

Editorial



Welcome to the 2006/2007 Summer Edition of Quest.

This editorial piece will be my last contribution to this magazine which again covers the many and varied range of activities that reflect the diversity of the adult learning field in Australia.

My term as Chief Executive Officer finishes in April and I will not be seeking to renew my contract.

I have enjoyed working to the Board of Adult Learning Australia over the past three years, and through the Board, implementing their policy initiatives on your behalf.

I wish all of our members and those of you linked to ALA in other ways the very best in carrying forward your on-going support for adult learning in whatever way you have chosen to do that. The adult learning community is characterized by its rich and diverse fields of endeavour.

This edition continues the tradition of providing you with contemporary news and feature articles.

One of the most significant items in this edition is the change to ALA's Vision and Mission which the Board of ALA worked on towards the close of 2006. I believe it offers exciting opportunities for your association in the coming year and the recently appointed Board members who will assist in crafting policies to support this new direction.

We also report on the highly successful 46th Annual Conference in Melbourne with its theme of "Social Capital: Learning for Living." The evaluations reveal the value participants gained from this experience. I would also like to acknowledge again on behalf of the 2006 Adult Learning Australia National Award winners, the generous sponsorship provided by APIA, part of the Promina Insurance Group. ALA looks forward to building a strong working relationship with APIA as we move forward.

We also thank the many presenters who provided the stimulating papers which offered much food for thought and reflection over the conference period and beyond.

The impressions about the conference by some of our overseas participants are here in this edition to share with you.

Some of the great successes arising from ALA's management of the Community Engagement Project are also reported on. Each and every one of these projects from around the country have done a great job in moving e-learning forward in their communities.

We also report on the success of another year's Adult Learners' Week activities. As we refine the management of this project, the numbers of those engaging continues to increase and we thank the co-ordinators and the many individuals who participate, for helping make this project the success it is in raising awareness about lifelong learning.

Throughout 2006 and with the support of ALA, Take Time, produced by Tony Ryan, continues to provide, through the web and community radio, a rich array of adult learning stories about real life issues and successes. We have a story in this edition that touches on how World Mental Health Day impacted on the life of an individual.

ALA continues to work towards building international adult learning links and as part of that effort we have a brief report from ALA's Business and Communications Manager, Peter Murphy, who was invited to contribute towards Adult Learners' Week in South Korea late last year as a guest of KEDI (Korean Educational Development Institute).

This edition also notes the passing late last year of John Wellings, a great contributor to adult learning in Australia.

We acknowledge the contribution of the distinguished scholar Professor Roger Harris to adult learning, who amongst the many roles Roger has, is the Editor of ALA's publication the Australian Journal of Adult Learning and will soon be telling members of the world - wide acknowledgement of Roger Morris as he enters the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame.

Jen Coughran, the new Director of Adult Literacy Policy and Programme Section of DEST, contributes to In Quest of Learning by telling us something of the formative experiences in her life.

Hayley Beck Senior Media and Communication Officer from the National Communication Project of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework, provides an informative article on blogs and wikies for those of you wanting to know more about these IT tools.

Read, learn and enjoy and may I again wish you all the very best for the future.

Ron Anderson

Chief Executive Officer