Quest

Issue 1 *Autumn 2005*

Adult Learning Australia Inc.

Flexible Learning Advisory Group

E-learning creative community partnerships

ALA Conference 2004 Report

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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For rates and dates contact Margaret Bates or download http://www.ala.asn.au/pubs/advertising.pdf

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ALA also publishes the Australian Journal of Adult Learning, in April, July and November. ALA members receive this publication, hard copy or electronic as part of their membership. Non-members may subscribe for $70. Single issues are $25 plus postage.

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Australian National Training Authority

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Editorial

Welcome to another engaging and challenging year. I'm sure, that you, as I do, find engagement and challenges are often the stepping stones to opportunities. In our business of adult learning there are certainly plenty of the former and hopefully some of the latter, although probably never enough. Adult Learning Australia (ALA) in 2005 has geared up for all of the above.

Throughout the latter part of 2004 and the beginning of 2005 there have been a number of staff changes for personal and professional reasons. Regrettably Margaret Bates is amongst those who for personal reasons will be leaving around the time you receive this issue. Margaret has been drawn to the lifestyle of the NSW South Coast. We wish Margaret and other former staff members that have taken up new career or lifestyle opportunities all the very best for the future and thank them on your behalf for their contribution to ALA over the years.

In the context of staff movements I would like to announce the appointment of Mary Hannan to the position of Assistant Executive Director (Innovative Projects) following an internal restructure. Mary's responsibilities within the Innovative Projects portfolio will remain the same as before, although some new tasks have been added in her new role.

As a result of these movements your national office has become much leaner, but we also believe we have, by necessity, become that much more focussed, with an agenda that will continue to have benefits for our members working directly in the field and elsewhere.

With the demise of ANTA and the transition of its many project responsibilities to DEST your national office has been working energetically with federal government representatives and others to ensure funding continuity for ALA so we can continue our valuable lifelong learning research agenda.

We believe that we manage a process that adds value to knowledge in this field and contributes professional value to you as a member and ultimately to the wider community.

Some aspects of that contribution form the basis of this first issue of QUEST for 2005. Of particular interest in this edition is the ACE/VET interface. Over 1.2 million persons undertake VET through ACE and around 1.8 million through TAFE. This is significant from whatever way you choose to look at it.

We have an informative interview with Rita Bennink (immediate past Vice-President and current Board member of ALA) who has been serving as a voice for ACE on FLAG over the past three years, plus an article on New Practices in Flexible Learning which we think will interest those of you at the ACE/VET interface.

Lorelie Ball reports on the successful 44th Annual National Conference for those unable to attend. The success of the conference in no small way was due to the efforts of Lorelie and the South Australian Committee.

The 2004 National Conference has raised the bar for the National Office which is charged with organising the 2005 event to be held here in Canberra commencing on the 24th November. The theme and other details will be appearing on the ALA website shortly.

Following the tragic tsunami on Boxing Day and a subsequent joint ALA/ASPBAE fund-raising initiative, we have devoted a number of articles in this edition to ASPBAE. ALA has been involved with, and a member of, ASPBAE for forty-one years, this year. Roger Morris provides a succinct history of the origins of the organisation in his article.

If you or your organisation would like to make a donation it will still be gratefully received. While the incident itself is over, the pain and suffering aren't. A CD (the file is too big to email) which has a brief 'on the ground' needs assessment undertaken by members of the ASPBAE Executive, some of whom lost family and friends is available upon request.

ALA believes we should provide assistance over the long haul or until an adult learning infrastructure is up and running again in the affected countries. We have been instrumental in gaining initial support for an international coalition of adult learning peak bodies that are willing to help achieve this goal. Judging from your feedback,

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Editorial

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members see this as a constructive way to provide targeted assistance.

Many of you would be aware that ALA's inaugural Visiting Research Fellow, Peter Kearns, Managing Director of Global Learning Services, is undertaking research on our behalf to identify future directions for lifelong learning in Australia. As part of that process Peter has instituted a National Conversation on Lifelong Learning on the ALA website, in addition to the Consultation Paper developed to trigger discussion around this important issue. You are invited to contribute to both. Details of the key discussion areas are available on page 17. For those of you who are not familiar with Peter's work you can go to his website at **www.gls.netspeed.com.au** or the NCVER website at **www.ncver.edu.au**

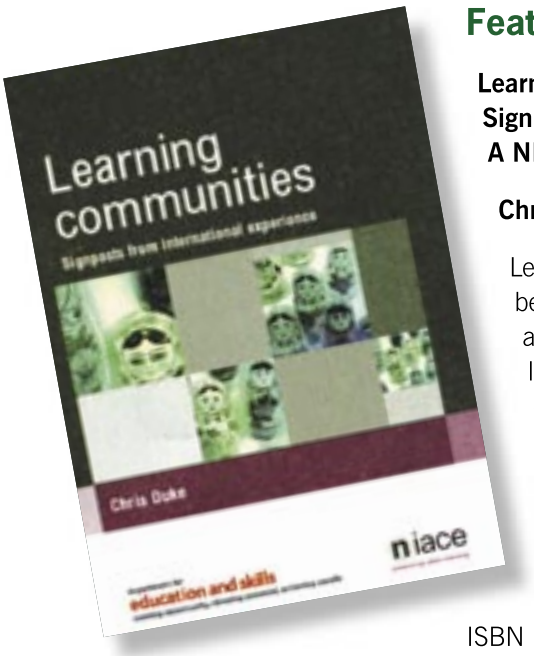
ALA has been successful in having the opportunity to manage a Flexible Learning Network project on Community Engagement. This project aims to create sustainable demand for, and use of, e-learning in communities, to foster both learning in the communities, and through learning, economic and regional development for the communities themselves. For more information see page 8.

In the next few weeks Dr John McIntyre and Dr Barry Golding will also be joining us as ALA Visiting Research Fellows in various ACE research capacities, as will Kris Newton. Kris will be working on how the ACE Sector can enhance its role in the dialogue with small business, other vocational providers and business, enterprise and industry groups. Outcomes from these projects will be reported back to you in due course through one or more of our publications on the ALA website.

Wishing you a great start to 2005.

Read and enjoy what your organisation is achieving through your membership and support.

Ron Anderson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Feature Publication

Learning Communities
Signposts from international experience
A NIACE briefing paper

Chris Duke

Learning cities, learning regions, and especially learning communities have become widely used terms and ideas. They are attractive to policy-makers and much argued over among academics. This briefing paper explores the language and context of learning communities. In response to the concept of the learning community as a possible approach to increasing educational participation, it reviews developments and experiences around this and related initiatives and ideas. Based on comparison with approaches in other parts of the world, it identifies key issues that need to be considered as we continue to explore ways of treating community as a more positive and effective part of attempts to become an active learning society.

ISBN 1 86201 214 8, 2004, 32pp.

Available from NIACE. Visit **http://www.ala.asn.au** and follow the link to the NIACE publications page.

Briefs

Report: Issues for grandparents raising grandchildren

Following the 'Grandparents as Carer's Forum', hosted and convened by COTA (NSW) in November 2004, COTA (NSW) now has a comprehensive report with information relevant to grandparents and their relatives who have primary care of their grandchildren.

For a copy of the 'Grandparent Carers' Report, contact COTA (NSW) on 02 9286 3860 or email **info@cotansw.com.au**

FURTHERING SUCCESS Education, Training and Employment Transitions for Disadvantaged Older Workers

The *Furthering Success* project identifies and analyses good practice in the provision of services and support to assist in increasing the employability of people aged 45 and over who are disadvantaged in the labour market. The report estimates that there are approximately 700,000 people in this category.

The aim of the report is to describe effectiveness of current employment pathways taken by this group and the role of the system, including participation in vocational and related education and training in supporting these pathways.

Elements of good practice are found in the case studies as are elements required to build pathways from adult learning to secure and sustainable employment.

The project was commissioned by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and conducted by staff from the Business, Work and Ageing, Swinburne University of Technology. It builds on the earlier report *Securing Success.*

For further information visit **www.dest.gov.au/research/publications/furthering_success/default.htm**

MCEETYA Joint Statement on Education and Training in the Information Economy

In February 2005, MCEETYA presented a 'MCEETYA Joint Statement on Education and Training in the Information Economy' which outlined a number of areas for cooperation between the school sector, the VET sector, the higher education sector and the Commonwealth. The MCEETYA ICT in Schools Taskforce, the VET sector's Flexible Learning Advisory Group and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, formally supported both the Ministerial Statement and the Action Plan and members from these groups contributed to their development. The new Ministerial Statement has replaced the 'MCEETYA Joint Statement on Education and Training in the Information Economy' which was released in December 2000 and the new Action Plan will replace the old Education and Training Action Plan titled 'Learning for the knowledge society: an education and training action plan for the information economy' (DETYA 2000).

Visit **http://www.aictec.edu.au/aictec/page250.html**

Education Standards for disabled students passed by Federal Parliament

The Disability Discrimination (Education Standards) Bill 2004 has been passed by the Federal Parliament. The education standards do not impose further obligations on education providers. Rather, the Bill aims to provide certainty for public and private education providers as to their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the rights of students with disabilities.

The Bill also provides greater certainty for education institutions by allowing a defence of "unjustifiable hardship" after a student with a disability is enrolled.

The Standards and the accompanying Guidance Notes can be viewed at:

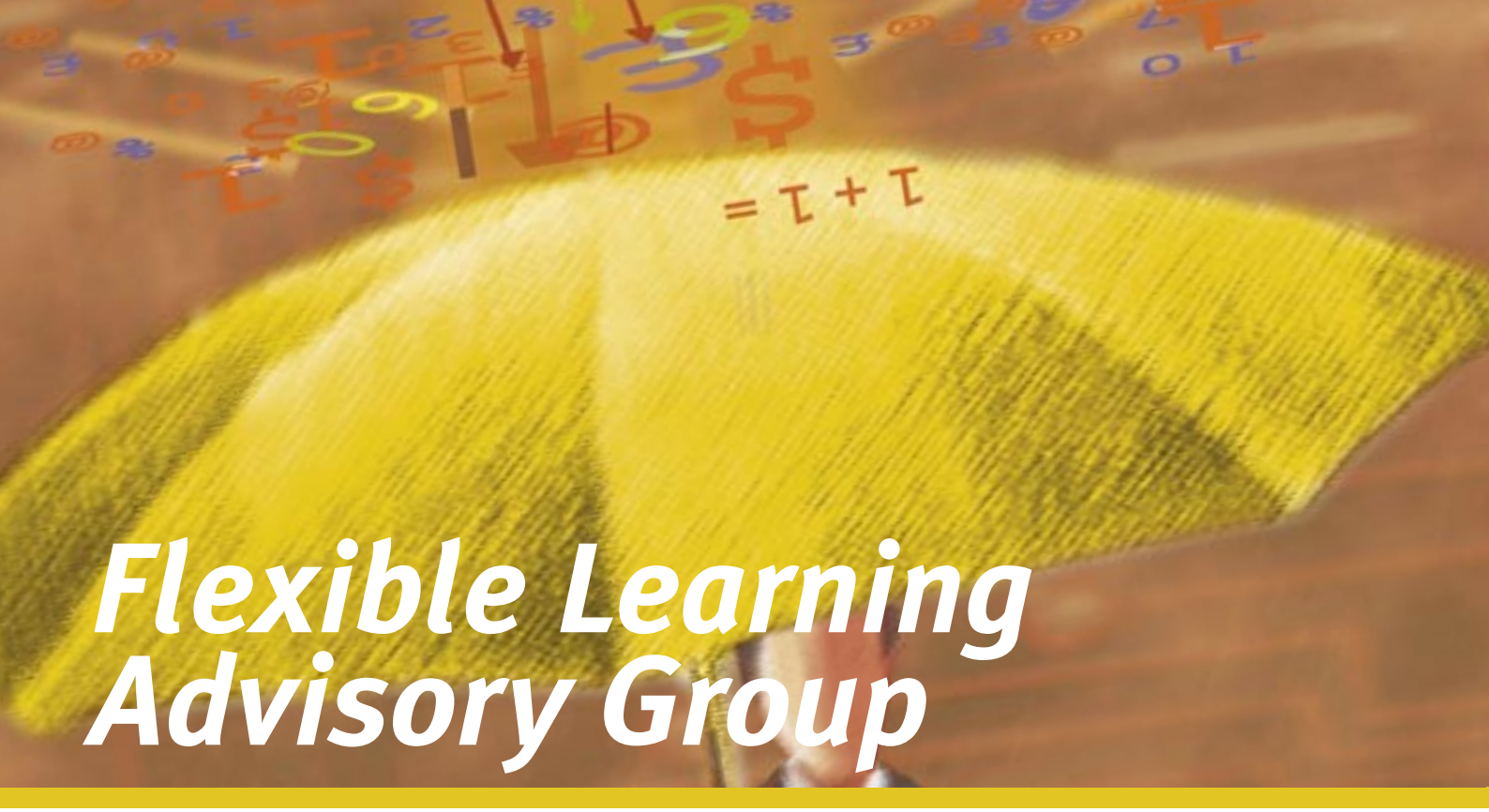
http://www.dest.gov.au/research/publications/disability_standards/default.htm

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Discussion Papers

ICT Transforming the Nonprofit Sector and The Role of ICT in Building Communities and Social Capital

The Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) is seeking submissions and comment on research into the role of ICT in the community nonprofit sector and its contribution to developing social capital.

In accompanying case studies communities, nonprofit organisations and groups share their experiences and the lessons they have learnt using ICT. These case studies are available at **http://www.dcita.gov.au/ie/community_connectivity.**



Flexible Learning Advisory Group

The Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG) is a strategically focused group of senior vocational education and training (VET) personnel. They provide advice on national issues related to the directions and priorities for flexible learning in VET to:

- the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA);
- the ANTA Board;
- the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST);
- the education.au limited Board; and
- the Australian Information and Communications Technology in Education Committee (AICTEC).

Since 2000 FLAG has also managed the Australian Flexible Learning Framework (Framework), a five year national strategy by all states and territories and the Australian Government to accelerate the take-up of flexible learning to achieve a shared vision of a skilled Australian workforce.

Rita Bennink, immediate past Vice-President and a member of the Adult Learning Australia (ALA) Board, has represented ALA on the Flexible Learning Advisory Group for the past three years. Recently Dorothy Lucardie (ALA Board member) spoke to Rita about her role and the involvement of Adult and Community Education (ACE).

What has been your role on the FLAG committee?

My role as the ACE representative on FLAG has been to use my expertise and experience over the past fifteen years in the area of flexible learning and my background in Adult Community Education to ensure that the needs of the ACE sector are considered by FLAG in all of its deliberations and planning processes.

With ACE having a different profile in each state and territory it has been important to maintain a national perspective while acknowledging and supporting the diversity of ACE across Australia.

While ACE traditionally provides flexible learning that meets the varied needs of participants it is the advent of new technologies and the resultant potential to increase access to quality learning opportunities that is stimulating new challenges.

It is essential that ACE engages in these challenges and is not left behind in having access to relevant support and resources.

What do you think have been the achievements of the Framework over the past five years?

Over the past five years the Framework has been very successfully using a model of collaboration and sharing across the states and territories which has resulted in:

- shared resources and products (500 e-learning products and 18,000 e-learning resources have been created)

- capable staff and leaders at the grass roots level (more than 20,000 teachers and trainers have been supported and funded to increase their e-learning skills)
- strong networks and communities of practice
- industry has benefited from training that is tailored, relevant and just in time
- learners have had increased access to learning that is flexible and meets their needs be it through the content, methodology, timing or place of learning.

How has this impacted upon ACE provision?

Evaluation has shown that professional development opportunities for ACE through the Framework's LearnScope Project has been significant, particularly in Victoria and NSW where specific funding has been earmarked for ACE providers. This has resulted in increased capacity of ACE staff and volunteers to use technology to increase flexible learning opportunities for ACE participants.

A number of ACE Flexible Learning Leaders across Australia are providing ongoing leadership at various levels within the ACE sector.

Participation in online networks and conferences has facilitated sharing across the sector nationally and enabled ACE providers to increase their flexible delivery in innovative and inspiring ways.

Access to significant e-learning resources, many of which are free, has enabled ACE providers to offer flexible provision that they would otherwise not be able to afford.

Many ACE organisations have taken advantage of the free online community space and services within EdNA Online to provide online learning opportunities and networking.

My experience is that there are many fantastic examples of innovation in which ACE is leading the way in the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching and learning, however just as in the overall VET sector, there is still a long way to go before the potential is fully realised.

What are the developments in the Framework in 2005?

The 2005 Framework is a one year AUD$15 million strategy collaboratively funded by the Australian Government and all States and Territories. It builds on the work of the 2000-2004 Framework, but also strikes out in some exciting new directions, including meeting the training needs of communities, Indigenous learners, and industry. A key feature will be a move towards fully embedding e-learning as a long term feature of VET.

For example, Mary Hannan from ALA, is project manager of "E-learning Creative Community Partnerships", a 2005 Framework Project that aims to create sustainable demand for, and use of, e-learning in communities, to foster both learning in the communities, and through learning, economic and regional development for the communities themselves. It provides an exciting and innovative platform to enhance and grow community capacity building through effective skills development and to reach under-represented and disadvantaged client groups.

How would you see ACE participating?

There are many opportunities for ACE

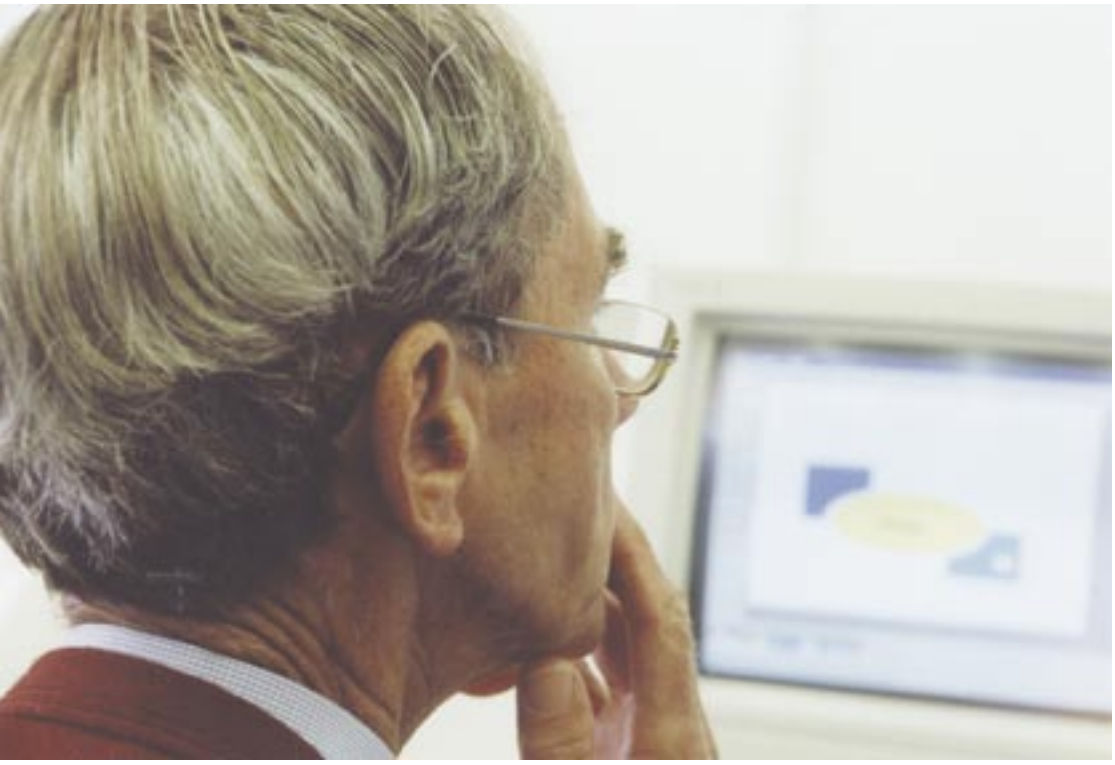
- participating in professional activities and networks
- accessing and utilising current and future resources, products and services through EdNA Online and the flexiblelearning.net.au website
- accessing relevant funding opportunities or partner with a registered training organisation to increase skills, develop resources and provide innovative leadership to share with others
- contributing to debate, discussion and consultation opportunities to ensure that the needs of the ACE sector are highlighted in system wide initiatives.

In 2005 each state/territory will have a Framework Coordinator who you can contact for information on how you and your organisation can benefit from the Framework.

I would recommend that interested people register for the online newsletter through flexiblelearning.net.au to receive up-to-date information about possible funding opportunities and relevant resources and services.

Please feel free to contact Rita in relation to any aspects of FLAG's work and ongoing planning for the future: **ritabenn@tafe.sa.edu.au**

E-learning Project



A U3A ACT member researching on the internet.

E-learning Creative Community Partnerships Project

The E-learning Creative Community Partnerships Project is one of the projects funded as part of the 2005 Australian Flexible Learning Framework.

Adult Learning Australia (ALA) will be the managing agency for this project which aims to create sustainable demand for, and use of, e-learning in communities. It will foster both learning in the communities, and through learning, economic and regional development for the communities themselves.

The Project provides an exciting and innovative platform to enhance and grow community capacity building through effective skills development. It also plans to reach under-represented and disadvantaged client groups. A foundation of the Project will be the support provided for at least eight existing community or regional development initiatives. The selected communities will each have a supported community leader and will develop a specific consultation and implementation plan to meet local needs. It is expected that there will be a diverse range of communities, types of project aims and target groups.

The experiences of the selected community projects will be used to inform and engage other community and regional development initiatives on a broader scale and to strengthen partnerships at a local, State or Territory and national level.

Therefore the objectives for the E-learning Creative Community Partnerships Project are:

- to embed e-learning in existing community based and regional development initiatives
- to foster strong partnerships between Registered Training Organisations, community based organisations, business and government to use e-learning to increase participation of targeted client groups in formal education.

Communities could be:

- regionally based
- virtual and linked through a common purpose
- an aggregate of smaller communities linked together through a common target group.

A suitable community for an application in this project is one where e-learning would enhance the learning goals of that community or regional development initiative.

The *E-learning Creative Community Partnership Project* offers the opportunity for proposals for funding in a range from a minimum of $15,000 up to $40,000. A minimum of eight projects will be selected.

The 'Call for Applications and Selection Criteria' can be downloaded from the ALA website **www.ala.asn.au.** Applications close Monday 11 April 2005. For more information contact Mary Hannan.
Email **m.hannan@ala.asn.au .**

Mary Hannan
ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
(INNOVATIVE PROJECTS)

2005 Framework

New Practices in Flexible Learning

A new CD-ROM outlining innovative new practices in flexible learning from around Australia will be available in March this year from the 2005 Australian Flexible Learning Framework (2005 Framework), through its New Practices in Flexible Learning Project.

The 'new practices' CD-ROM resource provides valuable and innovative hands-on resources and models aimed at helping Australian vocational education and training (VET) providers incorporate quality flexible learning practices into their training delivery.

The 2005 Framework provides the VET system with e-learning skills, resources and support to meet today's increasingly technology-driven learning environment. The 2005 Framework is a one year AUD$15 million strategy collaboratively funded by the Australian Government and all States and Territories. It builds on the work of the 2000–2004 Framework, but also strikes out in some exciting new directions, including meeting the training needs of communities, Indigenous learners, and industry.

Last year, nine teams from around Australia received funding and support totalling over AUD$680,000 from the New Practices Project, through the 2000–2004 Australian Flexible Learning Framework (2000–2004 Framework).

The New Practices Project aims to stimulate training providers to develop original and diverse practices focused on e-learning, e-business, online student support and self-service.

New Practices Program Leader Melanie Sorensen said the 2004 projects were selected because of their strong potential to give lasting benefit to the national VET system, and to provide models that could be used by other VET organisations.

Projects of particular interest to the Adult and Community Education sector follow.

Txt me: supporting disengaged youth using mobile technologies

This project recognises that mobile phone use has become a pervasive communication tool among youth culture, and has aimed to develop recommendations and guidelines for VET providers on using this communication technology to support a sustainable learning culture with disengaged youth. Specifically, the project aimed to find new ways to engage, motivate and sustain lifelong learning skills for these learners.

The project tested the hypothesis that m-learning strategies and mobile phone technology motivates and supports the retention of disengaged youth in learning programs and facilitates the development of lifelong learning skills through supporting collaborative, networked learning environments.

The overall goal of the project was to integrate readily accessible mobile technology into a vocational learning environment for the benefit of disengaged learners.

Who is it for?

There are multiple audiences for this New Practice:

- teachers and trainers who work with 15-19 year olds
- teachers and trainers who wish to engage disengaged youth
- organisations who wish to implement mobile learning
- teachers, trainers and organisations who wish to undertake professional development in area of mobile learning.

Resources

The project has developed the following materials:

- A set of recommendations and guidelines for VET providers that provides specific and practical strategies, for practitioners to utilise mobile phones as a teaching and learning resource.
- Three case studies that clearly outline the qualitative results of the m-learning trials with three separate student groups.
- Recommendations for the establishment of infrastructure needed to support the use of m-learning.
- Guidelines for Professional Development for practitioners.

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2005 Framework

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Interactive Ochre

Did you know that that many Aboriginal people consider it impolite to make eye contact? Could you identify which part of Australia the 'Nyoongah' people are from?

'Interactive Ochre' is a new flexible learning resource that has been developed as a multi-media tool to deliver an Aboriginal perspective on cultural awareness training.

The resource uses the oral tradition of Aboriginal story telling to deliver messages. The interactive CD-ROM uses songs, vibrant graphics, and interactive learning tools, to help public sector workers understand Aboriginal culture and is having huge success in field trials across Australia.

The CD-ROM was designed as an induction package to prepare service professionals to work more effectively with Aboriginal people. However, it has been recognised as an empowering resource for Aboriginal people to tell their stories and provides an ideal opportunity for modelling equivalent intercultural partnerships. Using entertaining multimedia resources the 'new practice' demonstrates educational infotainment as a methodology.

Educational infotainment has potential for all workgroups. In this multimedia rich era educational processes that ignore contemporary media are potentially missing their Generation X and Y audiences. Employing contemporary music and visually attractive imagery the CD-ROM is entertaining and stimulating.

The graphics and the songs capture attention and engage the learner. In the song animation titled *Newsflash,* hotspots (pop up text boxes) can be viewed at any stage by clicking on the screen. The hotspots clarify and embellish the messages in the lyrics and link the learner to the content document. By engaging in the activities, learners are introduced to contemporary issues. The summative assessment requires the learner to apply the content concepts in their workplace context and to plan an event working with Aboriginal people. This requires application of the learning into workplace action.

In terms of technical innovation in educational animation Interactive Ochre includes the element of time so that at any place in the animation a hotspot can be navigated to. At the stopping point there are hot links that are based on key concepts that come from the song at that point in time.

This feature gives the application versatility, enabling an independent learner at their computer to pick their own path through the hotspot information.

The quality of the application is in its use of multimedia to engage learners and in its multipurpose and applicability around the country. The information provided is public knowledge and enables local Aboriginal people nationwide to give a local context for the information presented. Through storytelling the broad concepts can be used as an entry point into locally contextualised understandings of issues such as health, employment, land issues or the role of Elders. The multimedia tools of Interactive Ochre can lead to deeper cultural awareness in the local context.

The training plan is linked to the new Training & Assessment Training Package. The core competency 'Foster and promote an inclusive learning culture' underpins other competencies and addresses the responsibility of all persons in a training organisations to promote a positive and inclusive learning culture.

What is the 'new practice'?

Interactive Ochre investigated, developed and trialled a new practice, called 'Educational Infotainment'. The model will be of interest to project developers, practitioners, RTOs and community groups wishing to address potentially sensitive issues using this methodology.

The impact of *Interactive Ochre*

- *Interactive Ochre* was designed to present an Aboriginal perspective on the issues currently affecting Aboriginal people and present public knowledge concepts about cultural awareness.
- *Interactive Ochre* was designed to be an induction package to prepare service professionals to work more effectively with Aboriginal people.
- *Interactive Ochre* will assist Aboriginal people to gain employment in the area of Cultural Awareness to be able to provide a local perspective on the content presented. Designed to assist both Indigenous and non–Indigenous cultural mentors and equal opportunity drivers.

Who is it for?

There are multiple audiences for this 'new practice':

- Aboriginal communities
- Cultural Awareness trainers
- Developers
- Practitioners and trainers
- Public and private registered training organisations
- Public sector employees including Police, Health and Community workers

Mobile learning: hand-held innovations in flexible learning

This project examined the potential of the handheld, personal digital assistant (PDA) and its use for learning in the workplace. Its focus has been to provide new directions, opportunities and ideas for the use of PDA technology by organisations, practitioners and learners through the provision and documentation of trialled example resources and case studies.

The project brought together a number of specialist practitioners from areas of learning, multimedia, graphic arts and industry in the collaborative development of a series of mobile learning resources. An essential aspect of the project was to examine the potential of these resources as an effective and realistic means of delivering learning and assessment in the workplace.

The overall project trials produced some interesting feedback with evaluation response rates from all participants being high. Industry feedback throughout the project period was provided very enthusiastically. From this it was clear that there had been obvious benefits for the industry teams that had participated. Industry team participants found that the project had inspired new ideas for the incorporation of technology in the workplace, including education and interpretation programs. It was also found that participating in the project had opened new opportunities for staff and their personal development, both individually and as a team.

The project has showcased some of the unique opportunities available for the use of mobile technology in learning through the materials provided in the resources section. It was the intention of the project to provide a good practice example of how learning product can be developed in collaboration with learners, industry, learning practitioners and designers.

Who is it for?

- VET training organisations, practitioners, industry and individuals interested in applying handheld technology to a range of workplace training environments.
- Organisations and trainers responsible for providing alternative solutions for meeting the training needs in rural and remote locations, including Indigenous communities.
- Staff development personnel who can use the project materials to inspire other staff to participate in innovative training delivery using handheld devices.
- Workplace assessors looking for alternative evidence collection tools.
- Organisations and individuals who work with younger learners.

Resources available for VET providers from the Mobile learning project include:

- a website demonstrating the use of PDAs within training
- PDA demonstrators including customised Toolbox materials
- case studies, project and evaluation reports
- a series of video interviews on the project trials and application of the technology.

Enterprising, franchised and online: towards a model of e-learning training for small businesses.

Recurring barriers have prevented small to medium sized businesses from adopting e-learning into their training programs because of a lack of resources, skills and expertise. This New Practices in Flexible Learning project developed an interactive e-learning model, **enAble**, to assist businesses in knowing where to start, where to get support, who to work with and how to keep training moving forward. The development of the model involved working with small franchised business, Bakers Delight ™, Lenard's ™ and Wendy's ™ to explore their training needs, ways they engaged their employees, the barriers

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2005 Framework

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to technology and how resources and skills could best be utilised and shared between the businesses.

It was through a series of workshops and a trialling phase with the franchised businesses that the model, **enAble** was developed and refined. The model provides a four step hands-on approach for the user to work though. It contains a kit of practical tools and resources to enable them to build a business case that supports implementing e-learning into any small to medium sized organisation.

enAble is a model that:

- can be used with other VET providers and industry clusters across Australia
- will increase the opportunity to build relationships and partnerships between VET providers and industry clusters
- encourages and supports the uptake of flexible delivery in small to medium enterprises
- provides a process to engage more industry and businesses to flexible delivery which in return will give employees greater access to training
- will lead to new business practices for small to medium sized businesses in Australia.

Who is it for?

- Small to medium enterprises who wish to gain a greater understanding of how e-learning works, how it can be transferred into their business and how to overcome some of the barriers to implementing e-learning.
- Training organisations and practitioners who wish to gain a knowledge of the issues associated with training for small to medium businesses.
- Training managers and providers who require support, assistance and resources to implement e-learning.

All of the resources produced under the New Practices in Flexible Learning Project will be available on CD-ROM from March. For more information, please visit **http://flexiblelearning.net.au/projects/newpractices2004.htm** or contact the 2005 Framework on **enquiries@flexiblelearning.net.au**

In addition to the New Practices in Flexible Learning CD-ROM, the 2005 Framework is currently producing a Framework-wide CD-ROM featuring the extensive range of flexible learning and e-learning products, resources, case studies and more, that have been created over the past five years. To keep informed about when this CD-ROM will be released, subscribe to the Framework's monthly online newsletter, Flex e-News, by visiting: flexiblelearning.net.au

Australian Flexible Learning Framework
Supporting Flexible Learning Opportunities

In December 2004, approval was given for a new 2005 Australian Flexible Learning Framework (2005 Framework) which provides the VET system with e-learning skills, resources and support to meet today's increasingly technology-driven learning environment. The 2005 Framework is a one year AUD$15 million strategy collaboratively funded by the Australian Government and all States and Territories. It builds on the work of the 2000–2004 Framework, but also strikes out in some exciting new directions, including meeting the training needs of communities, Indigenous learners, and industry.

The 2000–2004 Framework was administered by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). From July 2005 the functions of ANTA will be transferred to the Australian Government's Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

Key features of the 2005 Framework include:

1. The introduction of several new client engagement Projects including Industry Engagement, Indigenous Engagement and E-learning Creative Community Partnerships.

2. Continued professional development funding and support through New Practices and LearnScope (Flexible Learning Leaders is now incorporated into LearnScope). Funding updates for New Practices (including applications and guidelines) and LearnScope will be promoted at the **http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au website.**

3. Strengthened investment in Flexible Learning Toolboxes, including the launch of new series of customisable e-learning content which will be developed and packaged according to international standards, for availability through an enhanced Toolbox repository of learning objects.

A summary of the 2005 Framework Programs and Projects is outlined below:

PROGRAM 1: Client Engagement aims to strengthen the role of industry, individuals and communities in shaping VET provision to meet their needs. It encompasses three Projects (listed below).

Industry Engagement
This Project aims to increase industry use of e-learning in nationally recognised workplace learning. The Project will develop sector-specific strategies given the different e-learning needs of industry sectors and enterprises. These will be developed in close consultation with industry sectors and Skills Councils.

Indigenous Engagement

This Project will consolidate existing research and scope the current level of e-learning activity within the Indigenous sector through consultation with Indigenous organisations such as the Australian Indigenous Training Advisory Council (AITAC) and through an environmental scan of existing FLAG projects. The specific Project objective is to strengthen the role of Indigenous people and communities in shaping VET provision in very remote, remote, provincial and urban contexts. The Project contains three sub projects: links to employment; capacity building through e-learning; and communication. The Project will consider proposals that build on lessons learned and that are harmonised with the six priorities identified in Partners in a Learning Culture National Strategy and Blueprint for Implementation 2000-2005.

E-learning Creative Community Partnerships
This Project aims to create sustainable demand for, and use of, e-learning in communities, to foster both learning in the communities, and through learning, economic and regional development for the communities themselves. It provides an exciting and innovative platform to enhance and grow community capacity building through effective skills development and to reach under-represented and disadvantaged client groups.

PROGRAM 2: Resources and Innovation will take an integrated approach to supporting sustainable e-learning uptake by bringing together a blend of innovative ideas, educational values, client focus and technical standards. It encompasses four Project areas (listed below).

New Practices in Flexible Learning
This Program's aim is to fund innovative, practical and sustainable approaches to flexible learning in workplaces, communities and training organisations. It is about people and their capacity to turn knowledge into ideas and ideas into actions.

Quality E-learning Resources
This Project will extend recent groundbreaking work in interoperable learning objects to improve the flexibility of e-learning products for VET Training Packages. A new series of customisable e-learning content will be developed and packaged according to international standards, for availability through an enhanced Toolbox repository of learning objects.

E-learning for Target Learner Groups
This Project will focus on e-learning for two target groups: learners with disabilities; and young people in the 15–19 age group (including VET in Schools, disengaged youth and school-based apprenticeships).

Learning Object Repository (LOR) Network
This Project will build the capacity of the Australian VET system to share teaching and learning resources that support flexible delivery through the establishment and embedding of agreed principles in the design and development of resources and resource repositories.

PROGRAM 3: Capability Building is underpinned by processes which will sustain the changing patterns for workforce development and organisational development. It is based on the underlying principles for the integration of working, learning and knowing.

LearnScope
This Project focuses on professional development to enhance the professional skills that underpin e-learning and e-business. LearnScope is influenced by recent thinking about the skills development of VET professionals in the 'knowledge era' and will emphasise both individual and team responsibilities to model sustainable professional learning practices in their own learning through a range of strategies.

Australian Flexible Learning Networks
This Project will advance the VET system in establishing sustainable professional learning practices within an environment of online networking, knowledge sharing and knowledge management. It will initiate and sustain a series of 'online' environments which enable learning to take place, facilitating new connections between VET staff, industry, researchers, professional groups, enterprises and communities for the exchange of knowledge about e-learning and its applications within the VET system.

VET E-learning International
This Project will showcase Australian VET leadership and expertise in e-learning with activities targeting strategic international education and training opportunities. It will support the internationalisation of Australian VET by highlighting the capability and leading edge initiatives of the Australian VET system to assist the downstream marketing of VET products and services by others.

Knowledge Sharing Services
This Project will facilitate access to knowledge about e-learning in VET. This includes access to Framework developed resources, facilitated discussions and presentations, and people and networks. The Project will maintain the Knowledge Tree as an electronic journal opportunity for sharing knowledge.

PROGRAM 4: VET System Support will support the Framework's purpose to increase the sustainable uptake of quality e-learning in VET and its goal for a flexible VET system which meets diverse client needs and helps them succeed in a global environment by contributing to the improvement of policy, regulatory and system environments and VET business models, which affect the uptake of e-learning.

E-learning Benchmarking
The purpose of this Project is to provide data that will assess the uptake, use and impact of e-learning in VET. Performance indicators, used to collect the data, may also be adapted and used by individual providers to establish organisational goals and benchmarks for e-learning.

Research and Policy Advice

This Project will provide a high quality and flexible research program that contributes to the achievement of the vision, goals and implementation of the National VET Strategy, 'Shaping our Future' and of the Framework. It will support carefully targeted and rigorous research which will provide timely and evidence-based research to inform FLAG and Framework activities. The Project will commission research projects on significant policy issues.

Access to Broadband
This Project will facilitate the establishment of a Virtual Private Network (VPN), which aims to link individual State and Territory networks to increase affordability, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of communications for the delivery and administration of training.

National Communication

The primary focus of this Project will be to generate strategically targeted market awareness of the enormous potential and benefits of flexible learning, including a strong focus on e-learning for 2005 to stimulate the widespread uptake within the vocational education and training (VET) system and its clients, including community, Indigenous and industry.

For further information about this story contact the Framework Communication team's Susannah Thackray (0401 980 428) or Kristen Banks, tel: (07) 3247 5511 or email: flexenews@flexiblelearning.net.au

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2005 Framework

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E-learning funding available now!

The 2005 Australian Flexible Learning Framework (2005 Framework) is now offering more than AUD$5.5 million in e-learning funding to support a range of e-learning activities and initiatives in 2005.

Five of the 2005 Framework's 15 Project areas are offering funding, including:

1. LearnScope
2. Networks of the Australian Flexible Learning Community
3. Industry Engagement (applications have closed)
4. New Practices in Flexible Learning (applications have closed)
5. Flexible Learning Toolboxes (applications have closed).

These project areas aim to support vocational education and training (VET) practitioners and industry representatives who want to: strengthen their professional development; successfully facilitate an online community; engage with industry sectors; develop an innovative new practice; or develop e-learning products. Those Projects offering funding include:

1. LearnScope

Applications close on Friday 18 March 2005, 5pm Eastern Standard Time.

LearnScope focuses on professional development to enhance the professional skills that underpin e-learning and e-business. LearnScope will provide AUD$3.6 million funding to teams and individuals within registered training organisations (RTOs) or those in partnership with an RTO wanting to increase their ability to deliver training using new technologies.

Team projects will have a focus on exploring e-learning and/or e-business options and approaches within an educational framework while individual LearnScope projects may fall into one of three categories:

- Innovation – for individuals who are motivated and experienced in e-learning and want to explore new and innovative ideas in e-learning and e-business.
- Leadership – for individuals who are motivated and experienced in e-learning and want to take on a leadership role either within their organisations or across the VET system.
- Management – for individuals in a management role who wish to better understand the complexities of, and plan strategically for, e-learning and e-business.

Applications for LearnScope professional development grants for eligible VET professionals are now open. The LearnScope State and Territory Managers are available to assist with any questions about project ideas or completing the application forms. For contact details or for more information visit: **http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/**LearnScope

2. Networks of the Australian Flexible Learning Community

Applications close on Friday 18 March 2005, 5pm Eastern Standard Time.

Funding opportunities are available through the Networks of the Australian Flexible Learning Community Project, which aims to advance the VET system in establishing sustainable professional learning practices within an environment of predominantly online networking, knowledge sharing and knowledge management.

The Project will provide funding for up to 20 networks focused on the development and implementation of e-learning. Funding of up to AUD$7500 is available to each successful facilitator of a new or established network.

The Project will initiate and sustain a series of online environments and face-to-face events which enable learning to take place by:

- consolidating and extending existing VET professional networks
- making new connections between VET staff, industry, researchers, professional groups, enterprises and communities
- facilitating the exchange and capture of explicit and tacit knowledge about e-learning and its applications within the VET system
- coordinating linkages and online activities with relevant National and State and Territory based initiatives.

Applications for the Networks of the Australian Flexible Learning Community professional development grants for eligible VET professionals are now open. For more information about the Networks of the Australian Flexible Learning Community Project, contact the Project Manager Cathy Baxter, tel: (02) 6207 4891. For guidelines and application forms contact Cathy Baxter or Jyothi Jayaram, tel: (02) 6207 4832, or visit: **http://flexiblelearning.net.au/pd/** from mid-February.

In addition the following projects are to be conducted throughout 2005. Contact details are listed against each project.

3. Industry Engagement

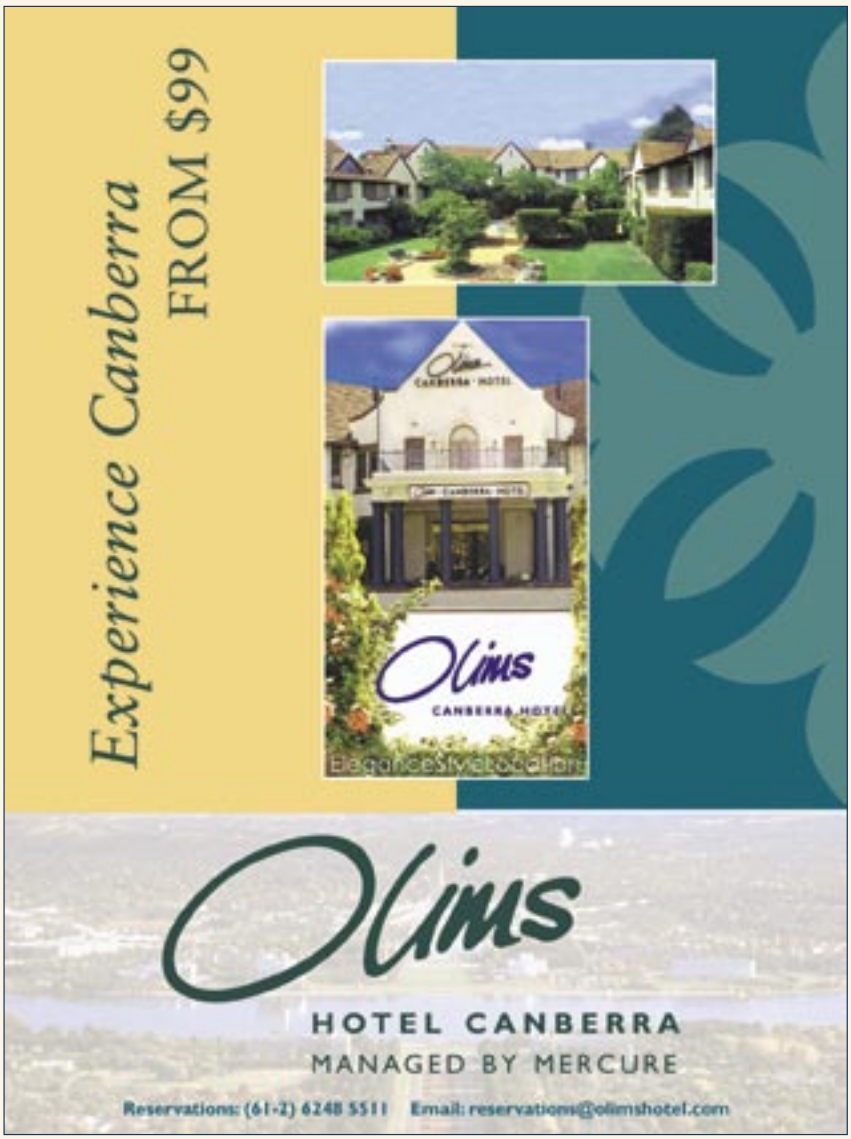
The Industry Engagement Project aims to increase industry use of e-learning in nationally recognised workplace learning. More information is available on the **http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au** website.

4. New Practices in Flexible Learning

New Practices in Flexible Learning aims to stimulate training providers to develop original and diverse practices focused on e-learning, e-business, online student support and self-service. Visit: **http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/projects/newpractices2005.htm**

5. Flexible Learning Toolboxes

The 2005 Framework called for tenders from VET organisations suitably qualified to act as the Lead Agent in developing Flexible Learning Toolbox e-learning resources. Visit: **http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox** for more information.



In Quest of Learning

Rick Swindell

Dr Rick Swindell is a Senior Lecturer, Curriculum Teaching and Learning, at Griffith University in Queensland. As a senior lecturer he has received a string of awards, the ones he probably prizes most are those bestowed upon him by his own students. The latest is a prestigious Australian Award for University Teaching. He's written and published a number of research papers on learning for life matters.

Outside his formal interests, he introduced U3A to Brisbane, is a founding Director and now President of U3A Online, and for good measure has taken on the State Presidency of COTA/National Seniors in Qld. Until the end of last year Rick was involved in a project bringing young Japanese students to study in Queensland. He's starting to think about retiring from formal teaching but his energy is such he won't stop working on projects like U3A Online. In 2004 his many contributions to society were recognised and he was awarded an AM in the Australian Honours.

1. **What is the single most important lesson your parents ever taught you?**

   Stick by your friends.

2. **What were your best and worst experiences from school? Were you a good student? – Why/why not?**

   I was a poor student, far more interested in sport that rote learning. I failed a major public exam until I learned to play the game. Best experience was observing committed teachers, some of whom influenced my future teaching. Worst experience was being caned for not bothering to remember facts.

3. **What did you always want to be? – Did you achieve this? Why/why not?**

   Always wanted to be a teacher. Started out teaching, tried a few other careers. Ended up a teacher.

4. **What was your first job and what did you learn from it?**

   Physical education teacher. I learned that I wanted to teach more academic subjects and at a tertiary level, so I returned to university for a further five years.

5. **Complete this sentence: 'The most valuable thing I've learned this year is…'**

   Don't look at emails. Get the main daily objectives finished first.

6. **What new skills do you hope to acquire and how? What unfulfilled ambition have you yet to conquer?**

   No unfulfilled ambitions. I intend to keep on learning through life, probably through self-tuition.

7. **What is one talent people might be surprised to know you have?**

   Ability to leap over very low buildings.

8. **What piece of information would you most like to pass on to the next generation?**

   Think and work positively towards your Third Age. You'll soon be there.

Consultation Paper

National Conversation on Lifelong Learning

Adult Learning Australia has taken an initiative to generate a national conversation on future directions for lifelong learning in Australia. This project has involved a discussion paper titled *Towards a learning revolution in Australia* which was released in December 2004 and consultations in all States during the period 14 March to 8 April 2005. The project is being directed by ALA Visiting Research Fellow Peter Kearns. The paper is available on the ALA website at www.ala.asn.au.

In addition to the broad national issues identified in the discussion paper, there is a large spectrum of other questions to be addressed where a national conversation will have value. The process outlined below is intended to provide for this.

Engaging with the discussion paper

ALA wishes to encourage discussion of a few key areas that need to be addressed in progressing lifelong learning in Australia. There will be a focus on each of these key areas for a two week period over the ten weeks from 21 February until 29 April.

Topics will be posted on the ALA website in each two week period for your ideas and comments, including good practice examples. It is hoped that there will be wide discussion of these key areas relevant to building Australia as an inclusive learning society. Comments may be as short or as long as you wish.

The program for this national conversation will be:

Topic	Dates
1. Empowering individuals as lifelong learners	21 February-4 March
2. Sustaining & transforming communities through learning	7–18 March
3. Using technology to transform learning	21 March-1 April
4. Making the workplace a key learning environment	4–15 April
5. Extending and linking partnerships and networks to build Australia as an inclusive learning society	18–29 April

Brief overviews of the main comments and ideas received for each subject will be posted on the ALA website. Visit **www.ala.asn.au**

Peter Kearns
VISITING RESEARCH FELLOW
ADULT LEARNING AUSTRALIA

DEST paper on new directions for VET

The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) has published a Directions Paper – Skilling Australia – New Directions for Vocational Education and Training – on its website. The paper sets out the Australian Government's proposed new directions for the national vocational education and training system. It describes the proposed arrangements for: governance and accountability; quality assurance and a range of models to improve the effectiveness of industry engagement and input to the training system. DEST is consulting with key stakeholders on the new training arrangements during February and March. The Directions Paper can be found at **http://www.dest.gov.au/ty/skilling_au.**

Adult Learning Australia
Annual National
Conference 2005
To be held at Rydges Capitol Hill, Forrest ACT
Starting with a welcome ceremony on Thursday evening 24th November and ending with an ALA Council Meeting on Sunday 27th November.
The theme for this year's conference will be:
ACE and the Learning Workplace: Future Directions
Information will be placed on the ALA website as it becomes available.
www.ala.asn.au

Bridging Cultures

ALA's 44th Annual National Conference

The 2004 Annual National Conference was held on 18–20 November in South Australia at The Stamford Grand Hotel, located on the beachfront of the Adelaide seaside suburb of Glenelg.

The conference theme of *Bridging Cultures* provided some exciting challenges and brought together educators and learners from throughout Australia, as well as some overseas guests, eager to share their ideas and research, meet and enjoy the company of others who work or are interested in adult learning, and to learn from one another.

The 2004 conference was organised collaboratively by members of the South Australian branch of ALA and the ALA National Office, with support from ANTA and the South Australian government, whom we gratefully acknowledge.

The conference was opened at a social function on Thursday evening 18 November. After an acknowledgement to the traditional owners of the Adelaide plains, the Kaurna people, Lorelie Ball, SA branch President and Conference Convenor welcomed delegates to South Australia. ALA's President Garry Traynor thanked everyone for coming and supporting the conference. He spoke of ALA's aims for the conference and invited everyone to participate fully and to enjoy and benefit from this special annual event in the ALA calendar. The conference was then officially opened by the Member for Reynell in the South Australian parliament, the Hon.Gay Thompson, representing the Minister for Further Education and Training. Gay has maintained a long time interest and involvement in adult learning, and she threw out a challenge to all those attending the conference to utilise this opportunity to address one of Australian society's major issues, and bring greater understanding about cultural differences to our various communities in our role as educators. In keeping with the theme, we were entertained by a performance by tribal belly dancers in traditional dress.

During the following two days we took up the *Bridging Cultures* challenge, led by five interesting and inspirational keynote speakers. There were 35 workshop presentations that focused for the most part, on four major sub-themes of Cross-cultural Communication, Indigenous Learning, Workplace Cultures and Intergenerational Learning.

The conference was expertly steered by co-Chairs Professor Roger Harris and Dr Peter Willis, both extremely well known in the adult learning community from their long association with ALA, and as lecturers in Adult and Vocational Education at the University of South Australia.

A consistent thread was soon apparent in the addresses of a number of keynote speakers. This was an emphasis on values in education – the necessity to reaffirm those values that underpin our lives and communities and ensure that they are integral to teaching and learning experiences.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Joy de Leo OAM JP is a member of the Australian National Committee for UNESCO, President of UNESCO APNIEVE Australia and a member of the National Human Rights Education Committee. She was formerly Director of Multicultural SA and previously Regional Director of AusAID. Her thought-provoking address, entitled *Diverse Learning Communities: Sharing Knowledge and Values* argued that the richness of diverse communities adds to our breadth of knowledge and experience and expands our awareness through sharing different ways of knowing, being and doing, as an ongoing learning and developmental process throughout life. The enduring universal values of respect, love, compassion, and integrity that are shared across all cultures, and which transcend or 'bridge' our diverse beliefs and practices, have the capacity to unite us in the shared desire for peace, justice, equity, human rights, tolerance and sustainability. She emphasised the need for values in Vocational and Adult Education and Training through the process of learning, rather than through just content or skills development. To achieve UN goals, a greater commitment by government, community and business sectors is required and an increase in funding, currently inadequate worldwide, must be made.

Kevin Liston, Director of the Australian Refugee Association gave us a view of the refugee's world in his address, *The Experience of Refugees and Refugee Advocates.* He graphically described the long journey of refugees – from homes in a foreign country, their flight, experiences in refugee camps, resettlement, and finally to full participation as citizens of a new country. The massive gulf of experience between their old lives and the new, the learning challenges they face, and the courage and determination they demonstrate in order to achieve a new future for their families, resonated strongly in Kevin's speech.

Garry Traynor, President of ALA; the Hon Gay Thompson, Member for Reynell in the SA parliament who opened the conference; with the conference convenor Lorelie Ball

On Friday afternoon, International Marketing Manager of IBM Australasia, Mark Bagshaw joined us. Mark is Joint Chair of the Australian Disability Training Advisory Council who, in his address on *A Whole of Life Approach,* argued for a better deal for people with a disability to enable them to lead full lives including participation in education, training and employment. Despite an awareness of the issues and what is required, despite acknowledgement of the benefit to both individuals and society – economic benefits of being independent of social welfare and being happy, contributing members of society, there remains a reluctance to commit the funds and to create change. In a wealthy society, such disregard of our disadvantaged people is unconscionable. Mark issued an appeal to those of us in the education sector to use our position and influence to advocate for greater equity and access, and seek further change.

Our final two speakers joined us on Saturday morning. The Managing Director of NCVER, Dr Tom Karmel presented statistics from the new national research agenda for Indigenous students in VET. The research indicates growing participation rates, particularly at Certificate level. He commented that in terms of employment outcomes for Indigenous learners, the business sector could be doing considerably more.

The final keynote address was by Anne Glover AO, Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of South Australia. Anne is the Project Director of the Papua New Guinea Elementary Teacher Education Support Project and the PNG Education Capacity Building Program – AusAID funded projects designed to assist the government of Papua New Guinea implement its Education Reform Agenda. The Agenda includes plans to build schools and provide teachers in communities throughout PNG so that all children, including those in the most remote areas, have access to education. Anne spoke of the particular dangers and difficulties of working in PNG. She described the AusAID projects which have been implemented by means of working partnerships with each individual community, and described also the positive effects these partnerships and the new schools are having in the villages and in the lives of their residents.

INTERNATIONAL GUESTS

We were delighted to welcome Marjean Buckner, President of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education to the conference. Marjean brought with her the well wishes of the American association.

Two guests from New Zealand, Jodi Maniapoto from Literacy Aotearoa, and Matthew Walters from the Aranui High School in Christchurch, were excited to have the opportunity to travel to the conference to learn first-hand about Australian research and experience.

WORKSHOPS

A total of thirty-five workshop and poster presentations were delivered during the conference, covering four major strands of the Bridging Cultures theme. The sub-themes of *Cross-cultural Communication* and *Workplace Cultures* dominated our endeavours, but we also had good representation for the strands of *Indigenous Learning* and *Inter-generational Learning.*

Mark Bagshaw, International Marketing Manager for IBM Australasia, one of the keynote speakers at the ALA conference

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Bridging Cultures

ALA's 44th Annual National Conference

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Matthew Walters, a NZ guest, speaking at the ALA conference final plenary

Attendances were extremely good throughout the two days with up to 130 delegates on the first day and around 100 on the second. Four or five workshops were conducted concurrently at each of the four scheduled workshop sessions on each day, providing conference attendees with plenty of variety and options.

Workshop presenters came from most states so that they could participate in this conference, including Western Australia, ACT, New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory, as well as an excellent contingent from the host state of South Australia.

An initiative in 2004 was an interactive on-line computer workshop room. Thanks to the provision of computers by the Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE, and the enthusiastic organising efforts of SA Branch Executive member Judy Fawcett, a series of workshops were conducted on the Saturday of the conference, that enabled participants (with one or two per computer) to access various Internet sites as a demonstration of flexible delivery. Michael Coghlan from TAFE SA introduced us to the Webheads, an online community of adult teachers and students of English in his workshop. This was followed by Judy Fawcett and Rose Denton who demonstrated their Online Learning Communities projects. Finally Margaret Granger and Daniel Nicholas from the EdNA VET Online Project showed us the EdNA gateway to tools and services.

Indigenous Learning was a central theme of workshops such as an Indigenous Traineeship Program at the Sydney Opera House with Sally Davis; 'Living Reconciliation – Ten years of teaching and learning on a TAFE program for women' with Isobel Fitzpatrick and Debra Evelyn which also encompassed cross-cultural issues; 'What's Up? – building learning communities for Indigenous families' with Dr Carolyn Broadbent and Dr Maureen Boyle, along with Jacquie Widin's Indigenous community learning centre project, both provided aspects of *Inter-generational Learning*.

The selection in *Workplace Cultures* was outstanding including: Tony Brown's 'Organising and education for union renewal in Australia'; Geraldene Eagle from Aspire Training and Consulting delivered 'Encouraging the development of employability skills for life in the 21st century'; Dr Michele Simons and Prof. Roger Harris spoke on 'What outcomes do apprenticeships really deliver?'; Generic skills was the focus of Heather Williams' and Margaret Brickhill's presentation; Debbie Dunn discussed workplace bullying; Lisa Davies' research and her workshop were about depression in the workplace; and Claire Manning presented a workshop on 'Work related learning using the arts'. Barrie Brennan was unable to attend the conference, but his paper 'Bridging the gap for mature aged job seekers' was delivered by Dorothy Lucardie.

Not surprisingly, the major sub-theme *Cross-cultural Communication* aroused the greatest response with regard to the number of workshop presentations. Deb Welch and her colleagues from Radio Adelaide provided information about how community radio provides programs and resources to bridge cultures; Sylvia Fisher and Pam Pindral spoke about a learning program in cultural diversity at the over 50s Jack Young Centre in Salisbury SA; and Gaynor Mitchell and Helen Speirs gave details of a Link project encouraging cultural diversity in ACE. Dr Peter Willis delivered a workshop entitled 'Lifelong learning and the democratic imagination: supporting the cultural bridge'. Ann Mayer and Sally Hearn from AMES presented information about a project to improve opportunities and outcomes for migrants and refugees in regional and rural areas, providing a model of an integrated counselling service for CaLD learners. WEA tour leader Dr Suzanne Brugger talked about cross-cultural learning on overseas tours. Dr Charlotte Fabiansson and Dr Lucie Crawford discussed research on issues surrounding excessive gambling and gambling dependence within ethnic communities. Ann Lawless looked at 'Changing cultures in medical curricula', and Dr Andrew Wojecki spoke about utilising personal narrative to focus on the social construction of 'race'. Dr Roger Morris provided a historical perspective in his workshop 'Adelaide's role in the formation of ASPBAE'.

In non-thematic workshops, Richard Vinycomb and Jim Nicholls from ACE North Coast NSW provided excellent workshop techniques in their 'Highs and Lows of ACE Management'; Helen Edwards looked at learning in community during 'The song and dance of the women in the fiery cottage'; and Leanne Isaacson showed how to put together wine appreciation and floristry courses using video conference technology.

To summarise these workshops, you would have to say that the depth and diversity was truly breathtaking and a credit to the Australian adult learning community.

FINAL PLENARY

The final plenary was an opportunity for delegates to raise issues and speak, if they wished, about the conference, its strong points and avenues for exploration and growth. Delegates appreciated this chance, and a number of people articulated their feelings, providing an excellent summary of the conference and its achievements.

The feedback given, at the plenary, during the conference, on feedback sheets, and in the weeks after the conference strongly indicated that the conference was a resounding success, providing the type of opportunity that participants sought – the sharing of information, networking opportunities with fellow educators, researchers, administrators and learners, and the motivational addresses to provide the 'big picture' and drive us towards better standards and practice.

Phil Bartlett from the Central West TAFE in Geraldton WA, addresses participants at the ALA Conference

CONFERENCE DINNER

The conference concluded with a wonderful social function on Saturday evening, also held in the ballrooms of the Stamford Grand Hotel.

About 140 guests enjoyed a three course dinner and live entertainment by a three-piece jazz group.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of Adult Learning Australia's National Awards for 2004, with guests from all over Australia attending this gala dinner. The awards were presented by Anne Baly from the Department of Education, Science and Training, and the President of Adult Learning Australia, Garry Traynor. A full report on the awards was included in our Summer 2004 edition.

WITH THANKS

The organisers would like to thank all our conference sponsors. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the assistance from ANTA, especially the support of Liz Keyes who attended the conference this year and on many previous occasions.

We are also grateful to the SA Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology for their assistance, especially Sue Ross and her department, and the WEA of South Australia which provided conference bags, and time for me as Conference Convener to undertake a myriad of tasks within my normal hours of duty.

The organisers would also like to acknowledge the excellent service and attention to detail provided by the Stamford Grand Hotel, Glenelg SA. We thank all who helped in various ways, including the conference co-Chairs and the workshop room hosts. Thank you also to Roger Harris for supervising the refereeing of papers.

The success of the 2004 conference is due to two groups of people. First, the staff of the national office provided great support for the conference. Thank you to Ron Anderson and the team, in particular Margaret Bates who worked tirelessly all year.

The final words of acknowledgement and thanks go to the South Australian Conference Organising Committee who worked with me – Mary-Jo Bellew, Denis Binnion, Judy Fawcett, Roger Heath, June Millan, David Muscio and Sue Ross who delivered a great team effort, sustained over a 12 month period, and had a great time to boot!

Lorelie Ball
CONFERENCE CONVENOR
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

International

ASPBAE Festival of Learning & 40th Anniversary

ASPBAE's Festival of Learning and 40th Anniversary Celebration

December 13–18 2004, Yogyakarta Indonesia

I was delighted to have the opportunity to represent Adult Learning Australia at the ASPBAE 'Festival of Learning'. This event would also celebrate ASPBAE's 40th Anniversary bringing together 150 participants representing South East Asia and the Pacific who would utilise the learning space to collectively reflect on the lessons of ASPBAE's forty year history, analyse the current global and regional challenges and deliberate on ASPBAE's future course. It also gave me a wonderful opportunity to interact with old and new members and friends of ASPBAE.[1]

The Festival theme, **'Learning is Freedom'** underscored the realities and challenges faced by millions of citizens in the current global and regional context. The workshops and conversations would draw participant's attention to the fact that access to meaningful and empowering learning opportunities have the immense potential to liberate men and women. Learning can free the limitless potential of people and their communities and that the history of the popular movement in the region – of which the adult education movement is part – is a story of learning and freedom.

The Festival was a week-long programme which consisted of two (2) sets of concurrent regional workshops, exposure visits with community education and civic society groups in Indonesia, cultural programmes, exhibition booths, plenary discussions and other interactive events. The Center for Women's Resources Development (PPSW), which is a non-governmental organisation based in Jakarta, hosted the event.

Participants were encouraged to bring material for display in booths which were set up on the Thursday. This would be day-long activity which would be the main arena for interaction with the people of Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta has been a traditional intellectual and cultural centre of Indonesia. It is home to a thriving student movement. It has a deep tradition of education, and is a locus of alternative thinking and innovative approaches to empowering education and learning. Festival participants were grouped by country and provided display spaces. The atmosphere was fantastic with participants sharing stories, learning from each other and watching local theatre/cultural groups perform.

Our final day was spent visiting some historical sites including visits to Borubudur, Kraton (the Royal Palace) and shopping at Bering Harjo.

The week long Festival was an important event for ASPBAE and I remember the final statement made by Maria Khan, ASPBAE Secretary-General, when she welcomed participants to the **'Festival of Learning'**:

> *'This week we are with friends. This week we are with family. This week we celebrate. We will plan and we will build. And if anything we will learn. And in our learning, we will advance the spaces we have won. And with this, our freedoms.'*

The 'Festival of Learning' did indeed provide an opportunity to celebrate the unique position that ASPBAE finds itself, forty years after its inception – participants celebrated in a new found vibrancy as we farewelled each other during the closing ceremony – little did we know that in a week's time we would hear about the tragic consequences of the Boxing Day tsunami. Many of the Festival participants came from countries such as Indonesia, South India and Sri Lanka which have been ravished by the tsunami and our hearts are with them as they now face the huge task of rebuilding and reconstruction in their communities.

Mary Hannan
ADULT LEARNING AUSTRALIA

1. Adult Learning Australia has been a member of ASPBAE since its formation on 1 February 1964.

Mary Hannan, who represented ALA, with other delegates at the recent ASPBAE Festival of Learning and 40th Anniversary Celebration in Yogyakarta.

International

ASPBAE Plans for 2005

The Asia South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) celebrated its 40th year in 2004 culminating in a Festival of Learning in Jogyakarta, Indonesia, on 12–17 December.

As part of the Festival ASPBAE held a changeover ceremony for its President and Executive Council. ASPBAE's new President, Ms Sandra Morrison is a Maori woman and Head of Maori and Pacific Studies at University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. The two new South Pacific Sub-Region Executive Council members are Ms Matatamua Maimoaga, from the Matualeoo Environment Trust (METI) a non-government organisation (NGO) in Samoa, and Mr John Salong from Vanuatu, currently residing in Australia. The new Council will be meeting in Bangladesh 8–11 March to finalise plans for 2005.

Post Tsunami Community Re-building

ASPBAE has had to review its 2005 plans given the enormous scale of the tsunami tragedy, and the fact that especially in Aceh a number of ASPBAE's member organisations were directly affected, including the deaths of NGO staff family members. As a result of assessment missions by Executive Council members and discussions with local organisations, priority will be given to provide key community organisers the where-with-all to carry out their work, since they are the most experienced in mobilising and supporting their people.

In the rehabilitation phase, ASPBAE has been asked to organise an Assessment and Planning Workshop where NGOs can be assisted in planning their reconstruction and rebuilding. ASPBAE is concerned to ensure that funds provided to assist tsunami affected communities and countries include resources to re-build and initiate appropriate education facilities, and are not directed away from existing education budgets.

Three Core Strategies

While the tsunami will have implications for most of ASPBAE's programs, the core strategies of the organisation will remain the same:

- policy research and advocacy for adult learning
- building strategic partnerships and collaborations
- capacity-building and leadership development.

Education Policy Advocacy

ASPBAE will be involved at the international level in the UNESCO Consultative Council of NGOs (CCNGO) to advise on progressing the goals of Education for All (EFA). It will also work as part of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) advocating for additional international resources to enable countries to achieve the EFA goals, especially those due to be reached in 2005 (equal access to education for girls) and 2015 (adult literacy). This will include utilising platforms such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Conference in New York and in the Global Campaign Against Poverty (GCAP).

At the Asia South Pacific regional level ASPBAE, in conjunction with the GCE, is coordinating a Real World Strategies Program to increase the capacities of national level civil society organisations (CSOs) and coalitions in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Indonesia, Philippines, PNG and Solomon Islands in their ability to analyse education policy and advocate for desired policy changes with their governments. Additional resources from NZAID have enabled similar work to be carried out in Vanuatu and to hold Pacific regional capacity building workshops.

ASPBAE will also continue to work in the thematic priority areas of:

- Education for Active Citizenship and Good Governance (Cit Ed),
- Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention,
- Indigenous Education,
- HIV/AIDS Education,
- Adult Literacy,
- Education for Women's Empowerment;
- Vocational Training and Education,
- Information Technologies and Adult Learning.

ASPBAE is also holding discussions with Adult Learning Australia in relation to encouraging linkages between Australian adult education organisations and counterparts in other countries in the Asia South Pacific region.

For further information about ASPBAE contact Bernie Lovegrove, email **blove.aspbae@effect.net.au** or check the ASPBAE website **www.aspbae.org**

Bernie Lovegrove
ASPBAE PROGRAM MANAGER

Fundraising dinner

ASPBAE and ALA raise over $22,000 for relief efforts

POST TSUNAMI FUNDRAISING DINNER

On the evening of Thursday 3 February 2005 over 150 community members and invited guests attended a gala dinner at Olims Hotel Canberra to raise much needed funds for Tsunami relief and community rebuilding in Aceh, Indonesia. The dinner was organised by the Asia South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) in collaboration with Adult Learning Australia (ALA).

Several of Canberra's community leaders including international ambassadors, dignitaries and politicians joined with other members of the community in a celebration of hope and goodwill to generate over $22,000 through ticket sales, auction proceeds and donations which will go directly to the Centre for Women's Resource Development (Pusat Pengembangan Sumberdaya Wanita- PPSW).

Master of Ceremonies for this successful evening was Bernie Lovegrove (Program Manager, ASPBAE) who introduced the room to a list of guest speakers who delivered powerful and poignant messages of thanks and hope throughout their speeches. Guest speakers included Mr Kristiarto Legowo (Deputy Chief of the Indonesian Embassy), Sandra Morrison (President, ASPBAE), Maria Khan (Secretary-General, ASPBAE) and Garry Traynor (President, ALA).

A highlight of the evening was the auction supported by a list of wonderful items donated by businesses and organisations from all over Australia. Celebrity auctioneers Bill Stefaniac, MLA, and Deb Foskey, MLA, worked the room with charm and candour to help raise over $7,000 with the help of some very earnest bidders.

Maria Khan, Secretary-General of ASPBAE with Sandra Morrison, President of ASPBAE at the tsunami fundraising dinner held in Canberra.

Of course the event would have not been the success it was without the enthusiastic support of Heidi Amaudon (Program Officer, ASPBAE) and Peter Murphy (Events and Public Relations Manager, ALA), who both gave up their professional and personal time to organise everything from catering to entertainment.

Special thanks must also go to "the two Bec's", Rebecca Bromhead and Rebecca McLaren, and Naomi Grainger (ALA) who donated their personal time to coordinate table bookings and donation collections.

Sponsors of the event included Olim's Hotel Canberra (thank you to staff and management who donated their time), ACT Entertainment Agency, ACME Printing (ACT) and The Gallery (CenArt); and proudly supported by ASPBAE, ALA and the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). Entertainment was kindly donated by local musical artists Mystereality, Touché and Ron Lucas.

On behalf of ASPBAE and ALA I would like to extend my thanks to all involved for donating their time and energies into making the event a success and supporting such a worthy cause.

Donations for the post tsunami fundraising and community rebuilding effort can still be made by phoning 1300 303 212 or visiting **www.ala.asn.au**.

Ron Anderson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking Back

ASPBAE's forty-first birthday

On 1 February 2005, ASPBAE (the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education) celebrated its forty-first birthday having been founded on that day in 1964.

ASM (Arnold) Hely, a New Zealander, Director of Adult Education at the University of Adelaide, since 1957, was the prime mover in establishing ASPBAE and was, until his most untimely death in 1967, its Secretary. He previously had played a leading role in the formation of ALA (then called AAAE).

Since the end of the Second World War, there had been a growing interest in Australia in knowing and understanding more about the rest of the world. Among Australian adult educators, this growing desire to be more involved internationally culminated in the UNESCO Regional Seminar on Adult Education, which was held in Sydney, January 1964.

In 1960, Hely attended with Colin Badger, the Director of the Council of Adult Education in Victoria, the Second UNESCO World Conference on Adult Education. In addition to the main conference, which was held in Montreal, six other meetings concerned with the education of adults were held – including a meeting, focussed on University Adult Education, which Hely attended.

During the conference proper, Hely had convened a meeting of delegates who lived in Asia and the Pacific. This meeting included representatives of the most and least populous nations in the world. The idea of forging closer links among the adult educators of the region had been strongly raised in the Australian context at the national adult education meeting held in Adelaide in 1959.

The International Conference on University Adult Education was held at Syracuse University's Sagamore Lodge, 3–8 September 1960. Here, Hely took a prominent role. He presented a very well received paper on adult education and the university. He became a member of the ongoing committee, which went on to form the International Congress on University Adult Education (ICUAE). He made some important and influential friends.

Hely used his involvement with ICUAE and other international bodies, such as the World Confederation of Organisations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) and eventually his membership of the UNESCO International Committee for the Advancement of Adult Education, as well as his network of international contacts to continually press the claim for an Australian organised regional Asia/Pacific seminar on adult education. The task was a very difficult one. The region had very many poor nations.

Eventually, Hely was able to gain the necessary approvals and put together a funding package for the seminar, which was held from 18 January to 1 February 1964 at the Women's College, University of Sydney. The theme of the Seminar was a dual one – "The role of schools and universities in adult education". According to John Lowe*, who participated in the Seminar, as Director of Extra Mural Studies at the University of Singapore, if the aim of the seminar was to interest Australian adult educators in Asia, then it was successful.

However, on other fronts, it was less than successful. There were no communist or pro-communist nations present. Neither were the leading neutralist nations – Indonesia, Cambodia, and Laos – present. Indeed, according to Lowe, the spread of nations represented was a little bizarre – Southeast Asia, plus Japan, Hong Kong and India, plus some US Pacific territories, plus Australia and New Zealand.

Moreover, the splitting of the seminar into two parallel commissions – one to focus on the role of schools and the other on the role of universities – while understandable, was unnatural and unhelpful. However, Lowe thought that the product of the universities' component of the seminar was very sound and quite useful because it provided a good general statement as to how universities should participate in adult education.

The most lasting and important outcome of the seminar was the formation of a regional adult education organisation – the second oldest such regional organisation in the world after the European Bureau of Adult Education, which has since been renamed the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA).

continued on next page

Looking Back

ASPBAE's forty-first birthday

< Continued from previous page

The founding meeting of this Asian Pacific regional adult education organisation was held on 30 January 1964. This meeting adopted three resolutions:

- The first had to do with what were to be the activities of the proposed body
- The second named the organisation as "The South East Asian and Australasian Bureau of Adult Education
- The third appointed a small interim Executive Committee of seven members.

This interim Committee met on 31 January and prepared three recommendations to go back to the full meeting:

- Fixing the annual membership fee at 5/- (i.e. 50 cents)
- Suggesting two additional members for the Executive Committee (representing Japan and Indonesia respectively)
- Proposing that the name of the organisation should be the Asian and South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE).

The founding meeting was reconvened on 1 February 1964 and adopted the recommendation prepared by the interim Executive Committee and the 33 foundation members of ASPBAE were enrolled.

Shiva Dutta of India was the first President and Arnold Hely was the first Secretary of ASPBAE. The first decade and a half of the organisation's life was most difficult and it barely survived Arnold Hely's untimely death in 1967. There were no real funds and only very limited regional activities were possible until the late 1970s when the DVV (the German Adult Education Association) made a commitment to provide ongoing core funding.

* Lowe, John (1966) "University adult education in Southeast Asia", **ICAUE Journal,** 5(2), December.

Roger K Morris
SECRETARY, ADULT LEARNING AUSTRALIA

New Members

Individual

Helen Aberton
WALLINGTON VIC 3221

Phil Bartlett
GERALDTON WA 6530

Aileen Boyer
ARMADALE WA 6112

Steven Bristow
TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350

Kathleen Broderick
FREMANTLE WA 6106

Judith Maree Bunn
MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC 3149

Wing-Yin Chan Lee
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Peter Chomley
SURREY HILLS VIC 3127

Jennifer Eaton
GEELONG VIC 3216

Janet Hayes
MONTROSE VIC 3765

Bryan Rochelle
QUEANBEYAN NSW 2620

Noel Wauchope
CAULFIELD SOUTH VIC 3162

Mandy Wiles
LONDON UK

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Calendar

United Nations Literacy Decade 2003–2012

13 April 2005
AVETRA 2005: Emerging Futures – Recent, Responsive & Relevant Research
The AVETRA conference 2005, to be held at the Sheraton Brisbane, will examine changes in vocational education and training in relation to the following five topic areas: Responding to youth needs; Reengaging late learners; Learning at/in work; Interacting with technology for learning and research; The Marketplace – current issues and research in VET.
For further information email avetra@welldone.com.au or visit http://www.avetra.org.au/annual_conference/index.shtml

2–3 May 2005
Connecting Up 2005
Information and Communications Technology for Australian Communities
Vision: To inspire communities, governments and businesses in Australia to work together to bridge the 'digital divide'.
This conference will provide a platform for innovative communities, businesses and governments around Australia to share experiences, successes and lessons learned from projects designed to build ICT capacity in communities. Will promote the social and economic benefits for disadvantaged and isolated communities of access to low cost, high quality ICT infrastructure and provide opportunities for like-minded not-for-profits, communities, governments and businesses to build networks and develop joint projects.
To be held at the Hyatt Regency Adelaide.
For further information email gb@cisa.asn.au

2–3 June 2005
12th Annual Curriculum Corporation National Conference
This conference, to be held at the Sheraton Brisbane Hotel, will explore the interplay between curriculum, assessment and reporting in our education systems and schools. The conference will feature a range of engaging and sometimes controversial Australian and international speakers, from within the education sector and beyond, as well as extensive opportunities for participant interaction.
For further information email conference@curriculum.edu.au or visit http://www.curriculum.edu.au/who-are-we/conference.php

3–7 July 2005
Connecting Voices: Practitioners, Researchers and Learners
The Australian Council of Adult Literacy (ACAL) and the international Adults Learning Mathematics (ALM) group are co-hosting a special conference in Melbourne. This conference will be devoted entirely to numeracy. This is a chance to catch up on professional development, and to explore current issues effecting numeracy and mathematics education for adults.
Visit http://www.acal.edu.au/conference/ALM12ACAL:conf1.pdf or email davet@cae.edu.au

6–9 July 2005
Australian Teacher Education Association Conference 2005
This conference will explore the forces of internationalisation and globalisation in terms of their impact on educational policies, curriculum and pedagogy in teaching and teacher education. Advances in information and communication technology are transforming the ways we communicate, teach and learn about ourselves, the world and beyond. Developing digital literacies and working to overcome digital divides are issues confronting teachers and teacher educators. Keynote speakers are: Professor Amy Tsui, The University of Hong Kong; Professor Allan Luke, National Institute of Education, Singapore; and Professor Marie Brennan, University of South Australia.
Visit http://griffith.edu.au/conference/atea2005/ for further information. Or email R.Roebuck@griffith.edu.au

7–9 August 2005
ACER Research Conference 2005: Using Data to Support Learning
The conference will consider issues currently being confronted by Australian schools in their collection and use of data. It will examine international best practice solutions to these issues; identify future challenges and promising directions in the collection, analysis and use of data to support learning in schools.
This conference will be held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Melbourne. For further information email taylor@acer.edu.au

14–17 August 2005
International Conference on Engaging Communities
This conference, to be held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, will examine contemporary practice, evidence and theory around community engagement from around the world, and the issues in opening a dialogue and maintaining productive relationships between governments/organisations and citizens/clients and other stakeholders.
For information phone 07 3854 1611 or email info@engagingcommunities2005.org
URL www.engagingcommunities2005.org

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