



**Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council**

**Annual Report for 2011**

# Annual Report 2011

(Presented to the AGM in May, 2012)

## ***Presidents' Report***

The VALBEC committee participated in a diverse range of activities throughout the year. Central to this work was the critical role of advocacy on behalf of members and learners. At each monthly meeting issues were raised and discussed and work done, mostly via email, between meetings to prepare letters and responses on various issues and concerns.

Highlights of the year have been the launch in Adult Learners Week of A Fuller Sense of Self, and the focus on Numeracy and Regional matters in Fine Print, the 2011 annual conference and the series of Twilight and Regional Forums.

The Participatory Action Research project responded to member feedback in a number of ways that included changes to the website. Follow up resources were added after the conference and regional workshops, there were a number of updates to the FAQ page in response to requests for information from the info@valbec, links to the other state organisations and other functions were added to improve access to information and services. VALBEC has ongoing representation on ACAL and supports ACAL lobbying for funding for nationally coordinated activity, as part of the wider role of VALBEC.

The list below provides a summary of the roles and main activities of the committee.

## **Key activities in 2011**

Strategic Planning Day: 23 January

Monthly meetings: 15 February, 21 March, 21 April, 17 May, 16 June, 21 July, 17 August, 20 September, 20 October, 16 November, 7 December

eVALBEC: 11 editions to distribution list of 950.

Fine Print: 3 editions published May, August, December.

## **Other Activities**

Involvement in ACE peak bodies/ACFE workshops and follow up

Meetings and liaison with ACFE project officers

Promotion in eVALBEC of relevant international, national and state events and introduction of jobs advertising

A new VALBEC banner was designed

Responses sent to email questions to info@valbec on a range of issues including teaching qualifications, resources and availability of classes

## **Advocacy and consultation**

Support for ACAL in lobbying for funding for national coordinated activity, conference planning hosting as well as ongoing involvement of executive and state representatives

Committee members attended and contributed to

- National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults focus groups
- Employability skills framework consultations
- Foundation Skills Training package consultations
- briefing for the National Year of Reading 2012

Representation on Learn Local awards selection committee and attendance at presentation of awards in Adult Learners Week

Provided speaker for State Library seminar at The Wheeler Centre for Books and Reading

## **Professional development events, conferences and meetings**

11 Feb: Understanding and Applying the ACSF, Wangaratta GOTAFE

17 Feb, 22 March Participation in ACE Peak Bodies Workshops

13 April ACFE Learn Local launch

May 20 'Sharing Good Practice' Annual Conference at William Angliss conference centre

7th September, CGEA Numeracy Review 2011 VU City Flinders campus

8th September – International Literacy Day the launch of A Fuller Sense of Self, a collection of stories told by adult literacy students, describing their life and learning written by Tricia Bowen. Beverley Campbell launched this book as part of Adult Learners Week celebrations at the Glenroy Neighbourhood Learning Centre

27 to 28 Sept VALBEC hosted ACAL Conference 'Literacy on the Map: Common Visions, Different Paths'  
Victoria University City Flinders Campus  
25 October Bendigo TAFE Australian Core Skills Framework Regional Forum  
10 October Foundation Skills Training Package Consultations  
25 October Bendigo Regional Forum 'Understanding and Applying the Australian Core Skills Framework, ACSF',  
Bendigo TAFE  
21 November Taking Good Numeracy Practice to Wodonga; Numeracy teaching and learning practices for LLNP  
and other programs Wodonga Institute of TAFE  
30 November Twilight Forum North Fitzroy Star 'Restor(y)ing lives – autobiographical reflection and perspective  
transformation in adults returning to study'  
6 December Presentation of Participatory Action Research Project

### **Committee thanks**

Thank you to the committee members who have so generously given their time and energy to attend the VALBEC monthly meetings, organise and facilitate professional development activities and contribute to all the other matters that required attention throughout the year.

We farewelled from the committee Dianne Parslow (4 years) and Corinna Ridley (5 years) and thank them for their contributions and commitment to VALBEC. Dianne held the role of secretary for several years and brought her knowledge of LLN institutions and numeracy expertise to discussions. Corinna contributed a depth of knowledge and experience through her many years working in the LLN field and teaching in the VET and tertiary sector.

We welcomed onto the committee Linno Rhodes from Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre and Paul Rawlinson from Glenroy Neighbourhood Learning Centre who bring expertise and knowledge of LLN and the ACE perspective. Thanks to all the committee for another fantastic year.

### **2011 Committee**

John Radalj	Co- President & ACAL representative
Kerrin Pryor	Co- President,
Lynne Matheson	Secretary
Ann Haynes	Treasurer
Linno Rhodes	Fine Print Liaison

#### **General Committee members**

Marie Bonne	Yvonne Russell
Pauline O'Maley	Sandra Wolfe
Paul Rawlinson	Natasha McCormick

### **Administration and Financial Management**

Thanks to Don MacDowall who continues to expertly manage the day to day administration, finances, archive, book sales and website development and maintenance. We wish to thank him and acknowledge the high standard of his work that keeps things ticking over so efficiently.

### **ACFE Support**

We would like to acknowledge the support of the ACFE board and the partnership with ACFE that allows VALBEC to continue to play such an important and vital role in the LLN field.

*John Radalj and Kerrin Pryor*  
*Co- Presidents*

### **Conference report**

Sharing Good Practice

Friday 20 May, 2011. Attendance 116

With the ACAL conference taking up a large amount of committee thinking and planning time, it was decided to try a different format for the VALBEC annual state conference. Committee members liaised with presenters to develop a program that included themes of Language and Literacy practice in accredited and non accredited programs, Numeracy and online resources and Assessment and Moderation using the ACSF.

The day was very successful and people appreciated the longer sessions that gave opportunities to discuss and really focus on particular aspects of teaching and learning. One of the main focuses of the day was on Numeracy in Adult Basic Education, and many practitioners shared their expertise and ideas. The momentum of reinvigorating numeracy teaching began on this day and will continue in 2012. The diversity, commitment and enthusiasm of all the presenters contributed to the positive energy evident as people stayed on for refreshments at the end of the conference, or headed home with new ideas to try.

Thanks to the committee for working in a truly collaborative spirit, the seventeen presenters, Don MacDowall for his work behind the scenes and the staff at William Angliss who ably assisted in the smooth operations on the day.

Lynne Matheson  
Conference convenor

### **VALBEC Professional Development Program 2011**

The first event was held on 11th February 2011 at Wangaratta GOTAFE and organised by Natasha McCormick. Philippa McLean facilitated a session titled 'Understanding and Applying the ACSF(2)'. This was a repeat of the sessions run previously at VU and Bendigo TAFE where participants were introduced to the Australian Core Skills Framework document. The interactive style of presentation was well received by the 25 participants with positive feedback including comments on the "hands on approach", "group discussion" and "interactive nature" of the workshop. The provision of a regional workshop which offered isolated practitioners an opportunity to interact professionally with others was much appreciated. Once again, the need for opportunities to moderate locally was brought up in the evaluations. There were a wide range of suggestions for what was needed in the way of PD activities which VALBEC is keeping in mind, subject to funding being available.

Marie Bonne and Sandra Wolfe organised a second Regional Forum 'Understanding and Applying the Australian Core Skills Framework, ACSF' with Philippa McLean held on Tuesday 25 October, Bendigo TAFE City Campus. The 18 people who attended were very appreciative of the knowledge and enthusiasm Philippa brought to the workshop.

### **Taking Good Practice on the Road**

Based on VALBEC's drive to reinvigorate Numeracy teaching, Sue Bloye hosted a half day session at Wodonga TAFE on 21 November, where experienced numeracy practitioners Maria Santiburn and Heather Glover presented 'Numeracy teaching and learning practices for LLNP and other programs'. It was attended by Numeracy and Language and Literacy practitioners in ACE, RTOs and TAFE from the North East Victoria region, as well as from South Eastern NSW. Participants had the opportunity to engage with and apply strategies and practices, tried and effective, based on Maria and Heather's experience in a range of programs over many years. There was a dynamic sharing of their knowledge and teaching tips. The order of the morning's program was based on an initial survey of participants needs.

In Maria and Heather's report of the session, the following observations should be noted:

*"The audience choice reinforced our belief that there is still a great need for dialogue in adult numeracy teaching. This dialogue has three elements: successful tasks, the delivery method of those tasks (reality based), and the integration of literacy and numeracy without diminishing the power of the numeracy being delivered. Achieving the balance of those three elements, together with clear links to the learning outcomes being addressed is key to meeting the professional needs of teachers delivering numeracy (not necessarily numeracy-trained teachers). There are still teachers who find themselves isolated and separated from this dialogue. Discussions and feedback during and after the workshop confirmed our view that practical sessions focussing on tasks both old and new, while well received, are not sufficient for professional development. Hence task lists are good, but not sufficient.*

*We believe that a dialogue around best practice delivery and the integration of literacy and numeracy in numeracy teaching is still a vital professional need. We feel that VALBEC is in a unique position to play a pivotal role in stimulating and sustaining this dialogue within Victoria. We are very happy to have played our part at the VALBEC Sharing Good Practice Professional Learning Day in May and at the Wodonga Workshop on 21 November."*

To conclude the 2011 PD program, a VALBEC Twilight Forum, 'Restor(y)ing lives – autobiographical reflection and perspective transformation in adults returning to study', was held on the evening of 30th November, at the North Fitzroy Star Hotel.

Jennifer Miles who recently completed a Master of Education by Research spoke on the topic of her thesis which examined the process and self-articulated outcomes of five participants who were returning to study at a Victorian TAFE institute. Jennifer's well received presentation was focused on the following themes: how stories came to matter; finding yourself through story; validating storytelling's strengths within the context of Vocational Education and Training and finding time and space for reflection.

Thanks to committee members and presenters for their contribution to the success of the 2011 Professional Development program.

*Marie Bonne*

## ***Fine Print***

Fine Print continues to record the rich theory and practice of the adult literacy, language and numeracy field. Content threads throughout the year included the Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills (CAVVS) and the questions around literacy support outside the literacy classroom; technology and e-learning; and climate change. Voices from the regional areas were present in each edition.

We had another successful special edition, this time it was a departure from the successful student writing to 'Celebrate Numeracy'. We formed a special editorial group with Ruth Goddard and John Radalj, who provided expert input to the content. Contributions came from 'the greats of numeracy practice', Dave Tout, Ruth Goddard and Beth Marr, as well as other dedicated numeracy practitioners. We included student perspectives as well, for example, Andrew's story about the Maths he needs on a day to day basis in his gardening business.

Fine Print and its Editor, depend on the time, commitment and energy of a volunteer committee. We thank departing member Sally Hutchinson who made many creative and practical contributions. We welcomed Pauline Morrow onto the committee. Thanks to Linno Rhodes and Lynne Matheson for their continued consistent reliable and inspirational input.

Thanks to typographer Mick Kannegiesser (Digital Environs) for his excellent design and production work which ensures the high quality of the journal.

Thanks to Don McDowall for his role in ensuring the journal is distributed and archived.

Finally, with each bumper edition in 2011, Jacinta Agostinelli has done an outstanding job as editor, not only with her editorial skills but also her talented writing and her creative flair.

*Sarah Deasey*

*Fine Print Editorial Committee Convenor*

## ***Treasurer's Report***

During 2011 VALBEC continued to remain in a healthy financial position.

The key income sources were membership fees and the ACFE grant, along with a small profit from the annual conference.

The main areas of expenditure are the running and organisation of the annual Conference and Fine Print.

The ACFE grant contributes to the production of Fine Print, conducting professional development programs around the State and the annual conference.

We continue to aim to increase membership through our highly regarded journal, 'Fine Print' and our successful newsletter 'eVALBEC'.

The ACAL Conference circulates through the states and in 2011 it was organised and hosted by VALBEC, providing another significant source of income this year with over 200 people taking part in this three day event.. Please refer to the separate audited financial statements for a detailed breakdown of expenditure.

*Ann Haynes*

*Treasurer*

## ***ACAL Report 2011***

### **Conference**

The 2011 ACAL conference Literacy on the Map: Common Visions, Different Paths was held at Victoria University in Melbourne. Co-hosted and organised by VALBEC, it was a very successful event and attracted people from all over Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. The Transitions and Transformations forum on the first day was well received and prompted wide ranging discussions across the sectors represented. The two day program had variety and depth in the concurrent sessions. Keynote speakers were both thought provoking and

inspirational. A highlight amongst the diverse range of workshops was Pauline O'Maley, VALBEC committee member and previous ACAL secretary and president, delivering the Arch Nelson Memorial Address, that was both constructive and humorous.

Attendance: Forum: 125; Day 1: 225; Day 2:189

## **Activities**

ACAL has participated in a number of consultations on:

National Foundation Skills Strategy Consultations

Lorraine Sushames NT, Jean Searle Qld and Jenni Anderson, Tasmania were able to represent ACAL in those states. Margaret McHugh, WA, in WA, Geri Pancini was at the meeting in Canberra. Dr Rosie Wickert was engaged by ACAL to assist in preparing ACAL's formal submission to the National Foundation Skills Strategy development.

Foundation Skills Training Package webinars

On behalf of ACAL and other state councils, WAALC conducted a series of webinars to inform practitioners and other stakeholders and provide a forum for comment and debate. Stakeholders from all parts of Australia were invited and took part. Responses were submitted to IBSA by WAALC, NSWALNC and Stephen Black and Keiko Yasukawa.

ACAL is a partner in the National Year of Reading 2012 supports lobbying for the Reading and Writing Hotline funding to continue.

*John Radalj*

*ACAL representative*

***Patron***

Joan Kirner

***VALBEC Life Members 2011***

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

