



England Wales Northern Ireland

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Newsbrief

International Play Association EWNI

Promoting the Child's Right to Play

News from IPA EWNI

Welcome to this edition of Newsbrief; we hope you find it useful and informative.

The last year has been a busy one for all of us, and also with IPA EWNI, where we have made several key changes in the way we do business.

We have reviewed and clarified our aims:

IPA EWNI aims to uphold the right of all children and young people to time, freedom and space to play in their own way by:

- Promoting the premise that playing is a universal behaviour
 - that the benefits to children and young people achieving their right to play are shared by all races and people around the world
- Fostering and facilitating evidence gathering and exchange (beyond and between international borders):
 - to inform, invigorate, critique and enhance research, policy and practice relating to play, environments for play and playwork
 - recognising that international professional networking and relationship building encourages mutual support and promotes understanding

As promised we have reviewed our work and prepared an annual plan in line with these aims, which were discussed at the AGM in the summer (see inside for more details).

As part of that plan we have increased our membership fees for the first time in ten years. This change has introduced new categories to encourage membership of under-represented groups (under 18s are now free to join; students and voluntary workers pay 50% of the full rate); new group rates and the benefactor membership increased. The new rates are advertised on our newly designed website at www.ipa-ewni.org.uk

The website aims to tell members and others about the work of IPA EWNI; we'd welcome your comments and any contributions you'd like to make.

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Sudeshna Chatterjee

Marc Bekoff



2011 will be a big year in the history of the IPA; in July we celebrate our 50th anniversary as an association and the World Triennial Conference will be held in the UK, hosted by Play Wales in Cardiff. The IPA 2011 world conference website is also available - take a look at:

<http://www.ipa2011.org/>

IPA EWNI will be playing a large part in the conference, with members supporting Play Wales with the organisation of such a big event, submitting papers and offering practical support throughout the programme.

As part of our contribution, we have offered to sponsor the attendance of two keynote speakers at the Conference; these will be Sudeshna Chatterjee and Marc Bekoff. IPA EWNI Committee felt that you would welcome bringing such highly respected speakers to the UK for the world event.

In conjunction with the IPA World event in July 2011, we will be publishing Newsbrief in line with the key themes. So we focus this edition on **Play - Environment and Space**. We will then be doing **Play - Society and Culture** in January 2011 and **Play - Individual and Social** by April.

If you have any short (400-500 words) articles on these themes, please send them to the Communications Group c/o info.ludemos@virgin.net by 12 January or 12 March. There will be other articles in the magazine as you'll see when it comes out, so please feel free to send in any relevant material.

I had a wonderful childhood ... I was brilliant at digging holes, setting fire to my coat and falling out of trees – a fabulous time of my life.

Ken Dodd



Playing: It's natural?

The children had been working as a team for the last hour; the larger ones breaking up windfalls and larger branches, the smaller ones picking up twigs and lighter sticks. All had a role to play and brought their finds down to the beach, where a circle of stones marked the fire pit. One of the older lads took charge and began building a pyramid of smaller twigs. He pushed some scrounged newspaper between the sticks and piled larger ones on top. Taking a match from one of the adults, he waved it in a circle around the pyre. In seconds, the flame caught and soon sped up the stack. All eyes turned to the dancing flames and all went quiet. Marshmallows were produced and toasted on the end of sticks made from grasses growing nearby. As it grew darker, people moved in closer to the warmth and someone started telling stories. Soon everyone was at it, with songs and jokes and silence added as necessary.

Richard Dawkins has his supporters and his detractors, but be they creationists or evolutionists, most people agree that humans have been on this Earth for quite a while, be that 5,000 or 2,000,000 years. In that time, we wandered the land, climbed trees for shelter and security, explored caves, tamed and herded animals, cultivated crops and built fires to keep us warm and feed us. Exploring, understanding and using the world we lived in were vital to our survival and were good for our bodies and our minds.

Yet in less than 50 years, less than a single lifetime, most children in industrialised countries have become alienated from the natural world. The changes are well documented and analysed (BARB, 2007; Bird, 2007; Gill, 2007; Louv, 2005), with terms such as 'risk-averse society' and 'nature-deficit disorder' becoming part of our concerns regarding children. The reasons given for this sudden change include the increase in vehicle traffic, access to TV and other electronic media, fears of abduction, changes in home circumstances and employment. Of course we can't turn back the clock; on the whole people are fed better, housed better, and with more choices than previous generations. But we also know that children are less fit, more likely to be overweight, more likely to be assessed as having a deficit disorder, and more likely to recognise corporate logos than know the names of trees or birds in their neighbourhood. Should we be worried?

Our answer depends in part on what we as adults perceive of the world; is it made up of the malls, supermarkets and entertainment centres that litter our urban communities, or is it the places where minerals are mined, crops cultivated, trees felled and livestock farmed? Many people working with children are concerned that British children are increasingly too remote from the experiences that humans have had since we started to walk on this Earth.

Whether their perspective is educational, environmental or

Do children need access to the natural world?

Perry Else comments on this topic in this article written for SutcliffePlay's magazine 'Playback' and reproduced here with their kind permission.



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emotional, commentators want children to learn from the world, be aware of its resources and engage with its beauty. Those of us in the 'natural play movement' believe that these benefits would arise from children's free engagement (i.e. play) in the natural world. By moving through and interacting with a world that is varied, organic and changing, children experience thrills and surprises and also develop flexibility and creativity to deal with newness, uncertainty, risk and occasionally danger. There is increasing evidence that playing helps develop more efficient brains, and clear evidence that playing is more effective than organised sport at developing healthy bodies (see Lester and Russell 2007).

In their play, children need to explore the physical world as well as imaginary worlds: hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, experimenting, and controlling the elements they find in the world, be they animate or inanimate, or air, earth, water and fire. By being outdoors, children experience warm and cold, wet and dry, hard and soft, slippery and stable, high and low – these things can be programmed into an electronic game but are not 'real' in the tangible, visceral, emotional, and spiritual way they are in nature. In nature, the rules and boundaries are always changing, the games infinite.

It may be argued that little of the land in the UK is truly natural space – we have cultivated it for many generations – yet people are still drawn to the wild spaces where they feel more human, can reconnect and form new experiences. How can we offer these things to children in our towns and cities?

Ideally, the UK government would join those European governments that legislated to put children (and people) first; to reduce the reign of the combustion engine and so allow for free use of the space around (see Else 2009). Until then, it is up to those of us in control of children's lives to try to broaden their horizons and introduce more natural elements into their worlds. All children should have access to space in their neighbourhood where they can interact and play with a variety of things in the real world.

In those spaces, we must give them a variety of both natural and manmade materials that can be used, moved and adapted, built and demolished. We must give them space to move around; climbing, balancing, jumping, and hiding. There should be spaces to dig and make dams. As well as giving them free access to air and earth, we should also factor in water and, yes fire. In our risk-assessed and over-cautious world, the fire would need to be supervised and controlled, but it should be part of children's lives, in bonfires, fire pits, barbecues or kitchens. Like all the basic elements, fire is vital for the development and sustainability of life, as such we remove it from children's experiences at our peril. Whether the human species can get through the next fifty years is uncertain, but what is clear is that those who do survive will do it with their hands on the soil and in the water and not on a keyboard.

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Play4Life Schools Challenge

Healthy and winning start for 25,000 school children

25,000 children across the UK had a healthy start to the new academic term thanks to the Play Providers Association's (PPA) Play4Life Schools Challenge. Between the 15th-30th September indoor play centres gave away FREE primary school visits and the chance for pupils to kick start their year in a healthy and active way. The session included an exercise competition and a healthy eating activity.

Over a hundred play centres across the UK took part in this activity in support of Change4Life – a nationwide movement to help families 'eat well, move more and live longer'. The centres are all members of the Play Providers Association (PPA) the group representing high quality indoor play centre operators.

'The PPA calls the benefit of indoor play "exercise in disguise" as children are too busy having fun to realise the high levels of exercise they are also undertaking.' Kate Costin, PPA Association manager said, 'This Play4Life initiative was an excellent way for PPA play centres to be involved in a campaign to give children the best possible healthy start in their new academic year. Indoor play is a great way to get children exercise without them realising. The way we see it, if this challenge can actually kick-start a few more children into living a more active, healthy lifestyle, then we'll be happy.'

In the 'Pedometer Challenge', children got to play on the equipment that PPA members provide, while their activity levels were measured with a pedometer. At the end of the session the children find out who covered the furthest distance with the best scores going on a site leader board. The national leader board for both the best individual and class scores from across the country are being consolidated currently and prizes will be awarded to the winners in November courtesy of campaign sponsors Britvic (My 5) and Californian Raisins.

The second part of the session involved fun activities based around healthy eating, including teaching the children how essential it is to have a balanced diet and the importance of getting '5-a-day'. Every child received a certificate and medal during their visit to remember the event.

More information about P4L, and the national leader board tracking the most active schools, can be found at: www.play4liveschoolschallenge.co.uk



For more information please contact:

Kate Costin (PPA Association Manager), Federation House, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2RF

Email: kate@sportsandplay.com
Tel: 02476 414999 (205)

IPA EWNI Annual Plan

As mentioned on the front cover, we have reviewed and clarified our aims. To support those aims, we have prepared an annual plan that guides our work. You will see that some of the activities are already underway. This plan will be reviewed at our next AGM in spring 2011. (DATE TO BE ADVERTISED).

Objectives

Debating in all relevant national and international areas, the philosophical and practical rationales for intervening in children's play and the appropriateness and effectiveness of the various responses that have arisen from them

Advising and supporting the IPA International Board to effectively work to influence international bodies and agencies

Facilitating the international exchange of evidence and experience (for instance events, articles, papers, contribution to PlayRights magazine, website and supporting study visits)

Contributing to global consultation initiatives

Facilitating 'cross-fertilisation' between disciplines that have an interest or impact on children and young people's play, environments for play and playwork

Setting up working groups as necessary to support activities in line with our aims

Operating efficiently and using resources wisely

Activities (what we will do)

Attend relevant IPA Events

Attend relevant IPA Events and contribute to consultation documents

Communications strategy including a peer reviewed journal. Ideally the magazine should be self financing.

Actions

- Produce two e-bulletins annually for members
- Continue to develop and maintain the IPA web site; to include a members only section on the web site – with self editing database for contacts

IPA coordinated programme of national and regional seminars/study visits and conferences to facilitate playwork exchange for education and learning.

Present an annual overview of the current play issues around the world – ideally through the magazine and website

Clarify identity and promote consistently worldwide and in all communications – promotion leads to recognition of the organisation then rewards

Encourage both individuals and organisations concerned with play to join IPA by providing a clear package of benefits.

Actions

- Benefits of levels of membership to be clarified and enhanced.



Big Society?

Have you been to Bristol recently? In the home of Banksy, something weird (and wonderful?) is happening. It's not a play project in the usual sense of the word but something that many play people would recognise in their communities – it's called the

PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF STOKES CROFT

Stokes Croft is/was a run-down area of Bristol, close to the city centre; home to the homeless and street workers. In 2009 responding to the lack of interest in the area taken by the local authority a motivated group of people decided to try to make a change, they declared the PRSC. 18 months on and the area is being transformed in creative and playful ways, often with large scale graffiti.

At the heart of the area is a reclaimed five floor office block that is now home to a training centre, artists' studios dance studio, healing centre and the Canteen. In the Canteen, local people can get an excellent two course meal for a fiver, local bands can lay free of charge and local art is on display. The energy in the place is lovely, and – perhaps – a model of what the ConDems do/don't want from their idea of a Big Society. For more info visit: www.prsc.org.uk



More on play spaces:

Paul Hocker took a break to visit Berlin, where he spent time visiting play spaces around the city. In his article [Swinging Berlin](#) Paul lists 10 reasons why Berlin is a great place to play.

To read the article visit the IPA EWNI website at <http://www.ipa-ewni.org.uk>



2011 Travel Awards Lady Allen of Hurtwood

Guidance notes for applications to the Trust

The Object of the Trust is to promote the welfare and education of children through the award of a travel grant to those whose proposed project will directly benefit their work with children.

Amount of award

Who may apply

What the Trustees cannot consider

When to apply

Closing date

Successful candidates

For further information, forms and guidelines

Some projects that have won awards

Applications are invited for the 2011 travel awards made to candidates working with children, to travel and broaden their professional experience and apply it to their work.

LADY ALLEN OF HURTWOOD is remembered for her dynamic contribution to the health and happiness of children throughout the world. Her pioneering action was largely responsible for the Curtiss Report and the original Children's Act 1948. In making an annual award, the trustees have tried to fulfil the spirit of adventure and enterprise instilled in all who worked with her.

Grants are usually in the region of £800-£1,000

People working with children and young people. The Trustees particularly welcome applications from those working with disabled and excluded children.

Grants cannot be given for:

- Academic course fees
- Attendance at specific conferences
- Building and equipping centres
- Supporting individual children
- School trips
- 'Gap year' projects or similar travel
- Medical electives



Please contact the Secretary at the address below for application forms, which are available between May and December each year. Awards will be made in March 2011.

The closing date for applications is the 15th January 2011.

Successful candidates are required to provide a written account of approximately 1,500 words of the experience gained in the project funded by the Trust. This must be received by the trustees within six months of receiving the award.

Visit the website: www.ladyallentrust.org

Email: lamt@hotmail.co.uk

Write to: Caroline Richards, Secretary LAMT, 89 Thurleigh Road, London SW12 8TY

- A grant enabled a Children's Development Worker from Glasgow to visit New York to look at a range of innovative projects that raise the voices of children living in poverty.
- An award in 2009 to the Co-ordinator of the Ebony Horse Club based in Brixton, London. This is an inner city project whereby young people access horse riding, training and learn how to care for the animals. The Co-coordinator visited similar projects in the USA to look at the work they carry out, and to establish longer term links with these projects.

Spatial Play can be Special Play

Play Can Be Anything?

It's not what you play 'on' that is important, but 'who' you play with and 'where' that contributes most to a fulfilling and happy play experience.

It reminds me of the old anecdotal observation that a child can gain as much play value from a cardboard box as the toy it contained. As a playscapes designer, I am more interested in supporting incidental and oblique play experiences.

Traditional Play Solutions are Limited and Limiting by Their Nature

Play design seems too often simply preoccupied with developing play as 'action' at the cost of play as a creative process and consequently focuses on equipment rather than the space in which play takes place. Catalogue equipment seeks to provide instant gratification and *Disneysque* themes. A pirate ship is a pirate ship. It can be nothing else and the play activity it engenders severely prescribing and limited.

Play has slowly and insidiously become synonymous with catalogue play equipment solutions designed to promote children's exercise and physical development for the least cost and minimal maintenance. Spontaneity and fun are thrown in as an afterthought if at all. It has at its root a Victorian notion.

The following extract from Every Man His Own Mechanic (*sic Ed.*) in the 1890s illustrates the fact that whilst physical activity was to be encouraged, that 'fun' was considered dangerous. Heaven forbid that children should enjoy themselves...

Some persons object to swings, and with good reason when they are used roughly and recklessly. A medical man, commenting on amusements for children which are more or less attended with danger, has recently (1880) called attention to a case in which a child aged ten had died from an attack of peritonitis due to irritation set up by excessive swinging. This is a favourite exercise with girls, and it ought to be impressed on parents and guardians that the immoderate use of it is calculated to produce grave ill. Muscular spasm of a severe kind is sometimes set up by it, and often very distressing back and headaches. With many children there is a strong temptation to persist in the motion, which produces a certain pleasing sensation, and whenever this is found to be the case, every tendency to it ought to be immediately checked: much irreparable mischief – immediate and future – may thereby be prevented.

Extract from Young F (1891) Every Man His Own Mechanic London: Ward, Lock & Co

Play is a much more complicated and interesting activity. It is the subtler forms of self-motivated play that I seek to promote through spatial design creating sympathetic play contexts and ambiguity of play purpose.

Jerry Cooper argues that play design should be more ambiguous in order to support playing, rather than be based on adult's sometimes fixed ideas about such spaces.

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Designing Better Places to Play

I can't control the 'who' you play with but I do have an interest and skill in designing the qualities of the 'where'. It's not a new concept but it's still hard to persuade clients that they should be spending as much, if not more, of their scarce budget on creating a beautiful play environment as they spend on play apparatus.

I am a playscape designer with 28 years experience of developing play environments for all ages, in all sorts of circumstances. I always seek to treat the design of a play space with the same rigorous aesthetic and emotional criteria that many adults would apply, without second thought, to designing a building or kitchen layout, but strangely ignore when devising play spaces.

An Emotionally Defensible Space Fosters a Better Play Experience

Play areas seem too often to end up being dropped onto hostile and unsuitable sites that have no designated purpose. We should instead seek to imbue a play space with a sense of ease, complexity and mystery and choose play sites that can support that sense. If my emotional response to a play space is to feel uncomfortable then it will not be an inviting space for children either... surely?

The phrase 'defensible space' comes to mind. I intend to use the term in a more emotional sense of defensibility than its more literal meaning that has often lead to play spaces stripped of any sympathetic spatial qualities as well as all those incidental items that lend themselves, like the cardboard box, to a kind of play activity that is singular to children.





To achieve a more emotionally defensible and richer play environment, planting should be incorporated. The spatial design and careful placement and relationship of these features can lend a real sense of privacy and secrecy without necessarily impeding supervision and safety. Nobody wants to feel like they are being watched or judged. At the same time plants can provide play props such as branches, seeds and fruit to enrich and inform a different play experience.

Spatial Variety Encourages More Creative Play Options

Planting as well as screens or the judicious placing of features and mounds can help break a play space up into numerous smaller spaces and compartments all of which can take on an autonomous play purpose of character conjured up by the children playing there rather than following the designer's prescribed vision. Just let the children do the playing.

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Ambiguity of Play Purpose Enables Different Play

At Theories Landscapes, we also try to incorporate a sense of ambiguity and flexibility in how objects or spaces are used. The greater the ambiguity, the more able the player is to impose their own creativity and wishes on how it is played in, on or around; which in turn fosters a more fulfilling and better play experience. When is something to be hidden behind or climbed on? When is something to be sat on or run along? When is something trying to promote active and boisterous play or quiet play? The capacity to be ambiguous in play intention will prompt a limitless range of playful responses and uses. Instead they can be subtle and covert. A pirate ship is a pirate ship is a pirate ship...

Beautiful Play Environments

We seek to incorporate decorative elements such as acrylic sheet material within play structures to create shafts of coloured light and visual drama. We tentatively and occasionally venture to use the word 'beautiful' when describing the kind of play space we seek to create. We want to momentarily stir a sense of wonderment in a child.

© Jerry Cooper

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www.theorieslandscapes.co.uk
designers@theorieslandscapes.co.uk

Playing into the Future – surviving and thriving

In 2008, Play Wales made a bid to hold the next International Play Association (IPA) conference in Wales in 2011, with the support of all the other UK play organisations.

The conference will mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of IPA in Copenhagen in 1961.

Due to the current level of international interest in what is happening in play and playwork in the UK and Play Wales' vision for the conference, their bid won.



The world conference, being held in Cardiff from 4-7 July 2011 promises to be the biggest play and playwork conference the UK has seen.

The 18th conference of the International Play Association offers four days to share evidence, experience and examples of good practice with colleagues from around the world.

The themes of the conference are:

- **Play – Individual and Social**
- **Play – Environment and Space**
- **Play – Society and Culture**

On each of the four days of the conference there will be a keynote speech by a leading play related expert. The following speakers have been invited and confirmed:

- Brian Sutton-Smith PhD
- Sudeshna Chatterjee PhD
- Marc Bekoff
- Bob Hughes
- Wendy Russell and Stuart Lester
- Keith Towler, Children's Commissioner for Wales

Everyone who has a professional or personal interest in children and young people's play should attend, specifically:

- Providers of services to children and young people
- Providers of environments for children and young people
- Advocates for children and young people's rights
- Decision and policy makers in national and local government and the voluntary sector
- Lecturers, students, researchers and training and education providers

Four day conference attendance	Early Bird Registration by 31/12/10	Registration on and after 01/01/11 to 01/06/11	Registration after 01/06/11
IPA Members	£425	£450	£550
Standard delegate	£475	£500	£600
Daily rate (minimum 2 days)			
IPA Members	£140 per day	£160 per day	£180 per day
Standard delegate	£150 per day	£175 per day	£200 per day

Booking

IPA EWNl members will receive a discount on registration. All fees include a conference pack and bag, lunch and refreshments, evening social events with food, and visits to play settings.

A limited number of reduced conference places are available to students – only £250 for the four-day attendance.

This offer is open to students studying full time in the UK. Proof of student status will need to be provided to secure the booking.

Staying in Cardiff

There is budget accommodation, within walking distance to the conference venue, is available to contributors and delegates at a Cardiff University hall of residence from only £24 per person per night - www.ipa2011.org/university_halls

The conference website has more information:

<http://www.ipa2011.org/accommodation>

Social Events

Monday, 4 July 2011

Twmpath – Welsh Welcome – A welcome to Wales with a traditional **Twmpath** – Welsh food, culture, live music and dancing.

Wednesday, 6 July 2011

The Presidents' 50th Anniversary Party – the conference dinner will be an opportunity to celebrate the last 50 years and look back at the styles and cultural influences of the past five decades since the International Play Association was founded.

IPA members are invited to attend the **IPA Presidents' Reception** before the Anniversary Party.



Playwork Camp

Play Wales is offering a two night International Playwork Camp in mid-Wales for 50 IPA members (twenty for UK IPA members and thirty for worldwide IPA members, all of whom must also book at least two days at the Cardiff conference). There is an additional registration fee for this event. Find out more on the conference website: www.ipa2011.org

This will be a unique opportunity to share skills and ideas, make friends, play with the elements (earth, air, fire and water) and help build play structures.



Make a Noise for Play event – Wed 6 July

Make a Noise for Play is an event for children and delegates to enjoy one afternoon of unadulterated noisy mayhem during the conference.

A panel of children will be planning this event.

If you are a play provider and would like to be considered for the facilitation of a play opportunity at this part of the conference, please request an Expression of Interest Form from:

ipa2011@playwales.org.uk

Study Tours

Play Wales is inviting other organisations to offer tours within the British Isles.

Play Wales will list available tours and links to the organisations providing the tours on the conference website. Delegates can then contact the relevant organisation and make arrangements independently. If you are interested in organising a tour in your area, please contact: ipa2011@playwales.org.uk

Fashion Page – Free Gift!

Now you can tell the World that you belong to IPA EWNI, and it will not cost you a penny.

We think that next year is an important year for the IPA in the UK (you can read why elsewhere). To help spread the message, we will send you a **free t-shirt** of your choice if you can recommend two people who then join IPA EWNI. As anyone who joins also gets a discount to next year's big conference, everybody wins.

The range of play themed t-shirts are in a variety of colours; as Mr Ford might have said, 'Any colour so long as it's black, blue, red or white.' If you can't wait for your recommendation to join, you could buy a shirt for £13.00 plus £2.00 p+p. Available in sizes S, M, L, XL; please allow 3 weeks from order to delivery.

Send your details and cheque made payable to IPA EWNI to paulhocker@hotmail.com



Saving Paper – Looking after the World so Children can Play

This newsletter is now distributed by email to save resources.

Obituary – Ted Beatty

At the meeting of IPA EWNI in September 2010, it was resolved to award Honorary Lifetime Membership of IPA EWNI to three individuals who had made an outstanding contribution to children's play, particularly in the context of our work over the years. One of them was Ted Beatty. To my great sadness, the award letter arrived on the day Ted died. Needless to say he will be greatly missed by all who knew him, and our thoughts go out to his family.

Most of those who worked with Ted in the 'play field' will have known him through his tireless work as IPA EWNI's treasurer for many years, and will acknowledge the huge debt of gratitude we owe him.

However, like a few others I had known Ted for much longer – in fact it was Ted's encouragement that initially brought me into what was then known as 'playleadership' in 1970.

At that time Ted had an unusual job as Community Development Officer in the 'London overspill town' of Haverhill on the Suffolk, Essex, and Cambridgeshire borders. I was born and had grown up in Haverhill, going through its schools and playing in its fields and farmyards. In fact Haverhill and the surrounding countryside provided me with a seminal mixture of growing up in a feral, rural setting during the revolution that was rock and roll.

In truth many of the playwork touchstones I refer to now were given life in that period.

In the late 1960s as the adventure playground movement gathered momentum, Ted, Drummond Abernethy for NPFA, and the local Rotary Club lobbied to have an Adventure Playground in Haverhill – situated, would you believe in a farmyard on the edge of town that I had played in, in my own mid to late childhood. In July 1970 Puddlebrook Adventure Playground opened and for the next five years it was my home, constantly supported by Ted, who by then was a close friend.

During that period Ted advised the playground's committee, supported the playwork team and was a constant visitor. I think he was immensely proud of what he had been instrumental in creating.

Always self-effacing, always first to give credit rather than take it, always first to fight your corner, when trying to explain the intricacies of the emerging playwork to less than skilled councillors and senior officers, Ted was a bastion during the early days of playwork development. I am very proud to have known him and like everyone else who knew Ted, will miss him.

The following story was written in 1975 shortly after I left Puddlebrook. Ted is the VIP...

Bob Hughes Membership Secretary IPA EWNI

Martin was a lovely person; totally gentle, incredibly generous and with special needs. He was the eldest of a family of five children, who all used the playground. Like them, he was extremely happy most of the time and loved painting, and music, although with the latter his taste was a little hard to take; The Dagenham Girl Pipers??

I have one memory of him that shines above all others. Martin had a habit of attaching himself to those he liked by an invisible umbilical cord. He would follow behind his friends – I was lucky enough to be one – at a distance of about six inches, which gave the impression of him perching on you.

On this particular day, we had an 'important' visitor to the playground, a VIP, and Martin and I were there to meet him. He made such a fuss of Martin that I could see what was going to happen. Anyway, our VIP proceeded to slowly tour the playground, followed closely by his new friend. He stopped and went to photograph something with his flash new camera. Martin followed mumbling something.

'Not just now Martin' said the VIP. Martin shrugged and off they went to the next scene. Up came the camera, 'Mumble' went Martin, "Not now", said the increasingly exasperated VIP. Click, went the camera. This went on for ages.

Martin would try and get our attention. The VIP was busy doing his filming. At last he'd taken snaps of everything in sight.

"Now Martin, what is it you want to say?" said the by now exhausted, socially committed to children, VIP.

"The lens hood is still on your camera", said Martin.

Ted laughed at the irony of the story, and was totally aware of how much we all still had to learn about working with children.

Children's pocket money

is now less than £6 a week, a seven year low according to a survey by the Halifax.

Average pocket money in 2010 for children aged between eight and 15 is £5.89, compared with £6.24 in 2009 and £8.37 in 2005.

Boys receive 38p more pocket money on average than girls, older children aged 12 to 15 receive just over £7 a week, while younger children get £4.57 (PR Newswire).



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When summer is forever and winter but a myth
When flying is a jump away and falling a distant risk

When scabs are badges of honour and every fear has a name
When rules are to be broken, no two seconds are the same

When the world is both bigger and smaller than at any time before
When running is skipping, tripping and slipping and barely touching the floor

When there is no past or future just a never ending now
When beauty is a burning ant and we don't care why or how

When sticks are sticky and girls are icky and you like the taste of dirt
When a coat makes you a superhero impervious to hurt

When all and everything are possible and we fly on the winds of fate
We are children
We are gods in our own image
We are 8

Ben Kingston-Hughes (Children's Links)

A poem written in 20 minutes at the Spirit of Adventure Play Conference 2010

Why I'm EWNI-EEK

Having been a member of IPA for a few years I saw the circular for the IPA USA Triennial Conference in 1998; I had a word with my friend Gordon and we decided to submit a paper.

Not having been to America before, I used the IPA contact list to liaise with one of the organisers, Tom Jambor about hotels in Colorado. Tom had never met me, but was very helpful and a good source of information – though he knew nothing about hotels as he lived 1,500 miles away in Alabama! I later met Tom in the company of Robin Moore, Teresa Casey, Rob Whewey and Harry Shier.

It taught me a lot about the size of the USA but also about the IPA network. I've been a member ever since. **Perry**

Keeping in touch

Have we got your current contact details? If not please contact Bob Hughes, Membership Secretary: playeducation@ntlworld.com

Join IPA EWNI

If you would like to join IPA EWNI, an organisation devoted to promoting and protecting the child's right to play please visit: <http://www.ipa-ewni.org.uk> see 'Membership' and download an application pack.

Contribute

If you are an IPA EWNI member and would like to contribute to future issues of this Newsbrief please contact the acting editor, Perry Else: info.ludemos@virgin.net

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