



CONTACT

The Newsletter for the ACT Modern Language Teachers' Association

The ACT MLTA Works 4U!

April

2010

Inside this issue:

Meet and Greet	2
2010 Executive	2
Upcoming Events	2
Photos	3
FIPLV Report	4
Contact Details	6
Join the Executive	6

FIPLV SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS OPEN IN MAY 2010

- ◆ Now is the time to start thinking about whether you would like to attend the NZALT Biennial Conference in New Zealand in July!

President's Report

"The day is recognised by the morning"

If that applies to this year's challenges in language teaching in Australia, we can expect them to be many and varied – but rewarding just the same.

Writing is well underway on the National Curriculum, with Associate Professor Angela Scarino (a member of the AFMLTA) writing the 'Shaping Paper for Languages'. Down the track, all MLTA members will be called upon to discuss the draft and give feedback.

As the representative for the AFMLTA, I attended the launch of the Draft of National Professional Teachers Standards on 23 March in Canberra. The presentation by Patrick Lee, co-writer of the draft, was informative, open and honest. He has called on all stakeholders (and who is more interested than teachers themselves?!) to pay close attention to the wording of the standards to ensure they sit well for practising teachers.

ACT MLTA will send you an electronic version of this draft shortly. You can return your suggestions to us directly by May 1. We will pass them on to AFMLTA for a final statement from language teachers in Australia by May 2.

If you miss out, you can still participate in discussions on April 29 and May 6 (see details in DET Alerts emailed of 26 March). Final day for comments is May 7.

A very special PD opportunity for you this year is indeed participation in the **Professional Standards Project - Stream C**, which talks about a national approach to

gathering evidence for student's assessment. You will not be asked to bring your assessment tasks, but to participate in a think-tank on what should constitute a reliable language test for K-12.

Stream C is now open to all MLTA members. Second round of enrolment closes on Wednesday May 5. Enrol via the Professional Learning Calendar or contact me directly.

The sessions are to be held at the CTL Thursday, 13 May, 8.30- 4.30 (the school will be reimbursed for your relief) Wednesday, 21 May and Friday, 9 June, 12.30-4.30. For more detail and the enrolment form, see a separate email.

In other news, I recently had the pleasure of giving a lecture to Dr Houston's students at the University of Canberra. It was reassuring and encouraging to see the new wave of enthusiastic language learners who will later this year become our colleagues.

It was a pleasure meeting many of you at our 'Meet and Greet' gathering and I hope you will encourage other language teachers to join the ACT MLTA and participate in the events organised for this year.

Don't forget, membership is valid for a calendar year, so to gain the most benefits, renew your membership or join ASAP.

Wishing you the most pleasant break from school until we resume on 27 April.

Meri Dragicevic

President Act MLTA

National News

**Draft National Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2009-2012 (please email Meri for the draft copy)

**Survey for Professional Standards (see other email). Please complete the survey

before 1st May to ensure your comments are accepted. You need to mention your association is the ACT MLTA.

If you wish to continue receiving Contact and updates about national languages news and are not currently a

member, you need to join the ACT MLTA asap. This is a very influential year in terms of the development of national plans for languages education and therefore essential that you have your say in the future of languages teaching in Australia.

ACT MLTA Meet and Greet



*Networking at the ACT MLTA
Meet and Greet*

The 2010 MLTA Meet and Greet was held at the beautiful Kurrajong Hotel in Barton on a warm, sunny afternoon. Language teachers from all over the ACT gathered to enjoy a cool beverage and participate in some relaxed professional networking. This was particularly important for the new language teachers in our state. Lucky door prizes were awarded to several members who will be now be enjoying their free movie tickets.

The 2010 ACT MLTA Executive was introduced to the crowd by the President, Meri Dragicevic. Meri also spoke about the Professional Standards Project Stream C selection process and that the ACT MLTA would be funding 15 places in this stream.

Tina Rodriguez, the 2009 FIPLV scholarship recipient, presented a speech about the time she spent in Italy pursuing a sister-school relationship with an Italian school for St Francis Xavier College here in Canberra.

Shannon White, a 2010 Endeavour Scholarship recipient, spoke about her recent tour of France and encouraged members to apply for the 2011 Endeavour Scholarship.

Photos of the Meet and Greet are available for your viewing pleasure on the next page.

Introducing the 2010 MLTA Executive Team

The 2010 MLTA Executive team is as follows - L-R Front row: Meri Dragicevic (President), Kratai Visityuthasar (Minutes Secretary), Natalie Stewart (Vice-President). L-R Back row: Shannon White (Editor of Contact) and Jennifer Macdonald (Treasurer).

This team of approachable individuals look forward to fulfilling their roles in 2010 and hope you will enjoy participating in ACT MLTA events as well as sharing your knowledge and experience with other MLTA members.



May 2010

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

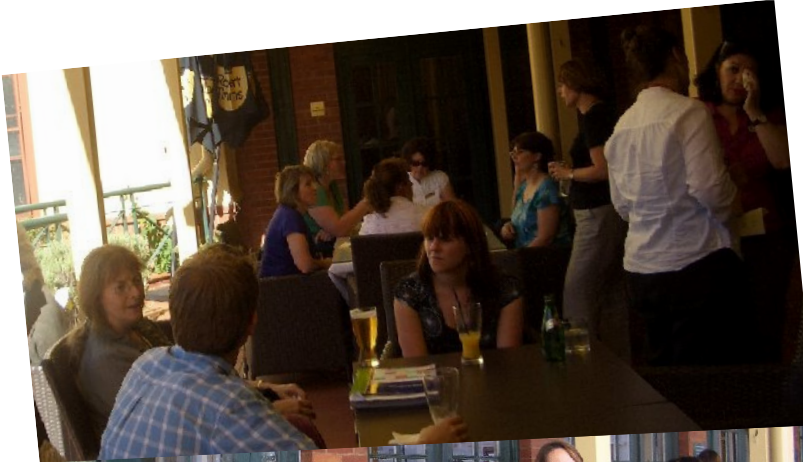
Upcoming Events—Thurs, 20th May

This year, the ACT MLTA will hold all of their events in week 4 of every term. This means that there will be 4 events, in 4 terms, in week 4 of every term. Keep week 4 free for ACT MLTA!

Put Thursday, 20th May in your diary now for the ACT MLTA dinner! The venue is yet to be confirmed. The meeting will be a mini-AGM with only one thing on the agenda; to accept the motion that the AGM shifts from November to March each year.

We would like to invite all members to inform us of a guest speaker they would like the for ACT MLTA Conference later in the year. It is important that members contribute their suggestions so that the ACT MLTA can provide members with exactly what they need and want.

The ACT MLTA Works 4u!



2009 FIPLV Recipient Tina Rodriguez Reports Back

Ciao a tutti,

Late last year I applied and was fortunate enough to receive a FIPLV scholarship from the MLTA ACT. A requirement for receiving the scholarship was to propose a project for enhancing teaching and learning of languages. So I put forward my proposal to foster a sister-school relationship with my school, St Francis Xavier College, where Italian has been taught for many years, and a school in Italy. My plan was to visit the school, meet teachers and students and begin negotiations for this project.

So, as luck would have it, I received an invitation from Claudia Speziali to visit the Liceo Artistico Statale Maffeo Olivieri in Brescia, Italy, where she is a senior teacher. Ms Speziali had been posted to the Australian National University's Modern Language Department as a Lecturer and Tutor in the Italian Language Program during the years 2001-2003. I had been fortunate enough to be one of Ms Speziali's students and friend. Ms Speziali is a very knowledgeable and experienced history teacher with extremely good knowledge of Brescia, her birthplace. She is also a very good language teacher. So, when I received her invitation, my immediate reaction was: Yes!

Visit to the Liceo

The Liceo Maffeo Olivieri is situated in the historical centre of Brescia, an ancient and beautiful city located about one hour's train from Milan. I visited the Liceo on Thursday 14 and Friday 15 January 2010. On Thursday Ms Speziali gave me a tour of the building pointing out some of the many architectural and artistic features of the Liceo.

Briefly, the building dates back to the year 1699, when it was built as a palazzo for a member of the city's nobility. In 1764 it was acquired by the Bargnani family, by whose name the building became commonly known. In 1813 the Bargnani family sold it to the Crown and since then has been home to various educational institutions, including the Liceo Classico Arnaldo from 1823 to 1925. In the 1989-90 academic year it became the Liceo Artistico Statale Maffeo Olivieri. It takes its name from the Brescian artist Maffeo Olivieri who lived in the city from 1484 to 1543.

The liceo is one of the very few "liceo artistico" in the province of Brescia and thus it attracts top class students from all around Brescia. The building, like many others in Brescia, was built in the Baroque style and houses many paintings and sculptures and the walls and ceiling of its more important rooms are

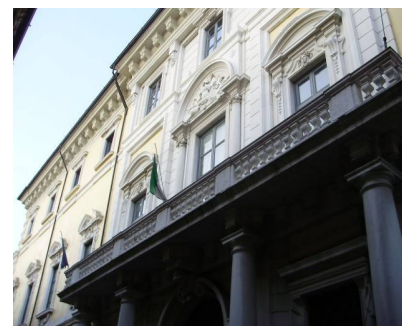
decorated with sumptuous, and well preserved, frescoes.

It became obvious from my discussions with teachers and students during my visit on Friday that a very important part of the Liceo's curriculum, apart from the artistic subjects, was the teaching and learning of English. I attended two English classes at which I was invited to take an active role along with the teacher. At one of these classes I had the wonderful experience of meeting "Diego", a Year 10 student with Down Syndrome. Diego had a wonderful personality and enjoyed getting involved. He was genuinely thrilled by the visit of an Australian teacher to his class. And even more so when I presented him with a golden kangaroo because he answered one of the questions I put to the class. The look of joy and excitement on his face just made my visit!

The Liceo takes students from Year 9 – 12 (Australian Equivalent) most of whom intent to major on some stream of the arts, which includes: painting, drawing, sculpture, print media, digital art and photography, art history and so on. English is taught along with the other compulsory subjects, as the preferred second language. In discussions with students it was evident that they regarded English



'Diego' and Tina Rodriguez



The Liceo's Façade



The Director's Office: Rosalba Loreto, Tina Rodriguez, Vanna Capelli, Claudia Speziali

lingua franca with which to communicate with people of other nationalities and a very valuable gateway to the internet. The Italian youth is probably the most anglophiles in Europe.

For my last engagement at the Liceo, I was invited by Ms Rosalba Loreto, the English Program Coordinator, to make a presentation to a combined group of some 50 students from various years at, none less than, the Liceo's Aula Magna! I am relieved to report that, judging by their response, everything went well and I did justice to Australia and SFX. The students were very attentive during the presentation and asked many questions. They even became really involved in the game I asked them to participate (maybe it was the little trinkets that got them motivated) at the end of the presentation. I thought the level of engagement was really fantastic.

I made arrangements individually with a number of teachers to maintain contact with them and to try and establish a regular exchange between our students via internet and other means. In discussions with Ms Vanna Capelli, the Liceo's Deputy Director, Ms Speziali and Ms Loreto, I explored the possibility of organising a home-stay for our students visiting Italy some time in the future. They were delighted with the idea and undertook to

canvass the proposal with students and parents and provide whatever assistance they could.

Tentatively, we have pencilled out April 2011 as a possible date for visit to Brescia and the Liceo Maffeo Olivieri by a cohort of our students of Italian at SFX. In the meantime the response from the students to the project has been overwhelming, we have already embarked on an email exchange program and are looking at other interesting activities, like Skyping and video exchanges and perhaps even developing a joint blog!

Tina Rodriguez

Languages Teacher

St Francis Xavier College

Canberra

Australia



Budding Artists



A Classful



A typical street in Brescia

The ACT MLTA Contact Details

Postal Address:

GPO BOX 989
Civic
ACT

Email the President:

Meri Dragicevic
meri.dragicevic@ed.act.edu.au

THE ACT MLTA WORKS 4U!

The AFMLTA Details

For further reading about languages teaching in Australia, please visit the following website:

<http://www.afmlta.asn.au/>

Join our Executive!

MLTA SECRETARY NEEDED!

Please email **Meri Dragicevic** for more details about how you can become a part of this amazing team!

**Are you doing something
interesting at your school
with your languages
teaching?**

**We would LOVE to hear about
it!**

We have so many experienced and dedicated language teachers in the ACT and they should definitely be promoted and acknowledged for their amazing work!

If you are doing something special at your school, the members of the ACT MLTA would love to hear about it. You might even inspire someone to have a go at something different too. Below you will find an example of an exciting activity undertaken by an enthusiastic teacher from Canberra.

We would love to hear about any schools going overseas this year also.

Please forward all anecdotes and photographs to the Contact editor:

Shannon White

shannon.white@ed.act.edu.au

We look forward to hearing your stories!

French Day at Hawker Primary

Jennifer Macdonald, the French teacher at Hawker Primary School, organised a French Day for her students in November 2009.

Students in years K-6 dressed up to represent the many French speaking countries in the world and participated in cultural activities such as cooking crêpes and playing Pétanque.

The students also enjoyed a fabulous French lunch prepared by the school canteen.

A fun day was had by all at Hawker Primary School!

