Balancing life, work and wellbeing

Issue 08 / Summer 2007

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Cover Photo: Nan Bosler, Apia Adult Learning Ambassador of the Year 2007

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 education, advises and lobbies government, promotes policy development, represents Australian international education bodies, coordinates Adult Learners’ Week and more.

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ALA also publishes the Australian Journal of Adult Learning three times a year. Many ALA members receive this publication as part of their membership but single or extra copies are available for a minimal cost.

ALA gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Department of Education, Science and Training. It thanks the many volunteers who submit material to Quest.
"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times’ so starts the Charles Dickens novel ‘A Tale of Two Cities’.

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

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

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

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

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

2008 should be a ‘make it’ year for adult learning in Australia. Congratulations to Nan Bosler on winning the inaugural APIA Adult Learning Ambassador of the Year Award. Our selection has been backed up by Microsoft who are sending Nan to Korea to assist the Koreans with their adult learning IT planning for older people. ALAs relations were strengthened with Korea as many Koreans attended our Cairns conference. Korea is becoming the natural leader in Asian Adult Learning but other countries are firing up as well so I am delighted to say ALAs relations there are great and we hope to continue working closely with Korea this year.

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

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

I hope you are as well.

Peter Peterson (P^2)
Chief Executive Officer

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Keep up to date with what is happening in our sector

Visit the Adult Learning Australia Blog
Every relevant press release or news item is posted on the Blog immediately. Keep up to date by visiting the site each day.
Click on after going to the website - http://www.ala.asn.au

2007 Adult Learners’ Week

According to the AC Nielsen Survey:

• Over 2.7 million Australians (aged 18 and over) were aware of ALW in 2007
• Over 1.45 million Australians (aged 18 and over) are aware of ALA
• Over 162,000 Australians (aged 18 and over) attended ALW events in 2007
• Over 1.35 million Australians (aged 18 and over) intend to enrol in an adult learning activity with their local community education provider in the future
• Over 1.05 million Australians (aged 18 and over) intend to enrol in an adult learning activity with their local community education provider within the next 12 months.

Who teaches who?

New research debunks traditional myths about age in the UK workforce. 40% of older workers believe their younger colleagues teach them skills they previously did not have, according to a study of older and younger workers commissioned by Jobcentre Plus, whilst one third of younger workers believe older workers are more likely to work anti-social hours than colleagues their own age.

The findings, which come as the UK celebrates the first anniversary of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, lift the lid on the benefits of employing a diverse workforce for both employers and individuals. Across the board, the results show that working in a mixed aged workforce is important for both older (66%) and younger (65%) UK workers with all recognising the benefits of working with people of mixed ages.


Tip of the day

Manage your stress levels!

Some good ways to manage stress and cope with daily hassles include:

• Thinking things through before getting upset (e.g., calling a friend for advice)
• Relaxing when feeling tense (e.g., exercise, deep breathing)
• Using stress management skills such as problem solving or goal setting
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Examples to us all!

Throughout Australia there are many examples of the way adult education is changing the lives of those involved. These two examples come from the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE.

**Aunty Kath’s healthy attitude**

an inspiration to Indigenous community

Devising eating plans and taking sugar and blood pressure tests are helping a Cherbourg elder reach her goal of providing health care to the community.

Kath Hopkins, who is known as Aunty Kath, said studying a Certificate III in Indigenous Primary Health at Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE’s (SQIT) Cherbourg campus would enable her to help Indigenous people.

Ms Hopkins said she was learning about Indigenous health issues, how to identify signs of heart problems and diabetes and performing tests to help diagnose health problems.

“I want to do this so I can help my people and all people; that’s what I’m aiming for,” she said.

“I have been coming to TAFE for the past three or four years.

“I’d like to see the younger ones looking at me and saying, ‘look at Aunty Kath, she can do it’.”

“I want to encourage the youth of today, they are our future.”

SQIT campus business coordinator Santina Schmocker said Ms Hopkins was a role model for the Cherbourg community having completed a number of courses including certificates in hospitality and numeracy and literacy.

“I’m thrilled with Aunty Kath’s involvement with the campus,” Ms Schmocker said.

Ms Hopkins attends five block training sessions at Cherbourg and has one day of work placement at one of the community health centres: Cherbourg Hospital, Cherbourg Community Health or Barambah Medical centre.

By the end of June next year, Ms Hopkins expects to have gained her qualifications.

Aunty Kath Hopkins practices taking blood pressure on a training dummy at the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE Cherbourg Campus.
Lorraine – a beacon to all adult learners

A Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE teacher was named one of Queensland’s outstanding achievers at the recent Adult Learners’ Week awards presentation.

The Department of Education, Training and the Arts’ Deputy Director-General for Training Rod Arthur presented Charleville identity and grandmother Lorraine Usher with her award during a ceremony at the Queensland State Library in Brisbane in September.

Receiving accolades however, were far from Lorraine’s thoughts when she enrolled as an adult learner at Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE Charleville Campus in 2006.

Her thoughts during the following months were consumed by the demanding but rewarding transition from student to teacher.

Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE Director John Elich said Lorraine, a hospitality teacher at TAFE’s Charleville Campus, was a beacon to all adult learners.

“She had no formal qualifications but loved to work with young adults and it was not long before her commitment to students and her work were recognised by her employer,” Ms Richardson said.

After visiting the local TAFE Campus Lorraine decided she wanted to teach what she knew best – hospitality and cooking.

Her first step was to complete Work Place Trainer and Assessor (Cert IV) and then a Diploma in Assessment and Workplace Training.

It was the most appropriate qualification for her current position of Certificate in Hospitality teacher at Charleville TAFE.

Lorraine was also able to draw upon TAFE’s flexible and innovative Recognition of Prior Learning Process (RPL) to gain her qualifications.

“This remarkable grandmother has inspired many young adults in the community to stay at school and has motivated them to better themselves by practical hands on industry skills,” Ms Richardson said.

“She gives of her own time to tutor students who have problems with literacy and numeracy, helps her students find local traineeships and work placements, and provides praise and encouragement.

Responding to her award Lorraine said: “I never dreamed I could help so many people by doing something that I love – cooking and teaching people new skills.”

Caption: Charleville TAFE Campus manager Debbie Richardson congratulates Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE teacher Lorraine Usher on her Outstanding Adult Learner Award.
It takes a switched on Community Centre to be awarded "South Australian Learning Community of the Year" for two years in a row.

The Milang Old School House Community Centre, MOSHCC, 80 kilometres south of Adelaide, engages a few part time staff, 100 volunteers and 900 residents in a sweeping vision of learning. The Centre finds learning opportunities in the triumphs and tragedies of daily existence. This learning gives a healthy perspective. It even adds a certain ‘glamour’ to life.

The learning here gives flesh and blood to holistic philosophies based on a community development model. It celebrates lateral thinking and the possibilities suggested by intuition. By encouraging such learning, MOSHCC enriches everyday life.

MOSHCC specializes in blended learning. The Centre blows to smithereens any “uncrossable” boundary between different facets of learning. For example, the ‘Lakeliners Creative Writing Group’ steps sideways to desktop publishing to compile their anthologies. ‘Friday Feast’, so useful for social interaction, becomes a meeting place to discuss local issues like the proposed weir across the Murray at Wellington.

There is also ‘Heart’s Journey’. This life skills/therapy group is the next creative leap from an original Grief and Loss program. The “Journey” is a patchwork of formal learning about the mind, emotions and feelings enhanced by creative writing and crafts. The course adapts constantly to what the participants need and want as they re-evaluate content.

Blended learning increases the Milang community’s capacity to deal with its own needs. For example, the original ‘Grief and Loss’ program led to the creation of ‘Ray of Hope’, a local telephone support group for people with depression.

A “hands on” approach enhances learning about issues and heart felt concerns. Educational tours in 2006-07 took residents to the Aeronautical Museum, Platform 1 Heritage Farm Railway at Littlehampton and on many historical visits and the WOW Women’s Group have explored soap making, numerology, circle dancing and the emotional freedom technique.

“Hands on” learning extended to the crisis over the possible weir at Wellington. www.stopthewein.com.au gave scope to local expertise in art and politics and this created a coherent
presentation of a vital local issue to influential people in Adelaide. The learning experience gave an edge and distinction to the whole challenge presented by the weir and it gave impact to a small rural community.

Learning at MOSHCC empowers as skills are recognised as transferable. This is very evident in the volunteer’s course, Certificate III in Active Volunteering which is delivered on site in a partnership with TAFE. This process captures and acknowledges learning and experience in a formal qualification.

Computer training benefits from all these learning styles. Desktop publishing and digital photography feature heavily. The product of these courses is presented at local forums such as ‘Friday Feast’ and ‘Volunteer Get Togethers’. Clients interested in re-entering the workforce benefit from on line and CD based learning.

The results of the MOSHCC style are more supple minds, self esteem, a higher level of functioning and a cohesive, healthier community. Because there is virtually no gap between life experience and learning the people of Milang region embrace lifelong learning in a myriad of enticing and exciting ways.

“The learning here gives flesh and blood to holistic philosophies based on a community development model. It celebrates lateral thinking and the possibilities suggested by intuition. By encouraging such learning, MOSHCC enriches everyday life.”
Michael Newman, an Australian adult educator, has received the prestigious Cyril Houle award for Outstanding Literature in Adult Education for his recent book *Teaching Defiance: Stories and Strategies for Activist Educators*. The book was published in 2006 by Jossey-Bass of San Francisco. Jossey-Bass is part of the John Wiley publishing company. The award was presented to Michael on 31 October 2007 at the annual conference of the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) in Norfolk, Virginia, USA.

The Houle award was established in 1981 to honour the scholarship and memory of Cyril O. Houle, professor of adult education at the University of Chicago. It is given annually by AAACE.

To win the award a book must reflect the universal concerns of adult educators, be relevant to adult educators in more than one country, exemplify high standards of scholarship, be well-organised and well-written, and contribute significantly to the advancement of adult education as a unified field of study and practice.

This is the third time that Michael has won this award. The other times were in 1993 for his book *The Third Contract: Theory and Practice in Trade Union Training*, and in 1995 for *Defining the Enemy: Adult Education in Social Action*.

*Teaching Defiance* is about teaching and learning choice. It argues that we live in times when others, be they individuals or organisations, are constantly trying to make choices for us. It examines ways in which we can defy those others, make our own choices, and take control of our own lives. The book is full of stories, theories, and detailed descriptions of actual teaching.

You can find out more about *Teaching Defiance*, and other books by Michael Newman, at [www.michaelnewman.info](http://www.michaelnewman.info).
Alan Levine’s AUSTRALIAN TOUR

“…he explored the notion that we need to face the future of social networking in an open ‘wide eyed’ manner. He stressed that we need to ‘be there’ not just look in and observe.”

Presentations in eight Australian cities in eleven days, that’s the programme ALAN LEVINE undertook on his Australian Flexible Learning Framework in October.

The Vice-President of NMC Community has spent years promoting creative uses of technology in learning for the Maricopa Community Colleges and is currently involved in using a campus on Second Life (a 3D online virtual world) to explore educational gaming and the potential of virtual world environments.

Alan presented six engaging discourses during his tour.

In Canberra, he engaged his audience on the topic “Being There”. Building on the themes emerging on the Peter Sellers’ film of the same name, he explored the notion that we need to face the future of social networking in an open ‘wide eyed’ manner. He stressed that we need to ‘be there’ not just look in and observe.

People, he said, should not worry about being an expert, rather we should ‘stand up’, trust and connect.

Using the example of the rapid growth of such social networking groups as Facebook (which he pointed out had grown by 80% in the month of June 2007 in Australia), he recounted that we should not think about how we could best use such emerging networks but that once we were engaged, we would “find a use”.

The figures he presented were astounding. Would you believe that 120 blogs are created each day, in May 2007, 70 million blogs were tracked or that 17 posts are created each second?

The audience were given an extensive look at Twitter (another social network) and were amazed at how many responses Alan received during the time he spent talking to us.

A number of other premises surfaced:

• you can’t blame the technology for inappropriate content, only the people controlling it
• always remember that a sense of play is important – it keeps you interested and makes engagement easier
• people don’t have to ‘master’ everything – it’s fine to make mistakes – it’s all part of the learning experience and
• just like Hansel and Gretel, leave yourself a trail – it makes it easier for you and others to return.

So, as Alan emphasised, dive into it; you’re a part of it, so make the most of it!

Seven Principles
FOR GOOD PRACTICE IN TEACHING

By Arthur W. Chickering & Zelda F. Gamson

There are seven principles to be considered when thinking about good practice in education.

Educators need to:
1. encourage contact between students and faculty,
2. develop reciprocity and cooperation among students,
3. encourage active learning,
4. give prompt feedback,
5. emphasize time to be spent on task,
6. communicate high expectations, and
7. respect diverse talents and ways of learning.

While each practice can stand alone, when all are present their effects multiply. Together they employ six powerful forces in education:

- activity,
- expectations,
- cooperation,
- interaction,
- diversity, and
- responsibility

Extracts from the website - http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/7princip.htm

CONFINTEA VI nears

In preparation for UNESCO’s 6th International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), a Consultative Group has been formed of education experts representing UNESCO Member States, UN Agencies, development agencies, international and regional non-government organisations and academics.

The first meeting in Elsinor, Denmark focused on the vision and overall orientation and planning, the second meeting held in Hamburg, took stock of overall developments, planning regional preparations and respective conferences, reviewing the development of benchmarks, the guidelines for national reports and preparation for a Global Adult Education Report.

As more details emerge, we will keep all our members informed.
Web 2.0 & 23 things
The East Gippsland Experience

Denece Sippo, Community Leader
Building Online Communities In East Gippsland

“Imagine when building web applications becomes as simple as playing with LEGO?”

I can’t remember who wrote it, but I do think that Web 2.0 is the tool that empowers people and allows them to do it, simply. The hurdle to overcome was how to introduce our community to learn, adopt and explore the many available options?

We discovered Helen Blowers Learning 2.0 program for library staff and decided to use it as a vehicle for learning in our Building Online Communities community engagement project.

A self-discovery program consisting of 23 Things (or small exercises) that you can do on the web, it encourages people to take control of their own learning through exploration and PLAY. There are no classes or workshops offered to support this program. Library staff were encouraged to work together and share their discoveries, techniques and “how to’s” both in person and through their blogs. In a structured learning environment, they used the tools to learn the tools.

In our East Gippsland project, we provided one introductory face-to-face workshop to explain the concept. Assisted by staff from the Yarra Plenty Library, Melbourne, we facilitated the first 2 ‘Things’ in a morning of lively activity to get our participants started. The morning was so successful that we had trouble getting people to stop and eat lunch. They wanted to keep blogging. For many, this session was the beginning of an exciting journey. As project leaders, we monitored their progress, provided encouragement and support throughout.

Some comments we received were:

“Well I have come to the end of a most wonderful journey. I have completed my 23 things, ye ha!”

“I enjoyed learning how to use Flickr and Delicious the most. This program has kind of forced me to learn about these new technologies that I have heard about but have never really taken the time to sit down, and play around with.”

“The most eye-opening part of Learning 2.0 for me has been the variety of ways that people can engage with each other online.”

“The best thing about this process is that I’m very inspired by all the things I found.”

For most of our participants the time commitment was the biggest difficulty. In all we ended up with 15 active bloggers and several ‘lurkers’, participating in the program. We had normal everyday people using the Web and successfully creating things on it. It was a great start to our project.

You can explore our blogs at http://iblog.net/bolceg or for more information about Learning 2.0, visit Helen Blowers blog at http://librarybytes.com/

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and follow the link to ALA-workventures
As you read in the last edition of Quest, this year’s Adult Learners’ Week was the best ever.

Adult Learners’ Week in the ACT was officially launched by the Labor member for Ginninderra in the ACT legislative Assembly, Ms Mary Porter, MLA, at a morning tea held at the ACT Vietnam Veterans’ Federation, Page.

“Adult Learners’ Week is a time to celebrate and promote all types of learning in the community,” Ms Porter said as she launched the over 50 workshops, events and activities that took place in the ACT.

Just as Milang Old School House Community Centre returned to the podium to collect more awards, Erindale College Community Education Program again scooped the pool in the ACT.

This College encourages and values human interaction and the participation from all sectors of our community. Basing their courses on trust, respect, mutual benefit and reciprocation between student and their organisation (including the teachers), the College absorbs many administration costs and offers a huge variety of accredited courses under 6 central themes:

- Directly helping less privileged persons in our community
- Helping those seeking entry into vocational learning
- Privileged learners undertaking training to support the less privileged
- Support & Charity fund raising
- Assisting people perceived as disadvantaged or alienated in the community
- Improving the safety, health and/or wellbeing of the community at no profit to the program

as well as offering mainstream popular interest courses such as

- Computing
- Languages
- Creative Arts
- Yoga & Pilates and
- Children’s Craft

The Program (CEP) is a product of 26 years of working with the local Canberra community in discovering, monitoring and meeting their interests and needs.

It is their Public Health/Special Interest Courses which are of special interest.

Save-A-Mate (SAM) is a harm prevention program that is designed to reduce incidences of injury and fatality associated with substance abuse in young people through the relevant provision of first aid and peer education while Living a Healthy Life with LT conditions is designed to help those people living with long-term conditions that impact their lives physically, socially and emotionally.

These are only two of the many truly community courses that are an exemplar to others and have earned the College such an important role in community education in the ACT.

Another notable ACT winner was the ACT Vietnam Veterans’ Federation who hosted the morning launch and who won the Community Contribution Award.

Having taken over a set of unused garden sheds in the suburb of Page, this thriving group runs men’s sheds in woodwork and metalwork, classes in their computer lab and kitchen. They provide opportunities to raise the roof with singing in a choir and gentle introductions to exercise. Most importantly, they provide the opportunity for people to get together and build their friendships.

Very different groups were honoured in West Australia – two young men who escaped violence in their homelands to start new lives in Australia.

Western Australian Minister Mark McGowan announced Mr Ephrem Hailu Njigu and Mr Hussain Ali Ibrahim as joint winners of the 2007 Outstanding Learner (New Migrant) Award during the presentation ceremony.

Mr McGowan said the two men were studying through West Coast TAFE’s Adult Migrant Education Service.

“Mr Njigu and Mr Ibrahim share a commitment to learning and a passion to give back to their new home of Australia,” Mr McGowan said.

Maylands resident Mr Njigu spent many years in a Kenyan refugee camp after being forced to flee Ethiopia while still in his teens.
Now living in Australia, he has progressed with learning English and other studies while mentoring younger students and coaching a junior soccer team in his spare time, despite battling severe ill health.

Mr Ibrahim, who lives in Mt Barker, endured torture in his homeland of Afghanistan which resulted in him needing to use a wheelchair.

Now a student at Great Southern TAFE’s Mt Barker campus, he is determined to pursue a career in graphic design and is an inspiration to fellow students.

Other winners included a successful program to prepare local Indigenous people for full-time employment in the booming Pilbara region.

In Tasmania which has only some 2.4% of the Australian population, the take-up of ALW is very strong on a per capita basis.

The value of ALW is very apparent with overwhelmingly enthusiastic about the success of the ALW events in local communities and the general promotional opportunities ALW affords.

“They provide opportunities to raise the roof with singing in a choir and gentle introductions to exercise. Most importantly, they provide the opportunity for people to get together and build their friendships.”

The Tasmanian Department of Education again welcomed local business sponsorship of the 2007 state ALW awards. Nominations were strong in all three categories and were presented as part of the Tasmanian Training Awards at Wrest Point Convention Centre in Hobart on Friday 31 August 2007 with the following awards being made.

**Mercury**
**ADULT LEARNER OF THE YEAR**
Elizabeth King

**Esset Australia**
**OUTSTANDING SUPPORTER OF ADULT LEARNING**
Tina Binns

**Veolia Environmental Services**
**OUTSTANDING ADULT LEARNING PROGRAM**
C Change Plus Program, Willson Training Centre

To cap it off, C Change went on to win Australian Adult Learning Program of the Year which was announced at the ALA Annual Conference in Cairns where they were presented with their prize by The President of ALA and State Manager of Adult Education Tasmania, Greg Peart.
The National Showcase of the 2007 Community Engagement Project

The National Showcase, held in Cairns earlier this month, showed delegates from across Australia how information and communication technology (ICT) is opening up education, training and employment opportunities within communities.

It was hosted by the Community Engagement Project of the national training system’s e-learning strategy, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework.

Six Community Engagement projects from across Australia demonstrated how e-learning was supporting learners in regional and remote locations.

All states and territories were represented at the day which was about unpacking the projects and ideas of others to find what was relevant to one’s own context.

Many key messages emerged:

- **Communities can do it!**
  E-learning is all about mindset and attitudes, drive and determination, and partnering.

- **Partnering is the key.**
  Look for partnerships that add value. Look for partners in different places, including overseas, build them strong and join the dots between community, business, government and education agencies.

- **The potential of e-learning is limitless.**
  There is an entry point for everyone, regardless of skill level as e-learning enables a level playing field where everyone to have an opportunity to continue to learn.

- **It is about starting**
  Start somewhere, planning and preparing based on community needs and goals and then expanding little by little.

- **Educate**
  Introduce your partners as well as the community in general about e-learning and what you are doing. The process can break down competition and develop collaborative approaches. It’s about all travelling the same road whatever the entry and exit points. Accept that partners and their inputs will change over time. Be flexible. Have a plan B.

- **You need support**
  There needs to be on the ground champions and mentors, movers and shakers who are trusted and respected as well as hand-holders with know-how about the use of technology for learning who can pass this on to others. Make use of local youth, the ‘digital natives’.

“Whether your main interest was financial literacy, workplace literacy, ICTs, literacy as a skilling pathway (the three “R’s”) or environmental literacy, there was something there for you or that was the conclusion of the participants.”
Keynote speakers included **Gail Short** who explored how plans for a community centre in Mount Barker (population 1,700), Western Australia, that began as an e-learning centre have developed into a community hub featuring youth drop-in, seniors activities, Centrelink, after-school club and a host of other activities.

**Michael Coghlan**, a world leader in developing online communities through use of audio technologies, gave an overview of the warmth and generosity of connection that can happen via the web. He said there was a notion that the internet and community were polar opposites, but, in his opinion, the internet equalled community.

The Community Engagement Project has set up a wiki containing all the resources from the conference, it is available at: [http://elearnala.wikispaces.com/showcase](http://elearnala.wikispaces.com/showcase).

**And the Conference itself...**

Forget your troubles, fly, drive or swim to Cairns to further your understanding of the policies and practice of adult and community education.

That’s what the advertisement said and nearly 150 people did!

There were guests from Korea, Canada and New Zealand as well as representatives from all the states and territories of Australia at the 47th Annual Conference held at the Cairns International Hotel in November.

At the Conference, celebrations began with drinks on the pool deck. A dazzling display by three Polynesian Fire Dancers kept everyone mesmerized and set the scene for two days of stimulating dialogue as the audience explored the different types of literacy we all must now master.

Whether your main interest was financial literacy, workplace literacy, ICTs, literacy as a skilling pathway (the three “R’s”) or environmental literacy, there was something there for you or that was the conclusion of the participants.

It was all topped off with a magnificent dinner in the main ballroom with entertainment from Mistin Summers and repartee from Deirdre Baker and Tony Ryan.

**Here are the main awards for the year were announced:**

**APIA Adult Learning Ambassador of the Year:**
NAN BOSLER OAM (NSW)

**Adult Educator of the Year:**
DR DEREK KOSBAB (VIC)

**Adult Learning Community of the Year:**
MILANG OLD SCHOOL HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE (SA) AND ERINDALE COLLEGE COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM (ACT) – JOINT WINNERS.

**Adult Learning Program of the Year:**
C-CHANGE PROGRAM, WILLSON TRAINING CENTRE (TAS)

**Indigenous Community Providers of the Year:**
MIRRIMBEENA ABORIGINAL EDUCATION GROUP (VIC)

**Certificate of Industry:**
ASHBURTON WORK START PROGRAM (WA)
The night ended with many dancing it away (we believe Peter Peterson did a pretty good salsa at 2.30am) but for most that was just one highlight of the stimulating atmosphere that ensured over the two days.

The evaluations show that many want to learn more about study circles - so watch this space for details – others want to learn more about Web 2.0 (haven’t they been reading their latest Quests) and still others feel their grasp of financial literacy is wanting. They should go to our website to look at Money 101 modules.

To hear more about the Conference and the Winners for 2007 read on in this, and subsequent, editions of Quest.

Apia Learning Ambassador of the Year

NAN BOSLER OAM

Nan Bosler left school at 15 but since then she has become the epitome of what adult education can do for you. Here is her reaction to being named as the Apia Learning Ambassador of the Year

What an incredible moment it was for me when the award was announced!

I was thrilled that the nomination had been made but not in my wildest dreams did I imagine that I would be selected. It was quite amazing; just so many people seemed to be so pleased to see me become the Apia Inaugural Adult Learning Ambassador of the Year. I was overwhelmed, excited and disbelieving all at the same time.

Adult Learning Australia, under a variety of names, has shown leadership and dedication to adult learners in Australia for nearly half a century.

Australia is both a world leader and committed nation in relation to adult learning and community capacity building – fundamental building blocks for socio-economic growth for all countries.

Australia is a world leader because of the innovative and resourceful programs and activities being run in all part of our Nation by people dedicated to life long learning and the empowerment of their own communities by providing opportunities for them to grow through Life Long Learning.

This fabulous award, funded generously by the Australian Pensioners’ Insurance Agency, is a great honour for me and I look forward to being able to endeavour to strengthen alliances and communication with organisations that support adult learning and lifelong learning.

The federal election held on 24th November means that the sector has a new Minister. Julia Gillard has been sworn in as Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, and Minister for Social Inclusion by the Governor-General Major General Michael Jeffries as part of the new Rudd Labor Government.

She will be the first woman, and the first foreign-born person, to hold the position of Deputy Prime Minister. She will also be the highest ranking woman in the history of the Australian government.

The Member for Lalor, she was previously been Shadow Minister for Employment & Industrial Relations, and Shadow Minister for Social Inclusion.

Born in Wales, Ms Gillard migrated to Australia with her family and settled in Adelaide in 1966. She attended the University of Adelaide but later moved to Melbourne and in 1986, graduated from the University of Melbourne with arts and law degrees. The following year she joined the law firm Slater & Gordon at Werribee, working in the area of industrial law. In 1990, she was admitted as one of their first women partners.

She believes education is the key to the future and has said that linking education and training and industrial relations was necessary to make Australia a more productive nation.

"What an incredible moment it was for me when the award was announced!"
Adult Learning Australia will mark its fiftieth year in 2010. In recent editions of Quest, some of the early history of one of our predecessor organisations, the Australian Association of Adult Education, was printed from transcripts of interviews with long-time ALA member Colin Lawton. The importance of preserving historical records was again highlighted at a national conference in October 2007, at the University of South Australia. Conference Organiser Jenni Jeremy, Manager of The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library at UniSA, prepared this commentary on women in the records, for broadcast on Monday 3 September 2007, in Learning Works. This commentary is also available online as mp3 audio – www.learningworksradio.com

The two most enduring institutions of civilisation are libraries and universities with libraries chronologically placed long before the establishment of universities. The Encyclopedia Britannica records that the earliest known library was an organised collection of clay tablets containing political and religious transactions in Babylonia in the 21st century BC, and which recorded the contribution of the dynasty and leader of the day. In that sense the very first library was a collection for someone special.

It is very reassuring to know we live in a society that recognises and understands the significance of collecting and preserving for the benefit of future generations the immeasurable amount of information resources available – the published and unpublished manuscripts, books and journals, memorabilia, art works, maps, drawings, photographs, audio and visual recordings – the list is endless - to ensure that what is created today will become the history of tomorrow.

Across the four major collecting domains – libraries, archives, museums and galleries - is a treasure trove of recorded memory, history and information. Coupled with an inherent responsibility for the provision of conservation, enhancement and dissemination of learning and knowledge all our collecting domains are challenged by societal change and technology.

Our collecting institutions are not just custodians but providers of access to the documentary, the published record and collective memory in all its formats.

Collective memory can be represented in many and varied ways – a collection of manuscripts, a lifetime of diaries, a journal of events, a wall hanging, a family quilt, a box of photographs. By acknowledging collective memory we are providing from our past and present a wealth of history for the generations to come.

Let me cite one example. In 1999 a small, diverse group of women with a common link – an acquired brain injury - were invited to co-ordinate the task of creating a wall hanging that would be a gift to the people of South Australia and a tool to educate the community about their continued capacity to be creative and contributing members of society.

It was the beginning of a journey that would surprise and delight not only the Adelaide community but also the women themselves. The Women with Acquired Brain Injury – or the WABI Group – as they became known was formed. Three years later through the creation of a large wall hanging – the WABI Project brought together a piece of art that represents the true meaning of collective memory.

Each woman designed and completed a panel that tells a story; a story that depicts something personal and significant from her life before the brain injury – and through their individual creativity each panel was woven together to construct a wall hanging – a personal yet public affirmation of their life, a memory, a story told.

The collective memory of women is not as widely examined nor as clearly identified in our collections as that of men. When we reflect upon or read about famous people or famous places - the ones that readily come to mind are by and large those associated with men. There is however, a growing significance of women’s collections in our collecting institutions – both nationally and internationally - and the voice of these women is the subject of a forthcoming conference to be hosted by the Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library.

Following the success of the 2005 conference related to women’s collections, Simply the Best 2 will focus on reflections of women through records. The conference program is outstanding with a wide cross section of presentations that will be of interest to everyone in the general community and in particular to...
Jenni Jeremy
Manager, Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library
University of South Australia
Email: jenni.jeremy@unisa.edu.au

The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library has, as one of its collection contributors, the papers of former South Australian Labor Senator, Rosemary Crowley and her personal papers are certainly the female jewel in the archives of the Prime Ministerial Collection at the University of South Australia. Rosemary’s recent conference paper titled Alive and Archived reflected her participation in the process of arranging and preserving her own collective memory – an opportunity that is unique - as most personal collections are gathered together following the death of the individual.

In preserving the Crowley Papers the Hawke Library is indeed a link in the chain of preservation; a sense of self and in the provision of evidence - not only of collective memory but of significant historical context in the political sphere of the Hawke era.

By providing an opportunity for those who have a story to tell, our libraries, universities and other collecting repositories act as the catalyst to a resource for scholars, researchers and members of the general community who seek access to that story; the collective memory and the women in our lives – past, present and future.

Jenni Jeremy
Manager, Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library
University of South Australia
Email: jenni.jeremy@unisa.edu.au

“Collective memory can be represented in many and varied ways – a collection of manuscripts, a lifetime of diaries, a journal of events, a wall hanging, a family quilt, a box of photographs.”

Australian College of Educators Archivist Tony Ryan made a presentation on women in the history of the College

librarians, archivists, museum curators, historians, scholars and writers – anyone that is with an interest in the collective memory of women.

Conference speaker, Lena Törnqvist, is the Keeper of the Astrid Lindgren Archives at the National Library of Sweden and will present her keynote address on this significant national and international collection. Astrid Lindgren – Swedish author and writer of Pippi Longstocking - one of the world’s most famous children’s books – holds a unique position in Swedish society and left a comprehensive archive of original manuscripts, notebooks, diaries, artefacts and letters. The Astrid Lindgren Archive is so significant it has been classified by UNESCO for inclusion in the Memory of the World Register to preserve for all humankind.

The conference program has been themed to include papers related to women and health, women and education, women and politics, research and social justice. Local and interstate speakers will present their experiences of women’s collections, their discovery into research in our libraries and universities and focus on the significance of oral history as it relates to collective memory.

Like the wall hanging project there are many ways of preserving the story of women and their achievements, in turn bringing gender balance to research, to history and to our collecting worlds. By unlocking the rich and often private world of women and the influences that have shaped their lives, the records of women in our libraries, archives, galleries and museums are being opened, talked about and presented to others in a forum that has the potential to touch us all.
Organisational New Members

Chisholm Institute of TAFE
DANDENONG VIC 3175

Tomaree Community College
NELSON BAY NSW 2315

Springvale Community Centre Inc.,
SPRINGVALE VIC 3171

Diversitat
GEELONG VIC 3220

Yackandandah Community Education Network Inc.
YACKANDANDAH VIC 3749

The Gowrie (WA) Inc.
CLOVERDALE WA 6105

Mackay Regional Council for Social Development Ltd
MACKAY QLD 4740

Campaspe College of Adult Education
ECHUCA VIC 3564

YNH Services Inc.
YARRAWONGA VIC 3730

Southern Region Community College
GOULBURN NSW 2580

CREATE (Geelong) Inc.
CORIO VIC 3214

Baranduda Community Centre
BARANDUDA VIC 3691

Taree Community College
TAREE NSW 2430

Djerriwarrh Employment & Education Services
MELTON VIC 3337

Old Courthouse Community Centre Inc.
CASTERTON VIC 3311

Finbar Neighbourhood House
RICHMOND VIC 3121

Organisational New Members

Felltimber Community Centre
WODONGA VIC 3690

Maisie Kaufmann Learning Centre
MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650

U3A Network – NSW
TAREE NSW 2430

Individual Members

Renee Williamson
GLEN IRIS VIC 3146

Tracey Ollis
SEDDON VIC 3011

Di Cummings
NAMBOUR QLD 4560

Johnny Weaver
TOM PRICE WA 6751

Jeanette Daly
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Patricia Minogue
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Jan Roberts
BAIRNSDALE VIC 3875

Suzanne Burns
RICHMOND NORTH VIC 3121

Online Subscriber Members

Barbara Nicholson
ACTON ACT 2600
For the second year running, Apia has topped Smart Investor magazine’s annual customer service poll. When you call us, you’ll see why. To begin with, the person who answers the phone (yes, a real person!) is trained to give you personal insurance advice. They can actually recommend the right cover for your needs. Better still, our phone staff are all multi-skilled. That means that whoever takes your call can handle your insurance needs. So if you’re over 50 and not working full-time, make a wise move today. Call 13 50 50 or visit apia.com.au
Connecting Faces, Places & Spaces

26, 27, 28 October 2008
ALCN Conference – Adelaide, Hyatt Regency Hotel

Adelaide, South Australia, will be the host city in October 2008 for the Australian Learning Communities Network National Conference, and already the hard work is underway to make it an outstanding success.

The conference, which is held every two years, will provide an important opportunity for people from established, developing and potential learning communities to share their experiences. Presentations by a range of exciting keynote speakers (national and international) and a variety of workshops will offer participants an excellent opportunity to engage with practitioners from best practice learning communities.

Connecting Faces, Places and Spaces is the theme for the 2008 Learning Communities Conference and is based on the idea that a learning community is essentially about building and fostering learning connections between individuals (Faces), communities (Spaces) and organisations (Places).

The conference will aim to create an increased awareness, interest and engagement in the growth and development of sustainable learning communities in Australasia. It is anticipated that the conference will attract participants from government bodies, education providers, business, community and local government associations.

In early 2008 the Learning Communities Network website will be launched, however for now, please place these dates in your diary:

- **January 2008**
  Expressions of interest in the Conference open

- **January – April 2008**
  First announcement and call for:
  - Keynote speakers
  - Workshop presenters
  - Exhibition booth presenters

- **April/May 2008**
  Conference registrations open

- **May 2008**
  Conference Program launch

For further information, please contact:

Ms Sharon Smith, Assistant Project Officer
Department of Further Education Employment Science & Technology (DFEEST)
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ACE & Community Partnerships

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2007 Year of the Lifesaver

2007 edna – 10th Birthday

COMING EVENTS

5 – 7 December 2007

*Innovation & Inspiration: Professional Development for Arts Educators*

University of Melbourne – Details at vca-hortcourses@unimelb.edu.au

21 – 27 April 2008

*Global Campaign for Education Action Week*

Go to www.campaignforeducation.org for a campaign pack.

May (or possibly October) 2008

*Regional Conference preceding CONFINTEA in the Asia-Pacific – South Korea*

12 – 18 May 2008

*National Volunteer Week 2008 – “Volunteers change the world”*

9 – 11 July 2008

*17th National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference (No Frills) co-hosted by TAFE Tasmania*

University of Tasmania Newham Campus, Launceston, TAS

13 – 17 July 2008

*Access to Learning for Development: The Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, London*

(Full details are available on ALA Blog of 14/15 November 2007)

1 – 8 September 2008

*ADULT LEARNERS’ WEEK*

2 – 4 October 2008

*ACAL Conference: Surfing Outside the Flags*

Crown Plaza, Surfers Paradise

26 – 28 October 2008

*Connecting Faces, Places and Spaces Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN) National Conference*

Hyatt Hotel, Adelaide

31 October – 1 November 2008

*ALA National Conference*

Fremantle, WA

May 2009

*Confitea VI – Brazil*

26, 27, 28 October 2008

*ALCN Conference, Adelaide*

Hyatt Regency Hotel