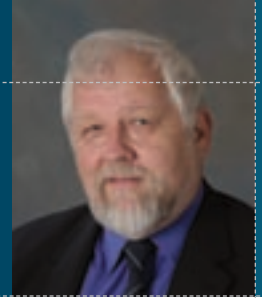


# Editorial



## “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times” so starts the Charles Dickens novel ‘A Tale of Two Cities’.

It’s a story of the French revolution. Well, we are now entering our new Government’s education revolution and boy are there similarities for us!

It’s true that in the Ministry we have two exceptional leaders who have great and ongoing connections with Adult Learning our Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Julia Gillard supported by the very committed Senator Ursula Stephens, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion. Both have clearly stated their commitment to social inclusion which is a key, if not the key issue, in adult learning. The good news is it doesn’t stop there; many others have a connection to Adult Learning including Lindsay Tanner, Minister for Finance and Duncan Kerr, Ministerial Secretary on the Pacific. I suggest that you check out your local member and let them know how important Adult Learning is to you.

Also don’t forget to use our Blog and website as it is updated and worked on just about every day.

Unfortunately it’s true that the Governments policy platform doesn’t seem to refer to adult learning directly and that, to date, it hasn’t been addressed in the ‘Learning Revolution’ statements. Interesting in light of the recent poor news that adult literacy in Australia is not improving. Some aspects are improving but it seems more have gone backwards and most show no significant change. We know we are not doing particularly well relative to other parts of the world, those who are really focusing on adult learning unlike here where it has been a poor cousin for many years.

It seems our challenge is “Carpe Diem” - seize the day. Now is a great opportunity for change and that is what ALA and its Board will be doing. We hope you will join us by reporting your stories about adult education to us and to your representatives, encouraging others to join ALA (do you realise every local government and most large businesses are adult learning enterprises) and actively participating wherever possible.

2008 should be a ‘make it’ year for adult learning in Australia.

Congratulations to Nan Bosler on winning the inaugural APIA Adult Learning Ambassador of the Year Award.

Our selection has been backed up by Microsoft who are sending Nan to Korea to assist the Koreans with their adult learning IT planning for older people. ALA’s relations were strengthened with Korea as many Koreans attended our Cairns conference. Korea is becoming the natural leader in Asian Adult Learning but other countries are firing up as well so I am delighted to say ALA’s relations there are great and we hope to continue working closely with Korea this year.

Congratulations to all the other Award winners from the national conference and from all the Adult Learners Week Events. One new category of winner was the Ashburton Work Start Program from WA. They were awarded a Certificate of Industry. Backed by Rio Tinto, the Program has shown exceptional adult learning support to its employees through vocational education and both formal and informal training.

With the Board we are currently electing, I am really looking forward to the challenges of 2008 in Adult Learning.

I hope you are as well.

**Peter Peterson (P<sup>2</sup>)**

Chief Executive Officer

