



EDUCATION
OTHERWISE

FOSSIL HUNTING

TRUANCY

THE PECKHAM
EXPERIMENT

NEW
GRAFFITI BOARD

NATIONAL HOME EDUCATION DAY

EDUCATING ARCHIE?
WHAT A JOE

ISSUE NO 82

OCTOBER 1991

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The deadline for submissions is 1st November 1991. Please send contributions to the appropriate editor marked clearly **'FOR PUBLICATION'**, including your full name, address and telephone number on each submission sent.

Further notes for contributors:

1. Please submit before 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 to newsletter number and date.
4. Feel free to make suggestions about articles you would like to see in the Newsletter or supplements.

Advertisements are accepted (when space permits) from members if they are of interest to EO in general at 10p a word.

If you would like to edit the Newsletter or a Supplement, please write or telephone **Lynne Greenhough, 18 Park Street, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE5 7JE, telephone 0773 836662.**

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EDITORIAL

One in my

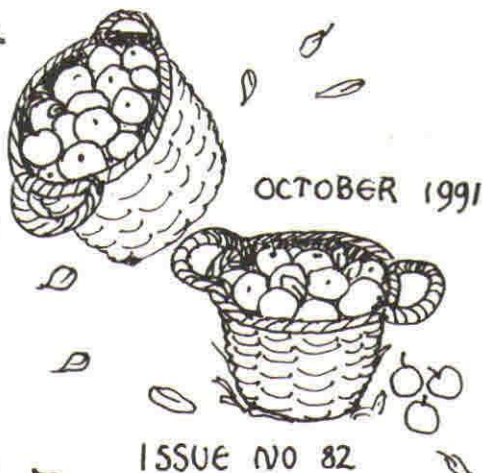


When your newsletter arrives do you rip open the envelope impatiently, make straight for Archie, then seek some small inspiring snippet that sets a comforting tone for the day? Do you then, like me, glance through the sheer volume of words and realise that this hot property must be put to one side before the porridge burns?

I cannot indulge my need to find the sympathetic words of other like minded members until bed time when I can spend a few precious moments of quiet reading. But the EO newsletter is not always helpful in my sleepy predicament.

Firstly there is the problem of reading articles written in a typeface that is sometimes so difficult that the article has to positively shine out or be extremely short to tempt me to overcome the visual obstacles: poor e's with blocked noses, TV screenprinting, miniscule print ... Then there is another problem. Unlike other magazines, the format is quite unpredictable, this issue being no exception, making it harder to find your way around, or know which bit you could contribute to.

The achievements of past editors are to be applauded not criticised - 40 or so pages to type, edit, proof read, arrange, and illustrate is an enormous task for anyone to undertake at home. This issue for example was made more difficult to produce due to software limitations. I had to beg favours, worry and yell for help more frequently than I would have liked in order to produce a fairly acceptable typeface to my eye. A rotating editorship, limited resources at home, a small A5 format and tired readers with a broad spectrum of tastes is the challenge all editors face. Whilst I'm not dreaming of a



slick image, could we not treat ourselves to a visually relaxing read?

Am I suggesting that we should preclude the talents of potential editors who are limited to an Olivetti portable in order to achieve an easy-on-the-eye newsletter? Not exactly - not if better resources can be made available by EO to help the less well resourced to achieve a consistently high standard of typeface.

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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Deepest Sympathy from EO

Our thoughts go out to Patricia Knox, whose husband Keith has just died after some time in great pain with cancer.

Patricia has done invaluable work on school phobia. As the person on the end of the EO school phobia helpline, she has provided a lifeline for many families.

Her research and writings have enabled parents and professionals to see that home education is a viable option where continuity in school looked bleak.

We would like to thank Patricia on behalf of EO for all her hard work and commitment and wish her strength.

If you can help fill a temporary vacancy on the Truancy Helpline please see 'Noticeboard' on page 38

GOOD PARKS GUIDE

One disadvantage of attending national EO gatherings is the length of the journey, especially if you travel by car: children get bored and restless, maybe feel sick, and need to stop, get out and run around. The problem then especially on a motorway is finding a suitable place to stop. Road maps may show country parks, road signs may point to lay-bys, but there is no way of knowing whether the place will have the facilities required.

So perhaps it would be a good idea to compile a GOOD PARKS GUIDE, listing parks, playgrounds and other play areas accessible to main roads and motorways, so that families can find somewhere to stop and run, climb, scramble, swing or

whatever.

All EO members could contribute to such a guide by recommending parks etc near their homes, or those they have found on their travels. All it would need would be a description of the facilities provided, not forgetting to say whether there are toilets, whether there is a charge, and directions. Anyone who thinks a Good Parks Guide would be a good idea is welcome to send their suggestions to me and I will compile a list in some vaguely logical order for inclusion in a later newsletter.

**Peter Darling, 50 Springfield Av,
Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 1HL.**

STAINED GLASS WORKSHOP

If you want a wonderful experience for your children, invite June Standing to carry out a 'stained glass workshop' in your home. June 'moves in' for three days with all needed equipment, so skills of cutting, grinding, copper foiling and soldering are easily learnt by children as young as five years old. June is the only children's teacher of stained glass in a workshop setting, and her results are magnificent. Based on two workshops over four years, our family can thoroughly recommend June's talent.

Group prices are £7 per child per day plus £8 for materials. Tel 081-435 8029.

Does anyone have any other recommendations of home workshops?

**Shiela and Steve Hall, 1
Littlehampton Road, Ferring, West
Sussex, BN12 6PB.**

Why a special issue on Peckham?

This issue has given prominence to contributions on Peckham for two reasons. The first is quite simple, there was enough space. The second reason is more complex. We are more dependant than most on the fragile resources of the neighbourhood and community to meet our children's educational needs. There are precious few studies that can help our vision of a more flexible system become more acceptable. We need to make these better known.

A NEED FOR INDOOR COMMON SPACE



I came across 'Peckham' when I was lent Alison Stallibrass's classic study of spontaneous play of young children, 'The Self Respecting Child', based on her careful observations at the playgroup she ran at her home. The playgroup was a continuation of her former work as an assistant to the research staff at the Pioneer Health Centre, Peckham, some years previously.

The Peckham experiment was established by a team of two doctors and a biologist in 1926 to study healthy people. In order to do so they had to find out how to create the physical circumstances in which people were able to cultivate health in themselves. The directors created these circumstances in the form of a purpose designed building rather like an anarchic version of our modern Leisure Centres, open to the community of Peckham on a very cheap family membership basis. It was used as a truly common open space where the directors soon learnt to respect the member's autonomy: "all people, from infants to old, resent being instructed ... even when it is called helpfulness rather than compulsion, it strangles creativity."

Alison
Stallibrass
with
latest
grandchild



Being Me and Also Us is Alison Stallibrass's personal account of the Centre. Well illustrated, it is by far the most readable description that I have come across about Peckham.

With the vivid memories of some past members, she describes what became an extension to the families' own homes: "The Centre was a place with the accessibility of a village green but also offering shelter, light and warmth ... the young people were enjoying the opportunity to learn the art of being themselves and at the same time contributory parts of a harmonious social whole - the art of being me and also us."

PECKHAM

It never became self-financing and tragically had to close down in 1950. If the spirit of Peckham infects the next millenium it will be largely due to Alison Stallibrass's painstaking work that has taken her many years to complete. Let's hope there are enough with the pioneering spirit to make sure that centres like Peckham dont just remain an ideal.

Being Me and Also Us - Lessons from the Peckham Experiment (with an introduction by Leila Berg). Normally £7.95, now available at the special rate of £7.00 to EO members including P & P directly from the author: Turkey Island Corner, East Harting, Petersfield, Hants GU31 5LT.

Self Respecting Child, Development Through Spontaneous Play (foreword by John Holt) Published Addison-Wesley Ltd, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, Berks RG11 2NZ price £9.90.

Kate Freeman, Wiltshire.

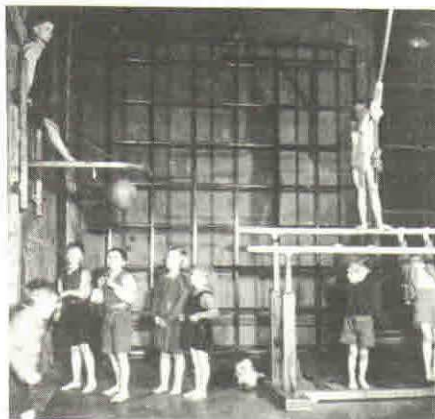
FINDING THE VILLAGE IN THE CITY



What follows is an account of how a community leisure centre was transformed nine years ago every Thursday into a truly convivial community in Toronto. Based on the findings of 'Peckham', Jutta Mason set out to create an 'indoor park'. The account has been drastically edited (despite its length!) from two articles: 'An Open Letter on the need for unprogrammed common space' and 'Finding the Village in the City' as well as a talk. No longer can those of us inspired by Peckham wistfully sigh and say 'if only ...', because someone has actually gone out and re-created

VILLAGE IN THE CITY

an environment that we can all point to and say 'It's happened there - why not here?' when approaching our local community centre managers!



Gymnasium used freely at Peckham

In these last years of the 20th century, the impoverishment of community life seems very evident in a city like this one, full of so many strangers. Particularly those people who are seen as marginal, and who see themselves that way, notice their loneliness: people who have recently moved to Toronto, people who can't speak fluent English, people who can't get around well because they are disabled, or sick, or elderly, or poor, or because they have young children. When my children were babies, I discovered that the exertion of going anywhere with them could be formidable. I also found out that in the company of my small children I had become rather bothersome to the rest of the world. We were too sticky, too noisy, too unpredictable for the orderly world of adults. Many women have shared my experience, and so through motherhood a whole new group of marginal, isolated people came into being - mothers and young babies.

To be sidelined and cut off is very painful, but this pain, like all pain, bears a gift inside it. People who are comfortable don't tend to struggle for change. But the pain of exclusion may force marginal people to go and hunt for their neighbours. That's what happened to me and some women I knew.

We approached the director of one of the municipal recreation centres, and we asked him if we could use the gym for four hours every Thursday, as an indoor park. "And could we make tea if we brought our own teapot?" Gradually ... more people came and we added another table. We asked for, and got longer hours, since no one used the gym in the daytime.

Older children came who didn't go to school. They played ball hockey on one side of the gym. The little ones, delighted and impressed, toddled in and out of that fast-moving group awkwardly juggling hockey sticks and poking at the puck if it happened to whiz by them. The older children played as if they had eyes in their backs. They mysteriously avoided falling over any of the babies while they charged up and down the gym. We weren't surprised - Alison Stallibrass had reported on the astonishingly low accident rate at the Pioneer Health Centre when the children were free to play without a hovering adult supervisor.

Between one and two hundred adults and children come to Wallace-Emerson on Thursdays now. They spill out of the gym into other parts of the centre ... plays have been put on, seasonal festivals conducted ... and - very important - there has been food.

Some days the gym seems to be a magical place ... the children, moving around the gym at their many different games, seem to be in perfect rhythm with the harp and flute coming from the tape

recorder.

There have been times when I felt like a medieval reaper in a field - bending and stooping all over the gym, picking up bits of sandwich, add socks, lost toys, badminton rackets in danger of misuse ... The motion of my body felt pleasing as well as strenuous - a rhythm based not on an exercise video but on the substantial and meaningful wants of my neighbours.

Tourists come to dissect and be serviced

I have come to see, more and more concretely, how my neighbours (as well as I myself) labour under the illusions of our late twentieth century culture. There is a subtle but definite pressure to turn this village into a kind of tourist attraction, with me (or some other strong person) playing the part of the village chief ... The village spreads out before them like a movie, to be observed and savoured and idealized.

Sometimes the tourists come to dissect, like anxious inspectors. They look at the older children playing ball hockey: 'Why are those children playing without any barrier?' Four little kids are racing their tricycles down an incline far away at the other end of the building: 'Don't their mothers notice that they've left the gym?' The young boy in the wheelchair is disappearing into the elevator by himself: 'Who is responsible for him? *Who is in charge here?* What are the rules?'

Some tourists come to be serviced. They approach me as the chief, to find out what we offer: 'Swimming lessons? No? What a pity. Wood-shop? Yes? Excellent. Skating time? Yes? Very good. Organised games? No? But you really should. Now I'd like to buy a cup of tea, please. What, no clean cups? I should find an empty one

on the table and wash it myself? What kind of a place is this?

The tourists sit down at the tables, and when they begin to tell their stories they lose the protective coating of being either admiring or critical outsiders. I sit down with them, listen to what people are saying, feel the sun on my back, and quit fussing about like a chief with important responsibilities. And like a snowball gathering snow as it rolls along, the neighbourliness of this quite ordinary group of people seems to attract others who long for connections.

Where do families with children feel welcome?

The centre has many doors ... it is common for a person moving through the centre to be blocked by locked doors and to have to make one or more detours to get to where they want to go. This repeated experience does not make a person feel welcome.

Where do families with children feel welcome? If they want to visit with one another, talk, laugh, kick a ball around, nurse their babies together, meet other families, where can they go? Libraries are for books ... shopping malls the space is organised for shopping ... eating

areas designed for efficient refuelling ... Churches are for organised worship and activities of the congregation ... parks are more flexible - but they have no warm shelter ... schools are for classrooms only for the families of children enrolled there ... and 'community centres' are mainly for sports and crafts programmes.

The idea of an unprogrammed, unmanaged happening has been hard for the staff to accept. The Wallace-Emerson Centre is run on a schedule with certain definite programmes. At the end of each programme, the participants are expected to leave, unless they are joining in another programme.

There are crumbs on the floor!

Over the years it has gradually become harder and harder to get people to leave in the middle of the afternoon. Sometimes the conversation is so animated, the plot of the children's game so riveting, that everyone is still firmly in place at four o'clock. This is a problem.

There are crumbs on the floor and people standing about talking. The loudest thing in the room by then is the taped rock music used to inspire the gymnasts, but in between the drum beats



Open doors at Peckham: Playing cricket behind a net whilst children use free access to shelter

the squeals of the children can be heard as they chase one another at the other end of the room. After repeated exhortations to the families to leave the gym at the specified time - they try to get going, but they always backslide.

The staff have recognised that the removal of the community from the centre is a management problem and, by means of a key, lower the metal barriers that separate the gym from the kitchen and the entrance corridor. People hurriedly get up, gulp down their tea and their salad, clean up the tables, gather up the crafts supplies, put boots and coats on their children, and - feeling guilty for having been caught unready to leave - quickly get out the door. The community has been successfully removed.

Perhaps all the doors might eventually be unlocked

When spontaneous community life does get going - when the commons begins to come back into existence - it is always in danger of being ruled out of order. Unmanaged community space is theoretically an admirable thing, but from a management point of view, a pain in the neck.

If the space regulations were gradually, progressively, relaxed, perhaps children could drop in after school to shoot some baskets or play ball hockey ... the instructors could sign out balls and equipment ... the hallways might get a little crowd of people sometimes listening outside a door where a real trumpeter was practising his instrument ... perhaps all the doors might eventually be unlocked except at night. This kind of commons needs an openness to community initiative and a commitment to nourish rather than suppress the energy of people like the

Thursday families. I would like to see if it is possible to begin an active discussion between those who run the centres, and those who wish to use them as a common space.

Jutta Mason, February 1989
Articles and photos courtesy of Alison Stallibrass and Pioneer Health Centre Ltd
STOP THE PRESS! See p29 for item on 'Peckham in the 90's and Beyond'



The following article has been compiled by the Editor from two articles that appeared in 'The Education Social Worker' written and submitted to EO by Dennis Leckey, Senior EWO for Metro Rochdale.

Schools Encourage Some Pupils to be Absent

Teachers, social workers, Education Social Workers (ESWs) and Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) are all in the business of social control. Certain rules have to be learnt, especially by pupils, if they want to survive. There are differing levels of social awareness in the individuals who are involved in 'the game'. It has to be played and concluded but there are helpful and unhelpful ways of achieving success.

To use a blanket concept such as 'truancy' is not only incorrect but is unhelpful to everyone. It is an easy title. It simplifies the apportioning of blame and puts in onto the individual. The label 'truant' should, at the very least, be used carefully, but preferably not at all.

A universally accepted definition of claimed that a 'truant' is ... 'a child who is absent on his own initiative without his parents' permission.' There are two major problems to be faced when considering this definition.

Firstly, the absent pupil rarely, if ever, absents himself or herself alone or without peer group pressure. He or she seldom uses his or her own initiative in this matter. The reason for this is in the strength gained from a sub-cultural understanding of the problems of going to school regularly.

Secondly, there is a problem in accepting that parents do not give permission. Sometimes they give very definite permission, sometimes they give extremely subtle permission but only very rarely do they not collude to some degree with their child's absence.

A number of studies have suggested that schools actively or passively encourage some pupils to be absent. Pupils who are often absent from school have been found to be generally from what might be termed 'insecure' home environments where there is disharmony. They may not be adequately cared for or supervised at home. These pupils often see teachers as increasing their unhappiness by not wanting to understand. A pupil's appearance or attitude is enough to gain negative responses from some teachers. All teachers and pupils have their own personalities, each with varying degrees of understanding, empathy and patience. It often takes a few steps forward from each side. When one side is not prepared to move, things can easily become impossible and the two-way labelling process goes out of control.

Many pupils with attendance difficulties may have an overall attendance level that is much lower than the average. It has always been an often misunderstood area of study but the simple truth is that a much lower attendance figure than average might be the highest possible level for certain pupils.

DISAFFECTED PUPILS TALK...

An almost verbatim account of seven disaffected pupils talking about school. What they say to us all in education can make the professional feel uncomfortable. Listening to these kids about to enter their last year of school was a slightly disturbing experience because it brings home the helplessness of the EWO/ESW in some cases.

'Teachers tell you what to do, that's all: you do their job for them while they sit on their ... while they sit there.' Laughs from the other kids. 'They never listen to you. You feel like killing them, they probably feel like killing you. They don't have to wear uniform, and I always argue with them. I like arguing with them.'

'I think my teacher and me had a personality thing. I didn't hate him, just what he did, what he had to do. I wouldn't have put up with me if I'd been him. But, do you know, teachers have stopped caring any more. They used to once. They boss you about now. We don't go to school. When we went, we didn't go to be bossed about. We went to learn.'

When it was suggested to the kids that they went to school to be taught how to behave they looked blank, unbelieving. The same look comes from teachers who can't perceive the kids' home circumstances.

About bullying: 'Nobody sorts it out. It's no use you saying they won't get you again, they do. And worse. And they never stop. Why should we go to school for that? Kids hit you and pull your hair. They call you and your mum and dad names. Teachers don't bother. I think they're scared too, 'cos teachers still hit you, with rulers, with their hands. Or

they poke you or put their face up against yours. I could have hit him.' 'I've never

FOSSIL HUNTING



Jan Miller describes a fossil hunt in North Wales which she organised. She took a degree in Geology 13 years ago, worked in Manchester Museum and now teaches various Natural History groups as well as her children at home.

Fossils are a great way into geology for children - something that grabs their imagination and they can take part in finding. Dinosaurs are another good 'way in' as well, of course; but a little more difficult to find in the field!

We started by making 'fake fossils' using modelling clay into which a modern shell was pressed. Plaster of paris was then poured into the mould when the shell was removed. This helps people to remember the difference between 'cast' and 'mould' and illustrates how fossils are made when one sediment is laid on top of another. It is important to point out that the shell would be **replaced** by the sediment or mineral bit by bit, rather than the whole shell being removed at once.

We all went off to a local disused quarry to look for real fossils. I was lucky enough to have been shown this treasure trove by a local person who was interested in geology. It has a lot of reef fossils from the carboniferous - corals, crinoids, brachiopods mainly, and the great thing is they are everywhere in the rubble of the old quarry floor. Even the little children could find them. Quarries are a great place for learning about geology, but they are often hidden from the public by notices reading:

'unauthorised personnel prohibited' if they are still being worked. This is understandable as they are potentially



Dennis Leckey in rehearsal with some lively budding actors and actresses last May

been bullied, not even in primary school. If you hit first you don't get bullied; but they chuck you out of school.' One boy fidgets, has been fidgeting so badly for a few minutes that the discussion is halted. 'I can't help it. I'm just not used to keeping still.'

Conclusions: 'I have the potential to achieve - that's exactly what a teacher said to me; those words exactly.' 'I learn more watching TV. Teachers are the biggest problem.'... Their situation is unique, as is their collection of experiences and beliefs. They were all bright, lively adolescents capable of much more given a tailor-made package. But that's rarely possible in a system as complicated as a school.

**Dennis Leckey, 65 William St,
Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire,
OL7 0BH.**

dangerous places - the walls and overhangs are often loose. But you **can** get permission to enter them as an educational group if you can find out who owns the land or works the quarry. You may be able to get a list of interesting and co-operative quarries from a local geography/geology school-teacher, a local Natural History Society or (more probably) from the nearest university that has a geology department. Failing these, look under 'Quarries' in Yellow Pages and ring round.

One-eyed Geologists . . .

If you do get permission to visit one please take precautions - wear stout footwear, a safety helmet (working quarries may supply these to you, but cheap ones can be bought at DIY stores), and use a geological hammer.

There is a very good reason for using a proper geological hammer rather than your ordinary hammer out of the tool cupboard: geological hammers are made of tempered steel, that is, the outer layer is re-heated and specially treated so that it won't splinter when hitting rocks like an ordinary hammer can. There are a number of one-eyed geologists around, and it's not because of **rock** splinters, it is because of sharp metal shards piercing their eye at great speed from a hammer struck on a rock! Safety spectacles would protect you from rock fragments.

A geological hammer is not essential in a quarry where the rock is already broken up for you, but it does make the expedition more **fun** - especially for the younger children! Another great thing about quarries is that you need have no qualms about taking your fossils home with you, unlike in a Country Park or a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

After we had found half a ton of fossils

- and then edited out the poorer ones - we took them back to my house where we looked at reference books and my small fossil and mineral collection. The children had some activity sheets to take home with them and some handouts showing a map of the area in Carboniferous times, the geological time periods and an identification sheet with outline drawings of the main fossils they would be likely to find. This latter sheet was useful for them to take home to remind them of the names of the fossils they had found that day. I hope the day gave them a taste for geology.

Useful Books :from British, Natural & Geological Museums

- 1 **Life from the Past - Introducing Fossils by Earth Science Teacher's Assoc**
- 2 **British Palaeozoic Fossils (also available for Mesozoic and Cainozoic periods)**
- 3 **Fossils Childrens Activity Book**
- 4 **Fossil - Eyewitness Guides (pub Dorling Kindersley)**
- 5 **How Invertebrates Live by Kaye Mash, pub Elsevier Phaidon - Describes ecology of creatures similar to their fossil ancestors**
- 6 **Penguin Dictionary of Geology**
- 7 **Wonderful Life - The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History by Stephen Jay Gould. Won the 1990/1 award for popular science writing. For adults and older children**
- 8 **Memoir for the geological sheet (map) for your area. Pub'd by British Geological Survey, available from Geological Museum. Most areas available. These 'memoirs' show locations of fossils and other geological features.**

The cheapest one pound (weight) geological hammers cost about £11.00 new. Available from ironmongers, rock and mineral collector's shops and from the Geological Museum, London.

Jan Miller, Saith Ffynnon, Downing Road, Whitford, Holywell, Clwyd CH8 9EQ

A flowing start to handwriting

Education Through The Press contribution Jan Miller

The fact that handwriting is now embedded in the national curriculum (English AT5) has underlined the need for more attention to the mechanics of writing and raised questions about the way it is taught.

Most English schools first teach young children to print and introduce joined-up writing later, but the limited research available and practical experience of French teachers suggests that children need early exposure to the joined style of writing which they are eventually to produce. In this way they are able to internalise these images before creating personal written forms of communicating.

When children enter nursery school in France, they are presented with the models of writing they are eventually to produce. Names on coatpegs/drawers; birthday greetings; messages; events that have occurred within the school – all are written in *l'écriture cursive* (joined writing). French teachers have observed that if children see this written form in their environment, they will eventually try to emulate it.

L'écriture cursive, they argue, is much easier than printing because it is a natural development from the continuous flow of early scribble, it allows a natural break between words as whole units of meaning, and it is easier to read because the children do not confuse spaces between letters and spaces between words.

It is becoming apparent that the early visual exposure of French children to joined writing also facilitates fluency in later years. By the time children have reached the age of seven or eight, they have achieved a basic fluent hand and teachers no longer need to emphasise the skills of handwriting.

More attention can be focused on style and content by reading and discussing the literary models of a variety of authors.

In this country, some educationists have already proposed that children should be encouraged to develop their handwriting abilities and, in particular, to learn to join their writing from a much earlier age than is current practice. This would not be just as a progression from early writing experience, like scribble but also as an aid to fluency in spelling and creative thinking. The ultimate aim is to produce a legible, fluent, fast hand which can be used as a communication tool.

In the French education system the developmental stages of writing are very closely linked to the visual experiences of the children when they enter nursery school (*école maternelle*), many of them as young as two. All the writing that they see is *l'écriture cursive* (often called *l'écriture anglaise!*). Even the children's early personal reading books are made by the teacher using *l'écriture cursive*. If the class has been on an outing, for example, the teacher, in discussion with the children, will write a few lines about the visit. She will then photocopy the short paragraph, written *en cursive* and each child can add an illustration. The piece of work is then added to the child's personal reading book. In this way, the children become accustomed to the joined form for both reading and writing.

Children in France also see examples of both cursive writing and print in books, comics, displays at school, the home environment and the wider community. Most French teachers tend to use one form of joined writing, similar to that in books, which adds to continuity. French children seem to be able to absorb different forms of writing almost by osmosis, in the same way that bilingual children can absorb two languages simultaneously. They appear to have no reading difficulties with *l'écriture cursive* and are internalising the form for later production, in much the same way as young children internalise the spoken word before speaking themselves.

Penni Cotton is senior lecturer in reading and languages at Kingston Polytechnic and is researching the effect of early visual exposure to cursive writing on fluency in later years. She welcomes correspondence from French and British colleagues working in the same area.

Times Educational Supplement 10 May 91

WHAT IS AN EO LOCAL GROUP?

'There's nothing happening round here. I'm going to organise some meetings.' So many new co-ordinators start with this intention. I also hear: 'We never knew we had a co-ordinator. There were never and local events.'

In fact organising social activities is not something every co-ordinator has to do. There are no expenses payable. Furthermore, any EO member could take the initiative, invite everyone round, put a notice in the newsletter saying 'Swimming on Wednesdays', or make a block booking for a local theatre. There are both rewards and risks.

The rewards include: new friends for yourself and your children; your children can take part in group activities; you can talk about home education with people who understand' you can hear about more opportunities for fun and learning.

The risks are less obvious. You may incur expense, write to everyone, phone around, clean your house from top to bottom, bake half a hundred weight of potatoes and then have no one turn up. Or people may come but not live up to your expectations. This last happens more than we like to think.

People in EO have very differing attitudes to education, religion, politics and lifestyles. There are all sorts of different people. You may find that you have nothing in common except home education. You may strongly disapprove of some of your fellow EOers. You may find their children obnoxious. Your children may say they never want to see them again. What happens then to your local gatherings?

There is a great temptation to take the

sneaky but personally satisfying option of sifting out the people on your wavelength, keeping in touch with those and dropping the rest. You now have a new network of friends, but **you do not have a local EO group.** If you really mean to have local EO social events, they must be open to everyone. This requires some effort. The fairest way to make sure everyone knows what is happening is to plan ahead and use the national newsletter. Even those members not on the Contact List can then choose to opt in.

If you or your children are not happy about welcoming everyone into your home, you could try meeting on neutral ground, maybe somewhere with enough space to permit a comfortable distance between people, the swimming pool or country park. If you arrange a special activity, for example in a museum, theatre or anybody where the staff expect conformity, think how you are going to feel if the most non-conformist children draw attention to themselves. If you can handle it, go ahead. If you are going to be embarrassed perhaps you should think again. Those children who do not come over well in large social groups probably need EO even more than the ones who fit in anywhere. Remember too that not everyone has a car and some people are very short of money.

With these thoughts in mind good luck to all of you and please can we hear more real life experiences. Perhaps it could be a topic for a newsletter supplement.

Stephanie Fatcher, Co-ordinator's Secretary (see inside back cover)



THALATTA - Sailing Holiday



The Thalatta is a restored traditional sailing barge, locally built in 1906. It is run by a charitable trust which subsidises trips taking groups of children around the East coast from Maldon in Essex.

The former cargo space is converted to communal living quarters with hammocks and a wooden sea-chest to store personal effects, just as you would have done when the Thalatta was a sea-going cargo ship.

Numbers are strictly limited to 13, including adults. Everyone will assist with the working of the ship, with cooking and cleaning. Safety standards are high. Children must be over 9 and able to swim. No upper age limit. Unaccompanied children are welcome.

The week runs from Monday - Friday. The Thalatta has three permanent crew members. Cost will be around £95 per person all inclusive. Food is vegetarian, other dietary needs catered for.

If you would like to join me, please contact me as soon as possible since this is very popular with many youth groups. Suggested dates: end of June beginning of July. The final date will be mutually agreed by those who are interested.

**Further information and bookings:
Sandie Cottee, 17 South View Road,
Rettendon, Chelmsford, Essex CM3
80X Tel: 0268 733259**

TREASURERS BIT

The law relating to Limited Companies and Charities is complex and in many ways restrictive to an organisation like ours. The trustees and Members of the Association have spent much time and money researching what can and can't be done within the Limited Company - Charitable Trust set up. Care is needed if you are not to put yourself and EO in a position that could result in accusations of impropriety or fraud. (Obtaining money or pecuniary advantage by deception.)

So... local groups beware!

With National Home Education Day in October, many members have been approaching companies and individuals in the area for support and donations of cash and materials, to help fund their local groups and establish resource centres etc. If EO's headed notepaper or name is used, it must be made clear to the prospective sponsor that it is for a local group which does not receive funding from the Association for the activities and materials specified. Also, that any cash or items donated would be for that local group's objectives, which should be stated. Additionally, cheques must be made payable to the local group, eg: Codsbury Home Education Group, **not** Education Otherwise Association. It will then be up to the local group to organise their own finances, as many now do. Any funds raised on behalf of Education Otherwise Association Ltd must be paid into the Association bank account, and notified to the treasurer. Our accountant has expressed concern in the past over undeclared bank accounts set up in EO's name by individuals and groups for fund raising and other purposes. The

raising and other purposes. Treasurer is the only person legally allowed to open a bank account in the name of Education Otherwise Association Limited.

If members wish to solicit donations or do anything in the name of Education Otherwise Charitable Trust they must first contact the Trustees Lesley Kilbride, Bruce Wallace or Christine Wallace. Any cash or cheques collected in this way must be notified to them, **not** paid into the Association bank account. Details are available from the Trustees.

Sorry if this all sounds bureaucratic but the Trustees and Directors are legally obliged to conform to strict accountancy regulations. Any problems please get in touch.

Mike Cook, Treasurer (See inside back cover)

Areas of activity for the
National Home Education Day
(as of Aug '91)



There are now over 80 exhibitions and events planned. THANKS!



19th October

This is the last newsletter before Oct 19th, National Home Education Day. Some more areas have things planned, I know, but what I don't know at time of writing is what, where and when. The following counties have nothing finalised as far as I know to date. I've had initial contact with a dozen or so folks in these counties.

Please get in touch:

ENGLAND: Cheshire, Cleveland, Cornwall, Cumbria, Gloucester, Hereford & Worcs, Isle of Man, Isle of Wight, Northants, Lincs, London (East), London (South), Gtr Manchester, Merseyside, Norfolk, Salop, Somers, Surrey, Oxfordshire, Warwicks, West Midlands, and Yorks (South) **SCOTLAND:** Borders, Central, Dumfries/Gall, Grampian, Highlands, Lothian, and Strathclyde. **WALES:** Dyfed, Gwent, and Gwynedd. **IRELAND:** All

It's not too late to organise ...

We have the following publicity material available (items marked * available from Lucy Charlton, 2 Church Lane Cottages, Newton Harcourt, Leics LE8 0FT Tel: 053 - 759 2118):

- A3 sheet - a 'title page' for exhibit 'National Home Education Day Oct 19th'
- A3 sheet - about socialisation
- A3 sheet - about who does it, why and how
- A3x2 sheets - about legal situation
- A3 sheet - children's thoughts and ideas
- A3 sheet - parent's comments
- A3, A4, A5 - School is not Compulsory poster with the triangular road sign*
- A5 (A4 folded) membership leaflet with information about EO*
- A5 leaflet - very basic info: 'School or Not, It's your choice'*
- A3 x 20 or so sheets of newspaper and



SHARED EXPERIENCES

magazine articles about home based education
A? (A4 folded into 3) leaflet produced by the
Trust with basic info in a question and answer
format

A5 (A4 folded once) membership forms for EO*

**ALSO: Car Stickers and Pens from
Mike Cook, Treasurer.**

And one problem: Someone contacted me who definitely didn't want to deal with the media. Unfortunately I cannot find a record of who that person was. Please please could you drop me a postcard in case I get queries in your area. All the best to everyone involved.

**Liz & Gordon Ramsay, NHED
Co-ordinators, 1, Stanford Hills
Cottages, Stanford on Soar,
Loughborough, Leics LE12 5QL.**

**NHED IN MERSEYSIDE: A one day
course, run by the WEA, at Caldy
Valley Neighbourhood Church and Centre,
Chester, 10 am - 4 pm October 19th 1991.
Please contact Kevin Fleisch, 62
Uplands Av, Connahs Quay, Deeside,
Clwyd, CH5 4LG Tel 0244 810153 for
details. Why not run one in your area if
you don't live locally?**

...And for more details about NHED elsewhere
see Regional Diary starting page 31

TUITION More adverts on page 37

**PROFESSIONAL TUITION FOR 'A' LEVEL MATHS
AND 'A' LEVEL PHYSICS (CORRESPONDENCE ONLY)
SPECIAL LOW RATE FOR EO STUDENTS
CONTACT: Mr R Freeborn, 4 North Fen Road,**

Temper Tantrums - Does this sound familiar

No one is more alone than a home educating parent coping with behavioural problems. Glenys Dates writes here about 'bad-temperedness' and appeals for experienced help.

I wonder if there's anybody out there who can offer some help or advice. I took my son, Robert - aged 10 years - out of school 6 months ago. I must admit that, although I am now more thoroughly convinced about the advantages of home education, my reasons at the time were that I was at my wits' end and I couldn't cope with any more complaints from the school. Robert was, on occasion, rude, disruptive and aggressive and wouldn't do the work he was set. In addition, he was often reluctant to go to school and bad-tempered at the end of the school day. He lost his temper very easily with lots of things.

After 6 months at home Robert loses his temper rather less than before but still has bursts of bad temper from time to time and I feel that the times when he doesn't lose his temper with things are as much due to consistent efforts on my part to divert and distract rather than any increase in his ability to cope with his temper. I find it a strain to be constantly fending off his ill temper and also think this is not a natural situation and other people out in the big, wide world will not try to placate him when things go wrong.

In fact, problems will occur when Robert is placed in situations with other children when loss of temper can result in

his doing something very aggressive towards them. He doesn't really have any friends and I feel that if he doesn't learn to control his temper and interact socially with at least some of his peers then he will have a difficult and lonely time of it.

He is quite bright, although not exceptionally gifted and has no problems when with adults. I am making enquiries into the possibility of allergy/diet induced behaviour but I really don't think this is the cause as all the instances can be explained and traced back to a starting point and reason for the loss of temper. It just seems that he has no ability to 'get on' with other children and this results in bad temper which just gets out of control.

Please, has anyone had similar experiences or can make any suggestions or give any advice at all?

**Glenys Dates, 22 Whinfield St,
Clayton-le-Moors, Accrington,
Lancs, BB5 5LY Tel 054 381539.**

Home Education for Under 5s Rules OK, Thank Goodness!

Linda Jackson continues Susan Urwin's theme in the last newsletter (NL 81) now that some of her son's friends are at playgroup.

I fully agree with Susan Urwin's comments regarding playgroup and EO. Although the social side of playgroup can be attractive, there can be a number of drawbacks, the emphasis on preparation for school being only one. We have a son, Harry, of nearly four who does not go to playgroup. His friends, mainly neighbouring children, are split between those who do attend a group and those who don't.

I have known most of the children fairly well for some time and have noticed an enormous change in most of those who

started playgroup. They became less adventurous, less willing to experiment, and, it seemed, frightened of failure. (Symptoms which I'm sure parents of older children will recognise in their children's school-going friends.) If we got paper and pencils out for Harry and his friends, the ones who went to playgroup would often say: 'What shall I draw?' or, even worse, 'I can't draw'. I find it very sad that these children should already have such a bad self-image. The playgroup they attend is comparatively well-resourced, with plenty of parental involvement and a good reputation, but obviously something is going wrong.

So I agreed with Susan that we should be providing some alternative/educational opportunities right from the beginning, not just from the magical age of school entry. But at the same time, we shouldn't forget that children also need time to be alone and time to discover their own resources. Children of this age, as with any other person, also need the freedom to be able to say: 'I've had enough now, I want to be alone for a while'. Many of Harry's friends are rushed from one class or club to another and from one house to another - they never seem to have time just for themselves. This leads to the children becoming very peer dependent, without the resources to work alone happily and successfully.

All of the children here play in a large group, including older children who attend school, and so their interactions are full of school jargon and place the children under similar pressures to those found in the playground, but much less intensely. In other words, they're often not very nice to each other. Watching them play has shown me how vulnerable children are to peer pressure - I am convinced that if Harry were to go to school he would alter

EXPERIENCES

almost beyond recognition. At least here he can come in and shut the door when he's had enough, and there is always a parent nearby. He is able to make a choice which he wouldn't have at playgroup or school.

Now that I've finally managed to write to the newsletter I would also like to say what a boost it gives me when it drops through the letter box. My family, including my partner, are at best ambivalent and at worst hostile towards the idea of home-education. It keeps me going to know that there are other people who are working towards similar goals and, above all, that home education can and does work.

Is this inertia selling?

Finally, I wonder if anyone can give me some advice on a practical problem? In our area most children start school after their fourth birthday. Friends with children just a little older than Harry (he's four in November) have already received letters from the local infant school offering a placement which must be cancelled if one doesn't want to take it up even though neither they nor the children have been anywhere near the place. I assume the names and addresses have been passed on from our local baby clinic. How should I handle this when our turn comes? And should I let the LEA know that we are home-educating after Harry's fourth birthday or can we still wait until he turns five without causing any ill-feeling?

**Linda Jackson, 21 Mount Pleasant,
Guisley, Leeds, West Yorkshire,
LS20 9EB.**

PESTERED BY LEA & SOCIAL SERVICES

The following has been compiled from two letters from Janice Bridden describing her family's upsetting case. It has been taken up by the local press and is now in the hands of the Ombudsman and their MP.

We have been, and still are, experiencing terrible problems with Richmond Council. We withdrew Graham (14) from school a year ago, having always been unhappy with his progress. We felt that he was being held back because he had been marked down as a failure, although he is really bright. His education has improved greatly under our tuition.

Education Authority staff have expressed disapproval on the grounds that they think Graham is not getting enough opportunity to socialise. In March they passed the matter to Richmond Social Services.

Throughout April, May and June we were pestered by the Education Authority and then by a Social Worker in the company of a police officer who tried to call at our home twice a week (although we kept putting them off). They used intimidating and bullying tactics to extract a confession of 'emotional abuse' and 'abusing Graham's social development'. The Social Worker kept firing questions at us and twisting our replies, trying to make us say detrimental things against Graham, making us admit we had neglected him in some way by teaching him at home. The Social Worker behaved like a thug and a bully boy.

The latest position is that Graham's name has been placed on the 'at risk' register, under the heading of 'Substantiated Emotional Abuse'. It seems the 'abuse' was 'substantiated' because the people present at the case conference

SHARED EXPERIENCES

said it was! We have asked the Social Services to produce evidence, but we get parrot-like stock answers about 'concerns expressed by the Education Authority'. Because, of course, there is no evidence.

The case conference, which we did not attend, consisted of the Education Authority staff who stirred it all up, and the Social Workers who have been acting in collusion with them. Talk about a 'rigged jury'! The 'protection plan' consists of an assessment, which Graham himself is legally entitled to refuse, and a scheme which gives the Education Department more leeway to meddle in his education.

Has any other EO member had experiences like these?

**Janice Bridden, 61 Manor Grove,
Richmond, Surrey.**

To EO or not to EO

When school doesn't come up to our expectations, making the break casts many doubts about the wisdom of throwing away all sorts of advantages that school may be offering.

I read the Coleman's letter in the August newsletter (NL 81) with great interest because we have similar problems. We have few social contacts with people who have children of an appropriate age for our boy. Added to this is the problem that our son doesn't find it easy to mix. He needs a lot of contact in a safe place before friendship can develop. School doesn't provide this, but then home can't produce a supply of people either. He needs contact with other children to learn social skills and be provided with stimulus. He needs friendships to develop his confidence.

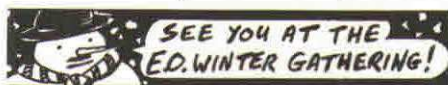
I also feel he has had a kind of nervous

breakdown as a result of the continuous stress that school puts him under. Does anyone know if children can recover from this and what can be done to help? Can anyone recommend a good specialist? I feel that to drag him around unknown psychologists is more harmful than leaving him untreated.

I would like to hear some more about the pitfalls and the bad points of home education. Surely it can't all be as good as the pages of your newsletter suggest?

Please write if you can help at all.

**Jane Arnold, Craigard, Craigton,
North Kessock, Ross-shire, IV1 1YG.**



EO NATIONAL WINTER GATHERING 1992

CLIFF COLLEGE, CALVER,
SHEFFIELD

FROM THE EVENING OF
THURSDAY 30th JANUARY
TO AFTERNOON OF
SUNDAY 2nd FEBRUARY

Self-catering £5 per person per night
Group Catering: person 18 + £10 per night
child aged 10-17 £7 per night
child under 5 £5 per night

Bookings and enquiries with SAE to
Stephanie Fletcher, 50 Springfield Av,
Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 1HL or Lynne
Greenhough, 18 Park St, Alfreton,
Derbsyhire DE5 7JE

*Fallen by the Wayside,
Dunfermling,
Yestershire,
EO1 1EO.*

19th October '91

Dear All,

I was wondering if any other EO members have questioned the affect of TV and videos on children and our planet. We do not have a TV in our house. My children's lives seem to mainly involve real personal interactions and playing in the natural world.

It concerns me when I meet children who watch alot of television - they are continually talking about TV characters as if they were real. Talking about what these characters do and say, even moralising about situations they find themselves in, arguing points TV characters have stressed.

I wonder, are these children (especially the younger ones) aware of the difference between the real world and TV world, and how is the TV going to affect these children's future opinions.

TV images are so fast, colourful and bright. Just one press of a button, and there is instant entertainment, far brighter and more dazzling than the outside world.

This seems so unbalanced to me, leading to an expectation that all life's needs should be instantly met in a bright dazzly way. But this is not how the natural world is. Things progress slowly towards an end.

It's man's endless drive for instant gratification that has gobbled the world's resources and polluted our planet. I for one am hoping that my children's lifestyle will help them respect the earth, helping them to develop a harmonious, sustainable future. No doubt time will tell!

**Coryn Bye, Bryn Hyfryd, Parc Bel,
Cilgwyn, Caemarfan, Gwynnedd.**

I would like to say how much I agree with Chris Shute's article 'What I Have Learned About Home-education' (NL 81).

Chris's comments about children 'behaving like shell-shocked Tommies when released from the mental straight jacket of daily lessons' was never more true than in my own case.

After eleven years of fear/boredom caused by most of the teaching staff, and 'ducking and diving' from the mean spirited pupils, I finally left school with no self esteem, almost no confidence, and no interest in education whatsoever. I have spent the last twenty years in a state of suspended animation as far as having any particular interests for myself - that is - until very recently.

After a dear friend told me about EO five years ago I grasped it, and with my husbands backing decided to 'teach' our two boys from home. This was the first real initiative I'd taken in years. I have found that as I have been 'teaching' the boys (for want of a better word) I too have also been learning. OK, so I'm a late starter, perhaps slow even. But guess what? I'm gradually beginning to get curious about things again. I am about to take up some college courses which interest ME for my personal pleasure and satisfaction.

Passing examinations aren't the prime thing. The fact that the interest is coming back, and that I am now confident enough to try is a breakthrough in itself. I am almost recuperated. At last there is light at the end of the tunnel!

**J. Nelson, 8 Manta Close, Dosthill,
Tamworth, Staff B77 1NQ**

I quite agree with you. But I must say, after eleven years of home education I am

We are an English family and have lived in Hong Kong for the past 10 years. We have one child, Benjamin, who is five and three-quarters.

Benjamin has just completed Primary 1 (June 91) - and the whole year has been a traumatic experience for him. I felt he was too young to start school, but because he is an only child and because he would have had no companions, except me, had I kept him at home, I reluctantly sent him to school. I was in constant close communication with the school and teachers, and Benjamin received tremendous support from all those who came into contact with him. However, the who experience still proved to be negative.

The purpose behind my letter is that we shall be returning to UK sometime within the next couple of years. Most likely around beginning July 1993.

If there are any families around the Richmond/Twickenham/Teddington/Kingston areas who are home-schooling their children, I would be very interested to hear from you. It would be wonderful to get to know two or three families by letter and to meet on our return to England.

My feelings about home-schooling an only child are ambivalent. Perhaps someone can reassure me? Benjamin is very sociable but finds it difficult trying to survive the 'rat race' of the school environment.

This coming year I have been offered a job at Benjamin's school working with the 'special needs' children. It's possible that my being there every day could help. But at least I feel easier knowing that I am

close at hand, should any difficulties arise.

I do look forward to hearing from any families who would care to correspond with us - maybe you would be interested to know something of Hong Kong too?

Angela Hedges, L16, 111 Mt Butler Road, Jardines Lookout, Hong Kong.

On the 3rd July I took part in a BBC Radio Scotland programme called 'Speaking Out' - a live phone-in programme. I'd like, through the newsletter, to comment on that experience.

I missed a golden opportunity to bring into the discussion the problem of unsuitable teachers. I know that there have been those who have contacted me because of the misery caused to their children by their teacher. I gave the misleading impression that this is not a problem. I can only apologise to those of you who have suffered from that source and say I'll try to do better next time.

Secondly, before the programme I had a conversation with a Mr Kevin Gavin, who is the Principal Primary Adviser for Strathclyde. I told Mr Gavin that I thought it a shame that Resource Centres should not be available to home educating families. He assured me that they were. So, for those of you in Strathclyde who have been barred from using Resource Centres, please contact Mr Kevin Gavin of the Strathclyde Regional Council Education Department and lay your complaint at his door.

Brenda Holliday, 10 Chulton Road, Bridge of Allan, Stirling FK9 4DX

This supplement begins with appeals for help for the families of two children who have very different needs. I have made some suggestions to them, but there is nothing more heartening than to hear the experiences of parents who are coping successfully with children who have the same or very similar needs.

Vivenda N. Sra. das Meninas
Zambujal, 2775 Parede, Portugal.

Dear Fellow EOers,

Have any EO members experience in raising a child with cerebral palsy? I am asking on behalf of some friends who adopted a little girl with severe cerebral palsy. They have taken her to many experts here in Portugal, and in England, Ireland and even to a clinic in Budapest. They all say the child is severely retarded. She is almost 5 and cannot speak, walk, crawl or even sit up. But my friends are convinced she has some intelligence, and I tend to agree with them, from the way she responds to them. She laughs, and does try to crawl.

Are there any activities that parents have found beneficial in fostering their handicapped child's development? My friends love their little girl dearly, they cuddle her and talk to her all day. But what else could they do? If anybody out there has any practical, specific suggestions, I'd be very grateful. They have plenty of instructions from all the clinics, but feel they need some parent-to-parent support and advice. All the experts are telling them to place her in an institution, but they don't want to give up on her.

Sincerely, Gloria Harrison.

A lady whose 11 year old adopted son is disturbed and has many and complex needs writes:

"School is a constant problem and he is due to start secondary school soon. If he fails to cope, residential school is the only option on offer. I would love to take him out of the school system, but don't know if I could cope.....He is unable to occupy himself and needs continual company and supervision (often to prevent injury to himself). Do other parents with similar children manage to educate them at home?"

Please reply via Sylvia Jeffs. Correspondence will be sent on.

EO's special children have problems or handicaps ranging from those whose short-term remedial problems are fairly easy to advise on, through to those whose multiple handicaps are of such severity that one can offer little more than moral support and whole-hearted admiration of their determination to offer their children a better deal than they were being offered by 'the system'.

I always have tried to put people in touch with each other, and to create a supportive network. So, many of you know that there is no real substitute for this sort of parent-to-parent help and advice.

However, it has always depended on my memory (pause for laughter) and

my pretty pathetic filing system! We really need something better, and I have received offers of help to prepare and maintain a sort of 'special' contact list. But I am told that there have been objections to the idea from some co-ordinators and others. Will anyone who feels they have an opinion on this, or an objection to raise, please contact me - preferably with alternative ideas if they don't like this one.

XX

What follows is the continuation of Alan Phillips' story about their autistic son Greg. (First part published in the April 1991 supplement) This is to 'report back' following their visit to The Option Institute in America. It may bring some comfort to parents who, like those above, are searching for help or for alternatives to inappropriate provision. Hopefully, it will make others pause for thought....

A MIRACLE IN PROGRESS by Alan Phillips.

In April we had just taken Greg out of school and were preparing to take him to the Option Institute in Massachusetts USA to discover how to provide an alternative to what in our experience was an uninspiring compromise of an education that our country, with its obsession with resources, was prepared to offer.

Prior to this, we had investigated therapies from all over the world, looking for clues, hoping each new idea would be *the* one to help us reach our son and bring him back to 'life'. We read obscure medical data, visited a homeopath, experimented with aroma therapy, explored the controversial 'holding' therapy, and visited many schools which specialised in autism. Each time we suffered disappointment. We learned such a lot but found nothing which offered any real hope.

Some might say we were desperate, clutching at straws, but no one could accuse us of having closed minds or of lacking determination. Demanding, sceptical?.. You bet we were - we knew Greg's only chance of a future depended on us and there was no-one else to turn to. If we gave up and accepted the compromise offered by the LEA, could we live with the consequences? (Most special schools use a behaviour modification approach which suppresses some extremes of autistic behaviour, but I believe it is at the cost of breaking the child's spirit.)

While our ideas and knowledge were developing we 'stole' the effective parts of several therapies to construct our own programme. This included music therapy, behaviour modification, the 'A-social' hands-on learning of Geoffrey Waldon, the TEACCH system from America and food and diet control with vitamin supplements. It is important to us that even if we ultimately fail to rescue Greg we have a huge pile of papers, letters, research documents etc. which we can show to him and whether he understands or not we will know how hard we tried.

Taking Greg out of school was not an easy decision. To say that looking after an autistic child is enough to try the patience of a saint is the understatement of the year! If special children sometimes drive those who love them to the very edge of despair, autistic children often send us *looking for the edge!* And some of us jump over!

So at first it appeared a daunting prospect - but it was inevitable because we were being distracted from our goal of developing a more effective teaching programme by having to spend an

increasing amount of time protecting the resource we had already won. (I had naively believed it possible for teachers to work in harmony with parents, but educationalists pay lip service to this ideal and few seem able to achieve such a partnership and be comfortable.)

Our fears about home education were allayed by talking on the phone to Suzi Kaufman of the Option Institute. She pointed out that parents might spend a huge amount of time establishing a relationship with the school, or persuading them to adopt a method such as Option, only to find the process must begin all over again if, for example, the teacher leaves. Also, even the most conscientious of teachers do not guarantee love and devotion or lifelong commitment. No-one knows a child better or could be more dedicated and motivated to help him than his parents, so they serve him best by putting their energies into directing their own programme.

A child attends school for a relatively small part of the day. Taking into account weekends and seemingly endless holidays, it is surprising how much time parents already cater for. Obviously, the child has no weekend or holiday respite from being autistic, therefore a programme that suits his needs rather than the convenience of authority has to be the more sensible and productive.

At Option, Suzi said we would be taught how to share our 'burden' by recruiting and training a team of volunteers, motivated not for financial reward, but by love for this special child. But they only take one family at a time and there was a 12 month waiting list. So we began to look for volunteers at once. We had few problems recruiting or keeping volunteers. They look forward to their time with Greg. They feel good about helping a child in need, and learn a lot about themselves and the opportunities they can create in their own lives.

It really is surprising how much love is still in the world if we communicate our need and enthusiasm. As a first step we contacted a local secondary school, offering them first-hand knowledge of child development and an opportunity for their pupils to become involved in a community caring project. Six keen, enthusiastic teenagers volunteered. (Four of these young people left school recently, but chose to continue working with us - which is fantastic.)

Then I contacted the Girl Guides Association and met Jan, their District Commissioner, who fell in love with the photograph of our beautiful blue eyed, blonde haired little boy. She persuaded some of her girls to meet us and talk about our forthcoming visit to Option and how we would like them to help Greg. We gained six more volunteers, and bless them they have stood by us ever since.

We now have seventeen volunteers. Not only do we appreciate the additional help, I cannot tell you how much our spirits are lifted by people willing us on and caring about our son. Such a contrast to our previous experiences! Individual people still care very much even if authority has decided it cannot afford to. I hope this might inspire or provide food for thought for parents who are contemplating home education but having reservations about facing it alone.

We were so fortunate to have met Jan, as she took over our fund-raising campaign. (Taking Greg to America was going to be expensive.) She named the fund "Greg's chance of a Miracle", set a target of £7000 and organised publicity. Greg was featured in over twenty newspaper articles, made the front page, and became a local celebrity!

The fund-raising events included a neighbour's pigeon auction to raise £1500, and there were many children's events, ranging from one sweet little brownie baking a cake and selling pieces of it, to over eight hundred children taking part in a sponsored torchlight walk. In three months we raised an incredible £14,000 !

I must tell you the amazing story of how we came to discover Option. We almost cancelled one newspaper article because we feared reprisals as Greg was in the educational system. But we were so annoyed with the apparent conspiracy to deny that autism even existed, we felt compelled to highlight the problem and appeal to authorities to at least have the honesty to tell parents where they stood.

The courage of our convictions was rewarded - a stranger tracked us down because she was so moved by the article and felt compelled to tell a hopeful story of how a little boy was rescued from his autism by the love and devotion of his parents. Unfortunately she did not even have the title of the film she had seen so there was little hope of us following it up. None the less we admired this stranger for having the courage to have contacted us to express her good wishes.

Two months later she contacted us again. By some miracle of luck she had discovered - and hired, a video of the film in a local hire shop. I collected it and we watched this beautiful story of love and hope through our tears. Whatever it would cost I was determined to buy this very special film. Fortunately the video shop were very kind and sold it to me for £10. It will be the best £10 I will ever spend.

The film is called 'Miracle of Love', and is the true story of Barry and Suzi Kaufman's struggle against all odds to rescue their son Raun from the world of autism. They had travelled America searching for help. They were told he was autistic and were advised to put him into an institution and devote themselves to their other children. His IQ was below 30, he could not talk, and he had shut himself off so completely he appeared deaf and blind. The film told of their unbelievable dedication as they worked with him for 12 hours a day for 3 1/2 years. Using a totally accepting, non-judgemental attitude as the basis of their programme, they *loved* their son back to life.

The end of the film is incredibly moving. Raun, cured of his autism, skipping along on the way to a fair, sees a child, obviously handicapped, with his carer, a nun. Raun asks if he is going to the fair, but the boy stares into space and does not answer. The nun tells Raun the boy cannot talk as he was "not born lucky like you"!

Not until 18 months later did we discover that following their successful work with special children, the Kaufmans had many requests for help, so they had formed a teaching centre, The Option Institute. Its work is well documented in Barry Kaufman's books and the huge selection of tapes on Option philosophies and their methods. The books are on the required reading list of 280 universities, and deserve to be taken seriously. It is the most inspirational teaching programme, and we learned such a lot from their books and tapes while waiting to fulfil our ambition to take Greg there. They also gave us free advice by phone on what we could do to help him. They are so sincere and care very much and are not motivated by financial considerations.

On Wednesday 1st May 1991 we set out on our journey of love to America. Greg was a treasure on the six hour flight, although he did

manage to dislodge the double glazing on the aircraft window - which concerned me just a little!

An internal flight took us to Hartford, Connecticut, where we were met by a kind family who were to host us for a couple of days until we started our Option programme. They were members of the Rotary Club of Sturbridge - which is 'twinned' with our home town of Stourbridge. The two Rotary clubs had liased to provide us with accommodation and transport while we were in America.

Eventually, we arrived at the Option Institute, which is set on a truly beautiful, wooded, peaceful New England mountain side, lying on the border between Massachusetts and Connecticut.

I claim our determination generated a lot of our luck, but we had not forgotten the thousands of defenceless children and families back home. We had had to travel over 3000 miles to find the loving, caring, positive attitude which was the very least our son deserved and which should be the norm in a truly caring society. (Ironically, we were proud that the British public had proved how much they cared.)

Virtually all experts in autism agree that autistic children need one-to-one education, but the lack of resources means it is only provided for a small part of a child's day (often, if the education authority can get away with it, not at all). We can find tens of thousands of pounds for hospital treatment to improve a life but cannot afford the education to save the life of a child like Greg. Option must be the flagship of individual attention. We shall always be grateful that it provided us with an alternative and a means to escape this situation.

We did not expect a miracle cure but were simply looking for a place to start to learn how to design and implement a teaching programme for our son. But Option is known as a place for miracles. It has a sign at the entrance saying so.... The Miracle they mean is the discovery that by adopting the attitude of 'to love is to be happy with' we can free ourselves from assumptions and the pressures of expectations and be happy knowing we are doing the best that we can. It is the realisation that - freed from the shackles of negative beliefs and unhappiness - we CAN make a difference. We can see problems as learning opportunities and free the way to allow the impossible to become possible, and the tragedy to become a miracle.

If this philosophy seems too idealistic and far from the reality of living with the 'pain' of autism, consider a conversation between Barry Kaufman and the author of a book about living with the tragedy of autism. Barry asked his opinion of his own book, hoping for an endorsement. The man said certainly not, he despised the book because it had taken smething that was very ugly (autism) and tried to make believe it was beautiful. Barry replied: "Have you considered you might have taken something very beautiful and made it out to be ugly?"

Beliefs influence attitudes and actions, so they should be examined in case they adversely affect our desire to help ourselves or our children. Sportsmen seem to win when they believe in themselves, and I am sure no-one has cured a child of autism without doing so. By closing our minds we may be closing the door on opportunity.

Much of our time at Option was spent learning to develop a non-judgemental attitude. They were 'happy detectives', helping us to

uncover those beliefs that made us unhappy and challenging them. We were shown that we could choose to discard any of them and thus find happiness. As an example they pointed out that Greg was very able to look after himself. I knew that was true - for some time I have believed he protects himself from that which he has difficulty understanding by constructing his exclusive world.

Also, I realised I did not need to hate autism to be motivated to help Greg; that it was possible to love him for who he was, even while wanting him to talk and live a normal life. Wanting and needing are two separate issues. Our love is not conditional on whether he is autistic or normal. Should his behaviour be judged bad just because it is different? Option helped us understand that he is a little boy lost doing his best to survive in a world that does not make sense. So we learned greater tolerance, understanding and respect for our son.

At first I had difficulty equating my own happiness with being more effective in helping Greg, but I began to realise that I should not be looking at him as a tragedy. So, rather than learning a technique we were taught how to develop an attitude. This is the cornerstone of Option teaching. Indeed, providing a totally non-judgemental attitude of love and acceptance culminating in happiness IS Option.

Yet they do not advocate a passive programme (although however strongly we want to help, the base should be 'to love is to be happy with'). Our time was split between working on that all-important attitude, and the physical aspect of how to work with Greg and train others to do so. We were taught how to create a world so exciting and inviting, he might prefer it to his exclusive autistic world. We had known that motivation was important, but at Option we realised that it is a key factor. They explained current understanding of the brain and how motivation can inspire undamaged parts of the brain to take over from damaged parts - that is, it effects its own repair.

A one way mirror and sound system in their purpose built playroom enabled us to see and hear trained staff playing with Greg. Staff also monitored us and later showed us several ways to be more effective. Better still, we were not simply shown techniques to follow, but were shown how to understand ourselves and our son, how to analyse and how to direct a forward moving programme catering for constantly changing circumstances. As Suzi Kaufman put it, if we were hungry, rather than just show us how to cook fish, she would show us how to catch fish. The benefit of this method is that it made us so much stronger and capable of handling the unknown (or maybe to find that we already knew many of the answers) and the confidence that we are our own experts. It is so easy to pass the buck, but we need to trust ourselves.

While we were busy, Greg received continuous one-to-one input (from a group of the most loving, enthusiastic and dedicated people imaginable) from 8.30am to 5.30pm. He had such fun I doubt if he missed us as we missed him! Afterwards we continued playing with him, sometimes to about 9pm. It was very exhausting! For such a child to interact for over 12 hours a day is perhaps a minor miracle in itself. Particularly as Greg was once described as a child with one to two minutes concentration who could not benefit from individual attention!

The difference all this has made to our lives and our ability to help him is unbelievable. We feel so less pressured now, so we make better decisions and are more responsive to our child's needs. In a

way it is like beginning the process of coming to terms with Greg's autism and Option has certainly helped in this respect.

A highlight of our trip was meeting Raun Kaufman, the so-called 'incurable' son of Barry and Suzi. He was a delight! It was hard to imagine he was once like Greg - they were at opposite ends of the development spectrum. Suzi is a positive person, but she told us that when she began working with Raun, someone dreamed they were having a conversation, but she couldn't imagine it could ever be possible.

Raun is living proof of hope and possibilities. He is a sociable, talkative young man with many friends and the usual teenage interests in sport, music, girls ect. In fact, the opposite of autism in every way. He passed his driving test at 16, has been virtually a 'straight A' student, and is soon going on to university (from having an IQ of less than 30, he now has a near genius level of 150!) He is currently writing a trilogy of science fiction novels. It was an absolute pleasure spending over three hours in his company - at times he was so natural, at ease and interesting we quite forgot some of the questions we meant to ask. Raun Kaufman is most definitely a Miracle of Love.

Speaking of Miracles, Raun is not the only documented success of the Option process. In the book 'A Miracle to Believe in', Robertito, a little autistic boy with identified brain damage (and an IQ of less than 12) was transformed within 18 months from a non-functioning child - who, according to the medical profession, would always be unable to feed himself, talk, or relate to people - into a little boy able to interact with his parents, speak in 6 and 7 word sentences, ride a bike, do simple maths and even play chequers.

Later, Robertito was taken by his parents and the Kaufmans to the independent psychologist for a check on the his progress. The psychologist could hardly believe the child's amazing progress and said: 'even if this child never learns another thing, what you have done here is a miracle'. The concluding words of this story will be forever printed on my mind: 'if the rebirth of a child and the rebirth of those who loved, accepted and worked with him is called a miracle... then miracles will happen only to those who believe in them'.

When we met Raun and saw all that he had become, it made us wonder what would have become of him if his parents had taken the advice of the experts and put him in an institution? And what of Robertito if his parents had given up when the experts said he would not talk or think for himself? The last news we had of him was that he was virtually holding his own with children of his own age.

Many stories of progress against all the odds are evidence of the Option Institute's right to be called a place for Miracles, and might persuade others to try for the seemingly impossible. Parents of special children will know the frustration of feeling helpless - of putting on a smile while hurting and feeling cheated. They will, I am sure, appreciate the importance of a place like Option which teaches that we are our own experts, and offers the hope of a better future.

We had been desperate to help our son, and after seeing the film and reading the books, we had pinned so much faith and hope on the Option Institute, that it was always going to be difficult for it to live up to our expectations. But not only did it live up to the dream, it surpassed it! We left America inspired, motivated and truly grateful, with so much more knowledge and confidence...with hope in

our hearts and the belief that we *could* rescue our son.

I have one further story of a miracle ... Although it is early days yet and we realise we have an enormous mountain to climb, we have taken our first steps. When Greg went to America he was basically unable to talk and lived in a world with little or no room for people. Towards the end of our second week there, Greg spoke more words in ten minutes than he had in ten days previously. He was interacting for up to 90% of the time with his Option playmates.

Since returning Greg has spoken 30 different words in one day for his mother. He had never been able to play with his brother, but last week they played together in an Option session. The excitement is that Greg was able to say four or five words for Lee....a memory I will treasure forever. Many of his words are not very clear, but he is trying so hard to talk to us whereas before he would ignore us. We have witnessed so many changes in him in such a short period of time.

I would not pretend that everything is perfect. Of course, there are days when our confidence weakens, but what we have learned at Option is so powerful we are confident that we shall eventually win.

Perhaps it would be premature to call him a miracle, but as the caption on the front of the sweatshirt Jan had specially designed for him suggests.....Greg Phillips is 'A Miracle in Progress.'

My article was never intended to sell Option or home teaching. It was meant to be a story of love and determination, to show what can be achieved when we harness the power of love and choose happiness, and give parents of special children an opportunity to consider reaching for that which they may have been told is impossible. I realise that the same degree of commitment would not suit all families. My advice would be to just be happy doing the best you can, and do not judge yourself. But I know Option could help many people to discover how special and important they are. In a way you could say I am selling hope and a belief in miracles. I do believe that for the price of a book you could change your family's life for the better, and if you have a special child - you might get the miracle you had prayed for.

Free information on the Option family programme, and a catalogue giving descriptions of their large selection of books and tapes (on teaching special children and on obtaining happiness for ourselves) are available direct from :

The Option Institute and Fellowship, R.D. 1 Box 174A, Sheffield, Ma O1257, USA. Telephone: 0101 413 229 8062

Alan particularly recommends:

- 'To Love Is To Be Happy With' - A description of the Option process
- 'Son-Rise' - Raun's story
- 'A Miracle to Believe In' - Robertito's story.

For details of any of the therapies mentioned in the first part of this article, please contact me - Sylvia Jeffs, 16 St Bernards Rd., Solihull, B92 7BB Tel: 021 706 6460

Penpal Wanted!



Two penpals that have hit it off exchanging younger siblings in June. Left to Right: Nina Guthrie (4), Alex Freeman (10), Lydia Guthrie (10) and Samuel Freeman (16 mths)

If you are seeking a penpal why not include a photo of yourself, or something that interests you to accompany your request? Colour or black and white are acceptable as long as it is a clear original photograph (not photocopied). Please enclose sae if you wish it to be returned.

AGED 14 My name is Rebecca Harris and I'm 14. I would like a penpal aged between 13 and 17, male or female. I like most chart music especially Madonna and George Michael, writing letters, reading and watching football (I support Tottenham Hotspur). I would like penpals from anywhere in this country or abroad. I will reply to all letters received.
7 Azalea Walk, Old Eastcote, Pinner, Middx HA5 2EJ.

AGED 11 My name is Rebecca Simpson. I am almost 11 and my birthday is on 12th November. I am in search of a penfriend of around the same age, with similar interests. I like guinea pigs, walking, writing, playing the clarinet, baking and E.O. Write quickly to Rebecca Simpson, 'Chickleberry', Bont Estate, Llanon, Dyfed, SY23 5LY.

AGED 7 I would like to ask for a penpal. Please could you print my details? My name is Jo. (I am a girl) I am 7 years old. I have been taught at home for 3 years.

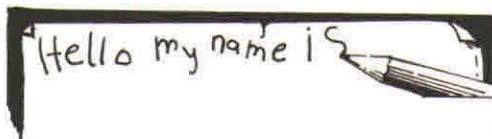


I live in a caravan and tipi on the beach. I am a vegetarian. I hate meat and spiders. I love swimming, reading, cooking, walking. I would like a boy or girl aged 6 - 8 in Scotland or abroad.



Jo Warren, Tanglens, St Cyrus, Montrose, Angus DD10 0DQ.

AGED 8 My name is Stephanie Simpson. I am 8 years old and I would like some penpals around the same age. I like swimming, dancing, reading, writing poems, painting and all kinds of music.
Chickleberry, Bont Estate, Llanon, Dyfed, SY23 5LY.



AGED 12 Hi! My name is Genevieve and I'm 12 years old. I'm looking for lots of pen pals, male or female, of any age. I would especially like to hear from people near or in Northumberland so we could meet. My main interest is writing, but I'm also interested in Unexplained Mysteries, good murder mysteries and good films. I like most music including Erasure, Amy Grant, Vanilla Ice and EMF.



If you are interested then write to:
Genevieve Berentsen, 4 Alexandra House, Beadnell, Northumberland NE67 5AQ.

AGED 6 My name is Hannah Simpson. I am 6 and I want someone to write to. I like swimming and collecting shells. My rabbit is called Up-down. **Chickleberry, Bont Estate, Llanon, Dyfed, SY23 5LY.**

AGED 8 My name is Stephanie Simpson. I am 8 years old and I would like some penpals around the same age. I like swimming, dancing, reading, writing poems, painting and all kinds of music. **Chickleberry, Bont Estate, Llanon, Dyfed, SY23 5LY.**

CONTACT WANTED



SORE THUMB SEEKS OTHERS

I am fed up with sticking out like a sore thumb at all pre school groups with my two year old twins and my alternative views! We would like contact with other like-minded parents of children of a similar age to Helen and Peter in the South and South East London area with a view to starting a small unconventional support group.

**Please contact: CATERINA GRAZIANI, 17A Kirkside Road, London SE3 7SQ
Tel 081-853 4024**

PERMACULTURE & COOPERATIVE LIVING ANYWHERE IN BRITAIN

We would be interested to hear from those of you who have enthusiasm and interest in setting up a cooperative living venture somewhere in Britain. We want a housing cooperative based in a rural area with separate living units and shared land. We wish to develop a more ecologically sound lifestyle: recycling, home education inside and outside the housing cooperative.

We are also interested in putting into practice the Permaculture theory. Permaculture can be applied to all areas of human activity - education, community planning, economics, energy use, housing, farming etc. The main concept is to plan self-maintaining co-operative systems that meet the needs of the organisms or elements involved. Diversity is encouraged to make the



system more balanced and productive. Yields are increased by finding more functions for the parts of the system. For example, a piece of wasteland could be planned so that children working on it learnt biology and social skills; a wildlife haven was created; community relations could develop by making a safe, free, meeting place whilst food, flowers and herbs were grown and so on.

If you have got ideas and energy to offer to a community venture somewhere in Britain or you want to learn more about these ideas please contact Coryn Bye and Pete Boyd, Bryn Hyfryd, Parc Bel, Cilgwyn, Caernarfon, Gwynedd Tel 0286 880179

FIRST STEPS Early Learning at Home

First Steps is a correspondence course for the parents of under-fives. It provides an introduction to the main theories and methods in child development and education today and also contains lots of ideas for translating theory into practice using activities and games.

A new version of the course, especially written for home-educating parents, is now available (10% discount for EO members)

For further details contact: Linda Jackson, FIRST STEPS, 21 Mount Pleasant, Guiseley, Leeds, LS20 9EB.

LOWER SHAW FARM Permaculture Course 18-20 Oct; Hedgelaying Course 22-24 Nov. For details of these and all sorts of others - send SAE to Lower Shaw Farm, Shaw, Nr Swindon, Wilts SN5 9PJ Tel 0793 771080.

Human Scale Education Day Conference in Manchester

**Saturday 12 October
10.00 - 4.00
Friends Meeting House
Mount Street, Manchester**

Open to parents, teachers and anyone interested in education

Are you concerned about the quality of education?
Would you like a child-centred, world-conscious education which respects
the growth of the whole person?
Come to the launch of Human Scale Education in Manchester!

for further details and booking contact -
Celia Beeson, 136 Dickenson Road, Manchester, M14 5HT
(tel. 061-225 6882)

GRAFFITI BOARD

Not everyone wants to go to EO gatherings half way across the country to put their point of view to the meetings. Nor do some important items on the agenda get an airing in the pages of the EO newsletter prior to discussion at these national meetings. I believe the membership at large should have a greater say **through the newsletter** in the running of EO without the precondition of having to attend meetings.

So I am proposing a **GRAFFITI BOARD** in this issue in which you can have your say about anything that's bothering you. Maybe this could become a regular section if it proves popular. For reasons of consistency, I am volunteering to edit this section for the **next 3 issues**. This first issue of Graffiti Board is not as a result of having canvassed openly. These current contributions arose from conversations that I had with other members in the course of editing this newsletter, comments that I thought shouldn't necessarily stop at my ears, but could constructively be offered to the readership.

Maybe we can now find a way of criticising without spoiling its friendly character or being bland for fear of offending. After all even friends can disagree, can't they? I would hope that those involved in EO organisational meetings could use Graffiti Board for feedback on any given problem that may have been featured, for inclusion in a future agenda, or even influence discussion at meetings. **Editor**

WHY DON'T YOU GO A4 WITH THE NEWSLETTER?

Dennis Leckey, Ashton-under-Lyne

Lynne Greenhough, publications director, replies: I would like to know people's preferences: A4 versus A5. I would appreciate feed back from readers to see if there is strong feeling to merit a change in size. Please write to me. (see back page)

MEMBERSHIP CARDS FOR BONA FIDE HOME EDUCATORS?

There has been a recent breakdown in the supply of membership/museum cards. I just haven't had the membership information needed to process your applications and quite a few have justifiably complained. The card is an enormous privilege and money saver, granted to give home-educated children the same access as schoolchildren, but it seems not to be taken seriously. Perhaps the time has come for a two tier membership (with a common renewal date) **FULL** for home educating families, who would receive the card, and **ASSOCIATE** for others. EO needs to become more professional and more democratic. If the response to **'Home Education Day'** is an increased membership with high expectations, this would be a good first step **Paul Bentley, London SE13.**

EO AND EXPENSIVE HOME SCHOOLING PACKAGES:

EO was founded as a libertarian organisation, promoting people's freedom to learn openly and think for themselves, retaining and regaining self-confidence.

People whose faith in themselves has been most undermined tend to be on lower incomes and are accordingly least able to afford these packages which prey on their insecurities.

As an Enquiries Secretary, I will give people who demand resources and curricula, which EO cannot provide, a list of addresses rather than have it appear that EO endorses such materials. I will also indicate that such packages aren't needed to achieve real education.

Miryam Bush, Dyfed

Mike Cook, EO Treasurer, responds to this and to others who have questioned whether EO should be achieving its aims using mailshot advertising: EO's Memorandum of Association states: 'The objects for which the Association is established are' (amongst others): (a) To promote, maintain, improve and advance public education, particularly by the provision of information, support and facilities to enable parents to make education provision for their children otherwise than through full-time state or private educational institutions.'

If individual Directors or the Council of Management were acting outside those objects, there would be grounds for criticism. The only other valid objection

would be if EO could not afford it, which it can.

We've been in touch with other organisations involved in Home Education and so far NEC have responded by sending us a supply of leaflets on NHED and Rapid Results are thinking about it together with Accelerated Christian Education(ACE) which many EOers use. If any members wish to promote any other scheme please contact me. (See inside back cover).

SOME PRAISE!! welcoming EO readers to Graffiti Board

It's good to know what everyone is griping about through Graffiti Board so that we know what others are thinking within EO. **Mike Cook & several others**

Some rules which you can shout about on these pages!

- 1 Please keep your praise, suggestion, criticism, or gripe to approximately one paragraph (120 words) per item.
- 2 No anonymous items. All contributions must be published with author's name.
- 3 Items must not be intended to offend any particular reader nor be a direct criticism of an individual.
- 4 Any EO officer or named person involved in the contents of an item will have a right to reply in the same issue.

**Contributions by 1st November to:
Graffiti Board, Wayside Farm,
Etchilhampton, Devizes, Wilts SN10
3JT.**



REVIEW- Books

Well Loved Poems



We would like to heartily recommend, for lovers of poetry or not, 'Shout, Whisper and Sing'. Included are many of the famous poems that everybody knows' - at least part of - 'Woodman, spare that tree! Touch not a single bough', 'Tiger, tiger, burning bright', 'The boy stood on the burning deck'... There are giggly humorous poems, 'The Lion and Albert', 'Goliath of Gath', 'Oh, I wish I'd looked after me teeth' by Pam Ayres; chilling scary poems 'The Highwayman'; gripping tales, 'The Lady of Shallot'; and poems of drama and tragedy 'The Wreck of the Hesperus', 'Cord Ullin's Daughter'; 101 in fact that one cannot resist reading aloud and remembering:

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't do a-hunting
For fear of little men'...

**Shout, Whisper and Sing compiled by
Beverley Mathias. Bodley Head**

1989, Hdbk £7.95

Reviewed by Sue Griffith

Calculated Play

The Wales PPA have produced a booklet with play ideas to 'encourage mathematic thinking for young children and their adults'. The booklet covers a range of activities that are familiar to most parents of small children, the difference being that the text describes what mathematical learning could be gained from each activity. I'm not sure that we need to seek out mathematical games for this age group at all. If the apparatus has been designed with mathematical accuracy, then the child is as likely as

not to increase it's mathematical concepts and mathematical language.

I wasn't not very happy with the instructions to encourage 'a systematic and logical approach to completing the task' of handling jigsaws. Each of our four children have tackled jigsaws in their own unique way, reflecting their personal way of thinking.

Are the PPA responding to their 'pre-school' role in this instance, perhaps under pressure from ambitious parents or in deference to 'expert' teachers by attempting to prepare under fives for school?

It is a pity that there is no real appreciation of the individual child's uniqueness, since the ideas described are fun.

**Feeding The Dragon published by the
South Glamorgan PPA, 5 Waterloo
Road, Penylan, Cardiff CF2 5AD.**

Price £1.50

Reviewed by Kate Freeman, Wiltshire.

Easing into Esperanto Scattering Nuggets

M'aire Mullarney's book serves as an introduction to the history of the international language, and at the same time charts the history of her own involvement with the international Esperanto movement. It is also an experiment in language-learning which '... involves scattering nuggets of Esperanto ... in gradually increasing quantities through the text ...', so that the reader may well find her/himself able to read Esperanto with reasonable ease by the end of the book. She gives plentiful help with grammar and pronunciation, and there is also a cassette, available from the author (price £2) as an additional aid.

If, like me, you are someone who finds

it difficult to make time for periods of concentrated reading, you may find that you need to read and re-read to really grasp the Esperanto, but Maire Mullarney presents cogent arguments for this international language and for its inclusion as part of early education. There is plenty of suggested follow-up material within the book, an appendix of international addresses and organisations to contact, so this is a book to recommend to anyone who is seeking an introduction to Esperanto.

Esperanto for Hope - A New Way of Learning the Language of Peace by Maire Mullarney published Poolbeg Press 1989

Reviewed by Lynne Greenhough, Derbyshire.

New Publication for New Home Educators

Pip Rupik, founder and general secretary of Children's Home-based Education Association (CHEA), has produced a supportive booklet (34 pages) for parents wanting to do their best to satisfy the Education Authority. She goes through the whole process in a more readable way than EO's own SINC but is less comprehensive. She helps you develop a positive attitude and broad towards home education. Whilst you may already share her attitude, it is good to be helped to articulate it within the educational framework that LEAs expect.

The LEA cannot grasp the full educational picture that your home educated child is receiving unless it is pointed out and valued. So often parents are tempted to present their child's education in terms of school thinking which often influences your attitude towards what you are doing. She suggests you present things to your adviser in a

different way "... If a school were able to fit in the width and volume of hands on experience that you and your child do without thinking, they would be heralded as worthy of much accolade. The problem is that parents are usually so skilled that they and their children don't realize a large extent of what the child is learning. No wonder then that their education authority doesn't realize it either."

Disappointingly, the sample syllabus and curriculum is limited to Pip Rupik's own child and not drawn from a broad range of home educators.

Satisfying Your Education Authority (price £1.20) and other publications including Coping with School Phobia (price £1.50) and 'The Teacher And School Phobia' (price £1.20) by Pip Rupik available from CHEA, 14 Basil Av, Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN3 2AT.

Reviewed by Kate Freeman, Wiltshire.

REVIEW - Resources

Jigsaw Puzzles

Other EO members may be interested in Lakeland Educational, a one-man business based in Cumbria making mathematical, geographical and language jigsaws. The puzzles are extremely well made and range from an alphabet train to fraction equivalence dominoes which made me stop and think. There is a catalogue available together with ideas for different ways of using the puzzles.

Lakeland Educational, Casterton Grange Cottage, Casterton, Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria LA6 2LD Tel 05242 72004 Reviewed by Sue Heath, Lancashire.

CHEAPER EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES for Science, Design, Technology, Maths, Environmental Studies and Art

Sheffield City Council, presumably fed up with paying unnecessarily high prices for their educational supplies, have set up their own purchasing organisation (SPD). Anyone can get a copy of their catalogue. A lot of their equipment for science and technology seems identical to that in the E J Arnold/NES catalogues, but at lower prices. Their bulk supplies of consumables like paint, plasticine etc are also much cheaper than any other I have seen.

**Contact: SPD Marketing Section,
Sheffield City Council, Sheffield
Purchasing Organisation, Sheffield
City Council, Staniforth Road,
Sheffield, S9 3GZ Tel: 0742 560424
Reviewed by Jan Miller, Clwyd.**



Technology in Action

Last year we came across a useful catalogue that tempts us to spend a fortune, not because it's expensive, but because the company, Opitec, have everything our children want for metalwork, electronic bits and woodwork at very low prices. They also sell simple electronic kits for the beginner that form part of a programme priced from £1.90 to £3.25. Other kits include a solar airplane (£5.20), Solar Table Fan (£3.90), Traffic Lights (£1.90), Tutorial Gear

Technique Programme (£3.95), as well as simple models that require basic woodworking skills. Any child or parent that is technically apprehensive will feel very confident when tackling these. No minimum order charge.

**Opitec Educational Materials Ltd, 7
West Road, Woolston, Southampton,
SO2 9AH. Tel 0703 446515.**

Reviewed by Kate Freeman, Wilts.

REVIEW - OI Organisations

**Organisation For Understanding
Children's Hurt (OUCH)** is a new charity that offers a Bully Helpline, Griefline, School Phobic Helpline, Truant Helpline, and a network of trained counsellors and therapists across Britain. The facts justifying the existence of this organisation make tragic reading: Thousands of children are bereaved by death of a friend or relative; 150,000 children are affected by marital break up; up to 140,000 suffer school phobia; half a million truant frequently; one child in five reports bullying in school, thousands more are bullied outside school...

**More information from OUCH, 14
Basil Av, Armthorpe, Doncaster, S
Yorks, DN3 2AT Te; 0302 833596**

**Unwaged mothers got organised in
1972** when an international movement was born in the UK called 'The Wages for Housework Campaign'. Just the thing for this home-educating writer who can look forward to an offensive rise of £1.75 in family allowance this October. The Campaign presses for financial recognition of women's work by insisting that it appears as part of the GNP. They lobby Government, the EEC and the UN. So far only third world countries have risen

to the challenge of paying women for housework.

Appropriately, the campaign has chosen this year to express its outrage at public money being spent on war instead of women. You can join women on 24th October, known as 'Time Off For Women', a date chosen to commemorate the General Strike by women in Iceland in 1975. If you want to join in or want more information write to:

**The Wages for Housework Campaign,
PO Box 196, Bristol BS99 7UT or
King's Cross Women's Centre, PO Box
287, NW6 5QU.**

**FAST FORWARD for
FREEDOM
a day conference on
education**

**at Vaughan College, St Nicholas
Circle, Leicester**

**on Saturday 2nd November 1991
from 10 - 6 plus evening
entertainment**

**for full information send sae to Lib
ED, The Cottage, The Green, Leire,
Leicester, LE17 5HL.**

**LIB ED CONFERENCE FAST FORWARD
FOR FREEDOM?**

Educational progress has been in the doldrums for the last few years, what with retrograde steps in government policy such as testing 7 year olds, the closure of many progressive schools and the failure of the visionary ideas of the seventies to become reality. It's time to put the liberation of learning firmly back on the agenda. This conference aims to

do just that! Informative presentations, interesting stalls, good food and lively entertainment in the evening are all promised for this year's annual conference.

**Organised by Lib Ed, Tel 0272
778453 or 0533 830161 or SAE to:
Lib Ed, The Cottage, The Green,
Leire, Leicester LE17 5HL. (see ad)**

The above organisation reviews was compiled by the editor based on information submitted and not personal experience. Would anyone like to contribute short reviews describing the work of other interesting organisations. (Perhaps this could be the place describing the work of 'Childline' and 'Kidscape'? Maybe future editors could thus avoid singling out these two worthy organisations **above all** organisations working for children's welfare on the back pages of every issue of the newsletter.)

QUICK! STOP THE PRESS

PECKHAM IN THE 90s AND BEYOND...

At a time when the well person is at long last being discussed at Parliamentary level, perhaps we could now consider exploring the Peckham Experience. Is anyone interested in discussing the possibility of creating a contemporary version?

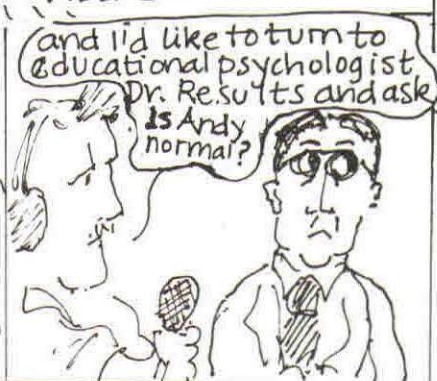
*Please contact Poppy Green, 15
Bellevue, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1DB
Tel 0272 735091*

EDUCATING ARCHIE

by SEY

10/91

MRS G AND ARCHIE ARE BEING INTERVIEWED ON THE RADIO!
IT IS ALL PART OF HOME EDUCATION WEEK = 0 0 0 0



REGIONAL DIARY



North

MANCHESTER:

Informal meetings at the FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, Mount Street, Manchester between 10.00am - 12.00 noon on: **Mon 9 Sept;** **Mon 14 Oct;** **Mon 11 Nov** Cost: £1.00 per family including refreshments.

Wed 23 Oct: There is an all day environmental workshop led by the wardens at the Mersey Valley Visitors' Centre, Rifle Road, Sale (in Sale Water Park). Do come - the standard of these workshops is very high, with a great variety of activities on offer. No charge - bring a picnic and friends. More details will be available if you contact me nearer the time. I could also co-ordinate car sharing if transport is a problem.

Fri 8 Nov: There is a Red House Book Party at my house. Come and solve your Christmas present problems!

Sat 12 Oct: 10.00am - 4.00pm Human Scale Education Conference at FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, Mount Street, Manchester. Gill Wilson & Georgia Cassar will be leading the workshop on Home Education. Offers of help welcome (see advert elsewhere). **Celia Beeson, 136 Dickenson Road, Rusholme, Manchester M14 5HT Tel 061 225 6882**

GREATER MANCHESTER:

As I write we are coming to the end of our most enjoyable course at PARRSWOOD RURAL STUDIES CENTRE. Many thanks to Gill Wilson for organising the course and for all her hard work over the six weeks. Forthcoming meetings at the FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, Mount Street, Manchester.

14th October 10 am - 12 noon

11th November 10 am - 12 noon
Anne Nesbit, Greater Manchester
Co-ord, 0625 871718

MERSEYSIDE:

A suggestion has been made that two maths evenings be held: one in Liverpool and one on the Wirral; and that group maths sessions be held in EDOers' homes on a weekly basis. If this idea interests you, or you would like to host such an event, then please telephone **Dr Brian Williamson on 051 639 8744**

19th October 10 am - 4 pm National Home Education Day. For Merseyside and Clwyd effort - see NHED feature. There are meetings without them quite getting into the newsletter ... contact **Kevin Fleisch 0244 810153**

YORKSHIRE - WEST:

October 15th - Drawing and sketching workshop at **Myrtle's: 1050 Bolton Road, Bradford. Tel 0274 640401 (daytime)** 10 am - 12.30 pm. Activities for 3 - 6 year old's free, £1 per child for 7 - 11 year old's. Phone Myrtle.

October 28th - Workshop on 'Using Montessori ideas in the home'. 10 am at **Margaret Scaife's, Glen House, Cragg Vale, Hebden Bridge Tel 0422 884682**. Please phone to book as numbers may have to be limited. Small fee. Members from other groups may wish to join us.

November 8th - 8 pm Parents meeting at **Eleanor Patrick's, 37 Gledhow Wood Av, Leeds Tel 0532 661727**. We are planning NEW and EXCITING activities for 1992 - PLEASE let Kim Wark have some ideas at that meeting or before!! Also some dates.

November 15th - Music workshop/play together at Myrtle's house. Bring

instruments, especially any unusual ones. Also any solo pieces. No charge, but please phone to let Myrtle know you are coming. Times and address as above.

November 20th - Visit to Bradford Industrial Museum, which now includes 'Horses at Work', formerly of Halifax. Meet there at 11 am.

December 10th - 'Food for presents' workshop at Myrtle's. 10 am - 12.30 pm. Two groups, aged 3 - 6 and 7 - 11. Charge £1 per child. Myrtle will supply the materials. Other details as above.

January 14th - 8 pm Parents' meeting at Carol Chamberlain's, 24 Bennett Lane, Dewsbury.

26th October - 5th January: There is a Japanese exhibition at Cartwright Hall, Bradford. If you would like to go as a group, please phone Kim and suggest a date.

Kim is trying to arrange a storytelling workshop and a visit to a handmade shoe co-operative. Please phone for details.

For details of any meetings, please phone host where applicable, or Kim Work Tel 0532 757473.

Scotland

See Brenda's letter page 20.

19th Oct - Open day for EOers & those contemplating EO. Refreshments. More info: **Nadine Edwards (031-229 6259)**



Midlands

DERBYSHIRE:

3 sessions at SHIPLEY PARK, near Heanor:

Wed 2 Oct - Fungi

Wed 6 Nov - Trees

Wed 4 Dec - Tracks All in the Green Room at the Visitor's Centre, 10am - 2pm. Bring lunch.



Sat 12 Oct - visit to the MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD at Sudbury Hall (meet in the car park at 12.30pm with lunch) then to the Meeks, 8 Brackens Lane, Alvaston, Derby.

Sat 7 Dec - CARTOON WORKSHOP with Jackie Smith, freelance cartoonist, at Steph and Peter's, 50 Springfield Av, Chesterfield from 11am. Please bring something to share for lunch.

SWIMMING at Queens Park Leisure Centre, Chesterfield, on the last Monday of each month, from 10.30am.

Activities at the Fleet Community Arts Centre in Belper: **WELDING WORKSHOP** with Mike and a visit from a Bat Worker (flying not cricket!) - dates and details to be arranged. **Phone Mike and Lynne on 0773 836662.**

Alfreton Library has been booked for **Home Education Day 19th October.** Volunteers wanted to help. Phone Lynne. Any new EO members who want to be sure of finding the 'regulars' at these events are invited to get in touch with **Lynne and Mike (0773 836662) or Peter and Steph (0246 239048) beforehand.**

LEICESTERSHIRE:

We have informal monthly gatherings at members' homes. Members from other regions are welcome. We are especially pleased to see new members from Leicestershire.

We meet for swimming at Leicester Leys Leisure Centre on the second Wednesday of every month.

Wed 9th Oct Swimming

Sat 19th Oct National Home Education Day

NHED: (cont) Open House at the Hornsby's. EO members will be there to give information to anyone interested.

Wed 23rd Oct Cycling at Rutland Water.
Meet at noon for picnic lunch at the
playground at Barnsdale.

Sat 26th Oct The Brewhouse,
Burton-upon-Trent. The Magic Carpet
Story Company 'offering a delightful mix of
stories, tales, chronicles and yarns for
the whole family.' The morning show will
be followed by a family workshop for
adults and young people aged 6 plus.
Show 11 am. Workshop 1 pm - 2.30 pm.
Ticket: £3 (£2) inclusive.

Tues 5th Nov Bonfire Party at the
Charltons

Wed 13th Nov Swimming

Sat 7th Dec The Brewhouse,
Burton-upon-Trent. Workshops led by
Nola Rae, international mime artist. 11
am - 12.30 pm for aged 9 plus 1.30 pm - 3
pm for adults Cost £4 (£3)

Wed 11th Dec Swimming

Sat 14th Dec Informal meeting at the
Ramsay's new house in Smisby.

**For more details, contact Lucy or
Keith Charlton unless a telephone
number has been stated.**

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE:

Tues 15th October Visit to Newark.
Meet in Castle Grounds at 11 am Bring a
packed lunch.

Thurs 19th Dec Get together at Jess and
Alex Sains, 6 Rutland St, Mansfield from
12 noon. Bring some food.

Otherwise, over the winter we will meet
at the Arts sessions at the International
Community Centre, Nottingham on FRIDAYS
contact **Anne Cavelle Tel 0602 673477**
for details.

Swimming continues at Water Meadows on
the LAST TUESDAY of the month. Contact
**Paul Sains tel 0623 655050 for
further details.**

OXFORDSHIRE

We had a meeting at the home of the new
co-ordinator, Alison Horridge, to get to
know one another and discuss interest in
group activities. From those in the
contact list, five families (including one
10 year old and four 5-6 year olds plus
younger children) expressed interest in
getting together. In mid September we
will endeavour to simultaneously punt
down the river as well as decide on future
activities. We are also compiling a list of
shareable resources, equipment and
skills. To find out what is happening or
get involved phone **Alison Tel 0865
513499.**

WARWICKSHIRE: Thurs 10th Oct - Coffee
morning from 10.30 am at the home of
Philip and Alison Cox and sons for all in
Warwickshire and the surrounding area
interested in arranging get-togethers for
the future. If you can't make it then
please phone or write with suggestions,
or to express an interest. We look
forward to seeing you. **7 Penelope
Close, Harbury, Leamington Spa,
CV33 9JP Tel 0926 613619.**

WEST MIDLANDS:

19th October - Home Education Day, at
2pm. There will be a meeting at Harris
House, 8 St Agnes Road, Moseley,
Birmingham. Please try and come, as we
are advertising it as an open meeting
where non-members can learn about EO
... so it would be nice if they could
actually MEET some of us.

16th Nov - 2pm Members' meeting at
Harris Hose.

I am thinking of re-commencing art workshops (or science or whatever within reason) one afternoon a week at my house. Phone me (Sylvia) if you are interested.

Further information or directions:
Carol Willis 021-455 9742 or Sylvia Jeffs 021-706 6460

South West



BRISTOL:

Bristol Seed Circle which meets in Bristol for regular workshops and play, joins with members in surrounding counties for outings and entertainment. To receive mailings send SAE to **Poppy Green, 15 Bellevue, Clifton BS8 1DB or Julia Hammond 0272 636082**

WILTSHIRE:

Sunday 8th Dec - 'Simple Things To Make With Children'. Workshop with Dave Cox at Lower Shaw Farm, Nr Swindon. Date and costs negotiable. We need 10 families. More details **Kate Freeman Tel 0380 860470.**



Wales

CLWYD:

Wepre Park is a 160 acre country park, consisting of ancient woodland, mixed woodland, meadow and stream habitats. The 13th Century Ewloe Castle stands at one end of the park, a new Visitor Centre at the other (built on the site of Wepre Hall) The Ranger Service offers a range of educational walks designed for 7-11 year olds, including: Creepy Crawlies

safari, Tree bashing, Pollution, and Geology.

Please contact Jan Miller for a copy of the walks or group visits Tel 0352 714796

GLAMORGAN:

Wed 9th Oct - meet at HEATH PARK playground at 11.30

Wed 13th Nov - meet at NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WALES, Cathays Park, Cardiff at 11.30

Wed 11th Dec - meet at TECHNIQUEST at 11.30

We shall try and see a show this December. **For details phone me, Kate Powell, 0443 227912**



East Anglia

CAMBRIDGESHIRE:

There are meetings in and around Cambridge at parks or one another's houses, depending on the weather.

Upware Field Study Centre (between Ely and Cambridge) we have sessions here 2 or 3 times per term. For details please contact - **Jacky Barlow Tel 0763 838941 or Penny Forster Tel 0223 870134.**

London, Home Counties & South East



BERKSHIRE:

If you have younger children being home-educated and you are looking for social events from September, **Karen Sternhell will be happy to hear from you on 0628 32262.**

I am always glad to pass on information about outings etc if anyone is keen enough to organise something! **Barbara Vine Lott, Berks Co-ord 0628 36490**
National Home Education Day: If anyone is interested in contributing to the NHED library exhibitions in October, please contact **Priscilla Park-Weir Tel: 0734 760766** for Wokingham and Bracknell displays; contact **Roma Brooks Tel: 0753 69218** for Slough displays; and **Barbara Vine-Lott Tel: 0628 36490** for Windsor and Maidenhead displays. Any ideas and practical help would be welcome.

HERTFORDSHIRE:

The Herts group is meeting fortnightly in different parts of the county on THURSDAYS. In recent months we have visited a nature reserve, Tring Museum, been swimming, found some fossils, visited Stansted Airport and visited Activity World in Hatfield - a soft play centre on three floors. We are planning further visits to Activity World in the winter months, and we will also be having a gym session with an experienced teacher in the Broxbourne area. For details of these and other meetings please phone **Jane Love (0707 335825)**. New members and families from other areas are always welcome.

Don't forget National Home Education Day! PLEASE come and meet in Welwyn Garden City Library between 11.00 and 1.00 on the 19th October so that people can come and talk to us. I really do need YOUR support!

LONDON OUTINGS FOR NATIONAL ED:

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.

Tues 15 Oct SCIENCE MUSEUM - meet in the foyer at 11.15 am, or for lunch in the schools dining room at 12.45 pm in the NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM FREE PASSES available from Paul Bentley (see inside back cover, enc SAE)

Tues 29 Oct GEFFRYE MUSEUM - meet 11.30 am for a talk for 7 - 11 year olds at 11.40 in the EARLY GEORGIAN ROOM

Tues 12 Nov TATE GALLERY - meet at 11.25 am at the Education Dept. entrance for a talk for 7 - 11 year olds at 11.30

Tues 19 Nov COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE - Talk at 1.00 - 2.30 pm on OUR GLOBAL VILLAGE. Meet at Education Dept. entrance or at 11.30 am in the ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND in HOOLAND PARK. 7 - 11 year olds £1 each in advance Booking ends Nov 1st

Tues 26 Nov NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY - meet at 11.25 am for talk for 7 - 13 year olds on FARADAY, and some electrical investigations at 11.30

Tues 3 Dec COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE - meet as above for talk entitled 'FOCUS ON CANAD' handle artefacts etc £1 each in advance Booking ends Nov 1st

Tues 17 Dec PLANETARIUM - meet at 10.45 am for talk at 11.00

Is anyone interested in forming a group to go to Centre Parks in Nottinghamshire either this Autumn or Early next year?

Contact Sue Petszajt, 2 Leylands Manor, Tubwell Lane, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 3RHJ Tel 0892 661319

LONDON - NORTH/INNER:

We meet on the first Sunday of every month (**6th Oct, 3rd Nov, and 1st Dec**) at FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, Church Crescent, Muswell Hill, N10 (Nearest

Tube: Highgate, Northern Line - 10 mins walk), 2 pm - 6 pm. BRING food and drink. We aren't allowed to use their equipment so bring playthings to share eg toys, arts & crafts, writing material, dressing-up clothes, music etc.

Suggested contribution £1.50 per family if affordable. 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.

Monday Outings: (Bring a picnic)

Mon 7th Oct - 11 am Caram Fields, Guildford St, WC1 Tube: Holborn

Mon 14th Oct - 11 am College Farm, Fitzalan Road, N3

Mon 21st Oct - 11 am Kentish Town City Farm, Cressfield Close, NW5, Tube: Kentish Town or Chalk Farm

Mon 28th Oct - (Bank Holiday) Parkland Walk, 4 Mile Walk along disused railway track from Highgate to Finsbury Park where there is an adventure playground and cafe. Meet at Holmesdale Road Entrance which is 30 yds down Holmesdale Rd from its junction with Archway Rd, N6. 11 am sharp. Tube: Highgate across road.

Mon 4th Nov - 11 am Natural History Museum, downstairs in the discovery centre. Meet at group entrance for free admission or bring EO ID card. We should have a guide from teacher's centre.

Mon 11th Nov - 11 am Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High St, meet at 'Canada' (Tube: High St, Kensington)

Mon 18th Nov - 11 am Priory Park, entrance in Middle Lane or Park Rd N8. Meet children's playground, Steiner School Cafe in park.

Mon 25th Nov - 11 am Golders Hill Park, North End Rd, NW11. Meet by the cafe (it may be closed). Tube: Golders Green or Hampstead.

Mon 2nd Dec - 11 am Parliament Hill adventure playground (Hampstead Heath).

Tube: Belsize Park or Hampstead Heath BR. Phone to check details, especially if raining): **David and Helen Michael Tel 071-284 2124; Jo Jenkins Tel 081-883 8052; or Belinda and Alan Reid Tel 081-343 1061.**

We often meet at the Fleet Community Centre, Agincourt Rd, NW3 for family workshops on Tues and Thurs, 3.30 pm - 5.30 pm term time. Tube: Belsize Park or BR Hampstead Heath. **Phone the Fleet for details tel 071-485 9988.**

LONDON - SOUTH:

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

Sun. Sept 29 - At Norwood Childrens' Centre, behind St Luke's Church, 2-8 Norwood High St, SE27, 1pm - 5pm

Sat. Oct 26 - At the Child and Parent Centre in the Albany, Douglas Way, SE8, 11 am - 3.30pm. Deptford Hight St 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.

Sun. Nov 24 - At Norwood Childrens' Centre 1pm - 5pm (see above)

For more details phone Nodge or Dorothy: 081 469 0413

Is there anyone in the Richmond - Twickenham - Teddington - Kingston area who can help Angela Hedges in Hong Kong? See 'Letters' page.

LONDON - WEST:

Several families (current ages of children 2 - 11) meet on Wednesdays at 11.30 usually at the Fountain Leisure Centre,


 Brentford, or a local park. Please ring for details: 081-995 8954 or 081-992 8549

SUSSEX - WEST:

Tues 15th Oct - 2 pm Horsham swimming pool foyer. Playground next door afterwards

Fri 18th Oct - 11 am onwards an 'At Home' day at our home, 20 Rusper Road, Horsham, RH12 4BD. Although we are very accepting of other people's beliefs and habits we are non-smokers. Walk in woods at about 2.30. Bring picnic, wellies and change of clothes for younger ones!

Sat 19th Oct - 8 pm Discussion at the Bogucki's house: 'The pros and cons of home education and how we can support each other more effectively'.

It is nice meeting in large groups, but daunting for newcomers. So please, all you local members who we have not yet met, ring and come and meet us at our home. Further information and details of **Nov/Dec events contact Isabel Boguski, Tel: 0403 61178** NB New and secondhand books for sale childrens clothes and some toys.



Advertisements accepted from members if they are of interest to EO in general at 10p a word

ARCHIE
 CHRISTMAS CARDS '91
 2 designs: 4" x 6":
 UNDER THE CHRISTMAS TREE
 or
 SANTA'S GREETING
 please specify with your order
 SARAH GUTHRIE FIELD HOUSE THRANDESTON ONS NORFOLK IP21 4BU

 25p & sae

**HELPFUL BOOKS
 FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN**
 'Teach Your Child To Read Properly'
 '555 Ways To Amuse A Child'
 124 and 174 pages respectively
 Price £1.99 each Postage 60p
 Subsequent copies 30p

CHILDREN'S AUDIO-CASSETTES
 Multiplication Tables; Alphabet;
 Counting; Nursery Rhymes/Songs; Party
 Games/Song; The Calendar; & Musical
 Sounds of The Orchestra.
 £2.75 each. Postage 60p Subsequent
 copies 30p

Martin Evans, 16 Thistle House, Dee Street,
 London E14 0PD Tel 071 515 1797
 Immediate refund if dissatisfied. SAE for list of other
 helpful early learning products.

*WANTED IN LONDON CENTRAL,
 EAST, SOUTHEAST,*
 On Tuesdays, while I am at college, I need
 someone to look after my daughter Robyn
 (7). We live in Surrey Quays SE16
 (Docklands)

Susan Peakin Telephone 071-252 1940

NEW PUBLICATION BY PIP RUPIK

**'Satisfying Your
 Education Authority'**

£1.20 inc P&P
 From 14 Basil Av, Armthorpe,
 Doncaster, South Yorkshire,
 DN3 2AT Tel 0302 833596

Cheques payable to Pip Rupik

EDUCATION OTHERWISE NOTICE BOARD

GROWING WITHOUT SCHOOLING

Distribution has now passed on to
**Barbara Sheppard, 18 Queen
Katherine St, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9
70G**

GCSEs 1991/1992

The changes that have been ruled by the Secretary of State for Education have been outlined simply in an updated leaflet now available from **Paul Bentley, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA**. Please send 30p to cover photocopying and SAE.

EO CARD INCREASES IN VALUE

The EO membership card, which is valid for one year and needs renewing when you renew your subscription, gives the whole family free admission to the following museums and places of interest:
LONDON: Science, Geology and Natural History Museums.
SURREY: Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond Surrey, TW9 3AB. If you know in advance when you are going to visit Kew, you should write to or telephone the Enquiry unit (081-940 1171 ext 4623) to arrange for a voucher that you can pick up from an appropriate gate on the morning of your arrival. On arriving at the gate you should show your membership card and receive your free entry voucher. If you decide only on the day that you are visiting Kew, then you should telephone the Enquiry unit and

advise them and they will prepare a voucher that you will be able to pick up from 37, The Green (just before the main gate). You will then be able to enter the gardens. Admission by voucher only is Monday to Friday.

NORFOLK: EO children (and one accompanying adult) who reside in Norfolk can obtain free admission to the following:
NORWICH: Castle Museum, Bridewell Museum and Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum. **KINGS LYNN:** The Lynn Museum **GRESSENHALL:** Norfolk Rural Life Museum & Norfolk Archaeological Unit **GREAT YARMOUTH:** Elizabeth House Museum, Maritime Museum for East Anglia, Tolhouse Museum, Exhibition Galleries & Nelson's Monument. **THETFORD:** Ancient House Museum. **CROMER:** The Cromer Museum. **WALSINGHAM:** Shirehall Museum.

You may be asked for proof of residence in Norfolk and you will need to present your EO card for free admission. To get your membership card: **See Where To Get What on last page.**

Treasurers Bit

Important article to all those intending to raise funds for local group activities on page 13 by the treasurer, Mike Cook.

Davy Crockett celebrates

To the tune of an old favourite:

Home Education week is nearly here,
Folks will come to it from far and near,
Tho' on the map it looks rather mere,
And just where it's at isn't terribly clear!

Chorus: Schoo-oo! is not compulsory
Down in the South at least.

By SEG

S.O.S.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Volunteers with a special interest in SCHOOL PHOBIA to relieve Patricia Knox of her school phobia workload for the time being. If we could have a number of people to be available by telephone or letter it should not be too onerous on any one of them. This is only a temporary requirement - you need not commit yourself for ever more! Thanks.



To talk about the work involved, please phone Liz Ramsay, 0509 856604, 1 Stanford Hills Cottages, Stanford on Soar, Loughborough, Leics, LE12 5QL.

Enthusiastic Co-ordinators needed

FOR: England - Bath, Cheshire, Cleveland, Cornwall, Lincolnshire
Scotland - Borders, Central, Dumfries & Galloway, Lothian

Enquiries: Stephanie Fitcher, Co-ords Secretary, 0246 239048

Congratulations to the Chamberlains

 
Congratulations to Carol, Martin, David, John and Robert on the safe arrival of baby Catherine (not sure about the spelling), and on holding a parents' meeting so soon! Kim

NEW CO-ORDINATOR FOR WEST SUSSEX

Following Collette Bradley's recent move to Devon, I have taken over as co-ordinator. If anyone else out there would like to help please say so, I am sure that there will be plenty to do!

Isobel Bogucki, 20 Rusper Road, Horsham, W Sussex RH12 4BD Tel 0403 61178

ALL CHANGE!

Penny, John, Johnny and Jenny Veitch have moved from Alva to 39 Kinloch Terrace, Perth PH1 2HB. Their phone number is 0738 - 441125 and they would love to hear from other EDers either by letter or phone.

New phone number for the Charltons: Lucy, Keith, Laurie, Hazel, Sam and Alex can now be contacted on: 0533 592118

Mario, Sue, Andrew and Chris McNamara have moved to: 1 Trevince Villas, Newlyn, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 5NX Tel 0736 61884. We would like to meet other ED families in West Cornwall. Let us know about any meetings or get-togethers!

The Matthews family formerly from Glasgow have moved to 3 Church Cottages, Cromer Road, West Runton, Cromer, Norfolk NR27 9NF. Thanks and all the best to all EDers in Strathclyde!

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 (New Edition due soon) A guide to your rights £2.50

Early Years (New Edition due soon) 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 Bendall - a good why and how book by an EO member and long term home educator £5.95

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

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EO STATIONARY - notepaper, re-use labels, forms, leaflets, and handbills from **Lucy Charlton, 2 Wislow Lane, Newton Harcourt, Leics, LE8 0FT.**

EO CHILDREN'S CARDS 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 3P**

EO MEMBERSHIP/MUSEUM CARDS

The EO membership card, which is valid for one year and **needs renewing when you renew your subscription**, gives the whole family free admission to an increased number of museums and places of interest. See 'Noticeboard' on page 36 for further details. To get your membership card send an SAE marked 'EO Card' to: **Paul Bentley, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA.**

LEARNING LINK is a non-profit making EO family run resource which can enable you to purchase **EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER HARDWARE AT DISCOUNT PRICES** available to schools.

The latest catalogue which includes Acorn, Apple, Atari, Cambridge, Commodore, IBM computers, Research Machines, modems from Pace, electronic musical instruments from Casio, Yamaha & Roland and Logo, Scheme software and books is available from **Learning Link, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA. Catalogue price £1.50.**

ALL PRICES QUOTED ARE FOR MEMBERS ONLY

SIMPLE THINGS TO MAKE WITH CHILDREN

David Cox is an artist specialising in painting and making sculptures from wood, tin and found materials. This work explores music, story and dreaming. He has been Artist In Residence at various schools and galleries. He now offers tuition to EO members for workshops etc. Rates negotiable.



Phone Bath (0225) 852631

TILE TEXTILES AND WOOD - Practical Day Course at Somervale School, Midsomer Norton, Bath. Saturday 9th November 9.30 - 5.30 Contact Richard Speed Technology Associates, Gable End, Hafford, Farringdon, Oxon Tel 0367 710593.

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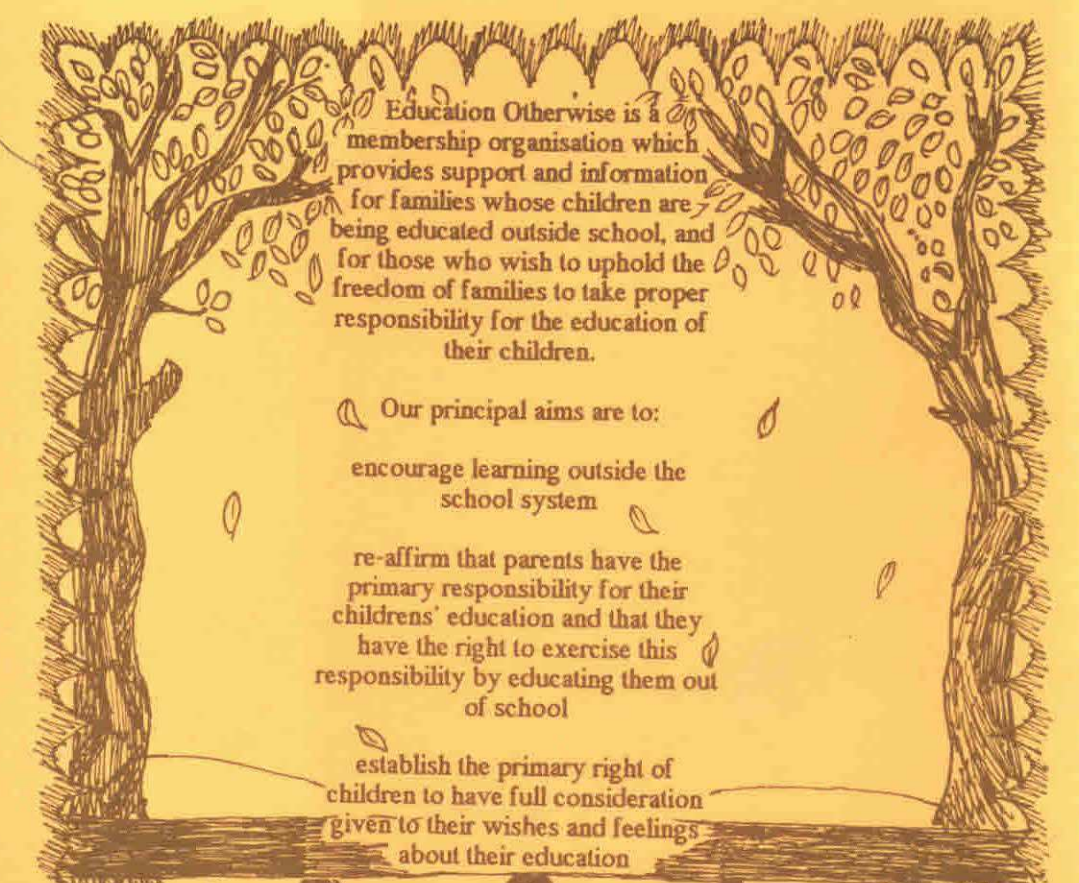
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Education Otherwise is a membership organisation which provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education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