



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROJECT

WATTLE PARK TEACHERS CENTRE
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15 FEB 1984

NEWSLETTER No. 2

AUGUST 1978^{SYDNEY}

INTRODUCTION

I am pleased that I included two options for "payment" for this newsletter for some kind folk sent money and their newsletter. Others, relying no doubt on such people, sent only their form! However, the flood of newsletters received should ensure a useful interchange of ideas. Payment should be sufficient for 1978 and 1979 (i.e. the period of the Project).

A number of people have offered to write items for subsequent newsletters and so the following organization is proposed:

- October : What is E.E.? Who has a working (and workable) definition? What curriculum statements currently exist in Australia that incorporate some E.E.? What policies in E.E. exist at State, regional and school levels?
- December : Community and Government Environment Centres and Organizations - how do they contribute to the education of the converted, the children and the public? What can industrial and commercial groups offer the environmental educator?
- February : E.E. overseas. ~ Inservice and preservice training in Australia. Gaming and simulation.
- April : The environment as stimulus for self-expression in Art, Drama, Language ... Is stimulus enough? What attitudes, values, and behaviours do we/should we encourage?
- June : The urban environment - its psychology, architecture, planning, landscaping, history and geography, as vital aspects of E.E. Is school design, both inside and outside, relevant?

Other information about publications, people, events and issues will also be woven into each newsletter. Brief notes about student projects, films, newspaper features, trails, education reserves and the like are most welcome. Would those prepared to write please send a short article, preferably half-page or less, by the 15th of the newsletter month?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR?

I am prepared to print letters that have pertinent points or questions which others may be able to answer - so long as they are kept short. Samples of the comments received in response to the first newsletter are:

- : I love your upside-down-dead-snail logo!
- : I hope this newsletter and the Project will help clear up the question of what E.E. is and what E.E. is not ... The E.E. movement

National Project Director: John H. Smith

could suddenly become much more effective if illegitimate and obscurantist programs could be weeded out.

: I find the following equation helpful -

$$\frac{\text{Resource Management}}{\text{Resource Use}} = \text{Environment}$$

: The theme of World Environment Day June 5th, 1978, was in fact *Things we want to keep*. I would be interested to hear suggestions for W.E.D. 1979.

NEWS FROM THE STATES

My brief impressions after a "Cook's Tour" of several states to meet grantees and others involved in E.E. are given below.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

The Territory has appointed a liaison officer for the Project. Jim Cameron is the newly-arrived Senior Advisor in Social Education for the Education Department. By training an historical geographer, he has taught history and geography at secondary and tertiary levels. He was on the W.A. Social Education Materials Project (S.E.M.P.) team and as president of the Geography Teachers Association was associated with the establishment of Field Study Centres in W.A. He is keen to see the "local environment" used and for children to discover its geographical and historical dimensions. He can be contacted at the Curriculum and Research Branch, Nakara Primary School, Darwin, or 'phone 089-27 3011.



The Environment Council N.T. held an important three-day conference at the Batchelor Education Village. After a wide variety of speakers from schools, the Darwin Community College, Government Departments, Environmental organizations, and political parties, the conferees resolved to ask for the establishment of a formal Environmental Education Committee and a full-time person to promote and coordinate E.E. To date developments have been very patchy with Science teachers well to the fore. Environmental issues such as energy, uranium, land rights, and habitat conservation are prominent in community education campaigns but not many student level materials have been produced yet.

QUEENSLAND

The largest number of first round grants went to Queensland which had been quick to move into the area of E.E. in the early 1970s. The general organization of the fourteen Education Department Field Study Centres and the workings of Australia's only(?) urban Field Study Centre, Fortitude Valley, as well as the supporting material of the Pilot Environmental Education Project (P.E.E.P.) are being written up for CDC.

The Environmental Advisory Team of four people began in 1975 under a Schools Commission Grant to survey the geological, biological, geographical and historical resources around each high school. It has covered 80% of Queensland and its reports, which cover techniques as well as resources, have been widely circulated. However before it is dismantled the team will write an account of its methods, successes, etc.

Agricultural Projects Clubs have been operating in Queensland since 1927 and provide practical experiences in silviculture, horticulture, apiary, land-use and habitat studies as well as developing school grounds. Jack Althaus and Lee Williams from the Agricultural Projects Branch provide advisory help, A-V kits for

teachers and a Kids Environmental Education Newsletter (KEEN). As well they administer the Field Study Centres and hope to have two Field Study Centres staffed and equipped for day and overnight visits in each region in the very near future.

The Queensland Education Department also has a Coordinating Committee on Environmental Education which involves people from the Agricultural Projects Branch, Physical Education Branch, Curriculum Branch and National Parks and Wildlife Service, and which has produced a Departmental policy paper. Further information can be obtained from the appropriate branch at P.O. Box 33, North Quay, 4000.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Like Queensland, NSW is rapidly developing Field Study Centres with some eleven staffed and two more "in the pipeline". The usual mode of operation is on a day basis but at some centres overnight accommodation is available. Many are closed schools on Education Department land but an interesting variety of land tenures, from Nature Reserves to National Trust properties, also exists. There is close cooperation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service who run E.E. conferences for teachers and produce resource material on topics such as *Rainforests* (\$3), *Royal National Park* (\$3), *Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park* (\$3), *Warrumbungle National Park*, *There's Dirt in the Forest* (activities for children) and the journal *Parks and Wildlife* (\$10 for five issues). Contact is Wendy Goldstein, Box N189, Grosvenor Street Post Office, Sydney, 2000.

An Environmental Education writing team under the auspices of a joint Education Department and the State Pollution Control Commission has produced some excellent primary level activities on *The Car - An Ideas Book*, by M. Ross (\$4) and on using school grounds, *On Safari*, by D. Ward (50c), available from Burwood Teaching Resources Centre, Railway Avenue, Burwood, 2134. The team has also run E.E. seminars and produced resource materials for secondary teachers on the Lane Cove River and the Cook's River Valley. Di Ward and Ewen Finnane, the team, can be found at 35 Mitchell Street, North Sydney, 2060.

School grounds and local areas seem fertile places for E.E. in N.S.W. A number of inner Sydney schools are using the landscaping talents of Narel Sonter, E.E. consultant with the Central Metropolitan Regional Office. The Gould League has published *The Use of Natural Areas near School Grounds* and Ku-ring-gai C.A.E. has produced a series of units for teachers after an inservice course in 1977. Titles are: *Let's Explore our Playground* (80c), *Clontarf and the Spit* (\$1.50), *The Pacific Highway* (\$1.50), *The Urbanization of Manly* (80c) and *How do I write a Unit?* (80c). They are aimed at primary level and can be obtained from Ken Morgan at the College, P.O. Box 222, Lindfield, 2070.

In addition, a number of voluntary associations such as the Awakabal Association for E.E. and the Association for E.E. (N.S.W.) are active and running conferences for teachers, local council and government officers, and the public. Allen Strom, 230 Scenic Road, Killcare Heights via Hardy's Bay, 2256, is a contact person for the Association for E.E.

The Gould League is actively promoting a wide range of outdoor activities, particularly at primary level, through booklets such as *Environmental Education Fieldwork*. It also hopes to resurrect its E-KIDS magazine and have regional environmental coordinators as in Victoria.

The national Gould League Conference for Environmental Educators will be held at Ku-ring-gai C.A.E. from November 29th to December 1st. The focus will be on resources for E.E. For further details contact the Gould League organizer for N.S.W., David Tribe, Public School, Burton Street, Milson's Point, 2061, 'phone 027-92 7934.

VICTORIA

I am always fascinated by the variety of activities and organizations involved with E.E. in Victoria. The most obvious is the Gould League with its array of excellent publications - bird books and posters, the magazine *Survival*, a special

Ocean Studies issue on how to explore the beach, "Storm Boy"-style and the two latest, *Making Trails* and *Field Study Centres*. The latter is the report of the 1977 National Gould League Conference in Queensland. Contact is Noel Shaw at 67 High Street, (or P.O. Box 446) Prahran, 3131.

The School Forestry Branch provides advisory help in each region in the use and development of schools' forest reserves and school grounds as well as on school excursions. It is responsible for the soon-to-be-opened (officially) Whipstick Environment Centre - near Bendigo. The Centre focuses on the unique whipstick mallee and is available to all schools and interested groups. The Branch publishes *Aldinga*, a quarterly magazine which can be obtained from the office at 234 Queensberry Street, Carlton, 3053.

The Victorian State Schools Horticultural Society was founded in 1910 by a farsighted teacher and today provides assistance in planning and planting school grounds, runs inservice programs in horticulture and natural science, and sells plants and other horticultural products to schools and teachers. It's no wonder they call Victoria "The Garden State". A *Teachers' Guide to School Horticulture* (\$2) and a nursery catalogue (60c) are available from Paul Crowe at the State Schools Nursery, Arthur Street, Oakleigh, 3166.

The Melbourne Zoo Education Service (P.O. Box 74, Parkville, 3052) is the most comprehensive in Australia with some fourteen teaching staff, five classrooms each with its own atmosphere (African savannah, etc.) and a soon-to-be-opened resource/in-service centre. In addition to conducting classes around the Zoo, the service provides weekend seminar programs for teachers, talks to regional groups and lectures on zoology for the Zoo staff. But is all this E.E.? Graham Morris who runs the service believes an awareness and understanding of animals will ultimately encourage a commitment to their conservation.

Victoria (as well as Tasmania and South Australia) has developed a Year 12 Higher School Certificate course in Environmental Science which was offered at 41 schools in 1977. Teachers for such courses are being trained at the C.A.Es but, as with other tertiary institutions around Australia, there is concern that there will be no suitable positions available in schools for such graduates. Nevertheless, a large number of C.A.Es around Australia appear to be about to offer graduate or diploma courses.

Geography, Art, and Social Science teachers associations are actively promoting E.E. through conferences, curriculum committees, and publications. With all this activity it is inevitable that associations such as the "Environment Teachers Association (Vic)", 28 Hunter Street, Fern Tree Gully, 3156, the "Environmental Studies Association of Victoria" (E.S.A.V.) and "Inspect", both based at the Victorian Environment Centre, 324 William Street, Melbourne 3000, would be strongly supported. E.S.A.V. runs a range of courses for both the public and teachers, and produces case studies materials based on the localities of the courses.

SMALL SCALE GRANTS FOR ROUND 2

The State Liaison Officers are meeting in Adelaide from September 19th-21st to examine Round 1 manuscripts and discuss applications for Round 2 monies. Each State will then form a small advisory committee to rank applications and forward them for consideration on a national basis by the E.E.P. Management Committee. This consists of three Liaison Officers, Bob Stevenson, Jim Wilson and Harry Pearson, David Stokes from S.C.V. Rusden as the tertiary representative, Bruce Lavender from Chadstone High (Vic.) as the Australian Teachers Federation representative, and Annette Greenall, the coordinator of CDC's E.E. programs.

Applicants should be notified in mid-November of their success (or otherwise). Closing date for applications is September 15th. Forms are obtainable from the Project Office or State Liaison Officer.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

WHALES



SAVE THE WHALE

Project Jonah and others have been particularly effective in bringing the current whaling situation to the attention of the Australian public. Many teachers have promoted their concerns in the classroom, especially at the primary school level. "Art" work for displays has been a prominent medium and much that has been produced suggests an emotive approach has been used with the children. Some administrators have commented (unfavourably) on Project Jonah's education kit *Whales, Dolphins and Man* (\$2.50, from 78 Abbott St., Sandringham, Vic. 3193). I received the following review of *People and Whales* (30c from Project Jonah, 310 Angas St., Adelaide, S.A. 5001)

"This pamphlet type publication is suitable for middle to upper primary school grades. It includes material on adaptation of whales to their environment, whale communication and breathing. There are also discussions on whale hunting and whale products. Questions about alternatives to whale products are raised. A number of activities are suggested for children including dramatic activities on whale breathing and communication, measuring activities and value questions on the harpooning of whales. Children are invited to discuss the future of the whaling industry as viewed by different groups such as conservationists, governments or representatives of the whaling industry. Reference is made to the decision to close the Cheynes Beach factory at Albany, and this in fact could provide further discussion points. The publication concludes with poems written by primary school children ... It would provide excellent resource material for primary school teachers interested in developing a unit on whaling, and could be purchased in class sets." It raises the following questions:

If such material is highly emotive, is it appropriate to use in the classroom, especially if no one is promoting the other side of the issue? Do teachers cause more (long term) harm than good by raising complex issues with young children who have no understanding of the economics and politics involved - and of course will want to save whales? How do you use such material? How do you justify its use on educational grounds?

Kevin Blatchford from the Victorian Curriculum and Research Branch has been commissioned by CDC to write papers on handling controversial issues and values issues in the classroom, to be published later this year. In the meantime have a look at Fraenkel, J. *How to Teach about Values*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs 1976.

URANIUM The flood of materials continues but "the wet" hasn't arrived soon enough for Kakadu! The Territory has some excellent first-hand information on the mining and land rights situation. NSW Teachers Federation has published a broadsheet. Such publications can be collected here. Would someone like to sift them and find which (if any) are suitable for the classroom?

The prices for the *Uranium Mining in Australia* kit mentioned in the last newsletter should have been:

Slide Format \$34 (+ \$4 Sales Tax*)

Film Strip \$21 (+ \$1.75 " " *)

(*if no exemption form) Available from Environmental Audio-Visuals, 51 Nicholson Street, Carlton, Vic. 3053.



"Was there an environment when we were kids?"

SALT Do the media in Australia determine the environmental curriculum in the schools? Has your concern been a response to T.V. or local daily newspaper publicity? Which issues have you tackled in the classroom? One letter received from Victoria recently had this to say:

"In the Murray Valley we have a very real environment problem affecting most of Australia's public irrigation systems and threatening the economic and social futures of 200,000 people (salinity). Basically the long-term solution lies in the application of ecological principles in the management of river basins on catchment principles. The urgent need is a public awareness of the interdependence of all the elements of the ecology of the Murray Basin. But most of our appeals to educators have fallen on deaf ears ... I still find indifference and lack of interest from secondary teachers in the irrigation districts. ... I'm sorry to have to say that there is an incredible amount of waffle coming from professional people" (curriculum developers).

Those who live at the sewer end of the Murray would also like to see this "non-issue" tackled by educators.

GROUP GARDENING The following extracts are from a newsletter recently established by grantee Audrey Windram who is making a film on "Group Gardening". Further details from Audrey at P.O. Longwood, S.A. 5153.



DIGGING IN A great deal of interest has been shown by teachers and group leaders in the establishment of some kind of a "learning exchange" or forum for the benefit of people who are gardening, or planning to garden with groups. Whether school or community garden or a joint venture between the two, the skills required include not only gardening skills but much more besides. The human interaction, the structuring of a program to ensure and maintain enthusiasm, sometimes the politics of acquiring land or support, initiating, overcoming the problems of a garden that has itinerant gardeners, or gardeners who vanish for long vacations: all these are problems indeed.

Winter has not been a good time for looking at other people's projects, but it has been possible to discover the kind of

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values that generate the energies and enthusiasms. James Culshaw of Thorndon Park has put in a great deal of his own time and money into a poultry and gardening project that is paying good dividends in student participation - he took me to the far end of the school yard where an independent group of children had decided to have a try on their own in their playtime to get a garden going. It seems that enthusiasm is an important part of the hidden curriculum.

At Hawthorndene the skills are the thing - the expertise these children are gaining is becoming of wide value - they are accustomed now to the pilgrimages made by other groups to see what they have done in the way of native plant propagation.

From Risdon Park High comes a request for ideas for restructuring the school's science program on more practical, less "dry-as-dust" lines, than many texts offer.

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

There was a time, not that long ago, when towns and cities were known for the activities and interests of their citizens - so Adelaide was a city of Churches and Gardens and likewise it was a city of church-goers and gardeners, and these interests were felt in home and community.

Well that was the way it used to be, then we got taken over by "trends" and "over-seas moves" all of which relied for their impact on "experts", "advisors" and "consultants". Local common sense collapsed under the welter of commercial pressure to want and do only that which was new. What happened inside the churches cannot be told by me, but in the world of horticulture and gardening things really went awry. Community interaction almost ceased to exist; neighbours no longer swapped plants over the back fence; children no longer had a garden patch of their own and the reasons are simple enough to see. Who could exchange bits of rock, pebbles and gravel? Everyone grew the same 12 shrubs from one of the new Garden Centres and no-one wanted to know how to grow things any more. In the modern home landscape there could be no room for a child's earthy scratchings, after all the over-all concept was not active participation but minimum effort. At last many people are beginning to realise that minimum effort means minimum involvement and minimum achievement and minimal pleasure.

The new awakening of gardening interests is not without its attendant bevy of "experts", "advisors" and "consultants" but the mystiques of gardening are not so great that they cannot be acquired without recourse to official sources. Fortunately there are still plenty of people in the general community just waiting to be asked to pass on their gardening skills. They are the good folk who kept the bits and pieces from Grandma's garden, who grew things for trading tables, tried hard to be neighbourly with gifts of geraniums and jonquils to new home owners and always had a little something in a pot to please a child. You can easily find them - they live in houses which aren't landscaped, manicured and automated; their gardens are crammed with all sorts of plants, jumbled but growing like weeds. If you stand at the fence lone enough a body will most likely emerge from the growth to enquire with a smile if you would like anything. And they mean it.

HAPPY NEIGHBOURS WITH

A COMMON INTEREST

The Nunawading Municipal Council with rate-payers, recently established a community garden in its outer Melbourne suburb, for an experiment in social interaction.

The motive was to help make people more contented and responsible, and the suburb more appealing.

From Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney come reports of citizen action groups and local government councils turning unused spaces and cosmetic landscaped areas into urban forests of "permaculture" and annual food gardens.

San Francisco, it is reported, has a magnificent community garden that sets a standard for others to follow.

John French (CSIRO, Victoria) has estimated Melbourne has some 14,000 ha of barren open spaces, suitable for citizen management.

The site selected in autumn 1977 for the Nunawading community gardens was on land adjoining a proposed municipal nursery and horticultural recreation centre, a place where school groups could visit and pot up a plant or make cuttings, and where public education lectures, displays or meetings of a horticultural nature could be held. The land was bought by the council for public open space.

Membership of the Nunawading Community Gardens Cooperative as it is now known was set at \$1 per family for the first year and for those who wished an allotment a further charge of \$10 was made. The income was to provide hoses, maintain the facilities and for administration costs, including water and rates.

All 64 plots were taken by October 8, 1977, and on that Saturday a working bee of approximately 300 people erected fences, marked out the plots and dug the paths. Later in the day the Mayor officiated at the ballot for allotments after which each holder then went to find out "who the neighbours were".

This tactic, it was felt, would help members relate better to each other - business man to teenager, housewives to retired folk, ecologist to chemist, etc.

Just after Christmas a sign appeared on one of the plots: "Away until the 19th. Please water if required and help yourself to the vegies."

Investigating the National Estate

P.O. Box 632 Manuka A.C.T. 2603

Telephone 733666

Work is well underway on this CDC environmental education project concerned with developing awareness in junior secondary students of their cultural and natural heritage.

The materials are interdisciplinary in nature but have been designed in such a way that subject departments can emphasise the content that is most relevant to them.

The units that make up this kit on the National Estate are:

- Unit 1 The Nature and Diversity of the National Estate
- Unit 2 Assessing Aesthetic Significance
- Unit 3 Assessing Historic Significance
- Unit 4 Assessing Scientific Significance
- Unit 5 Issues, Problems and Processes in Identifying and Managing the National Estate



In writing material about the National Estate the question of values forms an integral part of the program as the concept of heritage involves us in valuing things around us. These resource materials being developed are not only to make students aware of their heritage but to enable them to make informed judgments about it so they can participate in deciding what should be on the National Estate kept by the Australian Heritage Commission. It is also hoped that this awareness of their heritage will be reflected in students' attitudes and behaviour in regard to conservation within their own community.

The materials themselves consist of work-cards, booklets, slides and overhead projector transparencies. A teachers' handbook will contain suggestions as to methods and ways of using them. Ideas and suggestions for local area studies will be given and overall it is hoped the materials will stimulate teachers to develop a program about the National Estate in their own region.

If you require more information or would like to trial these materials in Term 1 1979, please contact the Project Officer, Helen Simmelhaig, at CDC.



A Curriculum Development Centre Project for the Australian Heritage Commission

NEWSLETTER - subscription for 1978-1979 (approx. 10 issues) is \$3, or your newsletter. Send to Environmental Education Project, Wattle Park Teachers Centre, 424 Kensington Road, Wattle Park, S.A. 5066, and make cheque payable to CDC - Canberra.