



# CONTACT

The Newsletter for the ACT Modern Language Teachers' Association

The ACT MLTA Works 4U!

November

2011

## President's Report

Dear members,

Before the school doors close and we start celebrating a New Year, let me remind you of some highlights to which we should all proudly lift the champagne glass cheering the MLTA ACT Inc.

Starting in February with a Meet and Greet party followed by the Annual General Meeting we set the pace for a busy year:

### 1. We worked on important documents:

- ◆ The mega job on updating the *Constitution* of the MLTA ACT Inc. is completed and I am proud of this achievement as we now have a working document in line with the legislation.
- ◆ We responded to the Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages and as of today we can see the finalised document at the ACARA web page.

### 2. We travelled:

- ◆ to various countries through the Endeavour Language teachers Fellowship (ELTF)
- ◆ to Brisbane, 23-25 March (four teachers from the ACT attended joined professional learning through the Professional Standards Project (PSP) on assessment)
- ◆ to Darwin, 6-9 July (we provided 10 FIPLV Scholarships to teachers who went to the AFMLTA Conference. With such a strong team of several excellent presenters we were visible and audible and launching the Canberra Conference, 5-8 July 2013 was a breeze for me.

### 3. We relaxed:

- ◆ two dinners: in May at "L'unico" and in November at "Harem" with a guest speaker,

### 4. We upgraded our skills:

- ◆ two mini-conferences: "Breakfast and Takeaways" in August, and
- ◆ ALAA-ALANZ Mini Conference for Educators, on Saturday, 3 December

All the work which the Executive and Committee members put into organizing these events has already paid off as we received many positive comments from you, 104 teachers, members of the MLTA ACT.

I lift the glass of champagne to my tireless colleagues: Jennifer, Siobhan, Anita, Shannon, Frank, Natalie, Myriam, Ludivine, Nicola, Patricia, Bobbie, Veronique and Heike. Thank you.

I thank you all for the opportunity to lead the MLTA as President again this year and I count on your continuing support. Have a relaxing school holidays, renew your membership by 28 February 2012. And rest assured that **the MLTA works 4U.**

Meri Dragicevic

President MLTA ACT

**Happy Holidays**

## Canberra Languages Education Conference 2011

If you haven't already bought your ticket, you still can! Pay on-line before COB on Thursday 1 December (and avoid the queue) and the cost is \$45. Pay on the day by arriving at the Manning Clark Centre, Australian National University at 8:30am on Saturday the 3rd of December and pay \$50. Click below for more details...

<http://law.anu.edu.au/coast/events/langfest/regio.htm>

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## THANK YOU!

The MLTA ACT thanks to former German Language Teachers Network for their financial support.

We will use their gift to further promote language learning through our Association. Thank you.

We now have

**104**

**members!**

# AFMLTA Conference ‘Inspire, Innovate, Interact’ in 2013

## ACT MLTA President’s Speech to Launch the Canberra AFMLTA Conference

Firstly, I wish to thank our hosts the MLTA of NT and the AFMLTA, for all the memorable experiences we had over the past several days in Darwin. I also wish a successful Conference to our colleagues in New Zealand in 2012.

But, most off all, I wish to take this opportunity to tell you what a special event the AFMLTA Conference “Inspire, Innovate, Interact” will be in Canberra 5 – 8 July 2013.

I will address three questions which you may have:

1. Why Canberra?
2. What is our vision of the “Inspire, Innovate, Interact” Conference?
3. What will we offer you that will be a unique experience?

### 1. Why Canberra?

When the MLTA ACT proposed to host the Conference in 2013 we had in mind two things:

1. that it would coincide with the centenary celebrations of our Nation’s capital city and
2. that our membership is strong and growing thanks to young, enthusiastic and talented language teachers capable to carry on such an ambitious task.

I am glad the AFMLTA Executive recognized this and shared the same vision of the importance of putting Languages on the calendar of the major events in Canberra 2013.

When you come, we will meet in the city described by a true visionary the Prime Minister Andrew Fisher almost 100 years ago with these words:

*“Here on this spot, in the near future, and, I hope the distant future too, the best thoughts of Australia will be given expression to...I hope this City will be the seat of learning as well as of politics, and it will be also the home of art” (Thanks to Robyn Archer, the Creative Director of the Centenary Celebration for this citation)*

Yes, by participating at the Conference, language educators will come to teach and to learn about the best practice in engaging young Australians to grow as a truly pluri-lingual people and multicultural

citizens of the world. As the official website for the Centenary celebrations says:

*“Planning is under way for a year of memorable celebrations to mark this special anniversary not only for Canberrans but for all Australians. The Centenary of Canberra will create lasting legacies in many forms, to take our city confidently into the next century.”*

Endorsed by the Government Robyn Archer, a singer, a stage and art director with Australian and international experience and fame, who many of you would know, is working with team on projects such as “The Canberra Diaspora” celebrating contributions from those who have lived, visited, worked, lectured or studied here and have now dispersed throughout the world. If you want to know all the developments visit [www.canberra100.com.au](http://www.canberra100.com.au)

I invite you to come to Canberra, be part of this historic event, the 100th birthday, as it is the once-in-a-century opportunity to acknowledge that the National Capital is yours too, and that you also build the present and the future of this nation.

### 2. What is our vision of the “Inspire, Innovate, Interact” Conference?

The MLTA ACT team (and some of them are here behind me) is working hard to give you ample opportunities to “**Inspire** and be **inspired**, to demonstrate your **innovations** in teaching and learn the **innovative** methods from colleagues, and most of all to **Interact**, interact and interact”.

Here in Darwin we have heard several presentations on the National Curriculum – Languages. We expect that by 2013 many of you will have worked on implementation of the new Curriculum and will have inspirational practical advice and suggestions to offer.

We also hope that the Professional Standards Project will inspire many teachers to reflect on their practice and showcase the findings of their investigations. We hope to present you with the latest research on acquisition of languages, and

bring to Canberra teachers who can present innovative practices from CLIL bilingual programs in Europe.

We can assure you that we will offer various opportunities for you to engage with people from different walks of life.

And this brings me to my third question:

### 3. What will we offer you that will be a unique experience in Canberra?

We are organizing a dinner in the Parliament House, the seat of one of the most successful democracies in the world. If Parliament is sitting maybe you will have the unique opportunity to brush your shoulders with the Prime Minister or some politicians working late hours. You may like to take the opportunity to visit the Embassies and High Commissions in Canberra which will open their doors for your visit.

Do not plan to come alone to Canberra. Bring along your family. Visit the National institutions: National Gallery of Australia, National Library, Australian War Memorial, National Museum of Australia, Museum of Democracy, Portrait Gallery, and local venues such as Glassworks, the Old Bus Depot market, Botanic gardens. We have it all from A to Z - from a new Arboretum to the Zoo.

We secured some great accommodation for you in the heart of the city. Be inspired to walk and jog along with Canberrans around the lake while the frost is still on the grass, and the sun shines brightly through the alleys of bare trees. Do not plan to stay in Canberra only during the Conference, come earlier, stay longer. In a 2 hour drive you can be at the coast or on snow resources in the Snowy Mountains.

It is only 726 days from our welcoming cocktail party and the start of the AFMLTA Conference at the Rydges hotel. We will continue working diligently to make it a special experience for you.

“Canberra” means “Meeting place”.

We will be waiting to welcome you there.

Languages shape paper now available!

<http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/languages.html>

## FIPLV Recipients : AFMLTA Conference in Darwin

**Patricia Blumstein**

**Telopea Park School**

The 2011 AFMLTA Darwin conference's greatest achievement was to set in context Languages Education in the realities of Australia. I am here partially paraphrasing and interpreting *The Shape of Languages and the Australian Curriculum: what's the hope*, paper written and presented by Angela Scarino, lead writer for Languages in the Australian Curriculum.



*Welcome to country*

"Curriculum documents, like musical scores, must be enacted and performance always involves interpretation..." (Schrag, 1992:227, quote used by Angel Scarino)

Go beyond the text... Teachers are language planners  
A broad view of language planning with Jo Lo Bianco

Jo Lo Bianco gave a powerful and motivational talk about policy making.



Communicating, Understanding and Reciprocating (Discovering Uluru with an Aboriginal guide and an interpreter)

He demonstrated that Language Planning is at the cutting-edge of the organisation of the world. Language planning organises how we communicate in space and time, what type of behaviours are permitted. Language planning shapes allegiance, loyalty and identity. Jo Lo Bianco used the notion of corrupt dialects during the Revolution in France and the 1992 Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as part of one of the European Union Language policies to illustrate the reversal of the effort of the national state to crush minority languages.

Alastair Pennycook gave an insightful perusal of transidiomatic practices. He started zooming in on the port cities and their colonialist heritage to the everyday contemporary habit of code switching.

Alistair gave numerous examples of graffiti and hip hop, which would be amazing resources for Translingual Education.

From Angela Scarino, I retained the following points:

- ⇒ Honouring the learners and their cultural and linguistic diversity
- ⇒ The development of language-specific curricula
- ⇒ The strong positioning of Australian Languages
- ⇒ Recognition of the diversity of language learners and pathways
- ⇒ Communicating, understanding and Reciprocating (see Draft Stage of the Australian Curriculum: Languages p. 25-26)

Jaky Troy (co-lead writer for the Australian Curriculum: Languages) echoed Angela Scarino when speaking of her own personal experience as a Ngarigu woman. She said: "My language is sleeping, it has few speakers but its people want it to wake up". She also spoke of the ecology of languages. Jaky used beautiful and simple words that echoed the words and images used similarly by other presenters.

The 2011 AFMLTA Darwin Conference was an amazing experience setting and reflecting the realities of languages in Australia.





## FIPLV Recipients : AFMLTA Conference in Darwin

***Ludivine Le-gal***

***French Secondary Network Leader***

Going to the AFMLTA Conference in Darwin was such a great experience! First of all, the Welcome Reception... how nice did it feel to wear a summer dress, enjoy lovely food with a glass of Champagne on the waterfront, and listen to Ali Mills and her version of "Waltzing Matilda"\*. What a great start for this three day conference during which I attended so many inspiring sessions. Listening to Angela Scarino, Joseph Lo Bianco and

many others discussing and presenting various aspects of the Australian Curriculum for Languages was extremely *Enriching*. Attending the various workshops on the use of ICT (from Interactive Whiteboards to iPads) in the language classrooms helped me *Consolidate* my ICT skills. Overall, this conference *Aspired* me to continue to develop my teaching skills thanks to so many great ideas presented. In between all these sessions, I really enjoyed meeting many language teachers from all over Australia and even overseas; eating at Crocodylus Park (after having a snake put around my neck

and surrounded by over a thousand crocodiles... of course!); swimming at the Waterfront; shopping at Mindil Beach markets; watching beautiful sunsets... All of that, followed by an amazing trip all the way down to Uluru! What an experience! And of course, after Meri's powerful speech at the end of the Conference, I feel very excited to be a committee member of the ACT MLTA and help organise the 2013 AFMLTA Conference in Canberra!

\*<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgltzD6JxcA>



***Myriam Davies***

***French Primary Network Leader***

It has been a few months since I attended the Darwin AFMLTA conference but images are still vibrant in my memory: the welcoming evening in the brand new Darwin convention centre, the inspirational speakers such as Joseph Lo Bianco and Angela Scarino, the

presenters, willing to share their experiences and researches, the conference dinner at Crocodylus Park and the networking opportunities with passionate delegates from all around Australia, revealed that languages have still a bright future in front of them. But the star attraction was maybe Darwin itself, as it was for a large majority of us our first encounter with the top end city. Did I mention the beautiful summer weather in the middle of winter? With sunshine still in

my head, I can certainly confirm that attending the AFMLTA Conference in Darwin was a worthwhile experience. But I also know that all of us in Canberra will take up the challenge to organise another memorable conference in 2013. And Meri's fabulous speech at the closing ceremony in Darwin, inviting every delegate to come to Canberra, was certainly one of these inspirational moments, when you know that everything is possible when passion and enthusiasm prevail.

## AFMLTA Executives and New Zealand organisers of the AFMLTA Conference 2012



## NZALT Conference, 1-4 July 2012 in Rotorua

- The theme of the 2012 Conference is: *V.A.L.U.E.S.*
- Conference Venue: *Waiariki Institute of Technology Rotorua*
- Fellowship Dinner: *Distinction Hotel*

*We value your attendance*

### • REGISTRATION FEE:

Early Bird before 5 April 2012 / after 5 April 2012

\$350 for NZALT/AFMLTA members / \$390 for NZALT/AFMLTA members

\$390 for non-members / \$440 for non-members

*{inc. of teas, lunches and fellowship dinner}*

### • CALL FOR PAPERS

Deadline: 15 Dec 2011

Contact: NZALT Conference Organiser Laytee George

Email: [georgesotonga@xtra.co.nz](mailto:georgesotonga@xtra.co.nz) fax 00647 347 2528 tel 00647 347 2527

For more information visit the website [www.nzalt.org.nz](http://www.nzalt.org.nz)





## ACT MLTA Mini AGM and Dinner

What a great turn out! The AGM dinner in May was a great success with lots of familiar faces but also a few new ones, too!

We enjoyed conversation, laughter and beautiful artwork at the Italian restaurant L'unico in Kingston whilst passing some important motions that now make our constitution up-to-date with current legislation.

Those who stayed a little longer were surprised by the lovely staff at L'unico with champagne and dessert—what a treat!





## ACT MLTA Breakfast Conference

The day began with a lovely breakfast in the Rose Gardens at ANU. Although a little chilly, the conversation was warm and friendly.

Our first session was presented by Myriam Davies who showed us how to make foreign language readers to use in the classroom. She demonstrated to the audience exactly how to use the website so that we could all go away and try it out for ourselves—a great take-away!

Our second session was with Melanie Consola who gave us numerous fun and interesting ways to integrate interactive

whiteboards into the language classroom. Melanie showed us how to integrate resources such as textbooks, video clips, online resources etc and turn them into stimulating resources to use in the classroom.

Our third session was presented by Heike Craig who spoke to us about creating multilingual projects for high-school students in an attempt to retain students in language programmes. She explained to us that students enrolled in several different languages were given the same tasks such as creating a Masterchef type show and recording a breakfast

programme. All students were then able to show their new skills to the rest of their cohort, thus, valuing their semester worth of work. What a great idea!

We finished the day by hearing from the people who went to the AFMLTA conference in Darwin earlier in the year. They reported back on some of the highlights of their trip, some of which are explored in more detail in this issue of contact.

The breakfast conference was, again, a success and a big thank you to the all the presenters for sharing your knowledge with us.



# 'Why is it good to learn another language?'

## A Focus on Skills - Written by Adie Price

At the beginning of the year, I ask the students to design the front page of their exercise book with their name etc, and also their dream job.

Several times during the year I refer to that dream job and the skills it requires to do it well. I might say, "Close your eyes for a while. Imagine yourself at 29 years old. You are working at your dream job. It is 11.30 in the morning. See yourself at your work. – Pause - Hands up those people who need to use their memory at their job."

Usually a good number of hands go up. I thank them and ask them to put their hands down and gradually dim the image of

themselves at work. When ready they open their eyes. I follow this with "Our next exercise will specifically train our memory skills. We are going to ....."

Freely substitute whatever skill is appropriate! Here is a list to choose from:

- ⇒ strategic thinking
- ⇒ imagination
- ⇒ recognising patterns
- ⇒ attention to detail
- ⇒ general knowledge
- ⇒ team work
- ⇒ logical thinking

- ⇒ memory skills
- ⇒ analytical thinking
- ⇒ creative thinking
- ⇒ problem solving
- ⇒ courage (to take risks: pronunciation, structures)
- ⇒ humility
- ⇒ curiosity
- ⇒ concentration
- ⇒ perseverance

This list also lends itself to a review at the end of the lesson.

## Term 4 Event : Dinner at Harem in Kingston

Our last event for 2011 was held at the Turkish restaurant Harem in Kingston. We enjoyed a delicious (and large!) meal while recapping 2011. Of course, reports were on everyone's minds so there were many discussions surrounding them.

We were lucky enough to have Meredith Box present at our dinner. She spoke about the importance of maintaining heritage languages in the community and ensuring students with culturally diverse backgrounds were catered for by programmes such as Saturday schools. It certainly made us think about the various backgrounds of the people in Canberra.





## Leading Curriculum Change: Professional Learning Flagship Program

On 7 July, on behalf of the ACT MLTA, I attended a forum organized by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) about the above program. The program aims to build the capabilities of classroom teachers who can lead curriculum change in their schools, including implementation of the Australian curriculum. It comprises several units developed by the University of Queensland and is available online. Participants will be able to have professional conversations across state and territory borders, and can complete the units at a speed and time that suits their other commitments.

Certificates of completion will be issued and there may be opportunities to accrue credit for post graduate courses.

The first round of the program was launched in August 2011. Places are available for teachers from all schools and years of schooling; up to

2000 applicants will receive financial support. Teachers who wish to register their interest will need to provide the contact details of their principal or supervisor to show evidence that the school endorses their participation. For more information see [www.aitsl.edu.au/lcc](http://www.aitsl.edu.au/lcc)

Mandy Scott



# Congratulations!



*to Tim Ward-Harvey (our 2010 secretary) and his wife Aimee on the birth of their son Samuel Ward-Harvey on 6th November, 2011. Get ready for years of excitement and fun with your wonderful new little son! Congratulations and best wishes from all of us in the ACT MLTA!*



## The ACT MLTA Contact Details

**Postal Address:**

GPO BOX 989

Civic

ACT

**Email:**

Meri Dragicevic

[meri.dragicevic@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:meri.dragicevic@ed.act.edu.au)

**Website:**

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

***THE ACT MLTA WORKS 4 U!***

## AFMLTA

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

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

## ACT MLTA Executive 2011

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**Minutes Secretary**

Vacant

**Publicity Officer/Contact Editor**

Shannon White

Please send all submissions for Contact to  
[shannon.white@ed.act.edu.au](mailto:shannon.white@ed.act.edu.au)



**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. You might like to ask a student to write a review of their learning in class!

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](mailto:shannon.white@ed.act.edu.au)

We look forward to hearing your stories!

***The ACT MLTA Works 4u!***