

# LONDON PLAY

Play Streets Past & Present

Winton Avenue, Haringey

**Winton Avenue is located in Bounds Green. Most of the houses were built in the 1930s and many retain their original features. In some cases they also retain their original residents!**

The road has playing fields at the bottom and woods at the top end. At the back of the houses are green areas, on one side allotments and on the other an area of land known as 'the wilderness'.

Over the past two or three decades the street has become a bit of a rat run for cars using it as a cut through to the North Circular at rush hour.



## Winton Avenue reminiscence session

There were many wonderful and amusing stories from people in the street. But a particular theme emerged as a focus during the art and play sessions.

Anthony has lived in the same house in Winton Avenue for 72 years. His family settled in the area after being bombed out of Highgate Village in 1941. His memories of post-war childhood reflected a time when children were inventive about play and could play freely outside in the days before the advent of cars.

Anthony recalls how after WWII there was a growing fascination about the space age, aliens and flying saucers. He remembered playing several space-related games. One involved the use of silver milk bottle tops which the children pretended were flying saucers; flicking them in the air and watching them fly.

In particular he described the influence of 'The Eagle' comic with its hero Dan Dare, 'pilot of the future'. Anthony spoke about how the comic captivated children's imaginations and dreams of "where we were going to go."

A favourite game involved the children pretending to be Dan Dare. Anthony remembered one story from the comic which children had re-enacted on the street. It involved two civilisations on Venus who were at war. A reptilian civilisation with machines was called the Treens and the other the Therons. Eventually the Therons won the war with special rays and because they had horses and bows and arrows.



## The space idea really takes off

These space age stories and the idea of 'where would we go', formed the basis for Winton Avenue's art and play session.

The art and play workers transferred the theme of time travel and space to get children in Winton Avenue building their own special giant play rocket called the 'Winton Wizzer'.

The space theme really captured the children's creative imaginations, and they worked together to create a space ship in which to have their own great adventure. They used tinfoil, cardboard, paper plates, cupcake holders, cereal boxes, gaffer tape, masking tape, tissue paper, string and tissue paper. The rocket was made around an old tent frame to support it and it took two hours to make.

On the day of the play street session, Anthony also shared his childhood memories with the Winton Avenue children, impressing them with his 'live long and prosper' gesture.