

# EDUCATION OTHERWISE

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Deadline for submissions: 1ST SEPTEMBER 1991

Please send contributions to the Editor marked clearly "FOR PUBLICATION", including your full name, address and telephone number on each submission sent.

THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS PUBLICATION ARE THOSE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR, OR OF EDUCATION OTHERWISE AS A WHOLE.

EACH ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER IS EDITED BY A DIFFERENT VOLUNTEER MEMBER OF EDUCATION OTHERWISE AND ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT BETWEEN MEMBERS.

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Further notes for contributors

1. Please submit by the deadline.
2. Please write or type your material clearly and indicate if you do not wish your contribution to be retyped otherwise the editor will retype and make minor corrections of spelling, punctuation etc. Material of the wrong size, faint print may well have to be retyped anyway.
3. If you are referring to a previous article or letter, please include reference of newsletter number and date.
4. Feel free to make suggestions about articles you would like to see in the newsletter or supplements.
5. Advertisements are accepted (when space permits) from members if they are of interest to EO in general, at 10p a word

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The childrens' pages are edited by:

HANNAH BUSH

68 Maesglas, Fontyates, Llanelli, Dyfed  
Wales SA15 5SH

## Editorial

computer literate?) and for occupying the baby.

Here we go again, just over a year on. Time flies and not much changes. I and the children are one year older but the questioning and the doubts persist. Perhaps they always will? Maybe this is why I enjoy editing the Newsletter. I find that for every concern/worry I have someone else has had, or is having a similar crisis of confidence.

Editing has been an infinitely less frustrating and time-consuming task the second time round. For one, I have become, as they say, computer literate!! In that, I have to agree with Terri Shoosmith. As adults we perhaps have less confidence when approaching something new, but there is much to be said for leaving learning a skill until it is needed.

One EDer laughed last year on hearing my difficulties editing with a 4month old (she edited with an 18month old). Well, I have to agree with her - an 18month old can cause far more havoc. He took a particular liking to the "News from the Regions" notes! Oh yes, we had fun!!

I hope you will find much to interest you in this M/L. It is very word-intensive but there are a lot of thought provoking articles. Let's just hope you do not get too much eye-strain trying to read it!

May I say thankyou to all the contributors to this M/L for sending their articles before the deadline. 95% of the material arrived on time. This is not a 'slap on the wrist' to those who rang/wrote at the last minute. I mean to say, where would we be without a little bit of last minute panic and juggling?!!

Finally, a big thankyou to my children for:  
a) the advice and direction regarding heading style and clip-art. And to Philip for the front cover  
b) for keeping out of the way when I made a hash of several pages (Did I say I was

A full version of the 'Accused of Abuse' article can be obtained from:  
Chris Sempers, 17 Melton Fields, Brickyard Lane, North Ferrisby, North Humberstone  
NU14 3HE

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DON'T FORGET TO DO YOUR BIT FOR  
HOME-EDUCATION DAY

SEE PAGES: 6, 20 AND 29

## REGIONAL NEWS

A - K



### Avon

The Bristol Seed Circle continues to meet several times each week for workshops, outings, play and entertainment. Members from other areas and visitors always welcome. Telephone Julia Hammond on 0272 636082 for further information or to receive mailings send an SAE to Poppy Green, 15 Bellevue, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1DB

### Berkshire

Wednesday 11th September: 10am - 3pm Pottery workshop Bring packed lunch £1 per family

Wednesday 9th October: 10am - 3pm Spinning and dyeing workshop Bring packed lunch £1 per family

Both the above workshops will be held at the Friends Meeting House, 74 Ragstone Road, Slough Telephone Diana Keegan (0753 529689) for more details

### Buckinghamshire

We continue to meet weekly for swimming at Danes Camp, Northampton, on Tuesdays at 12 noon, and informally for activities and outings. We are quite a small group at present, but we would warmly welcome any members from further afield to join us.

I have two provisional dates: (please telephone to confirm)

Thursday 26th September: Stacey Hill Farm Museum, Milton Keynes (Museum of Industry and Rural Life) Cost 50p per child Bring picnic lunch

Thursday 24th October: Projection Room at the Point Cinema, Milton Keynes - a look behind the scenes

Any offers/suggestions for future outings please contact Valerie Common on 0908 511247

### Dyfed

John, Sally, Emma, Julian, Mike, Lindsey and children welcome Dyfed EOers to an Equinox gathering at Cwm Rhaffau, Sarnau, Mr. Abergarth(?) on Sunday 22nd September. Please bring a lunch to share and fabrics, scissors etc and together we can make a harvest time applique wall hanging Tel. 0239 811118

### Kent

Sunday 1st September: Open house at Hales Place, High Haldden, Mr Ashford from 11am. Ideas so far include building a (temporary) BMX track in the field, a tree house or some swings and things in the woods. Bring wood, ropes, bikes etc. Lots of space and junk already here.

Please ring me for directions and to give me an idea of what you might bring. Sue Mather 05808 2107

Cobtree Museum of Kent Rural Life, Near Maidstone

A growing number of families meet regularly on the first Thursday of each month in the schools room, which has been booked from 1pm onwards. Various craft demonstrations have also been booked (August - Blacksmith). Bring a picnic to have inside if wet - outside if fine. Lots of interesting displays, animals, etc to see and plenty of space for the children to play. In order to obtain a reduced entrance fee of 60p per adult and 30p per child (under 5's free) please tell the entrance keeper that you are with the EO group.

An alternative venue in Maidstone is being booked for the winter months from November onwards - see next newsletter for details.

If you would like to have 'open house' one day during the winter months, or arrange a meeting in your area, please let me know. Pam Stevenson (0304) 210997

## H - L

### Hertfordshire

The Herts group is meeting fortnightly on Thursdays for swimming, museum visits, country walks, a visit to an RSPB nature reserve and a trip to Stansted Airport.

#### EO SWEATSHIRTS

£13.50 approx. + p.p. Interested?  
Phone Margaret Inman for details/orders  
before Sat. 8th. on (0582) 661833 or  
write to: 278 Poynters Road, Luton,  
Beds. LU4 92A

I am preparing an exhibition for National Home Education Day on 19th October at Welwyn Garden City Library. I have arranged to hire a room in the library for the morning so that anyone who is interested can come and talk to us. If you would like to drop in between 11am - 1pm on Saturday morning it would be lovely to see you. We will be upstairs in the Dorothy Hess Room, just off the Junior Library.

For further details of above contact Jane Lowe, 5 Elm Gardens, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 6RX (0707) 335825

### London Outings

So far this year we have had some excellent talks and activities at various museums. Everyone is welcome to join us from any part of the country but I do need to know about two weeks in advance if you are coming.

27th August: National Portrait Gallery 11.15am  
The life of Sir Henry Unton, an Elizabethan gentleman re-enacted in music, drama and dance. No under 7's. Covent Garden afterwards

10th September: Hampton Court Meet at 11.30am at the Trophy Gate. Ring to let me know you are coming. We might have the benefit of a historian among our numbers

24th September: 11am Museum of London. I am trying to book a lesson for 7-11 year olds in the prehistory and Roman Gallery. If this is successful then we can work through the different galleries as we are at

the Geffrye Museum. Numbers limited. Ring to book.

The museum is situated at the junction of London Wall, Aldergate St. and St. Martins the Grand(?). The main entrance opens onto the pedestrian high walk connecting the Barbican with the rest of the city (St. Pauls, The Barbican or Moorgate tubes)

15th October: Science Museum Meet in the foyer at 11.15am

Contact Susan Petschaft, 2 Leylands Manor, Tubwell Lane, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 3RH Tel. 0892 661319

### North/Inner London

We meet the first Sunday of every month at the Friends Meeting House, Church Crescent, Muswell Hill, N10 (nearest tube Highgate, Northern Line - 10 minutes walk) from 2pm - 6pm.

Bring food and drink. We are not allowed to use their equipment so bring playthings to share eg toys, arts and crafts, writing material, dressing-up clothes, music etc. We ask for a contribution, if affordable, suggested £1.50 per family.

Everyone interested in EO is very welcome. Wheelchair access is not easy but possible via a slope in the garden, toilets are not fully accessible.

Dates: Sundays, August 4th; September 1st; October 6th; November 3rd

Monday Outings BRING PICNIC BRING PICNIC

12th August: 11am Highgate Woods, Muswell Hill Road N10 (Highgate tube) Meet at Adventure Playground style playground

19th August: 11am Sainsbury Exhibition, National Gallery, Trafalgar Square (Charing Cross tube)

26th August (Bank Holiday): 11am Golders Hill Park by the cafe (Golders Green or Hampstead tube, buses 210 or 268)

2nd September: 11am Embankment Pier on Thames, boat trip to Greenwich, walk through

L - S

Thames tunnel, Docklands light railway (Embankment tube)

9th September (Rosh Hashanah): 11am Regents Park. Primrose Hill playground (Camden Town tube)

16th September: 11am Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, meet at 'Canada' (High St. Kensington tube)

23rd September: 11am Parliament Hill Adventure playground near the running track (Belsize Park tube or BR Gospel Oak)

30th September: 11am Parliament Hill/Kite Hill - bring kite

7th October: 11am Coram Fields, Guildford Street, WCI (Holborn tube)

14th October: 11am College Farm, Fitzalan Road N3

21st October: 11am Kentish Town City Farm, Cressfield Close NW5 (Kentish Town or Chalk Farm tube)

Telephone to check details, especially if raining. David and Helen Michael 081 455 5109; Jo Jenkins 081 883 8052; Belinda and Alan Reid 081 343 1061

We often meet at the Fleet Community Centre, Agincourt Road NW3 (Belsize Park tube or BR Hampstead Heath) for family workshops on Tuesdays and Thursdays 3.30 - 5.30pm term time. Telephone The Fleet for details 071 485 9988

I hope this is supposed to go under the same heading as the above. If not I apologise. The notes came independently but both asked to be put under the heading 'North London'

We have discovered an inspiring contemporary dance teacher, who runs classes of movement to music. She is willing to have a class of EO children. She has some free mornings and has said that she would travel to a

suitable venue if necessary. If there are enough interested children (any age above 4 years) we could start a group after the summer holidays.

For more details please contact Eleanor Stapleton, 21, Central Avenue, Edmonton N9 9RQ Telephone 081 884 1368

#### South London

We meet more or less monthly to encourage each other, meet new faces and play. We bring food and drink to share. All welcome.

Saturday 27th July: The Child and Parent Centre in the Albany, Douglas Way, SE8. 11am - 3.30pm. Deptford High Street and Douglas Way are closed on Saturdays for the market so drivers should aim to park in Watson Street. CAPC is on the ground floor of the Albany, turn left as you enter the cafe and go to the very end of the corridor.

Sunday 18th August: Morwood Childrens' Centre, behind St Luke's Church, 2-8 Morwood High St, SE27, 1 - 5pm

Sunday 29th September: Morwood Childrens' Centre 1 - 5pm (see above)

Saturday 26th October: At the Albany 11am - 3.30pm (see above)

Sunday 24th November: At Morwood Childrens' Centre 1 - 5pm (see above)

For more details telephone Modge or Dorothy 081 469 0413

#### Norfolk

Informal gathering for EO families, fortnightly from Wednesday 4th September. 2pm - 4pm at St. Mary's Church hall, Conaught Road, Attleborough. All welcome! For enquiries telephone Teena on Attleborough 455672

#### East Sussex

The last several newsletters have not carried any reference to our activities, but we are still here. We have our own local newsletter, in which we list events and meetings. Since I have been editing it, I have failed to keep the national newsletter

up to date - I apologise if you've been missing us!

We do have plenty of contact between EOing Families, including open days at people's homes, meetings at Drusilla's (a brilliant local zoo-playground), activity afternoons (we hire village halls) and focused get-togethers to explore the area. Last weekend (June 14, 15 and 16th) we had a camp in the middle of a wood, culminating with a storyteller who gave us some Native American legends. It poured with rain most of the time, and I would say provided a memorable occasion - 34 people huddled in a teepee, complete with cooking fire, dramatic hail/thunderstorms included.

Our local newsletter contains more than events listings - there are articles and letters which might interest EOers anywhere. If you'd like to see a free copy, write to Lyndon Pugh, 37 Nevill Road, Rottingdean, Brighton BN2 7HH or telephone (0237) 307503. Six monthly issues cost £3.

#### **Tyne and Wear**

If anyone is interested in meeting regularly for social/educational reasons, could they please contact me. Some of us have started swimming regularly at Elswick pool on Mondays at 12.30pm during term times.

We have a space booked at City Library on 19th October, 9.00am - 5.00pm. Could I have volunteers please to help person it?

Contact Yvette Haines 172, Doncaster Road, Sandyford, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 1RB

#### **North Yorkshire**

We had an enjoyable day at Rievaulx in May. It was good to meet everyone

Picnic/family day at Knaresborough in August. Confirm date with Sue Clare Tel. (043 96)

Sunday 8th September: 2pm Get-together at home of Lyn and Gareth Lewis 5 Vale Crescent, Bishop Wilton (Tel: (07596) 577) Weather permitting. No smoking zone

Proposed visit to archaeological dig. Date to be arranged in September  
Local library space needed in October for North Yorkshire. Information campaign in the pipeline. Ring Sue Clare for details and paperwork.

#### **South Yorkshire**

At the moment I'm writing this nothing has been organised (apart from the weekly meetings at my house). However, by the time you read this newsletter a planning meeting will have taken place. Give me a call if you are interested in the results of that.

Dineke de Jong 48 Montgomery Road, Sheffield S7 1LQ Tel: 0742 553836

#### **West Yorkshire**

20th August: Trip to Temple Newsham. Farm with rare breeds (free), large grounds, stately home with collection of china!!, nice cafe. Meet at cafe 11am

4th September: Get-together at Kim Wark's house, 21, Drummond Avenue, Leeds. You are welcome to arrive after 10.30am. Those arriving early may be given a duster! Activities could include sports on a nearby field, a walk in the woods, music or something French. Please bring own lunch, drinks provided. Telephone (0532) 757473 for directions and to let me know you are coming.

10th September: Trip to Shibden Hall, Halifax. Hall, grounds and folk museum. Meet there 11am

30th September: Parents' meeting at Jacqui Reed's house, 73 Salisbury Road, Armley, Leeds. Tel: (0532) 798783 for directions. Planning meeting for future activities.

## in THE MEDIA

Dear EO,

I am moved to write this letter after having seen 'Open Space' on BBC2, (Monday 10.6.91).

The programme was one of a series of Video Letters. This particular episode represented an exchange of videos between a group of protesters who were initially anti-gypsy and an eloquent lady representing the "travellers' side" from the nearby "permanent site" which Avon Council provided under extant law.

By the end of the debate the two 'sides' had effectively do-si-doed, as in square dancing. (I've probably spelled the step wrong but readers will doubtless be familiar with the 'corner reversal' I refer to.) This change of positions resulted from mutual passion and compassion!

I am aware that good contacts exist between EO and the Romany community and that the synapse is basically effective on both sides. What worries me, however, is that somehow, we seem to have failed to communicate the basic axiom which John Holt more than demonstrated in his 'Teach Your Own', namely that you yourself do not have to know a thing for your children to learn it on their own.....For example, that a child can learn to read in the presence of adults who do not, as yet, have that particular skill and, in fact, can IMPART that skill to those witnessing adults!

I can cite a parallel experience in my own immediate family. Our teenage daughter has been learning Welsh from two households across the road from us and has not only managed to impart a lot of her knowledge to my wife, but even to me. The latter is a big accomplishment as I had dropped out of a number of formal courses for Welsh-learners, rather discouraged at my inability, up to that point, to transcend some inadvertent, but nevertheless powerful, early behaviour conditioning towards monoglotism at the hands of my own

beleaguered parents, then immigrants in the USA.

If the above is less clear than I would wish it to be, it is because I am struggling with a form of English still not standard to me after living in the U.K. all these years.....an effort motivated by the lessons learned during a long and once near-fatal illness I am still recuperating from.

I trust that what I'm trying to say will be sufficiently clear to enough people as to be ultimately helpful to all concerned in the present dialogue.

With very best wishes,

Jacob Bush, 68 Maesglas, Pontyates, Llanelli, Dyfed, Wales SA15 5SH

### STOP PRESS!

The media and the Press are already showing a great deal of interest in EO with regard to National Home-Education Day in particular

In order to be able to offer up-to-date information and statistics

Sarah Taylor  
has prepared a

### SHORT QUESTIONNAIRE

for YOU to take to the local school, shopping centre, health centre or even 50 miles away to your non-local.....if you so wish (!!!)

and ask parents what they know about EO  
This should only take a minute or two

PLEASE make the effort. If everyone asks only two people we will have meaningful statistics to quote.

Contact: Sarah Taylor 23 Whitley Road,  
London N17 6RJ  
Tel: 081 808 3200

## To an Advisor



Thankyou for coming to visit us. You are welcome. We are glad that we live in a country where it is normal for the State to care about children and to want them to have the best.

We can easily imagine that coming here is not your idea of a satisfying assignment. You are used to seeing professionals at work, people with whom you share a general picture of what education is. Your natural inclination is probably to be very suspicious of us, to wonder what on earth makes us want to spend hours every day doing something which we already pay taxes to have someone else do for us. We can understand that. Perhaps you also wonder how people who have never listened to lectures on education, nor practised the art of teaching classes of school pupils, can hope to handle the task of bringing their own children to maturity.

We respect your feelings, whatever they may be. You are not our enemy, nor we yours.

We will listen respectfully to your advice, but we claim the right, having heard it, to act on a different way. This is not rejection. You know, if you are honest about your work, that education is not a single, unchanging discipline. Methods which were unquestioned when we were children would be dismissed out of hand today. That is not cant or vague chat-show generalisation - it is the sober truth. Go back even further than our generation and you will find ideas for which a training-college student would be rebuked nowadays, striding confidently through the school system sweeping all argument aside. The Act of 1944 came from the highest level of Educational thought: by 1960 its ideas about secondary schooling had been denounced and were in retreat. We in our turn see no

reason why we should not try something new and different in education.

So we expect whatever we discuss today to be seen as part of a wholesome search for truth and not as some sort of missionary sermon from an enlightened society to a gathering of backward natives. Strong words, perhaps, but that is how some of us have been treated in the past. We would not like you to be unaware of our susceptibilities.

You ask us about structure, programmes of work, times of lessons and so on. We do not want to make you think we are irresponsible or woolly-minded, but we have to say to you that these things have no importance for us.

We think that structure and time-tabling are by-products, not necessities. Let us ask you a simple question: do you think - honestly and seriously - that schools put pupils through a fixed routine of lessons because that is the best way to educate them? If so, you must explain to us exactly how, for instance, it is better for our child to do - say - thirty minutes of Maths, four times a week at arbitrary times than to spend a couple of hours working on a project which really interests and absorbs him here at home. We cannot deal in generalities; you must. We say it with respect - tell us precisely, and in detail, why you want to force your way onto our child?

You accuse us of generalising. We want to suggest that all talk about school education has to be general. You cannot talk in particularities about a system which starts every child at the same age, expects him to learn the same facts and skills, tests him at the same time as every other child, and keeps him under instruction until the age of sixteen, like everyone else. In fact, though we generalise about the effect of schooling on children we think that we know enough about our own child to construct an entirely personal education for him. Because he speaks freely to us and tells us the truth we can easily submit our general ideas about education to the test of his response, and modify them in any way necessary.

## WANTED.

A semi-professional artist  
to illustrate 'Early Years'  
Contact: Sarah Guthrie  
Field House, Thrandeston, Diss, Norfolk

Your questions about structure are difficult to answer. You sound as if 'structure' is sacred, a sort of holy word, which must never be denied or discounted. We fear that if we tell you - as we must - that artificial structures simply do not correspond to the way real children learn, you will close your minds to everything else we have to say. We do not want that to happen. So perhaps we can put it like this: learning always takes place within a 'structure'. Children do not pick up language without creating an intricate network of subtly related ideas. The structure is there, but it is the child's. We suspect that by 'structure' you mean an order of doing things which makes sense to a grown-up: nouns before verbs, adding before taking away, Queen Elizabeth before James I. Children do not think like that. We know, for instance, that children learn sentences before they distinguish words. We find, in our experience, that our child quite often attacks problems from unusual directions, because he sees good reasons to do so. We learn, not just from the easy parts of a problem, but also from the bewildering difficulties he sometimes meets. We believe he can 'structure' his own learning; we shall help him only when he needs it.

You are rightly concerned about socialization.

We cannot allay your fears if you honestly believe that a child will be socially crippled if he does not go to school. However, we would like you to know that our child has many friends. He chose them, or they chose him. They do not bully him, gang up on him or jeer at him if he isn't wearing whatever the clothes-shops say is fashionable; apart from those no doubt valuable experiences he has normal social relationships.

There are many other comments and criticisms to be made about our arrangements. Naturally, we shall be equally outspoken in our evaluation of your system. This ought

not to come between us. We both want what is best for the children. The question is, how can we possibly achieve that good end without killing their curiosity and forcing them to spend many hours a week doing things which bore and depress them?

You insist that school these days is nothing like that. Our child says that his school was. We believe him, and we have acted on that belief. It is for you to convince him that what happened to him was an aberration, not to be repeated. You can try, but frankly we doubt if you can succeed. He is doing too well, and the memory of boredom and bullying is still too much alive in his mind to yield easily to your persuasion.

Christopher Shute, 7 Kiln Way, Polesworth,  
Staffs B78 1JF

## SMALL HOME-SCHOOL

(growing to approx. 10 children)

OPENING SEPTEMBER 1991  
IN SOUTH LONDON

Led by an experienced Montessori and French teacher (salary to be covered by parental contribution)

If you would like your child to join this group, from September onwards or, would like more information

Please contact:  
Julia Harvey, 85 Emmanuel Road, Balham,  
London SW12 0HR  
Tel: 081 671 6227

The individual who sees himself and his situation clearly and who freely takes responsibility for that self and for that situation is a very different person from the one who is simply in the grip of outside circumstances.

Carl Rogers 'Freedom to Learn'

## Can anyone help?

We are looking for somewhere to live - a house (possibly communal), caravan, boat etc... to rent in an area with others who are home educating

At present we are staying with my parents after moving from a boat last December. Council and Housing Association waiting lists are impossibly long (over a year IF you are lucky).

We are: myself, my 4 - 5 year old son (he is active, imaginative and sociable, he loves books and comics and dreams of being clowns, acrobats and magicians 'cum knights (King Arthur or Robin Hood!) like many his age), and my daughter - 4 months - who likes trees and water amongst others!

I would like to have some space to do the things I enjoy - recycling old to new (clothes, furniture or anything I find!), knitting, puppet, kite and toymaking. Things that are new to me are natural dying, wine making, cycle re-building (nothing complicated!) and gardening. We share a beautiful organic allotment which is our only sanctuary. I would also like to take up meditating and some yoga again as they fell by the wayside long ago and are much needed again.

Is there anyone out there who is like-minded and has, or knows of, the space we require?

If so, please write or contact me:

Susan Robinson, c/o 48 Coppice Avenue,  
Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 2DL Tel:  
(0423) 583360

### FEATHERSTONE: April

Did anyone find a bicycle security chain covered with white plastic. Lost there. (Hands up anyone who caught chickenpox. I did for one.)  
Sue Petszart, East Sussex

## L A T E E X T R A

### REGIONAL NEWS: GLAMORGAN

Saturday 10th August: Meet at the adventure playground Bryngarw Country Park, off A4065, four miles north of Bridgend at 11.30am

16th September: Llanishen Leisure Centre meet at 11.30am for soft play, short tennis and swimming.

Kate Powell, 1 Edith Villas, Llantrisant,  
Mid. Glamorgan CF7 8ET

## Justice for Children

Dear EO,

Do any other EO families have difficulties with attendants, in museums, swimming pools etc?

As my son, Michael, gets bigger we have been having more and more clashes with them.

Galleries and museums are exciting places to an 11 year old and my son is not inhibited about making little whoops of appreciation or grunts of disapproval. He moves about a lot and may suddenly dart towards something that has caught his eye. At this the attendants move in closer and draw attention to themselves with non-verbal warning noises.

Our enjoyment is spoilt and is replaced by anxiety on my part and anger on Michael's.

Sooner or later he infringes the 'rules'; reaches out to touch something or leans too far over a barrier and the full wrath of authority descends upon us.

.....I am not good at acting as his advocate because what I really want is to be as inconspicuous as possible. Michael finds it hard to conform just to placate authority. Any advice?

Steph Fletcher, 50 Springfield Ave.  
Chesterfield S40 1HL (0246) 239048

# 101 Things You Never Knew about EO

1. EO started life as Mothers Education and Training but was quickly renamed Education Otherwise after complaints from vegetarians.

2. Membership is divided into 68 areas, the top six are as follows:

1. London South (63)
2. Kent (63)
3. London North (61)
4. West Midlands (61)
5. Essex (58)
6. Dorset (54)

3. Glamorgan and Gloucestershire were disqualified when judges found evidence of multiple entries in the Contact List. The Gilmores and the Pembertons were both visited and found to consist of one family each not two.

4. Central (Scotland) is the lowest area with one member and are considering merging with Cleveland (two members) but are unable to agree on a new title for the area.

5. EO membership is made up of many different nationalities, there are the English in Horley; the French in Clacton, Manchester and the Wirral; the Welsh in Slough; the Cameroons in Reading; and the Poles in Stoke Pages.

6. Some members have gone so far as to change their surname to that of their favourite football team - Oldham (Huddersfield), Blackburn (Padstow), Bradford (Newton Abbot), Chester (Durham), Hull (Darwen), Preston (Rochdale), Charlton (Leicestershire), Bolton (Boston and Leeds), Morton (Liverpool).

I am trying to persuade Ual to change ours to Queen of the South but she won't buy it!

7. Those non sporting types have just gone for colours - Pink (Havant); Brown (Walsall, Solihull, London, Skipton, Bishopston, Morpeth); White (Lincoln, Eye, Croydon, Leyburn, Brentwood); Green (Huddersfield, Werthyr,

Bristol, London, Chelmsford)

8. It was interesting to note what a multi-talented membership we have. We could all get together and form a labour agency. We have Mariners (Lavenham); Wainwrights (Oldham); Taylors (Haverhill, Kenilworth); Farmers (Jersey); Sheppards (Kendal, Finsbury Park); Bakers (Ilford, Dereham); Fidlers (Ramsbottom); Doctors (Chelsea); Cooks (Norwich, Herne Bay); Millers (Holywell); Faynters (Newcastle); Brewers (Leatherhead); Cheesewrights (Chelmsford); Wheelwrights (Castle Douglas).

Apologies to anyone I have omitted or insulted. The other 93 things will appear at a later date.

James Gannon, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes

## WANTED IN BRISTOL OR BATH

Somewhere for Joe (4 and a half) and Eleanor (2) to go

One day a week in term times from  
September 1991

In return: your child/ren to us? part  
payment? any other ideas?  
Tel: 0272 541860

## MOTHERS HELP NEEDED

Nov/Dec '91 16+

Please write for more information enclosing a few details about yourself.

Mrs. Carole Bowman  
Amelrain Str 50  
Oberderdingen  
7519  
Germany

# Autumn at Featherstone Castle

12th - 17th September 1991

Featherstone Castle is a big rambling house with acres of land around it. As there are no carpets or fancy decorations it is ideal for EOers of all ages.

So come meet new families, sing dance and make merry. Walk, talk and appreciate the countryside. The choice is yours BUT only if you are there.

AGM Saturday 14th September

Further details: Jill Gillings, Ballaglooney, Ronague, Arbury, Isle of Man Tel: 0624 824275

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As a fairly new member of EO, I would like to give Tom's (7) and my experiences on our first trip to Featherstone Castle last April.

After a 7 hour journey by train from Bath, we arrive at Maltwhistle. Several other families arrive and we are all collected in a pick up van. Children in the open back - much to Tom's delight - and adults in the front. Our first visit to Featherstone Castle had begun!

On arriving at the Castle, we had our photographs taken (optional). They would be pinned up on a board later, so we could put our names underneath and everyone could get to know everyone a lot quicker. What a good idea.

We chose a bedroom. Tom was very enthusiastic with his first taste of community living - eight bunkbeds in one

huge room - great! He made friends with another little boy his age and he was off! Other than meal times, I hardly saw him the few days we were there. Occasionally, I'd catch a glimpse of him sliding down the stairs, dashing around the Castle, playing hide and seek or swinging from the branch of a tree in the beautiful grounds. There were some really good workshops for the children, but as the weather was so good, Tom chose to spend most of the time outside with his new friends.

I did not find it difficult being a newcomer, as everyone I met was very friendly. My advice to new-comers is to expect a feeling of 'everyone knowing everyone else' because most of them do! But everyone is willing to chat, and, after all, we all have a common interest. The kitchen is a good meeting place if you are feeling lost!

We were only staying four days so the time to leave soon came. Tom was really sad about having to go, he grabbed a huge branch laying in the court-yard and nothing would part him from it. He just had to have a little bit of Featherstone to take home! It was difficult to say the least, getting on and off trains with a five foot branch.

Several times on the way home, Tom asked why he had to go to school when all these children did not. I feel very guilty about sending him, as I know it is not doing him any good. His main complaint is that it is boring. I did withdraw Tom from school for several months, but he was desperately lonely. He is an only child and no other EOers live in the immediate area. If there are other EOers out there with just one child at home I'd be grateful for any advice, as I may well withdraw Tom again if things do not improve in his next class.

We hope to see everyone again at the Castle next April. Tom says "Hello to Curdie". Sorry we didn't write Heather, we lost your address and I do not know your surname.

Thanks to the organizers of Featherstone for making it so enjoyable,

Carole and Tom Hayes 5 Oakfield Close, Bath

## School Experience

Dear EO,

I thought I would write at long last, having thought about it often. As soon as school breaks up this year, we shall have both of our children out.

For a long time we knew something was wrong with our eldest daughter's education. She was always so sunny and happy, full of life. The first school she attended, all seemed well, but her teacher there really loved children - she was, as I have since found out, exceptional.

We had to move to Essex and this was our first bad experience. Suddenly Rebecca did not want to go into school and would cling to me, crying. I was told it was my attitude, when I expressed concern, and would I please leave her outside school and go, each morning. Then we began to receive reports that she was unsociable and a loner.

What I thought were routine medical examinations were happening every couple of months, and I realised she was being singled out for some reason. When I finally asked the medical officer why she kept wanting to see us when Rebecca was fine at home and quite healthy the questions and tone changed. At this time I was very green - polite and genuinely believing that the purpose of education was to assist each child in achieving their potential. The upshot was that I worked! It was thought that by doing so I was emotionally damaging Rebecca, and this was the cause of her troubles at school. Here I have to say that either my husband or myself was always at home and I mostly worked during school hours.

Shocked? I remember being uncontrollable when I went home. How could these specialists think I was such a monster as to destroy my child's ability to enjoy school.

And since they were so sure, how would we cope financially without my wages? Luckily, my husband was not so daft. Striking while the iron was hot he was out of the door like a bolt of lightning. He demanded an

instant meeting with the Head, with the result that they backed off. But all confidence was gone and none of this had helped Rebecca, who remained unhappy at school.

We moved back to Leeds, after I had my second daughter, and sent Rebecca to the local school. All seemed well at first until we noticed her unhappiness return and her poor achievements. (Incidentally, we were summoned once or twice to see a medical officer at the new school, but she was also the doctor who saw babies at the local clinic. She had received a report on my youngest which stated she had cerebral palsy! I told her I would have noticed being a qualified nurse and observant parent. This enlightened lady said she had no further need to see any of my family).

We approached Rebecca's teacher, who basically shrugged his shoulders and was unable to understand what we were worried about. We left things for a while, but eventually, after seeing him again, I knew she was operating at well below her capacity. He wasn't interested. What to do? We sent her to a private school. My husband and I found ourselves working day and night to pay the fees. Don't misunderstand me, this was value for money. My daughter blossomed here. She made firm friends, was sociable, happy to go, reluctant to come home in the evenings and her 'performance' level rocketed, although she was at the lower end of their achievement range. They were happy with her. She was, in their words, neglected educationally. For a whole year, everything was wonderful. We were a whole family again and anyone could see how happy she was.

After a year, we could no longer keep up the workload needed to pay the fees and had to return her to the state sector. The same old troubles returned but the headmaster let us take her out of school on trips and we educated her at home, weekends and evenings, following the regime at her old school. Following another fracas over the school content, and after we had asked her teacher what her aims for Rebecca were, and had been met with the reply, "What do you mean, aims?" my husband met with the

headmaster, armed with the work and projects etc. she had done at home. We asked why, if she could achieve this at home, did they give her work geared at least a year behind? The Head and another teacher admitted that they could not hope to offer her an education anywhere near that standard

By now we were members of EO and seeds had germinated in our brains. Finally, Rebecca was beaten up at school. Her bag was ripped to shreds and her umbrella was smashed. My lovely daughter had been reduced to a crumbling mass and cried to us to help her. We felt destroyed too. Colin told the headmaster she would not be returning and, for the rest of the year, we managed to get her into another school. This would bring her up to 11 years, when she would be de-registered automatically. At the same time, we removed our younger daughter, who was 4 and in a reception class, as her personality had changed markedly.

So, that is the story and here we go! We are expecting a bumpy ride from the LEA, who we have been told will try to make life difficult for us - although we will speak as we find. We have met our local EO group, who seem a friendly bunch, and make good coffee.

I wonder if the LEA advisor knows anything about gear ratios for our DIY tandem project?

Yours,

Carol Lum 87 Leasowe Road, Hunslet, Leeds  
LS10 2EY

### WANTED URGENTLY

Children's contributions and photographs for forthcoming FACT FACTS

Please send to: Liz Ramsey, 1 Stanford Mills  
Cotts, Stanford on Soar, Loughborough, Leics.  
LE12 5QL

## Moral Support Needed

I have recently enrolled in EO. I have two children, a little boy of four and my little girl is one. I could do with some moral support, ideas and any experiences in home educating a child of primary school age. I am also a little afraid of encounters with the LEA, when they are due.

I have also been toying with the idea of starting up a monthly meeting for home educated children and parents at a church hall in Dudley, overlooking a park and playground. We could organise activities, outings, Christmas parties and exchange experiences.

Anyone interested please let me know.

Sharon Powis, 7 Newland Grove, Holly Hall,  
Dudley DY2 0TJ

### HELP

I have just started teaching my 12 year old son at home and need help in getting hold of text books and work on discs (suitable for Amstrad models CPC6128 and PCW8512) in all subjects; Maths, French, German, Science, History and Geography.

I am open to suggestions.

Thankyou,  
Ms Pam Francis, 253 Fulham Court, Fulham  
Road, London SW6 5QE

Has anyone a copy of:  
MY SECOND BOOK OF WORD FAMILIES by  
Mixie Tavener, pub. Philograph/Philip and  
Tacey

Belinda Allen, 4 Ashleigh Road, Barnstaple,  
Devon EX32 8JX Tel: 0271 79023

# Accused of Abuse

a personal account

We were very interested to read Rob and Anne Wade's account of the Orkney ritual abuse cases, in the last EO newsletter. We experienced similar treatment last year and made a diary of events as they happened to us.

As you will read, we are Pagans - we do state this in the EO contact list. We do not eat children, nor involve them in sexual abuse, neither have we anything to do with Pornography, Drugs, Sexual Orgies, etc etc regardless of what the tabloid press or certain other 'experts' may say.

One day in May 1990, we had a telephone call from Grahams' parents saying that a police officer and a social worker had visited their house, looking for us and enquiring after our son. Forewarned, we quickly tidied the living room - stuffing toys in cupboards etc - and waited.

The police woman (introduced to us as the 'Victim Liason Officer' - WOW! now doesn't that make you feel innocent until proven guilty) and social worker asked us if we knew why they were visiting us. When we said we had no idea, they told us that an anonymous allegation had been made to the NSPCC that our son (they got his name wrong) had been overheard talking about being involved in 'rituals where people dance around naked'.

Not such a dreadful thing when you think about it. There is nothing illegal about;

a) attending a ritual (Christians, Muslims, Jews etc do it regularly)

b) dancing

c) being naked - we have Naturist leanings. However, the combination immediately spelled 'Ritual Abuse' to the NSPCC, police and social services.

We then had to spend the next couple of hours explaining our religious beliefs to the police officer and social worker. There was great emphasis on the point that we keep

our beliefs 'secret'. We do not keep our beliefs secret, but neither do we flaunt them. Apart from the fact that members of pagan religions meet religious intolerance regularly, I happen to believe that both my political views and my religious beliefs are nobody's business but mine.

Both officials were also very anxious that we should give them names and addresses of 'others' (whether this was a list of friends, relatives, fellow pagans or simply anyone we could think of was not specified), but it was stressed that 'it would really help you'.

We were also told about a sort of 'check list' which is often applied as a guide to help spot child abuse - we have since heard that organisations such as Child Watch, which is particularly active in our area, not only uses this list, but will supply copies to anyone who asks for one.

The check list includes the following indicators:

1. The child/ren are kept away from school - this includes home education
2. The child/ren rarely (if ever) visit the doctor - the fact that your family maybe so healthy that they rarely need to resort to conventional medicine is not considered (we also happen to be great believers in a number of self-help 'alternative' medical systems)
3. There are few, or no toys on view in the living room! This fact was picked up on immediately by the social worker - ie our living room was tidy (a miracle actually!) and this gave her "great cause for concern"

When the officials had gone, although we believed that we had allayed most of their suspicions, we were terrified and angry. Terrified that our child would be taken from us and angry that this trouble had been caused to us by an anonymous allegation. Neither the motives, nor the mentality of the person who made this allegation will ever be known.

We started ringing round friends and relatives over the next few days, simply to let them know what had happened to us, both so that there would be a record of what was happening and in the hopes that

we might be able to fore-arm others who could find themselves in our plight. At the time we did not think to contact Rob and Anne Wade at the EO Legal Department, which would have been a good move.

However, we did contact a solicitor who did not seem at all sympathetic to us and told us that if we had nothing to hide we should co-operate with the police and social services fully. He also told us that there was nothing we could do to legally prevent a care order being taken out on our child, and that basically we could do nothing of a legal nature until something of a legal nature was done to us. This five minute telephone call later resulted in a £30 bill!

We spoke to a second solicitor who pointed out to us that the police and SS (Social Services) had the power to get a 'Place of Safety Warrant' from a magistrate at any time which would allow them to remove our child to a 'place of safety' for up to eight days. However, in that time they would have to prove that there was sufficient reason for this - we later found out that the blanket term 'Moral Danger' would cover just about any eventuality the authorities could think of.

Two days after the first visit, the social worker telephoned to tell us that she and the police officer would be visiting us again within half an hour. This gave us a little time to prepare, and we set up a tape recorder which we pointed out to the two as soon as they arrived and asked if they objected to our recording their conversation. (They didn't like it but had to agree to it!)

At this meeting our son was interrogated for an hour (at the time he was 7 years old, and stood up to it very well) and they had 'a look around' the house - did we have any objection? Again we were asked about our beliefs and were told that child pornography had been mentioned as a possibility. Nothing of an illegal nature was found in our home, no photographs, no illegal substances, and the police officer seemed positively bored stiff!

We told the police and SS that as far as we were concerned this was a clear case of religious discrimination.

In the meantime friends, acquaintances and people who had heard of our plight from various sources were starting to ring up, and write to, the social service offices and the Chief Constable of Humberside Police. The messages sent were various but included the sentiments that our family was being subjected to religious discrimination and pointing out that educating ones child at home was a legal right and did not automatically indicate that the child was being abused by anyone.

The third time the social worker came - on her own, the police had decided we had no case to answer - she asked us not to record the conversation "for her own protection" and asked us not to "hype up the situation any further" (the SS were getting worried about the number of people objecting to our persecution). We told her that as far as we were concerned our family was under attack and we would use any means at our disposal to defend our family.

At the Case Conference which happened a week later, because of the 'unusual' nature of our case we were given the highly surprising opportunity to address the conference and explain something about our beliefs and answer questions on it. We were also given support at this meeting by a friend of ours named Dan Hussey, an ex-headmaster, PTA chairman and pagan.

In England and Wales case conferences normally occur behind closed doors and you will never know what has been said about you. Apparently this is different in Scotland where the parents and children should be involved in any discussions which affect them.

In our case the recommendations of the Case Conference were:

1. We had no case to answer
2. It was recommended that Michael should not be placed on the children at risk register

3. Social Services should no longer be involved in the case - the police had already decided we had no case to answer

4. The LEA should continue to examine Michaels' education on a regular basis, as they were already doing

We were also given an apology for any distress they had caused the family! We made sure that we got the recommendations in writing.

The main thing which seemed to throw the SS was that we were not alone. That other people had taken the time to ring them up and write to them protesting about the treatment we were receiving. It was also noticeable that everyone who rang the SS got a slightly different story about what we were actually being accused of.

The best recommendation we can make to anyone who has to go through what we did - and anonymous allegations can be made about anyone, no matter what their religious or moral affiliations - is TELL AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE and, if you can, get them to write to the police and SS on your behalf.

*Chris Sempers, Graham Raven and Michael (aged 9)*

FINAL NOTE: Michael is still being home educated, and regularly inspected by the LEA. Despite our being 'proved' innocent of any crime or immorality, the regular report on Michael's progress is still sent out, to all the various organisations who joined in on our persecution - they all get regular copies for their files -  
**BIG BROTHER IS STILL WATCHING YOU!**

#### MAGAZINE REVIEWS

Would anyone like to receive 'Educational' magazines on behalf of EO and review them for the newsletters?

If so, please contact

Pam Stevenson, 25 Wyndham Road, Dover,  
Kent CT17 0BH Tel: 0304 210937

## WANTED

## TO RENT

Fellow member and vocational writer  
urgently seeks  
unfurnished country property  
to rent for family of four.

Condition and location immaterial.

Please help

Mick and Hazel Ellis, 30 Wotherton, Chirbury,  
Montgomery, Powys SY15 6BT  
Tel: (093 872) 334

-----  
SINGLE-PARENT, MAN FAMILY - 3 CHILDREN  
SEEKS  
RENTED COUNTRYSIDE ACCOMMODATION  
ANYTHING ANYWHERE CONSIDERED

Clive Allsopp, 46 Withern Road, Broxtowe  
Estate, Nottingham NG8 6FJ

I have noted the caravan in Ireland to rent in the last few issues but I am looking for something this side of the water and preferably in England as I don't believe in living in other peoples' countries without some sort of two-way cultural relationship and peaceful exchange; which does not exist between England and Ireland.

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## CARAVAN TO RENT

Comfortable, well-equipped 6-berth caravan on organic smallholding in beautiful County Clare. Fresh farm produce available, fishing, birdwatching, meeting our friendly animals or just relaxing in lovely countryside.

For details write to: Shoosmith, Faha,  
Dromindoora, Caher, County Clare, Ireland

## What I have Learned about home-education

I've been talking about education now for ten years but only doing it for one. The boy over whose studies I am presiding would not thank me for giving you any personal details, but I see no reason why I should not talk in general terms about what I think I have learned from the experience.

I have discovered that, for some children at least, schooling - class-teaching particularly, but not forgetting all the other organisational fatuities - is a major force working against creativity and invention.

Freed from the mental strait-jacket of daily lessons children ought to be able to revive their natural resources of curiosity quite quickly and go ahead into new areas of interest and discovery. Unfortunately they sometimes behave like shell-shocked Yomies, as if most of the life had been bashed out of them by a series of relentless, repeated shocks.

I thought it would be relatively easy to find out what any given child was willing to do, and arrange for him to do it. Not so. Schooling seems to convince some children that nothing is really interesting in itself. The important aspect of school-work is getting it done, getting it marked, filling the book, not making mistakes. If there is no-one enforcing school-type work it rarely gets done. Finishing is not important, nor is filling the book. Remove the school environment and, so it seems, you strip away most of the reasons for studying in the way we make children study in school.

In place of a docile acceptance of subjects and work-assignments, you tend to see robust questioning of the very necessity for studying things you are not interested in. Hard though it may be to accept, children do not automatically see the value of rigorous work and high standards. That comes later. Children only want to be excited. If ideas prove to be exciting they

will go after ideas: if you surround ideas with off-putting clap-trap like tests or homework they will look somewhere else for their pleasure. And quite right too.

Another thing I have learned from this year is that children are more articulate and clear in their minds about what they want from life than they are ready to let grown-ups know. I suspect that much of what we see as 'childish behaviour' is, in fact, protective colouring, a conscious device to meet unwelcome adult behaviour and neutralise it.

I am learning - and it is a hard lesson for a teacher - that children do not always need adults to help them learn, and still less do they need our approval. They can certainly become used to being praised or blamed, and they can learn to be fired up about tests, marks and such paraphernalia, but these things match with nothing in their natural make-up. They see them as 'natural' only to the extent that they accept schooling as 'natural' (which, of course, many do). Yet when schooling ends, so does their interest in being tested. Out of the classroom children handle themselves differently - with confidence and direction.

Teaching, I have discovered, can produce fear. Children do not like being unable to do things. It hurts them, especially if there are other children around who can do the things they cannot. The result of this is that when we take them out of school they give themselves the luxury of not being hurt. This may mean that for a fair chunk of time they will avoid the kind of work which hurt them. It will always be hard for parents or educators to feel at ease while their child seems to go from day to day not 'learning' anything, but that may well be what you have to do for a while at least.

The positive side of home education is, of course, seen most readily in the restored balance of the child's personality. I hope we are moving into a time when adults in general will see that calm unstressed, self-assured children are worth having around, and that we owe it to the future

to clear out of education everything which stops their developing in that direction.

Christopher Shute, 7 Kiln Way, Polesworth  
B78 1JF

## SHARED EXPERIENCES

An EO member recently invited us to comment on our home education situation. Having found other people's ideas and experiences interesting and helpful when we first started 'otherwise' education, we thought that our reply might be of wider interest.

We have two children - Jonathon, who will be 7 in July, and Laura who is 4). After agonizing for probably a year or more over whether or not to send Jonathon to school, we still couldn't decide by the time he was due to start. So we took what seemed to be the safest option at the time and sent him soon after he was 5. He attended the local primary for a term and a half - and although there were no specific or major problems, the experience was enough to convince us that it was not what we wanted for our children. The headmistress was surprisingly understanding of our wish to take him back out of school, and we had no problems from her about de-registering (except to the extent that she had never done it before and so we had to tell her what to do). We decided to inform the LEA of our actions rather than to wait for them to find out from the school, and we are convinced that this positive and assured approach (not at all the way we felt at the time!) played a significant part in the constructive response that we had from the LEA. The senior inspector we spoke to originally even referred us to EO, and was suitably impressed when told we were already members!

From the EO newsletters it is clear that people home-educate for all sorts of reasons. There were a number of factors behind our decision. None of them related to the

"quality" of the academic education, although some related to the quality of some teachers as people. But our overall concern was that we just did not see school as a "natural" way of life for a child - being made to sit still for so many hours each day; being told what to do and when to do it, irrespective of interests at the time; being subject to the dictatorial whims of some teachers; and perhaps most importantly, being taught (indoctrinated?) to fit in with the often petty and arbitrary rules and standards of both school and society, rather than to think about these issues for him/herself.

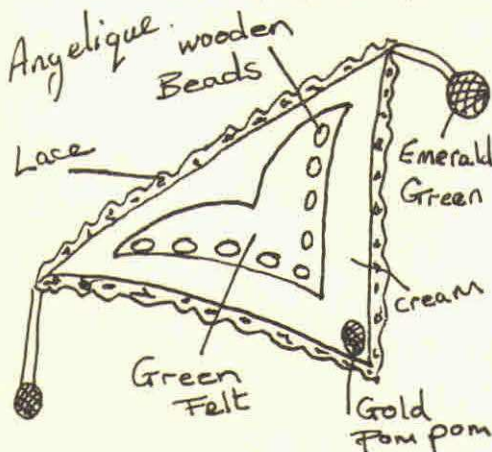
Linked with this last point is our feeling that the system is geared towards turning out round pegs to fit the round holes of industry and commerce rather than producing free-thinking individuals able to take charge of their own lives. This comes not so much from the curriculum, but through very much more subtle messages which may not be actively promoted but are nevertheless inherent in the school system - pressures to impress peer groups; the removal of personal choice by authority figures; the regulated life determined by the "working week" concept.

There are also other more invidious "messages" which we feel can eventually lead to undesirable negative character traits - for example, lack of confidence or a feeling of not being good enough caused by continued "could do better" type comments; the idea that success in life only comes through hard work (with "hard" often also implying unpleasant); in many cases, the slow acceptance that life is about "getting by" for five days a week in order to enjoy two; etc etc.

The basis of our approach to education is that it is no more than one other aspect of raising our children. We try to give them as much freedom as we can cope with (contrary to what some people have said to us, we are certain that this approach is much harder to live with than simply cracking the whip - and we don't always succeed!). Of course, this does not imply that Jonathon and Laura are allowed to do

## FEATHERSTONE ONE PERSONS EXPERIENCE

Last September's E.O. gathering at Featherstone Castle in Northumbria was a very rewarding experience. I had volunteered to do a "Traditional Clothes Making" workshop, as well as doing a bit of Pony trekking. Being so busy at home I hadn't managed to really plan anything so I left things to the other more creative way, spontaneity.

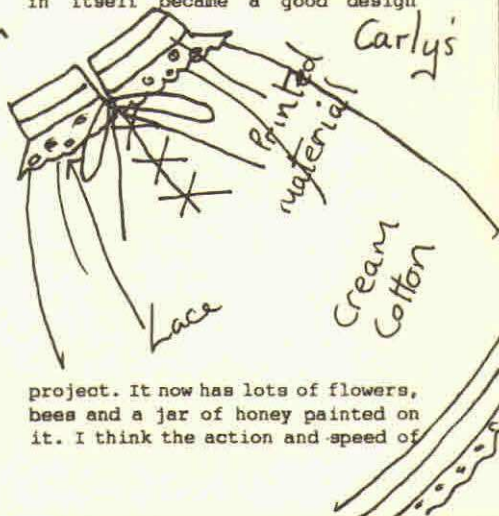


On arrival at the castle one of the first ports of call is to check the notice board and fill in workshops and duties to do, to help keep the week going, there was a lot of positive energy.

I went on the look out for material in Haltwhistle the local little town and to my amazement, found a Haberdashery shop so well stocked that I must have spent an hour or two just looking, in fact I have never come across anything quite like it, even in London. I then realised how lovely it would be to bring the children here after they

had decided what they wanted to make, there were so many wonderful colours shapes and textures. They had a vast range of materials from silk to synthetic fur, I managed to find just what I had in mind.

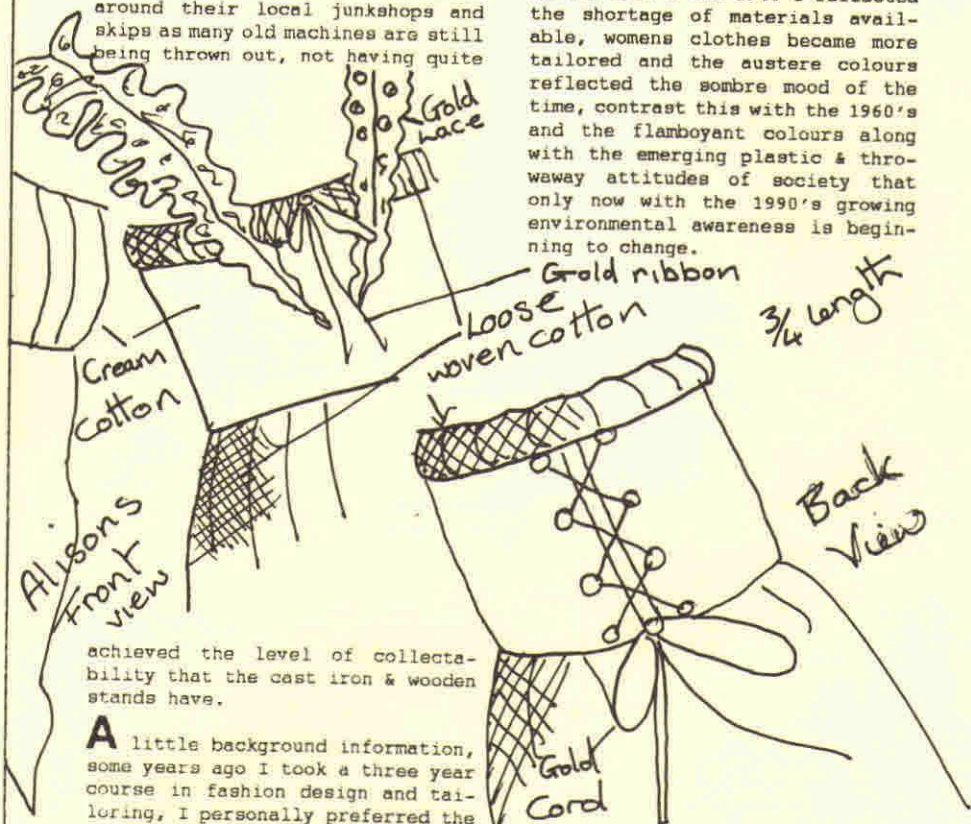
Although I had managed to borrow an electric sewing machine from Jane at the Pony Trekking centre, I particularly wanted the children to handle as much of the sewing as possible and anyway traditional clothes would mostly have been hand sewn. I wasn't too sure about this particular machine, most people think using an electric machine is difficult but like most things the more you practice and the more experience you gain, the easier it becomes and the more daring you get. I remember at the age of about nine or ten teaching myself how to use a treadle machine and getting to grips with the rhythm then trying to make a pair of trousers out of a pair of curtains. Whilst we are on the subject of treadle machines I was very lucky to recently find a Singer treadle which had been converted to electric, I bought it for my daughter Hera and she wanted to clean it up and stencil it, which in itself became a good design



project. It now has lots of flowers, bees and a jar of honey painted on it. I think the action and speed of

the old machines make them ideal for children to learn sewing on. Anyone interested should look around their local junkshops and skips as many old machines are still being thrown out, not having quite

political or economic environment in which it is operating, fashions in the 1930's and 1940's reflected the shortage of materials available, womens clothes became more tailored and the austere colours reflected the sombre mood of the time, contrast this with the 1960's and the flamboyant colours along with the emerging plastic & throwaway attitudes of society that only now with the 1990's growing environmental awareness is beginning to change.



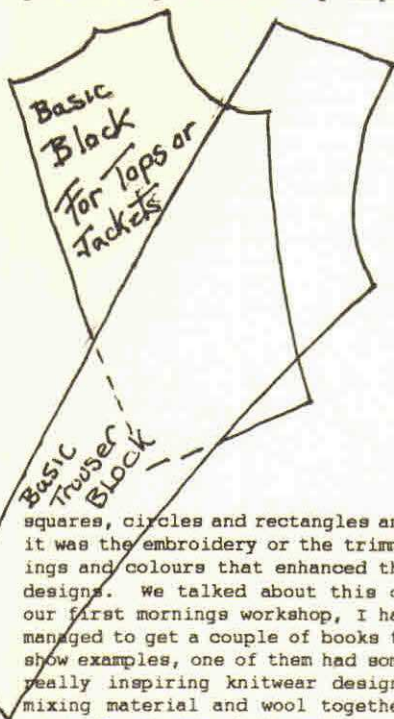
achieved the level of collectability that the cast iron & wooden stands have.

**A** little background information, some years ago I took a three year course in fashion design and tailoring, I personally preferred the design work which I developed by drawing hundreds of quick rough sketches, it didn't matter if they looked lifelike or not, the idea at that time was to be able to catch a thought and put it straight down, this seemed to preempt the "punk" attitude to fashion that happened a year or two later, but then this ability to predict, is part of the designers job anyway.

**O**ne interesting aspect of fashion is how much it is influenced by the

**N**early all garments come from patterns which are made from basic blocks (see drawings), which are standard sizes, from there the designs are manipulated through a series of cutting and shaping or darts (folding and then stitching the fold to hold the fold in shape). Other than that you can drape material over a tailors dummy, or human model if you can find one, and simply cut and fold the material as you wish.

With traditional clothes the pattern shapes were mainly simple



squares, circles and rectangles and it was the embroidery or the trimmings and colours that enhanced the designs. We talked about this on our first mornings workshop, I had managed to get a couple of books to show examples, one of them had some really inspiring knitwear designs mixing material and wool together even plastic can look amazing if its used in with other textures.

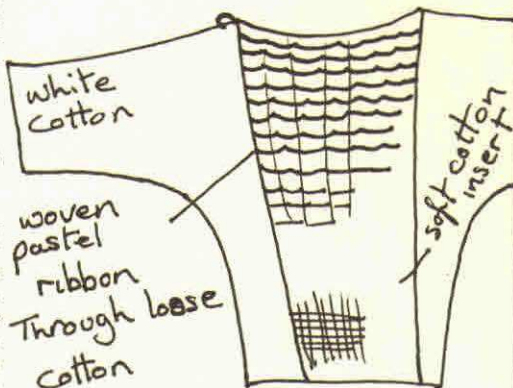
The group that came to have a go at this with me were Hannah, Carly, Angelique, Amy, Esther, Alison, Rowanna, Laurie and Hera, (my apologies if I forgot anybody or misspelt their names), boys were not excluded but unfortunately none turned up. After a chat and a few wild and inspiring ideas, we had a go at putting some designs down on paper. It was to be at that point that I would know whether or not the workshop could practically work, and most importantly whether or not we could avoid the need to

compromise too much from their original ideas.

We talked each design through, trying to look at the images three dimensionally and checking that the shapes and lengths were what the children wanted. I was amazed that they had all understood and were very positive about what they wanted, (I shouldn't have been amazed, after all these were E.O. kids!).

I encouraged them to write down the details of their designs and hopefully continue to inspire them with a trip to the amazing Haberdashery shop. This certainly did bring excitement and it was wonderful to see their faces light up when introduced into this fantasy world of colourful and varying bits and pieces.

The E.O. mother in me decided it was a good maths lesson working out all the yardage and amounts, if any of you are reading this I will say one word to you "Pompoms" !!! ,



there were absolutely loads of them of all shapes and sizes, from the

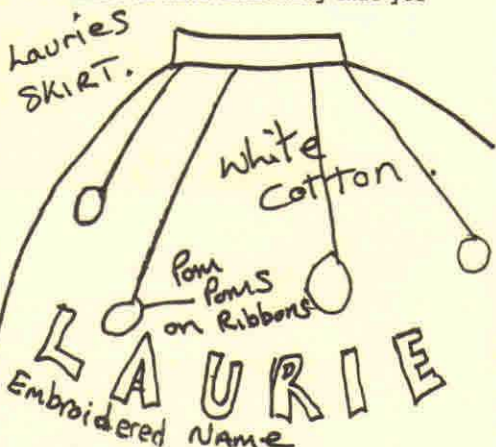
minute through to the very large, every colour of the rainbow, the same with ribbons, in fact Esthers top had a panel down the front which was a loose weave, and she wove very thin ribbons of all different colours, it really did look beautiful.

A lot of the pompoms were used in the designs and all in imaginative ways. Because some of the material we were using was a loose weave, it was very easy to hand sew and looked fine even if some of the stitches were large. Laurie and Hera both sewed their designs up completely by themselves, Angelique made a beautifully designed shawl. Carly knew exactly what she wanted, for her skirt she chose a strong white cotton and used lace and ribbon to trim it up.

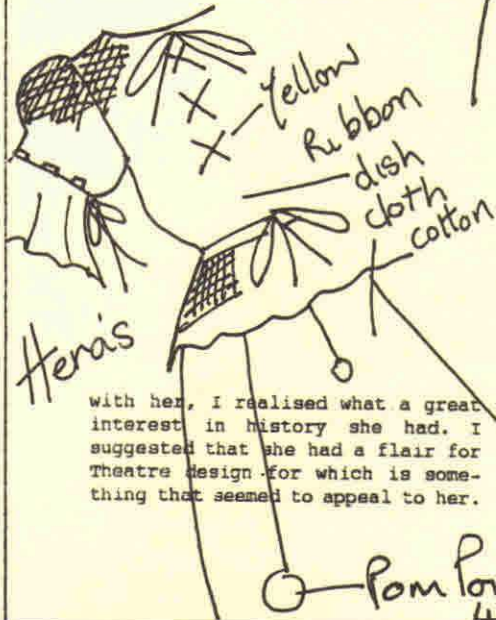
Alison did a very complicated outfit which resembled a cross between a Medieval outfit and something from Star Trek, it was wonderful and after working it through

As the week progressed the sewing continued there was a great atmosphere, a lot of patience and sharing. The target was to get every thing finished for the Ceilidh on Saturday night. The sewing machine helped things to move along and all the garments were ready in time.

If there is one piece of advice to offer about sewing, it is to say that it is very inspiring to a child or adult to make something that you



really like rather than doing tedious tasks for the sake of practice, don't underestimate yourself you can simplify the design, I don't use any paper patterns to make clothes, I never have, although its useful to know that I can. With children be prepared to take over when it gets a bit too much and let them have another go later on in the making up of the garment or whatever. Too much of the same stitch is just as boring as anything else, it's the enthusiasm that makes things work, and its that, in my opinion that should be treasured.



with her, I realised what a great interest in history she had. I suggested that she had a flair for Theatre design for which is something that seemed to appeal to her.

Pom Poms on Yellow ribbon  
4  
Lesley Cooper

whatever they like whenever they like - they have to realise that other people (including us!) must be given due consideration, and that there are sometimes outside agencies which affect (but not necessarily control) decisions (e.g. the LEA)

So far our formal educational activities have been very broad-based, with not over-much emphasis on the academic side. We try to encourage Jonathon to read, write and do some sums but we don't force it if he really doesn't want to. If we are honest, our main concern for pushing gently in these areas is not that we feel that there is any tearing hurry for his benefit. It is more that we are conscious that the LEA is likely to want to see some conventionally measurable progress between visits and, within the bounds of what we feel is right for Jonathon (and Laura too when she reaches school age) it makes for an easier life to keep the LEA, if not positively happy, at least content.

Perhaps the biggest challenges for us are overcoming years of conditioning to feel that we need always to be achieving, and learning not to succumb to the egotistical temptation to push our children to compete with the achievements of those at school. We are not adverse to hearing of these achievements from other parents, but we need to keep reminding ourselves that it bears no relevance to our children's education.

On a day to day basis we have no set timetable, but try to fit in the more formal activities when moods and opportunities coincide (which hasn't been very often in the last few months!). Otherwise we take the opportunities that arise at random - adding up pocket money, reading signs, writing notes to friends, reading and writing in play etc. Other than this we sometimes use a project to bring in a wider range of topics - Jonathon has started one on the River Thames, which potentially can encompass history, geography, general nature, environmental issues, mathematics and possibly other disciplines which may arise as we progress.

Our initial concerns about home education -

finding enough other children to mix with and the possibility of problems with the LEA, have come to nothing. We have dealt with the former by various means - attending clubs/activities in out-of-school hours, childminding (including older children in the school holidays) and of course contact with other EOers. As a result Jonathon probably plays with more different children through being out of school than he did when he was in school. And on the latter, the first (and so far only) visit by the LEA went very well, with the inspector even more laid back than we were about Jonathon's lack of desire to settle down to any formal learning! But again, we had prepared for the visit and had saved a healthy selection of what Jonathon had done over the previous months to show the inspector.

In our view the ultimate aim of education (in its widest sense) is to give our children the best possible chance of leading a happy and fulfilling life, both now and in the future. In spite of the odd voice of dissention, we are sure that there is the greatest chance of this if they avoid the social and intellectual pressures, prejudices, and strait-jackets that are part and parcel of the school system.

After our initial uncertainty we are now clear that the path we have chosen is the right one for the children and us: the only thing we can imagine that might change it is if the children themselves decide that they want to go to school at some future date.

Mike and Anne Cole 35, Bosville Drive,  
Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3JA

### P R O J E C T

Easy-to-understand instructions to convert a largish bookcase into a family doll's house

Use as they are or adapt

Send a £1 postal order and an A4 SAE  
to: Belinda Allen 4, Ashleigh Road,  
Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8JX

OCTOBER 19th 1991 is:

## National Home-Education Day

What can YOU do to spread the word

\* Organise a display at your local library or community centre - book exhibition space now before it is too late

\* Contact your local public service broadcasting company (radio or TV) and see if they are interested in a short item about home-education

\* Arrange to be available somewhere suitable for people to simply come and talk to you about home-education and then publicise the fact. Lots of areas have "What's On" magazines or listings but they will need to know in good time.

\* Distribute leaflets and handbills to your local Citizen's Advice Bureau, Community centre, library, Leisure Centre, doctor's surgery, wholefood shop - anywhere with a noticeboard. Standard leaflets, membership forms and handbills available from Lucy Charlton (053759) 2118

\* Organise a local gathering of home-educating families and invite the public and Press

**IF YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING ON THE 19TH, WHAT ABOUT THE NEXT WEEK? - REMEMBER, WE HAVE THE LUXURY OF KNOWING THAT HOME-EDUCATION IS POSSIBLE.....MANY DON'T.**

Please let me know what you have planned. (There will be some ready-made publicity material to supplement whatever you make yourself)

Liz Ramsey, 1 Stanford Mills Cottis, Stanford on Soar, Loughborough, Leics LE12 5QL Tel: (0509) 858604

## STEINER COURSE

Dear ED,

Sometime in the past you have indicated that you were interested in a course on Steiner Education.

The Plymouth Polytechnic South West hopes to start a course this September, the details are as follows:

The Polytechnic Certificate is to be based on 12 modules each of about 30 hours duration on Steiner education (theory and practice). The Diploma will consist of an extra year full time, where a term would be spent in a Steiner school, followed by a term of lectures and then a full time project of a terms duration.

If you are interested in knowing more about the course, contact:

Paul Filmore, Continuing Education, Polytechnic South West, Plymouth, Devon PL4 8AA

Sent in by Miryam Bush, Enquiries Secretary, Wales

## Camping

### Camping in France

Is anyone with a camper van interested in travelling in France next year?

Alternatively, we could use our van for transport if someone would like to camp.

Sue Petschaft, 2 Leylands Manor, Tubwell Lane, Crowborough, East Sussex

### Camping in Kent

The camping weekend in Kent was a great success and we would like to thank Penny for accommodating us and Sue and Keith for all their hard work arranging it.

Pam Stevenson

## 4 Years On

On July 18th it will be four years exactly since Jonny and Graham last set foot in a school. I think it is a tribute to our kids that I'm still celebrating the occasion! Our reasons for deschooling the boys have been written about in previous newsletters, so I won't go into all that again, except to say one thing: we have just one regret about school - that we ever sent them in the first place.

It seems like a good time to think about what we've learned in the past four years, not just in terms of the kids' academic achievements, but also about the way our kids have developed and grown without constant peer-group contact; not just theirs, either. Homeschooling has made both Alan and I review (several times!) our role as parents and our relationship with our children, to say nothing of the meaning of the word "education".

I found Roger Rich-Smith's article in the last M/L interesting. I agreed with his comments about the school system and we follow more or less the same routine - academic stuff in the mornings, though not five mornings a week, but we seldom do anything as structured as artistic pursuits in the afternoons, or not supervised ones anyway. The children know where the sewing, weaving, painting etc. equipment is kept, and if they want to use it they do. Running a smallholding means that most afternoons we are working outside. I would by no means consider us as "full-time" educators, though we would always give advice and help if necessary. Often the boys are working with us, tending the animals, gardening and so on, which, of course, is an education in itself.

Roger says of his daughters, "They do more work in half the time. There is less stress, and so far, no days off with illness. The girls have shown themselves to be keen to learn, hard-working and a joy to have about the place." Lovely. A cynical little voice says "this is what is known as a honeymoon period". We had one of those! The

boys were so relieved to be out of school, that despite Jo's terrible learning blocks and conviction that he was thick, stupid and incapable, he worked like a Trojan for six months. It would have been difficult for Jo to do less work, as he hadn't actually done any academic work during his last two years at school, so two sums a day was a 200% increase.

As time went on though and we began to relax, they got increasingly more reluctant to do anything just because I said so, ie even a project chosen by themselves was still guided by me and therefore unacceptable. We had quite a crisis at this point, (I wrote about it in the M/L and was amazed and incredible cheered by the response I had from other EOers). I felt then that it was vital for the boys to practise the 3R's daily, so in the end we compromised - possibly the most valuable skill any EOing parent and child learns! I loosened up, Jo tried to put in a bit more effort, and Graham, who has never been the most co-operative member of the family, at least stopped complaining so often. So academically, how are they doing? Well, they both read avidly, can add, subtract, multiply and divide, measure, weigh and estimate and write a good story. I have little doubt that, if compared with school children, or bright one anyway, the volume of academic work they do is considerably less. Neither of them could write a 5-page essay in an hour, or do 50 take-aways all in one morning, or do most of the follow-up work required by a school history book NOI because they lack the ability, but because they would only do it if they could see the point of doing so, and they haven't been trained to work at busywork that long. Things that catch their interest - that is different, they'll spend hours making something or reading about something exciting. Jo's writing is like beetle tracks, and, despite reminders, he cannot see the point of neatness in a maths book. If he ever does a college course, which I have no doubt he could do if he had a good reason, he would have to get a word-processor. We do not use a computer at present for the same reason I never used a babywalker - I feel that at this age it is better to use

the original equipment we were born with! I know, I'm a Luddite, but our generation never used computers at school, and I'm convinced that any intelligent person could learn in no time if necessary.

We tend, also, to do most written work in the winter, and very little in summer; everyone's got too many other things to do. Last year they barely picked up a pencil between June and September, when a spell of bad weather meant time to spend indoors, and writing became a chore and not a chore. I find that as they get older (they are now nine and eleven) they have more confidence in their own abilities to learn what they need and what interests them and less willing to follow any kind of curriculum; yet these spells without any "schoolwork" haven't yet hampered their academic development. Looking for a story Graham had written today I went through a folder containing most of the work done over four years, and I was amazed at their achievements. This is of course just what John Molt says, and, though in my heart I've always believed that they can educate themselves quite well without any assistance (unless requested) from adults, it is a nerve-racking experiment to try on one's own children. Suppose they DO NOT ever want to write or add up? Yet they DO, given the desire to do so - a letter from a friend, birthday money and so on.

As I said, I have absolutely no doubts that if they wish, they will get GCSE's, degrees or whatever - without the constant training of set written work, or exams. They have the basic tools to hand; basic literacy - the rest is just busywork and embroidery. This was borne out by my brother who left school at 15 just able to read and write, interested in cars and pop music and little else. He worked as a labourer in various firms, ending up a telephone repair man at 36. At this point he had a family and big mortgage, and came to the conclusion that he would be better off sitting in an office sending someone else down manholes and getting higher pay. So he went to night school, and in a few years got several O'levels, and a few business studies qualifications, and several promotions.

So much for academia - what about the boys themselves? Well, I think they are OK, but then I'm prejudiced! They often fight, argue and disagree - with us as well as each others (one great disadvantage in a family which believes in democracy). They have little time for pointless rules, but can see the sense in co-operation and compromise - for example, if they help with chores Alan and I have more time to spend with them, and if you want something, you have to work for it. They have a vast range of interests, from beekeeping to space rockets, and can turn their hands to a variety of jobs from sewing hankies to feeding pigs to shopping. During the past four years we have lived in places which have had very few other children and even fewer home-educated ones. But they get on well with most people, from toddlers to grannies, and when they do see their peers they really enjoy the company. They see parents at their best and worst, working or playing alongside us on good days, or keeping out of the way during a bout of PMI or a parental row; it is difficult to hide these things when we spend every day together. But they don't seem to be affected by these signs of weakness or negativity - that is something you will have to ask them about when they are old enough to get an overview of us! They are pretty independent, and considerably more discerning than I was at their age.

All in all, it's working pretty well - I think! Despite my confidence in their intelligence, I have, like the rest of us, I suspect, a few worries. Will they be at a disadvantage in a world that demands conformity? Are they getting a broad enough view of the world from this bit of remote Irish countryside? Will they be too "different" to fit in with the rest of society when they leave us? Suppose they want to be stockbrokers in Measden, or join the SAS? I'm comforted in my moments of panic with the fact that out of the people that I - and the world in general - admire, are nonconformists; Churchill, Gandhi, Geldorf, Jesus, to name but a diverse few. Will they be happy? Do I have any control over the circumstances that will make them

happy anyway? I don't know. What I do know is that the lessons they have learned and will go on learning - that the world is marvellous, that kindness is appreciated, that hard work can be fun, that all people have faults as well as virtues, and a hundred others, are good things to learn, and more important than any curriculum or exam.

*Terri Shoosmith, Faha, Dromindoora, Caher, County Clare, Ireland*

## REVIEWS

### PROMATHS COURSE

I was asked to review the Promaths course for both GCSE and A level mathematics. The course consists of a series of units each consisting of a textbook plus a commentary of 6 audio cassettes packaged in a carrying folder. The text is clearly set out and has the big advantage of having worked model answers for all exercises. The audio cassettes are clearly labelled to tie in with the text and have some extra explanations although quite a bit consists of reading the text in a formal sterile way. The approach is rather academic using technical names wherever possible which may make it difficult with younger pupils. There seems to be no guidance at present for dealing with the Coursework section of GCSE.

Each unit costs £140 and there are four units for GCSE and three more to A level (Pure Mathematics). If you buy all seven units the reduced price is £800, installments available. There is a valuable extra resource of a tutor you can telephone between 6 and 8pm any evening - as many times as required. This service applies to all members of the family so a procession of children could be a good bulk buy service - and there is of course, no extra charge for resits. Mock examination papers will be provided and any damaged tapes replaced free of charge.

The course is expensive and if you feel confident working with just a textbook then its not for you. But if you are considering employing a tutor for maths for several years (and several children) at over £10 per hour it may be good value and worth considering.

The company is currently working on a Primary course, statistics units, etc. Promaths is an international company with over 200,000 students. Should you be interested a representative will visit you to demonstrate the course. Contact Carol Hogarth, Promaths (UK) Ltd., 2nd Floor, Unit 2, Southern Court, South St, Reading RG1 4QS or telephone 0734-500081

### LETT'S GCSE MATHEMATICS COURSEWORK COMPANION by Ray Williams £3.95

If you are working towards GCSE in Maths and concerned at the thought of having to produce coursework, this book is well worth investing in.

Maths in the past was all about a problem with an answer you had to find and it was either right or wrong. Many parents are likely to be concerned about having to investigate an open ended problem which is wide enough that you can choose what to do. Also the interest is not necessarily in what answers you get but how you worked your way there and how you organised and possibly abstracted your thinking. Pages of similar calculations will get little credit but finding patterns and predicting outcomes is of more value. It is not only of value to 15 year olds either - many of the problems can be approached with much younger children. Even, 8 or 9 year olds can do this work to their own level and enjoy it. This really is an area where the parent can start alongside their child as an equal and test out for themselves how they cope!

The above reviews are by Betty Ball, Cambridgeshire

## SOCIALIZATION AND HOME-EDUCATION

There cannot be many of us who have not agonized over this problem at some time or another.

Dear EO,

Are there any other home educators or would-be home educators who may have any suggestions to help us overcome a very big fear? We would like to educate our 2 daughters (aged 5 and 3) at home but are very concerned that they may become isolated from other children. Currently, they both attend the local Welsh medium primary school, the younger only part-time. They both thoroughly enjoy school and seem to mix well with the other children.

The following reasons make us unsure that we could provide them with adequate opportunities to play with other children:

1. We live in the centre of town and there are no suitable play areas within a reasonable distance.

2. Because their school is a Welsh medium one, it has a large catchment area and none of our daughters' schoolfriends live locally. Nearly all the local children attend the English primary school and have already formed their own exclusive gangs.

3. Due to the fact that we have moved frequently in recent years we do not have a network of close friends with children the same ages as ours.

4. Our acquaintances and workmates tend to consider us as odd because we wish to take responsibility for the girls' education and also because of our interest in co-operative living (Most assume that this means we would adopt the worst excesses of the "hippy" era, namely drugs, orgies and flared jeans!)

5. Although both girls attend gymnastics and ballet lessons they do not get the opportunity to play with the other children

as everyone disappears as soon as the lesson ends.

6. We fear that none of our daughters' present schoolfriends would be allowed to mix with them once we do withdraw them from school as the other parents appear to be very conservative and would regard it as a form of heresy to withdraw children from what is seen as the best local primary school (competition for places is quite fierce).

7. We do not have any supportive family living locally.

8. Before starting school, our elder daughter was quite outgoing and gregarious. Now she is unwilling to mix with children she does not know (e.g. in the park) and prefers to stick to her group of schoolfriends.

9. There seem to be very few home educators in our area and even fewer with children in a similar age range to ours.

We hope that somebody may be able to give us some suggestions or advice regarding this problem. Maybe somebody has already been through this and could give us the benefit of their experience. Also, we would like to hear from anyone interested in co-operative/communal living and/or "alternative" schools.

Donna and Fred Coleman 49 Swansea Road,  
Llanelli, Dyfed

### SPRICH MAL DEUTSCH!

Does anyone know of a  
German course  
for young children (4 - 8 year olds?)

A friend and I have tried to find out and  
been unsuccessful, so we are trying to  
write our own!

The Bartram Family,  
61, Mumford Road,  
West Bergholt,  
Colchester CO6 3BL

## Playgroups and ea.



Jethro is now 3 and over the past year I have thought quite a bit about playgroups and how they fit in with EO. We always intended to home-educate our children but I had thought that would be a largely private decision until Jethro reached 5.

However, just before his second birthday we moved to an area where I knew no-one. My husband was very involved in his new job and I also had a new-born baby so I decided to use the local Mother and Toddler group for social contact.

The boys and I have continued to use this group off and on. We live in a mobile home and the space is welcome for letting off steam during wet weather and there are times when I do need the adult company. But Jethro is not going onto the local playgroup; most children here move on at 2) ready for starting school the term of their fourth birthday!

I am fortunate in that Jethro shows no desire to go to playgroup; for one thing he couldn't conceive of going anywhere I wasn't able to stay with him. I have always talked about playgroups and school as places where "some" children go and have recently had evidence of how important this approach is. After a gap of a couple of months Jethro asked to go to Toddler group again and from what he was saying I was able to link this request to a remark I had made about Silas no longer being a baby but a toddler. Jethro thought Silas had to go to Toddler group! We did go again a few times - it was raining - and I saw even in this group of very young children the beginnings of many aspects of socialization which we hope to avoid by not

using the school system. A lot of what I consider unacceptable behaviour goes unchecked even with every child having a parent or minder in the room. Snatching of toys, pushing over of small children who happen to be in the way and a definite use of size and strength to commandeer the best toys.

I doubt if any of the parents there condone this sort of behaviour and certainly would not allow children to behave like that at home but it seems part of the function of the group is to get children used to the 'real world', to toughen them up!

I also feel that the noise level and range of toys in one place is not conducive to concentration or creative activity. Jethro rarely settles to any activity whereas at home he has periods of intense activity followed by long quiet periods of stories or breastfeeding. In fact after one particularly chaotic session he said that going to toddler group meant he couldn't get on with his "work" at home, namely digging in the garden or "mowing" the grass with an old luggage trolley.

.....My conclusion is that if you have values which have led you to question school for your child then these pre-school groups are best avoided as they are very much part of the same system, however good or bad an individual group may be.

However, we do not simply reject school for our children, we offer some kind of alternative and I think this is just as important for the under-fives. If we are not going to use the system then we each have to take responsibility for providing our child with the resources and contacts they need.

There are groups such as 'Tumble Tots' which allow children to meet in a less 'pre-school' atmosphere ..... A local La Leche League group might be a place to meet other parents who wish for a different social life for their young children even if they are going on to school .....Or how about inviting other children over to have rowdy afternoons of football in the garden or whatever your child enjoys? As EOers

we are able to break out of the 'pre-school' rut and find friends and contacts of all ages for our children.

## Pre-school Music System

So far I have had no dealings with authority about home-education but as my children are unvaccinated and still breast feeding I expect my health visitor won't be in the least bit surprised!



As far as other parents are concerned I find those who are committed to the school system surprisingly easy to cope with. We agree to differ and in many cases can respect each other for doing what we feel is best for our children. Harder to deal with are the parents who feel some kind of guilt at sending their children to school and try and defend their decision by pulling yours to pieces.

As a new member I must tell you how useful I have found the newsletters and the pooling of information. I thought other members might like to know about a music system which both my children enjoyed learning in their pre-school years (and still use).

Apart from letting people know that it is legal to home-educate I don't feel I have to explain myself to any and everyone. At the end of the day anyone who is genuinely interested will seek you out and perhaps this is the time to start building an alternative support group for yourself as well through EO meetings.

The Tobin Music system aims to teach music in an entertaining and visual style. I can't speak highly enough of it. Three to ninety-three year olds are soon able to quickly understand music theory, read pitch, compose, harmonise and so on. Even accomplished musicians can find something useful in the system. Candida Tobin also gives lively talks, with plenty of visual effects and audience participation. If there is enough demand, she runs weekend courses.

Susan Urwin Red House Farm, New Hedges, Tenby, Dyfed SA69 9DP

When I said I was writing to you, she said she would give the same discounts to EO members on her books, games and computer programs as she does to schools.

-----  
**Education means** breeding up, bringing up or rearing up; and nothing more. This includes every thing with regard to the mind as well as the body of a child; but, of late years, it has been so used as to have no sense applied to it but that of book-learning, with which, nine times out of ten, it has nothing at all to do. It is, indeed, proper, and it is the duty of all parents to teach, or cause to be taught, their children as much as they can of books, after, and not before, all the measures are safely taken for enabling them to get their living by labour, or for providing them a living without labour, .....

As well as her Commodore 64 and BBC computer programs, apparently, Virgin Records are releasing a CDTV programme of her system this year and the Montessori Schools have adopted her system of teaching music literacy.

For orders or enquiries please write to: Tobin Music, The Malthouse, Knight Street, Sambridgeworth, Herts. CM21 9AX

I hope this might be of interest to other EO members.

Linda Eccleston, Hunters Lodge, Mill Lane, Churchgate Street, Old Harlow, Essex CM17 0LN Tel. (0279) 427121

taken from 'Cottage Economy' by M. Cobbett pub. 1926

Sent in by Valerie Common



# Featherstone Castle



## NOTICE of Annual General Meeting

to be held at Featherstone Castle,  
Northumberland

Saturday 14th September 1991  
2.30p.m.

### A G E N D A

1. Quorum
2. Apologies
3. Minutes
4. Matters arising
5. Rotation of officers
6. Consideration of accounts - Treasurer
7. Annual reports
  - a) Steering Committee
  - b) Legal Group - Anne and Rob Wade
  - c) Membership Secretary - Valerie Common
  - d) Publications Co-ordinator - Lynne Greenhough
  - e) Co-ordinators Secretary - Stephanie Fletcher
8. Appointment of Auditors

## PROVISIONAL Agenda for Members Meeting

to be held at Featherstone Castle  
Northumberland

Saturday 14th September  
10a.m.

1. Quorum
2. Apologies
3. Minutes
4. Matters arising
5. Publicity Officer - situation vacant

6. Future venues
7. Approval of accounts - Treasurer, Mike Cook
8. Home-education Day - Liz Ramsey
9. Steering Committee report - decisions since last meeting  
A.O.B.

Any member wishing to add an item to the above agenda, please write to:  
General Secretary, Pam Stevenson  
25, Wyndham Road, Dover, Kent CT17 0BH  
as soon as possible.

Anyone doing so should either send a full written account or be present at the meeting, in order for their request to be discussed. Thankyou.

## GCSE Camp

Would anyone be interested in having a (fairly structured) few days camp/residential time (cheap) for teenagers taking GCSE's only? The idea being to take specific subjects and work on specific areas/problems.

It would have a much more defined focus than most EO gatherings and cater just for the needs of those children taking exams.

If anyone is interested and can suggest a suitable venue/ideas for workshops, please let me know.

I am thinking about some time in the winter.

Avis Greenwell, 155 Castle Way, Dale,  
Haverfordwest SA62 3RN

PROFESSIONAL TUITION (by correspondence only) with 'A' LEVEL MATHS and 'A' LEVEL PHYSICS.

SPECIAL LOW RATE FOR EO STUDENTS

Contact: Mr R. Freeborn, 4 Low Fen Road,  
Helpringham, Sleaford, Lincs (Enc. SAE)

## Language Learning

For years I wished there were more people interested in language learning in this country (coming from Central Europe myself). I now find myself issuing a warning!

It is a highly controversial subject. Whereas it seems perfectly easy for children to learn a language with each parent speaking their respective native tongues, the process does not seem to be so straight forward with non-native speaking parents.

If you do decide to teach you off-spring Spanish or whatever, please bear in mind that many languages exist only in oral form and are passed on from generation to generation by verbal communications and listening. There is no need in the early stages to include writing and reading skills.

**IN FACT IT CAN BE DETRIMENTAL** to the learner to start writing and reading the foreign language before the age of about **EIGHT YEARS OLD!**

This applies especially to the two different alphabets mentioned by the family from Milton Keynes (p20 June M/L). Please **do not** burden your child with two completely different alphabets. It can do nothing but confuse the learner!

Another point to bear in mind is that one main language is important to us as an individual. We grasp concepts, "a cup" - visualising a vessel to hold tea or coffee - we like to express sorrow, love, excitement, happiness, etc. It is one medium we feel comfortable with. Very hard to explain this point. But from many conversations with people across Europe and language teachers in this country I have found that everybody needs "roots" in a language as well as in a country, culture or whatever.

I have heard of one gentleman speaking eight languages fluently, only to shed them one by one (the last one mastered falling away first) when he became very ill and only conversing in his "first" language just before he died.

It seems to me as though we acquire languages "in layers" and when we are tired or not well we instinctively use our "first" language. At least I do!

I hope I have not put people off language learning altogether. As in all things, moderation is the key. Provided you start off with speaking and listening only, you can't go wrong.

P.S. Sven, who was educated at home for four years, is doing well at College with a course on Media Studies and Journalism. Thank you to Sandie Cottee and all the other nice people we got to know through EO, for your help and support.

The offer for teenage EOers to stay for a night or two (or three) at our place still stands (Our youngsters are now 16,18 and 20)

*The Bartram family 81, Munford Road, West Bergholt, Colchester, Essex CO6 3BL*

And from Carole Bowman:

Several people asked for ways of teaching young children foreign languages in the last M/L

One cheap and, dare I say, enjoyable method is satellite TV. They can watch children's programmes in French, Dutch, Japanese or German with a cheap satellite. With a more expensive motor system the language choice is unlimited. It is also useful for improving/refreshing a language learnt in school for the parents.

For EO families living outside England I have found the following clubs very good value, with books only being sent that are pre-ordered and paid for.

Books for Children Ltd  
Overseas Service Department  
PO Box 70  
Cirencester  
Gloucestershire GL7 7AZ

## Books for Children

Mitney  
Oxford OX8 5VF

The Good Book Guide  
91 Great Russell Street  
London WC1B 3PS

All send regular newsletters and write ups on books, videos and audio cassettes.

Mrs Carole Bowman, Amelrain Str 50,  
Oberderdingen, 7519 Germany

STOP PRESS..... STOP PRESS.....  
!! EO SWEATSHIRTS TO ORDER !!  
SEE HERTFORDSHIRE REGIONAL NEWS

## National Home Education Day

This is the last real opportunity to get information into the newsletter before October 19th.

We have had 26 requests from members for posters to display in libraries and lots of enthusiastic ideas; kite/puppet making workshops, local radio talks, workshops with the WEA, activities in parks/resource centres, "open days", newspaper articles and so on.

This is great! But if we are to cover the country and get the "home education" message across to those who need it most, we need a lot more ACTION! So if you are not involved in anything so far, now is your chance. I know that many people have things planned that we've not been told about directly - for example, there are rumours of things going on in London but so far no one has contacted us to let us know what, when and where. What about the other cities? Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Norwich? What about Wales and Scotland? Wherever you are, country or town, please try and come up with something either on your own or in conjunction with others. "Woman's Weekly" had a double page about home education (11th June) which mentioned the National Home Education Day. Already enquiries are coming in from this wanting to know more about what's planned.....

Mike Cook (Tel: 02273 67059) has promotional pens available and will be the distribution point for car stickers. The posters will be ready in September and will be mailed out to all those who have requested them. Handbills, AS information leaflets, address labels and membership forms are available now from Lucy Charlton (Tel: 063759 2118). Bruce and Christine Wallace (Tel: 044581 225) have back copies of newsletters and some relevant publications.

Those of you who have planned library displays: One member has requested that her library display copies of useful home education related books and from her letter it seems the library is going to get them in especially for this purpose.

Good luck in whatever you plan and let's hope the day is a success.

Liz and Gordon Ramsey 1, Stanford Hills  
Cotts, Stanford on Soar, Leics LE12 5QL  
Tel: 0509 856604

### Worldwide Education Service Leaflets

At the Members Meeting held on the 27th April 1991, at Featherstone Castle, it was agreed that an advert or insert be included in the newsletter, giving details of curriculum-based options available to Home Educators, from the Worldwide Education Service.

Some of those present were concerned that EO should not be seen to be advocating structure or curriculum for home educators as the only choice. This we are not. However, we cannot deny parents the right to choose for themselves. (See our principle aims on the back of this newsletter.)

Mike Cook

"Mr Peter Rabbett, inspector (management of learning) for Hampshire is to be senior advisor for curriculum and professional development in West Sussex."

TIMES ED SUPPLEMENT Sent in by Kim Mark

## Treasurer's Report

End of the financial year once more for EO and the accounts are being prepared. It was decided some years ago not to include a schedule of account in the newsletter - members preferring regular format and postage costs limiting supplement insert.

If anyone (other than statutory recipients) would like a copy when available, please send me a 33p SAE (A5 or A4 envelope please) and I will oblige.

Some of you may have realised that by striving to keep down prices, avoid VAT and Corporation Tax, we could be impeding the growth of the organization. The old suggestion of separating the publications into a subsidiary has come up once again, so why couldn't we create another company or subsidiary?

First, Customs and Excise and MMI are wise to such moves to avoid tax liability and would still combine subsidiary income with that of the parent company for tax purposes. Unless of course you wanted a total separation, another Limited Company, with its own Directors and Council of Management. But why another Limited Company?

Few people appreciate having their personal assets seized if the Company goes bust. A Limited Company not only safeguards individuals from financial disaster but also the company from power struggles within. Directors can be removed by resolution.

An idea floated some time ago was to use the Charitable Trust to collect subscriptions, which would become donations and hence tax free.

The Association would run the publications and administration at a much lower turnover - the Trust taking care of the voluntary workforce and paying the Association to print and circulate publications. It all sounded great, no tax, low income with room to grow. But there was one snag.

Charitable Trusts can only be managed by Trustees who are appointed for life or until they resign. They have absolute power and are answerable only to the Charity Commission. Were we prepared to hand over all EO money and control to people (however trustworthy) over whom we had no influence or control?

EO Charitable Trust has at present three trustees and £5,000 of what was mainly Association subscription monies. The Trust in its present form being unable to use its funds for the benefit of EO members in general - only the public at large!

So you see we are committed to fighting a defensive battle to keep prices (income) down if we are to avoid paying VAT and Corporation Tax. If we lose, prices, both of subscriptions and publications will rise, upsetting the fine balance between what our members can afford or are willing to pay and the services we can provide. At present, subsidising gatherings, holidays and publications is giving benefit to a greater number - it's beginning to be worthwhile.

Mike Cook

### WESTAIR HOPE

I recently discovered that Westair Hope, the educational suppliers, offer 15% discount to anyone who goes to their school shop (ie you pay the catalogue price, with no added VAT).

Their address is: Hope Education Ltd,  
Orb Mill  
Muddersfield Road,  
Waterhead,  
Oldham OL4 2ST

I obtained a catalogue simply by writing to them saying I was a home tutor.

MAZEL TOU to Belinda, Alan and Gus Reid on the birth of Barnaby

MAZEL TOU to Francis, Mick and Rachael Monte-Mason on the birth of Isaac

## Steering Committee

## Penpals



In the autumn my period on the steering committee as the "third person" - ie the non-office holding member, will have come to an end.

A replacement person will be needed (possibly two as changes in the nature of the job are likely). It is not usually a difficult job and if anyone feels they may like to volunteer I'd be happy to talk to them about it. Changes will be made at the Featherstone Castle meeting and will probably take effect at once.

It is useful to be able to get to national gatherings regularly as the job involves taking decisions between meetings on things that can't wait and I've felt it important to have a reasonably clear idea of what others felt. The job will be fully discussed in the autumn at Featherstone and I expect new guidelines to operate.

Please contact me if you are interested or speak to Keith Charlton (Leics) or Mike Cook (Kent) - the office-holding steering committee members.

Liz Ramsey 1 Stanford Hills Cottages,  
Stanford on Soar, Loughborough, Leics LE12  
5QL Tel: (0509) 858604

I would like a penpal aged 9 - 14 with similar interests.

I like guinea pigs, bike riding, playing the clarinet, baking and EO.

Write quickly to:

Rebecca Simpson, 'Chickelberry', Bont Estate,  
Llanon, Dyfed, Wales

P.S. Two letters will be replied to!

My name is Imogen Tompsett and I am 11 years old.

I like swimming, cycling, cooking, rugby, cricket, climbing and pressing flowers and I live in the country.

My address is: Drove Barn, Whitsbury,  
Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP5 3PP

Hello, my name is Leila and I am 10.

I like computers, dancing, horse-riding and making things. I'm being home educated again after spending 1 year in Junior school

Leila Cutler, 94 Waverley Road, Plumstead,  
London SE18 7LJ

My name is Rachel Mountner and I'm nearly 14. I love watching films (especially David Lynch films), reading, writing letters and my favourite music includes Julee Cruise, REM, Madonna and the B-52's.

I would like a male or female penpal of any age, from anywhere. I love all animals

Write to: The Pavillion, Coed Feanol, Vaynol Park, Bangor, Gwynedd, N. Wales LL57 4BP

Jimmy Millman, 13, of 155 Castle Way, Dale, Haverfordwest, Dyfed, SA62 3RN is looking for a penpal of either sex around his own age. He is interested in fantasy games, the occult, history, SF, cycling and animal rights. He is home educated and a vegan.

### A PLEA FROM A VERY DESPERATE EO FAMILY

EO FAMILY DESPERATELY NEED SUPPORT TO SAVE HOME FROM REPOSSESSION.

CAN YOU HELP WITH MORTGAGE ARREARS?

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO:

"THE MORTGAGE CORPORATION"

Send to Box 10, 2 Pretoria Villas, Brome,  
Eye, Suffolk IP23 8AL

All correspondence will be passed on as the family concerned do not wish, at this stage, to make their plight public.

## Legal Workshop Report

On a grey weekend in March a dozen of us and eight children met together with Anne and Rob Wade and Sylvia Jeffs for a legal workshop in a conference centre in Welwyn Garden City. People have been asking me to write a bit about it ever since and I have only just succeeded, as the last few months have been so busy.

The centre was very comfortable and peaceful and we had lots of room. The children disappeared in the maze of stairways and corridors and spent hours playing hide and seek in the empty rooms, and they had fun playing badminton in a disused chapel. We had plenty of space and it was great to be able to work with the minimum of disturbance. In order to save time I had done most of the cooking in advance and I had enlisted the help of some local members so that mealtimes would be as streamlined as possible. Pam Regan, Barbara McDonald and Su Buckland were invaluable in serving up the meals, organising the tea breaks and operating the dishwasher. Paul (my husband) worked very hard behind the scenes and rounded up the children very expertly when they were terrorising the Over-Sixties Club who met in the Centre on Sunday afternoon!

One of the photos in our Library display for National Home Education Day is of a group of children clustered studiously around a computer, looking very absorbed and busy. It's an ideal publicity shot, demonstrating the way in which our young people can have the opportunity to work together using the latest technology.....but it is fortunate that the photograph does NOT show what is happening on the screen! The photograph was taken at the workshop when they were busy playing a highly addictive Grand Prix racing car game, and it was a source of great entertainment for them in their quieter moments.

So we had nothing to prevent us from getting down to work. We had four three-hour meetings led by Anne, Rob and Sylvia which were very intensive. Anne had prepared an excellent handout which we had studied in advance, and this saved a lot of

time when we were together. Sylvia gave us a lot of insight into the law relating to Special Needs, and Anne and Rob went over the relevant sections of the education law and discussed some of the case law relating to home education. We were informed about strategies which can be used when dealing with the LEA, and it was helpful to have the full sequence of events which should happen when they are not satisfied. I found it very useful and encouraging to discover the exact limits of the LEA's authority and powers, and this has helped me considerably in recent contact with them

Anne explained the procedure connected with School Attendance Orders and suggested courses of action if a family is threatened with one, and she gave us some useful advice on how to present a good case to the LEA for a family's educational arrangements. We discussed the issue of assessment and testing and talked about ways of safeguarding the parents' rights. Both Sylvia and Anne made helpful comments on Special Needs and the making of Statements, and Sylvia showed us the ACE Special Education Handbook which contains essential information for anyone who has to advise parents of children in this category.

Rob ensured that we were well supplied with information on where to get what, telling us about such things as Malsbury's Statutes, the Education Authorities Directory and the Education Yearbook. We learnt about ways of finding a solicitor (not many of them know about the law of education) and we discovered some of the pitfalls of using lawyers who also act for the LEA. We heard about Care Orders, Education Supervision Orders and the Child Abuse Register and we learnt about the role of the Ombudsman in cases where the LEA is guilty of maladministration.

On the educational side we received a great deal of useful information about flexischooling, work experience, early admission to college, GCSE's, university entrance and grants. There was ample opportunity for discussion and it was very helpful to share experiences with other co-ordinators. We discussed many of the problems which we all experience, including the thorny issues of

making judgements about families and deciding what level of support to give when families cannot cope.

For me the weekend was a very strengthening and encouraging experience which clarified a lot of things. It was very heartening to discover the variety and richness of the knowledge and experience possessed by the people who met together. We were all very grateful to Anne, Rob and Sylvia for coming, and for all their hard work. Undoubtedly the workshop has enabled me to be a more effective co-ordinator and the others who attended also found it very helpful, judging by the comments which I received afterwards.

Also, it was a very enjoyable get-together which was a source of moral support. So if you are thinking of organising a workshop in your area, I can say that it is very well worth it and it is not hard to do. If you allow plenty of time for planning and preparation you can manage it even if you lead a very busy life, as most of us do! If you would like any more details, you are welcome to get in touch with me.

Jane Lowe 5 Elm Gardens, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL8 6RX Tel. 0707 335825

#### HOUSE FOR SALE

Five bedrooomed, stone-built Edwardian house on a ridge overlooking the town. Big front garden, huge rear garden including pond, patio, garage, herb garden and strawberry patch. Park to front, fields to rear.

Burnley has lots to offer in terms of learning experiences for home educators and there are a number of home educating families locally.

We have produced a sheet with details of the house and area. If you are interested please give us a ring. You are welcome to call and have a look without obligation and we can usually find a spare bed for a night or two.

Jan and Alex Smith, "Mitchwood" 11 Queen's Park Road, BURNLEY, Lancs. BB10 3lb  
Tel: (0282) 831439

## Learning Link Update

From this newsletter we are reverting to our original format of offering just one catalogue, costing £1.50, which covers most of the computers we can supply. It differs from our previous catalogues in featuring only computers from Acorn, Apple, Cambridge, Commodore and IBM, modems from Pace, electronic musical instruments and Logo/Scheme information, software and books. In future we will give quotes for printers and other computers on request but will not issue separate lists. If you write to us please enclose an SAE.

EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE We receive a lot of requests for sources of educational software.

The main mail-order suppliers are:  
AUP, School Hill Centre, Chepstow, Gwent NP6 5PH Tel:0291 625439 (catalogues available for Nimbus, Archimedes, Master, IBM and Amiga).  
Rickitt Educational Media, Ilton, Ilminster TA19 9HS Tel:0460 57152 (catalogues available for Nimbus, Atari ST/E, Spectrum, Commodore 64 and Amiga and Amstrad CPC and PCW, Master and IBM).

VALIANT ROAMER DEMONSTRATOR Valiant have very kindly offered us the long term loan of a Roamer floor robot. The Roamer, for those of you who haven't seen one, is shaped like a giant Smartie with a "touch" keyboard on its back. It is an ideal introduction to Logo and it can be equipped with lights and sensors and given different identities using craft materials or Valiant's accessory Identity Kit! EO families who would like to try out the Roamer can do so if they agree to comply with the following conditions: In order that as many families as possible get a chance to try the Roamer the loan period is for one week only. Each family must pay the cost of postage and insurance from and return to Learning Link. This will be around £8. While in their care each family is responsible for ensuring that the Roamer is used only under supervision. If the Roamer is lost, stolen or damaged the family to whom it is loaned will be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement. If you are prepared to comply with these conditions and would like

to try the Roamer contact us.

**LOGO** Many of you will be familiar with the Turtle Graphics part of Logo, however, just as interesting is the list processing facility. If you would like to explore this aspect of Logo and don't know where to start, we can recommend 'Volume 1: Intermediate Programming' of Brian Harvey's three volume set called 'Computer Science Logo Style'. This book is a thorough introduction to an aspect of Logo that tends to get overlooked. There are many Logo books that can considerably enhance your enjoyment of Logo and increase its educational value. Send 50p and an SAE for our Logo/Scheme book and software list.

**EDSCHEME** the educational version of the LISP programming language, is now available along with an excellent self-study text. EdScheme is available for the Archimedes, Atari and IBM/Compatibles from: Ray Burcham, Lambda Publications, 194 Cheney Manor Road, The Green, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 2NZ. The Schemer's Guide costs £17.50 and the EdScheme software £45.00. The Guide and software can be purchased together for £60.00

**Learning Link**, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA

Andrew and Jane Milford may also be able to help you out with your software needs.

Dear EO,

I would like to both ask for and offer some help to fellow EOers.

As a self-employed software engineer I am interested in using computers to help in the education of our two children, Sarah 5 and Mark 3, but baulk at paying for software which I can easily write myself in my spare time. I have already written a few programs based around counting, sorting and pattern matching activities.

I would like to offer these programs to others for a contribution to cover postage,

disk etc. Alternatively, if you send me a blank disk and SAE I would be happy to put a copy of the program(s) on it. Either way an SAE will get more details. The programs run on IBM PC with EGA colour graphics. I would like to be able to add some more programs to my list but am lacking in ideas. If anyone has ideas for uses for the computer but lacks the skill/time/whatever to program the computer then please let me know the idea. I will gladly send a copy of the resultant program if the idea is practical.

Finally, on a completely different subject, if you are looking for a slightly different craft activity have you thought about rug making? We can provide all the necessary bits (canvas, wool, hooks) at prices well below the usual mail order suppliers. We have a few designs we've worked out and tried ourselves which we would be willing to share or you can make up your own - it is easy to do, even our 5 year old is making her own rug!

Andrew and Jane Milford The Bungalow,  
Half Acre Farm, Barway, Ely, Cambs. CB7 5TV

### THE JAPAN FESTIVAL 1991

There will be a Japan Festival in Britain from August '91 to January '92.

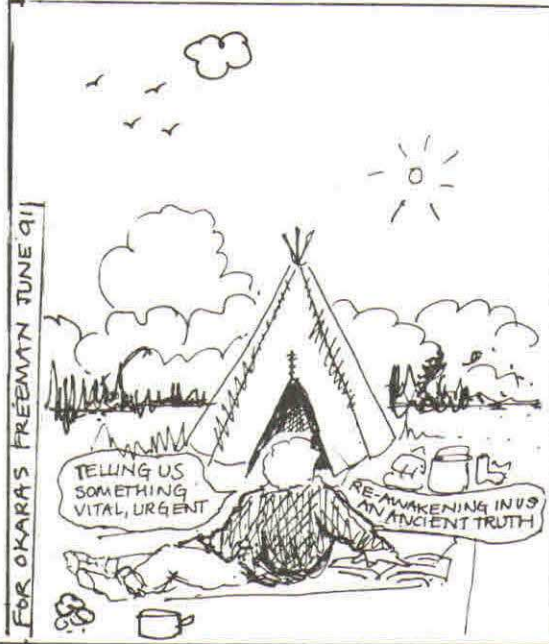
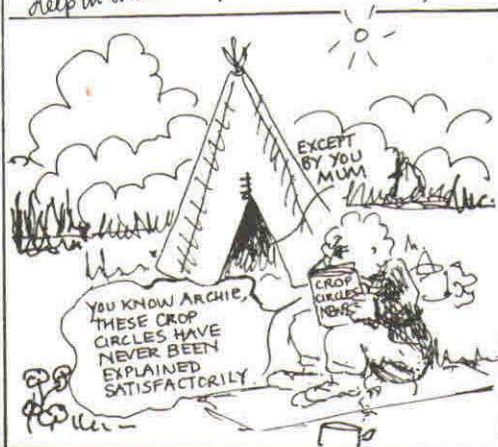
Events will be organised all over Britain, and many of them sound very interesting. I wrote for details and received a very nice letter from the Education Officer, Sally Lewis, who seemed keen that EO and not just schools should participate.

Details can be obtained (by co-ordinators?) from: Sally Lewis, Education Officer  
Japan Festival Office,  
6/7 Carlton Gardens,  
London SW1Y 5AE

The information pack includes a sheet about Maiku and a Maiku competition, which could be fun.

# EDUCATING ARCHIE by SEY

This summer Mrs G and Archie have pitched their teepee deep in the heart of the Wiltshire countryside...



FOR OKARA'S FREEMAN JUNE 91

## WHERE TO GET WHAT

The following publications are available from  
Bruce and Christine Wallace, 25 Diabaig,  
Achnasheen, Ross-shire IV22 2NE

School is not compulsory (SINC)  
A guide to your rights £2.50

Early years  
Learning suggestions for under 12s £2.50

Later years  
Learning for older children plus GCSE £2.50

Teach your own by John Holt  
Philosophy of home education £3.85

Learning all the time by John Holt £4.50

Schools out by Jean Bendell  
A good why and how book by EO member and  
long term home educator £5.95

EO Newsletters  
Back copies for '89 and '90 £1 each

EO Newsletter bargain basement  
Any four copies (our selection) from '87 to  
'88 £1.20

Newly produced newsletter digest  
90 page selection of the best from '82 to  
'88 £1.50

Growing without Schooling - the newsletter  
of EO's parallel organisation in the USA.  
£10 for six issues per year starting March,  
from: Jill Gillings, Ballaglonny Farm, Quales  
Orchard, Ronague, Castletown, Isle of Man

EO stationery, re-use labels, membership  
forms, EO leaflets and handbills from:  
Lucy Charlton, 2 Wistow Lane, Newton  
Harcourt, Leics LE8 0FT  
Send £2 for 100 re-use labels

PRICES QUOTED ARE FOR MEMBERS ONLY

### EO membership/museum cards

The EO membership card give you free  
admission to the Science & Natural History  
museums and Kew Gardens (see Feb/Mar '91  
M/L for details) in London. Also EOers who  
reside in Norfolk can obtain free admission  
to the Museums run by the Norfolk Museum  
Service. Please note that this is for  
Norfolk residents only and you may be asked  
for proof of residence in Norfolk. To get  
your card send an SAE marked 'EO card' to:  
Paul Bentley, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA

### EO childrens' card

These are personal ID cards to show that  
you are being legitimately home-educated. To  
get your card send an SAE to: William Rust,  
8 Church End, Gamlingay, Beds SG19 3EP

### Learning Link

Learning Link is a non-profit making EO  
family run resource which can enable you to  
purchase educational computer hardware and  
software at the educational discount prices  
available to schools. We have  
information/price sheets for Acorn, Apple,  
Cambridge, Commodore, IBM, Research Machines  
and Tandy computers, Fax modems and  
electronic keyboards. Details from: Paul  
Bentley, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA  
Tel: 081 852 1563

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## REGIONAL ENQUIRIES SECRETARIES

<u>East Anglia</u>	Sandie Cottee (0258) 733259
<u>Midlands</u>	Hazel Clawley (021 722) 7165
<u>The North</u>	Mick and Jennie White (0969) 23544
<u>Scotland</u>	Brenda Holliday (0786) 832042
<u>Wales</u>	Miryam Bush (0269) 861069
<u>South East and South West</u>	Sarah Taylor (081 808) 3200

## EDUCATION OTHERWISE OFFICERS

General Enquiries 36, Kinross Road, Leamington Spa,  
Warwickshire CV32 7EF Helpline: (0926) 886828

General Secretary Pam Stevenson, 25 Myndham Road, Dover, Kent  
CT17 0BH Tel: (0304) 210997

Director of Publications Lesley Kilbride, Fearnmore by Shieldag,  
Strathcarron, Wester Ross IV54 8XX  
Tel: (052) 05278

Publications Co-ordinator Lynne Greenhough, 18 Park Street, Alfreton,  
Derbyshire DE5 7JE Tel: (0773) 836662

Treasurer Michael Cook, 34 Beacon Road, Merne Bay,  
Kent CT6 6DJ Tel: (02273) 67059

Chairperson Keith Charlton, 2 Wistow Lane, Newton  
Harcourt, Leics LE8 0FT Tel: (053 759) 2118

Special Needs Sylvia Jeffs, 16 St. Bernard's Road, Solihull  
B92 7BB Tel: (021) 706 6460

One parent family Contact Jenny Blower, 15A Athelstan Road, Hastings,  
East Sussex TN35 5JB Tel: (0424) 722720

Subscription renewals, Address changes,  
Membership lists Bob Emmet, 148 Cuntun Lane, Norwich, Norfolk  
NR5 0AQ Tel: (0603) 747865

Publicity Officer Vacant

Co-ordinators Secretary Stephanie Fitcher, 50 Springfield Avenue,  
Chesterfield S40 1NL Tel: (0246) 239048

### MEMBERSHIP SECRETARIES

Scotland & Northern England Meryl Cumins, 84 Machanhill, Larkhall,  
Lanarkshire ML9 2LD Tel: (0698) 887977

South East Valerie Common, 19 New Road, Castlethorpe,  
Milton Keynes MK19 7EH Tel: (0908) 511247

Wales and Midlands Gillian Murely, 84 Witney Road, Stafford  
ST17 0BP Tel: (0785) 48753

London and Home Counties David Bettie, 56 Goodwin Road, Ramsgate  
CT11 0JJ Tel: (0843) 583260

South West Maggie Swartridge, 32 Carrey Park, Polperro,  
Cornwall PL13 2JF Tel: (0503) 72087

### H E L P L I N E S

CHILDLINE (0800) 1111  
KIDSCAPE (071 488) 0488

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

**Our principal aims are to:**

**encourage learning outside the school system**

**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**

**establish the primary right of children to have full consideration given to their wishes and feelings about their education**

**For further information**

**Send a 9 x 4 inch sae to: 36, Kinross Road, Leamington Spa, CV32 7EF**



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