

ISSUE 1 AUTUMN 2001

ADULT LEARNING AUSTRALIA



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Arthur BOYD Australia 1920–1999
Persecuted Lovers (1957–58, Melbourne)
 oil, tempera on composition board, 137.2 x 182.9cm,
 Art Gallery of South Australia, A.R. Ragless Bequest Fund, 1964

♦ 'Persecuted lovers' is part of the National Gallery of Australia's exhibition 'Federation: Australian Art and Society 1901-2001'. Learning Circles Australia has produced kits on Federation, and has been negotiating with the NGA to link its exhibitions, especially the travelling versions, into Learning Circles programs.

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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ALA EXECUTIVE 1999/2000:

- President: Ned Dennis
- Immediate Past President: Dorothy Lucardie
- Ron Anderson (NSW Branch Contact)
- Allan Arnott (NT Branch contact)
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- Barbara Pamphilon (ACT Branch Contact)
- Georgiana Poulter (QLD)
- Helen Schwencke (QLD Branch contact)
- Wendy Shearwood (WA Branch contact)
- Garry Traynor (NSW)

NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF:

- Executive Director: Tony Brown
- Executive Support Officer: Margaret Bates
- Coordinator of Adult Learners Week: John Cross
- Manager, Learning Circles: Mary Hannan
- Information Manager: Janet Burstall
- Manager, Print and Web Services: Cath Styles
- Office Administrator: Jennie Della
- Research/Project Officer: Liz Henderson

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Adult Learning Australia
 PO Box 308, Jamison Centre, ACT 2614
 p: 02 6251 7933, f: 6251 7935, e: info@ala.asn.au
<http://www.ala.asn.au>

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A culture of learning – for all of us

Welcome to the first issue of the newsletter for 2001. This year, elections will dominate politics in Australia, and education will play a key role in the fate of governments and oppositions. Which parties will best capture the education aspirations of voters? Which parties will best articulate a vision of education and learning at the start of a new century? What will the parties' policies reflect about the type of Australian society they believe is possible and needed?

Already Labor has set its course to try to foster a 'knowledge nation' and the Coalition parties have responded by releasing their 'innovation statement' *Backing Australia's Ability*. It is almost as if knowledge and innovation, online study and science are being counterposed.

Labor's commitment to making knowledge central to future policy, and to extending university learning online, are welcome. So too is the Government's intention to re-invest in higher education and science.

But at this stage it is fair to say that both parties have fallen short in outlining a vision that can claim to meet the needs of the broadest sectors of Australian society. Both have taken the relatively easy step of committing more money to the education of the few. And while both parties say that lifelong learning needs to be encouraged there is little evidence that this means much more than new attempts to link technology with vocational skills, whether in the universities or TAFE. Lifelong learning means more than this.

The term lifelong learning has been around for a long time and in its more modern usage since the early 1970s. In the contemporary context

it needs to incorporate the following ideas:

- learning occurs through the lifecycle in a wide range of contexts,
- it encompasses both formal and informal learning,
- sites of learning in civil society – clubs and associations, churches, trade unions, environmental groups, book clubs and so on – are important,
- everyone should be able, motivated and actively encouraged to learn through life,
- it relates not only to the workplace but also to a continuous process of forming whole human beings, and
- it connects economic development objectives and employability with personal fulfilment and community development.

This year ALA will be actively promoting an agenda that we hope the political parties will take up. It will include the following key elements:

- a comprehensive and integrated national lifelong learning framework – this framework should include a national summit bringing together all interested parties and organisations with the aim of developing a national lifelong learning policy, and a government agency or bureau for lifelong learning to follow up on recommendations from the Summit,
- to stimulate currently discouraged learners, taxation initiatives such as lifetime learning accounts, and the removal of the burdensome GST

from Adult and Community Education providers,

- support for a national network of Learning Communities,
- support for a national campaign to promote lifelong learning, using Adult Learners Week as a spearhead,
- a Community Adult Learning Innovation Fund, to support innovative programs to encourage adults to take up learning,
- a national program of Learning Circles for education and information on key social issues within the Australian community, and
- a program of wired communities providing internet access through community learning centres.

ALA will soon release a toolbox for members suggesting ways that these ideas can be pursued within communities. It will include more detail on these policy ideas; information for members on who their local members are, the relevant Ministers and opposition spokespeople, and key Senators; and tips on what to include in submissions and on how to approach the media.

If education, knowledge, and innovation are to be for all of us then it is imperative that policy development and funding take into account where adults choose to learn, and support the learning that adults know is important for them. It is encouraging that the political parties acknowledge the need to foster a culture of learning, but we need to make sure that it is a broad and inclusive culture. ■

Tony Brown

THE OBITUARY FOR THE LATE JOAN ALLSOP REMINDS ME OF A FEW VERY PLEASANT OCCASIONS WHEN I WAS PRIVILEGED TO MEET SOME OF OUR DISTINGUISHED ADULT EDUCATORS. AND YES, JOAN WAS ONE OF THEM.

In support of oral history recordings

Eleven years ago, some first moves were made in the area of oral history recordings. To the doors of the old ABC Radio Studios in Kings Cross, a taxi delivered Joan Allsop. She was frail but very bright and only too glad to tell me her story. At the end of the recording, a taxi whisked her away and I did not see her again.

On another ABC visit to Sydney, I interviewed, in her somewhat noisy office in Mosman, the also very lively Kate Campbell. About that time, I made a first recording with Colin Lawton in Adelaide (recently honoured with the Adult Educator of the Year Award).

Then disaster struck and I departed (honourably) from the ABC, having been made redundant.

But there is life after the ABC! As part of an oral history project, I recorded a longer interview with

Colin Lawton, and also with Victorians Shirley Randell and Concetta Benn. More information on the Conversations project can be found via <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/5UV> (click on the special events icon).

Along with over 20 other edited interviews, the conversations with Colin Lawton and Shirley Randell have been lodged in the Oral History Unit of the National Library of Australia.

I'm pleased to say that I hold the original tapes of the unedited interviews with Concetta Benn, Kate Campbell and Joan Allsop.

Nationwide support for any oral history initiative through ALA would help to ensure that other distinguished adult educators are recorded and the tapes (or these days, the CDs) are kept safely for the benefit of future generations. ■

*Tony Ryan
Executive Producer
5UV Radio Adelaide*

BRIEFS

Jack Beetson has been recognised by the UN as one of 12 'unsung heroes' from around the world. As part of its Year for Dialogue among citizens the UN has commissioned a TV production about 12 people's efforts to create genuine citizens' dialogue. Currently Executive Director of Tranby College in Sydney and a Director of the Federation of Independent Aboriginal Education Providers, Jack has been running an annual philosophy camp at 'Linga Longa' since 1996, to deepen understanding about reconciliation in Australia. For more on the camp, visit <http://www.midcoast.com.au/~shanib/>.

Congratulations also to **Dorothy Braxton** who was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the Australia Day Honours. The award was for her services to adult education, U3A and her role in establishing U3A Online. In 1999 Dorothy won ALA's Adult Educator of the Year award.

Peter Jones left his position of Field Officer with the Riverina Regional Council of ACE to become Head Teacher of General Studies at Griffith TAFE. **Ellyn Martin** has left CEC in Albury/Wodonga and to become Executive Officer with Riverina Regional ACE Council.

Greater Union's website carries a banner ad for **Oxfam's** 'Education Now' website. The 'Education Now – Break the cycle of poverty' campaign wants the promise of governments around the world – primary education for all by 2015 – turned into action – "NOW!" Why? Because 870 million

people are illiterate, 70 per cent are women, and over 125 million children of primary school age are not in school. A wealth of information is contained at <http://www.caa.org.au/oxfam/advocacy/education>. Well done Greater Union.

A new qualification for **Women in Small Business** has been developed by the Business Service ITAB. The Certificates III and IV (Developing Your Own Business) are new qualifications with resources specially designed for women. If you are an RTO and want to know more go to http://www.bsitab.org/WISB_Intro.htm or contact Rebecca Maidment at BST, rebecca@bsitab.org.

Overseas, **Malcolm Wicks**, UK Minister for Lifelong Learning, announced a big cash boost for community-based adult learning on 30 January. There will be a 9 per cent increase in recurrent funding for adult education for 2002–03 to a record AU\$477 million. Mr Wicks also announced a AU\$46 million capital investment in local adult education facilities. For the full story, visit NIACE at <http://www.niace.org.uk/news/Jan01.htm#Boost>.

The US Department of Education has released a document on post-secondary education titled Learning without Limits. Of interest are the ways the tax system and 'lifetime learning credits' are being used to promote access to post-school education. Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan is quoted: "The heyday when a high school or college education would serve a graduate for a lifetime is gone". The report also reiterates John Dewey's message: "Education is not preparation for life, education is life itself". The full report is at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/AganPr oj/report>. ■

JOHN CROSS HAS JOINED ALA AS NATIONAL COORDINATOR OF ADULT LEARNERS WEEK.

Adult Learners Week News



John comes to ALA with a background in cultural event coordination. Before joining ALA he was Program Officer with the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre and was responsible for coordinating a number of cultural and corporate events. Prior to this he worked at the National Gallery of Victoria coordinating the Members Program, as well as contributing to the Public Program and overseeing the production of the Gallery's magazine. He has also worked in a number of other roles in a variety of galleries and museums in both Melbourne and Canberra.

Holding two degrees in History and Art History, John is also a

qualified secondary school teacher. For many years now he has been a regular lecturer on the National Gallery of Victoria's lecture program, presenting lectures mainly on twentieth century architecture and design. In the coming years he is hoping to pursue further studies in Asian culture and language.

ALW 2001 will be held from 2–8 September. Planning has commenced and we are working to continue to expand the Week by developing the widest network of learning organisations possible. Do you have ideas or suggestions for ALW 2001? Let us know by phoning 02 6251 9887 or emailing alw@ala.asn.au. Check the ALW website <http://alw.ala.asn.au> for regular updates. ■

WA MEMBERS WERE ACTIVE IN THE STATE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. LET'S HOPE THE INCOMING LABOR GOVERNMENT IS TRUE TO ITS COMMITMENT TO LOOK FAVOURABLY AT FUNDING ACE PROGRAMS. WENDY SHEARWOOD AND ELLEN-MAY EATON REPORT.

Election time in Western Australia



Suffering from the effects of two terms of the Court government's economic rationalise policies, Adult learning in WA is looking for change. We are tired of going cap in hand for support for what many of our eastern states' colleagues take for granted, that is, a profile for ACE that is acknowledged as valuable in its own right and is given the financial support to demonstrate this.

With the State election looming we resolved to bring our cause to the fore. We've been asking questions of the bureaucrats and getting some sense of progress (however small) from these actions – although when issues of autonomy and money come into the equation it seems like one step forward and two back!

THE PROCESS

In recent years branch members have met with both Government and Opposition (Liberal and Labor) Education & Training spokespersons, slowly establishing connections and building a profile. With so many changes of Ministers this is a repetitive, ongoing process. Towards the end of 2000, and drawing on input from

members, we wrote to the parties asking for their position on lifelong learning and inviting their responses to key issues.

In January 2001, soon after the 10 February election date was announced, we mailed our original letter together with the responses, to the 450 providers in WA who consider ACE to be a significant part of their business. (This list was compiled in the first mapping of individuals and organisations in the WA ACE sector.)

KEY ISSUES

The parties were asked to respond to the following.

- Does your party have a policy on lifelong learning in Western Australia? What structural arrangements will you introduce for a broad learning agenda for WA? What role do you see for ACE in this future?
- Do you support establishing a Board or Council with responsibility for ACE and adult learning in WA, as in Victoria, NSW, SA and the ACT?
- If elected will your government provide organisational and financial support to ACE providers?

- Will your party promote and value a broad adult education and not one limited to providing direct vocational outcomes?
- Will your party increase support for Adult Learners Week in WA?
- Do you support promoting Learning Communities in WA? Will you provide seed funding for selected communities to establish themselves as Learning Communities as has recently occurred in Victoria and South Australia?
- Do you support more in-depth research into the ACE Sector and professional development for tutors/educators in ACE? Will you provide funding for these to take place?

We invited all recipients to respond and requested a meeting with them in early 2001 to discuss the issues raised.

THE RESPONSES

The detail, content and degree of commitment in the replies was disappointing, but the positive side is that all parties put in writing a commitment to lifelong learning and to meet with us.

Mike Board, the Minister for Employment & Training, wrote: “A culture of lifelong learning is one ... I am keen to foster and I acknowledge the important contribution that Adult Community Education can make to this”. Ljiljana Ravlich, of the ALP, made the commitment that “funding to ACE programs such as the Learning Communities concept would be looked at favourably by an incoming Gallop Labor Government”. Greens Secretary Stewart Jackson wrote: “Education should be the key to providing the community with

resources and information ... it should help develop communities that are peaceful, just and ecologically sustainable”. And Helen Hodgson, of the Democrats, wrote: “The Australian Democrats have a commitment to lifelong learning. We have a proud history of supporting free access to education at all levels – from kindergarten to higher education”.

The replies suggest a lack of awareness of ACE and the distinction between ACE and school, tertiary and vocational education. It highlights an ongoing need to educate others about the crucial role of adult and community education in the lives of so many people.

We did get fairly strong support for Adult Learners Week and many made good connections with the Learning Communities concept, so these are areas where we can get a win-win result.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The branch will follow up the parties, particularly the party that forms the next Government. We will also follow up all others who responded and perhaps invite them to a discussion forum around May.

Watch this space to see if (no, *when*) we achieve our major objective – of establishing an independent ACE Board or Council in WA.

Your experiences, strategies or tips would be appreciated in our ongoing struggle. In the meantime we keep plugging away determined to win out in the end! ■

Wendy Shearwood is a member of the ALA Executive and Ellen-May Eaton is President of the WA Branch.

TERESA CAIRNS ARGUES THE CASE FOR A CLOSER EXAMINATION OF INFORMAL LEARNING.

For the sake of informality

Learning is at the forefront of policy agendas ranging from lifelong learning to combating social exclusion, community regeneration and regional development. But this learning tends to be narrowly focused on participation in formal education programs. Our suspicion is that most of us, looking back over our lifetimes, would say that the most significant learning we have done is informal, outside the education system. Informal learning supplies the bulk of what matters to us in our daily lives. If we are to acknowledge and support learning in all its forms we need to go beyond the narrow boundaries of formal education.



The extent and significance of informal learning has been documented in David Livingstone's New Approaches to Lifelong Learning (NALL) research in Canada. It found that nearly all Canadians are involved in some form of informal learning activity that they define as significant in their community, workplace, family and home. Those with the

least schooling engaged in informal learning activities at least as much as those with most education (unlike participation in formal adult education). (The NALL findings are on ALA's website at <http://www.ala.asn.au>)

The Learning from Experience Trust (LET), NIACE, and the Lifelong Learning Foundation convened a conference in July 2000 to explore adult learning. The project had four aims, to:

- share what we know from different fields about the nature and extent of informal learning,
- explore the relationship between informal learning and formal education,
- discuss the implications for lifelong learning policy and practice, and
- see what need exists for further work to document informal learning, demonstrate its value and make effective links with formal education.

Informal learning is usually approached as a residual category – everything that is not formal education. However, one of the most significant outcomes of the literature review and subsequent discussions has been a developing awareness of informal learning as more complex and varied than its 'residual' status suggests. A more nuanced way of conceptualising informal learning began to emerge. Learning often happens within 'critical moments' of change and transition in our lives. The boundary between informal and formal is variable over time and between individuals, defying neat definitions. Perhaps the closest definition we have is that it is learning that fulfils people's own purposes (rather than the purposes of government, the education system

or social agencies) and takes place in forms chosen by the learner.

The formal education system prioritises learning that has economic consequences while informal learning tends to be regarded simply as a pathway into this system. But within informal learning contexts, the potential impacts and outcomes of learning are much more interactive and diffuse. The distinction between formal and informal learning becomes blurred in what Barton and Hamilton describe as the 'borderlands' between home and work, school and public life. They note that literacy learning in the home is, for instance, rarely separated from use, as it is integrated into everyday activities.

Informal learning happens within and across all the different contexts of our lives. It can even characterise 'spaces' within educational institutions (in coffee breaks, networking, mentoring and celebrations) as the public and private spheres interact. Informal learning has much to 'teach' formal learning in terms of its direct links with learner purposes, its creative use of different strategies and its embedded nature, while formal learning may provide additional tools and opportunities for people to use in their informal learning activities.

CHALLENGES FOR EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- Starting points for learning must be flexible and providers' responses to expressed learning needs must be prompt. This includes reaching out to communities and being available for 'just-in-time' learning (learning defined by community members in order to accomplish something they want),
- Educators should stop talking about 'people who haven't learned for 20 years' and value the knowledge they bring with them – people constantly learn but what they learn isn't acknowledged by the formal education system
- There should be different ways of looking at 'results' than is common in education. People accomplish their own purposes as well as government 'outcomes' when they follow a course of study. Building social capital and learning active citizenship requires long-term involvement to develop trust and confidence, and requires educators to take their lead from communities rather than vice versa.
- In our concern to address the problem of non-participation in education we should interrogate the learning opportunities that are made available. Payne and Forrester suggest that the dynamic movement of people in and out of various sorts of education is more significant than participation at a single moment and argue that we should explore the terms of people's inclusion in learning.

"Informal learning is more complex than its 'residual' status suggests."

- Having a tea break and space to interact informally is as valuable for learning as working through more formal knowledge structures. Learning is not just about teaching and the curriculum but involves enabling learning interactions to occur. The concept of 'learning ecologies' emphasises the need for spaces that are conducive to ideas, information sharing, and the social and emotional aspects of learning.
- People should be able to cross boundaries when they need to 'grab' some formal learning. This requires less hierarchically-structured interactions between the formal and informal sectors with more permeable boundaries.
- Professional educators need to recognise learning outside of formal structures and build upon their strengths rather than assume that only formal learning counts.
- Professionals can learn other ways of relating to people in marginalised communities, using participatory approaches to development and learning, talking and listening to communities and 'communities of practice'.
- Accrediting experiential learning can be encouraged as a part of formal education at all levels.

CHALLENGES IN THE WORKPLACE

- The emphasis on training at work primarily focuses on formal qualifications which employees feel do little to improve practice although they represented valuable currency in the job market. A broader view of economic and social gain would acknowledge learning in a wider sense.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The lack of integrated policies, the tensions and contradictions within policy initiatives coupled with a narrow short-term focus, particularly within 'project' funding, inhibits the building of active community involvement. Barton and Hamilton found parallels between literacy and learning in that people were not trying to learn but had real problems they were trying to solve. Essentially you can't separate learning from use. By failing to understand the role of informal learning in the process of building and maintaining social capital, policy-makers undermine the possibility of success from the start. Policy-makers need to recognise the benefits of flexibility and adaptability as well as developing patience – they can't predict outcomes but should learn to support the process and support communities in determining outcomes for themselves.

There is a body of practice that has been built up among practitioners working in community settings which is different to that of professional educators, and policy-makers need to listen to this experience. Failure to listen has led to an 'absence of memory', a lack of understanding about what and how initiatives work or fail and a consequent cynicism in communities and communities of practice about 'new' initiatives.

Wenger argues that learning cannot be designed, but we can design for learning – he proposes a 'learning architecture', enabling infrastructures that would support and nurture learning. To design for informal learning would build infrastructures and processes into the contexts of peoples' lives.

RESEARCH

We know very little about informal learning activities. Alongside these policy developments

there is an urgent need for a more wide-ranging and integrated research strategy to explore the complex nature of informal learning and develop a more nuanced conceptual framework with which to understand it. There are three types of research needed:

- qualitative ethnographic research exploring the interrelationship between the contexts of informal learning and peoples' lives,
- quantitative research that provides valuable data suggesting the extent of informal learning, and
- evaluative research into how Wenger's 'learning architecture' could be developed.

CONCLUSIONS

Rethinking what we mean by learning and how best to support it is a discussion that is particularly important to have now. Policy developments in post-school education, community development, and work-based learning mean that there are opportunities to design and embed processes and infrastructures for learning. Informal learning should become part of a conversation engaging people at all levels. Out of such conversations will come the recommendations for policy and practice that would enable lifelong learning to become more inclusive and embedded in life.

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This story was reproduced with permission from the NIACE publication Adults Learning, November 2000. Teresa Cairns is Research Officer at the Learning from Experience Trust.

FOR ALAN JENNINGS, LEARNING A LANGUAGE REQUIRES MORE THAN JUST

ACQUIRING A VOCABULARY.

Thoughts on language as culture

I am learning the Italian tongue and I am finding it rather difficult. When I learned my mother tongue, that all seemed to happen automatically with no effort. However, when you get to school and start having to put names to aspects of grammar and to parts of speech, that does require effort, despite the fact that the grammar is already in your head.

When we first travel overseas we get a dictionary or a phrase book. This is talking, not learning the language. Brief courses are very good and allow you to participate to some extent in the culture that you are visiting. I am not sure that this language is going into the speech centre that is already programmed in one's mind with the native language, or is it going into a new area of the mind altogether? Some animals like parrots can talk but they do not use grammar, nor can they. Grammar is an exclusively human characteristic.

How is it best to acquire a new language as an adult? The mother tongue is out there – you incorporate it automatically. When language comes into our mind the first time it does not come in by itself because it comes in accompanied by other cultural material. Language comes in as part of culture.

When teaching Italian to foreigners the textbook is only in Italian. This seems to me a very good thing – deep immersion. So we find some Italian grammar is very similar to English. These are parts of the grammar that do not need emphasising as much as those areas where there is a big difference, for example when thinking or hoping or wishing you will have to use the subjunctive in Italian. Grammar plays an absolutely fundamental part in language. How grammar should be presented in a course is not for amateurs to

decide. That is a matter for the expert, for the linguist. There needs to be a well thought-out, tried and true curriculum.

We do not become literate automatically in our own language, as we have to learn incrementally, step-by-step from 'the cat sat on the mat' through to whatever you like. I wonder whether we should have access to the Italian juvenile edition for some works? Kindergartens begin education in a very informal way – no rows with the teacher up front. Clients in adult education would be dismayed to look into a classroom with rows of desks and a teacher up front.

Minds and culture are two parts of the one informational system. The mother helps make the baby's mind. Language is critical. If you contrast a newborn baby with no language and with no culture with a five year-old who has some speech and the rudiments of culture, it is like contrasting two different species. Communication, first by gesture, then by sounds and gesture, and then finally by symbolic words, becomes language. There is a long period of dependence for learning a language.

Language and culture are inseparable. If you pick up one, you pick up the other. A teaching program must be embedded in the culture of a language, and the teacher must be enthusiastic and motivating. For success the students must fulfil their responsibilities to participate and cooperate, so that conversation can occur, and their diverse interests can gain expression in the class.

This is what we have got in full measure in our Italian language course. ■

Alan Jennings is a legally blind student in an Italian language course at the WEA of South Australia

Tertiary Ruling relevant to ACE RTOs

The final Tertiary Ruling was released on 17 January 2001. It is relevant to providers with Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status. Of the several definitions of “tertiary course” taken from the Student Assistance Act 1973¹ the courses of primary relevance to RTOs are pre-vocational, vocational education and training (VET) and English as a Second Language (ESL)².

Aspects of the Ruling of most interest to RTOs are outlined below, but the Ruling in full is available from the ALA GST website. Remember that GST can only be charged on education courses (and other supplies) if the provider has registered for GST.

SINGLE UNITS

Where you supply one unit of a course that is covered by the Student Assistance Act, the supply of that unit is GST-free. Whereas the Ruling refers only to “accredited courses”, it is safe to assume that this would also apply to a competency from a Training Package for which the provider has authority to issue qualifications. The Ruling also states that where a student enrolls in a unit and elects not to be assessed, providing the unit is from a course that is covered by the Student Assistance Act, that supply is also GST-free. ALA and other stakeholders were successful in lobbying the ATO to reverse their earlier view that a

non-assessed unit should be liable to GST.

NON-ACCREDITED UNITS AND “MIXED SUPPLY”

Non-accredited units or courses do not meet the definitions of pre-vocational or VET in the Student Assistance Act. Therefore non-accredited units are subject to GST. If you offer a course that is a combination of accredited and non-accredited units this is called a mixed supply. You must apportion GST to that part of the supply that is non-accredited. A reasonable basis for calculating the apportionment would be the proportion of the course hours that are associated with the non-accredited units.

Again, of course, delivery associated with Training Packages would not be affected by this paragraph of the Ruling, as the provider is responsible for determining appropriate learning activities for the achievement of competence to the specified standards.

If a course fee includes taxable supplies such as membership of a student association or the hire, lease or sale of materials that are not “course materials”³, GST must be apportioned to the part of the fee that relates to these supplies. In other words, supplies that attract GST cannot be ‘hidden’ in a fee for the supply of a GST-free course.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Administrative services that are directly related to the supply of a tertiary course are GST-free. “Directly related” is quite explicitly defined in the Ruling. Administrative services can include but are not limited to such things as program changes, enrolment services, issue of student cards, examination and assessment arrangements, processing results, record-keeping, administration of the library or a text-book scheme, administration of the supply of course materials and graduation certificates.

EDUCATION COURSES PURCHASED BY EMPLOYERS

Providing a course meets the requirements of a tertiary course it is GST-free. If a course is customised for an employer but still retains its accreditation it is still GST-free. If a course is customised to the extent that it is no longer an accredited course, it is then a taxable supply. However, if the employer is registered for GST and you issue a legitimate Tax Invoice, the employer can claim Input Tax Credits for GST incurred. Again, delivery of training for the achievement of qualifications from a Training Package will not be affected by this Ruling. This issue was another where ALA and others successfully lobbied to change the view of the ATO for a very positive outcome.

TAX INVOICES

The issue of Tax Invoices for supplies that are GST-free has caused some confusion. This Ruling clearly states that “a supplier may issue a document for a non-taxable supply that is headed with the words ‘tax invoice’ if the document clearly shows that the supply does not include GST.”⁴ This should overcome concerns of having to have two separate types of invoicing stationery.

ACE RULING

Where courses do not fit the tertiary course definitions of pre-vocational or VET, or where a course is made up of accredited and non-accredited units, it is worth looking to the ACE Ruling. If a course fits the definition of an adult and community education course, it is GST-free. The definition of an adult and community education course is that it is “likely to add to the employment-related skills” of those undertaking the course.⁵ The following requirements must be met to satisfy the test of “likely

to add to employment related skills”:

- a) the course must be directed at people who want to add to their employment-related skills,
- b) the course objectives must clearly specify the employment-related skills to be acquired, and
- c) there must be a reasonable expectation that the skills gained will be used in employment-related activity rather than personal, hobby or recreational pursuits.

In addition, consideration should also be given to how the course is marketed, whether the course is similar to an accredited VET course or if the course outcomes demonstrate that a majority of course participants are gaining employment to the training undertaken.

In short, a course that is not accredited but is nevertheless vocational or pre-vocational in its intent may satisfy the definition of an ACE course and be GST-free. Providers are advised to read the ACE Ruling in full to satisfy themselves that they meet all of the requirements.

PROVIDERS WITH CHARITY STATUS

ACE providers which have Income Tax Exempt Charity (ITEC) status can also apply the “market value” or “cost of supply” rules to supplies they make. If a supply (such as a course) is supplied at less than 50 per cent of market value or less than 75 per cent of the cost of the supply, it is GST-free. Again, detailed advice on the application of these rules is available from the tax office website and should be carefully read.

FINALLY...

ALA has participated in the Education Industry Partnership since the partnership’s first meeting in January 2000. We have appreciated the opportunity to raise issues from the sector directly with the Australian Taxation Office and to see the effect of our discussions in the final rulings made by the ATO. ■

Ellyn Martin has finished her contract as ALA’s GST Project Coordinator and is now Executive Officer of the Riverina Regional Council of ACE.

1 Providers who received a copy of the ALA GST manual will find a full copy of the Student Assistance Act 1973 at Appendix 2 in their folders.
 2 Pre-vocational course means “a program designed to assist people to gain entry to a specific related accredited vocational education and training program or a New Apprenticeship, and includes a New Apprenticeship Access program”.
 Vocational education and training means “(a) an accredited vocational education and training course; or (b) a sequence of training consisting of at least one subject or module from an accredited vocational education and training course; or (c) a structured approach to the development and attainment of competencies for a particular AQF qualification specified in an endorsed training package.”
 ESL courses are “a course of instruction in English as a second language”.
 3 Course materials are clearly defined. Refer to paragraphs 82–108.
 4 Paragraph 181.
 5 The definition also includes approved types of providers. Refer to the ACE Ruling (GSTR 2000/27) for full details.

TONY BROWN RELATES THE CONTENTS OF ALA'S SUBMISSION TO
THE INQUIRY ABOUT CHARITIES AND THE GST.

Go beyond 'charity', Inquiry told

Submissions to the Government-initiated Inquiry into the Definition of Charities and Related Organisations closed mid-January. The Inquiry arose out of the negotiations with the broad charitable sector over the impact of the GST.

In its submission, ALA explained that since the introduction of the GST many ACE organisations had applied to and become charitable organisations. Attention was drawn to the fact that the ATO's treatment of applications for charitable status was not always consistent and clear and that the existing criteria and interpretations were outdated. A number of other peak agencies made a similar point.

Indeed, the issue of whether community-based, not-for-profit organisations are most appropriately classified as 'charitable' was raised by a number of submissions. ALA advocated that a new category should be introduced that recognised the particular contribution made to the community by such organisations with appropriate taxation relief applied in a consistent manner.

The submission argued the need to change the existing definitions because a 21st-century society that values the active contribution of a healthy civil society must go beyond 17th- and 19th-century understandings of the term 'charity'.

21ST-CENTURY DEFINITION

There is no statutory definition of charity in English law. The current

concept of charity evolved from an Elizabethan statute of 1601, which defined as charitable 'the relief of aged, impotent and poor people, the maintenance of schools of learning, the repair of bridges, churches and highways, and the relief or redemption of prisoners or captives'.

At the end of the 19th century the concept of what was charitable was re-classified and now falls under four headings, which are the same in Australia and the UK.

- the relief of poverty,
- the advancement of education,
- the advancement of religion, and
- other purposes beneficial to the community.

In the UK there has been some flexibility of interpretation and in recent years, trusts to promote racial harmony, the equality of women and environmental conservation have been accepted as charitable because their 'purposes are beneficial to the community in a way recognised as charitable'.

CIVIL SOCIETY ROLE

Currently, Australian interpretation excludes organisations that have as an objective advocacy or lobbying, thus effectively excluding organisations such as ALA. While ALA's objects and purposes are not, and should not be, party political, ALA does contribute to the political process and works to secure or oppose changes in the law, or in the policies and decisions of government, so long as this is a means of achieving the purposes of

the Association, its members, adult learners and adult learning.

Essentially our purpose is 'to promote and support lifelong learning'. In practice this means supporting and promoting the theoretical and practical aspects of adult education informed by research and experience. This role is vital to a healthy and informed civil society.

The UK Charity Commission (<http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk>) permits political activity if:

- there is a reasonable expectation that the activity concerned will further the stated purposes of the charity, and so benefit its beneficiaries, to an extent justified by the resources devoted to the activity,
- the activity is within the powers which the trustees have to achieve those purposes, and
- the views expressed are based on a well-founded and reasoned case and are expressed in a reasonable way.

ALA has recommended that such an interpretation be accepted in Australia.

Public submissions to the Inquiry can be found at <http://www.cdi.gov.au>. ALA's submission is at <http://www.ala.asn.au/gst.html>. ■

Vale Pat Tsykalas

Pat Tsykalas has died aged 59, after a two-year battle with breast cancer.

Until seven weeks before her death on 19 December, 2000, Pat continued to work just as she had throughout her 19 years of service to the WEA. Staff, tutors and members marvelled that despite being desperately ill, her focus never changed.

Patricia Caroline Tsykalas was born in Cairo, Egypt on 12 September 1941. Her father, Aristide, came from a Greek family long resident in Alexandria. Her mother, Mitzi, was Austrian and had been governess to a wealthy family in Alexandria. Pat and her siblings thus grew up in a very cosmopolitan environment with several languages spoken at home. Increasing Egyptian hostility

towards Europeans led Aristide to bring his family to Australia in 1950. They arrived in a deeply provincial Corrimal where it was thought odd to have a salad with the evening meal.

A strong sense of duty and service threaded through Pat's life, and later, she had the additional responsibility of being a single parent of Luke, whom she cherished.

Breaking out of a clerical occupation in Wollongong and embracing the religious life for 13 years, Pat taught with great success in Catholic schools and became a prize-winning student at the University of New England. Her pioneering educational management work in the Catholic Education



Pat Tsykalas

Office preceded her becoming, in 1983, the first woman to be Executive Officer of WEA Sydney.

During her time at the WEA, Pat was to oversee a remarkable number of developments. Student enrolments rose from 10 300 in 1983 to over 20 000 in 2000. The WEA partnership with the University of Sydney, which had lasted from 1913, ended in 1983, and the WEA had to begin recruiting its own tutors and implementing its own educational policies and procedures. Pat was one of the first people in the ACE sector to see the advantages of computerisation and for several years served on the Quality Committee of the ACE Council of NSW. She remained a teacher at heart and was always an excellent mentor for new staff members.

Those who knew Pat wish she could have lived to enjoy her life and successes more, but appreciate all that she was. She will long be remembered as someone who believed in sacrifice for the good of her family and for those for whom she was responsible. She was a remarkable person and will be missed. ■

Richard Pinder

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ALA'S RECONCILIATION STATEMENT IS CIRCULATING FOR FINAL COMMENTS BEFORE
THE EXECUTIVE VOTES ON ITS ACCEPTANCE.

Reconciliation Statement

Adult Learning Australia commits itself to continue working towards reconciliation between Australia's indigenous peoples and all other Australians.

WE RECOGNISE

That we have much to learn about our shared place on this land.

That the Australian people have many achievements including relative harmony among diverse cultures, a stable parliamentary democracy and a level of material wealth that provides a very comfortable living standard for the majority of the population. Yet there are also Australians, above all indigenous Australians, who suffer deprivation, discrimination and injustice.

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation has listed on its website at <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/walktalk/education.html> statements from the following educational bodies: Catholic Schools in WA and QLD, University of NSW, University of WA, University of Canberra, University of Ballarat, La Trobe University, The Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia.

That during the past 200 years Australian Governments and people have tolerated acts such as forced migration in Queensland; massacres; indigenous exclusion from or segregation

in schools, swimming pools, bars and cinemas; forced separation of indigenous children from their families; pass laws in Western Australia after the second world war; Aboriginal reserves; a white Australia immigration policy; disproportionate rates of incarceration; deaths in custody; mandatory sentencing policies; and unacceptable levels of infant mortality and ill-health among indigenous communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have not been served well by the education systems. Educational institutions have not provided the same welcome or opportunities afforded to other Australians. School completion and higher education graduation rates are poor by comparison. Indigenous

knowledge and learning traditions have too often not been recognised or respected. Teachers have often underestimated the abilities of indigenous students.

We believe that we cannot create a just society if we recognise only the positive aspects of Australian history, without recognising the wrongs that have been committed and suffered in this country. Recognising this is essential if genuine reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians is to be achieved.

WE HAVE

Resolved in November 1998 to take 'a strong, public, active and principled stand in support of the Reconciliation process'.

Contributed to Australians' learning about reconciliation, and the People's movement for Reconciliation, through our work on Reconciliation Learning Circles.

Reserved a position on our national Executive for representation from the Federation of Independent Aboriginal Education Providers.

WE WILL

Continue to play our part in the 'unfinished business' by developing ongoing strategies to advance reconciliation.

Press for Australia's government to reach out to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to express its sorrow and regret for the injustices of the past and apologise.

Support the development of education programs that provide the skills and knowledge wanted by indigenous people to develop self-reliance.

Work for ways of learning that welcomes and respects indigenous knowledge, values and abilities.

Learn from each other in a spirit of reconciliation.

We endorse the Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation. ■

ALA Awards 2000

Adult Learning Australia Awards were presented at ALA's 40th National Conference dinner in Canberra on 25 November 2000. The awards are offered in recognition of outstanding work in adult learning program development, implementation and evaluation; research, teaching, training, and administration; or some combination of these. In selecting the winners, the judges made the following comments.



George Shipp with award winner Colin Lawton

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

COLIN LAWTON

Colin Lawton, OAM, has made an outstanding contribution to Australian adult education and learning for over 55 years. He has played a leading role in the following important developments:

- the post war expansion of the WEA's Adelaide program,
- the development of adult and continuing education within the University of Adelaide,

- the establishment and growth of the public radio station 5UV, and
- the establishment, growth and continued good health of the Adelaide U3A.

Colin has published academic papers on the history of adult education, the use of radio in adult education, and issues in adult and continuing education. Colin has always championed informed public discussion of current affairs.

Over his career Colin Lawton has worked tirelessly to promote adult education and learning, organise courses, teach current affairs, and publish. In more recent times, he has made a most significant contribution to the provision of adult education for older adults by establishing, and being actively involved in, the University of the Third Age, Adelaide.

PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

VOICES FROM IN BETWEEN – MIGRANTS IN NORTH EAST VICTORIA

Wangaratta Centre for Continuing Education's project is an innovative example of how adult and community education programs can build social capital through learning together, sharing values and build trust. By interviewing migrant members of their local community for an oral history project, community volunteers, high school students, and adult students increased their skills at many levels.

Eighty migrants' contributions to their new country have been acknowledged and



Geoff Baker accepting the Wangaratta CEC Program award

valued in a concrete way. Both informal and formal learning outcomes are evident for all participants. In a time where community development is a key to our future, this project provides a model that could enhance reconciliation in many settings.

PROVIDER OF THE YEAR
CONTINUING EDUCATION CENTRE,
ALBURY-WODONGA

The Continuing Education Centre at Albury-Wodonga demonstrated excellence

in its work and capabilities. Excellence was demonstrated through innovative work in program delivery, for example with the children of farmers. Workers at the Continuing Education Centre showed recognition of and a proactive response to grass-roots needs. They also demonstrated a sense of mutuality in their work and their network of local community organisations.

In addition, the Continuing Education Centre has been recognised at State and National levels for its innovative practices. ■



Dorothy Lucardie accepting the Albury-Wodonga CEC award



Roslyn de Bussey, glass artist

GLASS ARTIST

Roslyn de Bussey is the glass artist who produced the awards for ALA. Her design is based on the original (mass-produced) awards, but she has made the ALA awards by hand. Roslyn is an experienced artist, having worked in glass for over 15 years, using both traditional and experimental techniques. In addition to a number of exhibitions around Australia and in the United States, she has published articles on glass and taught others. Her particular interest is new techniques for working with glass: “Through the use of lustres and enamels I have been able to explore a variety of technical processes for architectural, site specific, commissioned and exhibition works.” ■

FIVE DELEGATES REPORT ON THEIR EXPERIENCES OF THE 2000 ALA CONFERENCE IN CANBERRA.

Reflections on ‘Learning in time’

THE SOCIAL PURPOSE OF OUR WORK

As an outsider, my observations on the Adult Learning Australia Conference are likely to be coloured by the initial impact of the country and its people. Both were a delight and a privilege to encounter.

What was so impressive about the debate during the conference was the remorseless demands of participants to address the social purpose of our work. Despite the almost universal pressure to see our efforts cast within schemes of ‘lifelong learning’ – geared towards the construction of adults as willing participants in a cut-throat struggle for work in a diminishing market – participants demanded again and again that the social and political purpose of adult education be explored. Perhaps most healthily these assumptions themselves were opened up for debate and liberal democrats engaged with Marxist ‘purists’ and post-modern relativists to clarify the often unspoken principles informing what we do.

Such refreshing candour is not always a feature of discussion and Australian adult education has nothing to fear while it can accommodate such healthy debate. There are many places in the world where the link between adult education and broad social purpose has all but been severed and a sterile technicism prevails. Not so in Australia – more power to you – and the rest of us.

John Wallis lectures at the University of Natal, South Africa.

DISSENT STIMULATES

For a newcomer to adult learning, the conference was a great way to gain an overview of the field and engage in current debates. Most positively, I felt I’d ‘come home’ to an environment of intellectual stimulation and social relevance that supported a broad range of practitioners.

The diversity of speakers and topics reflected ALA’s outward-looking approach and connectivity to many sectors of the community. A commitment

to reconciliation, found in ALA’s reconciliation document, in the recognition of Canberra’s traditional owners and in Dr Evelyn Scott’s keynote speech is just one example.

Broad themes such as the meaning and future of social capital wove themselves through the conference. While there were sessions dedicated to the discussion of social capital, the currency of this term in community debate was reflected in the speeches of the various politicians who presented to the conference.

The plenary session included a chance for feedback from members. Issues were raised and discussion was encouraged. Healthy dissent amongst delegates took place in an environment of safe debate, a pleasant change for someone who has attended other industry conferences where debate is stifled for fear of participants appearing foolish in front of peers.

A number of sessions did not obviously link to the main themes but were well attended by people squeezing into converted bedrooms or hall spaces. One session on the future membership of ALA ran counter to my other experiences. Several people argued for the restriction of membership in order to better serve the membership. I was reminded of some green organisations in the early 90s who, to their detriment, restricted their alliances with other community organisations as the green philosophy gained momentum community-wide.

From the Labor party's 'knowledge nation' policy to the Liberals' insistence that 'work for the dole' programs now provide 30 per cent training, 'lifelong learning' is gaining currency across the political spectrum and in local communities through the work of ALA members.

Social events were great fun. (Thanks for the shoes, Mara.) They allowed me to meet people from many areas of the industry, some traditionally identified as adult learning organisations and others, like myself, who had not been long identified as part of the sector. One person I met, a trainer with the fire department, offered to take a group of us by fire truck from Darwin to Kakadu, next year's venue. So, expect to see a few of us arriving

in style. See you there and best wishes.

Sue Harris works for Artsnet, a community arts organisation in Western Sydney.

A FIRST IMPRESSION

Our Training Organisation was only recently established and is growing fast. When I received notice of the ALA Conference I decided it was something I had to attend for the importance of our organisation's knowledge, directions and involvement in adult education for the community. Really, I had no idea what to expect! I was pleasantly surprised. The conference went way beyond my expectations.

Guest speakers introduced the conference in a way that acknowledged and praised the adult education sector and promoted promising directions for the future. I gained an increased sense of the importance of what we do, and additional motivation to continue to provide adult education and learning environments at the highest quality, and to aim for even greater outcomes for the community.

Sessions and topics were outstanding in content and delivery, so much so that it would have helped to be able to split into three or four so as not to miss out on anything. Social

events were also excellently organised and a wonderful opportunity to network, establish contacts and discuss partnership possibilities, not only locally but throughout Australia. The levels of knowledge, skills and opportunities within individual states is outstanding, and to be provided with the opportunity to bring those states together along with their ideas and future directions is indeed inspiring to a developing organisation such as ours.

After this very inspiring conference, I am confident of our continuing development in adult learning, and with my new network of friends, I believe that my expectations and goals are indeed achievable for the benefit of the community and the people accessing our service.

Well done ALA – I can't wait for the next one – Kakadu 2001!

Julie Phillips is Training and Development Manager of Optimum Training and Development, Southside Community Services.

A VET PROFESSIONAL'S PERSPECTIVE

'Learning in time' provided a unique opportunity for VET professionals to interact with two groups of people: representatives of community organisations, which form the backbone of the



Participants in the pre-conference tour behind the scenes of Canberra's museums and galleries

ALA network, and academics from education faculties across Australia. It is this combination that attracted me to the conference.

Over the past few years, with the implementation of the ANTA's new agenda for VET, TAFE Institutes and their commercial arms have been asked to focus more and more on their role as providers of industry training. Training Packages are the most obvious manifestation of this direction. Many Institutes have responded by reducing their traditional offerings in the area of community courses. It is ironic that this is occurring at a time when broad education debate is obsessed with the concepts of lifelong learning and learning communities.

It is refreshing to attend a conference where the two

represented groups are concerned to discuss the wider application of lifelong learning and learning communities.

Anthony Tyrrel is National Project Manager of TAFE Directors Australia.

RECHARGING THE BATTERIES BY PLUGGING INTO THE MAINS?

I perceive myself as a lapsed adult educator. Having done a Masters degree in Adult and Continuing Education in 1990, and spent some years in public sector management development, I have recently strayed into the field of consultancy in community economic development. I anticipated that the ALA Conference would be a trip back to my roots: an opportunity to indulge myself in a passion stemming from an earlier phase of my life.

What I actually experienced was engagement with a vibrant community of grounded, provocative, informed and intelligent thinkers who revitalised, energised and propelled me into action. I was reminded at every turn of the pervasiveness and relevance 'adult education' in its broadest sense. The conference helped me to identify the core relevance of adult learning principles to my work and encouraged me to place those principles at the core of my professional activity. The paucity of appreciation of basic adult learning principles within contexts that seek to promote individual and collective development and change is both incredible and inadmissible.

The message I have taken from the conference is that adult educators have an enormous amount to offer contexts in which collective and individual development is facilitated and we have the skills and a responsibility to ensure that such processes liberate and empower learners. ■

Elaine Slater is a researcher and consultant in Canberra.

LIZ HENDERSON RELAYS HER EXPERIENCE OF THE INAUGURAL AUSTRALIAN LEARNING CITY CONFERENCE.

From concept to reality

Having never been in Victoria I had some difficulty distinguishing my excitement over the conference from my excitement over seeing a new part of the country. In the weeks leading up to the conference I had been researching the Learning Around Town booklet, which was launched at the conference. I had discussed the learning city concept with many people in those weeks and they were all enthusiastic and passionate about it. The conference was a continuation of this experience – the keynote speakers provided stimulating discussion on various experiences of learning cities in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Over one fifth of the delegates were from various councils around Australia and New Zealand. Perhaps because the Albury and Wodonga Council has been involved in promoting Albury and Wodonga as learning cities, councils from around Australia have become interested in the concept. Building effective partnerships is crucial for any community wishing to become a Learning City, and involving local government is a key to active local engagement.

Several speakers noted that the drive to become a learning city is often a response to some form of local identity crisis: unemployment or changes in the local industry and a need for regeneration and a new role for the future. Delegates agreed that there is no single or correct way to develop a learning community, as each community is unique and has different infrastructure that it can build upon. But there are some common features. A community striving to establish itself as a learning city must strengthen its commitment to the development of effective partnerships, to sharing resources and to engaging the whole community – without exception – in the process.

According to David McNulty, Chair of the UK Learning City Network and special

international guest at the conference, “Learning Communities have developed learning as a key tool in preparing citizens in a new era. We learn from each other as individuals and as communities”. Dr McNulty also said that learning towns, cities or communities “have two purposes: to support widening participation in lifelong learning; and to use learning to promote social and economic regeneration”.



Majella McGrath and Rachel Castles with keynote speaker David McNulty

The address by Janet Candy, Town Planner with Brisbane City Council, highlighted the importance of making the development of a learning community a holistic experience, one where all aspects of community life are engaged to work toward a common goal. No individual or organisation should be excluded from the process. Janet pointed out that the learning city concept is about more than the formal areas of learning, it is about all aspects of community life, especially those areas that will stimulate economic revival and promote social cohesion. For me, coming from Glasgow, Scotland, I had been aware of city planning initiatives that sought direct community

involvement in the areas that were particularly deprived. But I did not know enough about the learning city concept to see the real significance of this until my work on the learning city project with ALA.

When Rachel Castles highlighted the Ballarat experience, when Councillor Graham Crapp talked about the Albury-Wodonga partnerships and when David McNulty spoke on the British experience, each clearly demonstrated that creating a learning city is achievable. The involvement of volunteers and 'champions' was noted, as was the need for particular individuals to drive the concept and make it a reality.

Another conference will be held in Ballarat in 2002. In the meantime the Victorian, South Australian and Tasmanian towns and cities already working on establishing the concept in their communities will continue their work. Other towns in New South Wales and Queensland have begun exploring possibilities since the conference. In two years there should be an even greater experience to share.

ALA has set up an email discussion group to facilitate exchanges between practitioners and to consider a national Learning Cities and Towns Network. All postings are archived on the ALA website and are searchable by topic, date and author. The website also contains more information on the speakers and the panel members. ■

Liz Henderson works for Adult Learning Australia.

ARCHIVE FOR LTC EMAIL LIST

<http://www.ala.asn.au/learningcities/mailarchive>

To join the list, send an email to majordomo@ala.asn.au, leave the subject blank, and in the message type "subscribe ltc-list".

LTC CONFERENCE PAGE

http://www.ala.asn.au/learningcities/Conf_prog.htm

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR PROPOSED ON LEARNING CITIES

The UK's Network for Learning Communities (LCN) has proposed that an international seminar on learning cities be held in the UK during 2002–3, coinciding with Adult Learners Week. Birmingham City Council has offered to host the event.

In its proposal to the British Council the LCN explained that the learning city-region concept has grown because:

- business and political leaders – usually at a region level – keen to promote innovation and local difference have grasped the importance of transforming the education and training system through better investment in and more effective exchange of know-how,
- city leaders, grappling with the urban identity crisis caused by massive economic and social change, have seized on the value of learning to develop creative solutions and prepare their citizens for the future, and
- educators and community leaders have realised the value of learning to neighbourhood renewal, to community development and to tackling social exclusion.

If the proposal is supported the seminar's purposes will be to:

- share understanding of the theory and practice of the learning city between representatives from a number of countries including Australia, Canada, other Commonwealth countries linked to UK communities, Sweden, Finland and Spain,
- identify opportunities for developing joint projects include exchange of good practice, creation of a website and exchanges of learning city coordinators and other staff, and
- publish a report of the proceedings.

The Learning City Network is the largest national organisation of learning partnerships in the world with more than 40 affiliates throughout the UK. ■

ICAE to meet in Jamaica

The 6th World Assembly of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) will be held in Ocho Rios, Jamaica from 9–12 August 2001.

The Assembly's theme will be 'The Creativity of Women and Men: A Strategic Choice for Tomorrow: Building a New Agenda for Local and Global Advocacy'. There will also be special celebrations, fair and an exhibition.

The World Assembly is open to all networks within ICAE as well as to all those convinced of the necessity for an active and informed citizenship. Two public debates, first on the need to recognise and strengthen the creativity of women and men, and second on new ways to reinforce local advocacy globally and reciprocally, will focus the conference.

However, the main and central agenda of the Assembly is the reinforcement and expansion of initiatives in literacy, gender education, and on the Education for All campaign, on the global scene.

In announcing the Assembly, ICAE President Paul Belanger said "Adult learning is a very large international field in continuous reconstruction, and the aspirations of women and men for creative participation know no boundaries; their imaginative involvement is required in all areas of activity.

"But this necessity of active citizenship and productive participatory economies will not be achieved without important changes in the present course of action, without new national and global policies. We, women and men, will only have the concrete possibilities to empower ourselves, to gain new competencies, if we

succeed, through direct involvement and efficient advocacy action, to reverse the prevalent trends in policies and practices. Only then, will we reverse a predominating situation where only those who have tend to get more opportunities to go on learning.

"We are convinced that only efficient local advocacy actions linked to global alternative networks can make a difference. And a difference is urgently needed for ensuring the right of all people to basic education. Women are also convinced that gender equity will only happen through creative initiatives and reinforcement of local and global leadership. A similar difference of action is required to make it possible for all people to improve their professional qualification. The emerging information society will not become equitable and multi-directional without critical changes. The billion older people requiring conditions for active aging are also looking for an alternative course. Without creating new conditions for active citizenship, racism will grow; local autocratic governance will be maintained.

"These challenges call for concrete actions. And this is precisely what this World Assembly is about. A World Assembly built on ongoing initiatives and leading to concrete actions.

"Communicate with us, make proposals, discuss the ones we are presenting here, let us continue building its program from above and from ongoing actions." ■

For further information visit the ICAE website at <http://www.web.net/icae> or see <http://www.ala.asn.au>.

TONY BROWN INTRODUCES THE LATEST INITIATIVES OF THE ASIA
PACIFIC BUREAU OF ADULT EDUCATION (ASPBAE).

ASPBAE elects first female President



Usa Duongsa

Usa Duongsa has been elected President of ASPBAE. A lecturer in the Department of Education Extension at Chiang Mai University in northern Thailand and a specialist in HIV/AIDS education, Usa is the first woman elected President of ASPBAE. She replaces Rajesh Tandon who had been in the position since 1991.

ASPBAE brings together a wide range of organisations and nations. It includes highly developed nations such as Australia, Japan, Singapore, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Korea; other industrialised countries such as Malaysia, Philippines, India, Pakistan, Thailand and Indonesia; and much smaller island states such as Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Samoa, and Solomon Islands.

It includes national adult learning associations such as ALA, as well as organisations

focused on environmental issues; community advocacy organisations; migrant and labour advocacy bodies; and many others.

In a number of countries adult education organisations and advocacy groups are constrained in what they can say or report because of the nature of the regimes.

Ensuring that ASPBAE can work within such a range of contexts and issues is a great challenge, made more difficult by the size of the challenge, and lack of resources available in most countries. However, the common interest among those present at the Advocacy Workshop was a shared commitment to the rights and needs of adult learners and the potential for adult education and learning to change the existing conditions in their societies and communities.

Over the past decade adult education has been a focus of attention at major conferences on Education For All – Jomtien (1990); the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD – 1995); Beijing Women’s Conference (1995); Confinda (1997); and most recently at the Beijing+5, WSSD+5 and the Dakar World Education Forum all held in 2000.

Despite global commitments to education, actual resources show that it does not enjoy high status or priority among national governments and international organisations. Literacy remains a major problem in most of the region as does access to education, and the rights of girls, women and the aged to education.

The Workshop considered ways to re-focus and consolidate existing project initiatives in areas such as literacy, environmental education, older people’s learning, technology, and vocational education. It issued a statement to UNESCO calling for the Goals of the Dakar ‘Framework of Action’ to be followed through and for full participation of NGOs in the process. One means for linking activity across the region was Adult Learners Week. Until now ALW has not been as strongly promoted in the Asia South Pacific as in Europe, Australia or South Africa.

Representatives on the incoming Executive from the South Pacific region, of which ALA is a part, are Sandra Morrison from Aotearoa/NZ and Joel Simo from Vanuatu. ■

To read more about ASPBAE’s activities and directions visit the website at <http://www.aspbae.org>.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS COMMITTED \$167.5 MILLION OVER FOUR YEARS TO ENHANCE THE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS OF AUSTRALIA'S PRIMARY INDUSTRY SECTOR.

FarmBis could be ACE biz

Farmers need skills, and Australian farmers have access to state- and nationally-funded education and training programs outside the formal education sector. These programs provide an opportunity for ACE providers in rural areas to work with agricultural groups in identifying learning needs and offering learning programs.

The newest of these programs is Agriculture Advancing Australia (AAA) – FarmBis, is intended in turn “to ensure Australia’s primary producers are more self-reliant and better equipped for change” in line with “the Government’s aim to increase the competitiveness, profitability and sustainability of Australia’s agricultural industries.”

The AAA – FarmBis program will integrate two programs. One is the Property Management Planning (PMP) Campaign – a nationally delivered program to introduce farmers to strategic business planning skills in facilitated workshops. The other is an earlier version of FarmBis.

Grants of up to \$500 000 will be available through the AAA – FarmBis Australia program. Priority will be given to projects with a high direct financial contribution made by the applicant. Applications for Round Two of the Program were called in February 2001.

Objectives of AAA – FarmBis Australia that ACE providers are most able to support are to:

- encourage a national culture of continuous learning and skills development in agricultural industries,
- assist agricultural industries to identify appropriate learning and development activities,
- develop and adopt best practices in business management in Australia’s agricultural industries, through education and training, and
- develop unique training and learning programs with the potential to assist Australian agricultural industries with business management.

AAA – FarmBis projects “should seek to improve the competitiveness, profitability and sustainability of agricultural, horticultural, pastoral, aquacultural and commercial fishing or apicultural industries within Australia”.

“Emphasis will be on projects that provide benefits to more than one state; and have wide industry application or target women in agricultural industries or benefit young people committed to achieving more for their industry.”

Suggested topics for projects include: “human resource management, domestic and international benchmarking, risk management, marketing, product quality and safety, skills stocktake, integration of business supply networks, sustainable business management, rural leadership.”

Examples are provided of projects that might be eligible for funding.

Education and Training Programs: where an industry has identified a specific national training need to achieve their long-term vision. Assistance would be provided to develop the education and training program.

Pilot Training Program: an industry may have developed a unique idea to deliver relevant training. Funding is required to pilot and implement this training program. If successful this program has the flexibility to be used by a number of industries.

Benchmarking: an industry wishes to benchmark their industry to identify best practices and future training needs to achieve these practices. Funding would be provided to undertake these activities.

ACE providers are unlikely to be eligible for direct funding under this program, however there is a possibility for ACE providers to work in partnership with eligible agricultural bodies, offering their expertise in the field of adult learning. ■

FURTHER INFORMATION

AAA – FarmBis

http://www.affa.gov.au:80/docs/industry_develop/aaa/farmbis

Property Management Planning (PMP) Campaign

<http://www.nra.gov.au:80/docs/nrm/policy/pmpstrategy.html>

Search the AFFA site for rural education and training topics.

<http://www.affa.gov.au>

GROUPS ALL AROUND AUSTRALIA CAN DEVELOP THEIR HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS
AND BECOME ACTIVE CITIZENS. MARY HANNAN REPORTS.

Update on Learning Circles Australia

SENIORS LEARNING CIRCLES – LIFELONG LEARNING

Seven new discussion modules will encourage users to explore Australian history and the economic, social and cultural changes that have occurred here over the last 100 years. This innovative learning circle program was funded by the Department of Communications Information Technology and the Arts through its Federation Community Projects Program.

Participants will be able to explore their personal and community memories and experiences of housing; discuss their memories and experiences of a much-loved Australian icon – the Sydney Harbour Bridge; and explore the history of keeping weather records in Australia since Captain Cook's journey, and Australian citizenship since Federation.

Funding was awarded by two Sydney electorates – Sydney and Cook – and Learning Circles Australia has been working closely with the Leichhardt Council and South Sydney Council, encouraging the Councils to embrace the program.

Two launches for the project will take place during the NSW Seniors Week. Tanya Plibersek, Federal Member for Sydney will launch the project for the Sydney electorate on Wednesday 21 March at 11.00am and Bruce Baird, Federal Member for Cook will launch the project for the Cook electorate on Friday 23 March at 11.00am.

Whilst the material was developed for older Australians the material could be adapted for others. Contact Mary Hannan on 02 6251 9889 or email m.hannan@ala.asn.au if you would like more information.

GOVERNANCE OF AUSTRALIA

'The Governance of Australia' is the first of two ALA-developed learning circles on civics and citizenship. It is available to groups interested in exploring how to become active citizens.

Where did our relatively young system of government come from, and in what ways have overseas models and practices been adapted to Australian conditions? Do we have a system of government that is capable of meeting the new demands and challenges of this millenium? Are there practical ways in which the governance of Australia can be made more democratic than it is at present? How can citizens of Australia become more actively involved in the critical examination of our democratic system?

If you are interested in establishing a learning circle please use the enclosed flyer.

FEEDBACK ON LEARNING AND LIVING IN THE THIRD AGE

The Anglican Aged Care Services Group (AACSG) has been running five learning circle groups using the Third Age kit. AACSG Community Coordinator Corinne Withycombe reports that with learning circles, Victorian seniors are increasing their interest in current affairs and their confidence in voicing opinions. For participants, learning circles mean:

- “mateship, having a lot of fun, gaining or refining your memory”,
- “a refreshing opportunity to get together and talk about current issues facing our community, to reminisce as well”, and
- “opinions besides your own”.

In Ms Withycombe's own words, “It has been great to experience residents giving me articles or telling me about related items they have seen in the media days after our group. The best outcome was when one of the residents told me about how he was discussing the GST with a visitor he had. This link to feeling confident to discuss current issues with the wider community is fantastic.”

Mary Hannan is Manager of Learning Circles Australia.

THIS QUARTER, JANET BURSTALL EXAMINES RECONCILIATION ACTION ON THE WEB.

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation presented its final report to the Government in December. The process is not over, and you can keep up with it and its implications for education.

The Council's site includes its *Final Report* containing recommendations for a treaty. Another section called 'What you can do for reconciliation' includes a publication *Local Symbols of Reconciliation* with examples and suggestions for local projects. At 'Register here for Foundation' you can register to be informed of progress in the establishment of the CAR's successor, Reconciliation Australia. At 'Partnerships, Walking the talk' are statements of commitment to reconciliation, including a number from educational bodies.



"The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission is Australia's main indigenous agency. ATSIC's site is an important international resource for information on indigenous programs, activities and issues." Press releases, transcripts of speeches and issues papers abound, but alas no search engine, so you need to browse. Education is in the 'Issues' section, and contains statements on ABSTUDY and rural and remote education. The site uses frames, so for example the link to Geoff Clark's speech 'From here to a treaty' will open without the site navigation system displaying on your screen.

Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation is best known for its Sea of Hands project. Continuing activities can be discovered here.

The Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Affairs provides links to ABS indigenous statistics, government programs for indigenous Australians, as well as Phillip Ruddock, Minister for Reconciliation and new Minister for ATSI Affairs. The Minister was still listed as John Herron at time of writing

KooriNet has been mentioned in this column before and remains a good launching point from which to research indigenous perspectives, especially on education.

'Our kids are switching off school in primary school now!' is a recent, thought provoking paper on lifelong learning for indigenous Australians, by Professor John Lester.

The Indigenous Online Network is a directory of opportunities in higher education, research, scholarships, courses and employment.

INTERNATIONAL

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission has made reconciliation a hot topic in South Africa, and spawned many websites. Of international interest is ReCONCILIATION NeT, a product of the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation. It is "dedicated to the study and practice of dealing with the past in countries in transition." Interestingly Canada is not one of the red spots on the map. Rwanda, Cambodia and Australia are among them. It lists over 50 researchers from around the world, including Australia. Many links are not correctly stated, but can be made to work with thoughtful hacking. This is a central spot to explore reconciliation sites,

but on the strength of its Australian coverage it cannot be taken as authoritative in recognising links of high credibility.

SOUTH AFRICA

At the Truth and Reconciliation Commission site are amnesty decisions, transcripts, reparation and rehabilitation policies, hearings schedule, and the TRC report. It shows how different the South African process is.



CANADA

Canada has been hailed as model of effective reconciliation. In March 1999 the Assembly of First Nations (an independent body representing indigenous Canadian nations) signed an Accord with the Government. This followed a *Final Report* by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). Its website publishes the 3200-page report.

The Canadian government site Indian and Northern Affairs Canada explains government policies and services to support first nations, including the government action plan *Gathering Strength*. ■

Janet Burstall is ALA's Information Manager.



Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation

<http://www.reconciliation.org.au/>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

<http://www.atsic.gov.au/>

'From here to a treaty'

http://www.atsic.gov.au/media/speeches_transcripts/display.asp?id=276

Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation

<http://www.antar.org.au>

Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Affairs

<http://www.atsia.gov.au>

KooriNet

<http://www.koori.usyd.edu.au>

'Our kids are switching off school in primary school now!'

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/umulliko/publ.html>

Indigenous Online Network

<http://www.ion.unisa.edu.au/contents.html>

ReCONCILIATION NeT

<http://www.reconciliation.org.za>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission site

<http://www.truth.org.za>

Assembly of First Nations

<http://www.afn.ca>

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP)

<http://www.indigenous.bc.ca/rcap.htm>

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/index_e.html

Gathering Strength

http://www.inac.gc.ca/gs/index_e.html

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The small band of committee members have been busy since the AGM (last June) planning and implementing much of that planning.

As reported elsewhere in this newsletter, the WA branch has been carrying out a pre-election lobbying campaign.

The completion of the ACE Mapping project has provided a very useful database of about 450 individuals and organisations in WA who identify ACE as a significant part of their business. We have since used the database to send out a package of useful GST/BAS information, including ALA promotional material, having successfully bid for some funds for GST projects via the ALA National Office. The responses were followed up on and some further follow-up work done via a second mail out which also included a copy of a letter sent to all political parties asking for their policies on ACE and lifelong learning, together with the responses.

Adult Learners Week provided an opportunity to promote adult learning initiatives around the state and the branch was represented on the organising committee. We tabled a report to the ACE Advisory Committee, reflecting upon ALW 2000 and recommended, among other things, broadening out the membership of the committee in the future. This year the Adult Learner of the Year made the front page of our state newspaper, *The West*!

The branch also continues to be represented on the WA ACE Advisory Committee, and has been instrumental in setting the agenda for a forthcoming planning session for this committee which, amongst other issues, will also consider broadening its membership base.

The branch submitted a proposal to the Office of Seniors Interests and the WA Health Department to promote the Learning & Living in the Third Age Learning Circle in rural WA; to develop a WA-based module on falls prevention; and to sustain coordination in the West. We are currently following this through with encouraging feedback from the relevant departments.

In November a small group of Western Australians made it to Canberra for the National Conference; always an excellent opportunity to network with our interstate colleagues.

In early February we shall be meeting with Dr Carmen Lawrence to further discuss comments in her address to the National Conference regarding Learning Circles. ■

Wendy Shearwood

TASMANIA



Members of the Tasmanian branch of ALA

ALA's Tasmania branch was re-established at a meeting in Campbell Town on 31 January. A good turnout of 25 voted to re-launch the branch and elected a new Executive Committee.

ALA President Ned Dennis and Executive Director Tony Brown attended the meeting and spoke about the importance of having active adult learning branches and ALA's agenda for 2001.

The number of people attending, the range of organisations represented, and the distances travelled to get to the meeting reflected a very positive level of interest in ALA in Tasmania. It also reflected the diverse adult education provision in Tasmania with people from Community Houses, Community Online Access Centres, TAFE, job link and private providers, U3A and Seniors groups, Health and Community Services educators, and the University of Tasmania in attendance.

A new Committee comprising Irena Allen, Jan Dunsby, Noela Foxcroft, Bob Holderness-Roddam, Rowena MacKean, Cheryl Maddock, Jenny Seaton, Helen Rees, and Maryke van Tatenhove was elected.

One of the tasks for the new Committee will be to elect office bearers, establish a means of communication for members across the State and to continue preparations for ALA's annual Conference scheduled for Hobart in 2002. ■

NEW MEMBERS

INDIVIDUALS

Deborah Brown	VIC
Dave Chamings	NSW
Graham Doering	NSW
Mark Firth	WA
Anne French	TAS
Susan Harris	NSW
Celia Hillman	VIC
Ken McArthur	PNG (Papua New Guinea)
Deborah Masani	ACT
Cheryl Maddock	TAS
Robyn Maher	NSW
Daryl Nation	VIC
Julie Phillips	ACT
Cathy Searson	SA
Elaine Slater	ACT
Maryke Van Tatenhove	TAS
Linden Wheeler	NSW

ORGANISATIONAL MEMBERS

- ACE Gunnedah
Gunnedah NSW 2360
- Algate House Community Centre
Broken Hill NSW 2880
- Ararat Community House & Adult Learning Centre
Ararat VIC 3377
- Ballarat East Community House
Ballarat VIC 3354
- Bandiana Neighbourhood House
Bandiana VIC 3694
- Barrington ACE Inc
Dungog NSW 2420
- Broadcare Community Centre Inc
Broadford VIC 3658
- Broadmeadows Further Education Community Development Assoc
Dallas VIC 3047
- Camden haven Adult and Community Education
Laurieton NSW 2443
- Chelsea Heights Community Centre
Chelsea Heights VIC 3196

Christian Community Aid
Eastwood NSW 2122

Cobram Community House
Cobram VIC 3644

Colac Adult & Community
Education Inc
Colac VIC 3250

Condobolin Adult Education Inc
Condobolin NSW 2877

Education Centre Gippsland
Warragul VIC 3820

Eurobodalla Adult Education Centre
Inc
Batemans Bay NSW 2536

Gellibrand Community Group Inc
Gellibrand VIC 3249

Jerramungup Telecentre
Jerramungup WA 6337

Karratha College
Karratha WA 6714

Kerang Learning Centre
Kerang VIC 3579

Mission Australia
Sydney NSW 2000

Morrison House
Mount Evelyn VIC 3796

Mount Martha Community Contact Inc
Mount Martha VIC 3934

Network of Community Activities
Surrey Hills NSW 2010

PR & Events
Ivanhoe VIC 3079

Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House
Pyramid Hill VIC 3575

SCOPE Quality Learning Inc
Morwell VIC 3840

Selby Community House
Selby VIC 3159

Southern Grampians Adult
Education Inc
Hamilton VIC 3300

Tallangatta Community Education
Centre Inc
Tallangatta VIC 3700

Tasmanian Association of
Community Houses Inc
Exeter TAS 7251

The Basin Community House
The Basin VIC 3154

The Learners Realm
Jervis Bay NSW 2540

The Verney-Mackay Group P/L
Toowong QLD 4066

Tuggeranong Link
Conder ACT 2906

U3A Online Resources Ltd
Cook ACT 2614

U3A Tea Tree Gully Inc
Modbury SA 5092

Volunteer Link
Hurstville NSW 2220

Wycheproof Community Resource
Centre
Wycheproof VIC 3527

Wyndham Family Support Inc
Wyndham WA 6740

Yarraville Community Centre
Yarraville VIC 3013

Yarrowonga Neighbourhood House
Yarrowonga VIC 3730

JOIN ALA TODAY

ALL ALA MEMBERS RECEIVE THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER, THE AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT LEARNING, E-SERVICES, ACCESS TO A NATIONAL NETWORK OF ADULT EDUCATORS AND REPRESENTATION BY THEIR PEAK BODY.

ORGANISATIONAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Annual Turnover	Annual Fee (includes GST)
Below \$70 000	\$77
\$70 000–100 000	\$165
More than \$100 000	\$214.50

Organisation name

Contact person

Position

Email

Address

State Postcode

Telephone Facsimile

Is your organisation a peak body?yes / no

Total enclosed \$

Cheque (payable to ALA Inc, PO Box 308 Jamison Centre ACT 2614)
or

Bankcard Mastercard Visa

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Cardholder's name Expiry date

Signature Date

Tick to receive a receipt

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Annual Income	Annual Fee (includes GST)
Below \$25 000	\$49.50
\$25 001–\$45 000	\$77
\$45 001–\$65 000	\$99
More than \$65 000	\$115.50

Name

Address

State Postcode

Telephone Facsimile

Email

Organisation

Total enclosed \$

Cheque (payable to ALA Inc, PO Box 308 Jamison Centre ACT 2614)
or

Bankcard Mastercard Visa

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Cardholder's name Expiry date

Signature Date

Tick to receive a receipt



CALENDAR

28–30 March 2001

Turning research into reality – putting VET research to work

The Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA) is holding its annual national conference in Adelaide.

Contact Dr Roger Harris,
email roger.harris@unisa.edu.au,
<http://www.avetra.org.au>

30 March–1 April 2001

Beyond the Global Pillage: Social Movement Learning

Department of Adult Education, Community Development and Counselling Psychology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto (OISE/UT). Featured Speakers: Elaine Bernard, Executive Director, Harvard Trade Union Program; Gregory Cajete, University of New Mexico; Lara Fitznor, Co-Chair, Indigenous Education Network, OISE/UT; Paulo Wangoola, Founder of Mpambo, the African Multiversity in Busoga, Uganda.

Contact Marilyn Proctor,
fax 0015 1 416 926 4749,
email mproctor@oise.utoronto.ca

2–6 April 2001

Investing in Community Development: Putting people first, protecting the environment, rebuilding local economies

The International Association for Community Development, the Community Development Group of the N.Z. Department of Internal Affairs, the Rotorua District Council, the Confederation of Tribes of Te Arawa, the Rotorua Ethnic Council and the Pacific Island Development Trust are jointly hosting the I.A.C.D. Rotorua 2001 conference. The conference will discuss community development's response to the benefits and impacts of globalisation.

Contact Margie Scotts,
fax +64 4 4959 444,
email margie.scotts@dia.govt.nz,
<http://www.iacdglobal.org/conf2001.html>

18–20 April 2001

Australian Education Assembly 2001 – Celebrating the past, shaping the future

The Assembly is an opportunity to highlight the contribution of educators and education to the process of nation building and the shaping of core Australian values.

A joint venture of the Australian College

of Education and Australian Council for Educational Administration, to be held in Melbourne.

<http://www.meetinginnovation.net.au/AEA2001.html>

18–20 April 2001

Prospering in the 21st Century: Creating workplaces where people matter

10th National Conference of the Australian Association of Career Counsellors to be held in Hobart at the Wrest Point Hotel Casino. Keynote speakers include Reverend Tim Costello, Father Michael Tate, Joan Kirner, Robyn Moore, Debra Angel, Mark Bagshaw.

Contact Sharon Starr,
phone 08 8341 1492, fax 08 8341 1635,
email aacc@camtech.net.au,
<http://www.aacc.com.au>

April 2001

International Year of the Volunteer Global Youth Service Day

9–11 May 2001

National Regional & Rural Training Conference: Pathways, Partnerships, Profitability

To be held at Shepparton Civic Centre, Shepparton Victoria. Convened to highlight national training packages and opportunities available to assist regional and rural communities. Will bring together government, industry, unions, employees and employers to discuss how training packages can offer innovative and flexible employment and educational opportunities for both employees and employers.

Contact Sue Nixon,
email prex@msn.com.au

23–29 May 2001

Canadian Adult Education Association 20th Anniversary Conference: Recovering our stories, rallying to Change

Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education, to be held at Laval University in Quebec.

<http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/cnf2001/cnf2001.html>

Friday 25 May 2001

Training at Work: Success Stories and Practical Strategies for Training Package Users

Hosted by the Admin Training Company, and held at The Holme, University of Sydney, this one-day forum is designed to

highlight case studies of successful training package implementation, providing participants with practical methods and strategies to help them implement effective training within the national framework.

Contact Shay Keating,
phone 03 9820 1300,
fax 03 9821 4392,
email skeating@admintraining.com.au,
<http://www.admintraining.com.au>

29 June–1 July 2001

Researching Widening Access: International Perspectives

To be held at Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland, UK, the conference will focus on research findings regarding the impact of the growing number of policies and initiatives to widen access to education in a number of different national contexts.

Contact Claire Scott,
phone +44 141 400 5726,
fax +44 141 332 8214,
email c.a.scott@gcal.ac.uk

7–10 July 2001

Languages: Our common wealth

Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations biennial National Conference. To be held at the ANU, Canberra, the Conference will focus on the links between culture and language and how classroom teachers can use these links to improve practice. It will also provide a forum for sharing knowledge, examining approaches and clarifying objectives.

Contact AFMLTA Secretariat,
phone 02 6281 6624, fax: 02 6285 1336,
email conference@conlog.com.au,
<http://www.spirit.net.au/afmlta01>

8–10 July 2001

6th International Conference on Lifelong Learning and the Arts: 2001 – A Spatial Odyssey

Organised by the SCUTREA Special Interest Group in conjunction with the University of East London's Year of Lifelong Learning, to be held at Birkbeck College, London. Will focus on physical spaces, community arts resources, adult education centres, galleries, museums, concert halls, theatres and libraries – indeed, any space where arts activities take place.

Contact David Jones,
phone +44 0 1205 351520,
fax +44 0 1205 358363,
email david.jones@nottingham.ac.uk