

Introduction to the final volume from the National President of WEF

Colin Power

As this is the last edition of *New Horizons in Education* as the national journal of WEF Australia, it is only fitting that we pay tribute to the outstanding contributions made by Dr Margaret Kiley as editor, to Dr Margaret Henry as Associate Editor, and to Dr Anne Feeney as Business Manager of the journal. Editing and managing a journal are very demanding tasks in the rapidly changing communication context, and we have been fortunate indeed to have had such a dedicated team in recent years enabling WEF Australia to consistently produce a high quality publication and to ensure that seminal articles consistent with the values and objectives of WEF are available to WEF members and Journal subscribers.

We now move to a new context in which the functions served by *New Horizons in Education* are now to be served by the WEF Australia Newsletter and website, and the WEF International journal, *New Era in Education*. The effectiveness of such a shift will depend in the end on the extent to which WEF sections and members take advantage of the opportunities created by having a new and more flexible medium of electronic communication and support by WEF's international journal (*New Era in Education*).

Our webmaster (Chris Jeffrey) is keen to develop the WEF Australia website <http://www.wef.org.au> as a valuable resource for members and potential members of WEF, both nationally and for each state section. The intention is to provide a national approach to the website for news and contacts with easy links to State section websites where more detailed information is provided. I would encourage WEF members to make full use of the website and Sections to ensure that the information provided to Chris Jeffrey relating to the website sections (About Us, News, Publications, Links, Contact Us) is regularly updated so that WEF members are kept up-to-date on what is happening in all sections through Australia and beyond.

We know that some of our members do not have access to the web or email services, and will ensure that in such cases, you are kept informed and involved using Newsletters delivered by more conventional means.

The *New Era in Education* is one of the oldest ongoing publications in education, established in 1921 as "an international review of new education." Like *New Horizons in Education*, it is a referred journal that welcomes articles that relate to the principles of WEF. Contributions to *New Era in Education* can be made directly to the Editor (Dr Dave Hinton, email: editor@neweraineducation.co.uk). Subscriptions from individuals or institution should be made to the Distributions Secretary, Mrs Guadalupe G. de Turner, 54 Fox Lane, London, N134AL, UK or email: subscriptions@neweraineducation.co.uk.

On the international front, the 43rd WEF International Conference was held in Sophia, Bulgaria from 27th August to 1st September 2006 on the theme "Education for Full Humanity in a Technological and e-learning Society." While a relatively small conference, it made an important contribution to the purposes of WEF helping us address the issue of the extent to which communication technology is:

- a threat – an obstacle to personal relationships, a filter through which our contact with the world is distorted, and a buffer that cuts us off from our spiritual roots, or

- an opportunity – opening new ways of creating works of art, creating new chances to communicate with people around the globe, and providing a material base upon which values of democracy and creativity should flourish.

We look forward to seeing some of the keynote papers in future editions of *New Era in Education*.

At the Sophia Conference, it was agreed that a World Action Group (WAG) be established as a sub-committee of WEF International Steering Committee. The intention is to strengthen the international and regional presence of WEF. To do so, we are seeking to reassert WEF's support for, and involvement in, UNESCO's work. We want to build a close working relationship with both UNESCO Headquarters and its Regional Offices, along the lines of the successful partnership between UNESCO and WEF in the regional Conference held in Adelaide at the end of 2004. Both Ian Penny and I are members of the Education Sub-committee of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO. I will also visit UNESCO Paris in November and while there will explore ways in which the links with UNESCO can be strengthened.

While in Melbourne last May I took the opportunity to attend a WEF Victoria meeting addressed by John Fien on education for sustainable development and by Denis Cunningham on language teaching policy. It was a delight to participate in the animated discussion that followed. In June, I met with WEF South Australia Committee and addressed a WEF meeting on the results of the WEF global study initiated by the late Jack Campbell on educating for tomorrow's world, which is now published (Campbell, W.J., Baikaloff, N. & Power, C. *Towards a Global Community*, Dordrecht NL: Springer, 2006). Again, a very successful WEF event. And during a fairly intense week in August, I gave the William Oats and Honora Deane Memorial Lectures in Hobart and Launceston on the theme "Building Intelligent Leaders for Tomorrow's World" as well as addressing students and staff at the University of Tasmania on global education and primary and secondary school students on leaders and heroes I have known. In essence, it is good to see that we do have a number of vibrant WEF sections in Australia. The challenge is to ensure that every state has a WEF section and to ensure that we exercise "intelligent leadership" in promoting the principles of WEF in Australia and our region.

Contact

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