President's Report

This is my second attempt to write this report. I abandoned my first as it became a long-winded account of what AARE has been / is doing in 2005: for example, our response to the RQF paper; participation in the National Stakeholders Forum; the focus conference in Cairns on Quality in Educational Research; the special issue of RARE also on research quality matters (due out later in the year); participation in the ‘HASS on the Hill’ event (see appeal to participate in this issue); the seminar / workshop for editors of Australian education journals (to be held at the Parramatta conference; see item this issue); development of an AARE strategic plan; revision of our constitution; plans to appoint an executive officer; and so on. (I could and probably should also add to this list things that participants at the recent Cairns conference thought AARE should be doing!)

In rehearsing this list, I became increasingly uneasy, though not with the events, activities, outcomes themselves. Our response to the RQF paper has already been used to inform discussions in several faculties and schools of education around Australia. And the highly successful focus conference in Cairns has heightened awareness of an impending RQF and assisted senior researchers from almost every faculty / school of education in the country to think through the issues and develop strategies for the future (see report in this issue). For the record, the Association owes a great deal to Barbara Preston for her work on our RQF submission and also to Rob Gilbert and Colin Baskin for convening such an important conference.

My disquiet is more about whether and the extent to which these activities are about ourselves, about our own current interests and concerns. To what extent are we bound by the political imperatives of the day? Are we allowing ourselves to be framed by and focus too narrowly on the RQF and what it will mean for us, our own departments, faculties and institutions? Are we neglecting a broader regard for education research, its quality and contribution to society, which may or may not be taken into account in any RQF? What is the contribution we are making to the field of education research and research more broadly?

Hot on the heels of AARE’s recent focus conference, I attended a research seminar in which the presenter (from the UK) reflected on what it means to be a European education researcher; the financial and political imperatives to work across boundaries, not just across state borders but also national and theoretical traditions. For him, it raised questions about ‘who we are’ as researchers and ‘what it means to do research’, indeed ‘how theoretical concepts are (differently) defined’ by differently positioned researchers. In his account, engaging with and collaborating across different European research traditions makes for difficult and yet important generative work.

I do not want to chastise ourselves unnecessarily. Many of the above AARE activities are intended to make and are making a contribution to education research beyond the boundaries of AARE. However, I do think we need to continue to raise the importance of this broader view and activity. Changes introduced by an RQF to Australia’s higher education system will certainly challenge these. It is fairly clear that there will be winners and losers in any new system and that there are implications for individuals, departments, faculties and institutions, and also for associations like AARE.

...continued p2
President’s Report continued

So, who are ‘we’ (AARE)? What is our future? If there is to be a redefinition of academics and institutions, some as teaching-only, what will that mean for AARE? How will AARE be redefined? Will our current membership (growing rapidly in recent times; currently 1300, 10% from overseas with China as our largest national group outside Australia) continue to see AARE as relevant to their diverse interests and needs and to the interests and needs of the education field generally? How can we reconfigure AARE so that it is not simply beholden to an RQF but operates in ways that support and advance education research and researchers generally, throughout our region in ways that provides leadership within the field? As with the European example above, while there will be difficulties in doing this there is much to be gained from working across new ‘borders’, both within academia and between education researchers and research ‘users’ (to use RQF language and distinctions, although I think there are good reasons and arguments to disrupt such distinctions).

The Executive is increasingly aware of the need to work across such boundaries and to develop partnerships with like-minded organizations. In this issue you will note some of our efforts to redevelop connections with similar associations in other parts of the world. Much more could be done in this regard and the executive would welcome your thoughts on this. As mentioned at the Cairns conference, we also need to be careful not to define ‘international’ too narrowly, as European or American or, even more bluntly, Anglo. (The RQF seems to have an even more narrow definition of international researchers, which doesn’t include Australians!) Some of you will know that AARE (and particularly Peter Renshaw who was President at the time) was instrumental in helping to establish the Asia Pacific Educational Research Association (a kind of Asian EERA), its Secretariat now located in Hong Kong. From July this year, AARE’s President has been included on APERA’s Board and we hope this will provide further opportunities for AARE to build on the contributions we have been able to make in our region. We are also endeavouring to establish connections with associations in other related academic fields (eg, we recently became a member of the Council of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences). And we have growing relationships with other organizations with interests in education and education research (eg, NEF (Barbara Preston has just become its President), QUTSL, etc.).

These are just part of what I mean by working across boundaries and it is only part of the work of providing leadership in the field. This is work for all AARE members, not just the Executive or SIG Coordinators. As a member of AARE, I encourage you to participate in this leadership agenda. This issue of AARE News is full of opportunities but they are by no means the limit of what is possible.

Trevor Gale
President, AARE

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• how to develop a structure for the thesis;
• the definition of a ‘thesis statement’ and why every thesis needs one;
• basic characteristics of academic English;
• some tips about what examiners look for and object to in theses.

Our presenter Dr Suzanne Eggin has deep academic experience with thesis writing, as well as recently completed post graduate qualification. This will be hands on workshop.

A detailed abstract will appear in the Conference Abstract Book and you will be able to find your way to the workshop via the room guide and map.

Further details are available from Sue Smith, suesmith21122@yahoo.com.au

Sue Smith
PG and ECR Representative on the AARE Executive Committee and 2005 conference committee.

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A CONFERENCE 2005 EVENT - THESIS WRITING WORKSHOP

The thesis writing workshop, open to all attending the AARE 2005 conference is presented by the PG and ECR SIG and will take place on Monday 28th November at 7 pm.

This two-hour session will cover both ‘macro’ and ‘micro’ issues of thesis writing, including:
• understanding how a thesis is both like and unlike other forms of writing you are already familiar with;
• the relationship between the research project and the thesis;

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE RESEARCH QUALITY FRAMEWORK (RQF)?

The Quality in Educational Research focus conference recently held in Cairns (4-5 July, 2005) brought many in the Australian higher education community up to speed on Research Quality Framework developments and implications, particularly in relation to education research. Almost every faculty or
school of education was represented.

If you couldn’t be there, some or all of the following may be useful reading:


Numbers of papers were also presented at the Cairns Focus Conference and conference participants also developed responses to three broad challenges: (i) for researchers, (ii) for research management, and (iii) for education research as a field.

This material (papers, keynotes and workshop deliberations) is currently being collated onto a CD for distribution to conference participants. If you weren’t able to be at the conference but would like to receive a copy of the CD anyway, email AARE Office at aare@aare.edu.au or phone 03 5964 9031.

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AARE ’05

Creative Dissent: Constructive Solutions

Suggestions for improving the quality of AARE Conference papers

The International Education Research Conferences conducted by the Australian Association for Research in Education have a well deserved reputation for the dissemination of the latest in quality educational research in a congenial and friendly environment.

Moreover, the Association’s Conferences are known for inspiring educational researchers to plan adventurous alliances, as well as helping them expanding the theoretical, methodological and geographical horizons for educational research that has an impact on educational practices.

The Australian Association for Research in Education continues to encourage improvements in educational research and the application of its results in accordance with its founding objectives established in 1970 ([http://www.aare.edu.au/exec.rfq.pdf](http://www.aare.edu.au/exec.rfq.pdf)).

The presentation of research papers at Association’s annual International Educational Research Conferences is intended to encourage public critiques of the work of educational researchers, especially the quality of our research processes, theorising, and findings.

The Association’s Annual Conference is a key forum in which the usefulness of educational research is publicly scrutinised.

The Association’s collection of Conference Papers, Abstracts and Symposia ([http://www.aare.edu.au/confpap.htm](http://www.aare.edu.au/confpap.htm)) provides many papers which offer very useful insights into the changes affecting the definition of appropriate methods for educational research and its funding.

Diane Mayer’s (MAY041063) paper on the implications of changing research policies for educational researchers is well worth re-reading; it provides pointers such as the following.

Presenters need to ensure that their papers meet the requisite standard for the research methodology they have chosen whether this be for example: experimental or quasi-experimental studies, surveys, comparative studies, longitudinal studies, interpretive studies, critical commentaries, practitioner inquiries, policy studies.

Depending on research genre, other elements to consider in writing a quality AARE Conference paper include:

1. posing a (nationally) significant research question(s).
2. situating the research reported in the paper within a comprehensive review of the relevant research literature.
3. linking the research reported to relevant theory, your own or someone else’s.
4. reporting on the rigour of the methods that were used to enable the direct empirical investigation of the research question(s).
5. providing a coherent and explicit line of argument from the beginning through to the conclusion.
6. indicating how the results replicate, extend and generalise or transfer across relevant studies.
7. identifying potential colleagues and stakeholders in
various institutions who have an interest in similar problems or questions, albeit in different contexts.

The Australian Association for Research in Education encourages members and conference presenters to pay close attention to these issues and their appropriateness for the type of research they are doing, as well as the changing context in which judgments and funding in now being made for educational research.

Michael Singh
Convener,
AARE 2005 International Education Research Conference

Expressions of Interest – AARE Symposia at International Conferences

Expressions of Interest are now invited to represent the Association at AARE’s designated symposium slot at the following international conferences:
- AERA (American Educational Research Association, 8-12 April, 2006)
- BERA (British Educational Research Association, 6-9 Sep, 2006)
- EERA (European Educational Research Association, 13 Sep 2006)
- ERAS (Educational Research Association of Singapore, 29-31 May 2006)

AARE has established and is in the process of (re)establishing / formalising relations with other education research associations from other nations (as above). One benefit of these relations is the provision to AARE of a guaranteed symposium slot at their respective annual conferences.

AARE Executive is calling for Expressions of Interest from groups of AARE members (at least 4 in each group) to take up the opportunity to represent the Association at these conferences.

The following conditions apply:

1. Separate expressions of interest are required for each conference and should name the relevant conference
2. All presenters in the symposium must be AARE members and should be named on the EOI.
3. Groups (at least 4 in each group) must be willing to present the symposium at the closest annual AARE conference.
4. Groups must also be willing to offer their symposium papers for publication in an issue of AARE’s Review of Australian Research in Education (RARE), within 3 months of its first presentation.
5. The proposed symposium must (i) focus on an issue of particular significance to education in Australia (and more widely); (ii) detail the contributions Australian education researchers are making to this field, and (iii) argue why this issue is of significance at this particular moment.
6. EOIs should be in the form required by the relevant above-named conference.
7. Criteria for judging the quality of EOIs will be the same as that which applies to submissions to AER (AARE’s journal).

EOIs should be submitted to the Executive via Associate Professor Sue Dockett, AARE Awards Coordinator and Executive Member (s.dockett@uws.edu.au).

A committee of experienced education researchers who are also AARE members will judge the merits of the EOIs. AARE reserves the right not to award the AARE symposium slot to any EOI.

EOIs to present the AARE Symposium at the 2006 AERA Conference should be submitted by 15 August, 2005. EOIs to present the AARE Symposium at the other above named conferences should be submitted by 31 October, 2005.

Note that the award does not include financial support and participants will be required to pay their own conference registration costs.

Creative Dissent: Constructive Solutions

Seminar / Workshop for Editors of Australian Education Journals

This is advance warning of a seminar / workshop to be held at this year’s AARE Conference in Parramatta, specifically for editors of Australian education journals, although interested others are also welcome to attend.

The seminar / workshop will be organised by Professor Bob Lingard (Editor, Discourse) and Associate Professor Annette Patterson (Editor, Australian Education Researcher).

Further specific details of the seminar / workshop will become available closer to the conference. Its purpose is to address the likely effects of the Research Quality Framework (RQF) on Australian education journals. If the RQF looks anything like the RAE in the
UK, there will be an increased emphasis on publications, particularly on their quality and impact.

Some issues this may raise for editors are: should editors have their journals listed in indexes? Which ones? How? Does this match the purposes of their journals? Is there conflict between an RQF agenda and individual journals’ agenda? Should AARE get involved in ranking journals (as some suggested at the recent Cairns conference)? Should AARE get involved in creating an alternative index? Are there viable alternative indexes in the UK and Europe, for example, to the much-referenced ISI? How can we maintain a view of contributing to knowledge in the field in the face of the impact of an RQF? Are there ways editors can support each other? What support could AARE provide?

These are only some of the relevant issues we hope the seminar / workshop will address. If you are an editor or on the editorial board of an Australian education journal, this will be a session not to miss.

Office. Full paper refereeing will also involve SIG members as much as possible.

The conference is an ideal venue for SIG meetings and these are being scheduled on different days at luncheon between normal conference presentations – rooms will be allocated and food will be provided.

Another important SIG-related activity will be a meeting of SIG convenors and members of the executive including the President and myself. This will enable discussion of matters such as communication, coordination, and in general, how the increased number of SIGs can effectively function within the organisation of the AARE.

Note: The AARE Office has set up a dedicated email address for communication between SIGs and myself - sigs@aare.edu.au

Rob Cavanagh

1. document the usefulness, influence and funding of (university-based) educational research.
2. consider the changed and changing socio-economic conditions, especially the rise of the knowledge based economy and what it means for improvements in the quality and impact of educational research.
3. think about the positive and negative behaviours the RQF will encourage, and the problems of determining which is which for educational researchers, schools/faculties/colleges and educational research.
4. examine the guiding principles to be used to allocate and authorise selected values under the local implementation of the RQF.
5. have the school/faculty/college advisory group test a range of key propositions regarding the implementation of the RQF through a process involving public consultations, forums, submissions, feedback and trials.

The usefulness, influence and funding of (university-based) educational research

Indicators that educational research is recognised as being very useful:

1. The National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership is exploring possibilities for developing a data base that will provide information to enable teachers to engage in research-based decision making as a way of enhancing teacher professionalism.
2. Education Queensland has its own educational research strategy and designated areas in which it is encouraging research.
3. Organisations as diverse as the Australian Association for Research in Education, the Victorian Department of Education and Training, Principals’ Associations, and teacher unions provide their constituencies with access to educational research in various formats, ranging from extensive databases to synopses of relevant research literature.
4. Eidos, a consortium of universities, government and
non-government agencies, is working to improve education and social research, policy and practice for the local/global knowledge economy.

**Australian educational research has a significant influence on educational practices, both policies and pedagogies.**

Teachers and others are working with ideas created by Australian educational researchers, for example:

1. action research,
2. the new basics,
3. productive pedagogies,
4. multi-literacies,
5. productive diversity,
6. appropriating English
7. multilingual knowledge economies
8. motivation, 'E/e'gagement

**There is modest funding for educational research**

1. The DEET funded a study of the motivation and engagement among boys of low SES, Indigenous, rural and remote community backgrounds.
2. The NI QTS funded a study identify attributes of enhanced teacher professional that engage with and are responsive to these new and interesting times.
3. The NSW DET is funding a study of school safety.
4. The ARC funds a range of educational research, everything from issues relating to girls and their study of new information, communication and computing technologies, through to studies of international student mobility and innovation in higher education.

**The knowledge based economy**

Minister Nelson’s call for improvements in the quality and impact of (educational) research could provide a useful point of departure:

*Research is a key element of an innovative and economically prosperous nation. For Australia to be competitive in a knowledge based economy, our research must be of the highest quality and standing (Minister’s Foreword to the Research Quality Framework: Issues Paper, The Commonwealth of Australia, 2005, p. 3).*

What is meant by the keywords in this statement, and how does educational research relate to them: ‘knowledge based economy,’ ‘research,’ ‘quality’ and ‘standing,’ ‘innovation,’ ‘prosperity’ and ‘nation.’?

What are the changed and changing material and socio-economic conditions that call for improvements in the quality and impact of Australian educational research?

“How will the RQF be used to drive the production of quality educational research that has an impact on the innovations necessary for ensuring Australia’s place in the local/global knowledge economy/society?”

**The RQF effects on the behaviours of educational researchers**

Minister Nelson is convinced that the RQF which he has endorsed will “drive positive behaviours, encouraging researchers and research organisations to focus on the quality and impact of their research” (Minister’s Foreword to the Research Quality Framework: Issues Paper, The Commonwealth of Australia, 2005, p. 3). This concern for encouraging positive behaviour is elaborated upon the Research Quality Framework: Issues Paper (The Commonwealth of Australia, 2005, p. 14). The positive behaviours the RQF expects from educational researchers, those who are most likely to be deemed winners under this scheme, can be paraphrased as follows:

1. enhancing the quality of educational research-related publications
2. supporting early career educational researchers
3. improving the strategic planning of educational research in universities
4. promoting collaborative linkages with industry/end-users
5. enhancing the impact of educational research on policy and practice
6. improving the internationalisation of Australian educational research and educational researchers
7. improving inter-institutional linkages
8. facilitating trans/cross disciplinary research
9. encouraging access to high quality educational research.

“How might the RQF changes or reform structure winning and loosing for individual educational researchers, their work units within their universities as well as their volunteer-operated professional organisations, particularly the Australian Association for Research in Education?”

**Is this desirable?**

The guiding principles in the Research Quality Framework: Issues Paper (The Commonwealth of Australia, 2005, p. 12) allocate authority to the following values:

1. transparency: open, informed public, credibility
2. acceptability: transparent, reliable, timely, equity
3. effectiveness: cost-effectiveness, rigour, accessible
4. encouraging positive behaviours: improve research, vibrant research culture

In addition to research excellence, Minister Nelson identified another important value: “The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that resources provided to carry out research are directed to ... public benefit” (Minister’s Foreword to the Research Quality Framework: Issues Paper, The Commonwealth of Australia, 2005, p. 3).

*In terms of transparency, what might be done to ensure Governments, stakeholders and taxpayers—the voting public—are better informed about the actual results derived from the educational research in which the nation invests? What approach to equity for early career educational researchers, those who do not have an established career pathway (due for instance to contracts and casualisation) and those in "less research intensive" universities will be acceptable to organisations, agencies, the Government—and the public? Will the RQF be effective in avoiding high cost implementation and avoiding work intensification by...*
the displacement of increased administrative burdens on educational researchers? How effective will the RQF be in ensuring that the results of educational research are accessible to the broader community? Will the effort to improve the quality and impact of educational research support the development of a vibrant culture in educational research throughout Australia?

What might be possible?

Minister Nelson established an advisory group chaired by an expert in research assessment from England. This group engaged in public consultations, sought submissions and feedback, conducted public forums and, set out and trailed possible models. The Minister’s Expert Advisory Group set out “a series of propositions which seek to focus stakeholders’ thinking on the main issues that need to be addressed for the development of an RQF” (Minister’s Foreword to the Research Quality Framework: Issues Paper, The Commonwealth of Australia, 2005, p. 3).

A school/faculty/college’s tactics and strategies for responding to and engaging with the RQF might usefully be approached by working through situational analysis specific explorations to the following interrelated questions:

1. How might funding for educational research be (massively) increased from its current miniscule investment?
2. What might it take to create public confidence that a research-based approach can deliver improvements in education commensurate with the necessary financial investment?
3. How might the reputation of educational research be improved by making it more useful for child-care workers, teachers, educational administrators and education policymakers in making informed, robust, principled decisions that improve practices in education, training and lifelong learning?
4. How might respect for educational research be enhanced, using which credible models of educational research and producing what type of research evidence that will warrant trustworthiness in shaping these educational practices?
5. How can the useful information, insights and ideas for improvements in education generated by educational research be structured and organised to effect advances in educational practices?
6. What can be done to increase the use of research, and research tools and processes by educational practitioners, and thereby enhance teacher professionalism?
7. What significant changes are required in educational research (rigorous methodologies); the values (norms) and skills of educational researchers and the incentive/rewards and organizational structures for educational researchers, to increase funding for educational research?
8. How might the educational research community produce a core of generally accepted, substantive results? What are effective mechanisms for doing this? Could this give educational researchers a collective voice?
9. What efforts might be undertaken across the field of educational research to produce multiple scenarios that capture the debates, complexities and possibilities suggested by research findings about fundamental issues in education while maintaining methodological pluralism? Could this improve the status of educational research?

References
MacLeod, D. (2005), The hit parade: The next research assessment exercise isn’t until 2008, and the rules are yet to be published, but already academics are looking to be noticed, Education Guardian, 14 June, pp. 18-19.
Postgraduate Students Research Works-in-Progress

If you are a student member of AARE, and would like to share your research work with the wider AARE community, please send a 150-200 word description of your research, along with your name, degree, email address and thesis title to either Sue or Kelli (addresses listed below).

Expert use of technology: youth culture, gender and learning.

This study will investigate and document the social construction of technological expertise, gender, and identity within teenagers' specialist non-school communities. This study will focus on teenagers' perceptions of their expertise in their site of learning (non-school setting) as a source for agency compared to traditional school settings, and their descriptions of how their expertise was obtained, developed, shared, and communicated. This study will ask how gender features in the construction of technological expertise in these specialist communities, as well as explore the capital and agency possessed by these non-school 'experts'.

An ethnographic, participant observer approach will be used to gather data for in-depth case studies, of which data collection is likely to include open-ended interviews, field notes, observations, the researcher's journal, audio taping, and small group discussions - the resulting artefacts of which will be examined and deconstructed. Interviews will be conducted with participants to understand and explore teenagers' perceptions of the agency and value of non-school 'experts' and construction of 'expertise'.

Data collection has recently begun. This study will define technological expertise, technological interest, and technological engagement through documenting how teenagers' expertise was and is understood, developed, informed, shared, and communicated, which will lead to sophisticated understandings that is needed in these areas.

Name: Nicola F. Johnson
Degree: PhD
Deakin University
Supervisor: Dr Leonie Rowan
Email: mjl@deakin.edu.au

Teachers shortages and the retention of 'non-english speaking background' student-teachers: a case study framed by the transnational mobility of knowledge workers

This thesis contributes to the empirical investigation of the challenging opportunities that arise from the retention and attrition of non-English speaking background student-teachers. The study includes both high-school leavers and mature age professionals making a career change to teaching. The specific focus is NESB student-teachers of non-European origin mostly from Asia, Africa and the Pacific Island nations but not exclusively. The 'subjects' for this study are enrolled in teacher education programs before being recruited to work in the Australian schools.

This thesis situates their experiences in the context of current and projected teacher shortages as well as testing current theorisation of global cultural flows of people in terms of the transnational mobility of knowledge workers. The contemporary transitions in globalisation/localisation have given rise to many problems, one of which is the focus of this research project. Specifically, it explores the educational experiences of a key category of Australian knowledge workers having transnational connections across state frontiers, namely 'NESB' student-teachers of non-European origins. The "global/local troubles" experienced by these student-teachers and the institutions in which they are educated and employed is especially significant, given mounting concerns about teacher shortages in Australia and other Anglo-phone countries. The tendency towards an increasing scale of transnational mobility of knowledge workers, of which teachers are a key example has arisen because of growing labour supply pressures within and across nations. These have been brought about, in part by an ageing teaching force and mounting difficulties in schools associated with working conditions.

This project is generating a rich evidentiary basis that describes what educational institutions are doing to provide appropriate professional education for 'NESB' student-teachers. It is identifying from the analysis of this evidence opportunities for productive initiatives by education policy actors, with respect to enhancing possibilities for 'NESB' student-teachers to meet the professions supply/demand problems. Further, it is elaborating possibilities by drawing on theories and secondary research about globally mobile knowledge workers. Here it must be noted that key concepts informing these subjects are often as enlightening as they are problematic; of particular concern is the designation "non-English speaking background." Finding an appropriate language to reconceptualise the issues involved in this project remains an important challenge.

Jinghe Han
PhD Candidate
University of Western Sydney
j.han@uws.edu.au

Don't forget – you too could see your work in print! Student members of AARE are invited to write about their works-in-progress for future issues of the AARE News.

Kelli McGraw & Sue Smith.
Student Representatives AARE Executive.
COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (CHASS)


DEST-funded project on establishing quality research measures

You will recall that in the same issue of AARE News (March 2005), the Executive encouraged AARE members to feed into the CHASS project (funded by DEST), which is establishing criteria for quality research measures in the areas of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. Terry Lovatt, an AARE member, is a member of the CHASS project’s reference group (established in December, 2004), although in his role as President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE). Terry is the only educationist in the reference group of 12, which includes Elin Papadakis and Mandy Thomas (the two new EDs of the ‘Social Sciences’ and ‘Creative Arts’ ARC Divisions), Michael Gallagher, Linda Butler, Malcolm Gillies, Toss Gascoigne (Executive Director of CHASS) and Linda Rosenman (President of DASSH).

We have argued that the President of AARE should be included as a member of this reference group but so far without success.

CHASS Board Elections

CHASS will elect a new Board in August 2005. Most of the current Board Members have indicated their willingness to serve another term, with perhaps 2 or 3 stepping down. The CHASS Search Committee will put forward a list of candidates to the AGM. As a member organization, AARE Executive has been invited to put forward nominations. AARE’s nomination is Professor Peter Goodyear from the University of Sydney and AARE member. Peter attended the inaugural meeting of CHASS in June 2004 and prepared a report on this for AARE’s Research Directors’ network. If elected, Peter will liaise between CHASS and AARE and contribute relevant articles to AARE News.

HASS on the Hill

On Tuesday 16 August and Wednesday 17 August 2005, CHASS is holding an annual (this is the second time) national event at Parliament House in Canberra.

The event brings 200 people from research and education in the humanities, arts and social sciences to Canberra for two days, to meet Federal MPs in two-on-one meetings. Ministers and Shadow Ministers have been invited to speak to HASS registrants and answer their questions (see below). They have been asked to nominate issues for discussion from a menu and will then be matched to HASS registrants according to registrants’ expertise.

The 2005 list of topics for discussion is as follows. Note that AARE contributed three additional topics to CHASS’ initial list as well as modification to one other.

1. Designing better cities and a better world
2. Australia in the world: international relations, globalisation, and trade
3. Changing attitudes and behaviour: the road toll, water use, health
4. Innovation and creativity in art, design and performance
5. The economic importance of the creative industries
6. Australia’s aborigines: health, welfare, education and reconciliation
7. The aging of Australia
8. Effective strategies and social dimensions of environmental issues
9. Unlocking the potential of young Australians (men and women)
10. Strengthening our communities
11. Better planning: economics, demography and the social sciences
12. The balance between work, family and leisure
13. Breathing new life into rural and regional Australia
14. Enhancing effectiveness through research for and in professional practice (teachers and other professionals)
15. Expanding Australia’s cultural export industries: Education and the Arts
16. The future of Australian schooling: choice, diversity and governance

The event will also feature a live televised address at the National Press Club, dinner at the Ottoman and a briefing day at the National Library.

Preferential registration for this event is being given to member organizations, so when registering be sure to indicate your membership of AARE (which is a member of CHASS). If you register to attend, it would be most helpful for our records if you could also inform AARE Office (aare@aare.edu.au), AARE Executive is aiming for at least 10% of registrants to be AARE members (i.e. 20 people or about 1.5% of AARE’s membership). Registrations are open on the web at http://www.chass.org.au/hasssh/

Please register soon before registrations close and help to promote AARE and education issues on a national stage.

Mel Lamprecht is the project officer helping in the CHASS office with this event.

p: +61 2 6230 7179
f: +61 2 6247 4335
e: Mel.lamprecht@chass.org.au

CHASS publications

On 30 May 2005 CHASS launched its report detailing commercial activities in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. The CHASS Occasional Paper, ‘Commercialisation of research activities in the humanities, arts and social sciences in Australia’ reports on a study funded by Minister Brendan Nelson and is available on the CHASS web site: www.chass.org.au Also available on the CHASS website is Iain McCalman’s National Press Club address, ‘Making Culture Bloom’.

when registering be sure to indicate your membership of AARE (which is a member of CHASS)

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debate with executive members Michael Scriven, Don Smart, Ralph Stratton, Grant Hannah and others were the lifeblood of change at that time.

To appreciate the reasons for (re)introduction of the AARE Newsletter, one has to take the above context and events into account. And the initiation of this strategy for communication became possible when I became President in 1987 (for 1988) on a platform of change including development of policy (largely necessitated by the Dawkin ‘reforms’). The changes that were occurring brought about the increased need for better communication with members. This was the principal reason for (re)introduction of the newsletter. At the time, I thought it was an ‘invention’ new to AARE. But I now know from David’s (Cohen) piece in the last newsletter that it was a resurrection. There was one major difference. David’s newsletter vision/ambitions grew into the AARE Journal. My vision was less; I had in mind a more immediate medium or means of communication for and among members.

The newsletter was reintroduced in 1988. These were busy days and most of us had little time to do newsletters. In taking the task on myself, I always thought that I would be the initiator and someone else with better skills at the game (and more time) would carry it through. My intention was to supplement the Journal with broadcasts of information related to the everyday life of researchers; and in a language that was immediately understandable and appropriate for the times. It was to be a vehicle for trading ideas among the membership. I never saw it as the principal means by which the Executive communicated with its membership although this happened with diminished alacrity on the part of the former. I wanted to make AARE more public and transparent than it already was. Like my predecessors and successors, copy was always hard to come by and I recall some of my languishing attempts at producing written material. The languishing part is probably reflected in the confusion about numbers and issues in the early years, and the low cost low quality production of the first issues. Despite these kinds of challenges, endemic for newsletter editors, the AARE Newsletter was launched with little fanfare. The credit for its success must go to its succeeding editors whose articles appeared in the previous issue, and who made it the useful vehicle for communication that it is today.

Leo Bartlett joined the AARE Executive in 1980 in the role of Conference Co-Convener for the 1982 Brisbane event. He became National Research Training Coordinator in 1982 and introduced the idea of states research coordinators, special interest groups, and overseas visiting researcher program from that time. He was elected President in 1987 and served his time through to 1989. Leo served as AARE’s representative on the Federation of Social Sciences Organisations – FASSO, and was elected its President in 1989. Leo (re)introduced the AARE Newsletter in 1988. He continued in this capacity as non-executive Newsletter Editor until 1991.
A letter to the Editor

Dr S L Smith
13 Dowel Street
Chatswood 2067

June 30, 2005

Mr Peter Jeffery
Editor AARE News
PO Box 71 Coldstream
Victoria 3770

Dear Peter,

Read News No 50 with interest. Not being one of the ‘nearly all’ the past editors of the AARE Newsletter approached for your 50th issue, I thought I should check in to add to the story of the AARE newsletter. You could be interested.

Like Mick Duncan and David Cohen I was an invited foundation member of the AARE at the Newport Arms in November 1970. It was a memorable few days, in all sorts of ways. David’s retrospective in the 50th issue describes perfectly the frontier-like conditions for the first editors of the AARE Newsletter. I joined David as “co-editor” in 1973, and took the Newsletter from Macquarie to the UNSW in 1974, where I had to find a typist and a printer.

By that stage we were hoping to print more papers from members, and to publish regularly 4 times a year. I therefore re-named the newsletter: “The Australian Educational Researcher” seemed to have a ring to it, and no one disputed my choice. I designed the new cover, developed the layout, determined the format and contents, and ran it for the first 5 years of its publication as the “AER” (I was overseas in 1975).

My functions included sub-editor, news editor, feature writer, columnist, leader writer (I snared a few eminent guest leader writers), researcher, and entreater of members’ papers. I did all the production work, acted as copy girl and messenger between typist and printer, and in the first year was the distributor.

The early AER combined the functions of newsletter and journal for the AARE. The hardest job always was drumming-up papers from the members, so it is nice to know that the AER is now considered to be “one of Australia’s leading education research journals” - thanks for that Mick.

When I retired from editing the AER in 1978 Dr Terry Field took over. In 1989 the executive of the AARE had Volumes 1-6 of the AER (1974-79) bound in a set of 3 books, and presented them to me. I looked at them when I started writing this; Mick was right, they were very basic.

Congratulations on your new-look AARE News- it’s as far from the first AERs as our 1960s typed (and carbon copied) theses are from today’s splendid productions!

Regard,

(Prof) Shirley L. Smith
Hon. Life Member,

Letters to the Editor are a rare event but members are invited to contribute to the NEWS and any academic education research debate by means of public exchange of letters in the NEWS if they wish. Send letters to the Editor AARE NEWS, Box 7%Coldstream 3K7 Victoria Australia.
AARE
CONFERENCE
ORGANISING
COMMITTEES –
EXPECTATIONS

This document should be read in conjunction with the following AARE document: AARE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION RESEARCH CONFERENCE (Comments based on "Draft Principles for AARE Conferences")

The major activity of AARE each year is the organisation and conduct of an international conference held over four days at the end of November and beginning of December.

The organisation of this annual conference is largely carried out by a committee of AARE members based in the local area, or at least in the State, in which the conference is to be held.

Conference committee members act in a voluntary capacity. Before volunteering to serve on a conference committee, members should be aware of the expectations AARE has for members of these committees.

It is expected that conference committee members will:

- Attend meetings of the conference committee whenever possible (attendance can include joining meetings by teleconference or Webex)
- Undertake such activities between meetings as agreed among committee members (this may include, for example, activities involved in organising particular aspects of the conference)
- Attend the conference and undertake ongoing organisational tasks

conference; these should not be so onerous or time-consuming as to prevent the members attending many conference sessions

It is expected that conference committees will begin their work approximately two years before the conference is held. Some aspects of conference organisation may require ongoing work for some time after the conference (e.g. conference evaluation, writing reports, finalising conference bank account).

It is expected that members will give their time and effort to this vital Association role on a voluntary basis as part of their commitment to educational research. Given the size and importance of the international conference, the workload involved can be significant. AARE will reimburse conference committee members for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in their conference organisation role (e.g. travel to attend meetings). However, AARE is not able to reduce or waive conference registration fees for conference committee members, fund their travel to the conference, nor provide other financial or in-kind compensation except as noted above.

AARE is extremely grateful to its voluntary conference committees and recognises that without their dedication and commitment the costs of conducting its annual international conference would be considerably higher. We trust that serving on a conference committee will benefit members by expanding their professional networks, developing latent talents, learning new skills, and providing a sense of personal satisfaction at participation in a major organisational event.

Debra Cunningham
Hon. Secretary.

EXECUTIVE MEETING – JULY 2005

The Executive Committee met for a full day at QUT in Brisbane on 1 July. Thanks to AARE member Erica McWilliam for arranging a room for us to meet in.

In his President’s Report, Trevor Gale raised the potential implications for AARE of issues to do with the current ROF exercise facing universities. Trevor and President-Elect Michael Singh will present a symposium at the Parramatta conference on how these matters should be viewed and possible ways forward for educational research.

Other matters discussed at the meeting included the following:

Plan and Constitution: a working group has been set up to work further on a strategic plan for the Association and to consider amendments to the Constitution to better reflect current needs and practices. It is envisaged that a draft amendment to the Constitution will be put to the AGM to be held at Parramatta at the end of this year.

Relationships with Other Associations: we are currently reconfirming mutual arrangements with sibling organisations overseas for conference attendance at member rates and a program slot for a symposium at each other’s conference.

National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership: the Executive is keeping a watching brief on developments.

Annual Conferences: the meeting heard from Kay
Whitehead (Flinders University), representing Professor Marie Brennan who is convening the 2006 Conference, of plans underway for this event in Adelaide. A decision was taken to call tenders for a venue for the 2007 conference, and to adopt this process for future conferences.

**National Education Forum:**
AARE Executive member Barbara Preston has recently accepted an invitation to take up the Presidency of NEF. We congratulate Barbara on this honour. AARE can now have a second representative at NEF meetings.

**Membership Patterns:** Total membership at 30 June 2005 stood at 1245. International members come from 24 different countries, the main ones being China, the UK, New Zealand, Canada and Singapore.

**Postgraduate Student and Early Career Researcher Issues:**
Postgraduate representatives Kelli McGraw and Sue Smith tabled a paper regarding representation of postgraduate students and early career researchers on the Executive; they will prepare a paper for the next meeting indicating pros and cons of various models for the representation of beginning researchers on the committee.

**Awards:** updates were provided on the selection processes for AARE’s various awards for this year.

**Volunteerism Issues:** as a result of recent queries from some members, it was decided to prepare a paper clarifying AARE’s expectations of members of both its conference planning committees and its Executive committee, emphasising the fact that no recompense is given for this voluntary role (apart from reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses).

Debra Cunningham
Hon. Secretary.

- the thesis must be recently conferred by your institution (last 6-12 months)
- the abstract is from a doctoral thesis (PhD or EdD), and from an education faculty/department/school in an Australian University
- Include your name, postal address, email, and the name of the conferring institution
- Include your supervisor(s) names

Valerie Harwood
Executive Member

**Dr Kathryn Lynch**
PhD
Collaborative work skills for the beginning Information Systems professional
Supervisor’s: Professor. Dick Gunstone and Associate Professor Julie Fisher
Monash University

This thesis explores the skills required by information systems (IS) professionals in order to work effectively in collaborative teams in the workplaces of the twenty-first century. It also considers how these skills can be introduced into an undergraduate IS curriculum.

**Dr Anna Clark**
‘Teaching the Nation: Politics and Pedagogy in Australian History’
PhD
University of Melbourne

There is considerable anxiety about teaching Australian history in schools. In part, such concern reflects the so-called “History Wars”, which have been played out in museums and national commemorations, as well as history syllabuses and textbooks. Such concern also reveals a professional and pedagogical debate over the state of the subject in schools. This thesis problematises history education as a site of contested collective memory and argues that concern over “teaching the nation” is intensified and augmented by an educational discourse of “the child” that shifts the debate over the past to the future.
Dr M Kelly
'I wouldn't teach any other grade': a case study of kindergarten teachers' work
PhD
University of Tasmania

Whilst the nature of teachers' work in primary and secondary contexts has been the focus of considerable investigation, in the field of early childhood education, kindergarten teachers' work has been under researched. This has important implications for the field, specifically that the work of kindergarten teachers is not understood. Consequently, the work of kindergarten teachers is often under-valued and accorded a lower status than that of their colleagues in other teaching settings. The study provides an in-depth examination of four kindergarten teachers' work with the aim of illustrating the complex and diverse nature of kindergarten teaching. A second aim of the study was to gain an understanding of how individuals came to teach in kindergarten, the roles that kindergarten teachers are required to adopt, and what it means to be a kindergarten teacher. An ethnographic, narrative, case study approach to the research was adopted. Extensive observations and interviews of four kindergarten teachers working in government schools in northern Tasmania were employed to examine the nature of kindergarten teachers' work and the meaning of that work for these teachers. Through this study, a framework for understanding the nature of kindergarten teachers' work emerged. The framework takes into account the personal, professional and social dimensions of kindergarten teachers' work. The findings associated with the personal dimension suggest that these participants entered the area of kindergarten education through serendipitous circumstances or opportunities. The participants described their work as hard although kindergarten teaching was also viewed as being rewarding and a privilege despite the low status and lack of understanding that had been associated with their work. The professional dimension of kindergarten teachers' work revealed the participants were required to adopt diverse roles that can be divided into three broad categories: roles that reflect the purposes of kindergarten education such as introducing children and their families to formal schooling; roles that are related to specific aspects of kindergarten teachers' work which included the role of facilitator or social worker; and general roles such as being the keeper of the peace or comforting children. The participants in this study often worked in relative isolation from other teachers, senior members of staff and their school's principal. The findings of the study suggest that the social dimension was influenced by the physical design or location of the kindergarten classroom, timetable differences between the kindergarten and the rest of the school and kindergarten teachers' perceptions that their work is misunderstood by those not involved in kindergarten teaching.

Dr Katrina Lamont
'The relational nature of mentoring gifted children using desktop videoconferencing'
E&D
University of Southern Queensland

The integration of technology into classrooms, the education of gifted learners, and the challenge this presents to classroom relationships as a result of engaging with computer technology are significant issues for teachers in this decade. The evolving paradigm of technology use, the deep learning of computer skills that students will require for future employment and how this can be incorporated into appropriate pedagogies for gifted learners also poses challenges for teachers. This thesis reports on a unique mentoring program that was developed to utilise desktop videoconferencing (DVC) technology and designed to specifically address these challenges. The study was undertaken in a large independent school (K-12) in New South Wales, Australia and involved six students and six teachers, none of whom had any previous experience of DVC or mentoring. The aim of the study was to investigate learning outcomes for teachers and gifted students. This study employed DVC as a didactic strategy over a 10-week period. The mentoring sessions of the cohorts and their post-mentoring interviews were evaluated using grounded theory methods of data gathering and analysis over a 2-year period. The findings demonstrated that the nature of learning during DVC could be constructed as an emergent theory, based on the teaching philosophies of the teachers and their goals for their students. Technical support, relational mentors and motivational tasks created supportive environments for DVC. Perseverance, enthusiasm and resilience enhanced the uniqueness of mentoring program. Several recommendations are also posited for further research.

AARE '05
Creative Dissonant: Constructive Solutions

2005 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS INFORMATION

AARE is proud to have four stimulating and diverse keynote speakers presenting at the November conference. Two of our speakers will be providing an international perspective and this will be complemented by two Australian speakers.

Professor Linda Tuhwaal Smith, from the University of Auckland, will be giving the opening keynote address on the first day of the conference. Professor Smith is an internationally recognized expert in indigenous education and research and is a sought-after speaker on these issues. Professor Margaret Vickers is the Director of Research and Research Degree Programs, from the University of Western Sydney. We look forward to hearing about her views on Australian education and educational policy. Professor Yang Zhong, Vice President of Northeast Normal University in China, will be delivering a timely and pertinent keynote address on China's moves towards reforming higher education for its people. Finally, we are very lucky to have

On-line Edition 14
Professor Mary Kalantzis, President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education, to deliver the Radford Lecture.

So, please, show your support for our four exciting and inspiring keynote speakers!

Lorraine Smith

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS -REMOTE ACCESS

AARE 2005 CONFERENCE WEBEX OPPORTUNITIES

WE WANT:
- to make it possible for people all over Australia and in many other places to see and hear our carefully chosen and expert keynote speakers via Webex.
- To make access free from anywhere for individuals or groups.
- TWENTY VOLUNTEERS AT 20 INSTITUTIONS

DO YOU WANT:
- to hear and see AARE 2005 Keynotes but can’t attend the conference in person?
- to help make the keynote speakers easily accessible to people at your university during the conference?
- to set-up a group at “your place” to have people watch and hear and ask questions of the keynote speakers?

CASH AVAILABLE:
- to pay for local advertising to get a group together
- to buy some biscuits and coffee/tea

Individuals can get access via Webex by sending a message to pjeff@aare.edu.au but it might help if a volunteer at each of several institutions was to set up group sessions for each keynote. To encourage people to set-up group viewing real-time meetings at institutions using WebEx, we have $50 each for the first 20 institutions to apply. It is easy to do and a worthwhile exercise in research dissemination. All we need is 20 volunteers who can use a phone and the internet and who will arrange a group session. Group leader volunteers need to apply to pjeff@aare.edu.au by 30th September 2005. We will need the names and emails of the people in your viewing group as well as the leader’s email.

Peter Jeffery will help people with so called technical details by giving instructions, assistance and even a one on one demo of WebEx if necessary. Contact pjeff@aare.edu.au

LET’S MAKE SURE OUR KEYNOTES ARE SEEN AND HEARD WIDELY AS WELL AS AT PARRAMATTA IN THE AUDITORIUM.

PLEASE CONSIDER ASSISTING OUR DISSEMINATION EFFORTS. IT WILL ONLY COST YOU A LITTLE TIME AND EFFORT.

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Would you like to try WebEx free from the safety of your desk?

AARE can facilitate meetings of two or more AARE members through the web. Initially you might try a meeting with Peter Jeffery to make sure you can do it, but then Peter can host meetings for you between you and any others with free local and international phone calls.

Thanks to WebEx our sponsor.

Free to on-line readers of AARE NEWS only – one of 5 copies of WebEx for Dummies: a reference for the rest of us. NEW EDITION. Currently selling on Amazon.com for US$16.50 per copy. One copy for each of the first 5 readers to send the editor an email with the subject WEBEX OFFER. Offer closes 31st August ’05.


DEVELOPMENTS AND CHANGES

Additional dot point to front page
An additional dot point has been added to the string of aspects of AARE operations on the home page since the “notice board” has been relegated to one click lower in the website hierarchy. This dot point leads to “submissions to government” This is to cater for people who want everything on the front page, an easy path to the latest thing AARE has going. Multiple entry and access to AARE content is provided via the front page, notice board, coming events, tabs in the headers and also the excellent search engine.

Melbourne Conference Papers
Over 500 full conference papers [not .ppt presentations] have been added to AARE Conference papers collections. This brings the total educational research documentation available on-line from AARE to about 5,000.

2005 Focus Conference Abstracts and Program
These have been added to facilitate people attending at Cairns. These details also advertise the academic achievements of members and the Association as well as contributing to the archive of authoritative work available from AARE.

Submissions to Government
The process of placing these onto our website has been smooth. Web usage (as it has grown up) is increasingly using specific URLs as a reference in documents. This is a problem for the long term operations of any website because it inhibits the Association’s freedom to re-structure the site. However, the habit of specifying URLs is widespread and I guess must be
accommodated. This means that any future re-structuring of AARE website must be undertaken in such a way as to preserve links in documents scattered throughout the world in digital and print repositories.

Updates needed – responsibilities
AARE website requires constant attention but especially needs updating immediately after the Annual General Meeting. Responsibility for the replacement entries rests with various members of AARE Executive.

What is required is that any new members simply write a MSWord document statement that includes the up-date information and pass it to the Website Manager. The document will be then converted to html and superimposed over the existing statement on the web. It is easy for a new incumbent to copy any existing file off AARE website, make changes in Word and then send the replacement document to the Manager. All hypertext links will be preserved or added as required.

Listservs:
A number of SIGs have listservers within AARE’s email domain. Usage varies, depending on the activity level of each SIG. ICT SIG had several uses recently and so did AMSIG. The most recent established was an Early Childhood list and immediately it was tested one person requested to OPTOUT. This underlines the responsibility of SIG convenors to make sure they have up to date permission of a SIG member before putting them on a list. The lists do not allow attachments as AARE service costs would increase. Most lists are able to accept sending by any member on the list. The Website Manager and AARE’s ISP monitor traffic on the lists.

USAGE
See current statistics on the website.

Reference usage support from ACER Library
ACER Library [Stuart Hughes and colleagues] have assisted a USA student seeking details of a 1981 paper in the conference papers collection on AARE website. The paper [as for all papers at that time - 14 years ago] was posted as full text but had lost all the tables and figures because .txt does not support such graphics. All the older papers in AARE’s conference papers collections are in .txt because that was all AARE could publish in 1991 due to technical limitations. ACER Library was able to source the hard copy of the original paper in their collection, scan it and send it to the student and us as .pdf file complete with the needed graphics. ACER Library has offered to perform this service for any other AARE collection papers in similar condition on an as needed basis. AARE conference papers hard copies are passed to ACER for the Library and for indexing into the Australian Education Index. This has occurred since AARE was established.

We are very grateful for the continuing support of ACER Library in our efforts to provide access to academic work of AARE members.

Outage
On Friday 17th June someone dug up a Telstra cable in the Mt Dandenong area east of Melbourne. As a result AARE website was off-line until sometime Friday night. This also cut off AARE email [as well as that of thousands of other users]. AARE Office received one phone call from a Monash librarian on Friday to inform us that our website wasn’t working and another on the following Tuesday. When told the nature of the fault and that it had also cut off all email the callers congratulated us on devising an excellent strategy for dealing with emails on any Friday.

AARE members and the public are being served very well by the website.

Use of WebEx:
Several parts of AARE have used WebEx to facilitate Association professional development, academic and administrative work. Meetings of the 2005 Sydney Conference Committee and AARE Executive have been possible and free of telecommunications charges due to WebEx use. The ICTSIG also used webex for professional discussions and webex workshops are in planning by at least two SIGs. AARE Focus Conference and AARE 2005 Sydney Conference will use webex to make available keynote speeches and perhaps some other discussions.

Peter Jeffery
AARE Website Manager

Cairns Focus Conference Report

On 3-5 July some eighty people from around Australia and overseas gathered at James Cook University in Cairns for an AARE Focus Conference entitled Quality in Educational Research: Directions in policy and practice. Sponsored by the Queensland social and educational research consortium Eidos, James Cook University’s School of Education, Webex, and Commodore Press, the conference attracted an excellent list of speakers representing universities, government and various arms of the educational research community. All except 3 universities in Australia had senior delegates at the Focus conference.

The conference was prompted by the Association’s keen interest to support its members and the educational research enterprise in general in responding to current policy developments affecting the practice and directions of research. In particular, the Australian Government’s Research Quality Framework has the potential for major impact on the way in which educational research is conducted. The conference considered questions about the features of an educational research enterprise which will
best meet the needs of key stakeholders and audiences, how quality and accessibility should be understood in this context, and what policy, accountability and assessment frameworks might promote high quality and accessible educational research. The conference program included an impressive array of addresses, papers, panels and workshops on these issues.

Prof. Rob Gilbert Convener AARE Focus Conference 2005 – Cairns and Dr Adrienne Alton-Lee keynote speaker from the Ministry of Education New Zealand.

Conferes were met on arrival on Sunday at Kewarra Beach Resort which was also the venue for the President’s reception hosted by Trevor Gale. The conference dinner was also held in the tropical atmosphere of the Resort, and excellent entertainment was provided by the Cairns High School string quintet, who played a rich mixture of classical and light modern music with aplomb. Kewarra Beach Resort marked the event as a tropical delight with members enjoying the palm tree lined beach and breakfasting next to the tropical garden, pools and lake.

Following the opening by Professor Bernard Moulden, Vice-Chancellor of James Cook University, Association President Trevor Gale welcomed

participants and set out the goals of the conference, committing the Association to a continuing aim of promoting education research in various policy forums. Trevor then introduced Lyn Yates of Melbourne University, herself a former President of the Association, who gave the opening address.

The keynote speakers offered a fascinating range of perspectives on the conference themes. Lyn Yates, in asking Is impact a measure of quality? identified competing agendas in the current quality research re-assessments in Australia, and reviewed the broader context of the status of education research and how this impacts on debates and strategies with regard to quality. Lyn argued that the education research community needs to develop appropriate quality indicators in the field of education, but that this requires attention also to the contextual pragmatics and politics of how such assessments will be enacted, as well as to the contexts of production of education research.

Adrienne Alton-Lee from the Ministry of Education in New Zealand reported on A collaborative approach to knowledge building to strengthen policy and practice in education: The New Zealand Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme. In the context of the conference, the paper was a fascinating example of how one education system has attempted to strengthen the use of evidence-based approaches in both educational policy and practice to enhance social and academic outcomes for diverse learners. Adrienne explained the methodology of the Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis Programme and the collaborative processes involving researchers, policy-makers, and educators in identifying what can be learned from the evidence about what works, under what conditions, why, and how. The paper raised important questions for researchers about their roles in contributing to collaborative knowledge building that can make a positive difference in education.

The third keynote address, entitled Applied and practice based research – developing quality criteria, was presented by John Furlong of Oxford University. Speaking of the UK context, John reported on a project sponsored by the British ESRC which aims to clarify different approaches to applied and practice based research with a view to developing appropriate quality criteria for the academic, policy and user communities. The paper addressed the concepts of applied and practice based research and ‘the multiple models of research conducted in, with and/or for practice’, and proposed four dimensions of quality which should inform research assessment. Illustrative criteria for appraising each dimension were identified from the research undertaken in the project, and suggested as important considerations in judging research quality.

An important focus of the conference deliberations was the development of the Australian Government’s Research Quality Framework. Evan Arthur of the Department of Education, Science and Training outlined current policy initiatives, the motivations driving them, and the issues they raise. Evan summarised the developments so far, and the plans for further development and trialling of the framework for possible consideration in the 2006-07 budget.

Delegates at the Focus Conference take a break from sessions but not from discussions.

Panel discussions were an important element of the program. Brian Davies, Jill Blackmore, Evan Arthur and Lyn Yates considered ‘Issues in developing and assessing quality in educational research’, and the relations among the goals of education research, concepts of what quality and accessibility comprise, and what kinds of government policy might promote them. A second panel, including
Doune McDonald, Sid Bourke, Michael Singh and John Furlong, discussed ‘Institutional approaches to promoting and monitoring research quality and accessibility’, reporting on experiences of and/or proposed strategies for promoting and monitoring the quality and accessibility of research within education schools and faculties. [See article elsewhere in this AARE NEWS].

A major component of the program was the wide range of important papers addressing issues related to the conference theme. Papers were too many to mention here, but will appear on the Association’s website and on CD in due course. They covered such topics as quality in quantitative methods, researching educational change, the experiences of research assessment in the UK, linking research on schooling, professional practice and educational policy, and early career research.

Finally, a culmination of the conference was a series of workshops in which participants identified important implications of current policy directions and potential steps the Association might take to further its aims and promote the interests of educational research. One workshop considered the likely consequences of the proposed research quality assessment scheme for research practices in education, and how it might impact on postgraduate students and early career and established researchers.

A second workshop discussed likely consequences of the proposed research quality assessment scheme for organising and managing research in education, and what strategies will enable research in education to consolidate its standing and prosper in a research quality environment. A third workshop addressed the likely consequences of the proposed research quality assessment scheme for education research as a national enterprise and its capacity to contribute to national benefit, identifying how AARE might provide evidence-based feedback and advice to policy makers and institutions about the effects and opportunities arising from the research quality framework. The results of these workshops will be collated and presented at a symposium at the AARE Annual International Conference in Parramatta.

The high quality of presenters and papers at the Cairns Focus Conference was a significant feature of the event. The fact that the conference had a clear focus on matters of great importance to participants was a major factor in the depth of discussion and the outcomes of the workshops. This augurs well for future ‘focus’ conferences which the Association might promote.

Rob Gilbert, Convenor. Colin Baskin, Co-Convenor. Peter Jeffery, AARE Executive Member.

+++ Editor’s Note:

All delegates to the Cairns Focus Conference were provided with Focus Folders in their conference satchels. These differed from the usual Abstracts and Program books that AARE has for its conferences in that the Focus Folders contained full text papers of many of the presenters. The achieved intention was to allow pre-reading of the papers so that intense discussion could proceed immediately the groups assembled. AARE Office has sent legal deposit copies to the National Library 2 State Libraries and to ACER Library for indexing in the Australian Education Index. A CD of proceedings is in preparation. This will be sent to all Focus Conference delegates with extra copies available only to members of AARE. We have five Focus Folders to give away to the first five members to send a message to parramatta@aare.edu.au with the subject FOCUS FOLDER. We are giving these leftover copies away while they are still topical. Offer closes 9th Sept. ’05.

Watch out for and check your Parramatta abstracts which AARE Office is copying and posting to AARE website. If you have left out an author that’s what we paste!

CALL FOR TENDERS FOR VENUE AARE CONFERENCE 2007

AARE has decided to call for tenders from conference venue providers in the three cities under consideration for the AARE 2007 Conference.

The cities selected as possible locations for the 2007 conference are Canberra, Perth and Brisbane.

Tenders are invited from conference venue providers in those cities.

After tenders are collected from hotels, groups of hotels, universities and convention centres in these cities, AARE will ascertain whether it can appoint a Convenor and form a Committee for the event in the most attractive bidder’s city. If not AARE will approach potential Convenors [members] in the next most competitive venue tenderer/city. Several iterations are possible prior to awarding the contract for the provision of the 2007 conference venue and venue services.

Note AARE is not calling for tenders for professional conference organizers [PCOs] but is calling for bids for the provision of the venue and associated catering and IT support at the venue.

The appointment of a group to provide professional conference organization at the selected venue will be handled separately.
AARE Annual International Conference attracts upwards of 1000 delegates for the four day event. Ninety percent of attendees are presenters so the conference needs approximately 25 – 30 break-out [teaching] rooms as well as a plenary presentation room capable of accommodating 900 persons. Nearly all presenters desire to use data projectors in their presentations.

Two hundred of the delegates are from overseas and about 600 – 700 do not normally reside in the host city.

The conference always commences on the last Sunday in November with registration, indigenous welcome ceremony and presidents’ reception for 300 on the Sunday afternoon. The conference proper runs from the Monday to following Thursday. In 2007 the dates are Sunday 25th November [reception] Conference 26th November – 29th November inclusive.

Tenders, offers and bids for the AARE Annual International Conference 2007 venue should be addressed to AARE Office attention Peter Jeffery.

Enquiries should be addressed to pjeff@aare.edu.au or 03 59649031.

Tenders close 30th September 2005. AARE members are encouraged to contact possible providers in the named cities directing their attention to this notice.

Debra Cunningham
Hon. Secretary

AARE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION RESEARCH CONFERENCE - GUIDELINES

The annual conference starts on the last weekend in November [normally on Sunday] and runs for four working days after that, often into December each year. This is the time chosen by AARE to best fit Australian academic needs and is now established in the world calendar of conference events relative to all other Associations’ conferences.

Conference Convenor and Committee:
The Conference Convenor will assemble a conference steering committee representative of the widest range of education research practitioners, users and interests available in the State or area bidding for the conference. The committee comprises members of AARE and its members work in a voluntary capacity for approximately two years on the project prior to the Conference date. Any persons not members at the time of forming the committee are expected to join. This is because the Committee is a sub-committee of AARE under corporation law and therefore members serving on the committee enjoy the normal protection accorded to volunteers working in an incorporated association.

Venues:
The current size of the annual conference is approximately 1000 papers presented by 800 members. Accordingly, the conference requires a venue with many fully equipped teaching spaces (approximately 25 - 30 so called break-out rooms with OHP and powerpoint facilities, plus at least one large 800-900 capacity plenary session space. This tends to encourage use of tertiary institutions or convention centres although joint operations with a set of adjacent hotels could be manageable.

Special venues:
Special venues are also included periodically by request or as a result of planned initiatives of the Executive. Thus, for example, overtures were made by AARE to Singapore ERA when AARE Executive wished to pursue the national objective of increasing Australian links to Asia. Likewise, AARE holds joint conferences with NZARE alternating between NZ and Australia hosting the joint conference. This is by longstanding agreement with our sibling organization in the Pacific area. The cycle of joint conferences is approximately every 5th or 6th year depending on the wishes of each association. The actual dates of recent joint conferences were: 1987 NZ, 1992 Deakin Geelong, 1999 Melbourne and 2003 Auckland. The intervals were: 5 years, 7 years and 4 years. Between 1992 and 1999 AARE also arranged for a joint conference in Singapore (1996) but work started on that conference in 1993. The interval between 1992 and 1996 was 4 years. Thus it can be seen that there has been a general intention to have a special joint conference every 4 years approximately. If this is projected into the current situation (in 2005), it suggests that 2007 would be a year for a special conference. Note: the 2001 conference in Fremantle was also joint with Singapore ERA.

Tendering process introduced
In July 2005 AARE Executive approved a proposal that AARE alter the order of establishment of conference venues, convenors and committees by seeking competitive bids to provide the venue for a particular year [3 years in advance] for a set of locations determined by the Executive. [See item in AARE NEWS #51].

Mini conferences
The first AARE Mini-conference was held in 2003. As it happened, the conference was developed around a special interest area rather than just being a small version of the annual general conference and it brought the Association to the attention of researchers working in discipline areas outside education faculties and departments. Mini-conferences have been re-named Focus Conferences and the first highly successful event of this kind was held in July 2005 at Cairns.

An abbreviated version of a document written by Debra Cunningham, Trevor gale and Peter Jeffery.
THE BACKPAGE NOTICES

Make sure you locate and use the NOMINATION FORM for AARE EXECUTIVE positions for 2005 – 2006 which is included as a separate sheet within AARE NEWS #51. It is separate to make it easier for members to nominate colleagues. **Closing date – 30th September 2005 in Brisbane.**

**Call for Nominations for the Early Career Researcher Award 2005 and the Betty Watts Award 2005**

**Closing date: October 30**

To nominate for the Early Career Researcher Award or the Betty Watts Award, please send a hard copy of your paper with a covering letter to the AARE Office at PO Box 71 Coldstream 3770 Victoria. Also send a MSWord disk/digital copy attached to an email to aare@aare.edu.au clearly identified AARE AWARDS.

Full details at www.aare.edu.au

AARE 2005 Conference – Parramatta Early-Bird registration rate closes 31st August 2005. By that date all proposals will have been accepted and hopefully all full paper refereeing will have been completed and the authors informed.

The draft Program showing placements is scheduled to be placed on the website FOR CHECKING by PRESENTERS at the end of September. After 10 days the Program is sent to the printer and no changes can then be made.

The Abstracts Book will be prepared from the Abstracts published on AARE website. It is important that authors check the website abstracts and inform AARE Office of any corrections immediately they are known. The Abstract Book is used by libraries and many people as a source of names of colleagues engaged in similar work and for information on possible contractors to do research. It is important that it is correct. AARE Office indexes the work very thoroughly.

AARE NEWS 2005

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Please send items on time so that members can receive the NEWS on schedule.

AARE makes annual calls for nominations for AARE Executive positions, Life member Nominations and various awards. There is a section of the website devoted to awards. The Executive section has details of the nomination form to be sent to AARE Hon. Secretary. Members are advised to check these portions of the website and apply when necessary or desired. Alerts are sent by broadcast emails and in AARE NEWS but the calls for nominations are regular events not requiring special notices.

Online Edition