



# Graduate Network

Published by the de Lissa Institute Association of  
Early Childhood Graduates Inc.

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- General Meeting Flier
- Giving Letter

## Presidents Message

Greetings to our readers for 2005.

The committee met on Monday January 24 to map out activities for the year some of which are outlined below.

Two of our committee members, Emmy Kiriakou and Cynthia Hannaford retired at the end of last year after giving devoted service to our association for a number of years. We now have two enthusiastic new committee members, Annette Brown and Catherine Garside. As recent graduates they will bring new perspectives with them which we will warmly welcome.

At our first general meeting for the year, Thursday April 14 2005, we will welcome Judy Grey-Gardener as our guest

speaker. Judy has spent several years in Alice Springs and she will have much to tell us of her experiences there.

On Saturday June 18 we are planning to have a winter luncheon at the Adelaide Mithke Kindergarten, Woodville.

The annual dinner will be held a little later than usual on Wednesday September 28 as this date coincides more closely with the centenary of the establishment of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia and it will give us the opportunity to acknowledge this milestone.

The Associations' 2004 AGM was held on Thursday November 18. Sally Barnes a de Lissa Graduate and recipient of a de Lissa Scholarship created a

great deal of interest and lively discussion when she outlined the work she is doing for her PhD. Her work investigates how early childhood educators construct their own curriculum frameworks. Sally is particularly interested in who is advantaged or disadvantaged in the curriculum development process.

It was pleasing too that the gold coin donation collection from our members present at the AGM raised \$35 which was gratefully received by St John's Youth Services, Halifax Street Adelaide.

Best Wishes

## Graduation Anniversaries

Congratulations to members celebrating the following graduation anniversaries.

**70 years (1935)** – Sheila Wesley-Smith (Martin 1935).

**50 years (1955)** – Heather Hammerstein (Barton) and Beth Mellor

**40 years (1965)** – Carys Penny (Knauerhase) and Heather Hale (Marrett)

**30 years (1975)** - Stephanie James (Hayter) , Catriona Kentish and Rachel Morris

Best Wishes to you all!

## New Committee Member Profile – Catherine Garside

I write this short piece to introduce myself as a new committee member of the de Lissa Association of Early Childhood Graduates. I have only recently completed the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and will graduate at the University of South Australia's April commemoration ceremonies.

After finishing school in 1994 I meandered my way through a couple of TAFE certificates, not really knowing at that young stage what I wanted to do with my life. After completing studies at TAFE I specialised in working with youth and adults with severe and minor Intellectual Disabilities. I found this work to be most rewarding, not only because I could see that I could make a difference in the lives of the people I worked with but because it encouraged me to develop

as a person. I became passionate about working towards equality and acceptance for all people.

As you can imagine working in this field can be quite tiring, so in 1998 I decided to take a break and go back packing and working in Europe. I had the time of my life, meeting new people and seeing places that I had only dreamed of! It gave me a sense of independence and achievement, doing it alone! Over the two years I spent there, I drifted between retail jobs, bar work and being a nanny for a family. I met wonderful people: friends for life, including my fiancé. However, something was missing and I felt that I needed some more direction.

This feeling led to my coming home to South Australia, much to my parent's glee! I sat the STAT test and enrolled in the Bachelor of Early Childhood Educa-

tion in 2000.

University was tough at times for me. As one of the younger mature aged students there weren't many people of my own age to relate to, however I felt sense of achievement on completion. Since graduating, I have been working in a temporary position at a community childcare centre, while also working as a relief teacher in kindergartens and junior primary schools in the Adelaide metropolitan area.

I look forward to participating as an Association committee member because it will give me an avenue for professional development, networking and most of all to follow my passion for making a difference in the lives of young children through promoting early childhood education.

*Catherine Garside*

## Pay Rise for Child Care Staff.

Since completing a degree in Early Childhood Education last year I have been employed as a childcare professional. This posting has made me aware of the poor conditions child care workers face each day, including long shifts, increasing workloads, little recognition for early childhood development and problems retaining and attracting staff due to low pay and high stress.

As many of us in the Early Childhood field know, there has been much focus in the media recently regarding a well-deserved pay rise for many childcare professionals. According to the Child-Care News (2005) on the 13th January 2004, the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in Sydney handed down its decision on the application for improved wages in Victoria and the ACT and in doing so made the following observations:

"We have concluded that the available research supports the proposition that the provision of quality child care is directly related to better intellectual-cognitive and social-behavioral outcomes in children. The quality of care, and hence outcomes for children, is positively related to the level of qualifications of the staff working with children ... [and] employees classified at the same AQF levels should receive the same minimum award rate of pay [as workers in other industries]."

For the more than 80, 000 people working in the childcare sector the recent decision to increase pay by \$64.50 a week for childcare employees in Victoria and the ACT is only the first step in pursuing quality care and equality in this important industry. There is much work to be done if other States and Territories want to achieve similar outcomes. As early childhood

professionals we can help this campaign by participating in the following:

- Supporting the Union through membership.
- Discussing the issue of low wages in the sector with parents and relating quality care to properly qualified, well paid and happy carers.
- Writing to politicians about the issues childcare professionals and parents face and advocating for the Howard Government to allocate funding to the area to ensure that parents don't pay out of their own pockets

In short, this is of major concern for all who have an interest in ensuring children's rights to quality care.

*Catherine Garside*

## Notes From the Field ... Pearls and Niggles

"Ian, can we play cricket!?" This request often prompts a game. Cathie, our new speech pathologist, remarked on how she hadn't seen cricket at a kindergarten before. It just seems natural to me – a loosely organised play opportunity, with children assigned roles they enjoy. They practice, learn and improve skills; new skills for many. Most of all, it is fun! The children's persistence remarkable!

Some children are 'naturals'. We currently have three Indian families at the kindergarten, all with four year old boys. They love cricket. One bowls the most perfect over arm ball with skill and accuracy. We talk about who he is playing for – 'Australia!' he responds ... 'Aussie!' He has recently taken to bowling with a long run up, a la Glenn McGrath. Another plays 'for India'. Our bowler/all rounder child has remarkable knowledge of many of the intricacies of the game, and when not bowling, batting or wicket keeping likes to be the umpire.

We play a modified (devised by me) game using plastic cricket bats, a tennis ball and outdoor blocks for the wicket. Tip and run rules ensure oft running between wickets. Five minutes or so at the crease is an agreed and agreeable time to give opportunity for turn taking. Several children need coaching to hold the bat properly with two hands. Others have had lots of practice. Children who sometimes need help to find a friend get instant company.

Cricket interest can spill over into drawings. Another Indian boy recently drew a most remarkable picture of a cricket game in action. When I sought further information about his work he told me "Glenn McGrath

is bowling the ball. Sehwag is batting. Matthew Hayden is fielding. India has got 395." He had written 395 on his work.

These are pearls; those precious revealing unexpected moments that keep our job such a pleasure. Pearls can appear in unexpected places; the teacher needs to be alert!

We seek to discover strengths in each child, each child is rich!

As we all know, some children tend to get noticed more than others. A constant niggle is how equitable our kindergarten is. Who is advantaged by what we do? Who is disadvantaged? Which children's voices are being heard and who is not being noticed? Whose work is up on the wall?

The new age of the digital camera provides great opportunity to display activity and child engagement not dependent on child art. Not all children are or want to be artists. I feel the artists and early writers can be advantaged.

So we have digital photo displays of cricket, the firefighters, block builders, ballet dancers, box constructors, and the worm, snail and caterpillar collectors, digging patch trench diggers.

And we are proactive in ensuring all families have access to the ever popular take home persona dolls, Annabel and Ramesh. Their take home backpacks include a diary, where families record their 'doings' with the persona doll at home, a storybook chosen by the child borrower, and a 3.2 mega pixel digital camera for recording images that are printed off and stuck into the diary on return. The children can take the photos if they want to. Diary responses are shown and told,

provoking big interest from the other children and great glee for each child with a story to tell. Consider this a cultivated pearl moment.

All families have access to family fun 'homework' opportunities. We currently have one finding and recording every visible number in the home as part of our child numeracy promotion. Homework returns reveal wonderful family engagement, with glorious diversity of response; one child made rubbings of the number plates on her dad's car!

Again, as the responses flood in so to the niggles trickle in ... not all families choose to engage so that child's work is missing from the display board. Does that mean we shouldn't have engaged in the exercise? Frankly I don't think so. What we do need to ensure is that all children are noticed and given positives. Children of families who choose not to do the homework can find and record lots of numbers in the kindergarten environment.

And in the meantime, "Ian, can we play cricket?!"

*Ian Fry*

*Teacher at Adelaide Miethke Preschool a kindergarten with bountiful outdoor space and opportunity for quality ball games.*

**We would welcome member's contributions to the Newsletter. Items for inclusion can be sent to 'The Editor' - see address top page 4.**

**Items for the next Newsletter, due to be published October 2005, should be submitted to the editor no later than August 31, 2005.**

**The Newsletter of the de Lissa Association of  
Early Childhood Graduates Inc.**

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[www.unisa.edu.au/del/alumni/index.htm](http://www.unisa.edu.au/del/alumni/index.htm)



## Millennium Project

### Interviews with our Senior Graduates

Over the past months we have had the pleasure of recording interviews with Shiela Wesley- Smith (1935 ), Merle Wilkington (1936 ), Vivenne Langsford (1937), Naomi (Muffi) Nuenkirchen (1938), Jo Hodgetts (1940), Margaret Chrenoff (1940) and Elizabeth Matters (1942).

We are currently seeking funding sources to enable us to have the recordings transcribed. If you have ideas for sources of funding we would welcome your suggestions.

*Helen Miller and Pauline Butler*

## Centenary Committee

The first meeting of this ad hoc committee to plan activities for the Association's centenary in 2007 was held on the 1st of March. Initially there are 12 graduates from 1947 to 2004 and a representative of the School of Education (a member of the former de Lissa Institute of Early Childhood and Family Studies) on the committee.

We are exploring a number of ideas for activities suitable for all graduates. Please do let us know if you have ideas.

*Helen Miller*

## The Archival Collection

There has been much change with in the University structure recently and the de Lissa building has been undergoing some considerable reshaping in readiness for the 2005 academic year which sees many of the former Underdale campus students and staff relocating to the Magill and Mason Lakes campuses.

The changes include the closing of the Curriculum Studies Centre (CSC) which has been converted to teaching space. This is where most of our archives were kept. The CSC manager Vikki Hopwood has relocated to Mawson Lakes campus as is currently the School of Education Campus Administrator on that site.

During her time in the CSC, Vikki has housed much of our collection and has shown great interest in and keen knowledge of the historic materials. She has been tireless in her efforts to ensure that the collection is safely rehoused and that we have ready access to the photos and the filing cabinets.

John Holmes, School of Education Campus Coordinator, is very sympathetic and supportive of our need for secure archival storage and has arranged for filing cabinets to be placed in G1-06 the meeting room where much of the heritage furniture and the 1940's tapestry is located.

Association members owe Vikki a debt of gratitude for her continued representation on our behalf with the University over many years and during all these changes. We won't lose touch, as Vikki who is our first Honourary Life Member, will continue to be an active member of the Association.

Thank you Vikki and our best wishes for the future!

*Helen Miller*

*on behalf of the Association's committee and members*

## 2005 Committee & Office Bearers

### President:

Christina Mc Pharlin

### Secretary:

Pauline Butler

### Treasurer:

Carol Thompson

### Vice Presidents:

Donna Broadhurst

Cris Zollo

### Committee Members

Annette Brown

Patrea Channon

Meredith Farmer

Ian Fry

Catherine Garside

Helen Miller

## 2005 Diary Dates

### General Meeting

April 14

### Winter Luncheon

June 18

### Annual Dinner

September 28

### Annual General Meeting

November 17