

# Robbeburg Newsletter

Robbeburg International Playgroup

## Editorial

October is here already. We seem to have missed a September issue - so my apologies for that. Henry has sadly resigned her position as Membership Secretary (more about this later) and therefore as Editor as well!

So - we're looking for a new Editor of our newsletter. If you like to be creative and would like to get involved in something outside of home or work, then this is the role for you! It's also a very good CV filler for those of you that are in-between jobs (I mean other than being a mum!). Please let me know if you're interested.

I personally think this newsletter is a very good means of communicating membership and important for our members. On that note - we'd love some feedback on the newsletter, so please let us know what you think! I'm no expert, so any advice would be greatly appreciated! E-mail me at [chair@robbeburg.com](mailto:chair@robbeburg.com). Meriel

## Dates for your diary

**Sunday 29th October, 3pm - Halloween Party at Robbeburg.**

**All welcome! Tell your friends! You don't have to be a member..**

- **Entry €5 per person.**
- **Children in costume free.**
- **Please bring something for the adults to eat with their tea and coffee and which we can store if not used e.g. biscuits!**

**Tuesday 7th November, 8pm - committee and members' meeting at Robbeburg. All welcome!**

**Sunday 10th December, 3pm - Robbeburg Christmas Fair. Details to follow!**



**October**

Volume 1, Issue 3

### Inside this issue:

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Editorial                         | 1 |
| Committee changes                 | 1 |
| Birthdays and hellos              | 2 |
| Robbeburg prices                  | 2 |
| Family cooking - Lemony Fish      | 2 |
| Swimming with toddlers            | 3 |
| Holiday cottage in Eifel, Germany | 3 |
| Positions vacant                  | 4 |
| Fridge wanted!                    | 4 |
| And finally ...                   | 4 |

## Committee changes

It is with real regret that we say goodbye to a few committee members this month. Henry Doyle has been Membership Secretary for the last year and before that she was responsible for publicity and the Newsletter. Now she's going to have a baby!! Congratulations, Hen. Obviously this means that she can't really quite fit in working on the Robbeburg committee as well, so will step down from January 2007. Hen has always been enthusiastic, energetic and committed as far as Robbeburg is concerned and I'm certain that we would not be in such good shape now if she hadn't been involved - let alone the fact that she pretty much single-handedly organised last year's Christmas party. So, many thanks, Hen, and we hope to see you and the new bubba back soon!

Ulrika, who moved from Chair to Secretary a while back has also stepped down due to outside commitments and a possible move away! Many thanks, Ulrika, for all your hard work as Chair - again Ulrika is someone to whom we owe Robbeburg's survival over the past year. Best of luck for whatever happens to you and your family in the future.

And we also welcome .... Jo Hetherington, who's volunteered to move from Publicity to Membership Secretary, Jenny Bridle and Becca Hitchman, who will do a joint job as Secretary, Andrea Bergmann as our new Website Manager and Susan Jessop, responsible for Health & Safety. We'll make sure that you get to see the faces soon, but meanwhile many thanks for joining us and we all look forward to working together.



## Birthdays & hellos!

Happy Birthday to the following little ones (on the left) for September and October. Also we're delighted to have the following mothers and babies join Robbeburg (list on the right). Welcome! (and there are so many!)

|                             |            |                               |            |                  |                        |
|-----------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Tobias Dubois               | 01/10/2002 | Max Bergmann                  | 06/09/2005 | Diane & Aleke    | Simone & Aidan         |
| Tilda White                 | 07/09/2004 | Anika Santos                  | 10/09/2005 | Lindy & Gabriel  | Linda & Joline         |
| Thea Boer                   | 08/09/2004 | Thalia Fletcher               | 11/09/2005 | Susan & Fanny    | Carola & Fanny         |
| Jenna Thomas                | 10/09/2004 | Finlay White                  | 20/09/2005 | Swapna & Arjun   | Claire & Luke          |
| Tiago Alvarez               | 17/09/2004 | Stanley Hitchma               | 20/09/2005 | Lynne & Brooke   | Andrea & Max           |
| Olivia Asp                  | 21/09/2004 | Ava Booth                     | 21/09/2005 | Yuki & Mika      | Rom & Ifat             |
| Daiki Hanada                | 29/09/2004 | Maya Harvey                   | 07/10/2005 | Simone & Aidan   | Daniela & Anouk        |
| Samuel Bulling              | 01/10/2004 | Aidan Wajcman                 | 23/10/2005 | Cecilia & Matteo | Alison & Amy           |
| Isobel Jenner               | 19/10/2004 | Liam Rathe                    | 27/10/2005 | Marci & Olivia   | Maria & Milo           |
| Karina Hedinger-Skoularikou | 23/10/2004 | Milou Wilderom - Hetherington | 27/09/2005 | Jenny & Hannah   | Alison & John          |
|                             |            |                               |            | Susana & Martin  | Nikki & Isabella       |
|                             |            |                               |            | Silvia & Lorenzo | Janise & Sophie        |
|                             |            |                               |            | Claire & Sam     | Nina & Benjamin-Damian |



## Robbeburg prices

We have a number of different membership fees for being a member of Robbeburg and sometimes we forget what's what as well! So we thought it would be useful to summarise what prices Robbeburg has to offer and what they mean.

Firstly, billing - at the moment we're billing you quarterly. We introduced this because we wanted to keep an eye on who was coming and going and, frankly, we needed cash more quickly! As you will know from various e-mails and discussions, our cash crisis has much improved, so we will reconsider our billing term in 2007.

Our prices are as follows:

|   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| Full member:  | €65 | allowed to change mornings without prior arrangement, because we are now starting to get full! There are waiting lists for those sessions that are already full and, while waiting, you can attend another group that is not full although you may be asked to leave if the session is full. |
| For 3 months  |     |  |
| Approx 13 sessions  |     |  |
| Second child:   | €35 |  |
| For 3 months  |     |  |
| Approx 13 sessions  |     |  |
| Multi-entry card  | €75 | With the Multi-entry card and the Guest Fee, you can turn up at any session and pay these entrance fees, but you may be asked to leave if the session gets too full.   |
| Valid for 6 months  |     |  |
| Valid for 10 sessions   |     |  |
| Guest fee first child:  | €10 |  |
| One entrance only   |     |  |
| Guest fee second child  | €5  | <b>And a final note - a Friday morning group is beginning soon! If you are interested, please e-mail one of the committee or look at the notice boards.</b>  |
| One entrance only   |     |  |
| Membership is for one chosen morning per week and you are not |     |  |

## Family Recipes - Lemony Fish

Sent in by Andrea Bergmann and Max!

Preparation time: 10 minutes

- 1 fillet of fresh white fish, such as haddock, sea bass or cod, skinned and boned (about 140g/5oz)
- juice of 1 lemon
- 1tbsp olive oil or butter



Melt the oil or butter in a frying pan. Drizzle half the lemon juice over one side of the fish and put it into the pan with the lemony side down. Drizzle the rest of the lemon juice onto the upturned side. Allow to cook over a gentle heat for about 2-3 minutes and then turn over and cook the other side. Flake the fish with a fork and remove any bones. Serve with mashed potatoes, rice or pasta, and vegetables, such as carrots and peas. Makes 3-6 servings

# Swimming with toddlers

Thanks to the Haarlem playgroup for providing this!

In most public swimming pools in The Netherlands it is compulsory for all children regardless of age to wear arm bands unless they have obtained their swimming diploma (even if they can actually swim).

The swimming diploma consists of parts A,B and C. It is only necessary to obtain part A to swim without armbands. The parts B and C are for those children wanting to improve their swimming and become stronger swimmers.

In many swimming pools there are long waiting lists to get your child enrolled in a swimming lesson scheme, so it is important for you to decide quite early which route you are going to follow. Some pools also provide private lessons, though of course at a higher cost. Different pools have different schemes. To highlight a few : some begin lessons at age 4, you pay weekly or quarterly and keep attending until your child is competent enough to pass the diploma. Others start at age 5 and some advice from age 6, the aim being that the child will learn to swim quicker.

Some pools provide a fast course, whereby there is usually a fixed time, for example 10 months, with a set fee and provided your child does not miss more than a stated number of lessons, for example 5, they guarantee they will obtain the diploma at the end of the 10 months. If your child is not actually competent enough to pass the diploma then, or fails the test, the pool will provide the extra lessons needed until he or she passes.

When a child is selected to swim for the diploma a "proef zwem" (practice swim) takes place before the actual diploma day. This is usually seen as the real test as no-one wants the child to fail on the day. The Dutch take their swimming very seriously and the actual diploma day is seen as a very big event; Granny and Granddad are usually

dusted off; Aunts and Uncles etc are invited to watch the children swim and get their diploma and medal.

For more information visit your local pool to see what they offer, speak to other members in the group for pools they recommend or look in the Gouden Gids (yellow pages) under zwembaden en zwemscholen. Most adverts have the pools websites.

## Swimming Pool Safety : Safety Advice For the Public

A public swimming pool is a relatively safe environment, but wherever there is water there is always a hazard present and children are at risk. Supervision is imperative at all times, lifeguards are there for users safety but they cannot replace the care and attention of a parent for children who are using the pool, particularly if they are weak or non-swimmers. Consider the following:-

- \* Familiarise yourself with the swimming pool and find out about the safety rules. Make sure you know how the depth of the pool changes.

- \* Check how many lifeguards are on duty and where they are positioned

- \* Do not leave your child unattended, even if they are wearing a swimming aid

- \* Remind your child to walk in the pool area and only to enter the water with you

- \* Encourage your child to watch what the lifeguards do and begin to identify which activities in the pool are dangerous

- \* Enrol your child in swimming / personal survival classes

Encourage your child to shower before going into the pool, good hygiene will help maintain the water quality of the pool. If your child is not yet toilet-trained, ensure that they wear a specific swimming nappy that will prevent faeces from entering the pool.

# Holiday cottage in Eifel, Germany

We recently had a lovely, relaxing time in the beautiful Eifel area of Germany (near Cologne, Koblenz and Bonn - about 3 ½ hours drive from Amsterdam) and I thought I would share the accommodation details with you.

While it was not posh, it was a comfortable 1 bedroom apartment with pull-out beds in the living room, which we slept in. Of course, the children had the bedroom! Good kitchen and good bathroom, but no bath. However, it did have a swing



and sandpit and gorgeous views over the valley. And all for €40 per night.

If you like peace and quiet and being able to wander to the local bakery for your bread and a drink and then spending the day in the forest and spectacular castles of the Rhine, followed by children playing in the sandpit and a relaxing patio, then this is definitely worth a try. And ... They had a babysitter! - Meriel

[www.koch-kell.de](http://www.koch-kell.de)



## Halloween Party at Robbeburg

on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October  
at 3pm  
in the main hall next to Robbeburg

A snack is provided for the children, but please bring some biscuits for the parents. It would be great if your children were dressed up - although it doesn't have to be in Halloween costume!

Entry €5 per person  
Children in costume free!

And finally

### Joke of the day

An acquaintance of mine who is a physician told this story about her then four-year-old daughter. On the way to preschool, the doctor had left her stethoscope on the car seat, and her little girl picked it up and began playing with it. Be still, my heart, thought my friend, my daughter wants to follow in my footsteps!

Then the child spoke into the instrument: "Welcome to McDonald's. May I take your order?"  
(from the internet)

## Positions Vacant

### Publicity

If you're creative, artistic and full of energy and enthusiasm then this is the job for you! We desperately need someone to help us publicise Robbeburg on a regular basis. It's completely up to you how you do the job - all that's required is that as many people as possible in Amsterdam get to hear about us!

### Purchaser

We would love to have a volunteer to help us buy all the things we need to keep Robbeburg going. It really just involves a few trips to Makro or Albert Heijn and checking every now and then that we have enough supplies. Obviously you get fully reimbursed!

### Newsletter Editor

Finally, we would love to have someone help us put the newsletter together on a regular basis.

Please contact Meriel or Sigrid on [chair@](mailto:chair@robbeburg.com) or [co-chair@robbeburg.com](mailto:co-chair@robbeburg.com) if you are interested in any of the above positions.

## Fridge needed !!

As you've probably noticed, Robbeburg really needs a new fridge. If you know anyone who's doing up their kitchen (and throwing their fridge away) or owns a kitchen shop and can sponsor us, please bear us in mind !!

