



Adult Learning Australia's Educator of the Year

Friends and work colleagues gathered at UTS's brand new campus in Jones Street on Wednesday 29 May to award and congratulate Sue Williamson, the 2001 ALA Educator of the Year. Sue has championed the learning circle methodology since 1998 recognising that this approach to informal learning is helping adults take responsibility for their own learning. One of Sue's great achievements was to help the Sydney Community College develop a learning circle program which has incorporated a very successful program of learning circle facilitation training workshops. Sue is continuing her work to develop the interest in learning circles both with community groups, and departments or organisations who have a need to increase community knowledge and awareness. Many thanks to the ALA's NSW branch for organising the function.

ALW2002 Collins Booksellers Writing Competition ALW2002

And that's one reason why this year Adult Learners' Week will profile the learning that takes place outside the classroom, for example the learning that occurs among friends and neighbours who meet regularly to share experiences and exchange views, or when you get involved in a hobby or community action group, or when you visit a museum, library or the zoo.

The Writing competition invites stories - fiction, autobiographical, biographical or poetry - that capture the experience of learning outside the classroom. For more information about the competition visit www.adultlearnersweek.org/competitions.html, email info@adultlearnersweek.org or telephone 02 6251 9887. Entries close 31 July 2002.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey: Education and Training Experience Australia (6278.0)

The ABS has just released its education and training experience survey. See www.abs.gov.au/.

Not surprisingly, it found that the people with a highest educational attainment of Bachelor degree or higher were more likely to be employed than those with a lower educational attainment and that generally, average usual weekly earnings increased as the level of highest educational attainment increased.

It also found that of people not at school, 20% wanted to, but did not, undertake some or more study in the 12 months prior to the survey, and 24% wanted to, but did not, undertake some or more work-related training courses. The main reason provided for not studying was 'Financial reasons' (21%), followed by 'No time' (20%), and 'Too much work' (14%). For 17% of women (compared with 2% of men) in this group, the main reason for not studying was 'Caring for family members'.

These findings reinforce the message Francesca Beddie heard loud and frequently during a recent visit to London: if we are to get more people into learning, then learning has to be taken to the workplace, the shopping mall or the home, and it has to be tailored to suit their needs and the other demands on their time.

Declaration of Principles about ACE

If you have any comments on the new ACE policy being put together by MCEETYA (it's more a declaration of principles than a new policy) HURRY please. **We have to give our feedback to the consultant on 6 June.** The paper can be found at www.curriculum.edu.au/mceetya/ace_consult.htm.

Website of the Month

BBC's Learning for Adults

www.bbc.co.uk/learning/adults/

The BBC's Learning for Adults website serves as a gateway to a diversity of resources aimed at helping adults to further their learning ambitions. Features of the site include:

- interactive online courses covering a range of topics, for example gardening, Internet use, languages, and first aid
- "Skillswise", a feature for basic adult literacy and numeracy education comprising interactive games and quizzes for learners and resources for tutors
- a comprehensive "digital library" of BBC resources, categorised by subject
- links to websites of training providers and adult educators, and a searchable guide to non-BBC educational websites
- details of learning programs broadcast on BBC radio and TV

The site offers a well-organised balance of information and features that cater to adult learners with varying needs—for example, those still only thinking of returning to learning, or for people looking for a particular course in the local area, or for those who simply want to use the web as an educational tool.

Community Learning Leaders

There was a strong field of applicants for this year's Community Learning Leaders. We are still finalising placements, but expect some 25 people to participate. The course will have three in-house sessions over the next six months and in between participants will be conducting their own projects. It promises to be lots of hard work but rewarding. The first session takes place from 27 to 29 June in Melbourne. We wish all participants the best of luck.

Higher Education Review

At its last meeting in Canberra, the National Executive met Peta Lane, Dr Nelson's adviser on higher education. She briefed the group about the higher education review and invited ALA to make a submission about the review paper. In response, the executive has established a working group to put together a submission. All comments are welcome. You can either join the discussion group on higher education at www.ala.asn.au/interests/phorum/index.html?forumid=88714 or email your comments to info@ala.asn.au. The discussion paper can be found on the DEST website at www.dest.gov.au/crossroads/pubs.htm#overview. The deadline for submissions is 28 June—but do give us some time to incorporate your comments into the paper.

On the Ground

You'll soon be receiving the Winter edition of the ALA newsletter. Hope you like it! Please tell us what's good and less good about the publication. We want to make it as relevant as possible to you and also to broaden its appeal to people beyond the membership. From the next edition we will be replacing the branch reports with a new section called On the Ground. This is your chance to tell the world about the best things happening in learning in your community. Please send items of interest to Margaret Bates at m.bates@ala.asn.au.