

Dear Friends,

Shortly after our former conference, in Brno, we received the news that Rimmert Van der Kooij was deceased.

Because of the problems with his health, he wasn't able to attend the conference, but with his heart he was in Brno. He appreciated very much the message we sent from Brno, but he knew his end was near.

In the history of the ICCP he first was mentioned for his contribution in Switzerland, in the conference 1977 Morschach. But the influence of the ICCP on his work was very strong.

Of course he studied and worked at the University of Groningen, with the very famous Professor Bladergroen. And in one of his books, he told that he was very impressed by the ICCP conference in Groningen in 1961. He wrote: "the fact that so many experts from different countries could talk so long and so hard about children's play, strengthened my motivation to perform research". I recognise that feeling.

When I was a young man, looking for more scientific information on children's play, I read his book 'Spelen met spel'. I was impressed by it and I tried to contact him: I was very surprised. It was so easy to contact him: he was very accessible for every one who was interested in children's play.

After this first meeting, we met each other several times on the ICCP – conferences. What I remember most of all, are his final reflections at the end of a conference. His knowledge and overview of the research on children's play, made it possible to situate a conference like this within a broad scientific and historical context. He did this at the end of several conferences and I have always appreciated these reflections very much.

Another characteristic I appreciated very much, was the networking. We all know that ICCP is more a network than a formal organisation; and someone has to stimulate the networking. Rimmert did it, for many years, and the most remarkable results were the conferences that we all enjoyed because of the opportunities to exchange knowledge and learn from each other.

His tall figure and his strong voice, the efforts he made for ICCP but most of all his work made him a very prominent man that will be remembered by every one who's interested in children's play.

Jan Van Gils
Lisbon, June 2010