

AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE NEWSLETTER

Editors: June Factor & Gwenda Davey

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Editorial

We apologise for the late appearance of this issue of the Australian Children's Folklore Newsletter, but both editors have been travelling overseas, meeting up for a brief but most enjoyable few days in Philadelphia, at the centenary American Folklore Society Conference.

Such a conference provides an opportunity for children's folklorists (among other things) to gather together, exchange ideas, and plan for the future. The Children's Folklore section of the American Folklore Society organised a meeting of all members at the excruciating time of 7 a.m. during the conference, but this proved to be its only lapse from good sense and good humour.

We were delighted to meet so many colleagues who shared our interests and concerns. Although children's folklore is only one of a number of sub-groups of the American Folklore Society, there were more than 1400 people at the conference - it is a vigorous and cohesive group. We were able to meet in the flesh people whom we had known only by name, and the comfortable lobby of the Sheraton Hotel, where the conference was held, as well as neighbouring restaurants, provided ample opportunity for good talk on matters folkloric.

A highlight for us at the conference - and a complete surprise, as correspondence recording the good news never arrived - was the award to June Factor of the Opie

Prize for her book, Captain Cook Chased a Chook: Children's Folklore in Australia (Penguin 1988). This prize honours the late, great British children's folklorist, Peter Opie, and is awarded "for an outstanding contribution to the understanding of the folklore and folklife of children". From one ACFN editor to the other: Congratulations!

Now we're both back in Australia, and struggling with accumulated mail. We appreciate particularly those of our readers who take the time to write to us. We would like to publish more readers' contributions, so please consider writing for the ACFN over the summer.

We are also planning a readership drive in 1990. If you know of a friend or colleague whom you think might be interested in this Newsletter, then send in name and address and we will post out a sample copy. Even better: consider giving the ACFN as a Christmas or New Year, or birthday, or just-for-fun present. At \$6.00 a year, including postage, it is not expensive, and the more subscribers we have the better chance we have of enlarging and improving the publication.

To all our readers: a jolly Christmas, Hanukkah (choose your celebration), a Happy New Year, and all good wishes for 1990.

Gwenda Davey
June Factor





The Festival in the Rainforest

The 24th National Folk Festival will be held at Easter 1990 in Kuranda, North Queensland - a small picturesque rainforest village on the edge of the Atherton Tableland, 25 km from Cairns.

A separate Children's Festival will run concurrent to the main Festival and will involve children in drama, craft and other creative activities.

The theme for the 24th National is "The Festival in the Rainforest" and it embraces current environmental issues. The Kuranda rainforest is also a rich source of local Aboriginal folklore and dance and this will be featured at the Festival. A secondary theme revolves around 1990 being the International Year of Literacy. Oral tradition, storytelling and the demise of certain Aboriginal languages all relate to this theme.

The main venue is the outdoor Kuranda Amphitheatre but the entire village will be devoted to hosting the festival; local theatres, halls, pubs, markets and restaurants will be utilised, in addition to tents and marquees erected for the occasion.

Accommodation ranging from resort to hostel style will be available. A special camping ground adjacent to the festival site will be set up.

Contact: 24th National Folk Festival Committee, P.O.Box 343, Kuranda, Qld. 4872, Australia.
Phone: (070) 938711
(070) 937568

NURSERY RHYMES; A NEGLECTED STUDY IN AUSTRALIA

This article by Gwenda Davey was originally published in ORANA, the Journal of School and Children's Librarianship; Vol. 24, No.2, May 1988. It is reproduced here with permission from ORANA and with the references to the Australian Bicentennial (1988) deleted.

Since 1975 I have been collecting nursery rhymes currently used in Australia, in English and other community languages. There were probably two main questions which stimulated what has now become a lifetime's interest: the first question notes that the Opies' Oxford Book of Nursery Rhymes contains about 800 rhymes, but which are common in Australia? The second question (which I now know to have been unbelievably naive) enquired whether other languages used the same kind of inspired nonsense and wisdom as the English nursery rhyme. I now know that they do, and I have a small number of publications on this topic (see Davey, 1979, 1984, 1986). One of my favourite nursery rhymes is Italian:

*Signorina Patatina
Con le game di gallina,
Con la vesta di veluto;
Signorina, ti saluto!*

*(Little Miss Potato
With her little chicken legs
And her velvet dress;
Little Miss, hello!)*

The sheer volume of nursery rhymes used in Australia is extraordinary. My collecting has so far identified about 250 English-language nursery rhymes and many in other languages. They are very much a family tradition, and despite the numbers of nursery rhyme books in print, greatly influenced by oral transmission from one generation to another. Families have very idiosyncratic collections; every interview my students or I have carried out has produced a different list. There are a few which are more common than others: This Little Piggy Went to Market, Twinkle Twinkle, Humpty Dumpty, Round and

produced a different list. There are a few which are more common than others: This Little Piggy Went to Market, Twinkle Twinkle, Humpty Dumpty, Round and Round the Garden and Baa Baa Black Sheep appear to be the most popular. Most of the 250 rhymes are familiar, and one intriguing discovery is the small number of once-popular songs which seem to be finding their way into the folk tradition. How Much Is That Doggy in the Window? is the most common, and Daisy Daisy, K-K-K-Katie and even When Father Papered the Parlour are still sung by some adults to their children.

Borrowing between the folk and commercial/popular traditions goes both ways; the song I've Got Sixpence was popular during World War II.

*I've got sixpence,
A jolly jolly sixpence,
I've got sixpence
To last me all my life;
I've got tuppence to lend,
And tuppence to spend,
And tuppence to send home to my wife.*

In 1784, the version printed in Gammer Gurton's Garland was as follows:

*I love sixpence, a jolly jolly sixpence,
I love sixpence as my life;
I spent a penny of it,
I spent a penny of it,
I took a penny home to my wife.*

A more recent example is the Simon & Garfunkel popular success - the song Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme. Gammer Gurton's Garland includes the following:

*Can you make me a cambric shirt,
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme,
Without any seam or needlework?
And you shall be a true love of mine.*

Nursery rhymes provide the adult world with more than a repertoire of reusable song material. They also provide a continual supply of symbols, images and poetic phrases, often used in the titles of books and plays such as The Pumpkin Eater, My Fair Lady, Bells on Her Toes and Upstairs, Downstairs or for trade names such as Tom Piper or Four 'n Twenty.

I have found the volume and nature of nursery rhymes, in many different languages, to pose a hundred different questions to which I would like to find answers. Why do parents amuse their children with unlikely juxtapositions like Cat and a Fiddle or a cow which jumped over the moon? Or in the Greek, O Pontikos, with a mouse and a monastery?

*The mouse jumped from the window
And his mother asked him,
"Where are you going, my skipper?"
"I'm going to get a marble
To build a monastery
To put my children in,
So that the fleas won't get them."*

Which rhymes do immigrant parents still tell to their children in Australia, and which ones (if any) have they discarded? Are there more similarities or more differences between English-language and other language nursery rhymes? How old are nursery rhymes? Where did they originate?

To attempt to find many answers about nursery rhymes is a frustrating task, as this fascinating and rich body of oral literature is much neglected by scholars. Two names stand out in the last half century, namely Opie and Baring-Gould, and I propose here to comment on their contribution to nursery rhyme scholarship.

The definitive scholarly work on nursery rhymes in the English language is unquestionably Iona and Peter Opie's Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes, first published in 1951. Not only is it the most extensive collection of annotated rhymes published in English but a book which discusses in its all-too-brief introduction a number of the most important issues concerning this rich and fascinating aspect of our cultural heritage. These issues include definitions, nursery rhymes as poetry, origins, the process of 'possession by the nursery', the power of oral transmission, Germanic equivalents and 'political squibs'.

Despite the great antiquity of nursery rhymes, the term 'nursery rhyme' does not appear to be older than the 19th century, being previously known as Mother Goose's or Tommy Thumb's songs (Opie, p.1). Furthermore, with the exception of a few rhyming alphabets, few were composed specially for the nursery. The Opies' list (pp.3-4) of the adult origins of nursery rhymes is both lengthy and intriguing. It

includes the following:

fragments of ballads or folk songs
remnants of ancient custom and ritual
refrains from barrack rooms and taverns
diversions of the scholarly, the erudite and the
wits
rude jests
satire against the clergy and the rulers of the
day
romantic lyrics 'of a decidedly free nature'

as well as many others. The Opies do not offer any explanations about how or why this adult material became 'possessed by the nursery', and this process presents an intriguing topic for further research, particularly in terms of the nature of adult-child relationships within the family. Certainly it is increasingly well-known these days that earlier centuries were far less protective of children's sensibilities than contemporary adults are supposed to be (see, for example, Aries, 1962). It is also possible that family life even today, is much earthier than is often publicly acknowledged.

The Opies' collection of many hundreds of nursery rhymes also demonstrates the power of oral transmission. They state (p.8) that:

The infrequency with which the rhymes were recorded before the 19th century establishes that the written word can have little to do with their survival.

The survival of nursery rhymes has been extremely long-lasting: the Opies refer to a manuscript of c.1364 which includes the nursery game of Bo-Peep, Peek-Bo or Peep-Bo (p.17) and many scholars believe that some rhymes are much older.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Opies' Introduction to the Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes concerns their rejection of the still popular belief that



most nursery rhymes were originally political satire. They condemn most of the theories as 'political squibs' lacking in real evidence, and describe Katherine Elwes Thomas's book *The Read Personages of Mother Goose* (Boston, 1930) as 'a curious mixture of fact and fable' (Opie, p.29). Although they believe that there is some evidence for a few political origins such as that *Charlie Over the Water* was in fact Bonny Prince Charles (pp.29-30) they state (p.27) that

the bulk of these speculations are worthless. Fortunately the theories are so numerous they tend to cancel each other out.

Another well-known contribution to nursery rhyme scholarship in the English language this century has been William and Cecil Baring-Gould's *Annotated Mother Goose*, first published by the New American Library in 1962. (All my references are to the 1967 reprint). The contribution made by these two American scholars is particularly valuable for its chronological approach which details some of the earliest printed compilations of nursery reprints in the English language. The *Annotated Mother Goose* reprints rhymes from the following 18th century publications, together with annotations by the Baring-Goulds:

- Tom Thumb's Pretty Song Book (London, 1744)
- Mother Goose's Melody or Songs for the Cradle (London, c.1760)
- Gammer Gurton's Garland (London 1784)
- Tommy Thumb's Song Book for All Little Masters and Misses (Worcester, Mass: 1788)
- The Tom Tit's Song Book (London, c.1790)
- A Christmas Box (London 1797)



In addition, a number of 19th century publications are represented by substantial abstracts. The best-known of these are those by James Orchard Halliwell and a number of American publications such as William A. Wheeler's *Mother Goose's Melody* (1869).

The biggest problem presented by the Baring-Gould's publication concerns the material which has been left out. This material raises a number of interesting questions, some controversial. Few might dispute the compilers' decision to delete from a discussion of nursery rhymes the 'selections from the works of Spenser, Southey, Wordsworth, and other poets' included in the later editions of *Songs for the Nursery* published by Benjamin Tabart and Company, originally in 1805. Yet the list would be interesting, given that several nursery rhymes still in common use are by known authors. The Baring-Goulds list *Wee Willie Winkie*, *Ten Little Indians*, *Three Little Kittens that Lost Their Mittens* (p.297) and the *Opies* include *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* (1951, p.398).

The other material from the *Songs of the Nursery* which has been omitted from *The Annotated Mother Goose* is rather more challenging. I immediately and obstinately want to read the items described by the Baring-Goulds (1967, p.111) as 'unacceptable by modern standards ... by anonymous hacks ... ill-written, tediously repetitive and overly sentimental ... never achieved any popularity whatsoever.' My obstinacy has perhaps been generated somewhat earlier in the *Annotated Mother Goose* by what seems like some unacceptable fiddling with original material. The first collection of rhymes detailed, *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book* (1744) is stated by the Baring-Goulds (p.24) to be 'exactly as they appeared ... well over 200 years ago'. Yet *Ladybird, Ladybird*, the first rhyme in *Tommy Thumb*, is banished to their Chapter 12 where it 'seemed to us to be more at home'. This bewildering decision is followed by another arbitrary deletion of 'one especially objectionable line' from the rhyme

Blackamoor, Taunymoor,
 ————
Your Father's
A Cuckold
Your Mother told me.

The same rhyme is printed only as an annotation, rather than in the text, although

the reprinted rhymes are allegedly 'exactly as they appeared there' (p.24).

Even allowing for a lower level of tolerance to bawdy in the 1960s than today, this kind of interference is hardly acceptable in a scholarly work. It is impossible not to wonder what has been left out in other chapters! It is particularly hard to understand, since the Baring-Goulds present what is clearly a critical discussion of wowers and bowdlerisers in their first chapter. The outraged complaints against the earthiness of much nursery lore made (for example) by George Wither (1641) and Sarah Trimmer and Samuel Goodrich in the 19th century are balanced by Walter de la Mare's defence which the Baring-Goulds quote (p.21) in the 'hope that you, the present reader, will agree with him'. De La Mare wrote that the *Mother Goose* rhymes

free the fancy, charm tongue and ear, delight the inward eye ... many of them are tiny masterpieces of word craftsmanship... crammed with vivid little scenes and objects and living creatures...a direct short cut into poetry itself.

We do have to thank the Baring-Goulds for including (p.35) the following deliciously vulgar rhyme from *Tommy Thumb*, one which will strike a heartfelt chord with many parents of young children:

Piss a bed
Piss a bed,
Barley Butt,
Your bum is so heavy
You can't get up.

Valuable features of the *Annotated Mother Goose* are the opportunities it provides to compare present-day nursery rhymes with older printed versions, and to consider their age, even allowing for the fact that the rhymes in the 18th century collections were already ancient. Some of my own research into nursery rhyme usage in Australia has shown that Australian adults regularly use many rhymes printed in the 18th century compilations. Here are a few of them, together with the publications noted in Baring-Gould:

Sing a Song of Sixpence
Hickory Dickory Dock
Mary Mary (Mistress Mary) Quite
Contrary
Little Boy Blue
Baa Baa Black Sheep

All in The Pretty Songs of Tom Thumb (1744).

Hey Diddle Diddle
Jack and Jill
Little Jack Horner
Jack Sprat

All in Mother Goose's Melody (c.1760)

There Was an Old Woman Who Lived in
a Shoe
Goose-a-goose-a-gander
Little Bo-Peep.

All in Gammer Gurton's Garland (1784).

Thanks to the Baring-Goulds, we know that all these rhymes were popular in Britain before European settlement began in Australia in 1788. Their popularity remains, in Australia at least. A fascinating subject for scholarly investigation would be to make a detailed comparison of the versions of nursery rhymes common in Australia today with the 18th century texts and with 19th century publications such as those of Halliwell. It is possible that Australia might provide a form of the 'Appalachian syndrome' found by researchers such as Cecil Sharp, who discovered very old versions of English folk songs preserved in the Southern Appalachian mountain communities in the United States between 1916 and 1918. (See Sharp, 1965). Only some detailed comparative research will provide an answer!

Gwenda Davey

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JUST OUT

Two new books of children's folklore in Australia -

Heather Russell, *Carmen Out to Play!* (OUP)

June Factor, *Real Keen, Baked Bean*. (Hodder & Staughton).



MEMORIES OF MARBLES AND JACKS

In August this year, the education editor of the Melbourne Age, Geoff Maslen, wrote a piece about the supposed disappearance of marbles from school playgrounds. His source of information for this unhappy news was a school principal. At the conclusion of a lively description of the importance of marbles in our childhood, Maslen wrote:

"If marbles have gone, then the times are tumblin' out of joint. Maybe it is the greenhouse effect at work, so that the winter season's trigger failed to set off the playground chain reaction and the game of marbles has simply faded into obscurity, like short pants, "Blue Hills" and threepenny bits."

Immediately, the Age received calls and letters informing Maslen that marbles were still popular with children across the country. In September, he wrote a second article, titled "No Sir, Victoria has not lost its marbles", which began:

"We were wrong. If all the small correspondents who contacted The Age over the past week are any guide, the ancient game of marbles is well and truly alive in schools across Australia."

Maslen passed on to me a letter from a reader who remembers the marbles games from his childhood in the 1920s. Mr. R.J. Davey has kindly given us permission to reprint that letter in ACFN, as has Heather Malseed, who wrote to me about her memories of Jacks in the 1960s.

. . .

Dear Mr. Maslen,

Your piece on marbles in The Age this morning was splendid. Perhaps your sadness at the apparent decline of marbles playing is not warranted. In Normal Douglas's book London Street Games, first published in 1916 and put out again in Dolphin Books in 1931, Douglas made the same complaint but then, I haven't seen a game of marbles played for about 50 years, and perhaps it has died at last.

The three main games played when I was a child in the twenties were Ring, Fat and Holes. You described Ring very well, Fat was similar with a little more at the beginning and the end. A square was marked out and each player put his stakes - or dakes as they were generally known - in the square and then the players bowled their Taws - remember that word? - up to it and the boy whose Taw was closest had first crack at knocking the stakes from the square. However, if the boy failed to clear every alley from the square and had lost his turn the other players were then entitled to "track" him. Tracking was a skilful business, the aim being for the chaser to catch the boy who had got most of the stakes from the square. He did this by using another boy's Taw, for the unwritten laws said that the tracker could keep going as long as he kept touching another alley. Fat was a very good game and a good player could make money - stonks usually - but occasionally we played glassies up or even Immas up. Holes was a dull game, three holes were dug a few feet apart in a straight line and the game was to go up and down without missing a hole. Really good players could win at this game all day.

Marbles or Alleys had its own terminology. The aim of every boy was to own a Real. Possibly Real referred to real marble. Normal Douglas mentions Catseyes and so did my mother, circa 1900, and I think Reals and Catseyes were the same. Next came the Imma, obviously imitation real. Immas looked like Reals but the shrewd boy was never fooled. Then there was Glassies from the lemonade bottles, Agates, Stonks which were made from clay and, rarely in my time, Tombowlers.

There were a few other words which have gone for good I think. The word "wainer" or "fainer" was used all the time a game

was being played. This word was used to prevent another player gaining an advantage. For example, in the games of Fat or Ring if there was an opportunity for a player to knock more than one marble out in one hit he could at the very moment of impact cry out "Dubs". This must have been a corruption of doubles and if his call was not answered in time he could claim the number he knocked out. However, his opponents were usually awake to this and they kept up continuous calls of "wainer dubs" or sometimes "fainer dubs". These words, if they managed to drown out the player's cry of "dubs" had the magical property of being able to cancel his claim.

I've looked up the Macquarie and Oxford Australian Dictionaries and Sydney Baker's two books but "wainer" and "fainer" don't get a mention. However "fudging" is listed by the Macquarie as the practice in marbles of trying to gain an advantage by shifting a marble forward. I remember one other strange word which was used often in marbles 60 years ago too. That was "funnyknuckle" but sadly, I don't remember what it meant.

You wrote that marbles came in without warning. True, and they went out just as mysteriously. I believe that at Tatura, marbles came in when Mrs. Johnson, the Newsagent, put marbles for sale out on her counters, so perhaps the time for their appearance was decided by some shrewd importer in Melbourne. I think they went out immediately before cricket came in.

I see that you've had a couple of responses from boys who claim to be playing the game still. Now, how about an article on the splendid gambling game of Cigarette Cards. It went out when cigarette cards went out and I don't think we'll see it again. A pity. That was the only game I was every good at.

Yours sincerely,

R.J. Davey
(30/8/89)

Editor's Note:
Can any of our readers contribute to a discussion of Cigarette Cards?

. . .

Dear Ms Factor,

Only the girls played (unlike Alan Marshall and

his mates some years before). We'd sit on the cement floor of the shelter shed, in the middle of cold Western District winters, and play all recess and half lunchtime. Goodness knows why we only played in winter, but that was the way it was - as The Could-a-Been champions would say, "Jacks is a Winter Sport."

You mentioned that the American Researcher found different expressions from state to state, but as far as I remember those expressions quoted all referred to different parts of the game.

The parts I recall were:

1. You had to pick them up one at a time, then two and so on - Can't remember a name.
2. "Sweeps", the same as (1), but you had to sweep them together with one hand while the thrown Jack was in mid-air.
3. "Scatters" meant dropping the 5 Jacks, rather than bouncing them from the palm, to the back of your hand and back again. You'd repeat (1) and (2) then.
4. "Horse in the Stable" meant splaying your left hand out, and pushing Jacks between each finger, while the thrown Jack was in mid-air (a variation of "Sweeps").
5. "Jumps" meant placing your hand little finger to the floor and 'jumping' each Jack over it.
6. "Threading the Needle" was pretty tricky. You had to hold your forefinger and thumb in a circle, at about shoulder level, putting jacks through it and dropping them.
7. "Catching flies" was a case of number (1) but instead of letting the jacks drop into your hand, you had to hold your hand, palm out, away from you and then flick it down and over the thrown jack.
8. "Through the Arch" probably came after "Scatters", I've muddled the order a bit. All you did was sweep the jacks through an arch made by thumb and forefinger on the floor.

Maybe there were more, I can't remember them now. I'm pretty sure we never did anything about teeth, mice, friends or enemies though.

We used to dye our jacks too, with cochineal and sometimes gentian violet and then, when we went really upmarket we used food dyes - green and blue, all sorts.

The plastic jacks were never much good, they were too small and too light. I had one set once and I remember the night Mum and Dad brought

them home for me, one was accidentally flung into the fire by an enthusiastic cousin (male, now that I come to think of it. Maybe boys only played at home). I was pretty upset: when you're young you think things that are bought are somehow better than the real thing. It's like preferring tinned jam to boring old plum jam from the blood plum tree.

I still have my Jacks, and sometimes they come out at gatherings. I'm usually the only one who knows much about them though, and it surprises me. I don't think they're played much at Hawkesdale anymore: my younger sisters didn't really use them much at all.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Malseed.
(9.9.89)

. . .



ONE DAY SEMINAR/WORKSHOP

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 1990.

from 9.30 am - 3.30 pm

**CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE:
THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM**

OR

SEE YOU LATER, CHIP POTATA!

The world of children's games, rhymes, riddles, jokes, insults and other play lore is ancient and ubiquitous. Yet it is only in recent years that Australians have begun to recognize the rich sub-culture which children inhabit when at play, and to evaluate its significance to the children, and to our own understanding of human societies and cultures.

This one day programme will include:

**an opportunity to examine
material from the Australian
Children's Folklore**

**Collection housed in the
University of Melbourne
Archives;**

**presentation of information
concerning the diversity
and variety of Australian
children's folklore;**

**discussion of gender, class
and national differences in
children's play lore; and**

**consideration of children's
vernacular language use.**

**COST: \$45 (includes
morning and afternoon tea.
Lunch available from
variety of local cafes and
restaurants).**

**VENUE: The Australian
Centre, 131 Barry St.
Carlton. 3053.**

**For further information
and registration, call June
Factor on 344.5358 or
344.7235, or write to: Dr.
June Factor,
The Australian Centre,
The University of Melbourne,
Parkville. Vic. 3052.**



To celebrate **International Literacy Year** in 1990, we would like to include folkloric material from children for children as a supplement to our first ACFN issue in 1990.

We welcome contributions - please encourage children of your acquaintance to write to us and send us their favourite rhymes, riddles, jokes, songs, yarns, etc., as well as descriptions of their play lives.

List of Artefacts in the Australian Children's Folklore Collection

In **ACFN**, No.16, we published a summary of material held in the Australian Children's Folklore Collection, housed in the Melbourne University Archives. Below is a listing of items from one part of that collection - children's play artefacts.

Inquiries about the collection (which is available for research and public viewing) should be addressed to the Melbourne University Archives, Barry Street, Carlton, 3053, or to Dr. June Factor, Australian Centre, University of Melbourne, Parkville.

The Australian Children's Folklore Collection, housed at the University of

Melbourne Archives, contains over 10,000 entries of children's lore (games, rhymes and riddles, jokes, etc.) as well as photographs, audio and video recordings and play artefacts.

The number after each item identifies the object in the archive.

AUTOGRAPH albums belonging to Ronis Lesley Chapman (x3)
1962-1967, Melbourne (54A)
1964-1968, Melbourne (54B)
Undated, includes signatures from celebrities at Channel 7 and GTV 9 (54C)

AUTOGRAPH album, donated by Ronis Chapman, belonged to Ronis Dinwoodie, 1939 (55)

AUTOGRAPH album belonging to Ida (no surname). 1937-1939, Sydney (90)

AUTOGRAPH album (copy) belonging to a girl from Highbury, London, born July 1925. She was evacuated with her school on 2/9/1939 to country areas for safety (91)

AUTOGRAPH album belonging to Ida Sharp (92)

BALLS, reed. Homemade by Heather Leonard. Square design is modelled off Sth East Asian reed balls which are round in shape. Donated by Heather Leonard, 1988 (89)

BICYCLE, handmade out of ring pull cans, made by Gwen Day's son, 1988 (78)

BLOCKS. Formerly property of Dr. Harold Moore who was born at No.2, Collins Street, Melbourne, in 1893, and played with the blocks as a child. They had remained in the family and were donated to the Collection by his daughter, Ms Barbara Moore in 1987 (63)

BULLROARER. Handmade Aboriginal top made by Sandy Atkinson, an Aboriginal who grew up on the Cumeragunga Mission on the Murray River. Made and donated by Sandy Atkinson, 1988 (70)

BUTTON SPINNERS (x3) simple homemade toy using a button and string. Made at the Children's Museum 1989 (75)

CARDS. Cigarette (children trade them). A gift to D. Howard (1963) from Pedro Munoz, age 12, Tonalá, Mexico. (Dorothy Howard Collection (15)

CARDS, Mexican playing. (Dorothy Howard Collection (14)

CUP AND BALL facsimile - popular in C19 (52)

DIABOLO. Plastic with sticks and string. Donated by J. Keel, who bought it in the 1970s (81)

DOLLS, apple, made by an 84 year old woman in Lincoln, Nebraska, in the 1960s (the kind of dolls her mother made for her when she was a child in pioneer Nebraska in

the 1880s). (Dorothy Howard Collection) (10A & 10B)

DOLLS, PAPER CUT-OUT, MID 1980's (43)

DOLL. Liberian bush child's, made by her father. The little girl carried the doll in a rag sling on her back (as her mother had carried her as a baby). A peace corps participant (USA) bought the doll in the 1950s, paid the child and paid the father to make her another doll. (Dorothy Howard Collection) (9)

DOLLS, Mexican handmade, bought in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 1962 - dressed by a woman in Maryland, USA. Mexican toys from Guadalajara and Tonalá in the State of Jalisco, collected and bought in 1962 and 1963. (Dorothy Howard Collection (21A & B)

DOLL, Moldavian National Costume, USSR, donated by Sylvia Brover, 1985 (57)

DOLL, Russian traditional = Matrioshka, donated by Sylvia Brover, 1985 (58)

DOLL, Samoan. Bought in Apia, the capital of Western Samoa. Made of bark, with painted face. A common doll sold as a children's toy (like our 'Barbie' and 'Ken') Early 1980s (60)

DOLLS. Handmade Japanese paper dolls. Made and donated by Mrs Masumi Jackson. 1988 (65)

DRUM, donated, Melbourne
1987 (62)

FLAGS, Australian, Melbourne
1954 (53)

FLAG, Mexican (Dorothy
Howard Collection) (20)

INCENSE OF THE WEST - made
from native pinon and
juniper. A. an 'horno'
(oven). B. Tee Pee, made in
New Mexico USA (23 A & B)

JACKS, metal, 6 jacks and a
bouncy ball c. 1950s, bought
in Maryland (Dorothy Howard
Collection) (1)

JACKS. Japanese. Silk bean
bags filled with red beans,
called O-Tedama. Twenty one
O-Tedama in a plastic
contained made by Mrs Kino
Hiraga, at the age of 91, in
Japan. Donated by her
daughter, Mrs Masumi
Jackson. Note: the game of
O-Tedama is very similar to
Jacks using five or six O-
Tedama bags per game (82)

JACKSTONES, (pebbles) played
with by Dorothy Howard in
1905-1910 in East Texas
(Dorothy Howard Collection)
(2)

JAX. Twin Jax set including
16 metal jax, small plastic
case. Two bouncy balls are
missing. Bought in USA in
1988. Donated by Naomi
Rogers (67)

KNUCKLEBONES. Sheeps. A
gift from Miss Kelly, 1954,
in Melbourne. She dug them
up in her garden (buried
there by her dog). (Dorothy

Howard Collection) (24)

KNUCKLEBONES (plastic
manufactured), bought in
Melbourne in 1954. (Dorothy
Howard Collection) (26)

KNUCKLEBONES, a gift from a
12 year old boy in Perth,
1955. (Dorothy Howard
Collection) (25)

KNUCKLEBONES, plastic
replicas. From Roman Baths
at Bath, England. Packet
includes notes on history
and instructions for several
Roman games (33)

KNUCKLEBONES, American,
purchased, 1981 (34)

KNUCKLEBONES (61)

LIMBERJACK, West Virginia,
USA (Dorothy Howard
Collection) (12)

MARBLES, cat's eyes. Found
in Melbourne in second-hand
shop. 1981 (38)

MARBLES, glass, purchased
Adelaide 1981 (36)

MARBLES in tobacco bag,
c.1920s and 1930s, Maryland,
USA. (Dorothy Howard
Collection) (3)

MARBLES, Japanese, purchased
Sydney, 1982. Also used in
England as plinkers (35)

MARBLES, Japanese (O-
Hajiki). Flat glass marbles
in blue round cardboard box.
Bought and donated by Mrs
Masumi Jackson 1988 (79)

MARBLES, large (37)

MATCHBOX FURNITURE, handmade. Two chests of drawers, made by Kerry Gavin and Gwen Day from a simple design used by Gwen's mother during Gwen's childhood. Made in 1988 (73)

MINIATURES of Queen Elizabeth II and Winston Churchill, bought Perth 1955. (Dorothy Howard Collection) (27)

MINIATURES of the Royal Coach bought in Perth in 1955 (Dorothy Howard Collection) (28)

PAINTING. 'Stormy Weather', painted by Jim Spratt, Australian Aboriginal boy, 12 years old, c.1950 (Dorothy Howard Collection) (30)

PAPER AEROPLANES mid 1980s (42)

PAPER BALLS, Japanese (Fu-Seng). Donated by Mrs Masumi Jackson 1988 (87)

PAPER BOATS (x3). One sampan, one sampan with cover, one twin boat. Made by Malay woman in 1988 (76)

PAPER FOOTBALLS. A. mid 1980s, donated by Carlton North Primary School. B. made at the Children's Museum 1989 (45 A & B)

PAPER 'GOBBLER' mid 1980s (44)

PAPER HATS, handmade Japanese Samurai hats - made for BOY'S Festival - Habuto.

Made and donated by Mrs Masumi Jackson 1988 (66)

PAPER ARMY HAT, made by Malay woman 1988 (77)

PEA SHOOTER made by a college student in Maryland, USA, c1960, copy of the one he used as a boy in Maryland Mountains in the 1930s and 1940s. (Dorothy Howard Collection) (5)

PENGUIN, handknit, bought in a shop in Melbourne in 1954 (Dorothy Howard Collection) (31)

PINBALL MACHINE, homemade (39)

PUGILIST (pugil) made by hand, bought in public market in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 1963. (Dorothy Howard Collection) (13)

PULL-A-LONG TOY, made out of tins. Made and donated by Sandy Atkinson, who grew up on the Cumeragunga Mission on the Murray River (71)

PUZZLE made about 1890 in Maryland mountains, USA, (for adults). (Dorothy Howard Collection) (8)

QUONDONGS, Western Australia, strung on a wire. They were used in a game of skill (Dorothy Howard Collection) (32)

RATTLE, baby's, carved from linden wood, Maryland, USA, c.1900 (Dorothy Howard Collection) (7)

RATTLE, baby's, carved from

one piece of linden wood,
Maryland, USA, c.1910.
(Dorothy Howard Collection)
(6)

RUBBER BAND CHAIN, used to
play Elastics (incomplete
and perished). Made by a
Japanese girl in 1982. Same
method is used by Vietnamese
and Cambodian children in
Australia (41)



SHUTTLECOCK, Chinese, bought
in Po Hong's Bookshop in
Little Bourke Street,
Melbourne. 1988 (88)

SKIPPING ROPE, English,
handles made from weavers
bobbins. Facsimile of 19th
century booklet contains
English and Scottish
skipping rhymes (50)

SKIPPING ROPE, made of a
leather cord from an old
Melbourne tram. Leather
cord donated by Tramways
Board. Yellow macrame
handles made by Judy
McKinty, 1989 (64)

SLING, made by a 70 year old
Senor Martiniano in Tonalá,
Mexico, who said in his
youth he made and used a
similar sling to kill large
wild animals for food. A
child's weapon - 'hondo'
(Spanish). (Dorothy Howard
Collection) (22)

SLINGSHOT, Maryland USA,
c.1920 (Dorothy Howard
Collection) (11)

SLINGSHOT, early 1980s.
(40)

SLINGSHOT, mid 1980s. (59)

SWAPCARD ALBUM, c.1960s (56)

TAWS, Hopscotch. Examples of
hopscotch taws, used over
the years, collected for the
Children's Museum
exhibition: "You're It".
Shoe polish tin, block of
wood, broken piece of
pottery, rock (80)

TIP CAT, game played in
England and Australia before
World War II. Facsimile made
by Henry Parker (51)

TOODLEMBUCK, gambling toy
made by Mrs Kelly (school
mistress) in Melbourne. A
copy of the kind she made as
a child and gambled with.
(Dorothy Howard Collection)
(29)

TOPS, Australian. A.red
spindle top. B.small green
peg top. C.plain wooden
spindle top. D.blue
spindle. E.yellow handle
for pulling the string.
Donated by B. Alexander who
played with these tops when

she was about 15 years old in the 1930s. (84, A, B, C, D & E)

TOP, Australian. One small peg top, donated by Gwen Day (86)

TOPS, Aboriginal. Two matchbox beans without spindles. These beans were used for tops by Aboriginal children in Nth Queensland. Beans donated by Judith Wiseman (85)

TOP, manufactured in Pennsylvania, bought in Maryland, USA. c.1950. (Dorothy Howard Collection) (4)

TOP, made by hand in Tonala, Mexico, c.1960. "Trompo" (Dorothy Howard Collection) (16)

TOP, made by hand in Tonala, Mexico, c.1960. "Trompo" (Dorothy Howard Collection) (17)

TOP, Trompo, manufactures. Bought in public market in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 1963. (Dorothy Howard Collection) (18)

TOPS, Japanese spinning. Spherical top spins on rounded end, then jumps over onto opposite end. Purchased Sydney 1982 (46)

TOPS, Japanese tops (koma). A. two plastic red, yellow and blue tops. B. large wooden top. C. wood and metal top. Three strings for spinning the tops. Bought in Japan, and donated by Mrs

Masumi Jackson, 1988 (68 A, B & C)

TOPS. Turkish tops (3 identical) with string, bought in Turkey and donated by Nebi and Fadime Yilmaz 1989 (83)

WHIPPING TOP, made in German Democratic Republic (47)

WHIPPING TOP, found in Melbourne 'Op Shop' in late 1970s. (48)

WHIPPING TOP, used until the 1950s. (49)

WIRE CARS, handmade. These three wire cars were made by Bradley Marsh at the Children's Museum, 1988. Bradley grew up in Zimbabwe. Two of the cars are incomplete (72)

TOY DISHES, made by Senor Munoz and Senor Carmon Martiniano Munoz and Senor Martiniano (her father) and by Pedro Monoz (age 12). The toys are also used by adults in social rituals among merchants on public market days (mercados), Tonala, c.1963. (Dorothy Howard Collection) (19)

WINDMILL. Paper windmill made out of a chopstick and paper. Handmade at the Children's Museum, 1988 (69)

* * *

'I deplore ... impertinent pedagogical meddling with traditional play customs. However, I am not ... pessimistic about the outcome ... I

find the folklore process still going strong with country children and city children (all but the few rich). I find that children still respect the rule of their peers more than the rule of the teacher or the book. Folk games are changing and the imprint of the industrial, commercial, academic age is clear upon them. But change is a necessary part of the folklore process.'

(From a review by Dorothy Howard of Paul G. Brewster's American Nonsinging Games in Journal of American Folklore. Vol.67. No.263. January-March, 1954.

YOU'RE IT! AT THE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

In a previous issue of ACFN, the first public 'hands on' exhibition of children's traditional play in Melbourne, the "You're It!" Exhibition, was described in some detail. Now that exhibition is recreated at the Museum of Victoria, and we are pleased to publish an account of "You're It!" Mark II written by the co-ordinator, Margo Hobba.

A Museum exhibition where children know more than adults? Although this is unusual, the "You're It!" Exhibition, at the Children's Museum, Museum of Victoria, is a celebration of children's traditional games and one of the few exhibitions where children are the experts.

The exhibition aims to demonstrate the remarkable history of many of the games played by children today. It is also a dedication to the adaptability and inventiveness of children. In all parts of the world, children make up games using materials that are inexpensive and easy to find. For instance, the game of Jacks, played by many Australian children using the knucklebones from a sheep, is also played by Japanese children using small bean or rice bags, by Vietnamese children using chopsticks and a ball, by European children using five stones, and with small metal stars and a ball by children in America. Traditional games have many versions of rules that are adapted to suit the level of skill of the players and it may be this adaptability

that accounts for their continuation.

The "You're It!" exhibition is divided into five areas: Marbles, Jacks, Tops, String Games and The Making Area. Each one has an active space where visitors are invited to play the game - learning a new version and teaching games they know to other visitors and Children's Museum staff. Book exhibits describe the history of the games and some of the current versions. Visitors also have the opportunity to add to the exhibition and to our knowledge of children's folklore in general by writing down their versions of games and rhymes. All the materials is collated for the Australian Children's Folklore Collection at Melbourne University.

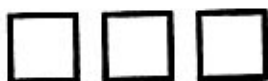
Although 'hands on' is the style of most of the exhibits, some precious items are kept behind glass. A popular pastime for children and adults has always been collecting. Visitors are invited to loan their collections to the Children's Museum for display. The 'Collection Cabinet' currently houses children's collections of Bunnies, Rubbers, Stickers, Marbles, Cigarette Cards and Matchbox Labels. The exhibits displayed in the cabinets will change over the life of the exhibition. Another popular display is the Spinning Toys - tops, yo yos, diabolos, balls and cup and ball.

A large display of Home Made Toys is planned for later in the year.

A very important component of the "You're It!" exhibition is the Explainer Staff. This is a team of volunteers who work with visitors, inviting people of all ages and cultures to share their knowledge and skill of traditional play as well as their memories of childhood. Explainers quickly acquire a vast repertoire covering many versions of the games and this knowledge they then pass onto others, thus building on the tradition. Whilst chatting to visitors Explainer staff highlight the value of traditional games to children and the high level of skills involved in the total game experience - agreeing on rules, solving disputes and the range of physical and verbal skills. According to the Explainers, a common complaint from many children is that marbles and other traditional games such as elastics are banned in many schools. Reasons for this seem to be varied - it encourages gambling, it is too dangerous, or children dig up the landscaping. The Children's Museum hope that the exhibition will raise the status of these games in the community, that parents will dig out their marbles bag and pass some marbles on to their children, and that teachers will provide an environment where children can play their own games without excessive interference.

"You're It!" is proving to be a very popular exhibition, particularly for children in a family group. It is quite a common sight to see children with their parents and grandparents gathered around the marbles ring debating the best way to flick a marble. For many adults, a visit to the Children's Museum brings back memories of childhood. Children enjoy demonstrating their skill - having the opportunity to be 'the expert' and also learning new skills. Many adults are surprised that the games they played as children are still played today.

The "You're It!" exhibition will be part of the Children's Museum for 1990. The Children's Museum is located in the Museum of Victoria, 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne. The phone number is 669.9906.



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