



Merry Go Round Summer Newsletter 2011

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter!

Last year was the busiest one yet for Carousel and Merry Go Round Toy Libraries, with over 1,750 visits by members borrowing and returning toys, and more toys going out than ever before. Some of the toys were so well loved that they needed replacing, so we were delighted to receive a grant for this from Cllr Hannaford. There are many new additions, although you have to be quick to spot them because as soon as they are returned they are flying out of the door! Don't forget we are open right through the summer holidays and we have toys for children aged from a few months old up to early teens. You might be a family, childminder, playscheme or crèche, there is something for everyone!

Over the summer we will again run Carousel Summer Stay & Play sessions in West Exe Children's Centre; these are open to members from either toy library, but do need to be booked in advance. Other events at the Centre include a recycled clothes collection on 24th June and a toy, children's books and cake sale on July 1st, both in aid of our charity. More details on back page.

We will have activities and stalls at the Respect Festival on June 4th & 5th so come and say hello. We are also organising a sponsored toddle around Belmont Park which should be lots of fun, with certificates for all entrants and a prize for the toddler who raises the most!

After some uncertainty about the future of Exeter Scrapstore, we are pleased to say that it will run as a community enterprise from August when Exeter City Council cease to manage the service. Keeping the building going is also good news for Merry Go Round, as we have just signed a new lease for our part of the premises. A big thank you is due to all those who provided us with grants and helped fundraise to keep the toy libraries going last year!

Fiona Daughton (Toy Library Co-ordinator)

New Toys to Borrow!



Sponsored Toddle-athon!

Could your little one toddle or walk round Belmont Park to raise funds for the Toy Libraries? We are looking for energetic children and their families to sign up to our Sponsored Toddle-athon on **Thursday 14th July at 1.30pm**. There will be a certificate for everyone who enters plus a prize for the child who raises the most.

Come and join us, and have lots of fun walking through Belmont Park and raising money at the same time!

Further information is available from Fiona and Nicky at Merry Go Round Toy Library. Sponsor forms will be available in June.

From the Chair...

It seems some time since we had a newsletter, so it is good to be able to update you on what is happening at the Toy Library. It has been an extremely busy time with Fiona and Nicky working very hard and signing many new members, which is always exciting. Toys come in and go out again quickly, which just goes to prove that the toys we have in the library are the ones that you want and like. I think it is important that we maintain the holiday opening of our toy libraries, enabling you all to have a place to go and to borrow different toys in the children's holidays from their schools or pre-school provision.



As a grandparent, I love using the Toy Library when my grandson comes for a holiday. Last year, we went as a family to Wales camping and I borrowed the space rocket for him. He is five and loves anything to do with Space. He took the rocket around the camping field, hid it in bushes, and had a wonderful time using his imagination in a different way than he would if he was back at the house. Ensuring it was all together to return to the toy library was interesting, but it was a huge success. I would encourage all grandparents who might be reading this, to come and borrow toys for when you have your grandchildren over. They enjoy them, and then you can empty your house back to the toy library until their next stay!

I would personally like to say a big thank you to all our members for supporting the Toy Library in the way that you do. If there is anything that you think would be good to have in the cupboards, please tell Fiona or Nicky and we will see what we can do.

Pat Cusa (Chair)

A big Thank You to the following for supporting our toy libraries over the last year!

Exeter City Council
West Exe Children's Centre
Co-operative Community Fund
Exeter Play Association

Norman Family Charitable Trust
Eastgate Rotary Club
Cllr Hannaford
Our wonderful committee and volunteers!

All the fun of the toy library!

My name is Zoe. I have two children and I set up and plan activities for a 0-3 group in Moretonhampstead. I am a member of the Merry Go Round toy library in Exeter, and for a few pounds each week I bring fun, stimulating and unusual toys to the children and parents/carers of the group so the children can learn and develop their skills through play.

The toy library is a very important part of the group as it provides a wide range of toys for all ages, abilities and interests along with multicultural and sensory toys.

The children love investigating the activities that are set up each week for them; their faces light up when they come into the room and see the toys. Parents and carers love the toy library items because their children can experience and explore large and expensive toys that they may not have at home due to lack of space or finances.

So if you run or go to a group where children are at play, become a member of the toy library and watch their imaginations grow.

Zoe Newton (group member)



Merry Go Round at Respect Playday

Following the success of Merry Go Round's stalls and activities at last year's Respect Festival and Playday, we will be back at Belmont Park on 4th & 5th of June for this year's event from noon until 6pm. There is something for all the family to enjoy, with even more to do than last year including bands, children's activities, craft stalls, food, beer tent, dancing and lots more.

We will be running our traditional soft toy tombola and children's book stall, plus playdough table and circus skills. Mr Purrkins, our giant cat which was decorated so beautifully at last year's event, will be there so come and visit!

If you are free for an hour or two and would like to help on either day, contact Fiona or Nicky at the toy library, or email fiona@mgrtoylibrary.org



Pirates ahoy!



Fundraising for Merry Go Round with Phoenix Cards

I have been a fan of Merry Go Round as a parent, childminder, pre-school leader and currently, as a committee member. I think the Toy Library provides a valuable service to our community, both as a source of toys and games and as a supportive meeting place for parents and childcare providers. Through my role as a trader for Phoenix Cards, selling greeting cards and stationery, I am able to donate 10% of sales to the Toy Library.

Some of you may have met me before Christmas, when I had my baskets of Phoenix cards, rolls of wrapping paper and other Phoenix bits and bobs available for people visiting the Toy Library to purchase. Many thanks to all who bought from me. I was delighted to present a cheque for £25 to the Toy Library, as 10% of sales taken.

If you are interested in holding a Phoenix Party in your own home and receive free cards etc in return, or place an order or receive a catalogue, please contact me. Remember! 10% of sales will be donated to the Toy Library, so let me know how you heard about me when you place your order.

Contact details: www.phoenix-trading.eu/web/judegreen
Tel 01392 677980 mob 07717 514 284

Jude Green (committee member)

Volunteers needed!

We are always looking for volunteers who would like to be involved in the work of the Toy Libraries. If you would like to help with fund-raising or promoting the work of the Toy Libraries then please speak to Fiona or Nicky during sessions, or phone 01392 436777 or email fiona@mgrtoylibrary.org for further details.

Helping families play together

1000 primary school children were asked by child expert Dr Pat Spungin what tips and advice they would give their parents to try and make play more fun. The results were:

- * Parents to spend more one on one time together with us children.
- * Go to the park and play sports together such as football, cricket and catch, and go on a bike ride
- * Play board games, cards or puzzles as a family
- * Mum and Dad to not go on the computer as much or do as much housework
- * Play games such a piggy in the middle, chase, hide & seek and skipping
- * Days out together to the zoo, museum, theatre, cinema and bowling
- * Bake and cook together
- * Make things and do arts & crafts such as painting, pottery, write stories or make face masks
- * Parents come home from work earlier
- * Be funny, playful and silly by telling jokes, be more impulsive, laugh more and jump in puddles.

Borrowing toys from the Toy Library can really help you play more with your child, for instance trying out a new board game or doing a puzzle together. Our circus skills and outdoor toys are great for all ages - who can resist seeing if they can still walk on stilts or juggle! We also have lots of books with ideas and inspiration for baking and craft activities or games from around the world as well as ones with great tips on how to deal with sibling rivalry or tantrums!

Toy Library members are able to borrow three books as well as three toys on a weekly basis so it is worth taking a look at the various book racks around the Toy Library, or check out the online catalogues of toys and books. Come and explore what the Toy Library has to offer and find something new for your family to play with together!

Liz Ellis (committee member)

Wanted: good condition toys, games and children's books for our fundraisers - thank you!

Dates for your diary

- * Respect Playday and Festival, June 4th & 5th, 12 noon to 6pm, Belmont Park, Newtown
- * Recycled Clothes Collection, drop off Friday 24th June before 1pm, West Exe Children's Centre
- * Used Toys, Children's Books and Cake Stall, Friday 1st July 1.30pm-4pm, West Exe Children's Centre
- * Sponsored Toddle in Belmont Park, Thursday 14th July, 1.30pm
- * Carousel Summer Stay and Plays, Mondays 10am-noon from 1st August to 22nd August (bookable)

Contact Information

Merry Go Round Toy Library

Exeter Scrapstore
Gordon Road
Exeter EX1 2DH

Opening hours

Tuesdays 1pm-4pm
Thursdays 10am-1pm
Tel 01392 436777



Carousel Toy Library

West Exe Children's Centre
Cowick Street
St Thomas
Exeter EX4 1HL

Opening hours

Thursdays 10am-1pm
Tel 01392 279361

Full toy catalogues and further information can be found at www.mgrtoylibrary.org