



◀ Peter Finegan is one of the faces of ALW 2000. Peter now teaches art to indigenous Australians after starting working life as a crane driver and rigger.

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FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of the Newsletter is published as the sixth annual Adult Learners Week is about to start. Again the spotlight will be on lifelong learning. But it is more than just two words. Many people will celebrate individuals achievements made against the odds. They will celebrate innovative programs and those education providers' optimism that education and learning can make a difference, that it can indeed change lives.

In addition to celebration there will be exploration of new ideas and how the umbrella term 'lifelong learning' can be applied in practice. And there will be reflection: reviewing the Hamburg Agenda for the Future and its application to Australia; reviewing educational practice, and considering public policy.

There are many lifelong learning seedlings in Australia in areas like online learning and technological innovation, learning towns, new approaches to curriculum and revived approaches to community development. However, we still lack a cohesive national policy which can serve to integrate these initiatives.

ADULT LEARNING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Now is the time to make a step forward or risk stalling. Education policy remains largely locked behind sectoral boundaries, as well as reactive to immediate political concerns.

The twentieth century has been described as the age of democracy. Suffrage became universal, citizenship was extended, and aspirations to full employment and access to welfare became the norm. Education has always been at the heart of democracy. Through the twentieth century compulsory school education was established, and progressively extended from six years to nine, to ten and then twelve. University education, at least initially, was free to all who could gain admission. A common slogan became 'education for all'.

But that education was firmly rooted in the formal education institutions of school and university and understood to be for the young, for the transition to work and, for a very few, higher education. Education in the 21st century needs to be different. It must be about extending learning and educational opportunity, about using learning as the integrative factor for technology, social justice, productivity, health and the environment.

Ending the narrow correlation of study and education with youth is as important as ending the correlation of adult education with a narrow conception of work, and the new restricting correlation of the internet with commerce. We face the risk of diverting the information highway to the parking lot of e-commerce.

As contributions to this discussion we reproduce in this issue two examples from the UK. Firstly, an extract from Bob Fryer on creating cultures for learning that has at its centre attention to

During ALW we can take the time to stand back and reflect on the state of Australian adult education and learning. To take the time to appreciate and celebrate our colleagues, students and peers' efforts and initiatives. We can take time to discuss with others engaged in the learning process about what policies and frameworks are needed to produce a fairer, more productive, nurturing and democratic society. We can collectively exchange, talk and learn from each other. ■

Tony Brown

"Now is the time to make a step forward or risk stalling".

inclusion and ownership. Secondly, a piece about the experience of Glasgow, perhaps the quintessential post-industrial city, and its attempt to develop a Learning City. We also report on the diverse approaches to Adult Learners Week from Africa to Asia and Europe.

Closer to home we look at how two towns are taking up the Learning City initiative in Victoria; the use of videoconferencing and networking among rural ACE providers in NSW; and speak to the new Director of Melbourne's Council of Adult Education.

RESEARCH STUDENTS

GET PAID TO BE PUBLISHED.

Are you looking to get your research published? AJAL, the new Australian Journal of Adult Learning, is looking to publish new research in the field of adult learning.

If you are enrolled in an Australian education institution you could win \$750 for having an article published in AJAL. How?

Simply submit an article for refereeing between 1 September 2000 and 30 June 2001. The best article submitted during that period will win \$750 and will be printed in the Journal.

Guidelines for submitting an article can be found at <http://www.ala.asn.au/pubs/AJAL/contribguide.htm>

Adult Learning Australia Inc. (ALA) is the peak body for organisations and individuals involved with adult learning in Australia. ALA informs and fosters networks of adult educators; advises and lobbies government; promotes policy development; represents Australia on international education bodies; coordinates Adult Learners Week and more.

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