



# Aspirational Youth

By Sam Grove

In a monthly column, Samuel Grove, with the help of his peers, takes a light-hearted look at youth culture. As we are approaching the New Year he examines ambition.

In an age of brazen hedonism 18-24 year olds, in the prime of life, have the reputation for living solely in the now. However a good deal of our time is spent thinking about the future. Standing at a crossroads of my life I am often caught worrying about the long-term consequences of my mistakes. A considerable source of anxiety, one resident observes, is that ambition at this age is such an ambivalent entity. On the one hand he wants to become a poster child of a social revolution. On the other he has quasi-erotic fantasies of making lots of money and then remorselessly burning it in front of poor people.

But are these visions diametrically opposed? The fascination with being a poster child is indicative of a generation that are individualistic and power

obsessed. Like vultures they cynically and ruthlessly hunt down the combined kudos of status and eminence at the expense of their fellow man and woman. In this vicious zero sum game, the winners flaunt their victories in front of the losers, who are themselves merely trying to survive day to day against the twin cancers of intolerable abuse and bitter ostracism in what has become an abhorrent and tortuous hell, where there is no truth, only manipulation and lies.

The very few that are fortunate exploit a world of vulgar opulence, while the rest of us are left, floundering helplessly in a fuming rotting pit of self loathing and terminal envy.

*Next month we investigate the latest fads in health and fitness.*



Matilda and Barney the Bear. Photo by John Dearing

## A Bear Necessity?

By Diana Cormack

When seven-year-old Matilda Donnachie saw the photo of Barney the Bear in the September *ARCHER*, she knew she just had to have him. The RSPCA had been trying to find the big, brown teddy a home for months. Previously he had been won in a competition to name him and he had been won in a raffle, but each time the winners were put off by his size. Not so Matilda – after all, she didn't have another bear of his build in her collection of forty-three cuddlies!

A search in her moneybox revealed a total of £18.50, but Matilda wasn't sure if this would be enough to give to the local

clinic in exchange for Barney. Luckily, her ten-year-old sister Alice chipped in with an extra £2.00 and Barney came to

live with them in Hertford Road, after what the RSPCA called "a very generous donation."

While all the family adore him, mother Margaret says that Barney is definitely the last bear they will give housework to!

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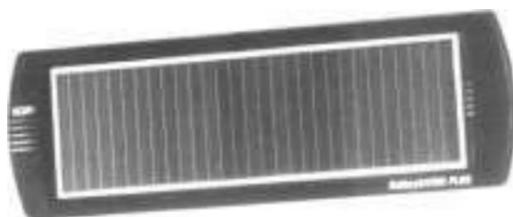
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