

Educational
Centres
Association



ECA News

EURO EDITION 2005

July issue

To coincide with UK's EU Presidency

From ECA's President

Prof. Brian Groombridge

As I write, the home news about adult education is bad. NIACE, the Association of Colleges and the ECA, strongly supported by many MPs from different parties, are protesting against the Learning and Skills Council's narrow focus on 16-19 year olds.

Yet other Government Departments and agencies are nearer to us e.g. those concerned with neighbourhood renewal, health in old age, or active citizenship. The LSC needs to be more 'joined-up'.

This Newsletter on European matters is not an escapist diversion: it coincides with the UK's Presidency of the European Union (and leadership of the G8).

So the timing is good: we're running a Grundtvig staff development event on citizenship (TEACH) with colleagues from six other countries; our interest in the North Sea region is being maintained; we'll be represented again at Salzburg; students are enjoying cross-curricular activities in many countries; and even Teddy Bears will be involved. It was a big disappointment that our Chairman could not get to the European Parliament reception (see p5).

On the 60th anniversary of WW2, it is especially fitting that we remember our colleague and former ECA President, Ronnie Wilson, whose peace-making work in Germany was so constructive.

Ambassadors for Learning, Unite!

It happened within seconds of sitting down at a coffee break. At the North Sea Commission's General Assembly, two Norwegians, a Scot, a Dutch man, and the ECA representative introduced themselves to each other as a matter of routine. "I'm from Groningen," said the Dutchman, and in half a minute painted such a delightful picture of the city that we all wanted to go, (once we found out where it was, of course).

Ambassadors for learning, unite! We need to be that quick in sharing the delights of learning! The ECA's presence at the conference, and as members of the NSC's Education and Research Group (ERG) is to ensure that your voice, the voice for learning, is heard, as plans are made in other thematic groups: the environment, culture and tourism, transport and ICT, economic development, and fisheries.

But we are aware that each ECA member, wherever you are, is supporting, strengthening, fighting for, defending, encouraging, safeguarding, elevating the learning process, and it's not always easy.

Do you have any suggestions on what to say quickly that extols learning's pleasures?

Please let us know (see back page for contacts).



Don't miss this FREE training opportunity!
Please pass the word to colleagues.

TEACH

Unique tutor training opportunity

The ECA is inviting applications for a one-week residential course in **Teaching European Active Citizenship to Adults** Funded under the EU Grundtvig 1 Project and supported in the UK by DfES

Participants in this project, together with Danish colleagues at a parallel event, will be leading an initiative that has Europe-wide significance and builds on a previous EU funded project.

In all communities it is the taking of civic responsibility by individuals that makes the most significant contribution to the quality of local life.

The ECA is a registered charity, number 313302

This course looks at these issues from an explicitly European perspective.

In the spirit of its foundation, the learning will essentially be collaborative and use innovative approaches that can be adopted in the tutor's own work. UK partners are developing a web-based tool, enabling participants to engage in dialogue online.

The Project is led by Finland. Other partners are Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy and Cyprus.

So far the UK Government has given specific attention to a citizenship curriculum for young people up to age 19. However, there are many other initiatives that imply greater participation and local leadership by adults across a wide age spectrum.

It is expected that tutors who have participated in this programme will better understand the European dimensions of their work, have acquired additional skills and be inspired to take a significant role in future developments, both in their own establishments and across wider fields of influence in Britain and beyond.

The learning Aims of this course are to present and to discuss the competences related to active citizenship - be it locally, nationally or on a European level - and the acquisition of some basic approaches to teaching these competences.

There is no fee for attendance but where applicable participants should expect to be given some paid leave of absence by their employing institutions.

VENUE:

Wedgwood Memorial College, Barlaston, Stoke on Trent

DATES: 25 September 2005 - 2 October 2005

LANGUAGE: Predominantly English (however the web material may be more diverse)

DETAILS: tel: 0870 161 0302
or email: teach@e-c-a.ac.uk



SSalzburg: ECA National Chairman Bernard Godding (left), with Naomi Godding and Polish, Israeli and Swiss delegates

A True Internationalist

Ronald Haig Wilson 1917-2005

Ronald Wilson, who passed away on 1st January 2005, was one of the outstanding British adult educators of his generation.

Born in Edinburgh, Ronald remained deeply committed to the land of his birth throughout his life, despite spending his entire professional career in Germany and England.

Ronald was a committed internationalist. A fluent speaker of German, and a modern languages graduate of the University of St Andrews, he first visited Germany as a schoolboy in the early 1930s, and was in Germany on an exchange scholarship as late as August 1939.

During the war, Ronald first served with The Royal Artillery and later with The Intelligence Corps. From 1941 to 1944 he served in Scotland as the Port Security Officer in Mallaig, where he was part of the real life 'Whiskey Galore' incident, later to feature in the novel of that name by Compton Mackenzie. In 1944, Ronald found himself as a sergeant and back in Germany for the final months of the war.

After demobilisation at the end of the war, Ronald continued to work in Germany for the re-establishment of adult education. He worked first in North Rhine/Westphalia, moving to Berlin in 1950, and finally to Bonn in 1956. During this period Ronald met his German wife, Edith, and they married in 1949. Edith was to remain his rock for over fifty years and nursed him through his final months of ill health.

Ronald was rightly held in affection and esteem by professional colleagues in German speaking Europe, and was a tireless supporter of international links. He strove hard throughout his life to ensure that British adult educators, and The Educational Centres Association in particular, were always aware of the international nature of adult education within European culture. He personally continued to attend meetings of The Salzburg Conference until he was in his eighties. Towards the end of his life he served with distinction as President of The Educational Centres Association. The Association continues to foster its internationalist links.

In England he is best remembered for his work in Manchester, as The Principal of Manchester's College of Adult Education from 1964 to 1980. He also served more briefly with Leicestershire County Council (1958-62) and with Huddersfield Education Authority (1962-64). But it was to be Manchester, and its rich cultural heritage, typified in its College of Adult Education, with roots reaching back to the eighteenth century, which was to become Ronald's

spiritual home. He presided over an expansion of its work, the quality of which was widely recognised. Ronald oversaw building of a purpose-built college and the transfer of the College of Adult Education in 1974 from its original site in Lower Moseley Street to the new, purpose-built, centre at All Saints.

It was the great regret of Ronald's professional life that the College was closed in 1990. He regarded this action by the City Council as a barbaric act, out of keeping with Manchester's honourable liberal past. Indeed, the political attacks on liberal adult education over the last quarter of a century were a severe torment for Ronald, who had devoted his life to adult learning. He had witnessed at first hand in Germany the importance of a vibrant liberal adult education sector to a thriving liberal democracy.

It is a matter of some regret to his British colleagues that although his work received official recognition in Germany and Austria, no such recognition was forthcoming in Britain. Yet the good of Ronald's professional life can never be undone by subsequent events, for he has left an enduring legacy in the minds and works of all his many friends, both in this country and in continental Europe, and in the thousands of student lives touched by his work.

He remained engaged with current practice and was committed to his beliefs to the end. He himself had once written, "In retrospect it is clear that retiring, in the sense of having no further responsibility for the work, is one thing – cutting oneself off from it, root and branch, is something quite different which I have not accomplished – nor am I likely to".

He himself wrote of a colleague in a tribute of 2002, words which equally apply to himself, "He had an instinctive grasp of the true nature and the role of general, liberal adult education as an essential ingredient of a genuinely democratic society. In that direction his example should give all of us food for thought and action in the century which has just begun."

Ronald Haig Wilson

Born 30 October 1917; Died 1 January 2005

He is survived by his widow, Edith, and his son, Peter.

ECA Individual Member- William Tyler

8th International LLine Conference

"What Future for Lifelong learning – A Time for Choice" 20-22, October, 2005 in Helsinki, Finland.

Details from Eeva Siirala, Conference Coordinator
Editorial Manager, Lline, KVS Foundation

(Kansanvalistusseura)

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FIN-00260 Helsinki eeva.siirala@kvs.fi www.lline.fi

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Learning from the Professor

One of the key speeches at the North Sea Commission's General Assembly in June in the Netherlands, was given by Professor Robin Thompson, Professor of Planning at University College London, and Special Advisor to the Mayor of London. His topic, "North Sea Region in Europe" included principles that apply to other areas of work as well. Specialists, he says, are in danger of remoteness. Although the top-down approach is partially corrected by the Interreg projects (www.interregnorthsea.org), this only provides a middle-up approach and still doesn't centre on those "on the ground". His talk covered a description of how Londoners collaborated on their own city plan. Many of his final recommendations are worth consideration when dealing with other organisations – including ECA:

- Negotiate with powerful neighbours. (He talked about the predation of metropolitan imbalance of jobs, but his message was "even though you are small, don't pretend that the megalith next door will go away. *You* have something to offer *them*, and it's important to know what that is.)
- Be clear about polycentric structures. (London is working to restore polycentricity – growth in all forms of community centres to counter the growth of central London. In working on one's own polycentricity, it's important to identify which sub groups are going to grow, and encourage them....an incentive for more local community education?)
- Collaborate on economic and cultural grounds. (And create a culture of enabling communication)
- Steer market forces
- Support urban intensification. (Prof Thompson is worried about the sprawl of some European cities, and deliberately decided that London would contain its own growth. How can small organisations encourage this intensification in their larger colleagues?)
- Find a strong image for your region (or organisation).
- Find some powerful simple messages.
- Make yours a learning region/organisation. (Not always easy when it's primarily a teaching organisation!)

Worth thinking about? Let's hear your comments. eca@e-c-a.ac.uk or other contact points as per back page of this newsletter.

Judith Robinson,
Bedfordshire

Euro Visits Subsidise Classes!

A Report from a Member Centre

We were pleased to be in touch with the very active Members' Association at Epping Forest FE College. As well as hearing of an impressive programme of activities, support and interaction with the Principal, we noticed one innovation worthy of mention in this special ECA News edition.

The busy programme of trips, visits and events is used in a very practical way to provide a bursary system for class and student support. Grants ranging from £50 to hundreds have been made to support activities, classes and services that would otherwise have been highly unlikely.

Congratulations, appreciation and very best wishes for the future go to the Association, especially the hardworking front-liners, Jim Weaver, Chairman; Jackie Johnson, Treasurer; Sybil Spink, Social Secretary and Thelma Howe, Minutes Secretary.

Long may your Association flourish!

Euro Visits Cross the Curriculum

A report from a Member Centre

Visits to European locations by Colchester adult education students started in the 1980s with painting classes held in a residential setting. To experience the sights and culture of a different country was a natural addition to the themed 'Summer School' curriculum extension activities.

Post-1992, the newly-designated college formalised the previously ad hoc visits to form a balance of practical art (in locations such as Avignon and Carcassonne) with seminars and critiques to form a structured educational experience. Latterly, visits (now extended to Asia Minor and the Americas) have extended the range to modern art and have been preceded by lecture series in preparation.

Staffing is structured to reflect all curriculum needs, including specialists in archaeology, cultural aspects and practical instruction. In terms of education, quality, value and health & safety, the arrangements now fully reflect strategic aspects of planning the whole college curriculum.

This concept of 'total immersion' has been taken up very enthusiastically by the Modern Languages department, who balance practical, cultural, language and social activities in a unified package.

I must not forget themed visits to Glasgow (John Rennie Mackintosh) and Liverpool (Tate and Walker Galleries). These, as with the foreign visits, are preceded by lecture series – which are open to those who can not attend (or indeed afford) the visits.

Howard Leyshon,
Adult Community College, Colchester

Glitches and Spinoffs

Anyone doing a European project – or any other kind for that matter – is aware that the bid, usually 2+ years old and frozen in time, is very different from enacting it in Reality.

At the North Sea Commission General Assembly, Starfish Awards were presented to successfully completed projects. Praise flowed freely among members, but we learned more from conversations with those who experienced surprising obstacles to completion, and how they dealt with them, than those whose projects went smoothly.

So, how did YOUR project progress?

What sudden, creative decisions overcame your glitches?

What innovative spinoffs amazed you, as a result?

Tell us, and we'll tell your ECA community. Sharing success is one thing. Learning from the hurdles along the way provides encouragement for your fellow Project Pilgrims.

P.S. a photograph would be lovely.

Judith Robinson

Highly Recommended

The ECA has been actively involved by being featured in recent content of the BBC's online support to language tutors, and, by using and promoting the site as an excellent way of keeping in touch with Euro-centric teaching developments.

Lots of interesting stuff on

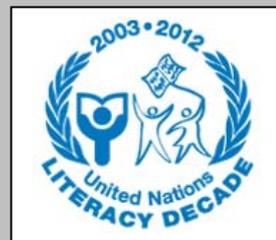
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/tutors/index.shtml>

The next edition of this newsletter, due early in the Autumn will feature **Citizenship** as a major theme in order to recognise 2005 as the **European Year of Citizenship through Education**



EAEA
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION OF ADULTS

Don't miss it – it'll be a hot topic in GB and internationally.



Institutional members: ask your centre's correspondent to keep you informed.

Lifelong Learning and the European Regions

"The EU is not about summits, it's about citizens and the added value that we can bring to citizens"
(Senior Official, Education & Culture, Directorate-General)

Rather a neat link to the TEACH project I think from the recent EARLALL (European Association of Regions and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning) seminar in Brussels on 16th June, which I attended.

Ronald Wilson would surely have approved of some of the key themes at the seminar: mobility – higher targets and priority given to visits and exchanges between regions as well as nation states and the sharing of good practice through an EU 'valorisation' strategy – compulsory for all Socrates programmes by 2006.

Valorisation involves disseminating and piloting the most innovative practices, developing them in different contexts and gradually incorporating them into formal and informal systems of training, into the methods used by businesses and associations, and into the learning experience of every individual.

For further details contact me at
Chris.Minter@brighton-hove.gov.uk



Chris Minter (white shirt) in Debrecen flanked by representatives of our Danish & Finnish partners

Chairman's Euro Invitation

Bernard Godding recently received a personal invitation to a reception at the European Parliament hosted by the Committee on Education & Culture. Such events provide an opportunity to meet a variety of stakeholders for informal discussions.

We know that these matters are dear to the hearts of many and were sorry that had no-one available to accept the invitation. In order that we can avoid this in the future, if you have a particular expertise in Euro education matters, please contact ECA national office with your CV to register an interest.

Put Modesty Aside

Like a plant that needs constant watering, publicity is ongoing and forever. Your work needs to be kept in the public eye throughout its life, not just at the beginning (when you are recruiting) and at the end (when you are committed to dissemination). Be sure that you update your LEA, LSC, local MP regularly, whether they ask or not. They, too, need copy for their publications.

Meeting the press can be especially daunting if you're not used to it. Here is a [Guide to Media Contacts](#) from an Interreg IIIB conference in Ringsted, Denmark last February.

- Take the initiative! Call journalists yourselves
- Audience: whom are you talking to? General reporter, radio, news journalist?
- Unexpected call? If not prepared, ask to call back within 10 minutes. Think carefully about what you want to say. BUT call back as promised.
- Be colourful! Give examples, compare things, give graphic details – here's a chance to write your own headline!
- Be specific. Give details
- Be correct. If you don't have all the facts, say so! Don't speculate.
- Tough questions? Give short answers, try to get back to your message.
- **Never blame anyone else.**
- Give your version
- Always mention your funders (e.g. EU) and those who support the project.
- Use bridges. Answer the question, but "bridge over" to your main message.
- Never lie.
- Be careful with your language – no abbreviations or jargon.
- Don't talk too much. Say less than more, think in simple terms.
- Take 5 minutes each day to prepare yourself.
- Be yourself and relax.

Control questions:

- What is your main message?
- What facts, arguments and evidence to you have to support your message?
- Answering controversial questions: think of some alternative answers.
- How shall I avoid things I DON'T want to talk about?
- Can I deliver my message in 30 seconds?

For more information on their publicity toolkit, see:

www.interregnorthsea.org

Intergenerational Project

The "Teddy Bear Project", an intergenerational learning scheme financed through an EU Grundtvig 2 Learning Partnerships initiative, continues to expand both in Herefordshire and Staffordshire. It involves older rural residents engaging in tutored reminiscence studies and then visiting local primary schools to deliver their life histories. Children respond with drama, artwork, poetry and creative writing. The project has partners in Finland and Italy and has attracted further interest in Norway, Greece, Austria and France. All are interested in taking the Teddy Bear project forward into a broader project focussed on a wide-ranging rural social cohesion agenda. With this development in mind, project members have identified a strong link with the outcomes of the TEACH project, managed by the ECA, with its focus on active citizenship.

Some members have visited Italy to see how Teddy Bear is being delivered in several Alpine villages north of Venice and more recently a visit to Finland showed how a small FE College in Vammala reached out to its local community with innovative activities. In Finland, the key activity is embroidered cushions, with themes from the older person's life and a smaller one made by the child.

The project has developed an effective website to present text and pictures of current activities. A 20-minute film, funded by the Extended Schools initiative, features activities in all three partner countries. This is seen as the ideal marketing tool to encourage new partner countries to join.

An exhibition of all the project work produced by both the older learners and the school children in Herefordshire together with a taste of activities abroad is being held at the Courtyard Theatre in Hereford on the 5th & 6th July. A journey back in time to the 1940s and World War II is the key theme and the exhibition features films, music, vintage vehicles, games and activities for all ages. The exhibition is free and all are welcome!

Dr Paul Olver, 01432 260192 – ECA NEC Member

Stay in touch with the ECA

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or eca@e-c-a.ac.uk or 0870 161 0302

NEWS & VIEWS FOR THIS NEWSLETTER ...

send your comments to "ECA NEWS EDITOR" c/o above contact points or directly to alan.skinner@essexcc.gov.uk



**Enquire about
membership
0870 161 0302
www.e-c-a.ac.uk**

48th Salzburg Talks for Principals in Adult Education



This year's theme will be "Adult Education – A Tall Order?" - Critical approaches to lifelong learning

"Therefore it has been decided Man toward learning must be guided!" The German poet Wilhelm Busch already took the ambivalence of education at face value. Also in our times opposition to lifelong learning is apparently inappropriate. However, not all people share a thirst for knowledge, quite a few develop a resistance to education and consider the obligation to learn and to do so for a life time a tall order and an alienation. They can gladly do without education and are very good at "the art of avoiding education".

But are they entitled to do that? Those responsible for education are irritated by such an attitude, as they consider their offers as valuable and learning as indispensable. Abstaining from education and resisting it impairs their self conception. Self-doubt makes them wonder: „Are we doing enough to keep educational barriers low, in fact to abolish them? How can groups of people who do not engage in education be motivated to learn?

Reflecting upon the contradictions inherent in adult education must not be considered less emancipating than the motto "Education for All!" The ambivalence of education concerns issues of self determination of the individual as well as his/her options.

The „Salzburg Talks" 2005 aim at analyzing the reasonableness of lifelong learning, the liberty to refuse to take part in that process, and ways of motivating people to educate themselves.

Sunday, July 10 sees the Opening of the Talks by Michael Ludwig, Vice president of VÖV, Vienna. The keynote speech will be

„Has lifelong learning come to an end? – An unreasonable statement" Karlheinz A. Geißler.

Chairing the Talks will be

- *Anneliese Heilingner a consultant at the Work and Research Office of Pedagogics of the Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres, Vienna*
- *Hubert Hummer, Principal of the Linz "Volkshochschule", chairman of the Pedagogic Committee of the Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres, Linz and*
- *Ewald Presker Principal of Federal Grammar School for Working Adults, Graz*

from the

Association of Austrian Adult Education Centres
Volkshochschulen (Member of the European
Association for the Education of Adults)

VIEWS IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE THOSE OF THE VARIOUS
CORRESPONDENTS AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT ECA POLICY