

Centenary Special Bulletin!!

No. 31 June 2022



1921–2021
**CELEBRATING
A CENTURY**
A.S. NEILL'S
SUMMERHILL SCHOOL

Hello everybody - old friends and new,

Well, here we are half way through our one hundred and first year and finally able to physically celebrate the amazing achievement of this old girl, A.S.Neill's Summerhill School.

With all the trials and tribulations, doubts and criticisms – it is amazing that she has survived. But survive she has and is as strong, if not stronger and readier to tackle the next hundred years than my dear old dad ever thought possible.

Many, many heartfelt thanks to all that have contributed to Summerhill in any small or large way over the years – we could not have done it without you!

This summer term we are back in 'real' time session again and things are more or less back to normal. Our numbers are low but we hope they will pick up soon.

The exam season is in full swing. There seem to be many smiling faces coming out of the exam room so hopefully all their hard work will be rewarded.

The Summerhill reunion is a year late this time. There are many people signed in from a variety of age groups and I am so looking forward to seeing them again. It is not only a whole weekend event, many are just coming for the day so if you are not able to stay, do consider a visit on the Saturday (busy) or the Sunday (quieter).

After the reunion there will be a few quiet days and then the amazing "Summerhill Festival of Childhood" takes over the celebrations. It is set rather like a music festival in a field a couple of miles from the school.

There are organisations, including UNESCO, and speakers coming from all over. I urge you to come along. It will be a lovely life-affirming event and lots of fun. You might be able to make a Summerhill peg or get your face painted into the bargain!



If you are interested in the future of education, just want to hear some alternative ideas on children and their place in education – or if you just want to enjoy great company in a beautiful setting in rural Suffolk where you might be lucky enough to see a marsh harrier or a herd of red deer, then this could be the place for you!

*Love,
Zoë xx*

Summerhill Festival of Childhood

Who would have thought that freedom, equality, democracy, non-compulsion and the overall prioritising of children's happiness and wellbeing over their academic achievements would have survived the rigidity of our educational system for over a century?

Yet, here we are, against all odds, not just surviving but thriving! We are celebrating 100 years of Summerhill School and the inspirations A. S. Neill has given the world, sending out a loud message that "being on the side of the child" should be the first tenet of our society!

In this historic moment, we are reaching out to everyone who shares similar values within education, childrearing and their communities and we are inviting you all to the Summerhill Festival of Childhood to have fun, connect, share ideas, co-create, celebrate and band together for a more humane and sustainable future for us all.



This family-friendly event will take place in the heart of the beautiful English countryside, within walking distance from Summerhill School itself! Individuals, initiatives and organisations from all over the world will be delivering talks, performances, concerts, films, workshops and so much more within a relaxed, warm and inspiring atmosphere.

More than forty [organisations](#) and fifty [contributors](#) from all over the world are lined up to enrich the programme of this event, either as keynote speakers, or workshop and activity space organisers. [UNESCO](#), [IDEC 2022](#), [Freedom to Learn Forum 2022](#), [Oasis Movement](#), [PARS](#) and [Project Defy](#) plus many more will be joining us at the festival alongside keynote speakers such as [Kate Robinson](#), [Yuli Tamir](#), [Peter Gray](#), [Yaacov Hecht](#) and of course [Zoë Readhead](#) to name a few. There will be panel discussions on; the UNESCO's Futures of Education Initiative, creativity within the confines of traditional education and the linking of free play and a happy and fulfilled childhood.

Also, to celebrate the importance of community, the festival structure will include Open Space opportunities inviting all who participate in the festival to share with the festival community through talks, workshops, performances, teaching or just telling your story in the living library tent.



Google Map link showing you to the entrance of the festival:

<https://goo.gl/maps/Ha9bTZgEarogrXVMA>

The full programme of the festival will be released very soon on our [website](#).

We are deeply moved by the response and incredible support that so many people have shown towards this event; from the amazing international team of volunteers that have been with us since the beginning, the participants of the Online Festival of Childhood in October 2021 and the incredible motivation of so many organisations and initiatives to join our in-person celebrations from 5-10 August, 2022!

We look forward to meeting you all, having a wonderful time and looking ahead to the future of education and childrearing together, feeling more connected, supported and confident than ever before! This will be a one off event so don't miss it!

For more information and tickets please check: <http://www.summerhillfestival.com>

FREEDOM TO CREATE

100 years of Freedom, Equality and Community in Education

The first event – in Summerhill’s new collaboration with the UCL/Institute of Education, London – is a week-long art exhibition in September 2022 honouring the creative work of 10 former Summerhillians.

This exhibition is also a celebration of school children having the freedom to create, a central part of Neill’s philosophy and still the practice of the school today. The exhibitors, or their families/estates, have said their education at Summerhill set them on course for their later careers in the arts.

The 10 alumni in the exhibition are:

1. [John Burningham](#) 1936-2019 – Children’s books illustrator and author
2. [Peter Chadwick](#) 1948 – Designer and photographer
3. [Keith Critchlow](#) 1933-2020 – Artist, lecturer, author, Sacred Geometer and Professor of Architecture
4. [Mikey Cuddihy](#) 1952 – Painter and author
5. [Gus Dudgeon](#) 1942-2002 – Music producer
6. [Roger Dwek](#) 1962 – Potter
7. [Ishbel McWhirter](#) 1927 – Painter
8. [Nao Matsunaga](#) 1980 – Artist and sculptor
9. [Storm Thorgerson](#) 1944-2013 – Graphic designer and music video director
10. [Evelyn Williams](#) 1929-2012 – Painter

Each of the exhibitors or their families/estates have each agreed to donate a work of art which will be sold by auction later in the autumn term (2022) to raise funds for school bursaries.

Date: 31st August - 6th September 2022

**Venue: IOE UCL’s Faculty of Education and Society University College London,
20 Bedford Way, London, WC1H 0AL**

“The pupils’ creative ability is excellent, as demonstrated by the quality of their artwork, craft and technology skills, music making and photography.”

ISI Report on Summerhill School, 2016

Summerhill Centenary Reunion

A much anticipated 100th birthday reunion

for old Summerhillians



Friday 29th July until Monday 1st August 2022

Calling all past Summerhillians, past parents, past Summerhill staff and their families –

The Summerhill Reunion which was postponed from last year, our actual one hundredth birthday, is happening this Summer at the end of July. We do hope that you can come along and enjoy our one hundred years. Whoever would have thought it, eh?

We cannot promise that your generation will be represented but it is always especially nice to meet other groups from different times at the school – we share so very much and are such a unique and special group of adults.

Even just touching base with the old place, looking for your special brick, your site in the woods – probably changed beyond recognition by now – funny how trees keep on growing when we are not there to watch them, and then when you return they are HUGE, different and make you feel totally disorientated?

There will be some things happening such as live music and hopefully a good old 'half-term' type of fair outside – but mostly it is an opportunity for quiet reflection and cups of tea and chatting while watching the world go by. Also of looking at how Summerhill is facing the 21st century, plans for the archive, Summerhill going forward for the next hundred years....

I do hope to see you here.

Love,

Zoë xx



**Please note, this event is only for old Summerhillians:
past-pupils, past-staff and their family members.**

Contact us via summerhillreunion2022@gmail.com and book your tickets!

Please get in touch and share your plans with us!!!

It is possible to buy day tickets upon arrival, but we need to know **in advance if you're planning to join us, so we can make sure we have **enough food ordered and prepared** for everybody attending our **Centenary Reunion.****

Your ticket includes:

- all meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) and tea, coffee and biscuits station
- music event
- swimming
- Gram
- outdoor activities
- games and sports
- crafts table for kids and adults
- and of course catching up with all your friends in the Summerhill atmosphere!



For any queries send us an email to

summerhillreunion2022@gmail.com



For further information please go to our website: www.summerhillschool.co.uk/reunion

The A.S.Neill Summerhill Trust

The A.S.Neill Summerhill Trust is a registered charity whose purpose is to promote the educational philosophy, ideas, life and writings of A. S. Neill, and to provide bursaries or other forms of financial assistance to school pupils. The Trust also works to promote the re-publication and translation of existing books, new books, overseas visits by school staff to give talks, school visitor days at Summerhill as well as Summerhill pupils visiting other schools to run workshops on children's rights and democracy.



Each year the trustees consider several applications for bursaries towards school fees. Because our funds are limited, we can currently award bursaries only to current pupils. Parents should contact the school office for information on how to apply for a bursary from the A.S.Neill Summerhill Trust.

A very big thank you to all our donors who have so generously supported the spirit of Summerhill. Your donations help kids remain at the School who would otherwise have to leave, and provide extracurricular activities that would be beyond the School's ability to provide.

If you'd like to make a difference to a child's life, you too can make a [donation](#) to the Trust. Whether it is a one off or regular donation, we will spend it wisely.

£25 means a child can join their friends on a school trip.

£50 will pay for two extra-curricular lessons.

£100 will pay for travel costs incurred by the External Affairs Committee during their promotion of Summerhill & the ideas/philosophies of A. S. Neill.

£1,000 will provide assistance over two terms for parents who are struggling to pay their child's school fees.

A regular donation made by standing order will become an important part of our 'bread and butter'.

To make a gift or regular donation, or for more info on the [A.S.Neill Summerhill Trust](#), please check out our [website](#) or contact the School office on 01728 830540 or email:

office@summerhillschool.co.uk

You can also write to The [A.S.Neill Summerhill Trust](#), c/o Summerhill School, Westward Ho, Leiston, Suffolk, IP16 4HY.

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So that is about it for this short Summerhill Centenary Bulletin. We are sorry for not sending you proper full volume Newsletters these past two years but we are all still here and hoping to see you at one of our events soon, so we can celebrate together this wonderful achievement for Summerhill and A. S. Neill himself.

Lots of love to you all from us here at Summerhill. xxx

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<http://www.100yearsofsummerhill.co.uk>

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All Summerhill Newsletters can be viewed at Dropbox [here](#)

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