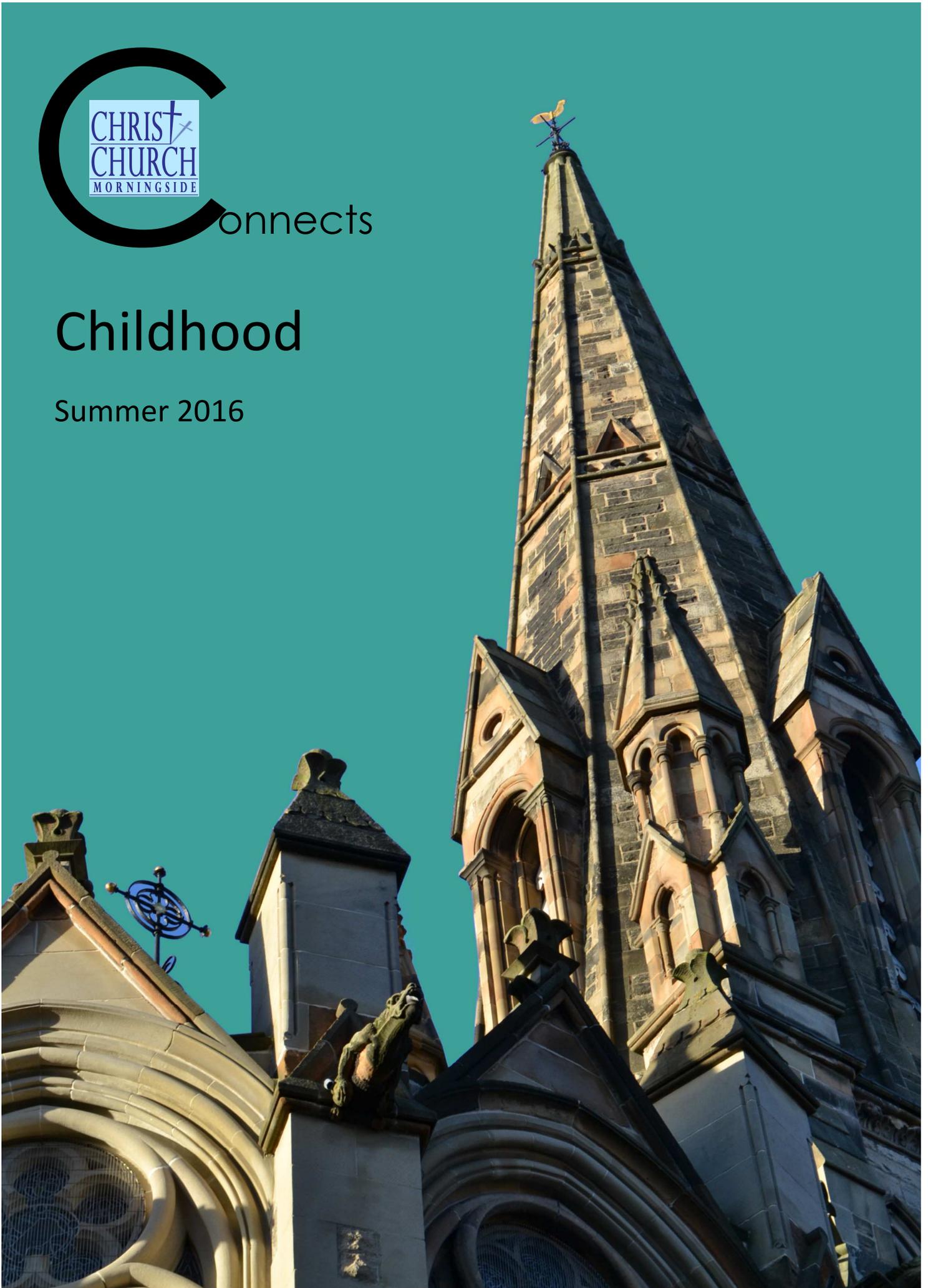




Childhood

Summer 2016



Tell me, I'll forget

Show me, I'll remember

Involve me, I'll understand.

This is a Chinese proverb that conveys a great truth, particularly in relation to childhood, for

- ♦ hearing/listening is not one of our strongest senses so we often forget
- ♦ seeing is one of our strongest senses so we most often remember
- ♦ when we are involved we are most likely to understand and remember for then is the potential for all our senses to be used as we hear, see, feel, touch, smell and taste.

I hope all, regardless of age, find Christ Church to be an “involving” community, nurturing and nurtured by all who come here, be they members, visitors or the curious passer by.

I hope too that you enjoy this second edition of “Christ Church Connects”, which brings us a raft of memories and insights into childhood - past and present.

Children say the funniest things (a true story)

Mary Snow

5 year old Stephen ran excitedly into the classroom beaming from ear to ear.

“Mummy had a baby boy last night. I’m a big brother” he called to his teacher.

“That’s lovely,” she replied, “Has he got a name yet?”

“Yes, he’s called Spot,” the happy boy told her.

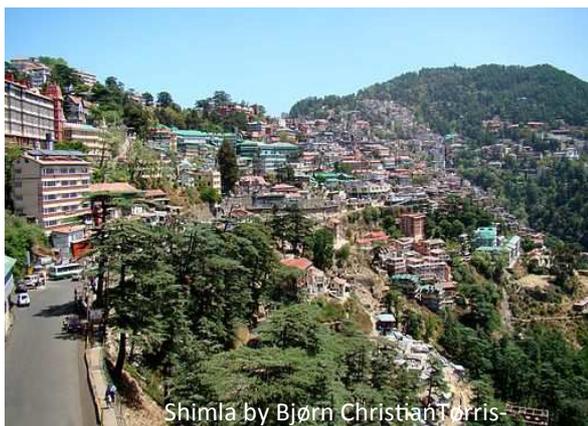
There are times in a teacher’s life when he or she must think quickly on his or her feet and this was one of them.

“Could you ask mummy to write the name down for me please? I’m not sure how you spell it.”

The next morning Stephen arrived clutching a piece of paper in his hand. He handed it to the teacher and she opened it. On the paper was written one word, Mark!

To Church on a Donkey

Sheila Baillie



What, I wonder are your earliest memories of going to church? Are they of short legs dangling uncomfortably from hard pews, adult words that were scarcely understandable and certainly boring and your mother’s gently restraining hand on you knee as you wriggled about? My memories are of all of these but with one particular Sunday a bit of added excitement. My father went out to what was then British India, as a Medical missionary in the days of the Raj.

For six months of the year we lived in Delhi but in the “dry season” when the heat became unbearable (no air-conditioning or even electric fans in those days) we moved up to the cool, and beautiful hill station of Simla. Being good Presbyterians Sundays were taken very seriously. We had Sunday clothes, Sunday toys and even a special Sunday doll – only to be taken from the top shelf of the toy cupboard on Sundays. Church going was mandatory. So every Sunday my sister and I dressed in our pretty blue Liberty lawn dresses, donned our Sunday “topee” hard hats and mounted our sturdy ponies (mine was donkey) to ride up the steep track to church behind our parents. Sunday topees were white and trimmed with a garland of artificial flowers making them marginally more attractive than the ugly everyday khaki ones.

As Presbyterians, the church we attended was not the one with the tall attractive spire that one sees on pretty picture postcards of Simla. Our church was a squat, bare, rectangular building with a large high pulpit dominating the far end. Behind the pulpit was a long window of clear glass – kept open to catch the breeze. Presbyterian churches did not have attractive coloured glass to help the understanding of young worshippers and distract the eyes of their parents.

On the Sunday which I remember so clearly a monkey managed to jump up onto the outside window ledge behind the pulpit. Now the minister, being an elderly man, had a shiny bald head. A true Presbyterian preacher he spoke his words with force, leaning forward and thumping the front of the pulpit to



Monkey picture by Shimlatimes.in

emphasise their meaning and attract the full attention of worshippers. But on this particular Sunday it was the monkey who was attracted. Every time that the preacher leaned forward his shiny bald head came within the monkey’s excited vision and it leaned forward eagerly also. When the preacher leaned back the shiny sphere disappeared from the monkey’s view. It too leaned back scratching its head in puzzlement. Had this pantomime gone on for much longer I have no doubt that the monkey would have sprung on the tempting object below it.

Fortunately one of the muslim “syces” waiting patiently outside with our ponies must have intervened and chased it off the ledge – much to the merriment of passers-by.

That Sunday is etched into my memory forever. I wonder what your earliest memories of going to church are? Were they as exciting as mine?

Horsing around

Carolyn Macpherson

One of the abiding memories of my childhood is of a Sunday afternoon when I was about 6 years old.



Home from Sunday School, and after lunch, I had been playing at ‘horses’ on our rather heavy settee (given to us by my grandfather). I fell off the settee and the settee fell on top of me! For the rest of the day, I moaned and whinged at the pain, but was chided by my parents for being careless! By 10pm the pain had become

unbearable so reluctantly the GP was phoned. This being in the 50's, the doctor came out, pronounced that I had fractured my right wrist (fortunately I am left handed), and immediately set to and made up a plaster of paris in the baking bowl, smoking a cigarette as he worked! (An episode of the recent Call the Midwife series when the revered Dr Turner smoked in his surgery reminded me of this).

The doctor asked my Mum to take me along to the Sick Kids Hospital on the Monday morning, in order to have the plaster checked out. I was fine thereafter and the plaster was removed about three weeks later.

Rose Queen

Anon

My fond memories of being part of the Methodist Sunday School across the road from my home. The Sunday school joined in the tradition, along with many other churches in the town, of crowning a Rose Queen for the year.



Each church would choose one of the young girls from the Sunday School to be the Rose Queen. She would be dressed in a long satin /taffeta dress with a velvet train edged with white fur. She would have a retinue of Rosebuds and Page boys (youngest girls and boys) and Ladies In Waiting all dressed in coordinating satin dresses along with flowery headdresses, white fingerless gloves and either " Dorothy bags" or flower posies. The Page boys would wear velvet pants and jackets.

The queen would be crowned at a ceremony in the church hall after the parade around the local streets,

usually on the back of a flat bed lorry from a local coal or vegetable merchant. You obviously prayed for fine days or had to wear plastic macs and rain hats.

After the local event there would be a grand gala in one of the local parks where all the Rose Queens of the town would gather and be judged, to be awarded the trophy of Rose Queen of the town.

St Kentigern's to Christ Church

Margaret Lindsay

Many of you will not know that long ago in the 1930's, St John's Church at the West End of Edinburgh had a little mission church called St Kentigern's in St Peter's Place, just by the canal. When I was a very small girl I went with my family to this church.

At the outbreak of the Second World War it was decided to close this Mission church down Families were given the choice of attending St John's or Christ Church. My family decided we should become members of Christ Church and so one sunny Sunday morning the Sunday School (as it was called then) joined up behind our teachers in a crocodile line. We walked through the archway and up Viewforth



and along Bruntsfield to Christ Church. One of the older children carried our Sunday School banner.

It took a little while for us to be accepted by the Sunday School children, but eventually we became one of Christ Church Sunday School. Here I have stayed a member of Christ Church for 77 years.

Childhood Memories

Janet Clarkson

We are told that no-one has true childhood memories from their earliest years and I find that the older one gets the longer it takes to recall. Prince Harry has said that his mother is fading from his memory and he was 12 when she died. Some children may be blessed if they can forget, if they have turned out to be unwanted and have been abused or neglected.

I can remember my first “dated” event when I was allowed to stay up until after dark, to stand on a stool in our front bedroom looking at the VE Day bonfire lit in the turning circle of our cul-de-sac. All memories before this are from family stories with few photos, because film was in short supply during the war, like food and new toys. My teddy was second hand, like the dolls’ house and furniture. Like many of my generation, I grew up with a mother, and a father absent in the forces. Some children never got to see their father and one early memory of my dad was his lullaby attempt with a chorus from Pirates of Penzance. I spent many hours with my mother, reading books and absorbing words, so that when I started school, I was bored whilst my classmates were learning to read. There was a six week gap whilst I had measles and whooping cough and I can still see Dr Petrie trying to get out of a basket chair in the bedroom which was stuck on his large frame.

When I returned to school, there was a new teacher because the South African lady had managed to get passage home, having been stuck in England for the war years. My only aunt came home from Malaya much later, after internment by the Japanese, with her health ruined so she could no longer cope with the stresses of nursing.

There were few treats for any children whilst rationing lasted, but I do remember our first family holiday in Blackpool. Photos show that I made new friends on the beach whose father was a skilled castle and sand boat builder, but I remember helping the Irish chambermaid to load the early morning tea trays. Few had pets, but our milk was delivered by horse and cart in large churns where housewives went out with a jug. We could talk to the horse and as we were at the end of the round, Jim occasionally let two of us ride for part of the return journey.



When did childhood end then? Officially not until you were 21, by which time I had finished 3 years at university.

When I married, I hoped that if we could have children it would be in the plural. My son and daughter were born two years apart, and I remember my doctor saying “You’ve got one of each, so you can stop now”. I did agree with him, because as a geographer, I was already aware that the world’s population was expanding far beyond our natural resources.

Many memories of our children were recorded on photos, but sometimes my daughter reminds

me of things I have forgotten or tells me of actions she and her brother kept from me. Following the progress of my grandchildren has been much more relaxing. They are also two years apart and now both are taller than I am, leading active lives, but up to date with the latest technology. They have been more fortunate than the children I see on the bus with mother concentrating on her phone. I read recently that some are arriving at school unable to hold a conversation. We see horrific pictures of refugee camps and overloaded boats, trying to escape war.

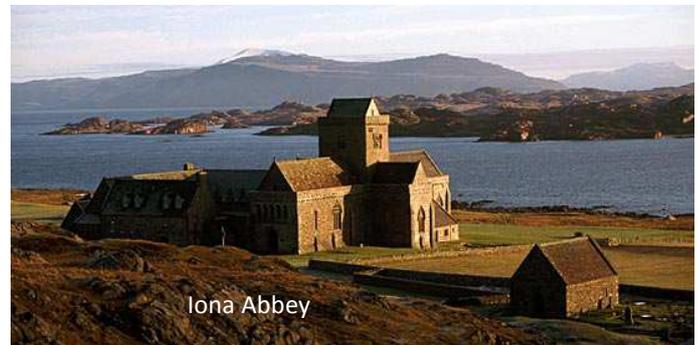
We must be grateful that many families in the UK do not face these problems for their children and pray for those who have or have had unhappy childhoods.

Dispatched to Iona

Jean Aikman

Having read the interesting article on Iona brought to my memory a childhood story of my father. This of course goes back 140 years or so.

My Father was a Clydeside Scot and came from a very female family – but did have one male cousin. The cousin was Wholesale Grocer who supplied the Islands with such necessities. The cousin met a girl on Iona that he wanted to marry. The custom in those days was that a male relative would convey the proposal to the girl's father. My father being the only male relative was dispatched to Iona with the proposal. When he arrived there, the Islanders were about to hold a funeral for one of their ilk. As soon as they



realised that there was somebody amongst them who did not speak their language everything was switched to English!! I was brought up to understand that this was POLITENESS!! The marriage did take place and produced three more girls!! My father had six granddaughters so our family name has gone!!

In the Temple

Mary Smallwood

You have surely seen paintings of the Presentation of the baby Jesus in the Temple set inside a stately building; and of Jesus expelling the Temple traders from a similar large building; in our own National Gallery here we have Jesus –aged- 12 holding an animated conversation with a group of rabbis in a building; and on the opposite wall He is discussing the question of the payment of tribute to Caesar with two or three men, of course in a building.

There can be no reasonable doubt that the imaginary buildings in all these scenes are meant to represent some parts of the interior of the Jewish Temple. (What alternative is there?) But such a location is totally impossible in every case, for a very simple reason: no-one except Jewish priests was ever allowed to set foot inside the sacred building, the Temple. (Outside that building, either surrounding it or extending in front of the main door, were three open air courts: the nearest was for priests; the next was for Jewish men; and the furthest was for Jewish women. These last two courts were as close as any lay Jew could get to the Temple building.)

So how and why do artists make the serious mistake of portraying Jesus and other lay people

inside the Temple building? The answer again is very simple. The English word “Temple” is used in English translations of the Gospels (and presumably also in translations in some other modern languages) ambiguously, to represent two completely different Greek words with distinctive meanings. One is easy and straightforward – TO NAOS, which simply means “the temple” and would have been used to denote, e.g., the Parthenon in Athens. It was taken over by the Gospel writers to mean exclusively the sacred building, the Jewish Temple.

This building, however, occupied only a very small part of the huge Temple enclosure, a rectangular space (big enough to hold several of our football pitches) surrounded by a high and impressive stone wall (much of it still standing), and otherwise completely empty, as far as we know. A word had to be found to denote this whole area, including the Temple building within it; and the Greek term chosen was TO HIERON, which simply means “the holy thing” (a neuter adjective). This distinctly uninspiring name presented a problem – how should it be translated into English, or into any other language?

The Temple and the enclosure surrounding it were a bit like a Cathedral and its Close in our country. But “Temple Close” as a translation would sound very odd, and would be obscure to many people. The most accurate equivalent would, I think, be the “Temple Enclosure.” But that would be a very clumsy expression to use every time that a translator had to say that something happened there, or that someone went there. So translators of the Gospels (into English at any rate) fall back on the simple term “the Temple,” using it to translate both Greek words, and thus rendering it ambiguous. The result, obviously, is that a Greek-less artist would just assume that any event that is said to happen “in the Temple” actually happened inside the sacred building, and paint accordingly. In none of the four events which I cited above would this possibly be correct, as all the participants were lay people.

So where would these events have taken place, as all are associated with the Temple site? The market which angered Jesus was obviously held in some part of the huge walled open enclosure. For the other three episodes there is not a shred of evidence, but I will hazard a guess (not inspired by any of the artists’ imaginary buildings) to cover them all. The interior of the enclosure was surrounded on all sides by wide porticoes, offering a welcome retreat from rain or excessive sun.. If, as is likely, rabbis made themselves available to answer questions or have discussions with lay people, a practice which could easily have developed into informal schools, under the porticoes, that would have been where the 12-year-old Jesus went. The Presentation could have happened under a portico (the Court of the Women being barred to Joseph and Simeon). And people wanting to discuss a problem such as tribute money with Jesus could have liked to do so in the shade.

If only English (and presumably some other modern languages) had two nice easy words, as Greek had, for two distinct and different things!



The Twelve-year old Jesus teaching in the Temple— Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528)

Carefreeness

Toy Car

Rounders on
Bruntsfield Links

New Bike

Freedom to
play safely

Playing outside
all summer

Sleeping in the
Air Raid Shelter

Freedom in the
Countryside

Spending time with my
Grandmother drawing
and looking after animals

Carefree, then dad sitting down
and explaining how very long my
life would be (I'd just had my first
glimpse of mortality)

Soggy, saggy swimsuit
at Scarborough

Playing in the garden
for years with my sisters

Wonderful hot,
dry summers

A very independent upbringing, sleeping
in the cellar and the bombs flying over

From the Editor

Alex Barrett, Families Networker

When I came up with the idea to theme the magazine around Childhood I started to think a lot about my own childhood and, as much as I could entertain you with many stories of fun, freedom and injuries, I find myself drawn to reflect on my own children's childhood.

As a mother of a ten-year-old girl and a twenty-two-month old boy I am experiencing the joys and challenges of completely different childhood experiences. I struggle as my daughter is exploring her independence, wanting to do more things by herself, walking to school by herself, going to the café with friends. As a mother I am not ready to let go but I know that she is ready and by gradually giving her the freedom she will become the independent and happy young lady I want her to be. While dealing with a pre-teenage daughter I also have a beautiful and stubborn toddler who even though he has no words is reaching for his own independence. He now wants to walk everywhere and touch and climb everything. He has already claimed his place not only in our house but also on the sofa where no one else is allowed to sit. Having two children with such an age difference does bring its difficulties but I wouldn't have it any other way! When William sees Megan in the morning or after school and runs straight to her for a cuddle it fills my heart with joy!