

# **ITRA NEWSLETTER**

**International Toy Research Association**

**Vol. 20 No. 2      Winter 2016**

<http://www.itratoyresearch.org>



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## PROLOGUE

The International Toy Research Association Newsletter is designed to keep members up to date with research in the fields of toys and play. In this issue, readers will find a note from our President, a Member's Profile, the Members' Forum, various publications, conference and exhibition previews and reviews. The newsletter has been formatted to allow the document to be read in either printed form or as a soft copy, which can be found on the ITRA website.



The ITRA website (<http://www.itratoyresearch.org>.) covers the following: a description of ITRA, a brief history of the association, how to become a member, and a catalogue of downloadable newsletters.

Those of you who promised material that never arrived... send it again. For those who made contributions, without which there would be many more blank spaces, a massive thank you.

Enjoy the Newsletter.

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## GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ITRA

Dear ITRA colleagues and friends,



Since our last communication, in no particular order of importance, the United Kingdom held a referendum, the Rio Olympics were run, and I have been in contact with the Turku University, Rauma, organizers of the proposed 8<sup>th</sup> ITRA Conference.

Päivi Marjanen and Kati Heljakka and their team at the University report that preparations of the scientific and social program are progressing according to schedule and that we are heading toward an exciting and important worldwide event. The Conference theme is “*Toys: Tradition, Technology and Innovation*” and will take place at the Turku University, Rauma, Finland from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> August 2017. The Conference organisers plan to issue the Call-for-Papers and the draft program over the course of the next couple of months. A full description of the Conference, including logistical details regarding accommodation and travel, will be included in the Winter edition of the ITRA Newsletter, which we plan to issue late-December.

The ITRA Board will assist the conference organizers’ hard work and will see that ITRA members remain up to date throughout this period via the ITRA website (<http://www.itratoyresearch.org>), e-mail and newsletter.

Mentioning the EU referendum may, on the surface, appear a little random, especially in the ITRA Newsletter. On the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> June, the UK woke to discover, mostly, it would seem according to the media, with a sense of disbelief that the United Kingdom had voted to leave the European Union. Analysts appeared from out of the woodwork and unfurled their SWOT charts – which produced flashbacks from my industrial design undergraduate days – predicting opportunities for the brave and threats for the faint hearted. Research colleagues have ruefully commented since the referendum that collaborative research funding and projects have been put on hold due to the uncertainty of what a ‘Brexit’ would actually involve. It appears generally, that UK academic institutions fear the worst, which will have an effect on toy and play research funding already hit by austerity cuts and a devalued British Pound - not to mention effects on the toy industry as a whole. I suppose, it is times like these that ‘opportunities’ are to be found.

While the British media digests the fallout from the referendum, a short article caught my attention from the 2016 Olympics. One sport in particular had written into its rules that a soft toy would be put into play when a competitor’s coach challenged a refereeing decision. This created a peculiar juxtaposition as the sport was Greco-Roman wrestling. Picture the scene: a large yellow plush toy would be flung by an angry coach into the ring while a couple of burly wrestlers were attempting to do whatever it is that wrestlers do. Apparently a debate raged within wrestling as to the suitability, or otherwise, of a plush toy! From an ITRA point of view, one might argue that it is never possible to have too many toys.

On that lighter note, I would like to wish the ITRA family an enjoyable summer and may it be filled with plenty of opportunities and toys. Remember to keep an eye out for updates regarding the 2017 ITRA conference.

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## MEMBER PROFILE – Lieselotte van Leeuwen



Lieselotte van Leeuwen is a Senior Lecturer at HDK-School of Design and Crafts, University of Gothenburg, Sweden, previously holding a similar position in the Department of Psychology at Sunderland University, UK.

Her Ph.D. thesis from the University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands, was dedicated to the question how young children learn to use tools.

Lieselotte is an experimental psychologist. The focus of her research has been the influence of environmental design on the development of perception and action. She has conducted several research projects concerning object-centred social interaction at the Department of Paediatrics at the University of Berne, Switzerland. Lieselotte worked as consultant for toy design and is part of the Nordic Centre for Research on Toys and Educational Media (NCFL) in Halmstad, Sweden. She is co-ordinator of KidsLab, a working group within an EU project initiative on Experimental School Environments (ESE). This interdisciplinary group develops methods and supports projects in integrating children in the design process.

In 1986 Lieselotte moved from East Germany to Holland to commence her PhD studies, at the University of Nijmegen, on how toddlers learn to use objects as tools. She concluded developmental psychology research tended to ignore the material environment – at best providing exchangeable props or setting to study behaviour. At that time the field of ecological psychology was emerging in Europe, which focussed on the changing relationships between actors and their environment. Observing her young children conquer the world and which objects sparked their engagement convinced Lieselotte to pursue this as her primary research interest.

Lieselotte joined Ruth and Franz Kaufmann's research group at Bern's academic children's hospital – the Inselspital in Switzerland – following parent-child dyads from the age of 3 months to 4 years, studying their free play interactions with toys. Observing how toys shaped the interaction in a multitude of ways finally made her settle on toys as the objects of her interest. She recalls people asking her how she would ever make a career out of this odd, almost frivolous and useless choice.

In 1996, she started consulting work for LEGO's Darwin group and while searching the internet for 'toy research' she found the Halmstad University Toy Research Institute in Sweden. Krister Svensson informed Lieselotte that an international meeting was being arranged – the first ITRA conference. It was there she realized how a multidisciplinary perspective on toys can make an impact at many levels. A lot of the research work she subsequently conducted was inspired or enabled through the network which emerged from both ITRA and close cooperation with the Halmstad Toy Research Institute. ITRA did and does provide a unique platform to bring researchers from diverse fields together. This has shaped her thinking and enabled her to create and/or participate in applied research projects such as EU funded projects like KidsLab in which they explored how children may become part of the design process or TIM, a project on tactile interactive media for visually impaired children.

Through ITRA she became involved with Siegfried Zoels' Sheltered Workshops, collaborated with Michael Fernström at the Interaction Design Department at the University of Limerick in Ireland, and she met Mathieu Gielen, a designer and educator at the TU Delft. For many years they have created and co-operated in research projects attempting to combine design and psychology in ways which open up relevant, inspirational and creative approaches to design for play. Last but not least, without ITRA there would not be a Masters Design Course called "Child Culture Design" at the Academy of Design and Crafts at Gothenburg University founded by Johnny Friberg and his colleagues six years ago – it is there where Lieselotte teaches and conducts research.

Lieselotte believes ITRA's value lies in the diversity of views on toys and the many opportunities to discuss the various viewpoints in a friendly and constructive atmosphere. The mix of scientific work from different disciplines, as well as practice in its widest sense, has the potential to inspire and question discourses beyond each field in isolation. In this sense ITRA may swim against the stream of ever increasing specialization in academic fields and ensure relevance of research for practice. The focus on toys instead of play or specific types of playthings (like digital games) means that toys may be explored and understood in their cultural, historical, behavioral, philosophical, economical and political contexts and roles. This provides ITRA the opportunity to truly work in Brian Sutton-Smith legacy and to continue exploring the relationship between play and society as an open question rather than a predetermined set of conclusions. Lieselotte currently sits on the ITRA Board.

Working with students in the Child Culture Design course has heightened Lieselotte awareness of the importance in addressing controversies both within society in general and more significantly within the discipline of design in particular. The university faculty continues to enable their students to critically assess for whom and how they might design toys, which make a difference to the complex lives of children under specific circumstances. ITRA inspired this course and in turn the design course demonstrates the need for a platform like ITRA to continue the dialogue the students started, within the course, and to contribute and spread their work and views.

## MEMBERS' FORUM

Please remember when you do send items for inclusion in the Newsletter to send them in a downloadable form.

### Germany

**Artemis Yagou** writes:

ITRA member Artemis Yagou has been awarded a post-doctoral research grant by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

The research grant will allow Artemis to continue her work on the history of construction sets. She will realise the project as a Research Associate of the Deutsches Museum, Munich, a museum of science and technology holding a fascinating collection of technical toys. The duration of the project is October 2016 to November 2021. The project is entitled "How they played: Children and construction toys (c. 1840-1940)" and will focus on the neglected dimension of use. More specifically, the project aims to examine and analyse construction sets from the perspective of users, i.e. children, from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the Second World War. The starting point is the fact that construction sets have been devised and developed by adults as educational tools for children; they have been designed to shape the future through specific play activities. Throughout their history, the role of construction sets has been oscillating between their pedagogical and their entertaining functions, with variations in different time periods depending on dominant mentalities and other socio-technical factors. The intentions of adults (parents, educators, designers, producers, retailers) in this process will be juxtaposed with the so far neglected and under-researched perspective of children. The project will illuminate children's relationship with construction sets, by studying their reactions and attitudes vis-à-vis adult intentions. The project is expected to contribute to the understanding of childhood and technology-inspired play. This is a crucial subject for our societies and their future, as technology-based play is nowadays a predominant element of childhood leisure, entertainment, and education. The technical nature of construction sets lies in the heart of the proposed investigation and sets the framework for the historical analysis. The main research questions are whether children's play practices conformed to or contradicted adult ambitions and expectations, in what ways this was realised, and what were the consequences. The project is situated on the intersection of the history of technology, design history and the history of play.

### Sweden

**Dag Ivarsson**, Chairman of *The Lennart Ivarsson Foundation* sent us this:

Swedish editors of "Space for play" BRIO-prize winners 2016 Assistant professor Märit Jansson and researcher Åsa Klintborg Ahlklo, both active at SLU (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences) are rewarded with the BRIO-prize for 2016 for their book "Space for play – Swedish playgrounds before and now". This book published in 2016 reflects over 200 pages rich aspects regarding Swedish playgrounds. This book also emphasis the need to allocate sufficient time and resources in planning for children's space for play. It is all about understanding how important play is for the children.

Building apartments and houses for an increasing population is a very important issue in Sweden's plan to build 700 000 apartments over the next ten years. The director for Swedish Architects, Tobias Olsson has initiated a debate over the theme "Do not build away space for children's play". Märit Jansson and Åsa Klintborg Ahlklo show in their book the very important need to remember space for children's play. Their book share knowledge and good advice both to urban planners, architects and politicians as well as ordinary parents how very important it is to always remember the importance of play for children.

We at BRIO share a lot of competence and knowledge about children's need to have a lot of play and good playthings/toys. By awarding Märit Jansson and Åsa Klintborg Ahlklo this year's BRIO-prize we want to acknowledge their contribution through publishing "Space for play – Swedish playgrounds before and now" as an important contribution in spreading the message how important play is for the development of children. This year it is the 24<sup>th</sup> year the BRIO Prize is awarded either to distinguished researchers or to a non-profit organization directed towards the needs of children and young people. The BRIO Prize has reached an international good reputation in its field.

## CONFERENCES & EXHIBITIONS

This section covers current, up-coming and past conferences and exhibitions. Hopefully mentioning past events will not induce depression as to what you may have missed, while we trust previews of future events will whet your appetite to attend. Previews and reviews of conferences are sought for the next edition of the ITRA Newsletter.

### FUTURE CONFERENCES

#### September 2017

**The International Play Association Conference** will be held in Calgary, Canada, 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> September 2017. The theme of the conference is *Unleashing the Power of Play*.

For more information visit:

<http://canada2017.ipaworld.org>

### PAST CONFERENCES

#### September 2016

**4<sup>th</sup> UIA Round Table Asia-Pacific**, was held at the Paradise Hotel, Haeundae, Busan, Korea, 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

The UIA Round Table is an educational seminar where associations meet to learn through networking and through practice, to meet other international associations and to share experience and knowledge.

For further information see:

<http://www.uia.org/roundtable/>

### CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

#### August 2016 - through January, 2017

**Doc McStuffins** Special Exhibit at the Indianapolis Children's Museum, Indianapolis, USA, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2016 – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2017.

This special exhibit is the first partnership between Disney Junior and a museum. According to the museum, "Children and families will be transported to Doc's backyard clinic to learn about staying healthy, caring for others, and problem solving – all through imaginative play!"

For further information see the following website:

<https://www.childrensmuseum.org/exhibits/doc-mcstuffins>

#### November 2016 - until January 2017

**Jingle Rails: The Great Western Adventure**, at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016 – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

Nine model trains, primarily G-scale/gauge on over 350 meters of track wind through intricate layouts depicting modern and historic Indianapolis as well as national parks of the American West, passing legendary sites, including grand railway lodges, Northwest Coast Native villages, and U.S. landmarks such as Mt. Rushmore, Hoover Dam, and Yosemite Falls.

For further information see the following website:

[https://www.eiteljorg.org/explore/exhibitions/jingle-rails-the-great-western-adventure-\(2016\)](https://www.eiteljorg.org/explore/exhibitions/jingle-rails-the-great-western-adventure-(2016))

### FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

#### August 2017

**Hot Wheels: Race to Win** Special Exhibit at the Indianapolis Children's Museum, Indianapolis, USA, May – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

May is race month in the host city of the "greatest spectacle in racing," the Indianapolis 500. This interactive exhibit of all things Hot Wheels provides visitors an opportunity to be part of a dynamic race team working together to build and test the world's fastest (and safest) speed machines, using Hot Wheels die-cast cars to experiment and play. For further information see the following website:

<https://www.childrensmuseum.org/>

## PAST EXHIBITIONS

### October 2015 - until October 2016

**Science at Play**, at the Science History Institute, Philadelphia, USA, ended October 2016.

*Science at Play*, was the first major museum exhibition to explore the many facets of these miniature laboratories for children, and drew from their collection of more than 250 science kits and toys. It lifted the lid and revealed stories of enterprise, aspiration, discovery, magic, and mayhem.

For further information see:

<https://www.sciencehistory.org/science-at-play>

**An American Toy Story**, American Museum & Gardens, Claverton Manor, Bath, UK, ended 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

This exhibition explored the huge impact that movie-licensing had on toy production and the way we play. A collection of vintage treasures and modern classics, spanning over 100 years, was on display together for the very first time. Whether you were a Disney princess or the next James Bond, you were certain to find something to delight you in that show.

For further information see the following website:

<https://americanmuseum.org/about-the-museum/exhibitions/an-american-toy-story/>



## PUBLICATIONS & BOOKS

Book reviews, or book recommendations, are sought for the next edition of the ITRA Newsletter. Please submit these to the Editorial Team at [itranevsltr@gmail.com](mailto:itranevsltr@gmail.com). This edition also includes calls for papers on upcoming publications.

**Dalio-Bul, M.** (2014). *License to Play: The Ludic in Japanese Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. 186 pages. ISBN:9780824839406 (hard cover).

*Reviewed by Alina Radulescu (University of the Ryukyus)*

Contrary to what cultural essentialist views of Japan might suggest, Japan is far from being an "all work, no play" type of society. On the contrary, Michal Dalio-Bul argues that play is an essential aspect of culture that informs many aspects of human activity, and that reflecting on how play changes can offer important insights into the mentality and atmosphere of an era, as well as the human condition in general.

*License to Play* engages in extensive research into how play and leisure activities are approached in the academy, offering a good review of the topic in both Japanese and foreign scholarship. While considering different terms used to designate creative activities, play, and leisure in Japan, Dalio-Bul chooses asobi as the focus of her inquiry. The scope of the research is bi-dimensional: on the one side, Dalio-Bul approaches play from a historical perspective, highlighting how the transformation of play during different historical eras reflects larger changes within Japanese society; on the other side, she analyzes what play represents in the field of cultural studies, approaching the relationship between play and different realms of human activity, but also new dynamics of play in the context of the postmodern era.

After laying out the theoretical frame of the book in an extensive introduction, the first chapter opens with a linguistic analysis of the meaning of asobi and related terms, illustrating that Dalio-Bul approaches the concept of play as a "road map showing how people perceive, interpret, think about, and express their views of the world" (14).

In the second chapter, the author focuses on the role of play in the lifestyles of three different social groups throughout the history of Japan: the court aristocrats of the Heian period (794-1185), the urbanites of the Edo period (1603-1868), and the urban youth of the 1970s. For these groups, the author argues, play was not only a way of exhibiting their aesthetic and moral ideals, but also of negotiating these ideals, resisting social trends, and shaping communities based on a shared fascination for a certain lifestyle. These groups, favoring play as a means of cultural expression, have had a considerable role in shaping the taste of Japanese society as well as the image of what we get to think of as Japanese. Therefore, it can be said that for Japanese society play has represented a "powerful civilizing force" (47).

As play is often described in opposition to the realm of "serious life," Dalio-Bul chooses to approach the "otherness of play" as the theme for the third chapter of her book. Since for the three social groups in chapter 2 play and leisure activities happened in carefully delimited spaces apart from everyday life, the author engages in a historical reconstruction of the sakariba, the amusement quarters which emerged in the city of Edo and still exist nowadays in Tokyo. The demarcation of the sakariba, both physically within the urban space and symbolically through behaviours such as dressing up, is seen as a way of conserving the otherness of play, and efforts to maintain or transgress the boundaries of these spaces can be interpreted in relation to the cultural construction of play.

From chapter 4 on, Dalio-Bul's focus switches completely to modern-day urban Japan and how play has metamorphosed in post-war era Japan. Chapter 4 considers the work-oriented culture that Japan developed under the influence of large corporations in the 1970s and the information culture that emerged in the context of Japan's late-consumer culture when discussing what play consists of and what a good player is under these socio-economic circumstances in Japan. The chapter offers interesting insights into the role played by economics in shaping ideology by focusing on phenomena such as the development of edutainment through karucha senta (cultural centres) and bukatsu (extra-curricular club activities), and the emergence of otaku, cosplay, and other subcultures. A particular interest is shown in cosplay culture and what is considered a best player in this form of play. The author observes that, as was the case for Heian and Edo period aristocrats, mastery of a vast amount of information and the aestheticizing of play are key elements for one to be considered a skilful player in postmodern Japan.

The fact that in many of the games the players manifest their creativity, not through original endeavours, but rather through skill that is a direct result of accumulating information and knowledge invites the subject of the next chapter: creativity in play. Dalio-Bul approaches creativity as a socio-cultural rather than individual construct and shows that in the case of highly structured, knowledge-based games such as cosplay, or fashion subcultures such as the ganguro or yamanba, accumulation of information allows for creativity while submitting to the agreed rules of the game. The emphasis on aesthetics and information, while also characteristic of postmodern cultural production, is also part of "a long historical lineage of artistic creativity articulated by





skilful selection and combination, intertextuality, remediation and parody in visual arts, performing arts, and literature" (116). The author argues that creativity is both linked to patterns of creation within a certain culture and influenced by the way the economy and society are organized in a certain era.

The last chapters delve deeper into analyzing the status of play in the most modern era under the influence of post-consumer culture. One of the most insightful aspects of this discussion is the process of politicization of play in Japan, which culminates with the integration of play into Japan's national strategy of promoting itself overseas through the "Cool Japan" campaign. Daliot-Bul hints that this campaign is the tipping point of a larger process that blurred the boundaries between everyday life and play, once an area of social resistance in Japan. License to Play is an ambitious project covering a large subject area related to play and culture over a long time-span through presenting episodes in the history of play in Japan. Daliot-Bul demonstrates that Western scholarship has plenty to gain from applying its theoretical frame to territories outside its geographical extent, but at the same time the book testifies to the difficulties of reconciling two vast academic spaces. While the title refers to the ludic in Japanese culture, it is probably worth mentioning that the book limits itself to the urban space of Japan, and the area in which the author provides her own fieldwork data is restricted to brief mentions of several interviews, regarding mostly cosplay culture. A different structuring of the book could have reflected the author's interests better while doing justice to this fascinating theme.

It is worth emphasizing that Daliot-Bul takes the theme very seriously, offering important insights into the relationship between play and culture for scholars of both Japan and cultural studies as a whole. Despite its seriousness, the book also presents what the Japanese would call *asobigokoro* (playfulness) with important parts of the book being set to an epigraph, either a poem or a colloquial phrase that includes the word *asobi*, the key word that discretely ties the whole book together.

### **The International Journal of Play: Call for Papers**

The journal welcomes: reports on research projects; papers concerned with theory-practice links; policy critiques and expositions; reviews and analysis of contemporary and historical publications; essays, memoirs, and other forms of reflective writing; writing that builds on the experience and voices of children and young people; and, theoretical position papers. The International Journal of Play will appear three times a year and the contents of the first issue can be found at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rijp20/current>



## MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

- 1) Parents, retailers and search engines urged to 're-think the pink' next Christmas  
<https://www.theiet.org/policy/media/press-releases/20161206.cfm>
- 2) Tech toys are great...if the children play too  
<https://www.ft.com/content/afdca140-c04d-11e6-81c2-f57d90f6741a>
- 3) The Internet of toys  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311771309\\_The\\_Internet\\_of\\_toys](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311771309_The_Internet_of_toys)
- 4) Venezuela seizes four million toys to hand out to poor children at Christmas  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/venezuela-toys-impounded-four-million-hand-out-poor-children-christmas-presents-a7469286.html>
- 5) Kids & the connected home: privacy in the age of connected dolls, talking dinosaurs, and battling robots  
<https://fpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Kids-The-Connected-Home-Privacy-in-the-Age-of-Connected-Dolls-Talking-Dinosaurs-and-Battling-Robots.pdf>
- 6) Infants show a preference for toys that 'match' their gender before they know what gender is  
<https://digest.bps.org.uk/2016/06/03/infants-show-a-preference-for-toys-that-match-their-gender-before-they-know-what-gender-is/>
- 7) Let's Play: the speech and language way  
<https://letsplaythespeechandlanguage.com/2016/11/>
- 8) How Smart Toys Are Changing the Way Children Play  
<https://cognitoy.com/blogs/blog/how-smart-toys-are-changing-the-way-children-play>
- 9) Beware the Imposition of Choice on Your Children  
<http://www.playunlimited.org.au/2016/12/02/beware-imposition-choice-children/>
- 10) Getting Preschoolers to Share...How Do You Do It?  
<https://pathways.org/blog/getting-preschoolers-share/>
- 11) Open-ended toys: Why your little one prefers a cardboard box over flashy toys  
<https://blog.kinedu.com/open-ended-toys-why-your-little-one-prefers-a-cardboard-box-over-flashy-toys/>
- 12) New structure for active family ownership of the LEGO® brand  
<https://www.lego.com/en-us/aboutus/news-room/2016/december/new-lego-brand-group-entity>
- 13) Toys: the Tools of Play  
<https://www.toyindustries.eu/priorities/importance-of-play/>
- 14) Let's play! A guide with toy and play ideas for children with vision impairment  
<https://www.rnib.org.uk/family-friends-and-carers-resources-parents-blind-or-partially-sighted-children/lets-play>
- 15) Can hi-tech toys be fun and educational?  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-37972608>
- 16) Inside the Booming Business of Adults Who Play With Toys on YouTube  
<http://mentalfloss.com/article/89957/inside-booming-business-adults-who-play-toys-youtube>
- 17) A study on toys, games and activities for children of each age group - tips from 1,500 mums  
[http://www.loogun.com/blog/entry/toys\\_games\\_and\\_activities\\_for\\_children](http://www.loogun.com/blog/entry/toys_games_and_activities_for_children)
- 18) Child's Play: How Modern Toys are Engaging Kids with STEM Subjects  
<https://blogs.solidworks.com/solidworksblog/2018/03/childs-play-how-modern-toys-are-engaging-kids-with-stem-subjects.html>
- 19) Why Kids Like 'Parenting' Their Toys  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/11/kids-parenting-toys-hatchibabies/576547/>



## ITRA 2016 Fees Notice

*Please note that, according to the ITRA Board's decision in Alicante, 8<sup>th</sup> August 2005, conference fees cover ITRA membership fees until the following conference. This means that conference participants who paid full registration fees for the 7<sup>th</sup> ITRA conference in Braga, Portugal 2014 have been exempted from paying ITRA dues for the years 2015 through 2017.*

*If you were not able to attend the conference in Braga, you must submit your annual membership fee for 2016 to remain an ITRA member in good standing.*

**Annual membership: €50**  
**Retiree// Student membership: €25**

Payments may be made

a) through bank transfer to the following account number

International Toy Research Association,  
National Bank of Greece, Pal. Phaliro branch 175  
Account number: 175/480074.53  
IBAN Number: GR16 0110 1750 0000 1754 8007 453  
SWIFT: ETHNGRAA

b) by sending an International Money Order, payable to ITRA, to the Treasurer at the following address:

Cleo Gougoulis  
73 Terpsihoris St.  
P.Phaleron  
17562 Athens  
Greece

Please notify the ITRA Treasurer, Cleo Gougoulis, by sending an e-mail to: [cleogougoulis@yahoo.gr](mailto:cleogougoulis@yahoo.gr), when you send your fees to the bank. It is important to mention what amount and in which currency you paid.

## EPILOGUE

If you attended a conference this year - toy related, preferably - have anything to say, whether about yourself, publications you have read or would like to recommend to the ITRA membership, events, research or just anything, or would like to propose an ITRA member we could profile, do not hesitate to contact either Suzy or Mark, via [itranwsltr@gmail.com](mailto:itranwsltr@gmail.com). We intend to publish a spring edition in May 2017. This edition is anticipated to contain a Call-for-Papers for the upcoming ITRA conference in Finland, and all pertinent logistic material related to the conference. In the meantime, the editors of the newsletter would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue of the ITRA newsletter.

We would encourage you to feel free to send the editors articles, which we can share with the rest of the ITRA members. If English is not your first language, please do not let this be a hindrance to contacting the Editorial Team; we are more than happy to assist in editing items from contributors.

The Editorial Team would like to wish all ITRA members a festive holiday season and a peaceful new year.

Regards  
Suzy & Mark

*We do not stop playing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop playing.*  
Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

