

This is a collection of comments in response to the question 'What singing games do you remember playing as a child on the Isle of Wight'? Most comments were made on Facebook groups which share historical material. Updated December 2020.

There were lots of skipping games played in the school playground when I first came to teach about 35 years ago. They were mainly sung by girls, but not always. Back then we had 75 minutes lunch time, when the Continental Day came in with a 30 minute lunch it all stopped!

Circle Games



Circle Game, Bembridge 1917/18

B.I.N.G.O.

This was played in East Cowes in the 1970s in a circle holding hands and singing. I think someone went around the outside and tapped the others on their shoulder. *There was a dog, a great big dog and his name was Bingo. B.I.N.G.O., B.I.N.G.O. and Bingo was his name oh.* Then the person it lands on becomes the person going round.

Farmers in his Den

Ryde , 50s

Farmers in his den x2

Farmer wants a wife

The wife wants a child

The child wants a nurse

The nurse wants a dog

The dog wants a bone

We all pat the bone

A farmer's in his den, e I addio a farmers in his den, this was between 1957_1962 at Grange Road School, East Cowes primary.

We played *the Farmers wants a wife* in Yarmouth junior school in the early 60s.

Farmer want's a wife, played at Carisbrooke/ Gunville, 1960s.

The farmers in his den. the farmers in his den. eiei the farmers in his den. The farmer in middle of circle and circle of people dance round chosen farmer holding hands. Then *The farmer wants a wife x two times eiei the farmer wants a wife.* farmer chooses wife. *Wife wants child* then *child wants nurse*, then *nurse wants a dog.* then *dog wants a bone.* then it's *We all pat the bone* and all from circle inside and out tap the "bone" on the head. Played in East Cowes in the 1970s.

Green Gravel

Another song which has just come to me is 'Green Gravel' which we used to sing at infants school: (I went to the convent at Ryde). Green Gravel: I'm sure our words were slightly different though and included the line, '*Young Tom is a drummer/soldier who drums/fights for the Queen*' and he of course goes off and gets himself killed. Binstead primary and Ryde convent

In and out the Dusty Bluebells

In and out the dusty bluebells was a circle game, played in Ryde, both at Caversham House Infant school, in Dover Street, and Ryde Saint John's Primary school, from 1956 to 1959. The three lines repeat "*In and out the dusty bluebells*". I recalled the last line of the first verse was "*You will be my master*". The rest of the verses start with three lines of "*Tippy tippy tappy on your shoulder*" then the variations: *You will be my lady; You will be my gardener; You will be my baker, etc.*

The dance that went with it; people stand in a circle while one person skips in and out between them for the first verse, then stands behind one person tapping on their shoulder while singing the second verse. The first verse is repeated with both people holding hands and skipping in and out of the circle, picking a third person to join in, then a fourth and so on until everyone is dancing. The song seems to be about the May hiring fairs when young people were selected by farmers to work for the summer. It was a time that bluebells were flowering, hence the dusty bluebells, and the reference to choosing a master was about gaining employment.

In and out the dusty bluebells, this was between 1957_1962 at Grange Road school East Cowes primary.

I remember *in and out the dusty bluebells* in the 60s at Newchurch Primary. Not a skipping game , but a play time game in the early 60s

We played *in and out the dusty bluebells* at primary school in the 70s on the Iow.

Maulberry Bush

In Cowes in the 1970s we played Maulberry Bush

Here we go round the mulberry Bush, the mulberry Bush , the mulberry Bush, here we go round the mulberry bush on a cold and frosty morning there were verses where you sang '*this is the way you wash your face: brush your teeth, comb your hair* etc., . Sang it at junior school in playground, first verse holding hands and going round in a circle, then doing actions.

Poor Jenny Sits a-Weeping

I played 'Poor Jenny' in Ryde, both at Caversham House Infant school, in Dover Street, and Ryde Saint John's Primary school, from 1956 to 1959. Poor Jenny sits a weeping was a circle game. I think these are the words:

Poor Jenny sits a weeping, A weeping, a weeping.
Poor Jenny sits a weeping, On a bright summer's day.
Oh why is she a weeping, A weeping, a weeping?
Oh why is she a weeping, On a bright summer's day?
She's weeping for her sweetheart, Her sweetheart, her sweetheart.
She's weeping for her sweetheart, On a bright summer's day.
Now Jenny choose a sweetheart, A sweetheart, a sweetheart.
Now Jenny choose a sweetheart, On a bright summer's day.
Now Jenny choose a bridesmaid, A bridesmaid, a bridesmaid.
Now Jenny choose a bridesmaid, On a bright summer's day.
Now Jenny choose a pageboy, A pageboy, a pageboy.
Now Jenny choose a pageboy, On a bright summer's day.
Now Jenny choose a parson, A parson, a parson.
Now Jenny choose a parson, On a bright summer's day.
Now Jenny shall be married, Be married, be married.
Now Jenny shall be married, On a bright summer's day.

I remember 'Poor Jenny Sits a-Weeping' but I think we sang 'Mary'. I was at Binstead Primary and Ryde Convent.

Ring a Roses

Ring a ring of roses, A pocket full of posies
Atishoo atishoo, We all fall down. I lived in Ryde, 50s

Wallflowers, wallflowers

This was a was a strange singing game. In Wallflowers we would be in a circle holding hands and moving around and the chant went something like "*Wallflowers, wallflowers growing up so high, all the little children they will all soon die, excepting (one is named) she's the only one, SHOUT "awful shame, awful shame, turn your face to the wall again"* so the poor child left the circle and went to face the school wall and so it went on. This was 1957-1958 at Denmark Rd School in Cowes.

Rope Skipping Games

All in together Girls

I remember the skipping song *All in together girls, Jill fine weather girls! When you hear your letter (first letter of your name) please jump in!* I would have been playing this game around '62/63. I went to Gurnard Primary School, now demolished. I was born and grew up in Porchfield. I only played this game at school. All I can add is that we would then recite the alphabet and friends would jump into the skipping rope as they heard their initial spoken!

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday never let the rope go empty. The skippers jumped in one at a time, and as soon as the rhyme came to an end, they jumped out and the next person jumped in, and the rope didn't stop turning. It was a long rope with a 'turner' at each end. We played all our games in the street. I lived in Cross Lane Newport. This was around 1955/56 when I was 10. We didn't have electricity until I was 12, and therefore no television until I was 13! I had many cousins who lived on the same road or nearby, so we played in the road or in the fields. (Now housing estates)
I remember playing Ash Wednesday at school and home in Wootton Bridge early/mid 1950's.

In Wootton, in the 1960s, played Ash Wednesday.

Bluebells, cockleshells

I remember another skipping rhyme, I played in Ryde. I went to Caversham House Infant school, in Dover Street, and Ryde Saint John's Primary school, from 1956 to 1959.

Bluebells, cockleshells, evy ivy over (Rope sways side to side, then over). Rope continues going over while you sing the next part: *Daddy is a butcher, mummy cuts the meat, baby's in the cradle fast asleep. How many hours did she sleep. One, two, three, four, etc.*

I really wish I remember the song the girls used to sing whilst playing Hopscotch in the playground at Binstead Primary, I think it was '*Bluebells, cockle-shells*'.

Bumper Car

In Ryde convent 1968 ish. *Bumper car bumper car number 48, whizz round the corner and put on your breaks.*

It was a skipping game where two people turned the rope and a third skipped, *"I'm a little bumper car from number 48, I turned round the corner and lammed on my brand new brakes"*. You skipped normally until you got to corner, when you jumped out of the rope, ran round one of the rope turners, and jumped back in making the word corner last as long as this action took. You then skipped normally again until *"brakes"* when you stopped the rope (or tried to!) by landing with one foot each side of the rope. Played in Ryde, late 60's early 70's.

Down the Mississippi

'Down the Mississippi if you miss the boat you swim....' skipping game with a long rope held at either end, in the 60's, I grew up in Cowes I can only remember '*down*' (where you had to try and touch the floor with your hand whilst skipping) *the Mississippi if you miss the boat you swim*'.

Double Dutch

My experience was in Yarmouth junior school in the early 1960s. I'm trying to remember more of the skipping rhymes but struggling, I know there was one where you had to call others into the game when using 2 ropes, a version of Double Dutch.

Ipsy Gypsy

A skipping and 2- ball game. *Ipsy Gypsy lived in a tent, Couldn't afford to pay the rent, The rentman came, The very next day, So Ipsy Gypsy ran away, Over the hills and far away.*

Jelly on a plate

I was brought up on the IOW, I lived in Lake. 'Jelly on a plate' went something like this: *Jelly wobble, jelly wobble, wriggle on the plate, jelly wobble, jelly wobble, now just fall off the plate*. Then you came out of the skipping group. There may have been a little more it, I can't remember now.

Nebuchadnezzar King of the Jews (see also Ball Games)

We used to skip to Nebuchadnezzar. When we got to '*When the shoes began to wear, Nebuchadnezzar bought a chair, When the chair began to rot, Nebuchadnezzar bought a yacht (Or When the chair began to break, Nebuchadnezzar bought a snake)*. We lived at Haylands, near Ryde. I am close to my mid-80s now, so this was in the 1940s.

Nebuchadnezzar was a fast double skip on the word *Jews* and again on the word *shoes* and each rhyming word thereafter. I think the doubles were called bumps, but it was a long long time ago. Happy days. I played mostly on the concrete path surrounding the house and in the garden with local friends in the Parkhurst/Northwood area, probably also at Northwood primary school. I guess it was around 1950/52

Nebuchadnezzar King of the Jews was used for skipping at Denmark Rd School in Cowes.

*Nebuchadnezzar King of the Jews, bought his wife a pair of shoes,
When the shoes began to wear, Nebuchadnezzar began to swear,
When the swearing began to stop, Nebuchadnezzar bought a shop,
When the shop began to sell, Nebuchadnezzar bought a bell,
When the bell began to ring, Nebuchadnezzar began to sing , Doh ray me etc and to these you had to do
"bumps " the very fast multiple turning of the rope.*

Other variations

- *Nebuchadnezzar King of the Jews bought his wife a pair of shoes,
When the shoes began to stink. Nebuchadnezzar began to sing Doh ray me fah so la tee doh!*
- *When the swearing began to stop...Nebuchadnezzar bought a shop...
When the till began to ring... Nebuchadnezzar began to sing..*

My mother told me

A skipping one played at Newchurch Primary,

My mother said

My Mother said, I never should. play with the gypsies in the wood.

If I did, she would say. Naughty girl/boy to disobey! This was played in East Cowes, mid 1980s.

The Wind Blows High

The wind the wind the wind blows high the rain comes tumbling from the sky

He is handsome she is pretty she is the girl from the golden city ! He comes dancing 123 (then say a name) Molly Molly will u marry me ! I sang this in the 1950s, I'm not sure where it came from.

Played at Ryde convent 1968 ish

The wind, the wind, the wind blows high, the rain comes tumbling from the sky

He was handsome, she was pretty, he was the one from the golden city. Prey tell me who he was? Then people holding skipping ropes decided who. ???? Took her by the hand and said would you marry me? Then the person skipping had to skip fast to yes no yes no till they finished. No tune

Oh She Bumps

I remember this skipping rhyme from the late 1950s onwards in Newport, I was Newport born and bred as they say. It was a plastic piece of washing line, not a skipping rope, that I used.

Why oh she bumps, she got the mumps, she went to school sat on the stool and learnt her A B C etc. ABC was fast skips called 'bumps'. You would see how many bumps you could do by how far you could get in the alphabet.

Raspberry, strawberry

Raspberry, strawberry, apple, jam tart, tell me the name of your sweetheart, A, B, C.... It was a skipping game. At whatever letter of the alphabet you tripped, that was the initial of your sweetheart. I played this on the Island in the 1950s, but was also well known in Lancashire.

Spelling 'Difficulty'

I remember the skipping game when as we jumped over the rope we said *mrs d mrs I mrs ffi mrs c mrs u mrs lty*. I never forgot how to spell difficulty! It was at the primary school at Arreton - about 75 years ago!

1949-55 York St & Cross St, Cowes I remember skipping to *Mrs D Mrs I Mrs FFI Mrs C Mrs U Mrs LTY* and on all the letters in difficulty we had to do the bumps.

Early 60s Yarmouth Junior School, spelling 'difficulty'.

Ball Games

Ipsy Gypsy

Ipsy Gypsy lived in a tent was a skipping and a 2-ball game played in Cowes, early 1960s.

*Ipsy Gypsy lived in a tent, Couldn't afford to pay the rent, The rentman came the very next day,
So Ipsy Gypsy ran away, Over the hills and far away.*

Mother Brown

At Cowes, Isle of Wight - early 1970s we were playing 2/3 ball against the wall - *Upsey Mother Brown, then Oversey Mother Brown.*

Nebuchadnezzar King of the Jews (see also Skipping)

Nebuchadnezzar King of the Jews was bouncing a ball or sometimes juggling with two when I played at school and home in Wootton Bridge in the early and mid 1950's. I remember these words

Nebuchadnezzar, King of the Jews Bought his wife a pair of shoes

When the shoes began to wear Nebuchadnezzar began to swear.

When the swearing had to stop Nebuchadnezzar bought a shop

When the shop began to sell Nebuchadnezzar bought a bell

When the bell began to ring Nebuchadnezzar began to sing then it went into such as (as long as it keeps the rhythm) Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall (etc.). Played whilst bouncing a ball on the ground and wall.

Clapping Games

When Suzy was a baby

Thinking about it, 'when Suzy' was a clapping rhyme.

When Suzy was a baby, a baby Suzy was, she went 'wah, wah, wah wah what. When Suzy was a schoolgirl, a schoolgirl Suzy was, she went 'Miss, Miss, I can't do this! When Suzy was a teenager, a teenager Suzy was she went, 'oh, ah, I lost my bra, I left my knickers in my boyfriend's car. I think there was more but I can't remember Ryde, late 60s early 70s.

A Sailor went to Sea, sea, sea

In Wootton, in the 1960s we played *a sailor went to see see see.*

A Sailor went to sea, sea, sea was a clapping gameyou clapped hands with a friend who stood opposite you, played at All Saints Primary School, Freshwater 1965 to 1971

A sailor went to sea, sea, sea - from All Saints Primary School, Freshwater 1965 to 1971



A sailor went to sea sea sea To see what he could see see see



And all that he could see see see Was the bottom of the deep blue sea sea sea

A sailor went to sea, sea, sea, I remember that in Cowes, early 1970s.

I think this was a clapping game. *A sailor went to sea sea sea, to see what he could see, see, see. And all that he could see, see, see, was the bottom of the deep blue sea, sea, sea.* Newport, in the 70's. We incorporated it into a clapping game.

Clapping game played in the West Wight in the early/mid 70s: *A sailor went to sea sea sea* (hand to head as if either saluting or looking) *to see what he could see see see, but all that he could see see see. was the bottom of the deep blue sea sea sea.* Repeat with *cross cross cross* (arms across chest). Repeat with *knee knee knee* (touch knees). End with *sea cross knee*.

Did you ever, ever, ever

Did you ever, ever, ever in your long legged life. See a long legged sailor with his long legged wife No I never, ever, ever etc. From Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight.

Have you ever, ever, ever in your long legged life seen a long legged chicken and his long legged wife, no, I've never, ever, ever, ever. Legged was pronounced legg -ed. It was a clapping song you did with a partner - nothing fancy that I can recall. You just clapped your hands together, then matched your right hand with your partner's left hand, clapped your hands again, then matched your left hand with your partner's right hand, clapped again and repeated the action throughout the song - if that makes sense! I seem to remember you repeated the song and clapping over and over - getting faster and faster each time, until you fell about laughing when you messed up! Simple pleasures were the best fun back in the early 70s! (probably around 1972/73 for me), Cowes, Isle of Wight.

Under the bram bushes

At Cowes, Isle of Wight - early 1970s there were clapping songs like *Under the bram bushes, under the sea.*

Counting games

Eany meany

Eany meany macka air i doma nack a Remember that one? I think that was a counting one to see who was out. I was in Nine Acres, then Newport C of E School.

I remember it as...*Eany meany macaraca, der ry dominaka ..chica bokka lollypoppa rum pum push!!* That was in Newport in the 70s.

Tinker, tailor

When we used to eat cherries as children, on the Isle of Wight, 1970s, the stones we lined up on our plates. We used to say *Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief.* Wasn't a game as such though. The rhyme actually went on: *Silk, satin, pigsty, barn.* But can't remember the rest.

Games with Processions

One Elephant came out to play

At West Street Primary, Brading, about 1962, during break times we'd dance around the playground starting with one child. It goes like this.

One elephant came out to play Upon a spider's web one day

He had such tremendous fun He called upon another elephant to come.

We danced behind each other holding waists and kicking out our legs to the side. Happy times! By the end of break time most of the girls were participating!

The big ship sails on the Alley Alley Oh

East Cowes. Playing in the playground - Grange Road Junior school, about 1954/5. Played against a wall. The child closest to the wall makes an arch with one of their arms and holds hands with the child on their other side. Everyone else holds hands making a long line. End of line child swings out skipping and leads the line under the arch and ties the child who is touching the wall. Now the arch is made by next child etc. *"The big ship sails on the Ali Ali Oow, the Ali Ali Oow, the Ali Ali Oow, the big ship sails on the Ali Ali Oow on the last day of September."* That's it - daft but we loved it. The line of kids that were tangled up got pulled about and generally it broke up because they went faster and faster. I played this game in Ryde, both at Caversham House Infant school, in Dover Street, and Ryde Saint John's Primary school, from 1956 to 1959. I read somewhere that this was about the Titanic, but I didn't know that at the time we sang it.

The big ship sails on the ally ally oh, The alley ally oh, The alley ally oh.

The big ship sails on the ally ally oh, On the last day of September.

The captain said, 'It will never, never do, Never, never do, Never, never do.'

The captain said, 'It will never, never do,' On the last day of September.

The big ship sank to the bottom of the sea, The bottom of the sea, The bottom of the sea.

The big ship sank to the bottom of the sea, On the last day of September.

A game where we skipped around whilst singing the song ' *The big ship sails on the alley alley oh*'. Children would hold hands in a line with one end of the line touching the wall. The other end of the line would then thread itself under the arm of the person touching the wall, and everyone in the line would follow until the person touching the wall was turned around and now had their arms crossed in front of them. The end of the line would then thread itself through the person next to the one touching the wall and so on, until everyone in the line was turned around and facing the other way with their arms crossed. All whilst singing the song. Then we would undo it all again.

This was at Newchurch Primary in the 1970s. I think the rhyme was

The big ship sails on the alley, alley oh The alley alley Oh, the alley alley Oh The big ship sails on the alley alley Oh on the last day of September.

The captain said it will never never do, never never do, never never do, The captain said it will never never do, On the last day of September.

The big ship sank to the bottom of the sea The bottom of the sea. The big ship sank to the bottom of the sea On the last day of September.

We all dip our heads in the deep blue sea The deep blue sea We all dip our heads in the deep blue sea On the last day of September.

I think the last verse may have had actions of heads dipping into the sea? And there could have been something for the sinking bit, I can't really remember!

Oranges and Lemons

I am Ventnor born and bred. In the 1940s we played *Oranges and Lemons* in Ventnor. It was played in a long line. I can't remember how many children. Enough to make a line? Our hands were up to form an arch. When the child passed you had to hurry to miss your head being chopped off. Unsure how the "chosen victims" were picked. As we sang our arms moved up and down mimicking an axe.

I live in Cowes so we all played it in the fifties. I can't remember the verse that was sung but as it neared the end and the kids were going under the two at the top of the line, it went *Here come the chopper to chop off your head chip chop chip chop the last man's head*.

I remember *Oranges and Lemons* in the 60s. More of a girl thing.

The bells of St Clements in the 1970s, on IOW.

Other games with rhymes

Christopher Columbus

Christopher Columbus was a very famous man. He lived in the ocean in a old tin can. The waves got higher and higher (can't remember any more). Ryde convent 1968 ish, no tune

I am a Pretty Little Dutch Girl

I am a pretty little Dutch girl. (clapping song). St. Mary's RC Junior school in the 60s.

In Wootton, in the 1960s we played *I am a pretty little Dutch girl*.

I sent a letter to my love

I sent a letter to my love, Ryde in the early 50's

Late 50's early 60's, South Wight we played *I sent a letter to my love*.

Oh No John

I think we acted out 'Oh No John'. They were just the standard words as I recall but we had a boy playing the part of John and a girl playing the lady's part and a chorus singing '*Oh no John, no John, no John, No!*' I was at Binstead Primary and Ryde Convent

Tarzan in the Jungle

From Wootton, in the 1960s, I remember *Tarzan in the jungle got a bellyache*. Tarzan was a bit scatological, unsurprisingly.

The Grand Old Duke of York

The grand old Duke of York he had 10,000 men, this was between 1957__1962 at Grange Road School East Cowes, primary.

We won the war in 1964

This was a chant in the 1960s

A Singing Game played by adults in a pub

Back in the late 70s we used to go to the Hole in the Wall pub in Ventnor on Friday/Saturday night. I remember that we sang a kids song *I am the Music Man* and it ended in a competition between the two bars!

Assorted games without rhymes

Cockstiddle, played in Ventnor, 1940s. Upside down with the wall for support. Hand stand against a wall. Stay that way as long as you can. Face the wall and do a hand stand. Also played **Five stones**, like Jacks. Stones were picked up from the road. Throw the stones up in the air and catch some on the back of your hand. Discard. And pick up one or more with one of the remaining stones. **Blind mans buff/bluff**. **Tag**. **Hop scotch**. Yes they were happy days. So much energy. Good fresh food. And brilliant parents. **Lurky** was played in the dark. Hide in a recess and wait. When found, run for base. Must not get caught.

O'Grady says. What's the time Mr Wolf ? I sent a letter to my love. All from Ryde in the early 50's

The first record of the game of **Conkers** was in 1848 on the Isle of Wight. Snail shells were used before that. The horse chestnut tree was introduced to the UK in 1616.

We played **Hopscotch** on the pavement in Upper Ventnor. I started school in 1952. You needed to find a piece of slate to throw, but the slate often broke up. We also collected chalk from the chalk pit. Don't forget there were large paving slabs, which we used as a grid. The throwing line was away from the grid so as the numbers got higher it was more difficult to throw the slate into the right place.

8		9
	7	
5		6
	4	
2		3
	1	

Played **Hop scotch** outside the Blue School, it was always the sunny side of the street. Wide pavement and the little square box thingy to sit on while waiting for your turn. We're talking about early to mid fifties, long time ago but some things are never forgotten..

At Whippingham Primary School 1972ish as many of us as possible would climb on the old blue tractor chanting '**All aboard for Blackgang Chine**' Not really a song but definitely a fond memory to share. Does anyone know if the tractor is still there?

What's the time Mr Wolf, French Skipping played late 50's early 60's, South Wight.

I remember **Who's afraid of the big bad wolf, French skipping** and of course **Hopscotch** at Newchurch Primary, 1960s. We also did **One potato two potato** to decide who went first in the games. **Handstands** and **headstands** were also very popular and of course **he** or **tag**.

We played **Stick in the Mud and Hopscotch**. Stick in the Mud was played in the street, one person on one side of the road, facing away from the rest of the kids. The aim was to sneak up to the single person without being seen to move when they turned round, hence stuck in the mud, a bit like musical statues. This was 1960s on the IOW at Carisbrooke and Gunville.

We enjoyed **French skipping** with elastic. I loved teaching my daughter how to do it and play **two ball**. All those years ago seemed so innocent. Bought my daughter some **Jacks** when she was younger and she looked at me as if to say 'really'!

Remember the game with knicker elastic? You jumped on it and twisted it under your feet? Some were never brave enough to try that. It was like hopping over 2 poles close to the ground. We also jumped over 2 skipping ropes going different ways. I went to Nine Acres first, then Newport C of E School.

I'm originally from Oakfield, we played **rounders, hopscotch, marbles, ball against the wall, ginger knock, five** stones, walked on tin cans with string on, roller skated, walked on the tops of people's walls, ran across the railway line crossing in Smallbrook when we heard the train coming, climbed a fallen tree out past bluebell copse, that's all I can think of at the moment.

We did dusty bluebells, **duck duck goose**, which I also played with my kids. The usual **tag, it. British bulldog**. Loads of skipping rhymes and jump rope ones. The usual "**salt, vinegar mustard pepper**" never understood that one. Isle of Wight from around 1970s till 1990s-2000s with my kids

Does anyone remember putting a tennis ball in one leg of your mum's tights and banging it against the wall over and under your leg? I can remember doing that on the playground wall at Nodehill Middle School ! Yes, 45 years ago, 1975.

I remember doing that with a ball in a sock at Archbishop King Middle School, the rhyme was something about a cup of tea.

We played **Kiss chase, British bulldog, film stars**, skipping games with elastic. Whatever we could make up. Always played in the street. With four brothers you had to be tough. Late 50s, early 60s. East Cowes.

What's the time Mr Wolf.

I remember what's the time Mr Wolf Cowes Iow, prob mid 60s onwards, Arnold Road to be precise.

Someone would be the wolf and other people some distance behind. The wolf turns his back on them and they ask what's the time Mr. Wolf. He choses to say different times and because strides are different then some people are nearer than others when the wolf turns round. then the wolf can turn at any time usually when some people are near and replies dinner time and the wolf gives chase. The person caught is then the wolf. in East Cowes in the 1970s

Played **Foxes & Hounds, Puggin, and British Bulldog. Pug/Puggin'** we had Pug fights on the "back fields" of East Cowes, which was an undeveloped area, now Kingslea Park. The area has this awful clay, known locally as pug. The kids used to find a bendy stick, grab a lump of pug and try and hit the enemy, who was doing the same back. Mum had to hose us down by the back door!

Lordy that **British bulldog** game was lethal. At least we took no prisoners. In British Bulldog there was one person " the catcher" at one end of the road, all the other group at the end. The kids ran to the other end of the road and it was the catchers aim to bring down as many kids as possible to join his side. The kids would then run from side to side, evading capture by the ever-growing bulldogs. Then there would be only one kid left, ready to run like Billy-o through this defensive line of bulldogs who will do anything to take you down. The East Cowes Rules... You take the other side down, by any means necessary. No tears. Don't cry now or you'll have to go home :=) My childhood was in 1989-1994 Good times.

Fox and Hounds. If you were on the fox team, you would have 10 minute head start to run and keep running. The Hounds would follow, chasing you all over town and eventually finding you. These were almost all day events that predated mobile phones, so you needed to rely on knowledge of the person and asking others. Also in East Cowes, it had a large undeveloped rural area lol.... You could literally run and run. If they didn't catch you and it was tea time, you'd won.

Eggs and Bacon, I played this in the 1970s.

Songs

Archibal-bal-bal I do not think I can put it on here as it now will be classed as unsuitable. I am 70 so it would be a rhyme that was deemed OK then.

*There was a man called **Michael Finnigin** He grew whiskers on his chin
The wind came up and blew them in again... Poor old Michael Finnigin, begin again*
Second verse *There was an old man called Michael Finnigin, he grew fat and then grew thin again, then he died and had to begin again, poor old Michael Finnigin begin again.* I don't know how I know this rhyme - but think I have known it since I was 4 or 5yrs old, so approximately 1967/68 when I lived in Cowes, IW. I may have learnt it from my older brothers or sister or maybe from a record - I really don't remember, just know all the words!

I remember at Girls Brigade, Ryde 1970s, we used to sing **I am the Music Man** and **The Quartermasters Stores** amongst others. Also remember: ***On top of Spaghetti**, All covered in cheese, I lost my poor meatball, when somebody sneezed. It flew off the table, and onto the floor, and then my poor meatball, was sadly no more!*

A folklore collector visited Wootton

I have a vague recollection of being called into Mrs Mahler's office at Wootton primary school during the 70's to be part of a group of pupils who were going to sing playground songs for someone doing some research. Wish I could remember more about it

NOTE: Possibly this was the visit to the Isle of Wight mentioned in a letter written by Iona Opie in 1988. Iona and Peter Opie researched widely and published a number of books about children's rhymes and games. This is the relevant part of the letter - 'It was only when we failed to find a contact in some corner of Great Britain, or in some offshore island, that I went off on an expedition with a tape-recorder: to Cape Wrath in the left-hand top corner of Scotland, to the Land's End in Cornwall, to the westerly tip of Wales, and to the Isle of Wight.'

NOTE: Each separate paragraph above was contributed by a different person.

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If you can add any details, please email to folkonwight@aol.co.uk. Rhymes and songs can be recorded on a phone/tablet (not video as the file may be too large). Thank you!