



Educational
Centres
Association

President Emeritus

At this year's AGM, we shall be recognising the semi-retirement of our President **Professor Brian Groombridge** who has been an inspiration. Brian first joined the National Executive Committee in 1951 when he took his first centre-based job at Letchworth Settlement.



An academic and educational broadcaster, he has a strong interest in the Third Age. As a young man he wrote *Education and Retirement* (1960).

He is Professor Emeritus of Adult Education at the University of London. The University of the Third Age recently made him a Founder Member Emeritus. He is a major contributor to Help The Aged's anti-ageism campaign, and is a co-opted member of the Older Persons Advisory Group (Better Government for Older People). His contribution

Continued page 2 column 1

Partners in Lifelong Learning

E C A N E W S

Autumn 2006

In this edition, featuring

Sustainability:

New term: new prospects
for adult education?

Sustainability on the ECA agenda

Climate change – pilot courses

Student representation & involvement

ECA in print - plus a blast from the past

Teleconferencing – by a convert

Al Gore's educational crusade on climate

Next edition - Spring 2007 – will feature
OLDER LEARNERS and will also explore
INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING



AGM 2006 Something different – and free of charge!

The next AGM will be a 'showcase' seminar in which ECA members and others can *view, hear about and comment on the current work of the ECA and tell delegates about their own work.*

The meeting will be hosted by the Finnish Institute on Saturday 21st October between 10.30am and 4.00pm. The Institute is at 35 Eagle Street London WC1R 4AQ (parallel with High Holborn) 020 7404 3309. The closest tube station is Holborn (Central & Piccadilly line). You can book by contacting ECA HQ or **www.e-c-a.ac.uk/conf.php** where you can book FREE on-line.

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PRESIDENT from previous page column 1
to the development of the Open University was immense.

ECA National chairman, Bernard Godding, said "Maintaining the ECA's position at the forefront of AE thinking and responding to fast changing agendas, has been immeasurably helped by Brian as our President for the last four years.

He combines a knowledge of and sympathy for the Centres in which he started his AE career with the worlds of academe, broadcasting and politics where he has held mastery for decades.

It has been my immense privilege to work with him and to know the enthusiasm and commitment that he brings to all that he does. He is great fun to be with and at the same time offers pertinent, authoritative and welcome advice across the broad fields in which we are engaged. I am delighted that he has accepted the title of President Emeritus, a position in which he can keep in touch and keep us on our toes; warmest thanks Brian."



Brian (centre) pictured recently in his natural habitat: listening, thinking - and always ready to contribute.

AGM from previous page column 2

Colleagues will be showcasing ECA's work at home and internationally.

Come along for an interesting day out, among like-minded colleagues – and the chance to let ECA know what you want of your organisation. You can add value!

ECA is keen to hear from members with successes to share, especially in the areas of intergenerational work, work for and with older people, sustainability, citizenship, tutor development and keeping alive the arts in adult education.

Please contact

conferences@e-c-a.ac.uk

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New Term – new prospects for AE?

With the new term under way, how does the adult education scene look for 2006-7? With a view to ECA's concern about the sustainability of adult education, members may like to tell the ECA how they have fared.

The summer period revealed a mixed press concerning prospects for adult education.

Our ECA News front page reported a positive written exchange with the Minister, Bill Rammell MP, on student representation on FE Boards – plus his plans for "new arrangements (2007-8) to develop

local partnerships where the voices of learners, providers and the local community can be heard" in the provision of 'personal and community' adult education.

Other comments were more of the 'glass half empty' variety. There were many sensational local press headlines such as "Adult education axed at college", considered letters to national press, such as "Closing night schools and losing cultural capital" in the Times and some educational press headings such as "Perils of ignoring adult learning", "Foster forgot about the adults" and "Quango's charm offensive" (reporting on the QIA launch where Education Secretary Alan Johnson nearly spoiled their party by calling for "more plumbing, less pilates").**

Two other stories showed the more complicated nature of the problem. In an FT column in July, entitled "Not just midsummer madness" an article by Ben Wolf begins:

"Let me introduce you to Madge. Madge is 91 - raised in India under the Raj, a lifelong supporter of the Red Cross, and a retired accountant. She is also a musician and a keen chorister. Now, together with 20 or so others, Madge continues to sing. Government policy, however, may soon prevent her from doing so." The choir, originally independent, had lost its way and was rescued by becoming an evening class,

** Lois Gladdish of NIACE has called for evidence as to why pilates deserves public support: contact c/o maier@niace.org.uk

** See also Commons Education Select Committee report page 13

supported by the local LEA. "Madge ceased to be a chorister and became instead a 'learner'."

Joining the choir as their conductor, Wolf describes the experience as "a curious meeting, charming 'learners' and my first significant contact with central government bureaucracy. Most choirs operate on a simple business plan. If the conductor is bad, the choristers sack him. Or they leave. The connection between provider and consumer is immediate, and almost entirely paperwork-free. When the choristers become learners, however, all this changes."

In a different situation, along with others in art and languages classes, a choir from another part of the country which had been an LEA class since its inception decades ago (and through which many amateur musicians had passed, learning, improving and progressing) reported that they had to 'go private', pay their teacher direct and hire the college hall they were based in because they had been deleted from the curriculum. Nearly four months later, they are delighted to learn that they are, after all, back in the prospectus as a class, albeit for a reduced period.

Both examples can be said to show the ingenuity of adult learners - and the willingness of local providers to find 'ways and means' (traits characterising adult education since Victorian times). However, more and more people are now crying enough is enough. Such make-do-

and-mend arrangements belong more in the 1940s than the 21st century. What is now required is a clear and sustainable strategy.

Continual swapping from one set of arrangements to another, knee-jerk reactions by FE and LEAs to government changes of direction, lack of commitment to ride out the storm (whether it be funding-related or due to audit, inspection or bureaucracy) is already leading to public confusion and withdrawal.

And it will be the very groups who need a dependable adult education service who suffer: the elderly, older workers who have seen their skills become irrelevant, younger people on severely limited incomes (but not on benefits), hard-pressed parents, those with a previously negative educational experience. In other words, many who were targeted under recent 'widening participation' and 'inclusion' strategies.



Singing out – in adult education's 'liberal tradition': what will be its place in the C21st?

An unfortunate consequence of all this is that although at the national level the debate often descends into

largely ignored party-political squabbles, locally those in the front line take the flak. A late-summer letter in a regional weekly where the AE service had been radically reorganised read *"What is going on? The website still lists the courses for the last academic year... for many years we have been able to enrol by now ... it all gives the impression that either they are disorganised this year, or that the future is uncertain and they are delaying an unpopular announcement."* This must have been devastating for those working hard to get everything ready for September.

Although many ways will still be found to sustain some non-government-priority adult learning, fragmentation needs to be stopped. The time has come to campaign locally for much-needed stability for adult and community-orientated learning (ACL) if there is to be a stable base for the Minister's 2007-8 improvement plans to build upon. ACL must be enabled to continue its unsung dual role as a safe foundation for those wishing to progress to further and higher goals, and, equally valuable, providing for those who wish to just carry on learning in cultural, social and community-related settings.

Alan Skinner

See 'Hearth and Home' page 10

Please share ECA News with your colleagues.
Pdf available

VIEWES EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE THOSE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS AND ARE NOT NECESSARILY ECA POLICY.

Sustainability - on the ECA's agenda



With a number of partners, the ECA was involved in a tough bidding process with Defra. As reported in the previous edition of ECA News, this should give us new resources to support the ECA's sustainability agenda.



We intend to contact centres and colleges during the autumn to identify current strengths in the Membership and to get to grips with the challenges. We hope that we will be able to bring new resources to support work in local communities.

Sustainable Development in the Learning and Skills Sector



LSC and LSN held this conference in London in June and I attended along with Hugh Blair from City College: Brighton & Hove. There were many learning points of which the main ones we brought away were:

- Massive indifference across the sector to the issue as the national baseline survey only had a response rate of 12% with only 151 responses from 1244 questionnaires
- How insular FE Colleges in particular are in this agenda and how little genuine partnership working there is in the sector.

There were very few examples of good practice, which highlights how much needs to be done to make this a reality across the sector as a whole. The LSC National Office have issued a strategy for sustainable development 'From Here to Sustainability' which is worth getting hold of from their website:
<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/2005/ourbusiness/strategy/from-here-to-sustainability-lsc-strategy-for-sustainable-development.pdf>

Chris Minter

Note: In 1992 the FEU did work on 'Colleges Going Green'.

- NIACE was strong on the agenda back in 1993 when former ECA President John Field convened the policy discussion group.

- FEDA's 1996/7 work pointed out that in 1993 the DfE/Welsh Office had stressed the citizenship aspects of Environmental Education through FE, while Shirley Ali Khan's later work for FEDA in 1999 actually set a series of goals that FE colleges should meet by 2010. BG

Defra and Al Gore's educational crusade *ECA at launch of film*



ECA was invited, along with government, community and business representatives, to the Defra UK launch of the climate-change film *An Inconvenient Truth*.

Secretary of State David Miliband said "I was struck by the visual evidence the film provides, making

clear that the changing climate is already having an impact on our world today, from Mount Kilimanjaro to the Himalayan mountains. Getting to grips with our over-reliance on carbon is not a problem that can be left for future generations; it is a responsibility that we must all share now". The film highlighted the issue as an imperative educationally as well as politically.

Further information is available at www.climatecrisis.net and www.climatechallenge.gov.uk and www.defra.gov.uk

With regard to the educational role of awareness-raising and attitude change, the ECA has written to Mr Miliband asking if he has the support of his colleague Ministers in Post-16 education. We have pointed out that such educational activity would be designated 'personal and community learning' – which has been relegated to minor funding and an uncertain future by recent changes in government priorities.

We will report any response in the next ECA News.

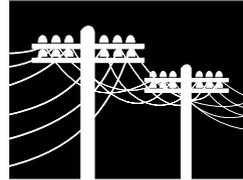
Telephone Conferences - by a convert



For some time I had been very dubious about a 'meeting' held by telephone conference – on screen I could imagine, of course. But to have disembodied voices coming from no particular direction, and unable to read any facial

expressions or body language? I thought there would be drawbacks.

Our committee has now held three teleconferences and I am a convert to their use. Apart from the major saving of travel costs and time, particularly when the committee represents a large area (ours covers the south and east of England), we found other advantages, which I will come to later.



For those that have never held a teleconference, ours have been worked through 'Community Network'. We book an hour for a conference, giving names and phone numbers, and they call our participants at that time and tell us a few minutes before our hour is up. It is very important that whoever runs the conference has circulated an informative agenda and has worked out the main issues which need to be settled. Someone should be prepared to take notes.

We have found that an hour-long conference concentrates the mind wonderfully. It is particularly useful for clearing up points of detail – of administration or responsibilities for forthcoming events, for example. I was surprised by how easy we found the 'give and take' of discussion and argument, even though we were more conscious of time passing, in a way which

sometimes gets overlooked at an ordinary meeting. So far we have always been surprised at how much we have got through when we get the last warning call, and have never needed more than our hour.

I still think that a committee needs to meet for general reports and discussing long-term strategy, but this meeting can often be shorter and give time to think over difficult points that have arisen and give decisions at the teleconference.

It is also much easier to find mutually convenient times for a teleconference, as there are far more occasions when people can spare an hour for a conference if they don't have to travel to it.

Even if members of your committee don't live very far apart, a teleconference can be useful, particularly for those with heavy home commitments, or who are disabled or temporarily indisposed, but who have views to contribute. In this way the committee can be much more 'inclusive' of disadvantaged members.

The network we use has charges according to the kind of group involved. For our conferences of an hour and up to ten participants the charge has been £35. This would barely cover travel of one member.

So, I am a convert to the use of teleconferences as a supplement to our main meetings, and hope this short piece might encourage those still undecided to consider using them.

Hazel Dunn

Global Learning *New Award*



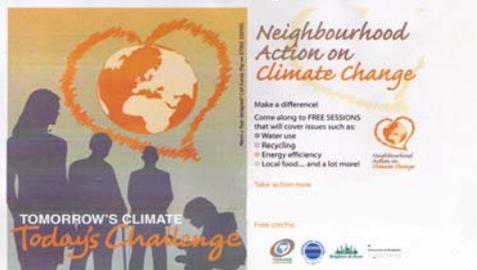
The Development Education Association (DEA) is co-ordinating an award which celebrates adult education programmes engaging learners in subjects such as sustainable development and other global themes including social justice. Further details: amy.dunkley@dea.org.uk
020 7812 1282

Climate Change *Pilot courses in neighbourhoods*



Brighton & Hove Adult Skills & Learning team started to pilot community courses on climate change with two six-week courses in one of our neighbourhood renewal wards, one evening and one morning during May and June. They were a partnership between the City Council and the University of Brighton, which involved council staff such as those in community engagement, adult skills & learning and Home Energy officers in housing. Courses looked at issues of energy and water consumption, waste and recycling and are part of our drive to introduce a new curriculum to appeal to a wider audience. Overall 21 people attended the courses, although the majority of them were already converted learners with only a few newcomers being attracted but we

are still planning to continue to roll them out across the city.



Ideas and proposals that arise during the courses are to be taken forward by local community groups and presented at the Turner World Festival, a vibrant community event. Perhaps this may result in some social enterprise activity in developing renewables in the area.

Safia Mohamud

Student involvement and representation

The ECA has from its founding involved learners at all levels of its activities. This was firmly based on local centres directly involving learners in their corporate life.

It was in this tradition that the ECA responded strongly to a government consultation in 1998 on governance in further education. The paper, prepared by Andrew Murray and Bernard Godding, made it clear that adult learners in all publicly-funded educational provision should be involved in its governance. This has just been announced as government policy by the Minister.

There have, however, hitherto been many more examples of student-centre interaction than the provision

of places on legally-constituted governing bodies.

Indeed, the presence of active “members’ associations” was once a requirement of ECA membership for any adult education provider wishing to join. This was intended to prove that the organisation was a truly inclusive, student-orientated body in the long-held tradition of the ECA going back to the 1920s. There are now, of course, other ways that putative members can share such a philosophy.

However, it has become apparent that although the membership still includes the like of Epping Forest College Adult Members’ Association and Bury Arts & Crafts Centre Students’ Association, such bodies are reducing in number.

Whether this may be due to other methods of student involvement having become available, or whether it illustrates a distancing of educational providers’ corporate life from the communities they serve – the ECA needs to know.

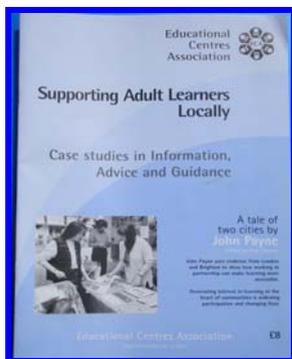
The ECA National Committee has discussed support both for the reintroduction of direct student involvement and, where it exists, maintenance of its effectiveness. Please tell ECA about your experience – whether of decline, or hopefully, of best practice in action.

CONTACT DETAILS PAGE 16
See also NEWS FROM SOUTH & EAST OF
ENGLAND REGION page 15



ECA in Print

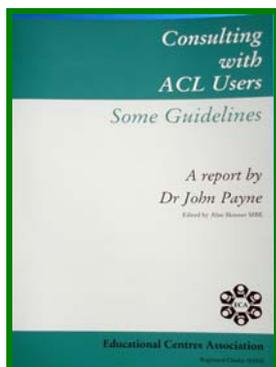
Members can obtain copies of ECA's recent publications by contacting the National Office on 0870 161 0302 eca@e-c-a.ac.uk for details. Bulk rates may apply for multiple copies for team-building or in-service training activities.



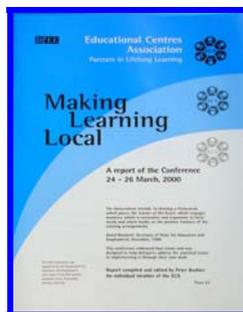
In his study *Supporting Adult Learners Locally*, John Payne uses evidence from London and Brighton to show how working in partnership can make learning more accessible.

Through case studies in information, advice and guidance, we see how generating interest in learning at the heart of communities is widening participation and changing lives.

£8 + p&p for a single copy

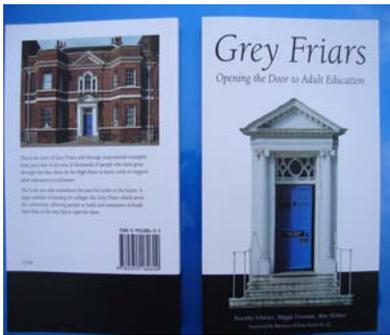


Whether read for interest, to confirm present practice, or to gain new ideas, *Consulting with ACL Users*, also by Dr Payne, gives a fresh, practical 'no-nonsense' and realistic view of managing community involvement in adult learning. £5 + p&p for a single copy



Still available, and remaining fresh and relevant even in the present ever-changing climate, is Dr Peter Boshier's report of the ECA national conference in March 2000. Over a dozen sets of notes on presentations such as Ufi and Learndirect; Taking Risks - tackling social exclusion; Beyond the Learning and Skills Bill; Access and Regeneration – a return to locality; Access to Funding; Learning to Succeed – post-16 funding futures; plus workshop reports (£2 + p&p).

Prepared with support from the ECA is *Grey Friars: Opening the Door to Adult Education* based on interviews by Dorothy Schwarz and Maggie Freeman. There is an inspiring Foreword by Helena Kennedy QC who produced the report 'Learning Works' for the FEFC.



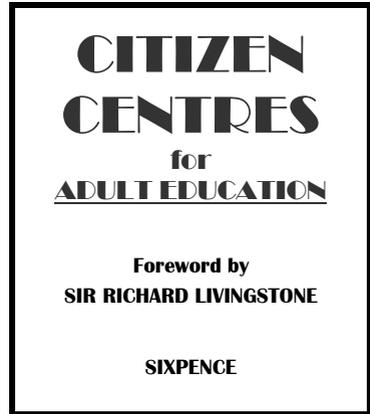
This is the story of an adult education centre told through inspirational examples from a few of the tens of thousands of people who have gone through the blue door on Colchester's High Street to learn, work or support adult education. Both remembering the past and looking to the future, this book urges stability of funding for centres which truly serve the community. Published by Access Books (part of CALCAG, an adult education charity no.1095713) available from ECA at £7.99 +p&p.

Blast from the past:
*ECA's 'Hearth and Home'
 policy from 1943 & 1949*

A copy of a 63-year-old ECA booklet came to light from the archive. In explanation of its re-print in 1949 of the original text of 1943, an editor's note states: "While in matters of detail it is necessarily out-of-date it is felt that as a general statement of the case for non-residential Adult education centres it still has validity and cogency."

Its argument was for a nationwide scheme of local adult education provided through dedicated

premises which will "do for the adult what the good school does for the child, but do this at the adult level and in the adult way." It suggests that schools can be used to supplement provision, but "They do not offer a suitable environment for individual and social development of adults." Does this sound familiar?



The foreword by Sir Richard Livingstone* says "Opportunities for systematic adult study are needed on a wide scale, and these must not be limited to lectures or classes given in any hall or classroom that happens to be available. They must have a 'local habitation', a focus in the Latin sense of the word, a hearth where the fire remains continually lit, where education can be more than isolated individual study and becomes a life shared with others."

The editor's 1949 note remains as relevant in the 21st century.

* Livingstone (1880-1960) was an eminent classics scholar, educationist, broadcaster, and writer. Knighted in 1931 in recognition of his work in Northern Ireland, in particular for promoting better health through adult education, he firmly believed that education should be life long.

Grateful thanks

to retiring committee members



Hazel Dunn (pictured) is retiring from the ECA National Executive Committee (NEC). She has been a stalwart supporter of national ECA work particularly in analysis and evaluation of our conferences.

Hazel came to the NEC from an active role in the Eastern region. Prior to this Hazel was a chairman of the Community Council and a Community Governor at Parkside Community College, Cambridge, a long-standing corporate member of the ECA. Sadly, there is no longer a Community Council, and the college has been amalgamated with other colleges.** Hazel also represented the Cambridge Federation of Community Associations on the ECA. We are pleased that she stays in active membership.



**The ECA is particularly keen to know where past member centres (especially exemplars of civic engagement) have been amalgamated or reorganised in order that we can ensure continued dialogue and avoid lapsed memberships. We would also like to invite anyone who has been disenfranchised by such a move to join us as an individual member at only £22 per year. 0870 161 0302

Also retiring is South and East of England treasurer Andrew Murray.



Andrew is pictured (right) receiving an ECA gift from retiring regional Chair Robert Eschle in recognition of many years of service. Andrew is a student governor of the adult college in Harlow (now incorporated into the re-organised West Area of Essex Adult Community Education).

One of Andrew's most significant contributions was towards an ECA paper on the importance of adult learners' contributions to the governance of all publicly-funded adult education (see page 8).

Welsh quango changes



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Three large organisations ceased to exist from 1st April as part of the Assembly's "bonfire of the quangos". The Development Agency, Tourist Board and education body (ELWa) were abolished and brought under ministerial control. Two assembly departments have been created.

Three more quangos - the Welsh Language Board, curriculum / qualifications and health bodies - will close soon.

The body with which ECA has been concerned, ELWa, merges with the Dept for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills. Jane Davidson (Labour - Pontypridd) remains Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning. She is a former councillor in Cardiff, teacher and youth and community worker. She gave the keynote address at the 2002 ECA conference in Llandrindod Wells.

V & A 's 'Inspired By'

In 2006, 240 adult learners entered from around 50 institutions. 71 works were selected by the judging curators and educators to go on display, most in the Café Foyer, 9 of them in the galleries, next to their inspiration piece. One work went on display at the Theatre Museum. www.vam.ac.uk/activ_events/events/inspiredby/

ECA Members write for Galatea

The Galatea Trust has just published a special edition of essays on adult education. The booklet, entitled *The Show Must Go On* is dedicated to the memory of former ECA president Ronald Wilson.

ECA members wrote on topics such as "A Home for Adult Learning" and "Adult Learning and (further education) Culture". The editor is ECA member William Tyler.

The Galatea Trust was set up in order to raise awareness of the ways in which the environment in all aspects, physical, social, intellectual, emotional and moral/spiritual can affect people and to encourage the development of therapeutic environments.

For further information contact

The Galatea Trust, PO Box 4199, London W1A 6XW

e-mail: ha.galatea@vrgin.net

ECA News would welcome your insights into the therapeutic value of adult learning in centres near you. Contact details page 16.

Government Education and Skills Committee

Current membership is:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Party</i>
CHAIR Barry Sheerman	Huddersfield	Labour
Douglas Carswell	Harwich	Conservative
David Chaytor	Bury North	Labour
Nadine Dorries	Mid Bedfordshire	Conservative
Jeff Ennis	Barnsley E & Mexborough	Labour
Paul Holmes	Chesterfield	Liberal Democrat
Helen Jones	Warrington North	Labour
Fiona Mactaggart	Slough	Labour
Gordon Marsden	Blackpool South	Labour
Stephan Williams	Bristol W	Liberal Democrat
Rob Wilson	Reading E	Conservative

Current enquiries include: 'Sustainability' which aims to examine the progress of the Government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, the Academies building programme and the capital programme for FE colleges, and investigate whether they will deliver sustainable schools and colleges that meet the needs of learners and communities now and in the future.

Included in the remit are: "How successfully does BSF integrate with other policy and funding areas (such as Every Child Matters and Extended Schools) to deliver joined up solutions to educational and community needs?" and "How are the strategic needs of Local Authorities balanced with the needs of schools communities and learners within BSF?" There is no specific mention of adult and community learning as an ongoing LEA responsibility. It remains to be seen if the committee addresses this issue in its discussion of 'extended schools' and 'community needs'.

Further information:

http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/education_and_skills_committee.cfm

As we go to press we have heard that the Committee has stated that there is "compelling evidence" that valuable college courses were being axed through government funding cuts. Members were keen to point out that many axed courses were not the evening classes for the wealthy that they had been made out to be. Barry Sheerman said that

recent government comment "grossly oversimplifies the wide benefits that can be gained from further education, not just for individuals, but for communities as well." The Committee added "There is compelling evidence that certain types of adult learning are being inadvertently put at risk by current funding priorities."

From the ECA Chair

Bernard Godding writes:

The Political Process

We had been welcomed to Edinburgh's Old Grammar School by the IT training co-ordinator of the City's historic Educational Settlement and shown around the grand building set high on a bluff above the city.

One room that seemed tucked away in a corner of the building had turned out to be a full sized debating chamber with raked seating, wrought iron fittings and a general air of grandeur. We had just settled back to consider the work of the 1905 founded University Settlement in helping learners with special needs, when two figures appeared quietly but excitedly. One clutched the local paper which was eagerly thrust forward to show that the very room we had just been in was featured as a possible temporary home for the Scottish Parliament while structural problems in the new Holyrood building were being addressed. It is hard to imagine an AE centre coming closer to the physical heart of the political process than this – but how close do

we and our learners come to the realpolitik?

Maybe Bill Rammell's letter to the ECA Chair featured in our last edition will be part of the answer. How is your centre gearing up to meet the Minister's aspiration for learner engagement?

The Volume of Laughter Says it All

Letchworth Settlement, Herts

I sat with manager Sarah Carrick in the comfortable common room of a building that will mark its centenary next year. Sarah came to this part time post in 2003. Like many in informal adult education, the job has already wooed her into full time commitment, despite her contract.

The Letchworth Settlement, one of ECA's oldest members, started in 1920, and has a thriving daytime provision, mainly for the active retired. "Their bodies may be less robust than before, but their enquiring minds mean that this centre is bursting at the seams, and we are looking at ways of expanding in the future. People in their 80s and 90s attend classes. Some complain that our Cambridge-Madingley courses – with the academic implications they bring – are too short. Why only 10 weeks?"

She showed me around the buildings and talked about the rich mix – crafts, classes with paid tutors, private providers, C&G embroidery, affiliated learning groups, clubs and rentals. And who

wouldn't want to run an event on these charming premises!



The "miniscule staff" is Sarah (25 hours/week for 44 weeks) an admin assistant (all year, 11 hours a week) and ancillary staff. Volunteers run the canteen, lock up, do gardening and computer work, and there is a very active Management Committee. "We are a face-to-face organisation," she says, "we like people to phone us or call in, we like the interchange and many calls involve referrals to other providers."



What can ECA do for the Settlement? "We are self funding, don't qualify for external funding. We can't offer concessionary rates although we have a discretionary fund. Promotion is always the issue because of limitations on funding. It would be good if we were part of the ECA information network."

And what's the best thing about the Settlement? "To me it's the buzz of having people bursting out of a classroom saying 'this is the most fantastic class I've ever had!' And of course the volume of noise and laughter around here. That says it all."

Further details: 01462 682828
<http://pages.britishlibrary.net/letchworthsettlement>

Judith Robinson

- and a Madingley connection:

Midsummer in Cambridge is a special time at the Institute of Continuing Education and the ECA Chair and Treasurer were fortunate to be guests at the Madingley Hall reception of this ancient University.

They were pleased to meet Roy Evans, former administrator of the Letchworth Settlement, who is researching the establishment from its early days as "The Skittles Inn" (a teetotal pub) in preparation for celebration of its centenary year, having been built as part of the new Letchworth Garden City in 1907.

News from S&E England *Student Involvement and ALI*

ECA Regional Chair Chris Minter forwarded David Sherlock Chief Inspector of Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) a copy of the letter on student involvement that Bill Rammell sent to the ECA. He asked how he envisaged the Minister's aspirations might be reflected in the ALI's processes. The response was both positive and very consultative; indicating that ALI

sees this as a live issue and that the Chief Inspector has raised questions about both the indicators to be assessed and the timings for the introduction of the new measures.

Annual Meeting & Conference 'Developing the Craft & Artistry of Adult Education' V&A June 2006

The conference was shaped around the regional annual meeting, which gave non-members a long lunch break, when they could network or visit the museum, using free vouchers to the exhibition kindly distributed by Madeleine, Head of Adult Learning at the V&A (ECA members could use theirs any time during the run of the exhibition).

Analysis of evaluation forms: Nearly 25% of the 201 scores were graded 'excellent', just over 35% were 'very good', 11.44% 'good'. It follows that over 70% of grades were above average, so the conference can be added to the long list of successful ECA events.

It is a pity the audience was not larger, and not all returned forms. However, many delegates expressed satisfaction verbally. Comments on forms were very enthusiastic – some examples: Madeleine 'Great and encouraging', Gerald Jones 'Enthusiastic and practical', 'Excellent philosophical thinking put in a very accessible form', re Angela Joyce: 'Great to have someone from 'Lifelong learning UK' (LLUK) at one of our regional conferences', 'particularly relevant to current work', and the Plenary 'Well run', 'reflected what we are all about'.

There was only one disparaging comment. The V&A was much appreciated, the venue and catering having many 'Excellent' marks.

A comment summed up the day as 'responsive, inclusive and extremely welcoming'. As one delegate put it: 'Best day at work for ages!'

Hazel Dunn

HE and Communities

Conference 2006

The ECA was represented at this University of London event which explored important areas of HE's civic involvement and how the institutions and their students interact with their host communities.



Birkbeck College's John Annette opened the conference with an overview covering voluntary student activity, structured learning in communities, two-way transfer of knowledge and experience, including impacts on employability, active citizenship and relationships between such activities, the DCLG and HE's curriculum. For further information: hecp@fce.bbk.ac.uk

Note: The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) was created in May 2006 to promote community cohesion and equality, as well as to be responsible for housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government.

www.communities.gov.uk

Developing Staff

It is good to know that Lifelong Learning UK is taking seriously the training of teachers of adults. Now we must press for funds to deliver the training and to support tutors at

a time when job uncertainty and low morale have become pressing concerns. The ECA would welcome members' stories of successful staff development activity and response to new accreditation frameworks.

Get the facts!

Wider Benefits of Learning

If you are taking up the challenge of arguing the case for all kinds of adult learning to continue to be publicly funded, a useful source of evidence is the DfES-funded Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning (WBL).

The Centre investigates the benefits that learning brings to the individual and to society as a whole. WBL's main objective is "to clarify, model and quantify the outcomes of all forms of intentional learning."

Centre for Research on WBL
Institute of Education
Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL
tel: +44 (0)20 7612 6291
email: info@learningbenefits.net
web: www.learningbenefits.net

Intergenerational Learning – *call for information*

ECA would like to ask for details of any work promoting interaction between the learning of seniors and school children.



Send in your news!

KEEP ECA INFORMED

Good news or not, tell us:

SO THAT WE CAN TELL OTHERS!

eca@e-c-a.ac.uk 0870 161 0302
21 Ebbisham Drive, Norwich NR4 6HQ