

VICTORIAN ADULT LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Presented to the AGM in June, 2009

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

(presented to the AGM in June, 2009)

PRESIDENTS' REPORT

2008 was a big year for VALBEC as it celebrated 30 years as a professional organisation. It was a year to reflect on progress and change and to reinforce the importance and relevance of VALBEC as an organisation and stakeholder in policy development and good practice in the adult literacy and numeracy fields. The committee were active in discussions, consultations, advocacy, professional development and responding to enquiries and supporting members.

Main activities for 2008

Support for CAE application for the Adult Literacy and Numeracy in ACE Capability Building Project

ACAL / VALBEC hosted forum on the results of the ALLs survey

Successful conference in May and program of PD activities well attended throughout the year

30 years celebration Dinner at the RACV club

Twilight Forum and AGM in June with new executive committee members elected

Nomination for Outstanding ACE Organisation for Adult Learners' week

Noyona Chanda, Head of Numeracy Division & Assistant Director of LLU at London South Bank University presented at the Spring Forum.

Consultations and Committees

VALBEC committee members were involved in the following consultations, committees and events

ACE Capability building project VALBEC member on steering committee

Submission of response to the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program Discussion paper

Submission of response to Securing Our Future Economic Prosperity discussion paper

Letter sent to Min Jacinta Allan and Sandy Forbes expressing concerns regarding definition of Foundation Studies in Skills reforms documents

Participation in the Roundtable consultations: A new ministerial statement for Adult Community Education

Workplace Learning Initiatives request for support for a project proposal to develop a pod cast for Mental health literacy (unsuccessful)

CMM board member

International Women's Day lunch at which Helen Macrae was inducted into the Victorian Women's honour Roll for 2008

Attendance at ACFE events, Lynne Wannan's and Marcia Guild's farewells and Celebration of ACFE achievements in 2008.

Special Projects

VALBEC/ Fine Print History publication – Bev Campbell continued work on this project and gave the keynote address at the conference covering the first section of the book.

Fine Print

Thanks to Sarah Deasey and the editorial committee, the commissioning editors Karen Manwaring (until May) Tricia Bowen and the production team of Mick Kannegiesser and Glen Dower. Thanks also to all the contributors for another excellent year of consistently high standard articles and reports. The initiative of the special student writing issue was a great success and will become a regular part of Fine Print.

Contacts database – this list of programs across the state is updated annually and continues to provide an easy referral base for learners and practitioners.

eVALBEC – circulated to around 850 people on the first of each month with a spread of information and links. It is being used by more providers, researchers, networks and conference organisers as a means of communication with the field and beyond.

VALBEC Website –The website continues to be improved and be updated regularly. It provides a conduit for information about VALBEC and its activities. The statistics for 2008 show over 28,000 visits (21% increase on 2007) with almost 79,000 pages being viewed and demonstrate the use and relevance as a means of communication and connection. Thanks to Don (web master) for the skills he brings to this task and the timely manner in which enquiries are handled.

Liaison with ACAL

The ACAL connection continues to be strong with VALBEC committee members Debbie Soccio (Vice President) and John Radalj (Victorian state representative). We thank them and appreciate their work and commitment to keep up with national issues and concerns and communicate with the committee to keep us informed.

Committee thanks

Once again a big thank you to all the committee members who have committed their time and energy to the VALBEC monthly meetings, Professional Development activities and all the other matters that required attention throughout the year.

We welcomed new committee members Marie Bonne and Sandra Wolfe at the annual general meeting in June and their presence and contributions have been greatly appreciated.

Jeannie Turnbull has been an efficient minutes secretary but she has decided to resign from the committee as she pursues new challenges. We would like to thank Jeannie for her work and patience in accurately recording the minutes in often difficult conditions.

Teresa Cusack has been a great asset to the committee with her work in VCAL programs and wide experience in teaching but she will also be standing down from the committee. We thank her for all her work and contributions over her time on the committee.

Gail Pratley has provided insightful and valued input, especially in the areas of numeracy and the CGEA during her term on the committee. She has also decided not to renominate so we thank her for her contribution and in particular her photographic skills.

Thanks to all the committee for another terrific year.

2008 Committee

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ann Haynes | Co- President |
| Lynne Matheson | Co- President |
| Jeannie Turnbull | Secretary |
| John Radalj | Treasurer & ACAL representative |
| Debbie Soccio | Fine Print Liaison |

General Committee members

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Marie Bonne | Dianne Parslow | Corinna Ridley |
| Teresa Cusack | Gail Pratley | Sandra Wolfe |
| Pauline O'Maley | Kerrin Pryor | |

We all appreciate the work of Don MacDowall managing the administration, finances, archive and website that he seems to carry out tirelessly and always with good humour.

Negotiations in the latter part of the year with ACFE, now in the Department of Planning and Community Development resulted in a commitment to funding and support for 2009. We would like to acknowledge the support of the ACFE board and the partnership with ACFE that allows VALBEC to play such an important and vital role in the ALBE field.

Lynne Matheson and Ann Haynes

June 2009

30 YEARS CELEBRATION DINNER

This was a wonderful night of celebration and acknowledgement of the work and involvement of so many people over 30 years. All who attended would agree that the years seemed to melt away as the talk flowed.

Please convey my thanks and congratulations to everyone involved in organising VALBEC's Celebration Dinner. It was a particularly enjoyable evening. Not only did it provide me with the opportunity to catch up with former colleagues and members of 'the Movement' but it was also strongly evident that the commitment, passion and enthusiasm that I first encountered nearly 30 years ago continues through the current membership. The 'snap shot' of achievements provided an opportunity for reflection about how effective VALBEC really has been over the years. I'm looking forward to the completion of Bev's project. I think that Bev was at the meeting last century - actually in 1992 - when we noted the importance of recording VALBEC's history. Had we managed to find some funds back then she could now be completing Volume 2!

All the best for continued success.

regards

Jenny Dyer (past president)

It certainly was a memorable evening! Congratulations to the VALBEC team which organised the event. I caught up with so many people I had not seen for over 20 years. Our lives have taken us in many different directions since then. Conversation flowed -we reminisced- we laughed - we remembered the early days with much affection. Thank you for the certificate with its thoughtful wording.

But the best thing about the evening was the realisation that VALC/VALBEC is still a vital, well functioning organisation - 30 years on.

Congratulations to those committed members who have taken the baton and handled it so well over the years 1978-2008.

Sam Thomas (past president)

VALBEC CONFERENCE REPORT

Still Glides the Stream – Friday May 16th

The 2008 conference was preceded by four workshops on the Thursday afternoon that provided a taster for the main event on Friday. Shrieks of laughter and much animated talking emanating from the rooms indicated engagement in activities around technology, science and numeracy in the classroom. These pre conference workshops have become cemented as an important part of the conference program, especially for regional members.

The conference began on a sublimely tranquil note on a fresh Friday morning with the Parkville Ensemble playing beautiful chamber music in the auditorium as people arrived. Lynne Wannan, ACFE Chairperson provided the opening address and was generous in her acknowledgement of the role VALBEC plays in adult literacy and ACE in general. The strains of Mozart gave everyone some time to reflect before Bev Campbell presented her work on the VALBEC history publication that had everyone captivated.

The 2008 conference program was designed with a different format in response to feedback from previous years. The spacious arrangements for refreshments provided views of the Docklands and room to move about and chat with colleagues. The program was structured to minimise movement and at the same time provide expanding choice: People appeared to respond to this positively and it was affirming to see the sessions 'equi-subscribed' with no overcrowding!

The program included a panel presentation on the ALLS that was thought provoking and provided several perspectives on the Australian and local levels for action. Positive psychology proved engaging and the applications of learning in community were explored in relation to the Melbourne Museum. People were challenged with presentations that contained reports on projects in technology, community partnerships and research findings in relation to social capital and work and global economics. The final block of six sessions gave a choice of activities that reflect the diversity of learners in the ACE and TAFE sectors. The Employability skills in the CGEA featured as did a DEST funded Literacy project using ICT. Innovative approaches to using theatre with low level literacy students and a paper on the adjustments made to assessment processes for learners with mental illness had particular relevance, while the healthy canteen

project and an exploration of language use in the class room with reference to numeracy provided ideas for ESL and literacy activities and projects.

A highpoint of the conference was the afternoon keynote address by Kate Burrige. She began by saying there would be no PowerPoint and a collective sigh of relief could be heard. She held everyone spellbound and wanting more with her lively and wide ranging talk about our ever changing English language.

The day ended with a short review and people were keen to complete their evaluations and collect a souvenir wine glass. The 104 completed evaluation forms were uniform in rating each part of the conference high in quality and relevance. The 2008 conference was a great success and thanks go to all the presenters for their generous involvement and sharing of knowledge and skills with colleagues who attended from across Victoria and interstate.

One comment from the evaluations that was particularly encouraging:

The 30 years of hard work building VALBEC have laid foundations and it is my role and every teacher in the field's role to honour this heritage by continuing to do our best for our students, while I now work mostly with NESB clients and refugees the principles remain the same.

Lynne Matheson & Ann Haynes

Co-Presidents

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2008

The year started with a Twilight Forum in Ballarat in March in which Dave Tout discussed the results of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills (ALLS) survey. "But that's not ALL the story? The results of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills (ALLS) survey with a focus on numeracy". Although the numbers were small, the audience was interested in Dave's clear description of issues related to the outcomes of the ALLS survey and its implications for ACE and ALBE programs and teaching and learning.

The Practical Matters Workshops on May 15, the day prior to the conference were well attended. Ruth Goddard presented some strategies for teaching and learning percentages; Lynda Achren discussed Project-based learning, digital stories and literacy development; Maria Santburn looked at ways to integrate science into the CGEA; Chris Tully & Vicki Doukas' practical hands-on session showcased ideas on how to assess different levels and different modules of the new CGEA using one resource. Participants were enthusiastic about the practical nature of all the presentations.

As part of the 30 years of VALBEC, Nick Gadd was invited to speak at the Twilight forum in June that preceded the AGM. Nick, a one time member of VALBEC and the Fine Print Editorial Committee, is now a writer and author of Ghostlines the novel that won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award for an Unpublished Manuscript in 2007. He addressed a rapt audience about his journey in writing and read the early pages of his novel. The searching questions which followed his presentation were an indication of the appreciation of the audience gathered at the Twilight Forum.

He left us with the thought, "Some see education as a story, but education is to help people find the plot – to find why things happen".

Noyona Chandra, from the UK, was a keynote speaker at the ACAL conference in September. The week before the conference she presented some stimulating strategies and resources for developing language for maths learning at the Spring Forum. Forty five enthusiastic numeracy teachers from throughout Victoria took the opportunity to participate in "Numeracy activities for all". After Noyona's interesting presentation other numeracy based workshops were presented by Maria Santburn; Dave Tout and Dianne Parslow. Many participants were literacy teachers who were now teaching numeracy and were eager to get the help they needed to be effective in teaching numeracy.

Two final events were held in November. After a request from teachers in Moe, Gail Pratley and Yvonne Russell conducted a workshop on assessment in the CGEA. They examined models of planning, recording and moderating assessment tasks. The participants needed encouragement and assurance of their own ability to create appropriate tasks but were affirmed in their practice and a very good time was enjoyed by all who attended.

Also in November a small and interested group heard Jan Hagston talk about her involvement in a new international survey of adult skills. Jan is the Australian literacy expert on the planning committee for the OECD Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competence.

Thanks to all the presenters and members of the committee who were involved in the organisation of the Professional Development program for 2008.

Dianne Parslow

FINE PRINT REPORT

2008 marked Volume 31 for Fine Print with four high quality editions exemplifying the changing thoughts, ideas and research in ALBE field. The regular sections: Feature Articles, Practical Matters, Open Forum, Policy Update, Foreign Correspondence, Beside the Whiteboard, What's Out There and Technology Matters continued to provide the reader with a balance of theory and practice, local and global issues and their impact on adult literacy and basic education. The journal continues to reflect the influence that a range of different tools, techniques and practices are having on ALBE classroom practice and to provide practitioners with new ideas.

In 2008, our Feature Articles really expanded our thinking both theoretically and practically. Fine Print looked at the blend of a range of vocational and community based projects with literacy focused learning. There were projects about a public housing arts project 'The Pink Room', a blend of music with Literacy and ESL, supporting literacy learning through the delivery of Aged Care, Men's Sheds and the impact on men's literacy and learning in the communities. A key focus was the celebration of VALBEC's 30th Anniversary as a professional organisation and peak body in Victoria. Alongside this, the celebration of Fine Print's history was illustrated through a number of articles printed during the year. An initiative was the launch of a student edition with contributions of writing from students and teachers from all over Victoria. These stories described the learning journeys and life stories of students, stories and poetry of people and places that shaped the writers' views of the world and teacher's experiences and observations of the processes.

Foreign Correspondence took us to England, Scotland, Wales and Vietnam to review what is happening in adult literacy programs and to give us some very helpful tips for teaching overseas. Technology Matters provided a step in the door to technology like using audio and digital stories to support student learning. Practical Matters provided tips for blending drama in the classroom, looking at new technologies and the role they play in the classroom, as well as practical tips for integrating technology and numeracy into viable classroom experiences.

Fine Print remains a leading journal in the adult literacy field in Australia because of the many contributions we receive from practitioners around the country. This year our contribution list included writers Helen Spyrou, Angela Bailey, Sue Wallis, Luzma Sanchez, Lynne Matheson, Dave Tout, Mike Brown, Barry Golding, Liz Suda, Annette Foley, Frances Newell and Nick Gadd. We would like to thank our regular contributors and experienced practitioners who so generously share their knowledge which is greatly appreciated and valued.

Thank-you must also go to the Editorial Committee led by Sarah Deasey. The committee meets to plan each edition, and each time the members bring new ideas, new links, new thinking to the table. The committee included Sarah, Robin, Lynne, Debbie, Karen and Julie. We say farewell to Robin Kenrick who has retired from the committee after many years of support and advice. We welcome to the committee Sally Hutchison and Jane Westworth as new members.

We also had a change in commissioning editor, saying farewell to Karen Manwaring as we welcomed Tricia Bowen as editor in the second half of the year. The work of producing Fine Print is a collaborative effort with the expertise of the editor and production team ensuring the high quality of each issue. Fine Print is now the only adult literacy and numeracy journal in Australia and we can be justly proud of its integral and dynamic role that is interwoven with the history of VALBEC in the publication Reading the Fine Print: a history of VALBEC, 1978-2008. We look forward to more reading of Fine Print next year.

Debbie Soccio

ACAL REPORT 2009

Literacy Live sessions

In the second half of last year there were two free Literacy Live sessions available to the LLN field.

"The VALBEC History Project" in June with Beverley Campbell and Aboriginal Literacy: Bridging the Distance to Learning in August.

Professional Development Flying Squads

ACAL organised Flying Squad's to conduct Professional Development - WA, SA, and in NT (Darwin & Alice Springs) during the second half of 2008.

ACAL 2008 Conference

ACAL 2008 Conference "Surfing outside the flags: catching waves, avoiding rips" in October 2008 at the Gold Coast. Keynote speakers Noyona Chanda, Hermine Scheeres, Michael Balfour and Colleen Mitrow.

ACAL Pre-conference Forum "Adult Literacy, Numeracy & Lifelong learning: A cross sectoral dialogue". Senator Ursula Stephens, (Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion) Dr Chris Duncan (ABS) and Dave Tout.

Last Literacy Link

ACAL has previously received money from DEST/DEEWR to produce Literacy Link; however it is unlikely funding will continue. There will be no further issues as there is no money to do produce them.

Adult Literacy National Literacy Project

2009 funding for National Literacy Projects is uncertain but funding for the Reading and Writing Hotline will continue until the end of 2009. With the loss of the Adult Literacy National Project, DEEWR no longer has a fund from which to provide grants to ACAL.

Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma in LL&N

ACAL has been involved with consultations on the Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma in LL&N. The two new qualifications- being developed by the Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA) for LLN practitioners delivering to adults in and beyond the VET sector.

ACAL has also formally responded to:

- * DEEWR Discussion Paper on the Language Literacy and Numeracy Program
- * Skills and Workforce development discussion paper
- * Government Skill Australia: VET Training Products for 21 Century

ACAL 2009 Conference, "From Strength to Strength" Fremantle 1-3 Oct 2009

Keynote Speakers Dave Baker is based at the London Institute of Education in the UK and is passionately interested in the issue of social justice and mathematics. Dr Peter Waterhouse has had a lifelong interest in adult literacy and learning, particularly informal and experiential learning and will speak about strength-based approaches to learning and teaching. Dr Rob McCormack has a well documented interest in academic and civic literacy working in the past with Aboriginal students in tertiary education and now with students from low socio-economic groups.

ACAL Pre-Conference Forum an Aboriginal Education theme for the forum, focusing on the link between language variation and educational and other life outcomes.

John Radalj

ACAL representative 2009

TREASURER'S REPORT

It's my pleasure as Treasurer to report on the finances for the year January to December 2008. At December 31, 2008 the total assets are 55,221.95. As has been the case for many years we have two main sources of funding - membership fees and ACFE grants. The ACFE grant provides support for the annual conference, workshops and forum, for eVALBEC and Fine Print. These are significant activities for VALBEC and our membership as well as the ALBE community.

Our expenses reflect these activities with the Conference and Fine Print being the main expenses followed by administration (Consultant fees).

The detailed Profit and Loss statement is provided below and the full audited accounts are available for perusal.

John Radalj

Treasurer

VALBEC FINANCIAL REPORT

Detailed Profit and Loss Statement For the year ended 31 December 2008

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|
| Income | | |
| Grant- DEET | 24,200.00 | 22,000.00 |
| Annual Conference | 19,666.30 | 18,253.15 |
| Interest received | 5,192.61 | 1,036.51 |
| Sales- Fine Print | 522.73 | 1,896.77 |
| Subscriptions | 17,209.25 | 16,015.79 |
| Workshops | | 470.00 |
| Other income | 409.09 | 812.48 |
| Fancy Footwork Publication | 359.07 | |
| Total income | \$67,559.05 | \$60,484.70 |
| Expenses | | |
| ACFE - Database Project | 1,653.65 | 5,944.54 |
| Affiliation Membership Fees | 866.40 | 880.17 |
| Audit fees | 640.00 | 800.00 |
| Bank Fees And Charges | 450.82 | 349.70 |
| Committee Expenses | 59.10 | 170.98 |
| Conference 2008 | 29,073.27 | 22,545.63 |
| Consultants fees | 9,518.66 | 4,606.67 |
| Consultancies & Conferences | 652.73 | 1,694.26 |
| Fine Print | 12,900.70 | 15,801.38 |
| Fine Print- Editor | 5,860.00 | 5,000.00 |
| History Project | | 5,162.72 |
| Archiving Project | | 1,836.32 |
| Fancy Footwork | 418.18 | 90.91 |
| Paymate Fees | 93.70 | |
| Postage, Courier, Freight | 193.52 | 663.64 |
| Rent and Storage | 922.95 | |
| Web & Email | 44.34 | |
| Total expenses | \$63,348.02 | \$65,546.92 |
| Net Surplus from Ordinary Activities before income tax | \$4,211.03 | (\$5,062.22) |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the compilation report.

VALBEC Detailed Balance Sheet As At 31 December 2008

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Proprietors' Funds | | |
| Opening balance | 51,010.92 | 56,073.14 |
| Net profit / (loss) | 4,211.03 | (5,062.22) |
| Less: | | |
| Total Proprietors' Funds | <u>55,221.95</u> | <u>51,010.92</u> |
| Represented by: | | |
| Current Assets | | |
| Cash Assets | | |
| Cash at bank | 10,265.33 | 4,707.98 |
| Term Deposit - Westpac 0 109 | 11,347.43 | 20,300.74 |
| Term Deposit No 0 117 | 22,144.85 | 21,034.08 |
| Cash on hand | | 55.00 |
| | <u>43,757.61</u> | <u>46,097.80</u> |
| Receivables | | |
| Trade debtors | 16,296.61 | 2,582.11 |
| | <u>16,296.61</u> | <u>2,582.11</u> |
| Current Tax Assets | | |
| GST clearing | 659.75 | 1,003.75 |
| | <u>659.75</u> | <u>1,003.75</u> |
| Other | | |
| Prepayments | | 2,127.27 |
| | | <u>2,127.27</u> |
| Total Current Assets | <u>60,713.97</u> | <u>51,810.93</u> |
| Total Assets | <u>60,713.97</u> | <u>51,810.93</u> |
| Current Liabilities | | |
| Payables | | |
| Secured: | | |
| Trade creditors | 3,760.07 | 0.01 |
| Accrued Expenses | 291.95 | |
| | <u>4,052.02</u> | <u>0.01</u> |
| Provisions | | |
| Provision for Audit Fees | 1,440.00 | 800.00 |
| | <u>1,440.00</u> | <u>800.00</u> |
| Total Current Liabilities | <u>5,492.02</u> | <u>800.01</u> |
| Total Liabilities | <u>5,492.02</u> | <u>800.01</u> |
| Net Assets | <u>55,221.95</u> | <u>51,010.92</u> |

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the compilation report.

PATRON

Joan Kirner

VALBEC LIFE MEMBERS 2009

Delia Bradshaw

Bev Campbell

Jenny Dyer

Daryl Evans

Heather Haughton

Nance Hovey (dec)

Julie Hurley

Robin Kenrick

Robyn Logan

Helen Macrae

Rosa McKenna

Fran O'Neill

Noel Simpson

Sally Thompson

Sam Thomas

Aileen Treloar-Coates