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## **Advance Notice**

ACF Newsletter is delighted to announce the First National Folklore Conference to be held late in November this year at the Institute of Early Childhood Development's Abbotsford Campus. The Conference is being run as an Australian Folk Trust initiative through a Steering Committee containing AFT representatives and invited members. The conference aims to provide a focal point for the many independent groups and individuals involved in Australian folklore activities, and this first Conference will place an emphasis on children's folklore and on the integration of folklore in a multicultural society.

It will be eleven years since the first conference for field-workers in Australian folklore was organised at Sydney University in November 1973, and it is hoped that the 1984 Conference will attract not only field-workers but performers, academics and teachers for a vigorous sharing of experience and opinion for the benefit of Australian folklore and folk arts.

The Editors of ACFN will co-ordinate the Conference section on children's folklore; folklore of, for and about children. Expressions of interest as well as offers to participate will be welcome. Preliminary enquiries can be made through this Newsletter; full brochures will be distributed in May.

Gwenda Davey  
June Factor

## **Rebound:**

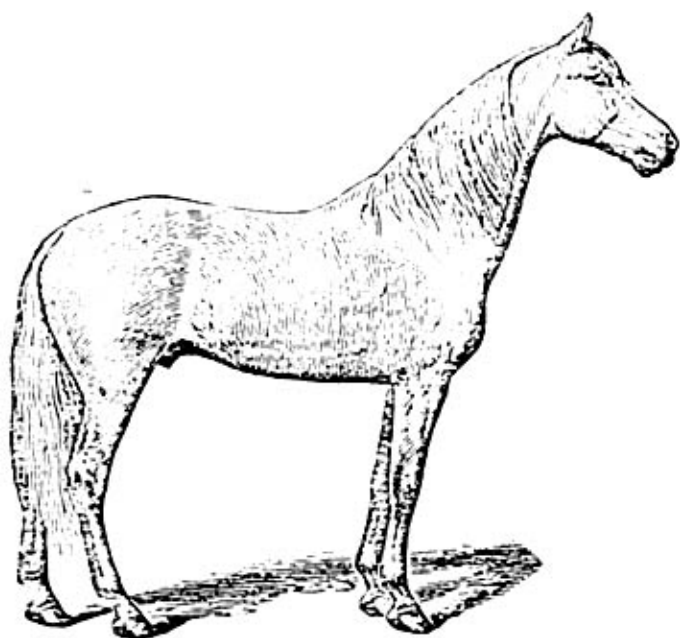
Replies  and

correspondence

### EVEN MORE REMINISCENCES

Reading Alan's copy of The Australian Children's Folklore Newsletter, I was delighted to read, in "Old English Traditions" by Mary Small, the superstition regarding the good luck brought by the white horse.

I was born in Queensland in Brisbane, a second generation Australian with Irish grandparents and this was one of our childhood games, but I've never come across anyone else who knew it. Our version was slightly different. After we'd crossed our fingers after seeing the white horse, we chanted "White horse, will you bring me some good luck" and at the same time performed a complicated manoeuvre of crossing and recrossing our feet in time to the chant. Then we weren't allowed to speak until we'd seen a black dog, when we could uncross our fingers and have a wish. If you spoke before seeing the black dog, you weren't allowed a wish.



We used to bow to the new moon three times, each time repeating "Goodnight, Lady Moon", then turn around three times. After this ritual we had a wish.

We never wore green and shunned anything green. It was very unlucky. I had thought this to be an Irish tradition, but as one side of the family came from the South and the other from the North of Ireland I could never understand why orange wasn't unlucky as well.

When our baby teeth fell out, we put them in a glass of water by our bedside and the Good Fairy (not the Tooth Fairy) came during the night and always left a silver coin.

A dropped knife must be picked up by whoever dropped it. If anyone else picked it up it would "cut" the friendship, but alternatively (my mother was a woman for all seasons!), if someone else did happen to pick it up, it meant a "sharp surprise".

Even though I consider myself a rational person, I always, always, throw salt over my shoulder, if I've spilt it. Left shoulder of course!

There were many more superstitions but in this article I am more interested in discussing several games my sisters and I played.

About 25 years ago at the now defunct Folklore Society in Sydney, a film was shown called "The Singing Streets" made, I think, about Glasgow or Edinburgh.

It made people at the meeting very nostalgic and everyone started talking about their childhood games.

When comparing games, I found there was one I'd played as a child which no-one else seemed to know. As I've mentioned I am a Queenslander and it was much later that I found another Queenslander, Hilda Lane, who came from The Darling Downs, who had also played the game. It is in the Opies' book and it would be interesting to know if any reader from another State remembers it. We only played this game at Sunday School Picnics:

There were 2 sides, one with 3 members and the other side with the rest of the players.

The 1st side with the 3 players holding hands advanced towards the 2nd side singing:

"We are three Knights from out of Spain  
To serenade your daughter, Jane."

By the end of their song they had retreated back to their original place.

The 2nd side advanced towards the 1st side singing:

"My daughter Jane is far too young  
To understand your struggling tongue;  
Go back, go back, you saucy Jack  
And clean your spoons for they are black."

2nd side had retreated again by the end of their song.

1st side advanced again.

"My spoons are clean and shine like gold  
And in this world they can't be sold."

1st side retreated again by the end of their song and the 2nd side advanced again singing:

"Come through my kitchen, come through my door  
And choose the fairest one of all."

2nd side had retreated again during their song and the 1st side advanced again singing:

"The fairest one that I can see  
Is little ..... please come to me."

The chosen one crossed to the side of the 3 knights (the 1st side) and the game commenced again, until there were only 3 left on the 2nd side. They then became the "Knights from out of Spain".

We had a particular tune we used for this game. [Copy enclosed.]

Our "Drop The Hankie" had several differences to the game Ethel Beed played. We had a special song we all sang whilst "It" walked round the back of the circle. We sang:

"I wrote a letter to my love  
And on the way I dropped it,  
And one of you has picked it up  
And put it in your pocket,  
Not you, not you, not you," etc.

"It" dropped the hankie at the back of one of the girls sitting in the circle, and immediately started running. This alerted the girl behind whom the hankie had been dropped and she had to run round the circle in the opposite direction to try to beat "It" back to her place. If she failed she became "It".

We played "Sheep, sheep, come home" and another game very like it, called "Red Rover".

There were 2 sides in this game with a catcher in the middle. Each side stood behind a line opposite each other with a fair distance between them. Behind the line was their "home". The catcher standing between the two lines recited:

"Red Rover, Red Rover, come over,  
One step and you're over."

Each side then tried to cross to the other side without being caught by the catcher. He had only to touch you and you were caught and joined him in the middle. After all had crossed, he repeated his chant, but this time he had many helpers to catch those wanting to cross. As the game progressed and more and more catchers were in the middle, the game became much more exciting with lots of arguments. The catchers weren't allowed to chase you until you had actually put one foot outside your territory.

We played all the usual skipping games, which by the way the girls still play, judging by Alan's collection, and rounders and hopscotch and two and threes (although this last was more of an organised game we played on sports afternoons), and statues and bedlam and marbles; but another I remember from school days was, like Knights of Spain, one that I haven't heard anyone else recollect.

It was a game we played between 1st and 2nd bell in the morning before school started, and after lunch recess whilst waiting to return to our classroom.

The girls would form a circle, with their hands held cupped in front of them. "Queen Mary" in the middle, would have her hands cupped, and inside them would be a ring, her own signet ring, or one borrowed from a mate. She would go round to each girl in turn, putting her cupped hands into their outheld cupped hands singing:

"Queen Mary, Queen Mary has lost her  
gold ring, lost her gold ring, lost  
her gold ring,  
Queen Mary, Queen Mary, has lost her  
gold ring, guess who has found it."

During the song, "It" had dropped the ring into one of the outheld cupped hands. Whoever she finished the rhyme at, had to guess who had the ring.

"It" always tried to drop the ring as casually as possible so no one noticed who received it, but there was always a lot of subterfuge with this game. "It" would pretend to drop the ring into several hands and some girls would pretend to wrest the ring from her.

#### A FURTHER COMMENT ON 'DUKES OF SPAIN'

I don't think I've ever checked this one in the Opies' book but it seems it could be a game of great antiquity, perhaps alluding to Mary, Queen of Scots. I'd be very interested to hear of readers' opinions.

I don't think you need wonder whether children play games now-a-days as they did in your young days, Ethel. Only last Easter when Alan did a workshop on Children's Folklore for the National Folk Festival at Adelaide, he asked his sister in Queensland to see if his nieces' children, who are of primary school age, had any skipping rhymes and games, and found from the tapes she recorded of them and their school friends, that the children today are saying and doing and playing much the same rhymes that he had collected from their mothers in 1957.

I remember a few years ago when a commercial appeared on T.V. for a deodorant called "Uncle Sam", it wasn't long before our kids were singing about the house quite a witty parody that had evolved in the school yard.

I close this article with another modern day rhyme, an adaption by school children of the jingle that was so popular during the "Year of the Child". It achieved widespread circulation in a very short time -

"Care for kids,  
Throw 'em over the Harbour Bridge."

Gay Scott

*(Editors' note: Alan and Gay Scott are stalwarts of the Bush Music Club in N.S.W. and among Australia's leading collectors of folklore - including children's folklore.)*

While reading some articles housed in the IECD Australian Children's Folklore Collection, I came across the following references to 'Dukes of Spain', or 'Knights of Spain'.

From: E. Martinengo-Cesaresco, American Games and Songs, Folklore Journal, No.6, 1888.

"It happens that there are incipient dramas which, like the first in Mr Newall's collection, "The Knights of Spain", are still acted, not only throughout England and the United States, but also in Spain and Sweden, in Italy and Ireland, among the Baltic Finns and the Moravin Sclavs. The Knights of Spain was originally based on the idea of a courtship conducted in the strictly mercantile spirit which probably pervaded the next stage of marriage-making after the primitive carrying off of the bride. Of that earlier system there are also reminiscences in some surviving games and in many popular customs."

From: Miss Allen, Children's Game-Rhymes, Folklore Review, 1882, p.89

#### 'Dukes of Spain'

"Here come three Dukes all out of Spain  
In mourning for your daughter Jane.  
My daughter Jane is yet too young  
to cast her eyes on such a one.

Let her be young, or let her be old,  
'tis for her beauty she must be sold.  
So fare thee well my lady Gay,  
I'll call on you another day.

Turn back, turn back you saucy Jack,  
Up through the Kitchen and through the  
hall, and pick the fairest of them all  
the fairest one that I can see,  
so please, Miss . . . . Come with me."

From: Carrington, E., Folklore Review, No.3, 1881, p.171. An article on the singing games of children in Bocking, Essex.

"I am a gentleman come from Spain;  
I've come to court your daughter Jane  
My daughter Jane is yet too young  
To understand your flattering tongue.



Let her be young or let her be old,  
 She must be sold for Spanish Gold.  
 So fare thee well, My Lady Gay,  
 I'll call upon you another day.

Turn back, turn back, you saucy lad\*  
 And choose the fairest you can spy!

The fairest on that I can see  
 Is pretty Miss . . . . Come to me!

I've brought your daughter home safe  
 and sound,  
 With money in her pocket here,  
 a thousand pounds:  
 Take back your saucy girl back again.

\* Probably once 'boy' pronounced 'by' in  
 Essex."

Fiona Webster

(Fiona Webster is presently a research  
 assistant attached to the Australian  
 Children's Folklore Collection.)

# # # #

RE: THE CONUNDRUMS ON PAGE 3 OF ACFN  
SEPTEMBER ISSUE

I may be able to help a little with the  
 following solutions.

Top of Page 3, second column: The  
 first three lines have got me tricked, but  
 the last line should have eight o's after  
 the pot, which means the captain fed his  
 crew on "pot eight o's" (potatoes).

Further down after "By hook or by  
 crook, etc.", I think the solution may be:

"I auto (ought-to) cry,  
 I auto laugh,  
 I auto sign  
 Your autograph".

The last one (music) -- I think the  
 first B should be a B-flat, thus reading:  
 "Never be flat, sometimes be sharp, always  
 be natural".

Never   
 Sometimes   
 Always 

Here is another autograph ditty I used  
 to know:

"No matter how bad your case is,  
 There are always others worse.  
 And when you're riding in Black Maria,  
 Be thankful it's not a hearse,  
 And if you're sent to prison,  
 Don't talk of wounded pride,  
 Be thankful you're sure of your tucker,  
 While thousands starve outside."

Congratulations on your Newsletter, and  
 wishing it continued success.

Ethel M. Beed  
 (Bulleen, Vic.)

# # # #


You ask for an explanation of the auto-  
 graph book entry on Page 3 of the last  
 issue. I can't recall it all, and anyhow  
 it's a bit incorrectly done. But it's:

Captain DDDD (4 D's-that looks wrong,  
 there's some pun in there).

Took his CCCC (forces - four C's)

To the **WIDD**

= West Indies (i.e. west in d's  
 - you've misdrawn this so the D's  
 look like squares)

And fed them on  OOOO

(Again I think this is misdrawn  
 and should be eight O's

=  OOOOOOOO

(pot 8 O's)

= potatoes

I'll still try to think what the cap-  
 tain is. My vague memory is it was Captain  
 Cook, but I can't see how you'd get that  
 out of 4 D's.

Dave Potts  
 (Melbourne)

You asked for an explanation to my  
article on 'Captain DDDD'.

Captain Fordes (4 ds)  
Took his forces (4 cs)  
To the West Indies (D@B@T)  
and fed them on potatoes

Mary Small

## Poems I know

*In the Introduction 'For children' written  
by June Factor for her book of Australian  
children's chants and rhymes FAR OUT,  
BRUSSEL SPROUT! (O.U.P. Melb. 1983), she  
asked her young readers to send her the  
rhymes, riddles, jokes and games they knew.  
The first response came from Emma Einsiedel,  
a Grade 6 student at a Melbourne primary  
school.*

Sarah and Tom,  
Sitting in a tree,  
K.I.S.S.I.N.G.,  
First comes love,  
Then comes marriage,  
Then comes Sarah,  
With a baby carriage.

Jack and Jill,  
Went up the hill,  
To fetch a pail of water.  
I don't know what happened after that,  
But they came back with a daughter.

Look up in the sky,  
It's a bird,  
It's a plane,  
No it's a bird.



If brains were dynamite  
You wouldn't have enough  
To blow your nose.

Roses are red,  
Violets are blue.  
Most poems rhyme,  
But this one doesn't.

Roses are red,  
Violets are blue.  
The shorter the dress,  
The better the view.

Roses are red,  
Violets are blue.  
I was born spunky,  
What happened to you?

Roses are blue,  
Violets are red.  
I think you're a bit  
Funny in the head.

If all the boys  
Lived out in the sea,  
What a good swimmer  
Jan would be.

First comes primary,  
Then comes high,  
Then comes Jane,  
With a good looking guy.  
Then comes love,  
Then comes marriage,  
Then comes Jane,  
With a baby carriage.

Go play hopscotch  
on the freeway.

Go tapdance  
on a mine field.

If brains were electricity  
You'd be a walking blackout.

## Skipping Rhymes

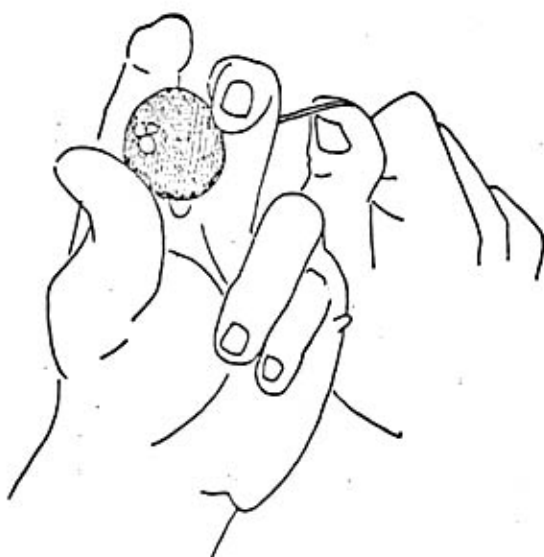
Twinkle Twinkle  
Football star,  
How I wonder what you are.  
Clouting heads and busting knees  
Seldom seen by Referees,  
Twinkle Twinkle  
Football star,  
How I wonder what you are.

I had a little motor car  
No.64  
And I took it round the corr...ner  
And slammed on the brakes.  
Policeman caught me and put me in  
Jail,  
All I had was ginger ale,  
How many bottles did I drink  
1, 2, 3, 4 . . .

Emma Einsiedel

## Conkers

*The author recalls a game 'very popular in Cambridge [U.K.] playgrounds, and exclusively for boys'. Have our readers any knowledge of this, or similar games, in Australia?*



The game of conkers was invented by William the Conqueror in Hastings in 1066. Plenty of boys and the hard brown shiny seeds of the chestnut tree have ensured its survival ever since. Average seeds or conkers are about the size a 30 cent piece would be if we had one and come in spiky

green pods. Preparing them for the joust simply requires threading a piece of string, knotted at one end, through a hole in the centre. Meat skewers were excellent producers of the ideal diameter. One shouldn't ask how long the piece of string is as that will produce as many answers as there are players. Let the fact that there will be breakages in the heat of play be your guide.

Two players stand opposite each other. By agreement one suspends his conker by holding the string in his hand, knuckles upward. The other contestant now has three 'goes' at hitting the suspended conker with his own, taking care to clear the outstretched knuckles of his opponent as it is his turn next. The point of the sport is to shatter the other's conker. The conker triumphant profits from this by claiming the title 'er' to the number of contests it has survived. (There are no prizes for coming second in conkers.) For example: New conker A beats new conker B. A becomes a 'oner'. The success continues when A beats C, also new. Now A is a 'twoer'. And so on and so forth until individual conkers seem to be invincible and measure their 'ers' in dozens. Deciding the outcome and allocation of 'ers' when one of these classic heroes came to grief produced the sport's first schism.

Some players claimed all the previous 'ers' of the vanquished for their own conker. Thus, when a 'hundreder' went under to a 'oner' (and everything has to go sometime) these players claimed a 'hundred and oner' for their champion. But this was generally seen to be a bit flash. Other doings from the seamy side involved artificial hardening of players. Soaking in vinegar was recommended and might be acknowledged worthwhile practice by any former pugilist readers. Baking in the oven was also the word and both methods did produce a titanium-like finish. Often purists, that is those with conkers au naturel, would defer playing with the hard cases who were left to exchange granite-like 'goes' at each other. Not that there was ill feeling. It was just that it didn't seem to be 'conkers', all this tinkering business. Rather like anabolic steroids in sport. Or cricket and the World Series hybrid.

Accuracy and power were all in the cut and thrust of play. A poor shot could lead to 'strings'. Whoever shouted this when strings became entwined regardless of whose turn assumed the role of striker. Knuckles have been mentioned. Power was gained by keeping the striking conker restrained behind two fingers and running a short string tightly along the curved, upright thumb of the striking hand. It was of course never done to move one's conker when in play.

Patrick DeLargy-Healy  
(Tullamarine, Vic.)

## **Hard Tennis**

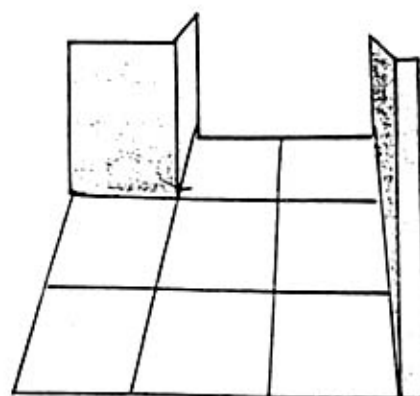
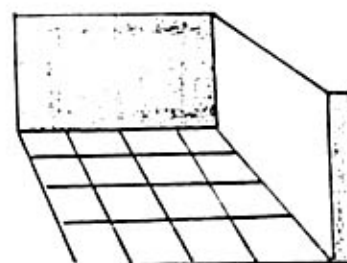
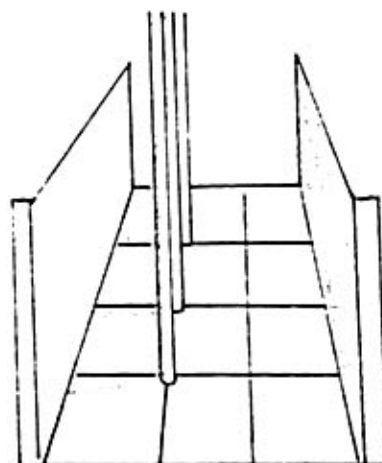
(DARAMALAN COLLEGE STYLE)

The game is like conventional hard tennis, in that it is played on concrete paving, using the form-lines as count dividers. One player defends each square, and is out if the ball double-bounces within his square. Thus the ball may pass over his square, bounce once without needing his intervention (though he may).

A player hitting (or allowing to continue, after bouncing in his square) beyond the boundary of the game is out. Squares have a hierarchy of progression, the final one being the server's square. A player 'out', reverts to the lowest square, everyone else below him moving up one. Players aim to get to the serving square, and to get the server out.

The different part to this game is the use of squares. A game can be of any size (I have seen up to 15 or so playing). A wall rather than being an obstacle becomes an asset, so that players can bounce off a wall. A square adjoining a wall will usually be the server's square, so that he has extra difficulty in facing balls from bounce as well as direct approach. If several walls (even posts) exist within the court, they are simply incorporated into the game, a bounce off a post would not be a foul. The use of multiple walls is interesting, games can go round corners even.

Some examples are:



Michael Searle

(A.C.T.)



## LETTER FROM NEW ZEALAND

I was able to borrow the book by Brian Sutton-Smith A History of Children's Play: The New Zealand Playground 1840-1950, University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia 1981, and I certainly found it interesting. My parents, both born in New Zealand, told me old stories especially of the boys on the West Coast tormenting the poor Chinese miners.

In my day, and even in my parents' childhood, boys would have scorned to join the "sweet-hearting" games though of course originally it must have been a two-way game.

Nearly all the games were played in circles with one person who had been "counted out", who usually stood or knelt in the middle while the ring circled round.

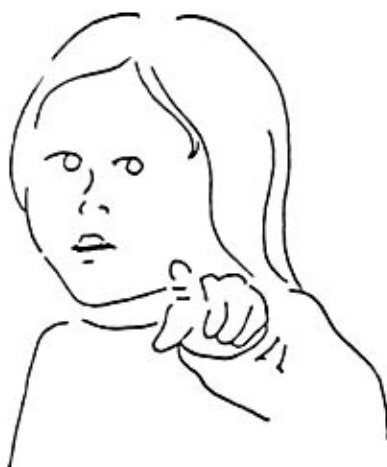
We played these games usually at lunch time and when we had parties - yes, even when we were over thirteen so even in the 1920s we were unsophisticated. I don't think this would apply in cities. From remembrance, they were all very much the same - a kind of chant:

### Green Gravel (in circle)

Green gravel, green gravel, the grass  
is so green,  
The fairest young lady that ever was  
seen.

We'll wash her in milk,  
And dry (or dress) her in silk,  
And write down her name with a gold  
pen and ink.  
Dear (any name) dear \_\_\_\_\_ your true  
love is dead.  
He sent you a letter to turn round  
your head.

At this the person named turned with her back to the centre and the game continued till all were circling round facing outwards. Of course in all these games we all joined hands.



### On Yonder Hill (circle as before)

On yonder hill there lives a maiden  
Who she is I do not know.  
All she wants is gold and silver  
And a nice young man I know.  
Choose to the east and choose to the  
west  
And choose to the very one you love  
best.

The middle girl chooses one from the  
circle. Then:

Now you're married you must be good  
Help your wife to chop the wood.  
Chop it fine and carry it in,  
And kiss her over and over again.

Then the chosen one stays, and the  
original girl returns to ring.

### See this Pretty Little Girl of Mine

See this pretty little girl of mine  
She cost me many a bottle of wine.  
A bottle of wine and whisky too,  
To see what my pretty girl can do.  
Down on the the carpet she shall kneel  
(she did)  
While the grass grows in the field.  
Stand up straight upon your feet  
And choose to the one you love so sweet.  
(repeat)  
Now you're married we wish you joy  
First a girl and then a boy.  
Seven years after, seven years come,  
Pray young couple, kiss and be done.  
(Repeat as for last game)

When we had a school fancy dress party, we played Jolly Miller in two concentric circles - one boys, one girls - one fewer girl and a boy in centre. This was one of two games mixed: the other, "The Grand Old Duke of York" was also played at fancy dress parties and practised in drill periods at school.

There was a jolly miller and he lived by himself.  
As the wheel went round he made his wealth.  
One hand in the hopper and the other in the bag,  
As the wheel went round he made his grab.

Then the middle boy made a grab as did all the other boys and the one who missed out was then "miller".

Another game, not in circles: two lines faced each other and three children pranced (like horses) together down the middle chanting either:

Here come three dukes a riding  
or  
Here come three gentlemen out of Spain  
A-ree a-row a riding.  
Here come three dukes a-riding  
To court your daughter Jane.

The people in the two rows then chanted the following:

My daughter Jane is yet too young  
To be controlled by such a one  
or  
She has no skill in a flattering tongue.

The three then chanted:

Oh be she young or be she old  
It's for her gold she must be sold.

Those in the lines now chanted:

Go through the kitchen go through the hall  
And pick the fairest one of all.

The three then prance along and choose.

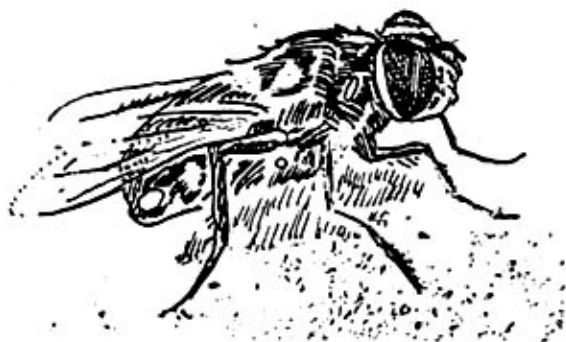
The fairest one that I can see,  
Is pretty Nance (Jane etc.) come with me.

Those in lines now chant:

Go back, go back you saucy knight  
And clean your spurs till they be bright.  
(Response)  
My spurs are bright and richly wrought  
And in this town they were not bought  
And in this town they won't be sold  
Neither for silver nor for gold.

There were others: Poor Jenny, Drop the Hanky, Nuts in May, Oranges and Lemons etc.

Marjorie D. Gray  
(Te Awamutu)  
(New Zealand)



Wendy Lowenstein sends the following gem:

There was a little fly and he flew into a store,  
And he pooped on the ceiling and he pooped on the floor,  
And he pooped on the lollies and he pooped on the jam,  
And he pooped all over the grocery man.

The grocery man he got his little gun,  
To shoot that little fly on his little brown bum,  
But before he could count to 5 or 10,  
The little brown fly poop-pooped again.

FROM: Kathleen Macarthur, Bread and Dripping Days: An Australian growing up in the 1920's. (Kangaroo Press, 1991)

# *The Australian Folklore for Children Project*

The Australian Children's Folklore Collection at I.E.C.D. contains approximately 10,000 entries of children's playground lore. This enormous archive of "folklore OF children" does not at present have any parallel as regards "folklore FOR children", with the exception of a few hundred items in community languages other than English, mainly collected during field recording for the Multicultural Cassette Series produced at I.E.C.D. English-language folklore for children still in active use in Australia is not as yet adequately documented in the Australian Children's Folklore Collection.

The AFC Project aims to collect folklore of many different types in both English and other community languages, folklore which is CURRENTLY IN USE and which is used by adults with children. The Project is co-ordinated by Gwenda Davey and is partly funded by the Australia Council through the Australian Folk Trust. Over the next two years, individuals and institutions will be invited to participate in a survey to collect Australian folklore for children. READERS OF THIS NEWSLETTER ARE PARTICULARLY INVITED TO PARTICIPATE. All participants are to be sent the following Briefing Notes, and where possible, are asked to use the standard data sheet. Teachers who are supervising students collecting folklore for children will also be sent a sample Student Instruction Sheet. Despite these efforts at standardisation, contributions from readers of this Newsletter will be most welcome, on any old bits of paper!

## Briefing Notes for Participants in Australian Folklore for Children Project

### What is "Folklore for Children"?

For the purposes of this project, folklore is defined as those traditional aspects of behaviour and beliefs which are learned directly from other people rather than from books or media and which are passed on informally, usually in families and often by word of mouth.

Folklore for children may involve words, music or rhythm, movements, drawings or material objects such as home-made toys. Some items of folklore for children may involve several of these characteristics; for example, a bouncing-baby-on-lap (dandling) rhyme may involve words, music and movements, whereas a game which adults teach children like Noughts and Crosses involves drawings (graphics) plus verbally transmitted rules.

### Folklore OF and FOR Children

Folklore FOR children needs to be distinguished from folklore OF children. Folklore OF children refers largely to the playground lore passed down from one generation of children to the next (transmission from child to child). Such lore includes all kinds of games such as skipping and clapping games or marbles or "elastics" which are often accompanied with rhymes, chants or songs.

This project is not concerned with folklore OF children. Folklore OF children has already been extensively documented, as in the Australian Children's Folklore Collection at the Institute of Early Childhood Development in Melbourne, and in

published books such as The Lore and Language of School Children (Opie 1959), Cinderella Dressed in Yella (Turner 1969, Turner, Factor & Lowenstein 1978) and Far Out Brussel Sprout (Factor 1983). By contrast, no studies of any magnitude have ever been carried out in Australia into adult folklore addressed to children, so that the Australian Folklore for Children Project is breaking new ground.

It needs to be pointed out in passing that the folklore "OF and FOR children" distinction is not an infallible classification system. Sometimes adults will teach children items of playground lore remembered from their own childhood, and sometimes children will learn adult child-lore from each other. Nevertheless, the distinction between folklore "OF and FOR children" is a valid and useful one, in that the main persons transmitting the lore are children and adults respectively.

#### "Living" rather than "dead" folklore.

It is essential to emphasise that the AFC Project is concerned with folklore which is still in active use. It is not concerned with the lore which adults can recollect from their own childhood, however fascinating it may be. Unless a song, rhyme or saying is currently used by an adult to children, it is not of significance to this project.

#### Types of folklore for children

Many different types of folklore for children are of interest to this project, and the following list is given, with examples. The list may not be exhaustive, and some categories will overlap:

- lullabies (e.g. Rockabye Baby on the Tree Top)
- nursery rhymes (e.g. Humpty Dumpty)
- rhymes and chants (e.g. Pat a Cake)
- tickling games (e.g. Round and Round the Garden)
- finger plays and other body games (e.g. Here's the Church and Here's the Steeple)
- bouncing (dandling) rhymes (e.g. Ride a Cock Horse)

- pencil and paper games (e.g. Boxes or Dots)
- proverbs (e.g. Too Many Cooks)
- reprimands or evasions (e.g. A Wig-wag for a Goose's Bridle)
- warnings (e.g. If the wind changes while you're pulling a face)
- toys (must be home-made)
- tales or "modern legends" (these can be complicated and may involve warnings, e.g. the "well-known" public toilet where girls are kidnapped for white slavery)
- superstitions (e.g. don't walk on the cracks in the footpath)
- fairy tales (e.g. Goldilocks and the Three Bears)
- made-up stories or reminiscences (e.g. "when I was a boy")
- rituals (e.g. the Tooth-Fairy)
- jokes (e.g. knock-knocks)
- teases (e.g. Which hand will you have?)
- songs (e.g. What shall we do with the drunken sailor?)
- parodies (e.g. X has got a bunion, a face like a pickled onion)
- prayers (e.g. Now I lay me down to sleep)
- tongue twisters (e.g. She sells seas shells on the sea shore)
- games (e.g. how many buttons (etc.) in my hand?)

#### What is "traditional"?

The reader may dispute that some of the above examples are "traditional", such as "What shall we do with the drunken sailor?", yet no infallible distinction can be made between "folk" and "popular" culture. Some nineteenth century popular music hall songs such as "Botany Bay" have already passed into the Australian folk tradition, and some other popular items such as "Daisy Daisy" are well on the way. If the informant learnt the item from another person and is passing it on from memory, include it! Whether it is or is not truly "folk" can be debated at a later date.

"Made-up" stories are in a somewhat different category. These are included because they are a traditional activity, and sometimes incorporate elements of fairy tales or myths.



### Who will be interviewed, and about what?

Both adults and children may be used as informants for this project. Adults interviewed could be parents or grandparents, or any adult regularly involved with children such as teachers or child-care workers. Adults would be asked about the folkloric material which they use with their own children or the children they are concerned with; children would be asked about material which adults use with them. In every case, the key information sought involves the nature of the material, the persons using it and the persons to whom it is addressed, and the context or situation in which it is used. In other words; what, who, where, when and why!

### Age of the "children" in this project

For the purposes of this project, "children" range from birth to and including adolescence. Clearly some categories of folklore as listed above will apply more to one age-group than another. Thus lullabies will concern mainly infants, whereas tales or "modern legends" will probably concern older children and adolescents.

If children are interviewed about folklore which adults use with them, they must be interviewed about adult folklore used now, not, for example, what adolescents remember from their childhood. For the purposes of this project, recollection is OUT!

### What aspects of folklore for children can any one collector obtain?

The collector may choose to interview informants about as many types of folklore as possible, or may wish to select one type only, such as lullabies, legends or games - depending on the collector's or supervisors' interests. You may also wish to collect folklore of many types about one topic, such as sex-roles or obedience, or collect all types of folklore for children in one language only.

Some adults may use very little folklore to children, and others may use a great deal. Almost everyone uses some, and most people can be prompted with examples to realise that they use far more than they may think at first. Both well-educated and illiterate adults may be excellent informants.

### Languages to be collected

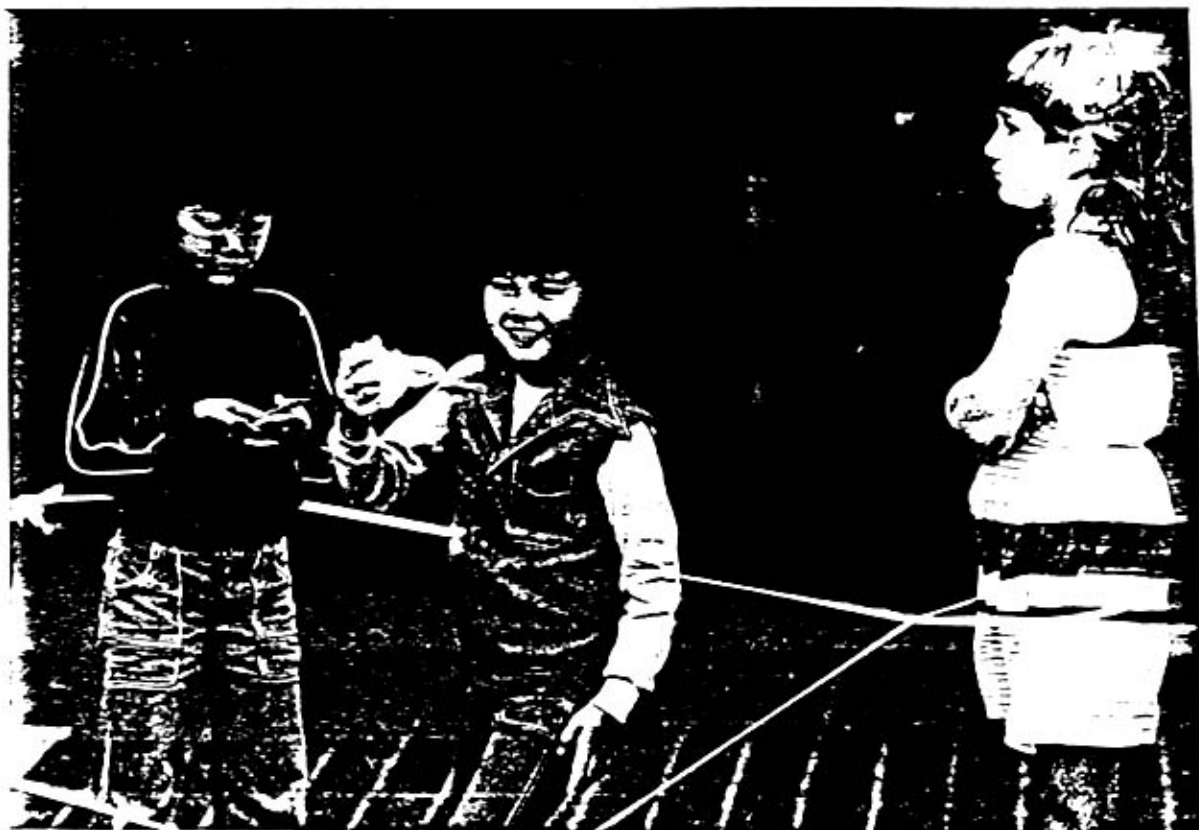
The Australian Folklore for Children Project aims to collect folklore currently used by adults with children in English and other Australian community languages. A "community language" is defined here as any language in regular use within the Australian community, and in present-day Australian society this involves almost every major world language and a number of dialects. All are of great interest to this project.

### A brief reference list

- Bettelheim, Bruno. The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairytales, 1976 London: Thames & Hudson.
- Brunvand, J.H. Folklore: A Study and Research Guide, 1976 New York: St Martin's Press.
- \* Davey, Gwenda. 'The Functions of Folklore', 1983. Extracts from M.Ed. thesis, Folklore and the enculturation of young immigrant children in Melbourne.
- Goldstein, Kenneth, S. A Guide for Field Workers in Folklore, 1974 Detroit: Gale Research Co. (for American Folklore Society).
- \* Goldstein, Kenneth, S. 'The telling of non-traditional tales to children: an ethnographic report from a northwest Philadelphia neighbourhood', 1975, Keystone Folklore, Vol.20, No.3.
- Keesing, Nancy. Lily on the Dustbin: Slang of Australian Women and Families, 1982 Ringwood, Vic.: Penguin (Australia).
- Opie, Iona & Peter. The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book, 1975 London: O.U.P.

\* Reprints can be obtained from Gwenda Davey.





Elastics at Collingwood Education Centre,  
Melbourne (see ACFN No.2). Photo Len Lamb  
"The Age" 24-3-84. Used with permission.

# # # # #  
#  
# Gwenda Davey's M.Ed. thesis Folklore  
# and the enculturation of young  
# immigrant children in Melbourne  
# (Monash 1983) is held in the main and  
# Education Faculty libraries at Monash  
# and in the library at Melbourne  
# C.A.E., Institute of Early Childhood  
# Development.  
#  
# # # # #

# # # # #  
#  
# Have you any home-made playthings?  
# The Australian Children's Folklore  
# Collection at I.E.C.D. will be holding  
# an exhibition shortly of home-made  
# playthings by and for children: paper  
# dolls, apple dolls, sock and newspaper  
# footballs, shanghis, etc.  
#  
# If you can contribute to this  
# exhibition, please send items to the  
# editors of the A.C.F.N - or, if the  
# material is too awkward or delicate to  
# post, let us know where we can pick it  
# up.  
#  
# A catalogue of the exhibition will be  
# made available to all A.C.F.N.  
# subscribers.  
#  
# # # # #

## WEATHER DITES

Do any readers of the A.C.F.N. know of Australian 'weather dites' - traditional sayings about the weather, often used by adults to explain weather changes etc to children?

Emeritus Professor Herbert Halpert (from Memorial University, Newfoundland, Canada), who is one of our subscribers, has established an archive of 'dites' at his university, and seeks Australian examples. The following Canadian weather dites are taken from his book, A Folklore Sample from the Maritimes (Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Publications, 1982):

Thunder: God is angry.  
God rolling potatoes  
downstairs.  
Devil beating his wife.

Snow: God's dandruff.

Readers who know of any weather dites used in Australia can send them to the editors of A.C.F.N. who will forward them to Professor Halpert. If we receive a large response, we may also begin a 'weather dites' section of the Australian Children's Folklore Collection at I.E.C.D.

Readers of ACFN may be interested in the 7th Annual Storytelling Weekend conducted by the Victorian branch of the Storytelling Guild of Australia. The main speaker for the weekend will be Patricia Scott who will be focusing on Aboriginal myths and legends and the use of puppets in storytelling.

Place & Date: Erskine House - Lorne  
June 1st - 2nd, 1984

Fee: all inclusive \$75.  
Students/pensioners \$68.  
Family. 2 adults, 1 child under 12 \$150.

Please make cheques payable to:  
STORYTELLING GUILD OF AUSTRALIA -  
Victorian Branch.  
and post to: TREASURER  
STORYTELLING WEEKEND  
BOX 10, P.O.  
BALWYN 3103

## S T O P   P R E S S

The Minister for Home Affairs and Environment, the Hon. Barry Cohen M.P. has agreed to open the First National Folklore Conference to be held at the Abbotsford Campus in Melbourne on the weekend of 24th and 25th November 1984.

Expressions of interest, enquiries and offers of accommodation or of other contributions can be addressed to:

Secretariat,  
First National Folklore Conference,  
P.O. Box 182,  
BRUNSWICK EAST 3057

Data sheet

Folklore for children: single item

Informant (mother, father, child, other) .....

Language spoken to child .....

Age of child (years, months or weeks as appropriate) .....

Sex of child .....

Location (suburb or town and State) .....

Date of interview .....

Title of item (if any) .....

Type of item (e.g. song, game, rhyme, story, saying etc.) .....

Who would normally play or tell this item? .....

When and where and how often would item normally be used? .....

.....

From whom did informant learn item? .....

Why does informant think he or she uses item? .....

.....

Words of item (Ask informant to write out in full or dictate to you.  
Continue on back of sheet as necessary. If item is not in English, add  
translation).