

# Scottish Child

JUNE/JULY 1994

£2.55

A young boy is the central figure, smiling as he flies a large, multi-colored kite. The kite has sections of green, yellow, orange, blue, and pink, with a long, colorful tail. He is wearing a blue t-shirt with a graphic, dark pants, and a dark cap. The background is a panoramic view of a city, likely Edinburgh, with many buildings and a church spire visible in the distance under a cloudy sky.

# Flying High

Children and the Environment

ISSN 0950-4176



9 770950 417029

Teenagers in Trouble • Summer Outings



# Scottish Community Education Council



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
ON THE WORK OF THE SCOTTISH  
COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL,  
PLEASE CONTACT THE MARKETING  
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS UNIT,  
SCOTTISH COMMUNITY EDUCATION  
COUNCIL, ROSEBERY HOUSE,  
9 HAYMARKET TERRACE,  
EDINBURGH EH12 5EZ.  
TEL: 031-313 2488.  
FAX: 031-313 6800.

The Council supports those active in community education to meet the learning needs of people in communities, through:

- ◆ *Influencing public policy and awareness*
- ◆ *Promoting best practice*
- ◆ *Providing information, products and services*

The Council is active in five main areas:

- ◆ *Adult Education*
- ◆ *Community Work*
- ◆ *Youth Work*
- ◆ *International Services*
- ◆ *Setting training standards for community education (CEVE)*

SCOTTISH COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL IS A NATIONAL ORGANISATION ESTABLISHED BY



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE AND IS A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE. REGISTERED IN SCOTLAND NO. 98117.

## Centre for the Study of the Child & Society UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Courses available 1994/95:

**Diploma/M.Phil. in Child Studies**

and,

*in partnership with the Scottish Institute of Human Relations:*

**Diploma/M.Phil. in Therapeutic Studies of Children and Young People**  
**Short Courses in Therapeutic Studies of Children and Young People**

For further information, please contact:

Laura Lochhead, Centre for the Study of the Child & Society, University of Glasgow, Lilybank House, Bute Gardens, Glasgow G12 8RT or telephone: 041 330 4591

# Contents

## COMMENTARY

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Editorial - What Children Really Need .....  | 5 |
| <b>Aileen Bruce</b>  |   |
| In Brief - the 'condoms for kids' controversy<br>exhibitions, training packs and Undoing Time..... | 6 |
| Your letters .....   | 8 |
| The Hours After School .....   | 9 |
| <b>Ian Maxwell</b>   |   |

## FEATURES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| A Short Sharp Kenyan Safari .....  | 10 |
| Reappraising adventure activities for young people<br><b>Philip Roycroft</b>                   |    |
| Don't Hit Kids .....   | 12 |
| <b>Mark Wilson</b> on education to change violent lives<br>and two poems by <b>Mike Dillon</b> |    |
| Passionate about the Planet .....  | 16 |
| <b>Bernadette Vallely</b> talks to <b>Rosemary Milne</b><br>in the Scottish Child interview    |    |
| Out and About with Kids .....  | 18 |
| <b>John Hunter</b>   |    |
| The Alternative Health Guide - part 2! .....   | 21 |
| Up Against it in Drumchapel .....  | 22 |
| <b>Stephen Naysmith</b>  |    |
| Rona's Diary .....   | 24 |

## CULTURE

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Bill and Ben - they're out buying records<br>this time - and what records! ..... | 25 |
| <b>Shiel Yule</b>  |    |
| New Voices, New Writing .....  | 26 |
| Poems for Sophie by <b>Gordon Meade</b>  |    |
| The books I loved when I was wee... ..   | 28 |
| <b>Elaine C Smith</b>  |    |
| Reviews: Children First  |    |
| Soul Mates and Your Child Learning 1 and 2 .....                                 | 30 |
| Cartoon .....  | 33 |
| In My Life - <b>Jan Murray</b> .....   | 34 |



### Editor

Rosemary Milne

### Assistant Editor and Subscriptions

Stephen Naysmith

### Consulting Editors

Aileen Bruce  
Ian Maxwell

### Design

Shiel Yule

### Business Development & Advertising

John Hunter

### Editorial Group

Lois Aitkenhead, Alison Bell, Yvonne Burgess,  
Marion Flett, Bob Gouppilot, David Johnson, Joe  
McGrath, Margaret Murray, Moira Scott, Lucy  
Turnbull, Hugo Whitaker

### Scottish Child

Edinburgh office: 130 St Stephen Street,  
Edinburgh EH3 5AD  
Phone: 031-220 6502

Glasgow office: Maryhill Community Education  
Centre, 35 Avenuepark Street, Glasgow G20 8TS  
Phone: 041-946 0009

Scottish Child Limited is a non-profitmaking  
cooperative which publishes Scottish Child  
magazine and runs conferences and training  
events to promote a greater understanding of the  
importance of children and childhood in society.

ISSN 0950-4176

Letter and articles to  
The Editor,  
Scottish Child,  
130 St Stephen Street,  
Edinburgh EH3 5AD

©Copyright all articles and material except those  
marked exempt is held by Scottish Child. Opinions  
expressed in the magazine are not necessarily  
those of the editors or the editorial group.

Subscriptions: UK Annual Rates - individuals  
£15.00; organisations - £21.00. Cheques should  
be made payable to Scottish Child.

Overseas airmail: individuals - Europe £25.00;  
rest of the world £30.00; organisations - all  
countries £37.00. Overseas subscriptions are  
payable by sterling international money order or  
banker's draft.

### Production

Camera: Edinburgh Make-up Services  
Printing: Alna Press

Front cover photo: Geoffrey Craig  
Geoffrey Craig is Scottish Child's staff  
photographer

Thanks to "Wind Things" for the loan of a kite and  
to Sandy MacDonald





## be my friend!

SCOTTISH CHILD receives no public funding of any kind - it relies on your support to stay independent and keep growing. Make your support for SCOTTISH CHILD concrete by becoming a FRIEND OF SCOTTISH CHILD.

### AS A FRIEND OF SCOTTISH CHILD

● You will make a significant contribution to securing the future of SCOTTISH CHILD and it's work

● You will receive a year's complimentary subscription to SCOTTISH CHILD

● You will also receive absolutely free all SCOTTISH CHILD's publications throughout the year and will receive advance notice of conferences and events

YES, I want to become a FRIEND OF SCOTTISH CHILD and I enclose a cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ (minimum £50) made payable to Scottish Child.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to SCOTTISH CHILD  
130 St Stephen Street, Edinburgh EH3 5AD

# THE STIFF

Written by and for Scotland's Prisoners

To get a copy of the Spring 1994 issue, please send a stamped addressed envelope, plus a small donation to help cover our printing costs (The Stiff does not receive any financial support), to THE STIFF, c/o Scottish Child, 130 St Stephen Street, Edinburgh EH3 5AD

THE STIFF welcomes contributions from prisoners, ex-prisoners and other interested in improving the Scottish Prison System. Next issue out Summer 1994.

Join the crew of a Buckie Steam Drifter, pack fish in a barrel and try your hand at mending a net. Discover the undersea world of the herring through various "hands-on" and "high-tech" displays. Visit "The Doctors", a 37ft Oakley class lifeboat, sample our delicious cream teas and join a harbour tour.

Open 7 days a week from 16th June to 29th October 1994. Entry charge



Freuchny Road, Buckie,  
Banffshire, AB56 1TT  
Tel: 0542 834646

## Alan Robinson DESIGN

Improve your publications with the help of a specialist in devising and designing printed and display material for Youth, Community, Health and Education sectors.

Tel: Dunblane (0786) 822427

## PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY



UNIVERSITY  
of  
GLASGOW

GLASGOW UNIVERSITY  
PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY  
COURSES:  
M.PHIL  
Ph.D.  
INTRODUCTORY  
EVENING  
COURSES  
3 DAY WORKSHOPS

For further details contact John Daly tel. & fax no. 041 330 4079 Rm. E23 West Quadrangle, University of Glasgow, G12 8QQ



## What Children *Really* Need

Rosemary invited me to take a turn at the editorial because *Scottish Child* is not a lone voice. It is an independent forum for discussion and debate, so I want to urge you to make the most of your magazine.

We all feel like voices in the wilderness at times but while sometimes it's gratifying to allow ourselves to believe we have some unique insight into human experience, a quick brush with our peers keeps us right. There's no substitute for face-to-face discussion, which is why *Scottish Child* runs workshops and conferences. We can't criticise without being prepared to stick our necks, so it's my turn to finger my collar!

I hope you've had the chance to read *Scottish Child* in the sunshine. Perhaps you even allowed yourself to believe everything is OK for a time. I think it restores our faith in a future - that the sun will rise tomorrow. Surely that's the least we can hope for? *Scottish Child* is based on a similar kind of basic optimism: that if we take good care of our children the future will be bright.

How can we reconcile this with the often grim reading that regularly seems to appear in our pages? Partly it's simply that people contact us when their project is under threat or after going through or witnessing a traumatic experience. Well, we're here to listen. It would be easier to highlight success stories than to go on demonstrating that the underlying trend, as far as meeting the needs of children and young people is concerned, is downward. That's when you can start to feel like the voice in the wilderness again, when people just don't want to hear. So we are prepared to listen that bit harder even if we know it's not going to be welcome 'news'.

But we are not looking downwards but upwards. In the pages of this magazine it is taken for granted that children are entitled to the best. We're not here to congratulate people on doing their jobs, though the battle for proper recognition of those working with children is caught up with the importance we place on children themselves. But it is secondary to addressing the standard of care that children receive.

We want to discuss what the best kind of care is for children and how to ensure that every child gets what they have a right to expect from all

of us - a good start in life. For the first of these, we stress the importance of listening to children and young people themselves and for the second we cast widely to look at the political and cultural arena in which it all takes place.

So take a hard look at the institutions that our children depend on so much - schools, health services, the family, state childcare and welfare - are they in good shape? With so many readers working in these spheres we applaud those of you who are prepared to stick your heads above the parapet. Most people, happy to produce reports, stop short of writing articles critical about specific current practices and policies. Of course some reports can be invaluable and can shield the individual from recrimination in a way that writing an article does not.

But we need more of you to come forward with contributions and we promise you will get plenty of support and assistance if necessary. It is up to the media to put the human face back into the statistics and we are indebted to those individuals who are prepared to tell their stories firsthand, from the receiving end as it were.

There are no voices in the wilderness, only people who are finding it difficult to be heard. If feeling like a lone voice is tough then it is high time we recognised that our political system is very sick when, in spite of all the voices speaking out for an end to child poverty, for decent public services that give priority to the needs of all children irrespective of their background, government is still choosing to ignore us. Now what? All suggestions welcome. Write!

Aileen Bruce



## IN BRIEF

News from two of Edinburgh's galleries. **Stills**, the high street photographic gallery will be moving premises from the 2nd of July to Cockburn Street, Edinburgh. As a farewell tribute to their old space they're showing an exhibition of work by Kate Lithgow. The subject of this visual inquiry is poet and wit Ivor Cutler. Kate has looked in on Ivor's personal life and environment and managed to capture this on film. Ivor was born in Glasgow one hundred yards from Ibrox stadium but now stays in self-imposed exile in London. He is reputed to have threatened never to visit Edinburgh again because, "it's so dull".

He says his career started at the age of six when he won a prize at school for singing "My Love is Like a Red Red Rose". He began writing prose at the age of forty-two but says he wasn't any good at it until the age of forty-eight. His favourite pastime is 'Playing at growing up' which indicates his childlike wonderment at the world. The exhibition entitled "A Stuggy Pren" will run from 18 June until 2 July and will be privileged to have a rare personal appearance of the man himself.

Elsewhere in Edinburgh - in Blackfriar's Street, (off the high street), **Out of the Blue** is beginning to promote its work. The two gallery owners Ann-Marie Culhan and Trudi Gibson have set up a space where, as they explained to Scottish Child, "interaction between artists, public and gallery is actively encouraged". They have already run some workshops for children and more are planned. In June you'll be able to join in a week of readings and workshops with Rebel Inc and Independent Scottish Writers. Admission is free to these events. Scottish Child would like to

welcome this optimistic addition to the capital's galleries - and urge readers to help this initiative get established by going along and joining in.

*Gallery open Tuesday - Saturday 11.00am - 5.00pm/Sun 2.00pm - 5.00pm.*

\*

Scottish Child's most recent conference '**Undoing Time**' which took place in April was a well organised event, which through no fault of the organisers, nearly came apart before the first speaker, the Chief Executive of the Prison Service, Eddie Frizzell, could say a word. Jeane Freeman, Director of Apex Scotland, who was the second speaker, was suddenly taken ill during the night and was unable to come. Without too much panic and mopping of brows though, the organisers made a phone call or two and the able-bodied stand-in, Martin Currie (also from Apex), came to the rescue.

A well organised event, and a 'success', but of benefit - meaningful - to whom? The group sessions in the afternoon were of benefit to everyone in some way because people felt they could have gone on into the evening if the organisers had let them. Getting groups together to talk is, at the end of the day, the object of the exercise.

The morning was very interesting, and meaningful too, but to whom I'm not so sure. Was Mr Frizzell testing toleration levels, especially among the many prisoners there? Did he expect people to believe, bearing in mind he is the Chief Executive, he couldn't organise the supply of more than two pairs of clean underpants per prisoner per week? Mr Frizzell stunned us by his inability to answer any of the

questions put to him in the plenary. Everyone knows it's a difficult job running a network of prisons bursting at the seams with nearly 6,000 inmates. Of course you would want to have as few escapes as possible, as few assaults as possible, as few disruptions as possible in those prisons. Mr Frizzell however has acceptable levels' - he keeps tables you see - for all these things. His prison system runs along famously so long as only a certain number of his 6,000 inmates are assaulting others, escaping, or causing disruption of any kind.

The whole event was meaningful to the delegates in the final analysis because what it told us yet again is that prison will always be a damaging and negative experience for prisoners. How could it be any other way when the man who's in overall charge runs the system by keeping score of assaults and escapes, and can't supply more than two clean pair of pants to each prisoner a week?

It was meaningful because if nothing else what it leads on to is the next Scottish Child event in October of this year Alternatives to Custody. It's essential that we do find an alternative. So keep your eyes and ears open for further details nearer the time. If you care about prisoners and their families, you'd better be there!

*Joe McGrath*

\*

Barnardos have brought out a new pack for residential workers. Called **Dealing With Challenging Behaviour**, it gives guidance for staff on how to handle the volatile situations which arise in children's homes. The pack is yet another of

these self-help training manuals which are increasingly giving untrained and unsupported workers in a whole range of professions the chance to learn on the spot. Scottish Child will be reviewing the pack more fully in the August issue and we'll let you know then if we think it's worth the large price tag attached: £116.62.

Packs available now if you don't want to wait for our verdict, from Barnardo's Publications, Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6.

\*

Magazines and periodicals come and go, with surprising rapidity as we have seen in the past months. Way down south in Dorset a new one is about to spring on us. With the ambitious title of **Social Work in Europe**, this will be a three-times-a-year publication providing you with "a critical look at all aspects of European policies management and practice". The editor is John Pitts who is based at Brunel University and the magazine can be ordered by phoning/faxing 0297-443 948. We wish Russell House Publishing well with this new venture.

\*

Normality is important to children. They are always conscious of the need to fit in and everyone knows that children like to go on the same trip, have the same toy, watch the same T.V. programme as their pals.

But what if you cannot have what you see? What if your family itself doesn't match up to the images society presents you with? Even schools often end up reproducing stereotyped images of the nuclear family despite the fact that for many kids it is simply not the reality.



Britain has the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Europe. AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases are a real threat to the health of young people. So do the government and the press call for greater awareness about sex amongst young people? Do pigs fly?

In many countries it is considered normal, indeed necessary, to educate children about sex, to ensure that as they become adults they are equipped to deal with sexual feelings. But in Britain those opposed to sex education often seem able to bully everyone else into accepting, or bending to, their reactionary views.

The Sunday Times must take the biscuit for sheer daftness when it comes to crusading against teenage sex. One of their columnists, Barbara Amiel, actually seems to approve of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases as a way of showing that sex has consequences. She argues that if condoms were used by teenagers to stop these things, we would have "created the conditions for human beings to regress to a baboon society" where "you would have people who live simply from one discharge to the next". Another article promotes a discredited programme in the United States where children are taught to chant "Do the right thing! Wait for the ring!" The sting in the tail of this nonsense is the front-page headline - "Teachers risk sex lesson prosecutions" - aimed at intimidating teachers, already unsure of their legal position, into refusing to give straightforward information to youngsters.

The most worrying dimension of this government and media panic is the reaction from most of those involved in sex education. Rather than standing up to the bigots many of them have backed down, slow pedalled and kept quiet.

One voice of sanity in this sorry mess came from Doreen Massey, director of the Family Planning Association, when she said that, "There's a need to calm down and refuse to be put off as a profession by some hard-nosed bigots who claim the moral high ground. We should claim that ground ourselves, with our realistic approach to sex education which we know young people are crying out for."

Quite so. But it's worth remembering the sort of thing the bigots want to stop young people reading. The banned Pocket Sex Guide begins its chapter on sexuality with these words: "You could be heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. It's all perfectly natural. As in all areas of human activity, people want to make rules about sexuality. The truth is there are no rules." Now we can't let people believe that can we - where would it all end?

There are children whose parents have split up, others whose mums and dads never married, there are some whose parents are dead and other children are in care. Schools know the family is changing, children know too, but still the myth is maintained.

One reason is the simple lack of alternative materials, and that is the reason for the recent launch of a new pack "Families Like Ours". It is published by Family Mediation Scotland, who work with parents who are splitting up, for the benefit of their children. In their work with adults and children they have become aware of the potential value of a broader perspective on the family in schools.

Susan Matheson, director of FMS, hopes the pack will help prevent the feelings that can be caused by always seeing your life depicted as abnormal: "Children can feel a great sense of isolation." But the pack doesn't focus specifically on the children of separated and divorced parents, "that would only increase their sense of isolation. It will help them in particular, but it should help all children to understand that family life is about change."

The pack uses exercises, puzzles and games to explore the classroom community and the wider communities that surround children. It has been distributed free to all primary schools in Scotland. The possibility of doing another pack for secondary schools is now being explored.

For further information about "Families Like Ours" contact Susan Matheson or Maureen Lynch at FMS, 127 Rose Street South Lane, Edinburgh, EH2 4BB, or Tel: 031-220 1610.

Industrial Estates conjure up images of grey characterless boxes stuck on the outskirts of towns and cities, rather than harmony with the environment, but things are changing in the borders.

Remember the environmental conference in Rio, where western heads of state met, knitted their brows and promised to think about what they could do? Well Tweed Horizons business centre is one of the few tangible benefits Scottish Child has come across.

All the businesses in this park are committed to sustainable development - they include a tyre-recycling plant, an air and water filtration scheme and Earthward, a company advising on permaculture (sustainable farming techniques).

Graham Bell, of Earthward, points out that permanent agriculture is a concept anyone can apply, in his book *The Permaculture Garden*, which should be of interest to anyone who believes in a more sustainable way of life. The book suggests countless ways of bringing permaculture techniques to your garden, but above all it is realistic about the limitations of time and space. "We can all be made to feel inferior by pictures in magazines of gardens which have been carefully manicured by twenty people just before the cameras arrive," he says, "But gardens are for children to play in, to hang washing in or to mend bikes. If you enjoy your garden you can't be going far wrong."

*Earthward can be contacted on 0890 883456, The Permaculture Garden is published by Thorsons (£9.99).*



## Listen to me!

Dear Editor,

I have been in sixteen children's units, been fostered once properly and been in respite care twice. I am only fourteen years old. How would you feel? In the sixteen children's units I have been 'secured' twice.

My parents divorced when I was seven and I hardly ever see my dad. My mum has disowned me. My behaviour changed dramatically once my dad walked out. I have three brothers aged 21, 12 and 11. I've never met my eldest brother because he got adopted out when he was 3.

I go to a residential school in Fife and I've been there for over two years. I have been suspended three times because of conflict and dilemmas at home with my parents. I feel like I am getting tossed everywhere and anywhere. I enjoy being at school but I am still really angry with my parents and hurt deep down. I get upset sometimes because my mum says something then she changes it. I get all confused by that - plus my dad says he'll visit and doesn't. I am hopefully getting fostered long-term. The only thing stopping it is my mum because she is saying if I get fostered I will regret it and that worries me.

I recently went to Butlins with my mum and brothers. It was supposed to be a week but I got put out of Butlins by my mum because of my brothers. She said to me to go wherever I wanted, so I decided to go back to school. She did give me money but not enough. That was over two weeks ago and she still has not contacted me. I was scared because I didn't know where I was. My mum didn't contact anyone to let them know I'd left so nobody would've known if anything had happened to me or not. I felt all horrible inside me. I cried all the way back. I was that scared. How would you feel? my younger brothers live with my mum and I haven't seen them for over two weeks because my mum disowned me and isn't letting me see them.

I have overdosed once because I wanted my dad to take notice of me and he did - for a few minutes. I know that might not seem very long to you but it was to me.

I slash my wrists sometimes when I get upset about my parents but mostly about my mum. I run away but I haven't for over two months now. I do this when I think I can't cope any more. I did try to commit suicide when I did these things but it didn't work. I print my brothers' names on my arms sometimes because I miss them an awful lot.

Please print this letter. I want your readers to try to understand how it feels for me, a confused teenager.

Yours  
Kirstie,  
Fife

## Cynicism's not the Answer

Dear Editor,

Your editorial 'Doing Our Own Thing' (Scottish Child February/March) commented on the International Year of the Family and as co-ordinators of the International Year in Scotland, we would like to respond to some of the points you raised.

Firstly, we cannot stress enough that the International Year has absolutely nothing to do with the now notorious (and largely discredited) 'Back to Basics' campaign. The International Year is an initiative of the United Nations, and follows on from similar programmes on sex discrimination, children's rights and disability.

The UN's slogan for the Year, 'Building the Smallest Democracy at the Heart of Society', underlines the UN's wish that this year should be a focus for "the promotion of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms accorded to individuals, whatever the status of each individual within the family, and whatever the form and condition of the family" (United Nations Office).

Secondly, we entirely agree with you that support for children and their families, and the struggle against poverty and inequality, are things that should occupy our time and efforts every year, not just in 1994. Most of the conferences 'marking' the Year, fliers for which are currently filling Scottish Child's letterbox, are being run by organisations who provide exactly this kind of continuing support. However we cannot agree that their using the opportunity provided by the UN to highlight these issues really deserves to be condemned as "cynical manipulation".

You comment that such organisations are naive, even tragic, in their assumption that co-operation with the Year will "get something really useful out of it". How much more tragic it would be for children if this particular brand of thinking had been popular during the International Year of the Child - one of the results of which was the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a tremendously important document with the potential to make a real difference to the lives of children and their families in Scotland.

Finally, we would agree that a degree of scepticism about International Years is a common - and doubtless healthy - response to the phenomenon, for 1994 certainly won't solve all our problems, and neither does it intend to. But it is important to bear in mind that although the International Year of the Family is not a panacea, neither is it a "charade", party-politically inspired or otherwise. It is, as ever, what we make of it, and we would urge all the readers of Scottish Child - sceptics or not - to get in touch with us, read the UN literature, and decide for themselves. Back to Basics, we promise you, it ain't.

Yours sincerely,  
Annie Gunner  
Children in Scotland  
Scottish Co-ordinators for the  
International Year of the Family  
UK Association.

## Art in action: to be continued

Dear Editor,

We'd like to take up some points in your article Art in Action (Scottish Child, February/March 1994). First of all, to set the record straight: Mary Horn is in fact the headteacher at Hollybrook School, not Maureen McGeever. Secondly, although it was a treat for your reporter to see the animation project in action, such projects are very much an everyday part of our school. The arts initiative scheme run by the region has over the last four years allowed our pupils to work in performance with musicians and dancers, to participate in poetry readings and currently, to design and produce a mural. That our pupils respond so positively to visiting artists is a result of previous and continuing school initiated projects. We are constantly in search of any new route to more effective communication and self esteem for our pupils. One of our younger pupils has just won a poster competition on The Rights of the Child.

We do have guidelines for our joint projects, guidelines negotiated with artists before the project begins. For any project we make a small presentation to pupils outlining what is involved and then pupils are given free choice as to whether they wish to participate. No pupil is ever excluded by ability. Currently another member of staff is developing a puppet show to be given by some of our pupils with more severe learning difficulties. If we think the initiative will benefit our pupils then timetables are arranged, resources are somehow located and the problem is not finding staff volunteers but picking the lucky ones.

The key to any successful partnership is listening. Any special school revolves around the needs of its pupils and its many activities are thoughtful attempts to meet those needs. We are happy to listen to artists who may present us with new approaches and a possible redirection of our skills. We are also happy to use our skills to help artists achieve the maximum from our children. We have many successful partnerships with visiting artists and we certainly perceive Hollybrook's current partnership with Street Level to be exactly that and one of many more to come.

Yours sincerely,  
Maureen McGeever,  
Assistant Head Teacher,  
Hollybrook School,  
Glasgow

**Scottish Child welcomes letters from readers. Please send them to: 130 St. Stephen Street, Edinburgh EH3 5AD. Letters sometimes have to be cut for length.**



# The Hours After School

During the recent Regional Elections the political parties vied with each other to offer improved provision for pre-school children. Guaranteed nursery places for four year olds, extended hours ... everything with jam on it was on offer as they competed for the powerful pre-five vote.

But one doorstep canvasser was puzzled when asked about increased help for after school care. His party hadn't understood that working parents don't stop needing childcare once the children reach the magic age of five.

Out of School Care schemes operate after school hours and during holiday periods, often from within school premises, offering a safe environment for children until they are collected by a parent after work. There are now about 150 schemes operating throughout Scotland, mostly in Strathclyde and Lothian. Some are funded entirely from payments by parents, others have support from local authorities or employers.

Last year the Government introduced a scheme to pump-prime new after school projects via the Local Enterprise network, making £4.5m available in Scotland over three years. But a mixture of confusion and inertia meant that much of the amount allocated for the first year

---

## Ian Maxwell reviews the current state of out of school care for primary kids

---

was not spent as intended, and there are still considerable delays in turning this funding into actual after school places.

A more fundamental problem comes when the pump-priming runs dry. After three years these new schemes have to become self sufficient, hardest to achieve for projects in low wage areas where such schemes are most urgently needed. Funding from the Urban Programme and from European sources may bridge the gap for some, but long term stability will only come through some form of partnership between voluntary organisations, local authorities and employers.

At first sight, last autumn's budget offered another lifeline in the form of a new childcare allowance, to be introduced in October 1994. But the sugar coating soon rubs off: the allowance isn't real money that you can count in your hand, it's an offset against earnings when

calculating Family Credit. This means that the poorest families who already receive maximum Family Credit will not enjoy any of this largesse.

With increasing numbers of women working, many in low paid jobs, the number of 5-10 year old children left alone at home after school has trebled in the past 15 years. Even if parents could afford to pay for proper childcare, it often isn't available. What we need is an out-of-school club at or near every primary school. That might sound too ambitious, but it already exists in Denmark. ■

*For further details of existing out of school schemes and information about how to set up new ones contact the Scottish Out of School Care Alliance, 339 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 6AE (041-248 5154)*



**The Cherry Drop Club** is one of only six after school care schemes in Tayside. Funded through the Urban Programme, it cares for children from three local primary schools, giving priority to helping lone parents and low-income families. The scheme is based in Mid-Craigie primary school, and the staff do a daily collection run to

pick up the children from the other two schools. It also opens on in-service days and holidays. The emphasis is on fun and play, rather than just 'another chunk of school', with a wide range of activities including arts and crafts, games, baking, drama and computers. Even though it is based in school premises, the atmosphere is

very informal, and the children are encouraged to compile the programme of activities. The Club is managed by a group of local people, including parents using the scheme. They work in partnership with the Scottish Council for Single Parents who set up the scheme in 1992. ■

# A Short Sharp

Philip Roycroft puts the arguments against locking up youngsters.

When Lord Frazer recently announced a £1m. scheme to reduce juvenile crime in Scotland, he outlined the general thrust of this initiative as lying somewhere between two undesirable and apparently opposing approaches:

"Certainly not of the short shock variety. ... This will be no soft option. There will be no safaris to Kenya."

The 'short sharp shock' has been around for some time as a way of describing the punishment approach. Although the original military discipline involving a combination of rigorous exercise and marching drill is not so evident today, the term 'short sharp shock' has stuck. The building of new high security units to lock up ever younger children is the latest evidence that this is still the government's preferred option in England and Wales, despite advance evidence that this brutal and expensive exercise will not work. They have the facts and statistics - these regimes do not reduce crime, they do not stop youngsters from reoffending, and they are substantially more expensive than the majority of alternatives! This policy seems based on the bleakest of assumptions including:

*Young people who offend are inherently evil  
Locking them up will protect the community  
The more severe the punishment the greater the deterrent*

*Punishment is more effective than encouragement  
Nothing works anyway.*

On the other hand, 'Kenyan safaris' is a new way of describing the child-centred approach or 'soft option', depending on your point of view. I suspect that we are now stuck with this emotive image, and that we will have to come to terms with living in the 'post Kenyan safari era'! As someone who has not yet been on a Kenyan safari but who has devoted a chunk of his life to promoting active learning approaches, I have a particular interest in what this might mean for me.

I can't even remember now which tabloid first blew the whistle on Bryn Melyn, the Welsh community who sent 'hooligans' on alpine skiing holidays and Kenyan safaris, paid for by you and me - the long-suffering taxpayer! The story understandably triggered strong public reaction and resentment.

The majority of young people who become involved in criminal activity do so as part of an adolescent culture, an inappropriate and damaging rite of passage into adulthood. This is an adventurous delinquent phase which most will leave behind in their early twenties. The further down the road we take them towards secure custody during those formative years, the more likely they are to take on a criminal identity in adult life. When you combine emotional deprivation with physical isolation, purposeless activity and constant negative reinforcement, then it is not surprising that we end up with disturbed, angry and unpredictable

individuals. Clear evidence of this can be seen in the alarmingly high incidence of suicides and violence to self and others within secure units, and back in the community on their release.

Just as a baby's early life is hopefully shaped by the reflected love in its parents' eyes, so it is with young people entering adult life. If, when they are learning how to become adults, they are shut off from society - entering adult life with mainly negative role models around them - is it surprising that 80% of those who leave these institutions reoffend within two years?

The term 'Kenyan safari' highlights the dilemma which those who are involved in alternative programmes face. They must balance the needs of these adolescents to find positive routes into adulthood with the more immediate and legitimate concerns of their victims, that justice is seen to be done.

The first step in trying to help a young person find a positive route to maturity, is to build trust and rapport with a responsible adult, often within a group environment. Channelling creativity and the quest for adventure through recreational or adventurous activity is a popular means of building that trust. Yet when you consider the levels of unemployment, increasing poverty and the decline in services within these communities, it is easy to understand why others are resentful. Those who break the windows appear to receive the treats and attention denied those whose windows were broken. We should





# Kenyan Safari



not be surprised that there is popular support for fairly brutal forms of punishment fuelled by resentment and anger.

Punishment is back on the agenda as a means of teaching youngsters the difference between right and wrong. But what is the scale of the problem? How bad are these youngsters? Over the past few months we have been exposed to a series of horrific stories about feral youngsters who have been brought up by single parents, brainwashed by video nasties and who roam the streets, preying on the most vulnerable. These stories are a form of 'tabloid nasties', designed to work on our worst fears.

Whatever happened to pit-bull terriers, dobermans and alsatians? Last year they were roaming the streets eating children. Have the dogs reformed? If pit-bull terriers can be turned around so effectively within a year then we need to apply this knowledge to the problem of our feral youngsters. As you've probably guessed, attacks by dogs have not changed dramatically since it was big news. Perhaps the first lesson we should apply is caution - maybe young people are not more evil than we were at their age. Perhaps the incidents which have hit the headlines reflect a wider malaise, rather than a new epidemic amongst our children. In Scotland for example, incidents of reported crime declined by 8% last year.

Perhaps this focus on young hooligans is a distraction and the sense of anger and frustration

expressed about juvenile crime is symptomatic of a deeper more widespread sense of social injustice. We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that young people are growing up in communities of our making. If they lack direction and hope then we must accept some responsibility for not providing the necessary leadership and vision.

The advantage of locking people up is that we don't need their cooperation to do it, their views and opinions are of no consequence, we don't require them to exercise choice and trust is not a factor. The disadvantage is that without cooperation and trust it is unrealistic to expect those we lock up to reconsider their attitudes and behaviour and make positive change. As any good educator would tell you, cooperation, respect, creativity, challenge, choice and trust are needed to create a genuine learning environment. You can't teach young adults until they want to learn. Once that want is there then the commitment will follow. Programmes which incorporate an element of adventurous activity have the potential of bringing all these ingredients together within a dynamic framework. They can engage young people at a number of levels, providing them with genuine opportunities to take responsibility, exercise choice, value their own creativity, rely on others and experience success. They can provide a safe and acceptable environment within which to experiment, to take risks, to develop their individuality. A safari in Kenya might well look

like a soft option from the outside. For the young person who planned and prepared this adventure, who made the commitment, accepted the discipline involved and risked succeeding, it was a challenge. For the worker who was there unsupported for six weeks 24 hours a day, this too was no soft option.

There is little doubt that these programmes can effect significant change to an individual's self-perception and behaviour in the short term or within the context of the programme itself. The greatest difficulty lies in transferring that learning back to their community or family. A programme is only as good as the quality of the connections which the young people make between what they have experienced within the programme and the reality of their lives.

There is nothing wrong with the rationale behind Bryn Melyn. My criticism is over their naivety in choosing such glamorous activities which fail to take into account the feelings of the victims. I would also have concerns about the difficulties which young people experience in transferring the lessons they learned on safari, to the reality of street life. A note of caution therefore for those who are planning to base their alternative to custody projects on the Mediterranean or the Caribbean - perhaps you should consider the Highlands of Scotland instead, where the midges and rain provide politically acceptable levels of discomfort! ■

# DON'T HIT KIDS

What do we mean when we say that children have the right to grow up in a safe, non-violent environment? There are many children who have their emotional and physical needs met within their family but learn to live with hostility and danger when they walk out the front door. But that violence is by no means unique to certain big-city housing estates in Scotland. In many parts of Scotland, rural and urban, children are not safe, in their homes, in the streets or in their schools.

Community psychology has, I believe, a role to play in changing that situation. It grew in the 1960s in the United States, out of a concern amongst psychologists that the people with the greatest mental health needs, were generally found in localities with high levels of poverty. Although the needs of that group were the greatest, such communities generally had poorest access to mental health services. To quote Professor George Albee "Every exploited group in society is at greater risk for mental/emotional disorder".

But helping to bring about change in such communities is not easy: the 'professional' helper's knowledge often seems to carry little credibility. Our abilities may be dismissed because we are seen as lacking personal experience of hardship. Community psychology aims nevertheless to build responses to issues of mental health and behaviour through public health approaches. The causes of problems are seen as located in the interaction between a human being and his or her environment. It seems likely that if we think, "How can we guarantee the rights of all children", we might even now ensure that the special needs of those growing up in poverty are more effectively met than they have been.

Community psychologist, **Mark Wilson**, lays out an agenda for change in communities where children lead violent lives.

There has been some progress - for a start, a major change in expectations and attitudes of people as regards violence over the past decade. Whereas ten years ago parents might go to their child's school to complain about fighting, now they come complaining that their child has been bullied. To some extent, there is a new and growing expectation that a child should be safe at school, and elsewhere.

I can think of secondary schools that have, over the years, become a bit more tolerant when it comes to misbehaviour in the classroom, but who have become much stricter about violence within the playground. If the pace of change still seems too slow, we should remember that it was only about ten years ago that the belt was banned in Scottish schools and only thirteen years ago I remember a social worker talking about a school, and describing it as a very violent place with very violent teachers and very violent pupils.

What have the children themselves to say about it? Take this example of 8 year-old Jimmy (not his real name). Social work staff had been quite unsuccessful in their efforts to change Jimmy's situation, (he'd not been going to school for about six months). His mum and dad both kept poor health, and he was temporarily received into foster care. The social worker left him overnight with a tape recorder, asking him to talk into it about his worries. The list was dreadful to listen to. Here are just some of them:

"I worry about the boys that bully me

I worry about the time my big sister and me were running down the street because the gang were chasing us and my sister fell and they got her.

I worry about the time there was a noise up the close and we didn't know what had happened.

I worry about the time my mum was bleeding and my dad didn't come home

I worry about the time my big brother was late and the police came and said we had to go to the hospital

I worry about the time the window got put in..."

This is a picture of a child growing up with a stark awareness of danger in the street outside, coupled with a lack of security in his own home. Jimmy found a way of coping with the violence. He reduced the risk to himself by sitting in the

house, not going to school. His developmental and educational needs were not met of course.

I have no means of demonstrating how common this situation is in the area where I work, but the situation is common enough for there to be a local expression to describe such children or adults: "hoose hermits" is what they are.

Equally bad, or even worse some would say, at least some of our children are almost certainly learning that violence is the successful means of establishing a role for themselves.

There is a theory, sometimes called the 'boiled frog theory' which can help us in our understanding of how children can become 'anaesthetised' to violence over time. The theory says that if you put a frog into a pan of boiling water, the frog will jump out. If, on the other hand, you place the frog in cool water, which you gradually heat, the frog will allow himself to be boiled to death. Children are not frogs of course. They do usually develop a certain resilience in dangerous environments. As a psychologist, however, I do wish to state again that the coping mechanisms which they have to develop for 'survival' in a dangerous environment do not prepare children well for trust and intimacy in future adult relationships.

Anaesthetised as children, we may remain anaesthetised as adults. Interestingly, a recent 'safety survey' conducted by sociological researchers within a Glasgow housing scheme identified violence as a problem, though not one of the major concerns amongst residents. However, police figures for 1991 provide objective confirmation of what the community was contending with: at the time of the survey, violent crime in the area stood at three times the Strathclyde Region rate. These figures were backed up by others from the Health Board which showed eighty-seven 10-24 year olds from the area required hospitalisation after an assault. In one neighbourhood 1% of 15-24 year old males required hospitalisation after a knife assault during 1991.

I obtained another indication of the problems by examining notes on all children referred to a particular social work resource centre for children and teenagers during the session 91/92. Over 80% of referrals included some comment about violence being an issue. The experiences were wide-ranging: threatening parents, assaulting police who were called to school, cousin murdered, violence to children's home staff. For over 55% of these children there was a father figure who was violent at some time to their mother.

We can identify four main ways in which people can begin to respond to the violence

# VIOLENT LIVES



which affects children:

Firstly, we must develop **educational approaches**.

I referred earlier to the feeling in communities where violence is endemic, that people accept its inevitability. The commonsense acceptance of violence tends also to sanitise its reality. Teenagers often ask me, when we talk on this subject, whether I would use violence to defend myself under attack. But most of the violence they see will be very different. An educational approach would allow scope to increase their understanding of the various reasons behind the violence they see.

Just as 'war poets' such as Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon challenged the glorification of war, we too require to prepare materials which help young people form opinions about the senseless violence which surrounds them. The LEAP material, "Playing With Fire" gives an excellent example of how this can be done.

Secondly, there has to be a greater focus on **domestic violence and personal relationships**.

Methods of 'cognitive restructuring' have been developed in North America to help adult men who are violent to their partners to change their thinking patterns and hence their behaviour. Such techniques do not need to await the acting out of violent behaviour before people can make use of them. Teenage boys could usefully be introduced to the facts about domestic violence to help them see the need to control their impulses to anger and violence before they become involved in a serious relationship. Research into domestic violence suggests that it tends to start very early in the relationship and it is well-known that the violent man tends to deny responsibility for his violence, using his power to persuade his partner that it is her fault.

Research suggests there is a serious violence in 5% of British marriages. Although many boys who see violence meted out to their mother do not grow up to copy that behaviour, there is still a need to develop strategies to ensure that they know that violence is never acceptable in personal relationships.

The third approach is to make use of **trauma counselling** to help those who have been attacked or who live in fear of attack.

I referred earlier to high numbers of young men hospitalised as a result of knife attacks. Boys grow up seeing the dangers ahead of them. Being a victim of violence has a traumatic effect. Super-sensitive to the possibility of being attacked again, a boy may start to carry a weapon which enhances his feeling of security. This anticipation of danger can make the 'defensive' weapon-carrier a high risk for committing an act of very serious aggression. The teenager doesn't even wait to be attacked - he strikes before the other strikes him, even if the other had no such intention.

The fourth approach focuses on the need to **build networks of support** and use the experiences of others

There may be a place for groupwork, to develop co-operative behaviour. Outdoor group activities where safety issues are paramount, may be useful for this aim. For boys for whom violence is a fact of life, there may be a particular need to learn to trust one another. At the same

## the coping mechanisms children have to develop for 'survival' do not prepare them well for trust and intimacy in adult relationships.

time work may need to go on with parents to ensure young people receive the support they require.

In any community where there is violence, there will be many stories to be told about personal experiences. Young people often attach a lot more credibility to the experiences and opinions of local people, than to the wisdom of somebody like a psychologist or social worker. There are stories from yesterday's gang leaders about how they decided to get out of regular tribal rituals. There are other equally gripping stories of battles for justice which have involved solidarity rather than attacks.

Taken together these strategies could begin to change the culture of violence which mars too many Scottish childhoods. We must also not forget that in trying to make sure that children grow up free from violence, the experience of each individual child has to be put into a political and social context. Cathie McCormack, writing from her garden in Easterhouse, describes these graphically:

"Whole families are treated as surplus to market requirements, thrown on the scrap heap; the unemployed who are used like food

mountains to keep down the price of labour; the mothers who are being forced to work in the sweat shops that are springing up all around, to help feed and clothe their children; the teenagers who have been left with no sense of identity and who are also having to sleep up closes or in the street beside the rubbish; the drug addicts trying to escape from our world. This is a psychological and economic war where only the richest and the fittest are meant to survive, no matter the cost.

As these thoughts pass through my mind I can hear a children's chant: "We're no paying the poll tax! We're no paying the poll tax! It's just no fair! It's just no fair. Cause we love all the people"... and my spirit starts to climb to a new height.

In spite of the adversity in which they live, parents who are the soldiers in the war are planting seeds, which are now taking root. I have just witnessed the tender young shoots who will carry the fight on." ■

LEAP 'Playing with Fire: Training for the Creative Use of Conflict', is available from YouthWorkPress, 17-23 Albion Street, Leicester LE1 6GD price £16.50.



# Save the Children

*'You can't give them a balanced diet. Also you can't afford proper heating and warm clothes and that affects their health. There's the psychological effects too - always having to say no, not now, maybe next year'.*

SCF Project User,  
Rosemount,  
Glasgow, 1994.

**IN THIS DAY AND AGE!...**

## **WHY SHOULD ONE IN FOUR SCOTTISH CHILDREN BE CONDEMNED TO LIVE BELOW THE POVERTY LINE?**

*'The Save the Children Fund is often told that its aims are impossible... There always has been child suffering... It is impossible to remedy it. Let us clearly understand that it is not impossible. Three things are required to save the children from their misery: Money, Knowledge, Good Will.'* Eglantyne Jebb, founder of Save the Children, 1919

**IN SCOTLAND TODAY, SAVE THE CHILDREN'S  
MESSAGE IS THE SAME: POVERTY AND HARDSHIP  
ARE AVOIDABLE IF WE ARE PREPARED TO  
PRIORITISE THE WELL-BEING OF OUR CHILDREN  
AND YOUNG PEOPLE.**



75th Birthday Appeal

**Save the Children** 

For more information on Save the Children's work in Scotland  
contact: SCF Scottish Division, 6 Western Corner,  
EDINBURGH EH12 5PY; Tel 031 346 8352

# **STREET** *wise*

## Taking Activity Seriously

A one-day seminar, run jointly by Scottish Child and Endeavour Scotland, for all those working with young people at risk or in trouble.

**21 June 1994**

**10.30 am - 5.00 pm.**

Venue: **Newbattle Abbey, Dalkeith** (10 miles outside Edinburgh, just off city by-pass). Seminar fee **£55.00** inc. VAT. (includes morning coffee/lunch and afternoon tea). Some concessions available.

For further information or to book please contact:

Scottish Child  
130 St Stephen Street,  
Edinburgh EH3 5AD  
Tel: 031-220 6502.

**Endeavour**  
SCOTLAND   
*Releases Potential*

**Scottish  
Child**



# Sacrifice of Childhood

two poems by Mike Dillon

## A Touch of the Maternals

Down by the dockside  
I run to the lifebelts  
and ask what they're for.  
Mam says  
They're deathbelts  
packed with stones and  
lumps of lead and if  
any little boy should be  
bad and climb where he  
shouldn't and fall into  
the murky murky water  
policemen come and throw  
them over the badboy's head  
to make sure he drowns  
and serve him right  
Mam says  
he should have listened  
to his mother.

At bedtime the curtains  
are drawn and I check  
the pillows for earwigs.  
Mam says  
if any little boy should be  
bad and not say his prayers  
and not eat his greens and  
not stop sucking his thumb  
earwigs will hide in his  
pillows and wait till he's  
asleep and crawl into his  
ear and eat his brains and  
he will die screaming  
wishing he'd listened  
to his mother.  
Mam says  
it's worse than drowning.  
I suck my thumb

all through the insect  
night, awake to every creak  
and slithering sound  
Mam says  
I shouldn't worry about.  
It's just the Martians  
searching the houses for  
any little boy who's being  
bad and not going to sleep  
like a goodboy should and  
now the dark is heavy as  
a deathbelt and I don't dare  
get up in case the Martians  
under the bed grab my legs  
with their earwig claws.  
Mam says  
Aren't you asleep yet?  
God Bless. Sweet dreams.

## Raising Cain

In the sunlit garden  
the children are guilty  
of original sin,  
uprooting flowers  
and talking dirty;

KID ON  
YOU'RE THE LADY  
AND I'M THE BOY  
WHAT DONE DIARRHOEA  
ON YER HEE HEE HEE

and me at the window  
caught between laughter  
and envy, thinking of  
another sunlit garden  
and another angry face  
at another window  
and the crook of the finger  
and the babbling of the bowels  
and the leadfooted walk  
of the condemned criminal  
to the place of punishment

and that heart of melting ice  
and the rage of Godthefather  
which made you realise  
that seeds of senseless thunder  
are buried in each sun  
and the mystery of His anger  
and what the fuck you'd done  
and the terror  
and the shame  
of your cowardice and tears  
and the length of knuckled cane  
waiting by the window  
nearly as tall as you were  
but not half as yellow  
and the slash of sound  
as that cane came down  
again and again and again.

In the sunlit garden  
the children are guilty  
of original sin.  
I rap on the window.  
I crook my finger.  
Now it's my turn.

**DON'T  
HIT  
KIDS**

# Passionate ab

---

**Bernadette Valley spoke to Rosemary Milne about the environment, health and children.**

---

**B**ernadette Valley is a young woman with an impressive track-record in environmental campaigning. She founded the Women's Environmental Network and has already a string of books and awards to her name. Since she became a mother over a year ago, her activities have taken her in some new directions and she is infused with an even greater sense of urgency. Her latest venture is a new magazine, **Radical Motherhood**, which she runs with a neighbour. She describes it as 'for local people', which means mainly for people living in her own neighbourhood of Hackney and adjacent Stoke Newington. Contrary to what the title perhaps suggests, this is not a magazine for women only.

"Radical Motherhood deals with local issues as they affect children and parents. We have one of the fastest growing baby populations in Britain just around here. The streets are full of children. We're campaigning just now about the abysmal facilities in one of our busiest children's playgrounds. It's a place which, in spite of its stated purpose, is totally un-child-friendly. There are dreadful safety features and hopeless design. Accidents happen far too often and we want something done. When you're dealing with environmental issues of almost any kind, you have constantly to move between a particular problem and what it tells you about the bigger picture. This playground says so clearly that children have no priority locally. We're going to reverse that."

Bernadette, who came to the phone to talk to me, straight from an editorial meeting on the magazine, was also keen to tell me about the interview she'd just done with a local hypnotherapist who's offering free sessions of spiritual healing for children under five. Now, there's an idea that might raise a few eyebrows: that pre-school children might already have suffered sufficient trauma in their short lives to require spiritual healing.

"I have no problem with that myself. I use a mixture of alternative and conventional medicine to treat my own ailments. I place a great deal of importance on spirituality. In fact the title of my next book is *The Young Person's Guide to Mind, Body and Spirituality*."

We never got any further with the hypnotherapist because my next question took us off on other paths. What, I wanted to know, are the roots of all this: the campaigning, the emphasis on spirituality, the deep commitment?

"I went through a great crisis while I was working at Friends of the Earth. I left my partner. My sister attempted suicide. I lost my house. My grandpa died. All this happened in the space of about eight weeks. It was intensely stressful. Then I started to see colours round people and that frightened me too. I thought I was going mad. Fortunately someone told me that it was OK - I was seeing people's auras. I learnt that this ability could be controlled and that I could make use of what you can call your 'third eye'. I began to find a new balance within me. And it was different. It was no longer a fearful, clinging-on way of being but an openness, I suppose a kind of receptiveness which is incredibly energy-giving."

This major life-change, for such it sounds to have been, took place some eight years ago when Bernadette was still in her early twenties. She describes it as 'starting her on her path' and so far that path has led her to do something passionate about the planet.

"I can see why things did develop as they did for me. I left home and lived in Glasgow for a

couple of years, in Easterhouse. The relationship I had with the man I lived with there was violent at times. There had been violence in my own childhood which perhaps predisposed me to accept this as OK from my partner. I look back on my childhood with no regrets now because I've done a lot of work on it.

"I have four brothers and one sister. We belonged to a large network of Irish Catholic families in London. Poverty was the norm; my father often found it hard to get work. I'd say we're a closer family now than ever before. I love them more and appreciate them more now, since I 'healed' my childhood. Most of us do need to do that. There's far too little done to help people come to terms with their childhood. I learnt incredible lessons from listening to my inner child. I think that self-examination together with the experience of living in Easterhouse taught me an enormous amount about people - far, far more than I could ever have learnt at university."

I was curious to know if that foray north of the border was a one-off brush with Scots and Scottish-ness.

"I am a Londoner at heart, although my husband is a Scot, as was the man I lived with in Easterhouse. I'd not thought when I came back that I'd ever want to move away from London again. I was brought up short the other day however, when I had to take my daughter to the doctor because of a cough she's developed. He asked me about possible histories of asthma in our family. Now I have to face, as do so many parents, the idea that air pollution from traffic and other fumes is not just an abstract nuisance but may even now be having a damaging effect on my own child's health.

"What shall I do? Shall we move out of London? Well, possibly we could. But not everyone can. So that brings us straight back round to **Radical Motherhood** and the other campaigns we have to tackle if we're to hand on a habitable planet to our children. We shall

**When we first set WEN up I said that we can't sort out the planet unless we sort ourselves out. That still applies**



# out the Planet



certainly take action about traffic levels here.

"Children's health is a critical indicator of a society's health. I remember when I visited Poland some years back, talking with women in one of the towns there who had campaigned to get the smelting plant in their town shut down. The numbers of deaths of infants was horrendous but they'd faced tremendous resistance to the closure from their own menfolk for whom the

plant meant work and therefore income. Eventually however the men came to see that there is no argument for keeping a factory open if it carries the threat of the death of the very children they're working to support."

The two strands of the personal and the planetary underpin the ethos of the Women's Environmental Network.

"I said when we first set it up that we can't

sort out the planet unless we sort ourselves out. That still applies in WEN. People regularly go away on courses for themselves and WEN has a constant stream of trainees who learn about campaigning and much more besides. In the course of a year we have about sixty to seventy people who work and learn with us like that."

Trainees - women trainees? "No, not only women. I do want to emphasise that WEN does not exclude men. We have had male staff and volunteers. What we do hold out for, though, is the primacy of a woman's perspective in WEN. It may sound a bit grandiose but, in working to rebalance the planet - and after all that's our aim - we have to rebalance masculine and feminine energies.

"We have had centuries of masculine energy driving us forward in a particular direction: towards a greater and greater dominance of monotheism and monoculture. It's quite obvious if you go into a natural wood that nature celebrates diversity. Nowhere will you find monoculture if nature takes over. But men - and I mean men - have tried to superimpose uniformity on that diversity. Think of the acres of pine forest, the vast stretches of grain fields, no hedges breaking the monotony of the landscape. It's a disaster on every count."

Although Bernadette has achieved already much more than most of us might hope to manage in the whole of a life, her efforts are nevertheless constrained by the responsibilities of motherhood and by her own lesser earning power (relative to her husband's). She, like so many young mums, spends a considerable part of the money she earns on childcare. Although the care of their daughter is shared, between them and woman friend who lives with them, it is she rather than he who ducks and dives to manage child, job and home. She does so with good cheer and no recriminations but the fact that even she has still to adapt to the monopolising demands of the labour market tells us that we still have a long way to go before either the planet or the people on it are 'in balance'. Her and WEN's success do however provide a heartening reminder that big corporations and governments can be made to change if there's enough energy at the individual level to keep putting the alternative arguments, over and over again until eventually they win the day. ■

# Where can we go today?



## John Hunter's brief guide to entertaining children in the summer season

**B**right clean sunshine streams in through the kitchen window.

Nothing can be heard from outside but the hum of bees and other insects assiduously going about their daily routines. A butterfly flits silently past the window and lands on a bush beside the back door. The kids are in the living room watching cartoons on the telly, all peely-wally and oblivious to the potential of this glorious day.

'Right,' I say to myself. 'Let's get out of the house. Let's go somewhere.'

Zzzzzt!

It's been raining for days. And the weather forecast for the foreseeable future is bleak - to say the least! Whatever happened to that summer they promised us? Wee Jack pushes open the door and stands in the doorway with his hands on his hips. Defiant.

Behind him the girls are arguing. "We're bored," he says bluntly. "We want to go somewhere." He has a point.

Zzzzzt!

The telephone rings. It's Chris. As we exchange pleasantries I can hear a jumble of noises in the background: computer-generated music, someone talking on the radio, a child singing. I become aware again of the voice on the other end of the line. "I was thinking we might all go somewhere," it's saying. "Any ideas?"

Zzzzzt!

Yes, it's summer again and the school holidays are looming. The kids have had enough of the classroom for one session and are raring

to go. Summer can be a great time for families or a bit of a nightmare. It can be great if the weather's good, money is plentiful, and the children are occupied, fulfilled. It can be a nightmare if - for whatever reason - the wee ones become bored and restive.

I can remember one summer all too many years ago in Glasgow, when I was a child myself, and my father took us swimming at Shettleston baths every morning before he went to work. I can remember endless street games of football, hide-and-seek, kick-the-can; endless indoor games of Monopoly, stop-the-bus, switch. I can remember day trips to Saltcoats, Bothwell Castle, the Cathkin Braes.

Now I have 'grown up' and have children of my own. We live in a different and in many ways more varied world. Years have passed and leisure is now a recognised need, for children as well as adults, and many 'things' - tourist attractions, visitor centres, leisure complexes - have sprung up to fulfill that need.

Across Scotland there are literally thousands of these 'things'.

The main, and most abundant, traditional ones are castles, museums, trips 'doon the watter', parks. In more recent years a whole range of new ones have sprung up, things like the Loch Ness Visitor Centre in Drumnadrochit, Deep Sea World at North Queensferry, Storybook Glen at Maryculter, and the Time Capsule and Summerlee Heritage Centre in Coatbridge. We could take our children to different ones each day of the summer holidays and still only see the very tip of the iceberg.

But there's a problem. Money. In post-Thatcherite Britain we don't get much if we don't pay for it - and if you've got to travel there, pay entrance fees for yourself and your kids, eat, and travel back, the cost can be very substantial. My ideal place to take the children is one which is local, which all of the children get a lot out of and which preferably doesn't cost anything. Funnily enough, I can't think of one offhand.

Anyway, children, like my eldest daughter Sarah, 12, have their own ideas. "I went to Wonderland West for a day with granny and grampa," she says. 'I thought that was nice. There was a fair and a swimming pool. There was a cable car ride. I liked that.'

But the cost! Think about the cost! It's not all bad news, though. Both of my eldest children, Sarah and Rachael, 9, are devotees of the Museum of Education in what used to be Scotland Street School, Glasgow, which has no entrance fee. What on earth is the attraction? Why would kids on their school holidays want to go to a school, for goodness sake?

Rachael: "It's like you really are in an old school. If you're in one of the classrooms you feel as if you're in the olden days and you're being taught by the teacher."

Sarah: "They've got paper and pens and you can copy out the alphabet the way they used to do it. Also, for about you get a bag full of olden days toys and you can go out in the playground and play with them."

Ha! Now even going to school costs money. Outside the Central Belt it's no different. My





sister Alison lives in Ellon, near Aberdeen, with her children Jill, 14, and Andrew, 12. Jill's a bit beyond the age of visiting tourist attractions and leisure centres with her Mum and Dad but Andrew has some very definite ideas.

"My first choice would be Cadona's," he says, referring to a permanent amusement park/fairground in Aberdeen. "It's got loads of rides". His second choice is Quasar, a technological war game costing £1.50 for 20 minutes! "You go around with these laser guns and shoot people. It's fun."

Shooting people is fun? Honestly, young people nowadays...

But not everything is so costly. Andrew is also keen on outdoor activities. "I like to take

walks in parks and stuff like that. I also like hill-walking."

Cousin Tommy lives in Garrowhill on the eastern fringes of Glasgow. He has two children, another Andrew, 9, and Lesley-Ann, 7. "My children like going to the theatre to see musicals, the Sound of Music, South Pacific, things like that," he says. Tommy likes musicals too, which is very handy.

Lesley-Ann's favourite places are the ten-pin bowling at Finnieston - "because I always lose!" - and the swimming at Whitehill Baths, while Andrew likes to go to parks and museums. "We go to Drumpellier Park which is just up the road from us. I also like to go to Glasgow Museum - I like the dinosaurs and the bird section. I like to go to Millport and cycle around

on the bikes. "In fact there's not a lot of places I don't like going to."

What is it, then, about a visitor centre or tourist attraction that makes it of special interest to children? What must we look for when deciding whether the kids will be fulfilled, or plain bored? If I knew the answer to that question I'd be a happier man

- and a better father.

All I can say is that from my highly unrepresentative sample of six children drawn from a Scottish under-16 population of around a million, I'm not able to come to any hard-and-fast conclusions about what children in general are likely to like or likely not to like.

It seems like there's only one sure way to find out. Do what I did - ask them! ■



TIGH TASGAIDH GHEARRLOCH  
GAIKLOCH HERITAGE MUSEUM



Achtercairn, Gairloch, Ross-shire  
Tel: (0445) 2287

### Drummond Fish Farm and Trout Fishery

Visit the farm and feed the fish\* Beginners' pond\* Rods for hire\* Free tuition during summer\* Picnic tables\* Farm shop\* Spectacular surroundings

Aberuchill, Comrie, Perthshire.

Tel: (0764) 670500

### Blackshaw Farm Park

The Working Farm with a Welcome

Farm Animals; Pony Rides; Play and Picnic Areas; Coffee Shop Open Daily 10.30-5.00

Blackshaw Farm Park off B781, between W. Kilbride and Dalry

Tel: 0563 34257

Visit **Biggar's** museums unique group of museums with something to interest everybody: a Victorian street, a farmhouse, the local gasworks and a heritage centre. Details from: 0899 21050.

### Highland Museum of Childhood.

The story of Highland childhood, quizzes, dressing-up box and toy train. Highland Museum of Childhood, the Old Station, Strathpeffer, Ross and Cromarty.

**Neidpath Castle/ Peebles.** The children's favourite castle with dungeon and mummified rat. Great to explore all the rooms and stairways, on the river with picnic area.

**Finlaystone for fun!** Picnics, barbecues, children's adventure playground, detective trail, woodland walks, visitor centre with displays, shop and tearoom. Off A8/M8 west of Langbank.



### SCOTTISH MARITIME MUSEUM

Open every day 10 till 5

Laird Forge, Gottries Rd,  
Irvine, Ayrshire

**ONLY 1 1/2 HOURS FROM GLASGOW**

### INVERARAY JAIL

VOTED  
**BEST**  
SCOTTISH  
ATTRACTION  
OF THE  
DECADE



Open every day 9.30am  
Last admission 5.00pm

TELEPHONE 0499 2381  
INVERARAY, ARGYLL, PA32 6TX



### MUGDOCK COUNTRY PARK

Come and enjoy the woodlands, marshes, lochs, pastures and the remains of Mugdock and Craigend Castles.

We have an information and exhibition centre, shop, tea-room, car parking, toilets, picnic areas, BBQ sites, adventure play areas, footpaths (most suitable for wheelchairs), viewpoints, a bridleway, an orienteering course and countryside events programme.

MUGDOCK COUNTRY PARK, CRAIGALLIAN ROAD  
NEAR MILNGAVIE, GLASGOW G62 8EL.

TEL: 041 - 956 - 6100

(Proceed North of Glasgow on the A81 and follow the signs)

# Erskine MacAskill & Co.

## The Approachable Solicitors

**Specialists in all matters of the law relating to children  
and young people up to 18 years of age in Scotland:-**

- **CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION**
- **CUSTODY/ACCESS**
- **CHILDREN'S HEARINGS**
- **ADOPTION**
- **EDUCATION**
- **ABDUCTION**



**SOLICITORS AND NOTARIES**

Erskine MacAskill & Co. 4 Gayfield Square, Edinburgh EH1 3NW.

Telephone: 24 Hour Answering Service 031-557 1520



# The Alternative Health Guide

## Part 2

He would also take into account the patient's inherited body, for example a red-faced person might indicate a tendency to be 'hot'. Herbs would be prescribed to balance these symptoms, using the same

classifications. And if there was pain acupuncture would be used to relieve it.

So what would all that cost? As a rough guide the first appointment would be £20 - £25, then subsequent appointments would cost £12 - £15. The herbal remedies have to be purchased on top of that at £4 - £5 a sachet. Treatment for a deep-seated ear infection might therefore cost around £70.

None of the practitioners at his health centre are in the NHS and as Clogstoun-Wilmott candidly admits there is no incentive for them to be. And the patients? "It's a supply and demand situation. People will always get what they want if they ask enough and they have the money to pay for it." They encourage patients to subscribe to the Hospital Savings Association which is a form of private health insurance.

**Homeopathy** is based on the principle that 'like cures like'. This means taking remedies that in a healthy person would produce the same symptoms shown by the ill person. It is believed that this stimulates the body's own defences. The amount of the remedy used is minute, in fact the more dilute the better, although to be effective there still has to be at least as much as would produce the symptoms in a healthy person. This has great advantages in the treatment of children because it avoids the potentially dangerous side-effects often associated with conventional drugs.

Homeopathy developed alongside our conventional 'allopathic' medicine which uses substances producing the opposite effect on the body, to cure illness. It flourished in the early 19th century when many medical practices were downright barbaric. Its popularity waned in the early 20th century when powerful drugs were being developed and promoted by the

### Aileen Bruce finds out about Chinese medicine and homeopathy

pharmaceutical industry.

However, when the NHS was set up in 1946 homeopathy was included as an officially approved method of treatment and there are still five homeopathic hospitals in Britain, including one in Glasgow. A homeopathic clinic has just been set up in Dalkeith outside Edinburgh.

Kirsty Foster, a doctor in Muirhouse, Edinburgh explained how people can get access to these services: "There are principally two hurdles to overcome - money and knowing about them." She spent a month at the Glasgow Homeopathic Hospital during training. In her view there isn't enough time available to GPs to do the lengthy history-taking involved in this form of medicine. "But if a patient does want to be treated with this form of medicine, they can change to a GP who is fully qualified in it, under the NHS."

It's not always so easy though, to find out where such doctors are. GPs rely themselves on a monthly sheet from their local medical committee to keep them up to date with new services. Often this is not enough.

What about access to other alternative therapies? It boils down to money - again - and GPs tend not to rate these services as a high priority. The new fund-holding Gaps can buy whatever services they wish but even non fund-holding doctors are banding together now to purchase services from outwith the NHS. Another, sometimes more realistic, possibility is to approach community health projects which often have a range of alternative therapies at little or no cost.

Doctor Foster's final word is a reminder that the responsibility for the NHS patient still lies with the patient's GP so, "Please tell your GP if you are receiving alternative forms of treatment."

**Chinese medicine** embraces a range of what we in the west would term 'alternative' therapies. Perhaps the best known of these is acupuncture, when the doctor inserts needles at strategic points along a patient's energy channels, a network akin to but not identical to the nervous system. This may be done when the doctor diagnoses energy in the patient's body as excessive, deficient or of the wrong type. But it forms only a part of a range of treatments. Nutritional medicine plays a fundamental part, not just general advice but in a prescriptive way. Foods are classified as hot, cold or damp, according to whether they cause the patient to experience similar symptoms, eg. excessive thirst, shivering or discharge. Altering the diet from hot foods to cool foods, in the case of someone experiencing 'hot' symptoms, should benefit the person.

Herbal medicine is a further development from this and 'moxibustion' which is the burning of herbs on the surface of the skin or on the end of a needle. Massage, Qi Gong, plays a central part in 'inner strengthening' and Ti Chi is a derivative form that uses exercises to do the same.

Jonathan Clogstoun-Wilmott of the Edinburgh Natural Health Centre, which specialises in Chinese medicine, treats children for a whole range of common acute illnesses like mumps and measles as well as chronic conditions like long-term bronchitis and eczema. Using the example of an ear infection he illustrates their approach. Firstly he would consider the symptoms and classify the condition as cold, hot or damp. Then he would look at the patient's diet and suggest, for example, if there was a discharge, that the patient should avoid dairy foods, salty, fried and sugary foods, all of which encourage mucus.



**Y**outh For Youth didn't last long - they disbanded amid frustration and apathy, due largely to two things. Firstly, they were forced to change the name of the group. Initially they had called themselves Youth Against Harassment, but they immediately had to back down on that when Strathclyde councillors and police refused to accept that harassment was a problem and denied them funding.

Apart from having their main complaint dismissed as non-existent, they were then denied funding anyway, despite the fact that the police invited them along to give a presentation to a Community Policing training course. But there's supposed to be lots of money up for grabs in Drumchapel isn't there? Isn't it an enterprise zone, or an area of priority treatment or whatever they call it when nobody in an area can get a job?

The Drumchapel group, **Youth For Youth**, met to campaign for the rights of young people in the area until last year. Some of the members met **Stephen Naysmith** to talk about police harassment, rights and the problems the group had encountered

"They only give money to nice projects," says John Jamieson who prefers to be called J.J. "I've got nothing against lassies, but they'll give money to netball teams easily enough."

Drumchapel Detached Youth Work who set up the group, help any local people aged 12 to 25. The five I met are at the older end of the range: Tommy McAllister, is 20, Clark Dowling's 24 as is Billy Cross. J.J.'s 23 and Kim Boyd is the oldest of the group at 29.

They'd had trouble passing themselves off as a 'nice' project. All have been in trouble with the police, and most have done time in prison already. They have all been involved with drugs and are on programmes and prescriptions to beat their habits. "It went from one inspector to another inspector, basically just because it was us," says Billy. "The police thought we were all just toe-rags".

A similar fate befell a proposed car club for young offenders involved in car break-ins and vehicle theft. After the expectations of local people were raised last year the idea was quietly dropped.

Once you are known to the police you are victimised, they claim. They got badly burned after taking part in Scottish Television's 'Scottish Youth Debate'. Several of the group went on the programme and spoke frankly about their involvement in the local drugs scene and petty thieving: "One guy, the police said to him afterwards 'we'll get you eventually' and the next week they arrested him because they said they'd seen him drop a crisp packet four weeks ago." There was a write-up in the Sun which characterised them as brainless thugs - Basher, Slasher and Belter.

Their relationship with local police is tense. There were a couple of policemen they respected who have since moved on. "They were from the same sort of area as us and would say to you 'you've got a fortnight to get those fines paid', they were straight with you", according to Billy. Nevertheless they were still reluctant to greet them in the street, for fear of being thought of as a grass.

What should be provided for young people in the area, to prevent them hanging around shopfronts at night, taking drugs or sniffing glue, as this group have done? More to do is the immediate answer - clubs, somewhere to go at night, although they point out that there are problems with just opening a youth club and expecting everybody to go there. Often if a club is available, anyone who chooses not to use it is instantly assumed to be up to no good.

"A free bus to Hangar 13" (a rave in Ayrshire), says Clark, "There is a bus now, but the police raid it every Saturday night. They hold you back for a couple of hours and by the time you get down there it's not worth going in".

"That's right", says Billy, "They just come on and go - 'You, you, you and you', they pick their victims. You and me could be sitting on a bus, and I could be sitting with a bit of dope and you could have a thousand ecstasy tablets in your pockets. They will come on and they don't know you so they will lift me. You'll be sitting there sweating, but I'll spend the weekend in the cells down at Clydebank, and that's not funny."

Kim has had her door kicked in by the police - she claims there were eight of them - who said they had 'an anonymous tip-off' though she doesn't believe them. "I was in with my boyfriend and my two kids (her daughter is nine, her son five months old). They strip-searched every one of us." They found nothing,

# UP AGAINST IT I



**“The police said to one guy ‘we’ll get you eventually’. The next week they arrested him because they said they’d seen him drop a crisp packet four weeks ago.”**

and went away leaving the door and the carpet behind it to be repaired.

So what does it make people feel like when the police are on their backs like this? “It makes you feel like getting up and cracking them,” says Billy, “But you can’t or you’d be in the jail for sure. There are people around here who will run away if they see a police car even if they have no drugs on them or haven’t got warrants out against them. They know they will try to fit them up for something.”

Of these five young people four are already parents and Billy is also an expectant father. “There’s plenty of us got wains - it’s something in the water in Drumchapel,” J.J. comments. “It’s because people have nae money, its just boredom,” says Billy.

They stand at the midpoint between trying to make sense of what has happened to them and aiming to change what happens for the next

generation. So what future do they see for their children?

Recent reports in the papers that babies born in Bearsden (an affluent Glasgow suburb) can be expected to live ten years longer than those born in Drumchapel have the group up in arms. Some simply don’t believe it. “They are healthier” says Clark, but J.J. disagrees “They’re not. How are they healthier?”

“They are, they eat better” Clark argues “They can afford to eat in restaurants all the time and what do we eat? Packet shite! They are out near the countryside, you can smell the dung - it’s good for your lungs and all that.”

Clark wants more facilities for young people. “Give us something for our age group, so we’re not hanging on street corners and they can’t harass us.” Billy would be keen to set up a five-a-side football team himself: “I would like to take the young ones for football,” he says, “I

could have played football but I wasted my chance with drink and drugs. I’d run a club for kids but nobody would want to back me.”

What about work? None of these five are working: “I’ve never worked,” says Billy. “I’ll give you an instance of what it is like. There was a guy I know who got himself a job on a building site. He still had a warrant out against him for non-payment of fines and the police came onto the site to try and lift him. He ran off and when he came in the next day they sacked him. How does that work? How was he going to pay the fines after they did that?”

There is a workshop for disabled people in the community education centre we met at. Opening a similar facility might give local youngsters some hope, Billy claims: “They can make rocking horses, toy garages and all that. If there was something like that it would give us a chance to maybe start running a wee business or something. There’s lots of kids around here who don’t get Christmas presents. You could make things that people could afford. “

It sounds as if they are proposing some kind of community action, people banding together to improve their conditions: “That’s what we need, the police to stop harassing us, and community action rather than community service” Clark concludes. ■



# N DRUMCHAPEL

May 1994

I have engineered the past few weeks in such a way as to keep continually busy. And I'm exhausted! But Time can be very ominous so I have ensured I've no time to myself to worry about. Though Grant employs most of my time I make sure his time in nursery sees me fully booked - life seems easier to manage that way! Often I feel it's this timetabled lifestyle that gets me through.

Anyway, to my life. It seems a long way off now but I had intended mentioning the Zero Tolerance debate that a friend and I went along to. I say debate but I'm not sure there was one. In fact the general consensus seemed to be that when asked 'Is there a future for men in the family?' the answer is most definitely NO! Though not willing at the time to put my head on the chopping block I did leave feeling fairly despondent at the proceedings. Whilst agreeing generally with the Zero Tolerance campaign I could not share that particular opinion. I felt that somehow they were missing the point. I agree wholeheartedly that society, especially men, must start facing their responsibility for

the abuse inflicted on women but I feel society as a whole, not just women, are the casualties. I can't believe that just writing men off as abusers, unworthy of any help, can alleviate the situation any. Will we always be restricted to dealing with the aftermath, never getting to the core of the problem? We seem in agreement that women are the predominant parent in a child's life; I'd like to use my advantage to raise a fully-functioning man - I'm definitely not willing to dismiss him as a lost cause!

Of course there will always be a struggle with society's set rules. Our schools are incredible! Children are rarely encouraged to talk in mixed sex groups about such vital issues to their lives as sex and sexuality - and when they finally do get the chance it's often too late. At the Women HIV/AIDS Network conference I went along to a workshop run by sessional workers who go into schools to talk about the issues relevant to young adults. While it's good they get in at all I can't help feeling that going in the 5th year means they miss the most vulnerable group. And certainly by 5th year at my school there were already a substantial number of us having sex

**going into schools to talk about sex to 5th years means they miss the most vulnerable group.**

- often unprotected! But with ministers like John Patten threatening to prosecute teachers in England who encourage youngsters to protect themselves I wonder if we are not moving backwards sometimes? Here in Scotland it's not seen as 'appropriate' to mention homosexuality - it's just a pity that this continuing denial of its existence has done nothing to help the so-called 'problem'. I wonder where these ministers get off? They're no longer putting young people in danger of a bit discomfort in the groin area - their ignorance could be costing young lives. And as far as I'm concerned it's not acceptable for these would-be moralists to cover their short-sightedness by claiming it's protecting children's innocence.

Back to me. Edinburgh District Council's Spring Fling events came in very useful for us - particularly because they're free! We had a good weekend at a time when the Child Support Agency had seen to it once again that we waited almost a week for money - but we're getting 'used' to it. And our weekend came off anyway - the most unfortunate aspect being that it was

miles across town and walking miles with a tired 3 year-old after a busy day out is not to be recommended - though with the ever-efficient C.S.A I am sure more women will be afforded the experience.

On a more day-to-day basis I'm fairly busy chairing the Roundabout Centre's Summer School Committee which I was coerced into with the promise of it involving little time - I will not be quite so gullible next year! It's tiring but worth it when the thing comes together. Approximately 40 volunteers and 200 kids descend on Drummond High for the month of July; in a twisted way I must like it - it's my fourth year helping!

After all that it's strange I should often be termed unemployed; though that's always contradictory when talking of a single parent. So at the moment I carry on looking forward to a time when I can trade in this un-paid role for one with pay and fewer hours!

**Rona Sutherland**

*The summer playscheme offers safe and creative play in a multi-cultural environment. Volunteers are offered lunch, travel expenses (around Edinburgh) and a written reference at its close. Anyone interested in volunteering contact the Roundabout on 031 556 1168.*

## Rona's Diary





# Bill & Ben

Bill & Ben are just out to visit some of Glasgows record shops, after reading about a new type of music that's tipped to become the brawniest, beefiest sound you will ever hear.

- Hello, can I help you?

**Ben:** Yes, there is a new album out, I'm not sure what the name is... but the whole album is the sounds of men lifting weights. I wish I could remember the name... Bill?

**Bill:** Nope... but it got a great review... and I guess there can't be many albums like it.

**Ben:** There's two isn't there... yeah one is the actual clanking of the weights and the other is like the vocalisation of the chaps lifting the weights.

**Bill:** Do you reckon that it's free weights, like dumbbells and barbells only... or do they have, like the sounds of the machine weights and exercise bikes... like the sound of a metal pin going into the right weight slot?

**Ben:** It's probably everything all kind of... sampled together. But just the equipment, not the people.

**Bill:** No, no I think I remember it, the other one... the men. It's like "Smell my thick black belt after I power-lift"... or maybe "Hymns for

a He-man or Hercules".

**Ben:** Or "Huge hunky chunky weights and sweaty stressed straining men"... something along those lines.

- O.K. let me see what I have on the computer... Okay we have... "Getting Big-the incredible sounds of vigorously hairy men" or "A sonic mosaic of pain, nipples, armpits, sweat and protein powder".

**Bill:** Don't ring any bells.

**Ben:** OOOOOOweeee... I got it, it's on that "Sucker" label.

- "Sucker?"

**Ben:** Yeah that's right... have a look.

- Well what do you know... "Mad, muscular men heaving huge lumps of iron only to replace them again exactly where they found them", on "Sucker" originals.

**Ben:** Yeah, yes that's the one.

**Bill:** Cool we want it on CD, yes cause it's got two extra tracks.

- Yep we have it on CD.

**Ben:** That's right... CD includes sounds of rear triceps cable laterals and another cut with cross over flies, with extremely heavy weights.

**Bill:** That's where one guy says to the other "C'mon lets get big... real BIG". And you hear the other guy moaning and crying, so the other starts screaming and yelling at him, "Move that weight. You're a strong-man, your a mesomorphic monster. Heave it. Move it. Kill it." And the other guy starts growling and panting, finally finishing he jumps up and they high-five each other.

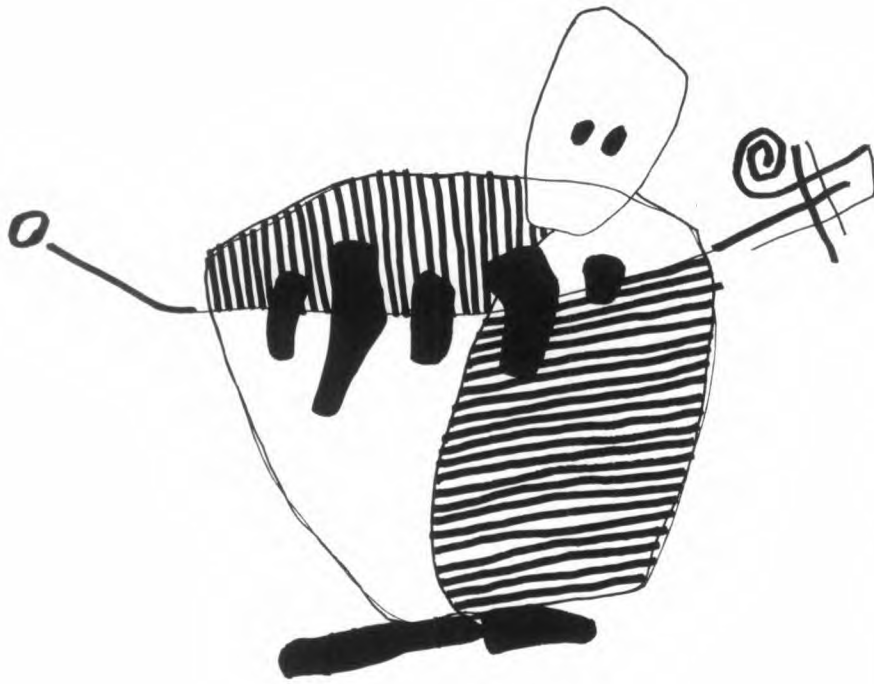
- I can let you hear it if you want?

**Bill:** No need... I know it's the one. I'll take it.

**Ben:** Hey... maybe we could make a record. Like record us after we've run a mile, wheezing, staggering and coughing our guts up.

**Bill:** Yeah... like humpin', heavin' and hernias





## The Eye of the Sea

The eye of the sea  
In Eyemouth: its lids,  
Twin rims of rock;

Its iris, breaking surf;  
Its pupil, a dark blue depth

Of salt. Like yours:  
Sea-born, sea-bright,  
Reflecting wisdom.

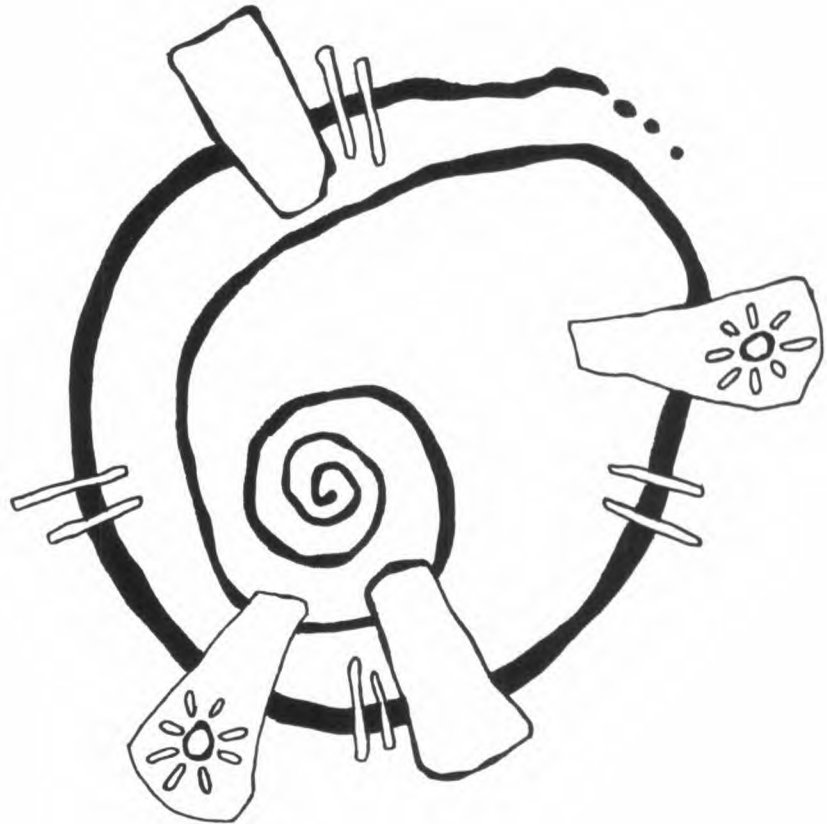
## Sophie Asleep

Her legs have the suppleness  
Of eelgrass, and move gently  
To the rhythms of her sleep;

Her arms, thrown above her  
Head, surrender her entire body  
To the invasion of dreams;

Her hands bunch into fists around  
My fingers, squeeze them, vice-like,  
For an instant, then release;

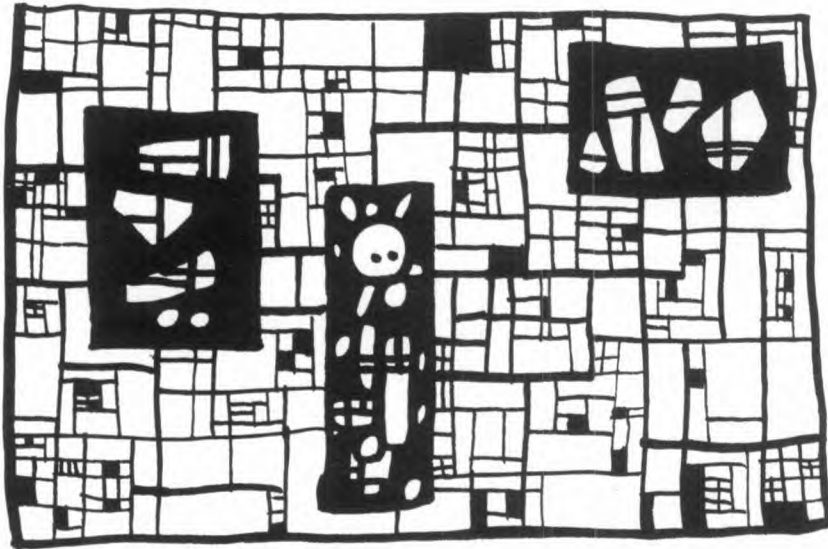
Her face has the serenity  
Of a simian death-mask, and  
A wisdom beyond my reach.



# Poems for Sophie

by Gordon Meade

illustrations by  
Ralph Christensen



## Noah's Daughter

In the beginning, everything  
Has to be tried and tasted. Lips first,  
And then, the eager tongue.

Eventually, the eyes take  
Over, sorting out shapes and colours,  
Seeing one form as different

From another. Finally, it all  
Goes back to the lips and the tongue,  
To be released as a high-

Pitched squeal from the echo-  
Chamber of the mouth - plastic, painted  
Animals, translated into sound.

## A Celtic Year

Upon the March wind's  
Fulsome breath, the keen-eyed  
Hawk of Spring brings death.

Beneath the June sky's  
Burning sun, the fleet-winged  
Lark of Summer comes.

Beneath September's  
Star-filled skies, the dusty  
Moth of Autumn flies.

Upon December's  
Frozen ground, the snow-white  
Hare of Winter bounds.

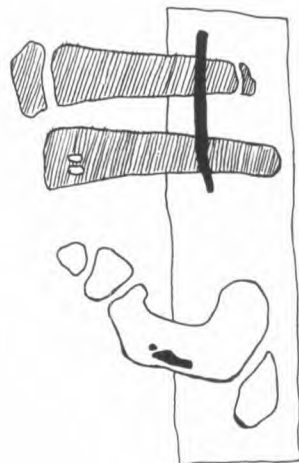
## She stops to listen

She stops crying, to listen  
to the screech of swifts, flying  
past our bedroom window.

She stops coughing, to listen  
to the harshness of rooks, laughing  
on the pantiled roof.

She stops sneezing, to listen  
to our dog wheezing, recovering  
from a long summer walk

She stops everything, even her  
featherlight breathing, to listen  
to the sounds of her world





# The Books I Loved when I was wee...



I can tell you without hesitation the book that made the greatest impact on me as a child. It was C.S. Lewis's **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe**.

I first came across it when I was in primary school, I must have been about eight, and our primary teacher read it out loud to the class. She read a chapter to us at the end of each day and I was absolutely transported, magically transported by it.

What it did was it spoke to children, for me it spoke to who I was. It allowed you to go into a fantasy land through the wardrobe. You didn't just hear about the characters, you really related to who they were. The kids in *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* are quite goody-goody almost but it didn't matter. And neither did it matter that they came from a different background - it was as if it was happening to you.

Another thing which made it special was the circumstances we heard it in. Having someone read to you is one of the most soothing things that can happen, it is very comforting. I remember that feeling even now, and it is one of the reasons why if I am asked by the radio or television to do a morning story, or anything like that I am always very keen to do it.

The school I went to wasn't a very posh school, it was in a mining village in Lanarkshire, but the class sat silently for the whole time the teacher was reading.

The peacefulness of it just seemed to affect everyone. When the day ended it wasn't the usual case where children are running out, helter skelter trying to get away from the place, I remember everyone drifting off on their way, our class was so calmed by it.

I went on to read all the tales of Narnia, it

gave me the enthusiasm to do that and to be interested in books in general. I became an avid reader although I wouldn't say I was ever bookish - it was partly to get out of doing any housework! But I had learned to read for enjoyment.

What is special about *The Lion The Witch and The Wardrobe* is that it combines imagination, characters you can relate to and brilliant writing. Of course you often go on and find out that there are all sorts of suspect things about people like Lewis, and you end up thinking "How can that person have been responsible for a book that was so wonderful to me?" But I really would like to sit down and read it again. I'm looking forward to getting the chance when my daughter Katy is older.

The other author I remember reading eagerly when I was young is Dickens - **David Copperfield and Oliver Twist**. I must have been older, maybe eleven, by then. I was fascinated by those too. There's so much cruelty in the books and they are so detailed and descriptive. That was intriguing to me as a child, but upsetting and shocking at the same time. Perhaps I had reached an age by then where I had almost left behind the world of Narnia, the fawns, the talking badgers and all the fantasy, and reached a stage where the realism of Dickens was more able to feed my imagination.

So much came through in the reading of a book that couldn't come from television, I never got half as much from television as I did from a book. I like the radio for the same reasons, your imagination soars much more than it can ever do with TV. ■

Elaine C. Smith

# reviews

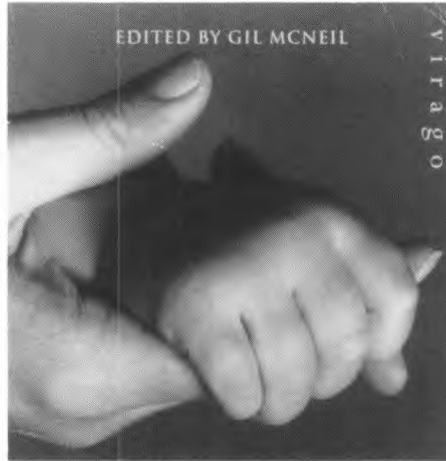
**Soul Providers, Writings by  
Single Parents**  
ed: Gil McNeil  
Virago £6.99

**Sarah Nelson**

As a single parent I feel disconcerted and disloyal writing critically of this book. Not just because a celebration of the joys, strengths and positive features of single parenthood is clearly so welcome and so needed in a political climate which sees us at best defensive, at worst contaminated with polluting disrespect for ourselves and our children.

It is also because the eighteen contributions from women and men are genuine personal testimonies. Where I would once have found some, (like the book's title), too precious, and still find one or two others uncomfortably self-justificatory at the expense of confronting the depth of their child's confusion about its parentage, I would now strongly defend the validity of any single parent's experience. I would share their anger if any critic picked over the pieces of whatever account I wrote on my own behalf.

But there are problems. The most glaring one, in a book rightly careful to ensure lesbian mothers and women of colour have a voice, is the lack of working-class women - divorced or



separated - who battle for survival in their hundreds on each deprived housing estate across Britain and the total absence of very young working-class single mothers against whom so much venomous right-wing stereotyping is directed. When Virago picked from 150 manuscripts, why are so many mysteriously freelance writers, editors and producers - people like me, people like the editor themselves?

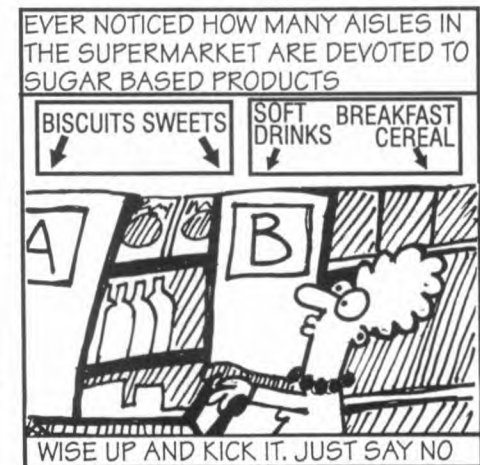
Sorry, this is not on. Not even when the writings show how deeply single parent poverty cuts across the social classes. It's a lot worse for the working class woman. People like me are in paradise in comparison. That's why the blurb about several contributors 'enjoying boating' or tapdancing, 'currently digging a wild-life pond', grate a lot. It's the context, and the editor's attitude in a supposedly broadbased book. If the working class weren't 'literary'

enough Virago should either have made their standards more flexible or worked cooperatively to support women in expressing their experience.

The book's strength lie in presenting in an often moving and graphic way such diverse experiences and causes of single parenthood, even among this select group; in the lack of self pity, in the joltingly brutal experience of older women and in at least a couple of outstanding contributions: Madeleine Cary's life with her son Ky who died as a teenager, and the courageous Thalia Peterssen's bone-shocking unforgettable revelation of the system of all-encompassing patriarchy in France.

The book is also likely to provoke much thought among single parents about how they would write their own account. That's a benefit too. The whole experience of single parenthood produces mixed, often contradictory feelings in a very diverse bunch of people. Many of us, contrary to the book's impression, have found people more generous in their attitudes than stigmatising. Crippling problems tends to be political and practical or arise from the wider behaviour of men towards women, or spring from non-single parents' lack of thought and imagination.

Awareness that telling our stories in print can make a positive impact for social change conflicts with the strong sense that we should not need to justify our own family lifestyle to anyone. Further, aspects of what some single parents have done may not be justifiable. And while for many it will be important to celebrate publicly their love for their children, for others that will remain their most private affair.



---

## Children First

What we must do - and are not doing - for our children today

Penelope Leach

Michael Joseph £14.99

---

## Rosemary Milne

---

Scottish Child does not generally review hardback books but this one is too important for us to wait until the publishers bring out the paperback version - as they surely must do.

Reading it - and I have read it twice now - I found myself jotting words and phrases down from every second page. There is great wisdom in these 260-odd pages and it is hard not to pile on the adjectives in an effort to encapsulate why I think this is probably one of the most important books written for a very long time about the place of children in our society. I have not read, in any great detail, Penelope Leach's other books on child-rearing: my own children were already almost grown-up by the time she began to publish - but I feel certain this must stand as the weightiest contribution she has yet made to the child-rearing debate.

If pressed I think I'd settle for 'courageous' as the word which best sums up *Children First*. It is courageous because it blows away so many of the taken-for-granted myths of present-day child-rearing and bravely reiterates what many would like to categorise as 'reactionary' notions about what children need.

Penelope Leach begins and ends with the developmental needs of children. That is what the title says: children first. She doesn't see their care as something to be fitted into the other demands of the adult world but as deserving of status and place in its own right, leading ultimately to the creation of a new generation of well-rounded adults who can and do play a full part in the social life of the world they inherit from their parents.

How children are cared for is intricately enmeshed in the way in which national economies are run and the current value placed on earning power, status from jobs and upward 'career paths'. There is considerable status of course in becoming a parent and much medical attention lavished on the pregnant woman. But once entered upon the parent race, you quickly learn that, major crises apart, you're expected to get through it alone. Blame will be heaped on you if you fail but expect no praise if you succeed: to complete the race is somehow expected to be reward enough in itself.

Most of the prosperous nations of Europe and North America make scant provision for any kind of parenting aids. Certainly - with the one outstanding exception of Sweden to which Penelope Leach devotes several pages - there is no state aid given which takes the needs of the child as its starting point.

Her lengthy examination of poverty in these rich countries provides some truly awful figures



# What's "Goo

about the levels of state benefit to poor families in America as well as Britain. She charts the rise in the numbers of those in poverty throughout the rich world and the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots, a gap which became a yawning gulf in 1980s. The facts and figures about the position of families dependent on state aid in some American states is useful for us in Europe if we still want to avoid the worst of what the individualist philosophy sets up. Penelope Leach has a great following in the USA and it is to be hoped that this book rises inexorably to the top of the best-seller list there as well as here.

An earlier chapter looks in some detail at the arguments against the kind of universal daycare which EC countries are still only aspiring to provide. She risks the wrath, I imagine, of thousands of parents who have bought the myth that 'socialising' a small toddler in a nursery or daycare unit is what's best for that child. The uncomfortable fact is, and she does not shrink from reminding us of it, that small children need their parents; tiny babies need their mothers; all pre-school children need the security of well-known, trusted adults around them, to take them safely through their different stages of learning. Nurseries can be cheery places full of nice toys





# Good Enough"?

and attentive staff but by their very nature they lack something. That something is the element of passion, which is inherent in the relationship between parent and child, however muted. It is the gut-level engagement with another human being which produces both the agonies of parenting and its great triumphs.

"Adults who are tied to infants in reciprocal affection will always try to understand and they will always answer, even if the answer is 'no'. That is what matters; that is what assures infants that they are real, individual people who can act upon other people... However carefully she is fed, washed and protected, and however many

mobiles are hung for her, a baby's overall care is not good enough to ensure her optimal development unless she is constantly with people who know her as an individual and who always have the time (and usually the inclination), to listen to and answer her; to cuddle and play; show and share. Those are the people she will attach herself to and that attachment matters." (page 87)

On the plus side, for once the UK comes out somewhat ahead of much of the rest of the EC in the matter of training for daycare staff. It has a diploma-level Nursery Nurses' qualification whereas in many countries it is commonplace

for tiny children to be looked after by young, wholly untrained staff working for low wages and with no career prospects.

Themes on which she has expounded lengthily in the past are given another airing: discipline and punishment merits a whole chapter of sound advice. A notion which has taken hold more recently, that of 'quality time' is put in its proper place: the quality of the time you spend with your child is important but flexibility and availability are of equal importance. We can all think of the unexpected and impromptu way in which people, not just children, choose to tell you something of burning importance. Miss the moment and you may wait a long time to hear what needed to be told.

The book starts with some hard-hitting pages on the central importance of the mother for the newborn baby. There is excellent material on breast-feeding and some helpful comments on the role of the father during those first months. We are reminded that children do better if they grow within a culture where they are not constantly herded into 'same-age' groups, where they can participate in useful activity as well as have time to play freely. And she looks sympathetically at the problems for mothers in handing over the care of their child to another: the strain of balancing a natural jealousy (the down-side of that passion mentioned earlier), over the child's attachment to another adult with the mother's wish to feel that her child is content and settled in the company of the other carer.

The difficulty with all that Penelope Leach writes, is that, as indeed she herself points out, it will scare a lot of people, women especially: fear that comes from feeling that women have only just tipped the balance a bit more in their favour. Can they stand to be told that after all, despite all their best efforts to set up the optimum conditions for their little ones to be cared for by others, such care falls well short of what a child needs? 'Penelope Leach wants to push women back into the home. She's part of the new 'familism' of America.' I can hear it now.

But this is simply not so. Nor, let it be said, is this a book which speak to the concerns of the middle-class to the exclusion of all other more disadvantaged groups. What Penelope Leach is doing is putting up a genuinely alternative agenda for child-rearing, which if followed, would revolutionise the status of all parents, not just of mothers and not just of middle-class mothers. Because at last we would be putting the child at the centre; not merely saying the words, pat, but actually doing it.

The last part of the book gets into the practicalities of how it can be done. She points out that all the methods of shared caring and state support sketched out in the book have been tried with success somewhere in the world. We need to harness the knowledge that already exists and put it to better use. We need to stop fearing that children will be spoilt by 'too much' of our attention or 'too much' of our time. The message is that 'good enough' (another of these glib phrases), is not good enough when we have the wealth and the knowledge to do things so much better.



## The Ceilidh Place

FROM RISING TO SLEEPING, SPINNING AND WEAVING  
WORDS IN A GARMENT, LOOSE ROUND MY LIFE:

EATING AND MEETING, TALKING AND SINGING,  
SUCH IS THE CEILIDH, THE JOY OF MY LIFE

JEAN AND ROBERT VROUHART, THE CEILIDH PLACE,  
ULLAPOL, WESTER ROSS. TEL: 0854612103



## ALL KINDS OF KITES!

.... and lots of things to juggle with

plus: windssocks  
boomerangs  
frisbees  
yo-yos  
model yachts  
puzzles



Kite-making workshops and displays

## WIND THINGS

11 Cowgatehead 3-5 Gibson St.  
Edinburgh EH1 1JY Glasgow G12 8NU  
Tel & Fax: 031-220-6336 Tel: 041-334-3336

Mon-Sat: 10am - 5.30pm Mon-Sun: 10am - 5.30pm

Free mail-order catalogues

## JM Centre

*Peaceful and therapeutic breaks on the beautiful  
Isle of Mull.*

Self-catering cottage, sleeps 6 people, minutes from  
the beach. Wonderful views, lovely walks.

Optional extra: qualified practitioners available for a  
range of alternative therapies.

Suitable for children and adults of all ages.

Please write or phone JM Centre, Castle Steadings, Aros  
Mains, Aros, Isle of Mull PA72 6JP;  
Telephone: 0680 300487.

British  
Agencies  
for Adoption  
and Fostering



**BAAF Day Seminar**  
on the theme of  
**post-placement support,**  
Crieff Hydro Hotel, Perthshire,  
31st October 1994.

A seminar with linked workshops on the research findings  
undertaken by the Social Work Section, Department of Social  
Policy and Social Work, University of Edinburgh, into the post-  
placement support project set up by the BAAF Scottish  
Centre. Among the contributors will be Sally Wassell, Janice  
McGhee, and Peter Yeo.

For further information please contact Alice Ednie,  
BAAF Scottish Centre, 031-225 4285.

# Scottish Child

**10 & 14 June 1994**

**Bookings:**

**Scottish Child**

**130 St. Stephen Street,**

**Edinburgh EH3 5AD**

**Tel. (031) 220 6502**

## June Workshops on Child Punishment

**"Just a little smack now and again"**

**Venue: Maryhill Community**

**Education Centre**

**Avenuepark Street, Glasgow**

**Fee: £40 (includes tea/coffee & lunch)**

**Workshop Leader: Rosemary Milne, editor of Scottish Child**



# School Guides

**Your Child Learning 1**  
**a guide for parents of children**  
**at primary school**  
**Scottish CCC £5.99**

Anthea Grierson

**Your Child Learning 2**  
**a guide for parents of children**  
**starting secondary school**  
**Scottish CCC £5.99**

Gail Howieson

This is a concise and informative booklet which gives parents an up-to-date view of the Scottish education system. It has the added bonus of looking nice: full colour illustrations and good use of colour to draw out particular points.

The information it contains will be particularly helpful to parents who have a child who is about to start school. It gives clear guidance about parents' rights in a number of important and often worrying areas of choice: When can I send my child to school? What school can I choose? How can I best prepare my child for this major development in his (or her) life?

I liked the way throughout the book the emphasis is on partnership, between parents and school. This is consistently what parents remark on most when they bring a child to school for the first time: looking back on their own school days, they often remember the end-of-term report and possibly one parents' night per term as the total contact between school and home (unless of course your mum and dad were unfortunate enough to be asked to 'come in and see the head teacher').

Nowadays home-school links are considered to be of the utmost importance, as indeed the publication of this booklet makes plain. And to back that up there are verbatim quotes from parents which give added credibility to what is being claimed:

"I used to avoid parents' evenings like the plague... But last time I went along with the wife - and I survived it. ... The teacher showed us some of the lad's drawings and models, which weren't bad at all."

The 5 - 14 curriculum which is now in place in Scotland, is described in some detail. It gives a helpful overview of what the school aims to provide and in so doing it avoids jargon and strikes a sensible, unpatronising tone.

All in all this seems to me to confirm that primary education in Scotland has a great deal indeed to be proud of. With the additional help of a booklet like this, parents can start off on an excellent footing with their child's early education and therefore be ready to for the challenges of secondary school when they eventually arise.

You've heard of Terminator II and Nightmare on Elm Street II, now here's Your Child Learning 2 - not a sequel but the second in a series of guides for parents but will it be a box office success, or is it pure horror?

Published by the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum, (SCCC), Your Child Learning - 2 is intended to tell parents what happens in the first two years of secondary schooling, so as to "encourage parents to become more involved with their children's education".

I'm always quite suspicious of glossy publications which appear to put forward the government's line. The SCCC exists after all, "to review the curriculum and advise the Secretary of State accordingly". At one level it's hard to equate the message and look of the guide with the reality that schools today are often struggling with too few resources and buildings in a poor state of repair. Nevertheless, despite my initial reservation, I do think that for the most part this book achieves its purpose.

It is attractively presented - plenty of photos of diligent pupils at work looking clean and smart in their uniforms. I can think of a number of schools where images of this kind would not be easy to find. Interestingly enough, the only person photographed who seemed to be unhappy was wearing jeans. This poor creature was a uniformless heap on a park bench beside the section of the guide on bullying. Perhaps he'd been having a hard time from all the other kids in uniform?

The text of this guide is quite sophisticated and I found myself wondering who it is aimed at. It's a

funny mix of quite 'educated' language, coupled with at times patronisingly simple ideas. Take for example some of the advice in the 'Learning at Home' section:

"Here are a few examples of things you could do in the home to support your child's development... When your child is reading a magazine you could ask him or her to show you from one paragraph as many examples as possible of punctuation, especially commas, full stops, quotation marks and apostrophes, and to tell you what job they are doing..."

Tough on the parent who's never really sussed when to put the odd comma in and when to leave it out. As for quotation marks and apostrophes - well, we've all seen the signs which say "Fish and Chip's".

Turning to another section of the book, I did feel I would have liked more detail in the discipline section. Parents, teachers and pupils all find discipline a major issue and although the guide does say that each school has its own system of discipline, it is insufficiently clear about what they might be.

Nevertheless I did find the information interesting and was amazed at the changes since my time at school. It seems now that these places of learning are trying to be much more 'student-oriented' and this emphasis makes you feel school could be a good place to go to.

The verdict? A useful guide to parents which does leave you believing that secondary schools are indeed striving to make the learning experience for young people as positive as possible as well as to make schools places where parents feel welcome too.

Your Child Learning 2 may not win any Oscars but it's still a useful buy at £5.99.

## Among the contributors in this issue:

**Ralph Christensen**, born and bred in Canada, is currently a third year student at the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art; Poet and singer/songwriter, **Mike Dillon**, lives in Edinburgh and has published two collections of poems and songs - *Under the Rainbow* and *Shades of Oisín*; **Anthea Grierson** is acting assistant head at Sciennes Primary School in Edinburgh; Gail Howieson is a parent and childminder; **Ian Maxwell** works for the Scottish Council for Single Parents; **Gordon Meade** is fellow in Creative Writing at the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and writer in residence at the Dundee District Libraries. His latest collection of poems, *Scrimshaw Sailor* will be published by Chapman later this year; **Sarah Nelson** is press officer for SCVO and a freelance writer with a specialist interest in child sexual abuse; **Rona Sutherland** is a single parent living in Edinburgh; **Philip Roycroft** works for Endeavour Scotland. His publications include *More Than Activities* and *Playback*, a Guide to Reviewing; **Mark Wilson** is a community psychologist working at the Easterhouse Child-Centred Project in Glasgow.





## Jan Murray

who works at the Scottish Council for Spastics, looks back on her past and tells how this helps her 'find the positives', personally and professionally.

Looking back at my life there seems to be a couple of distinct patterns. The first is of parallels: meeting and getting to know people who are on the same wavelength and who want the same kind of things out of life. I find that when we grow or discover new priorities, relationships change and we tend to go our separate ways. The second involves taking a look at the changes that have occurred in my recent past. This personal inventory check seems to happen every five or six years.

There are also unpleasant situations and events I've gone through which have taught me a lot about how my life is developing. They have often been the means of recognising flaws which need to be addressed. The closest way I can describe it is that it's a bit like learning to live by a process of elimination. Haphazard it may sound but it's a very valuable insight into how I and others function.

When I was sixteen all I wanted was a job which paid a decent wage. My qualifications were okay but I couldn't wait to leave and get out into the big wide world. The only regret I have about that is I wish I'd worked a little harder to try and get a place at university, which would've meant staying on at school for a further two years. Career guidance was practically non-existent so I left school with very little idea which career I should pursue. At that point I went to college and became a qualified secretary/p.a. and landed a job with The Medical Research Council. From there I moved to Thomson Scottish Petroleum and it was then

I first encountered and learned a lot about public relations and the psychology behind it.

Asia has always fascinated me and I decided to take a year out and travel there for a while. I was twenty-one then. When I came back I knew that I wanted a bit more from my work and life in general. The aspect of secretarial work I disliked immensely is that you're seen, especially by men, as being subservient and it was at that point I started questioning the concept of male/female roles. I believe in working to your best capacity but I'm not prepared to be mistreated like a piece of elaborate organic office equipment just because of

my gender. In short, I suppose this led to my first political thoughts on personal and professional sexual inequality. As I now see it many personal relationships are little different from professional relationships between male bosses and female secretaries. The expectations are often very similar.

The whole questioning attitude I have of male/female roles has given me a new perspective on my relationships with other people. My past experiences haven't escaped this inquisition. I started to look back on life and sort out in my mind some of my past, using the negative to achieve positive and constructive ways of thinking. A

utopian I'm not. My sense of positivity has developed over a long period of time and is tempered by realism.

I'm working for The Scottish Council for Spastics as their public relations officer. They created this post two years ago. This job gives me the kind of reward I need. The organisation is changing very fast and is committed to providing services on a needs-led basis. This new post allows S.C.F.S. to get their message, insight and vision across to the community, service users, relatives and the media more effectively.

The changing organisation has taught me how to be more creative in promoting ourselves. As ever there isn't enough money to go round but that's a minor detail in the whole scale of things. With the media we've managed to gain and maintain a reasonable foothold. When they need a comment or opinion on anything to do with disability, we are often the first point of contact.

When I first started working for S.C.F.S I became more aware of public attitudes towards people with disabilities. The question uppermost in my mind was "Why haven't I seen anyone with cerebral palsy in Princes Street on a busy Saturday?" It gave me the kind of jolt I needed to realise what this job and our general aims would be. Many of us but not all, get caught up in the negative images and shy away from the issues involved. We must look beyond that towards achieving positive living and contribution for everyone. If we don't, we won't be able to take positive action in our own lives.

**IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF  
SCOTTISH CHILD  
August/September 1994**



**Young people, poverty and prostitution - what price a roof over your head? Stephen Naysmith reports on the alarming choices faced by some of Scotland's most vulnerable teenagers.**

**So, half of Scotland's children are 'doing' drugs? What's behind the latest outcry and what are the shortcomings of the drug education programmes now around for children? Plus a long short story for a summer's day - and much more besides.**

**The best way to be sure of getting your copy of Scottish Child is to take out a subscription. You can also order it from your newsagent using the form below.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

## FILMHOUSE

88 LOTHIAN ROAD, EDINBURGH  
TELEPHONE 031- 228 2688

At Filmhouse in June:

SHORT CUTS (3rd - 5th)  
PAINTED HEART (5th - 8th)  
A DANGEROUS GAME (10th - 19th)  
IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER (19th & 20th)  
THREE COLOURS: WHITE (24th June - 10th July)  
LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL (10th - 22nd)  
SCHINDLER'S LIST (21st - 27th)  
THE BAD LIEUTENANT (27th & 28th)

Children's Saturday Matinees:

GENEVIEVE (4th)  
COOL RUNNINGS (11th)  
LORD OF THE FLIES (18th)  
WUTHERING HEIGHTS (25th)  
WIZARD OF OZ (2nd July)

Look out in July for:

KIKA  
GOLDEN BALLS  
DRAUGHTSMAN'S CONTRACT

Ticket prices from £2.00 (£1.50) to £3.90  
Details and booking 031 228 2688  
Box Office open Mon to Sat noon to 9pm  
CAFE BAR open from 10am

## The Woodcraft Folk *In Scotland*

**A Co-operative Voluntary  
Children's Organisation**

For children of 6 and upward. The Woodcraft Folk believes in the principles of Co-operation, Democracy, Equal Opportunities and International Friendship.

Groups are based in local communities and meet weekly to carry out a wide range of educational activities.

For more information contact:

The Woodcraft Folk  
95 Morrison Street  
GLASGOW  
G5 8LP  
or Tel: 041-429-0952





# SUBSCRIBE!

## Scottish Child needs you!

Unpredictable, frank, funny, and often controversial, Scottish Child is full of useful information! Against unbelievable odds the Scottish Child Co-op is celebrating five years of bringing out Scotland's liveliest magazine. Now, as ever, we rely entirely on our subscribers to maintain our independence and to continue publishing. So, if you enjoy the magazine join us and watch Scottish Child grow even bigger and better!

If you are a new subscriber joining us before 1st July 1994 we will also send you (while stocks last) a copy of "Treasure Islands", an essential guide to childrens reading. Forward by Penelope Lively.

### \*BY DIRECT DEBIT

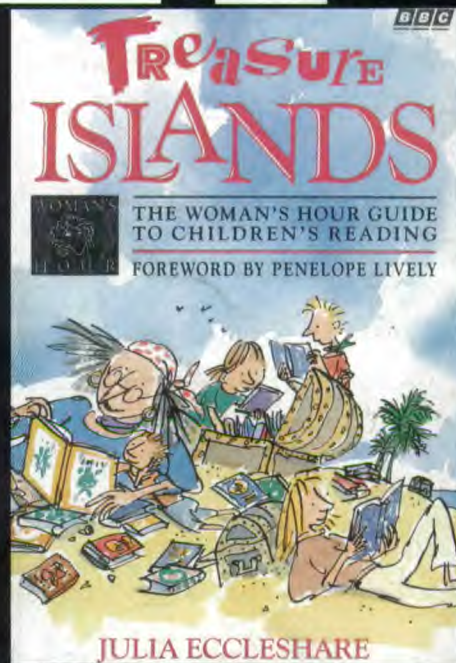
Fill out all sections of the form below and we will send you Scottish Child for just £14 per year for individuals, £19 per year for organisations and groups.

### \*BY ANNUALLY RENEWABLE SUBSCRIPTION

Just fill in the mailing details on the form below and enclose a cheque made payable to 'Scottish Child'. Rates are just £14 for individuals and £19 for organisations and groups.

### \* BY BECOMING A FRIEND OF SCOTTISH CHILD

The highest level of support you can give Scottish Child is by joining our supporting subscribers group. Just fill in the mailing details below and simply pledge a minimum of £50 per year by direct debit or by cheque. We will then send you every issue of the magazine, all our forthcoming publications, and notification of all Scottish Child events. Your name will also be listed at least once a year in the magazine. We cannot overemphasise how much this extra support is needed and valued.



### GIFT OFFER

Please tick if applicable

I am a new subscriber to Scottish Child.  
Please send me my copy of "Treasure Islands".  
I understand that this offer is subject to availability

I want to become a friend of Scottish Child

### DIRECT DEBITTING INSTRUCTION

(BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

To (Name and Address of your bank/building society) \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name and Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

I instruct you to pay direct debits from my account at the request of Scottish Child Ltd. The amounts are variable and may be debited on various dates but Scottish Child Ltd may only change the amounts and dates after giving me prior notice. I will inform the bank in writing if I wish to cancel this instruction and I understand that if any direct debit is paid which breaks the instruction the bank/building society will make a refund.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account in the name of \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Account no.           Bank sort code \_\_\_\_\_

Banks may decline to accept instructions to charge direct debits to certain types of account other than current accounts. Scottish Child Ltd. Reg in Scotland No.113283 Reg Office. 40 Shandwick Place Edinburgh Scotland. Originator's No. 907089.

Please return to Scottish Child, 130 St Stephen Street, Edinburgh EH3 5AD.

### MAILING DETAILS

Please fill this in to help us get Scottish Child to you efficiently. **BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_