

Scottish Readers Remember Children

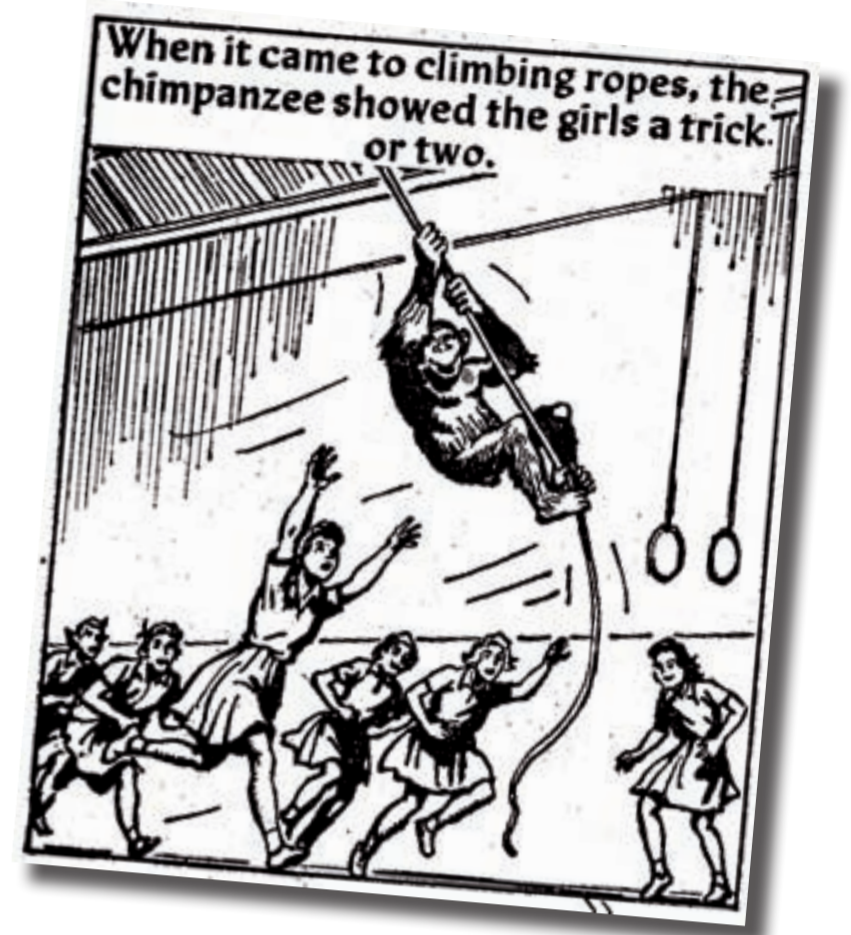


Sometimes we got an annual at Christmas which was lovely. I loved the Annuals. Another one that we always got was The Broons book, either The Broons or Oor Wullie.

Nancy Johnson

Childhood encounters with reading range enormously. Comic book Annuals, such as *The Beano*, *The Dandy*, *Oor Wullie* and *The Broons*, can be no less important to young readers as classics such as Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. They are just as essential in promoting a love of reading. Children's stories, including such seemingly escapist material, have also often engaged with issues that were important at particular moments in time. The Second World War produced the heroic adventures of Biggles which appealed to boys and the important part played by women in the war effort also gave rise to the no less glamorous Worrals of the WAAF.

Many of the interviewees recalled with clarity the books of their childhoods in the 1920s and 1930s – in particular, those books that



played a part in many of the magical moments of childhood such as Christmas, birthdays or prize-givings. Some also commented on the long tradition of differentiating between the interests of girls and boys. School stories actually originated with girls and continued to grow in popularity during the second half of the twentieth century with bestselling authors like Enid Blyton producing the St Clare's and Malory Towers series, and girls' comics like *The Bunty* featuring the Four Marys.

