

President's Update

As President of CEFPI Australia I attended the CEFPI international annual conference held in Chicago in October 2003. While we were few in number – Tim Gourlay, Ray Whitfield, John Sewell and me – our presence was formally acknowledged at the opening and closing ceremonies. I was welcomed by the CEFPI Board and had the opportunity to discuss with them issues of importance to the Australian members of CEFPI. There will be further discussions regarding key issues including nomenclature for our region and chapters, support for CEFPI events in Australia, and opportunities for Australia to take a more active role in CEFPI. The Board is keen to extend the international focus of CEFPI and the increasing number of Australian members provides encouragement for further expansion.

The annual conference is a huge event with over 1000 people, more than 100 presentations, two sessions of short round table presentations, site visits and a large trade show. There are celebratory awards for achievement in educational facilities planning, design and construction and for contributions to the organisation. Significant research is undertaken on a wide range of issues affecting education and school facilities. This ranges from research into brain based learning, and programs to ensure no child is left behind, to classroom standards, energy conservation initiatives, funding and furniture.

Two key projects were highlighted. Reece High School in Tasmania ("down under") and the Paragon School House Project which is a school being refurbished using voluntary contributions of time, skills and money to achieve the principles which CEFPI espouses. After the conference I visited Crow Island School which opened in 1940 but its design still meets the needs of student centred learning today. It has L shaped classrooms each opening out onto its own courtyard, with natural lighting and furniture designed to fit the child. Another innovation I saw was the flexible, multi-functional auditorium at Stevenson High School which also had track and field and aquatics facilities of a very high standard. My impression was that a fair proportion of the budget is spent on providing good quality student amenities and facilities.

The celebration of education is an important part of the CEFPI gathering and includes an opportunity to meet and discuss issues with colleagues as well as viewing the projects submitted for the design awards. It is fascinating to see how similar, yet how different the standards can be, and mind boggling to see the budget allocations for some of the top of the range schools.

"Why is it so difficult to achieve change?"

This was the key question raised in this year's conference and it is the same question that Bruce Jilk posed at LETA 2000. While we all agree that the ways in which schools are structured and managed does not meet the needs of the 21st C there is a certain reluctance to embrace new models and take the risk. Key factors inhibiting change include community attitudes to change, uncertainty about trends, constraints from funding policies, teacher resistance to change and concern about changes to facilities not meeting the needs of teachers and learners.

Prakash Nair and Randy Fielding have some interesting items on their web site and you may find these useful.

<http://fieldingnair.com/>

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It was generally agreed that there is not enough research undertaken to determine new directions and to measure the difference that new models provide. Dr Kaname Tunagisawen from Japan has undertaken a study of schools which suggests that Sweden and Japan are the leaders in innovation in and in creating learning environments which provide new models. He is hoping to undertake some research in Australia and New Zealand in the forthcoming year.

I hope we always have a contingent of Australian members at future conferences in North America. The next one is in Atlanta in October 2004 and a call for papers has been issued.

Season greetings to all members and best wishes for a rewarding new year.

Jeff Phillips

President, CEFPI Australia

Board Meeting of CEFPI Australia – Melbourne December 2003

A number of issues were discussed including the three outlined below.

Our Chapter & Our Region

Discussions are under way to define more clearly our region and our chapters. Currently we are called "Intercontinental" which does not clearly reflect who we are or where we are on the map. There is a formal process for change which requires the Board to carefully review the By Laws and make application for a new name such as Australia, Australia & New Zealand, Australia/Pacific, Australasia etc. Your suggestions for an appropriate name are welcomed. In doing so it has been noted that our region could extend to include India, the Middle East, South East Asia and Japan as well as the Pacific.

Making Links, Connections & Alliances

We should seek out opportunities to make connections and to form alliances with other bodies that have similar functions and objectives. For example, there are many issues in common between the International, national and local RAIA, the FMA, Property Council and A- APPA, APPA, SCUP, OECD PEB and CEFPI in its various forms. There are also links to education bodies including ACEL, ACE, and the Principals Associations and Curriculum Associations as well as national groups for Libraries, Science, Maths and ICT. It would be a good to share ideas, exchange information and work on research without overlapping or encroaching. One way of doing this is to invite members from other groups to our CEFPI functions and to circulate articles of mutual interest to show the diversity of the expertise available.

Communication and the web

A major effort will be made to get the web site up to date and to keep it relevant to members. One of the matters discussed at some length was the flow of information from the USA in the context of Australian initiatives and needs. The Executive is keen to hear from members of ideas on how to make better use of the services and expertise in the USA.

2004 the Year of the Built Environment

A program of activities has been initiated by the RAIA and there are numerous opportunities to get involved. Contact your local Chapter or go to their web site at

www.builtenvironment2004.org.au

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Awards and Opportunities

Design Share Awards 2003

In January each year, Design Share calls for submissions of school designs which represent best practice in design for learning. The submissions are reviewed and evaluated by an international panel and awards are made in a wide range of categories. In 2003 Australian projects which received awards included merit awards for three:

- Australian Science & Maths School
- Oak Valley School (in the Aboriginal Pitjantjatara lands)
- Griffiths Primary School (Singapore)

and a recognised value award for Canberra Primary School, also in Singapore.

Details of the projects submitted and awarded are available on the Design share web site www.designshare.com

2003 James D. MacConnell Award

The James D. MacConnell Award is an international award created by CEFPI to recognize the significant contributions made to the profession of planning educational facilities and to CEFPI by Dr. MacConnell. This prestigious award recognizes educational facility planning excellence; from determination of the need for the facility through occupancy and all segments in between. The project(s) being recognized, best demonstrate the comprehensive effectiveness of planning, design and construction.

2003 Winner:

Reece High School

Tasmania, Australia

Department of Education, Tasmania

Tim Gourlay will be making a presentation at the Sydney Conference.

Melbourne Seminar 4 December 2003

Darren Clarke from the Victorian Education Department Planning & Infrastructure Branch welcomed the CEFPI Board and locals who came to hear Ron Lake give a presentation on transforming schools. Ron is the Assistant General Manager, Innovations Branch Key points included:

- Achieving innovation is like herding cats – difficult to achieve, but ultimately rewarding
- More of the same will not give the results required
- Radical innovation requires boldness of vision, commitment to the cause, and skilled people to see the project through from big picture to fine detail
- Need to address change on many fronts simultaneously – and this requires skills, energy and belief
- Meeting the needs of the future requires radical change to curriculum, the structure of learning (pedagogy), design and use of facilities, and customised pathways which focus on and meet the needs of learners as the first priority.

Ron had a key role in developing the Australian Science & Mathematics School (ASMS) in South Australia. This centre was developed by the SA Education Department (DECS) in conjunction with the Flinders University of South Australia. Key features include:

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- Size, space and inter-relationship of spaces, flexibility, acoustics and communications
- ICT everywhere and of a high standard
- Courageous vision by the key parties

Ron Lake urged CEFPI members and associates to support transformation and to create a difference. Celebrate success, share knowledge, programs & resources and continue to develop new models.

Next Events

CEFPI in Sydney – April 2004

“Design and Learning: Has the paradigm changed?”

Venue: The Conservatorium High School, Sydney

Sydney will host the CEFPI annual facilities conference for 2004 from Wednesday 21 – Friday 23 April 2004. Further details of the program are on the CEFPI web site. As there are only 240 places available are sure to register early!

The CEFPI Board will meet at the conference on Friday 23 April 2004

LETA 2004 (Learning Environment Technology – Australia 2004)

“Sustainable Learning for a Sustainable Future”

LETA 2004 will be held in Adelaide, South Australia from Sunday 29 August – Wednesday 1 September 2004. This is the 6th LETA and this time our strategic partners are the Area School and Small School Principals. The theme is sustainability in all its forms (not just “clean and green”). The conference will be held at the Education Development Centre at Hindmarsh. Further details will be available early 2004.

There will be a function for CEFPI members on Monday 30 August.

ACEL/ACE National Conference

“Checking the Pulse”

The 2004 National Conference is on 6 – 9 October in Perth.

<http://www.checkingthepulse.com/>

There will be a CEFPI event in conjunction with this conference.

CEFPI – USA – 81st Annual Conference Atlanta Georgia

In 2004 the annual international conference will be held in Atlanta Georgia on 22 & 23 October 2004

A call for speakers is out now and registrations are required by **14 January 2004**.

Further details are available on www.cefpi.com

In 2005 it will be in San Antonio, Texas – just in case you’re planning ahead.

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2004 Deadlines

Design Share Awards

Early registration deadline 20 Feb 2004
Registration deadline 19 March
Deadline for submittal 23 April

James D MacConnell Award

Entries need to be submitted by 5 March 2004

2004 Year of the Built Environment

Submissions for inclusion as part of YBE2004 need to be submitted to the RAIA.

See www.builtenvironment2004.org.au

NEW!

Victoria Chapter of CEFPI Award

Victoria has developed an exciting new award specifically for education buildings completed in the past two years. There will be a jury of three – an architect and two education facilities planners. Information will be on the CEFPI web site in the near future, and the winners will be announced at the Sydney CEFPI conference.