journal 'Chronobiologia' (which deals with Biological rhythms) drew my attention. Its an analysis of the sleep-activity pattern of a 17-19 year old boy (Japanese), based on observations made by the boys mother.

I thought EO families might be interested: the author treats school-refusing as some sort of a disease: "School refusers have been so increasing in number that educational authorities, as well as child clinics, have had to give them special attention. Psychologists have well described the refusal behaviour as being accompanied by many symptoms such as enuresis, darrrtoa, dysmenorrhea, stomache ache headache, abnormal behaviors such as violence etc."

Here is an extract from the case history:

"The observation was made by the patients mother, a published psychologist. She was very cooperative in collecting data. For the first few months, the patient always kept her obstinately at his side, a typical manifestation of the emotional disorder. This enabled her to make observations with ease. Thereafter, as the baby like behavior gradually declined, observations were made in most cases indirectly from the next room by hearing or seeing indications of retiring and awakening. This is largely possible because of the specific structure of the Japanese house partitioned, as it is, by sound permeable paper sliding doors. Due to the indirect observation, inaccuracy could not be avoided to some extent. Furthermore, we had to be very cautious in order to record behaviors in a roundabout way without attracting the patients attention.

The obsevation started on November 1, 1976. The patient was 17 year-old. Symptoms concerning school refusal had germinated way back to the age of 12; 6th (last) grade of elementary school. Soon after entering junior high school (13 yrs), he fell into enervation, no longer studied, and did nothing but lie down or sleep after he came in from school. In his second year, he often became an actual refuser, complaining of stomach aches or diarrhea. He would lie in bed all day long. At this time his case was diagnosed as vegetative stigmata. It seemed that, with this diagnosis as a turning point, his condition worsened rapidly to where he had become a complete refuser often displaying abnormal behavior. Eventually he was sent to a hospital where he received psyshotherapeutics without drugs. Both his parents and doctors tried with little success to encourage him to attend school from the hospital. He left the hospital after two and a half years. From then on, he confined himself to the house and entered the so-called chronic stage. It was thus in the middle of the chronic stage that we started the observations."

Throughout the article, there is no mention of any attempt to help the boy towards an out-of-school education. His attempts to gain affection from his mother are labelled 'emotional disturbance' and 'baby-like' behavior. There seems to be no effort to understand the boy's emotional needs, and we are left toconclude that the mother spied on her son for nearly 3 years, to satisfy the grotesque needs of a biological rhythms researcher.

We hear much about Russian abuse of psychiatry as a means of controlling dissidents: we should be equally worried at what our achievement-orientated 'Western' societies are doing to children!!!

From Jane and Mervyn GIDDINS, of 30 Keightley Rd Holbeach St Marks SPALDING, Lincs., via phone.

We were, until recently, undercover EO'ers. We got 'caught' by our LEA and find, to our amazement, that its a great relief! We'd like others to know that we feel that this is the lesser of two evils. You don't have to dread the unexpected knock at the door.

Also can we recommend the following book; MATHEMATICS, THE BASIC SKILLS. by S Llewellyn & A Green, and published by Stanley Thomas Ltd. It is very well worth the price of approx. £6.

'The Way which can be told is not the way', said the ancient Chinese; this may explain their inscrutability, and a lot more besides. If it means anything to a Westerner this classical statement of Taoist truth suggests that truly important things do not benefit from being planned, described, set down in documents and talked about, however wisely. I think this is true about real education.

I once quarrelled with a Headmaster about lesson preparation. He wanted it set out in headings, exhaustively. I maintained that lesson preparation was nothing to do with education and is basically a waste of time. Lesson preparation should have been done during the teacher's own education and if he had to stop and think what he was going to teach his pupils he had obviously not acquired enough knowledge and general culture during his younger days. In any case, I opined, if the lesson consists entirely of what I prepare beforehand it's more than likely to fail in its effect for the same reason that tooth-extraction (a common treatment in the early 1900s) failed to cure T.B. As a treatment it's relatively harmless, requires skill, and leaves the patient with a certain sense of having been decisively dealt with! The only trouble is, it doesn't cure the disease. The same is true of a prepared lesson. It sets out to 'cure' a 'disease' which the 'Patient' doesn't have, I insisted. It is more educational to try to find out what is actually going on in a child's mind and respond to that. Since such disputes are commonly settled in a 'professional' fashion - by a comparison of salaries - (the higher wins!) - I duly wrote pages of guff and went on teaching in my own way - that is, by trying to find out what the children were actually learning and building on that. Such methods are more satisfactory but less easy to turn into a mark-list at the end of the year!

The point I am making is that syllabuses, lesson-plans, forecasts and the like, which are used to frighten E.O. parents with are really paper tigers. The secret shame of every school is the number of children who, although 'taught' a fine-looking pile of syllabuses and carefully planned lessons don't actually learn them. This is no better than the case of a salesman who reported that he had sold his product but the customers hadn't bought it.

Similarly, otherwise education deserved to be judged not by the amount of 'work' done, books 'read' or sums calculated, but by the amount of knowledge of all kinds which the child has pursued, run to earth and made his own. It can't be organised except in close consultation with the child himself. It cannot be limited or circumscribed by bourgeois cultural faddism. It can't be made to include literacy or numeracy unless the child deems it necessary, any more than it can be made to exclude football, disco-dancing or the Life and Works of Michael Jackson! The standard by which we should judge learning is not how useful some adult or other thinks it is - that is mere slavery to someone else's sanctified enthusiasm; it is how firmly that learning has been grasped by the child and willingly added to his private store of knowledge. Imposed, planned, artificially organised learning is only useful to a person who wishes to follow it. By and large enrolling on courses of study is an adult activity. Children need freedom to organise their Universe for themselves, on their own unique way.

Not everyone will agree with this. However, before you begin to denounce this self-indulgent approach to things, ask yourself how much of your formal schooling has actually stuck - and think of all the really useful things you might have been learning while you were undergoing it.

CONTACTS WANTED:

Sylvia Bancroft, Ard la Bor, Bracken Ln, Nr Matlock Derbyshire
Has recently become vegetarian and wants contact with others for advice etc.

Steven and Janet Wellock, Royd House, Shay Ln, Halifax, W.Yorks.
Would like to get in touch with any other 'Witnesses' who are also EO members.

Nicola Miles , 69 Cranbury Rd Reading, Berkshire
Would like to hear from anyone with similar views on the importance of bringing up children with a loving and spiritual awareness of Earth and our responsibility towards Her. Also those interested in the Pagan Faith(not to be mistaken for the non-sense of 'black magic').

Chris Mager, The Gatehouse, Meeting Hill Rd, Briggate, North Walsham, Norfolk
Would be glad to hear from people interested in 'Organic Education', a scheme he is starting, in conjunction with WWOOF, that is to help people learn practical skills in a more 'apprentice style' manner. He also suggests that someone write an article for WWOOFnews (!) about EO as he thinks it would generate interest. If you fancy the idea please contact; Jenny Meldrum 46 Stoke Common Rd Bishopstoke, Eastleigh, Hants.

GWS

We've now made a start on getting out GWS. However my bit in the last newsletter about 'first come, first served' was not exactly apt. There has been no great free for all. Requests are still coming in but we are by no means anywhere near a full subscription! SO if you would still like to take out a sub. do let us know. There are also a variety of old issues available. They are to be sold at the London meeting in February, if not sold before. If you fancy a sample copy to see what GWS is all about send us 50p (cheque, PO or stamps) and we'll send you a copy. The cost of the subscription for '84 is £5 but will have to be substantially higher for '85 due to the severe dip in the exchange rate. B & C Wallace, 25 Diabaig, Achnasheen, Ross-shire, IV22 2HE.

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WHERE TO GET WHAT!

Enquiries Secretary; posters, digests, old Newsletters, handbills.
Membership Secretaries; Current and old Newsletters, S.I.N.C., Early Years, Teach your Own, Mem Sec Adress stickers.
Co-ordinators Secretary; Stationary, Introductory literature, Membership Forms, Envelope re-use Labels, Mem. Sec. Address stickers

Interesting Quote from an L.E.A. Advisor.

"You also mention Mathematics. Once again, it must be emphasised that the progressive element of skills, logical steps, and factual knowledge is of paramount importance. It is possible to develop a 'home grown' scheme of work but this is a major undertaking, even for fully trained and well experienced class teachers; even then, a commercially produced scheme will probably lie at the heart of the teaching, to ensure correct progression of knowledge and inclusion of all relevant topics".

We'd be interested to hear others comments on this quote.

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EO is affiliated to :- N.C.C.L.
Future Studies Centre
National Out of School Alliance

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Answer to Bob Emmett's brain teaser:- A.Hitler Esq. 111111

EDUCATION OTHERWISE

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

Our principal aims are as follows:

To encourage the provision of alternative learning situations outside the school system.

To re-affirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their childrens 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"x4" s.a.e. to
25 common Lane, Hemingford Abbots, Cambs. PE18 9AN

