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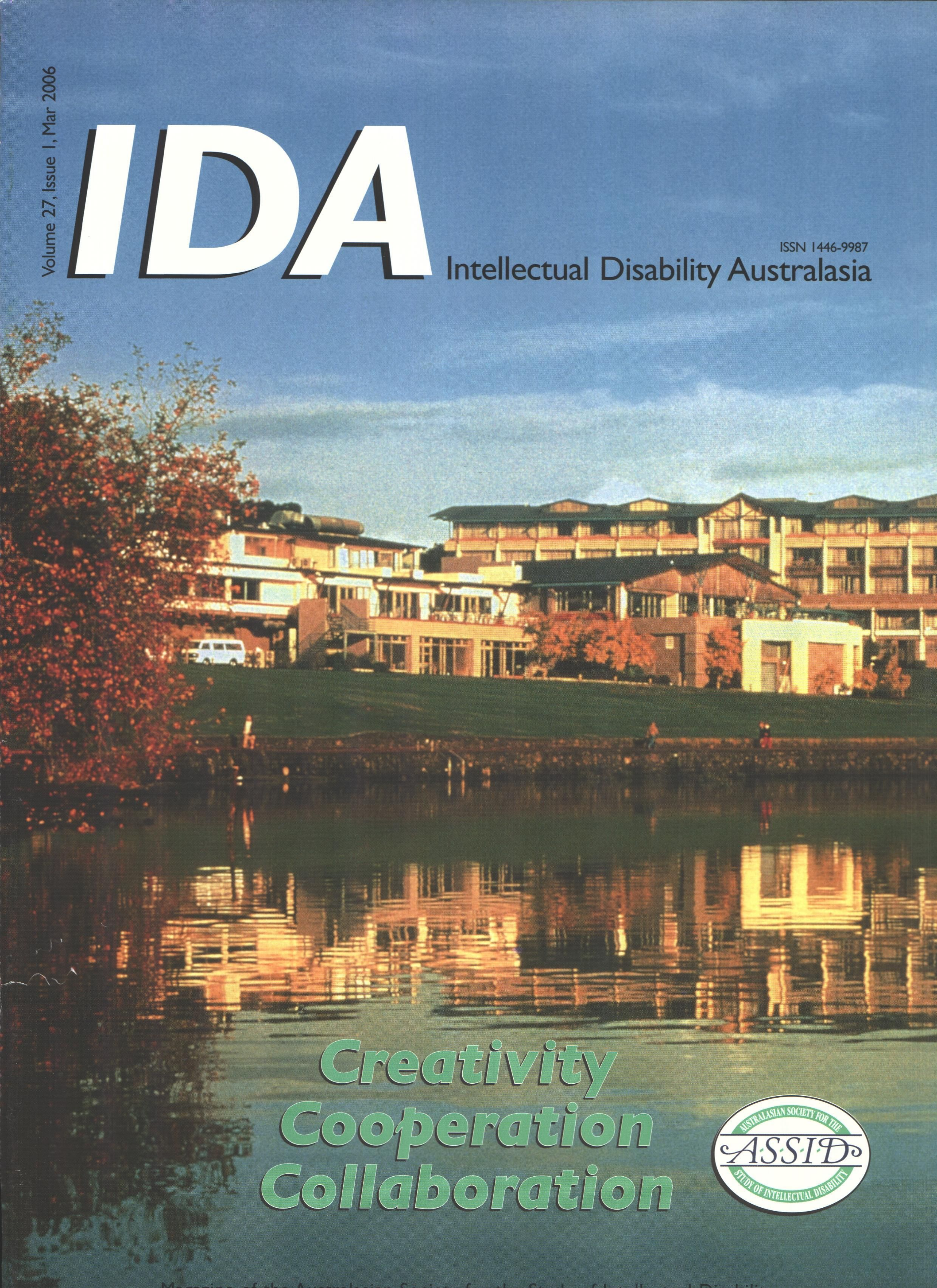

Creativity
Cooperation
Collaboration

AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY
ASSID

Magazine of the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability

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Front Cover:
curtesy of the Waipuna Hotel, Auckland

Editorial

The Future of Advocacy

Our lead article in this issue of IDA is an edited version of the keynote address on self-advocacy given by Dr Dan Goodley at the ASSID annual conference in New Zealand late last year. In his paper, Dan Goodley argues that we need to change the environment and culture to make it more accessible and inclusive and to bring out 'difficult to hear voices'. Recent Queensland events, described below, illustrate the particular relevance and associated difficulties in getting this change to happen in our region.

In 2000, the Queensland Government established the office of the Public Advocate. The primary function of this office was systems advocacy, which can be defined as "advocacy on behalf of groups or classes of people with a disability, rather than individuals. Its purpose is to influence changes in the values, beliefs, attitudes, policies, procedures, practices, funding arrangements, legislation and 'cultures' that affect people with a disability so as to better promote and protect their rights, interests and well-being" (Boardman, 2004). Ian Boardman was appointed as the Public Advocate. Some of you may remember Ian from when he presented the keynote address Innovation Through Insight at the 38th ASSID conference held in Brisbane in 2003 (see IDA, 2003, Issue 1).

Ian Boardman's contract came up for renewal last year and we have just learned that he has not been reappointed, despite receiving praise from many quarters for his commitment, integrity, and hard work throughout his five-year contract. Yvonne Zardani, state secretary for the Pensioner and Superannuants League, has been quoted as saying: "I think he has done a brilliant job given the constraints he's had to work under. The Government gives this job to a person and the job requires that person to criticise the Government if they are doing things wrong. But of course, when the Government is criticised it doesn't like it and it doesn't want it" (cited in Wenham, 2006).

In his speech to the UnitingCare Centre for Social Justice conference on advocacy in 2004, Boardman stated that to make things better for people with disabilities, we need a community-wide culture that encourages dissent and welcomes criticism. It was his belief that the Queensland political and bureaucratic environment was punitive in nature, making the efforts of advocates all the more difficult. Within such a culture, people with disabilities, while attempting to communicate their concerns, are often ignored or seen as trouble makers and at risk of being marginalised or threatened. Boardman suggests the following personal qualities are central to good advocacy practices: control anger at injustice, be clever, humble, collaborative, and be prepared to compromise. Unfortunately, possessing these qualities may be insufficient if the culture in which individuals are attempting to advo-

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SELF-ADVOCACY:
Forming Reliable Alliances

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This feature article is an edited and shortened version of Dr Dan Goodley's address given at the 40th Annual Conference of the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability. A fuller version of this paper, with related references and research projects is available at the following website: http://www.shef.ac.uk/applieddisabilitystudies/

This paper will argue that in order to understand, realise and release the potential of self-advocacy, we need to interrogate the three key concepts sloganeered in the title of this conference: (1) co-operation; (2) collaboration and (3) creativity. Only when we meaningfully engage with these concepts can we start to talk about forming reliable alliances with self-advocacy. A recurring theme of this paper is that of 'our assumptions': the ideas we hold about the phenomenon of 'intellectual disabilities'; the principles on which research, service provision and practice are based and the philosophies that underpin the support of self-advocacy.

1. CO-OPERATION

Co-operation refers to working together for a common purpose with commonly agreed-upon goals and methods. It hints at a starting point: a willingness to be working with others: to be flexible, open, willing, and significantly, able. Marginalised people, like those labelled with intellectual disabilities, may well benefit from the co-operation of others to further their development. Yet, for self-advocacy to embrace and be a key element of co-operation, it is crucial to deconstruct this concept.

Self-advocacy groups are normally made up of people with learning difficulties – sometimes called 'self-advocates' – and supporters or advisors who aim to help the membership to promote self-advocacy. The role of the supporter is a difficult and, in many ways, complicated one. A few years ago I carried out some research with self-advocacy groups (Goodley, 2000). One of my main aims was to understand how self-advocacy groups worked. A key issue emerged: that self-advocacy groups prosper not only from the activism of people with learning difficulties but also from good support on the part of advisors. But what makes for a good supporter? Previous literature and research on self-advocacy – and by

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Editorial

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cate discourages criticism by punishing those that speak out. Kevin Cocks of Queensland Advocacy Incorporated has said that the outcome of effective advocacy depends on the maturity of the people you upset. While the implications of Boardman's departure as Public Advocate are distressing, it is important to seek a way forward and this may lie in the words of Michael Kendrick (cited in Boardman, 2004):

> *It is therefore important to not give up on change in the face of continuing opposition based on the belief that it is hopeless. It may well be that there is no reason for the kind of optimism assured by favourable probabilities, but this does not mean that one is having no effect. One never really knows when the tides will change in the hearts and minds of people, and it may well be that a crucial corner has been turned even when we least expect it. It may also be true that the personal commitments, of even one person, may be just enough to make the difference.*

There is also encouragement to be gained from the content of Robert Martin's acceptance speech that he gave when awarded Fellow of ASSID. The speech is printed in this issue and points to the advances that self-advocates have made in New Zealand and internationally.

There is much interesting reading and words of wisdom, particularly from Ian Boardman, to be found at the following web site, although in the light of recent events, you may need to be quick in accessing the information while it is still available: http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/guardian/pa/speeches.htm

Boardman, I. (2004). Doing advocacy: dissent, dissonance or dilly-dally? Paper presented at the UnitingCare Centre for Social Justice Conference, Brisbane.

Wenham, M. (2006, 7 February). Victim of a sick democracy. The Courier Mail, p. 17.

Deb Keen

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self-advocacy groups – has tended to understand support in one of two ways: (i)good supporters are good people and; (ii) good supporters are independent of services.

The first explanation suggests that some people are simply just good at supporting people with learning difficulties. Perhaps they have thoughtful dispositions, caring personalities and positive attitudes which make them able to support self-advocacy in useful and empowering ways. The second explanation is based on the idea that self-advocacy groups must be independent of services. If supporters are professionals or staff within services and also supporters of self-advocacy groups, then a conflict of interests will often arise.

It seems to me that these explanations do not go far enough in questioning what constitutes 'support'. In addition, I think good and bad support is directly linked to assumptions held by the people who enact support. But these assumptions are not just individually owned things – they are often reflected in society's view of people with disabilities. I think you can be a good supporter and be a professional. I also think you can be a good person and a bad supporter. But good support reflects particular assumptions about people with learning difficulties.

One assumption may be termed a deficit perspective. As Tim and Wendy Booth say in their 1994 book about parents with learning difficulties, supporters who hold a deficit perspective assume that people with learning difficulties are unable to think and do for themselves because they are not able enough. Another assumption is that people with learning difficulties are what they are because of their impairments. An alternative outlook is a capacity perspective, based on the idea that just because someone has an impairment this does not make them a passive person devoid of thought and ambition.

We live in a disabling society that understands disability as the product of someone's impairment. Therefore, we need to change the environment, make it more accessible and inclusive, and work to bring out 'difficult to hear voices'. People with disabilities are disabled not by their impairments but by a society that excludes people with impairments. Change society; challenge disability.

2: COLLABORATION

Collaboration appears to infer some form of active participation and partnership: some doings together. How collaboration is enacted will influence how reliable an alliance self-advocacy becomes. Policy makers, practitioners and researchers of disability must ensure meaningful collaboration with organisations of people with disabilities such as self-advocacy groups. Indeed, a vision of self-advocacy as a reliable alliance has been promoted in contemporary disability research.

Research Collaboration

Collaboration in research has been embraced in a number of participatory approaches to research. One possible way of thinking about collaboration is in terms of participation and/or emancipation. This might be considered as a **continuum**:

Knowledge	Shared Knowledge	Action Research
Non-participatory	**Participatory**	**Emancipatory**
Researcher-led	Researcher invites participants into research	Co-researchers

A key emergence of participation is, and for many should be, emancipation. The underpinning assumptions of the British social model of disability have led to a number of core research issues, including:

- *Inclusion* – more and more researchers with disabilities involved in academia
- *Accountability* – the disabled people's movement demands researchers and academics to be accountable to the experiences and aims of people with disabilities, reflected in the slogan 'Nothing about us, without us';
- *Praxis* – theories of disability emerge from an engagement with the changing nature of people with disabilities' lives;
- *Dialectical* – research draws and builds upon the social model of disability;
- *Ontological knowledge* – people with disabilities understand the conditions of disablement and impairment;
- *Disablement rather than impairment* – disability research should engage with the material, social, cultural, relational and political conditions of disablement;
- *Partisan* – research/ers are on the side of people with disabilities.

(see Goodley and Lawthom)

These issues are, of course, contestable and have provoked major debate in the disability studies literature. Ethically sound research is not simply about following professional guidelines on anonymity, confidentiality, withdrawal and the avoidance of distress in research. Ethical research is also about promoting an ethically sustainable vision of disability. Ethics brings with it considerations of values and

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politics in which the disabling world is changed to give way to more equitable social relationships. Any research endeavour that attempts to work with people with intellectual disabilities benefits from reviewing itself in light of these issues.

Conditions of Collaboration: Interdependence and Distributed Competence

For many people with learning difficulties, adulthood is accompanied by group living with parents and siblings in family homes or peers in group homes. Most people live with their families. If not then they live in supported contexts, such as local authority group homes. In addition, Valuing People reports 3000 living in 73 village and intentional communities. The extent to which people with learning difficulties have a say in their own housing and accommodation is explicitly cited as a major concern by the White People. In 2001, there were over 4 million existing homes in the social rented sector alone, which could have been used for the possible accommodation of people with the label of learning difficulties (DoH, 2001). Clearly, at least, some of the resources are there.

Yet, for many, a chosen home remains a distant dream. The importance about people with learning difficulties having a say about where they (want to) live – as a key element of self-advocacy – has been strengthened by recent controversial news stories about private care homes / specialist units being built to house people with learning difficulties with mental health problems and complex needs. Such 'humanitarian' interventions threaten yet again to segregate people with learning difficulties from mainstream life.

Living independently is never living alone. We all require the services and skills of others to make living worth living. As a contributor to a book by Jane Campling put it many years ago, 'Not many of us cut our own hair – we all need help'. Independent living also means supported living: by friends, family, the community. It is therefore important that the self-advocacy movement continues to support self-advocates' choices about where they want to live; and to identify the support necessary for such living. In this sense, then, collaboration demands the pooling of resources, skills, expertise, drive, ambition, passion and commitment. I particularly welcome this theme of the conference because it seems to at least implicitly demand the enactment of inter-dependence. In doing so, we trouble notions of 'independence' which sound more like neo-liberal and conservative ideas of personhood which have dominated thinking at the very least in the UK. Who wants to be independent? Interdependent sounds safer, more human, social, community based and more achievable.

3. CREATIVITY

Creativity challenges the maxim "There's no need for change: It's how we do things around here". Self-advocacy is a hot-bed of activism, theorising, life-style creating, embracing diversity. Sometimes we need to be creative in seeking out its creativity. Often self-advocacy takes on different shapes, practices and forms. In so doing, it disrupts taken for granted ideas and common senses about people, society and identities. I want now to talk about creativity in three different ways: contextualised activism; self-advocacy via the performing arts and; understanding intellectual disabilities.

The aim here is to supplement ideas for co-operating collaboratively through thinking creatively.

Contextualised Activism

A key task of working in collaboration with others involves assuming competence rather than incompetence. Academic debate so often separates itself off from everyday practices: the academy is where theory is generated in and where development often stays. This separation will stay in place as long as artificial - and problematic - distinctions between theory and practice can be sustained through divisive (and elitist) governance of research production. A real alternative is to work from the 'bottom up': taking a direction to research as located in the lives of people with disabilities themselves (see for discussions Atkinson and Williams, 1990). We felt it appropriate to work with dialectical notions of practice, where contextualised examples of activism can be explicitly recognised as practical and theoretical spaces, constituting arenas for meaningful praxis-oriented developments. An example from field notes highlights the theoretical qualities of contextualised activities:

> *Khadam phoned me on Wednesday night. He told me that a chap was coming down to the self-advocacy group on Saturday to visit.*
>
> *'Is he a member of staff from the local Day Centre', I asked?*
>
> *'No'.*
>
> *'Is he a friend of yours from the market where you work?'*
>
> *'No'.*
>
> *'Does the person have 'learning difficulties'?*
>
> *'I don't know, I haven't asked him', replied Khadam.*

Khadam's response – as a person labelled as having 'learning difficulties' and challenging this

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through involvement with a self-advocacy group – practically captures the socially constructed and contested nature of 'learning difficulties' as a naturalised impairment. The social model of disability informs and is informed by points of analysis raised by personal and political activists such as Khadam. To see his resistance as an incidence of activism signifies political and theoretical potency. While the vignette of his actions is not the product of a piece of emancipatory research, we can understand these actions as intrinsically emancipatory. Here then is another side to emancipation within disability research where we aim as researchers to capture the theoretical and political qualities of contextualised actions. Similarly, our work with performers with learning difficulties has meant that conventional ways of expressing theoretical and practical outcomes have become inadequate.

Self-Advocacy Via The Performing Arts

A clear example of creativity, which furthers the reliable alliances of self-advocacy to the development of empowering service provision and practice, has been demonstrated through the performing arts of people with learning difficulties. (Editor's note: please refer to the full version of Dr Goodley's speech on line for an account of a theatre production by people with learning difficulties from Goodley and Moore, 2000).

I have suggested elsewhere that self-advocacy is the public recognition of the resilience of people with learning difficulties (Goodley, 2000). Such public displays – not only through the campaigning activities of the People First movement but also through other creative endeavours such as performing arts – are crucial. Why? because acting differently is so important when society and its institutions treat people with learning difficulties in the following ways:

- Everything in life is potentially open to surveillance and, consequently, control;
- Even personal relationships and private matters can become wards of the state;
- Relationships are open to risk assessment and professional interference;
- The independence of women with learning difficulties is often seen as a product of the 'competence' of their partners;
- Breaking up is hard to do – particularly when others are mapping the terrain of what happens next.

Understanding Intellectual Disabilities

As conference delegates, we are brought together under the banner of the study of 'intellectual disability'. There is a need, I would maintain, to unearth and question the very assumptions that underpin our understandings of this concept. *Rejecting deficit assumptions* is a key component of forming alliances with self-advocacy, as we have seen earlier when thinking about co-operation and collaboration.

> *First, we need a sociology of those who study mental deficiency ... second, we badly need a sociology of those who work in institutions ... third, we need to see mental defectives in terms of the general theory of social problems (Dexter 1956, pp10-11).*

Clearly, though, understanding intellectual disabilities as a product of society and its practices is a leap of faith too far for some. Recently, Vehmas (2005) has suggested that we need to ask serious questions about humanity, personhood and access to human rights that are raised by the existence of very real, organic, embodied intellectual disabilities. 'What about people with profound intellectual disabilities?' is a question I have been asked many times when espousing the virtues of self-advocacy, 'does self-advocacy really represent these people?' At the heart of these questions is an assumption: that self-advocacy, empowerment, theory and research, co-operation and collaboration is incapable of touching those whose identities are imprisoned by severe impairments of mind. It is a key reason why people with intellectual disabilities have remained marooned from certain developments in the social model of disability: the social model cannot cope with something so unmovable asocial and material as the severely impaired brain.

These assumptions and associated rejections risk marginalising people with intellectual disabilities from debates about their services, rights, professional practice and self-advocacy. While I have attempted to look at just a few examples of the ways in which self-advocacy can exist as a reliable alliance to the furthering of these debates – via co-operation, collaboration and creativity – I want to end by suggesting that in thinking through our assumptions – how we understand learning difficulties – we may well want to look at the foundations on which they are based.

This conference offers an ideal opportunity to take to task these three key concepts, phenomena, entities and practices. The question is not "Is self-advocacy a reliable resource?" But what conditions need to exist to allow self-advocacy groups, researchers, policy makers and practitioners to make reliable connections? The answers to these questions are clearly, it seems to me, bound up in the assumptions and expectations that we hold. ◆

Report:

40th Annual ASSID Conference

Out of the Ordinary? Creativity, Cooperation, Collaboration

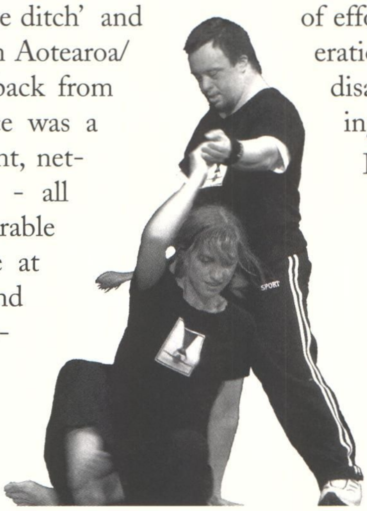
A·S·S·I·D
40th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
10th-13th OCTOBER 2005
Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre
Auckland, New Zealand
AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

10 -13 October 2005

Held at
Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre,
Mt Wellington, Auckland, New Zealand (*front cover*)

Prepared by
Fran Hartnett, **Conference Convenor**

2005 marked a significant milestone in ASSID's history when the 40th Annual Conference of the Australian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability was hosted in New Zealand for the first time. It was fitting that New Zealand was the host in the same year that Dr Olive Webb, a New Zealander, took on the role of ASSID President. Of a total of 316 conference participants, 23 came from as far a field as the U.S.A., Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, 103 Australians crossed 'the ditch' and 190 New Zealanders remained home in Aotearoa/ New Zealand to attend ASSID. Feedback from participants affirms that the conference was a success in regards to programme content, networking, discussion and social events - all key ingredients contributing to a memorable conference. The conference took place at Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre and a number of participants took the opportunity to exercise body as well as mind with early morning walks and runs around the attractive small lake in front of the Hotel.



An important factor in the success of the 40th ASSID Conference was the quality of the keynote presentations which explored different dimensions of the conference theme Out of the Ordinary? Creativity, Cooperation, Collaboration. Dr Phillip Ferguson from the University of Missouri examined the notion of the 'ordinary' in relation to disability, failure, success and tensions. He explored how such notions have affected the lives of people with disabilities and the effect of resulting interventions by professionals based on these notions of 'ordinary'. He proposed that we might need to change our concept of 'the ordinary' even as we seek to achieve it, if we are to avoid the failures of the past. Dr Dan Goodley from the University of Sheffield used his ten year's experience and research in the area of self advocacy to reinforce his argument that reliable alliances between people with disabilities and professionals require a particular type of effort. An effort characterised by creativity, cooperation and collaboration is needed if people with disabilities and professionals are to engage meaningfully with one another (see article this issue).

Dr Edwin Jones from Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust in Cardiff argued that despite rhetoric to the contrary, many human service organisations continue to provide services that deprive people with disabilities of the opportunity to experience an 'ordinary' daily life. Homes are run on a 'hotel' model with staff doing everything while the people whose home it is, sit around with very little to do, living far from 'ordinary' lives. Dr Jones suggested 'active support' as an approach that can be useful in supporting people to live more ordinary lives. Dr Dianne Ferguson from the University of Missouri spoke about the disempowering nature of disability research which is often characterised by an approach which 'does things to' people. Using examples from her research in the field of education, Dr Ferguson

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Report: 40th Annual Conference

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illustrated methodologies where research could be fairer, more accessible and empowering of people with disabilities.

Dr Glynis Murphy from the Institute of Health Research, University of Lancaster presented on the evidence available regarding the effectiveness of treatment offered to people with intellectual disability who break the law. Dr Murphy highlighted the particular disadvantages that people with an intellectual disability face in coming before the criminal justice system, citing research that incorporated the perspectives and experiences of people with intellectual disability. Dr Susan Hayes from the University of Sydney expanded on this theme, highlighting research which showed that the experience of the criminal justice system is anything but 'ordinary' for victims or offenders with an intellectual disability. Dr Hayes contended that many aspects of existing systems are harmful to the interests of people with an intellectual disability and she stressed the urgent need for targeted training for police, lawyers and other criminal justice professionals.

The closing address given by Dr Patricia O'Brien, Trinity College, Dublin, challenged participants to consider whether they personally aspired to 'ordinariness' in their lives or rather 'a combination of the ordinary and extraordinary'. Dr O'Brien argued that there needed to be a change in the relationship between citizens with intellectual disabilities and professionals. Such a new, more desirable relationship would be one characterised by support built on reflective practice. This relationship stands in stark contrast to the all too common relationship marked by 'power over' and compliance. Dr O'Brien provided examples of how this new relationship might look in practice. The international face of ASSID was personified by Dr O'Brien who brought her Australian, New Zealand and current Irish connections to the conference.

A number of symposia provided participants with the opportunity to explore issues in depth. Dr Stancliffe, Centre for Developmental Disability Studies, University of Sydney, had assembled an eminent line-up of researchers and practitioners for the community living symposium which he led. This symposium focused on active support and the reality that much of what is termed community living is characterised by control and institutional practices. Dr Christine Bigby, La Trobe University led a symposium entitled Inclusive conferences: Why is that out of the ordinary? which included, among others, a paper examining strategies that had been used over the past ten years to include people with intellectual disability in ASSID national conferences. Dr Rachel Mayes, University of Sydney led a symposium on Parents with intellectual disabilities. Dr Stancliffe was also lead presenter in a symposium on Classification and Assessment of Supports.

The conference programme was organised around six strands with 160 papers exploring the themes of self advocacy, social justice, community living, advocacy, health and families/education. Feedback indicates that participants appreciated the quality and range of issues explored and the depth of the research on which many presentations were based.

The conference was attended by 47 people with intellectual disability from New Zealand and 10 people with intellectual disability from Australia, setting an attendance record for ASSID national conferences to date.

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Report: 40th Annual Conference

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Participants commented on the significant contribution that people with intellectual disability made to the conference in the papers presented, discussions and debate. The conference committee acknowledges the support of the Office of Disability Issues, Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand Government, in facilitating the attendance of such a large number a people with intellectual disability at ASSID 2005. The organising committee hopes that the links established between trans-Tasman self advocacy organisations can be strengthened in the future as an enduring outcome of ASSID 2005.

In keeping with the theme of creativity and cooperation, conference participants were treated in the opening ceremony to a superb performance from Touch Compass, a mixed ability dance troupe, who have performed both nationally and internationally to considerable acclaim. Two Creative Arts symposia facilitated by members of Panacea Arts Trust and the Court Theatre in Christchurch provided opportunities for creative expression for those who attended. The committee acknowledges the support of the J. R. McKenzie Trust in enabling the Creative Arts symposia to take place. Some of the keynote presenters were able to display their prowess not only in research but on the dance floor when invited to join the stirring dance rhythms of the Pacific when Oyster Entertainment entertained everyone at the conference dinner.

ASSID 2005 was also the occasion for a well-attended launch of Allies in Emancipation: Shifting from providing service to being of support, edited by Dr Patricia O'Brien, Trinity College, University of Dublin and Dr Martin Sullivan from Massey University, New Zealand. This publication expands on a number of the themes which the conference explored and a significant number of the book's contributors presented at ASSID 2005.

Her Excellency, the Governor General, Dame Silvia Cartwright hosted a reception held at the Government House, Auckland, for 160 conference participants who travelled to the reception in double-decker buses, a British tradition in keeping with the occasion. Dame Silvia acknowledged the important contribution to the field of disability that ASSID makes. On a beautiful sunny evening, guests were able to admire the huge, iconic Pohutukawa trees which line the grounds at Government House.

As Convenor, I would like to acknowledge the support of a hard working conference committee which met every month for one and a half years. The conference committee was well supported by Te Roopu Taurima o Manakau who welcomed and farewelled conference participants according to Tikanga Maori. I would like also to acknowledge the contribution of Eddy van Til of e.events whose friendly, cooperative, attitude and superb organisational skills ensured the success on the conference. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the sponsoring organisations and exhibitors whose contributions were so important to the success of the conference - space prohibits my naming these individually. On behalf of the conference committee, I would like to thank everyone who presented at and participated in the 40th Annual ASSID Conference. We hope that the knowledge and understanding gained at ASSID 2005 will go some way to bring about more reliable alliances between people with intellectual disability and professionals working in the field. ◆

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Region Update

Queensland

by Marie Knox, Jeanine Gallagher, Lesley Chenoweth

The newly appointed Minister for Education and the Arts, the Honourable Mr Rod Welford, presented the key address at our Annual General Meeting at the Queensland Parliamentary Annexe on 14 September. Mr Welford spoke of the current reforms in the education sector with particular reference to students with disabilities. Mr Welford highlighted initiatives identified through the Education and Training Reforms for the Future (ETRF) and the impact of this on school age students with disabilities; these include the introduction of the Preparatory year for all students and 'earning or learning' for students in the senior phase. Mr Welford also acknowledged some of the key processes associated with the Education Adjustment Program (EAP), which is a system identifying and responding to the educational needs of students with disabilities.

At the AGM a committee for the upcoming year was elected, with several new members adding to those volunteering for another year. Our committee members come from a range of professional backgrounds and bring with them a correspondingly breadth of experience and skill – all of which will no doubt be drawn upon throughout the year.

A recent major task undertaken by our committee has been the evaluation of the Sharing the Road Conferences by Dr Amma Buckley, currently from Curtin University but previously from Queensland University. The Sharing the Road conferences have been held over a number of years both in Brisbane and in rural areas of Queensland and are aimed, in the main, towards direct care workers as a professional development and networking forum. The evaluation provided some very positive feedback about these conferences, and importantly indicated their value to participants. We are now looking towards following up the evaluation with relevant agencies to explore different means of resourcing these conferences.

Finally, several members participated in and enjoyed the recent Australasian ASSID Conference in Auckland, New Zealand. Of particular interest was the prominent and powerful role played by self-advocates throughout the conference.Topics of papers presented by our members included Early Intervention with Children with Autism, Person Centred Planning and Transition, Perceptions of Family Care by Families with an Older Member with an Intellectual Disability, Ethics and Inclusion, and Abuse in the Lives of People with an Intellectual Disability.

The Qld branch will hold a planning half day on the 18th March. This is an annual event where we review ASSID's overall plan and translate that into goals and activities for the branch. All members are invited to attend 9 am till 12 noon on 18th March at the offices of QPPD 169 Given Terrace Paddington Qld. Morning tea will be provided.

Victoria

by Daniel Pennefather

The Victorian Regional Association wishes everyone a Happy New Year and welcomes Victorian members to take part in activities planned for 2006.

Our first meeting for the year was well attended, and the committee was happy to welcome Keith McVilly (recent refugee from ASSID NSW).

A focus will be on strategic planning over the next few months, with a view to aligning the Victorian Regional strategic plan, with that of the ASSID Australasian Board. The outcomes and planned events resulting from this process will be reported to members through the bi-monthly Victoria Regional Association's Newsletter.

If any members have missed out on receiving the electronic newsletter (a small word file attached to an email), please send 'subscribe' to assid.vic.news@optusnet.com.au. The next issue is expected in late March 2006. Also, feel free to request the December 2005 issue, which reports on the 2005 Regional Association AGM and 5th Annual Disability Support Worker Conference.

This was the first year that Carolyn Neville was not on the Conference Organising Committee. Thanks Carolyn for your tireless effort!

NSW & ACT

by Tony Tinlin

The AGM was held last Friday with the committee being, John Brown, vice present; Jenni Avery, secretary; Trish Wetton, treasurer; Linda Goddard conference convener and Tony Tinlin, president. John Brown organized a delightful venue for the meeting overlooking the harbor. A group then enjoyed each others company at dinner.

There is the opportunity for another couple of people on the committee. If you are interested please let a member of the executive know.

Those members who attended the AGM had the opportunity to hear Dr Jeff Sigafoos speak about some research he is collaborating in, which is looking at augmentative communications and mechanical aides. This has the potential to improve the choice people have in what augmentative system is best for them.

The regional committee is busy with planning for the September Australasian conference in Canberra. A conference organizing group has been engaged and with Linda they are moving forward developing what promises to be a very exciting conference.

There will be need for support from members to assist with the planning and the operations of the conference, any member who is able to assist please contact a member of the committee.

Researchers and practitioners with information of strategies to share are encouraged to consider presenting, as it is an opportunity to show case what is happening in this part of Australia. We need the support of local members to make the conference a success!

Tasmania

by Donna Venn (nee Ryan)

ASSID Tas has been rather quiet during the holiday period with current position holders gradually returning to work in recent weeks.

Our Planning Day in March is looking good and we are hoping to achieve a number of goals in the coming year. Supporting Keith McVilly to further the work done so far on professionalizing support work (for Disability Support Workers) is one of these goals.

It is great to see the Companion Card System being implemented in Tasmania. This was another of our goals although our involvement was not needed due to the generous assistance of the Department with Disability Services (Tas) appointing a Project Officer to oversee the implementation.

South Australia

by Richard O'Loughlin

After 'brainstorming' in November 2005, the SA committee met in January for a more detailed planning and timetabling of events and activities in 2006.

The first event of the year will be on Friday 10th March in the afternoon. The event will involve a Developmental Educator presenting on their recent experiences working at a Red Cross orphanage in Vietnam with children with disabilities. The view of the ASSID(SA) committee is that it is healthy to maintain perspective regarding the situation for people with disabilities within the broader context, bearing in mind that in a global sense, Vietnam is a near neighbor. The event will involve presentation of how the Vietnamese community supports its most vulnerable children and the type of assistance this community requires. Participants will be invited to make donations at the presentation although attendance will not be contingent upon donation. Members will have received flyers notifying them of this event.

Other activities planned for 2006 include documenting and distributing information presented at the popular legal issues session in 2005; further investigation as to how to work with self advocacy groups to enable them to present their views and issues in a way that can inform policy and service development; and seeking to engage the University of SA in showcasing research it is doing in the area of intellectual disability.

Given the recent launching of the 'Lifestyle Project' in SA (involving norming of Einfeld and Tonge's Developmental Behaviour Checklist with adult populations), it is anticipated that we will be approaching the people involved in this research project to provide updates on their findings and progress.

As always, if any member has any particular ideas or areas of interest that they would like to see considered for events/ activities or forums do not hesitate to contact the ASSID(SA) committee via its President on richardoloughlin@bigpond.com.

New Zealand

See conference report in this issue of IDA. ◆

Join ASSID - L *now*

ASSID-L is a spam protected mailing list for people with an interest in intellectual disabled individuals and their families.

To join the list, send an email to ddu@med.monash.edu.au with 'subscribe to ASSID-L' in the heading.

Postings assid-l@med.monash.edu.au

We look forward to increased relevant traffic on the list!

Report: 40th Annual Conference

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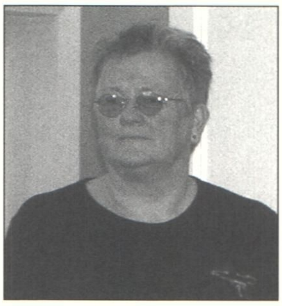
A·S·S·I·D
40th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
10th-13th OCTOBER 2005
Waipuna Hotel & Conference Centre
Auckland, New Zealand
AUSTRALASIAN SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

NZASID Address to the ASSID Annual Conference of 2005

By *Olive Webb*



"Tena kotou, tena kotou, tena katou katoa"

Welcome ASSID to New Zealand. What a fabulous occasion.

In the face of all the Aussie Kiwi jokes, and Kiwi Aussie jokes; in spite of the football and the cricket and the netball – Here we are.

The Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability's first conference in this country affirms work that was started some 5-6 years ago when NZASID was formed with the long term goal of becoming a member organization of ASSID.

Some of you will not be aware of the pioneering work in Australia by Karen Nankervis and Bill Taylor, followed up by the energies and efforts of Sue Peden, Keith McVilly and the then Australian ASSID council. Some of you may not be aware that in order for New Zealand to become a member of ASSID, every state branch of ASSID had to change it's constitution in a process that took some 2-3 years in some cases. Some of you may not be aware of how complicated it is to do simple things like 'cash a cheque' trans Tasman. CER is devilled by the detail.

For all these efforts Kiwis must say thank you – and we do.

But we must not get trapped into celebrating this organizational success with self congratulatory navel gazing. ASSID has some clear goals, to:

1. Promote the research and understanding of intellectual disability
2. Bring together people who work in the field of intellectual disability

Some of its operational objectives are:

- to promote the research and understanding of intellectual disability.
- to bring together people who have an interest in the field of intellectual disability.
- to promote communication via conferences, special interest groups, symposia, workshops and other professional development activities.
- to promote research, scholarship and the dissemination of information about intellectual disability through appropriate publications and networks.

When we consider these selected goals and objectives, we have further reason to feel well pleased. The research awards, the journals, the array of conferences and various ways by which we provide a focus for many hundreds of people of like minds throughout Australasia is exciting.

But we have other goals and other objectives, and of these there are still some concerns. For example, we also have a goal that urges us:

- To promote high standards of work practice in the field of intellectual disability

And we have other objectives

- to promote the rights, development and well being of people with intellectual disability.
- to promote high ethical standards of practice in the field of intellectual disability.

How well are we doing with these? How comfortable can we feel? Some 50 years ago we all, pre ASSID, made promises to people with intellectual disabilities. We promised to take them from the large abusive institutions and to integrate them into community settings. We promised to give people with disabilities choices about where they live, with whom they live, what they eat, where they work and how much they get paid for work. We promised them families and friends. We promised them dignity, respect and citizenship.

Some of you will remember those halcyon times of campaigning, education, defiance, and social revolution. So what happened?

Let me be clear: I believe that individual people in ASSID, attested by their very membership, still hold to these goals and objective. But ASSID itself must still recognize that the battles have not been won. The war continues. The difference in the 21st century is that the frontline is not clearly demarcated as it was in the institution-community; good-bad days.

Some great things are happening. Throughout Australasia important initiatives are making a difference. The forensic and disability conference in Melbourne has become a 'must go'. The conferences and work of people like Lorna Sullivan in NZ makes a difference. The Carer's conference in Melbourne next month is reaching out to people who make the difference. I visited a small Trust last week where the average length of tenure of support staff is about 14 years.

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NZASID Address to the Conference

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But I am also aware of a facility under construction for people with disabilities that will house 18 people in order to achieve 'economies of scale'. I am aware of a person with disabilities who has been doing unpaid work experience for 6 years. I am aware of a person who faced charges of 'threatening to kill' after she protected herself from an assaultive support people.

I am aware of many providers on both sides of the Tasman who ring the Police in the face of any conflict because their own alleged commitment to non-aversive practices mean that they need the legal system to punish people instead of them doing it.

I visited a service recently in which the annual turnover of support people is just under 60%. In both our countries, the remuneration for people who support people with disabilities is amongst the lowest paid to anyone – for anything. We have systems in both countries in which the quality of service is not determined by the reports of people who use the services, but by checklists that tell us if we have passed or failed accreditation

In this country, we have just celebrated the first birthday of the implementation of the Intellectual Disability Compulsory Care and Rehabilitation Act, a piece of legislation that promised fairness, accountability and transparency for offenders with intellectual disabilities. Even given the predictable 'bedding down' problems that one might expect with such a new concept in legislation, all sorts of strange things have happened. I note that on the same day a judge in one part of the country discharged one charge of threatening to kill being leveled at an ex cop come drug dealer because he was sure it had been said 'in the heat of the moment and was not really intended', and in another part of the country a person with disabilities who had been illegally provoked by a support person for the umpteenth time was subjected to compulsory supervision in a designated place for three years.

I am not wishing to depress you. Indeed there is much to be proud of. I am urging you, however, don't get tired yet. As my generation gets older, make sure that you are passing the baton to the next generation. There are people in our midst who have never been in institutions – who have never witnessed the blatancy of institutional exploitation and abuse.

There are people who are not therefore on permanent orange alert to guard against the 21st century version of management instead of support, control instead of empowerment, groups instead of individuals, one-size-fits all instead of needs-based interventions, economies of scale rather than citizenship, second bottom lines instead of third bottom lines, and checklist quality control instead of participation and self report.

As individually and together we move forward in and with ASSID, I leave you with a piece of poetry written some 150 years ago by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow - An allegory which my father used to stand outside and recite boldly - every time he cleaned out the garage.

THE BUILDERS

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Go and clean the garage.

"Kia ora tatou" ◆

FELLOW OF ASSID AWARDS 2005

Three awards were made and presented at the 2005 ASSID Annual Conference.

EDDIE BARTNICK

One of the recipients of the Fellow of ASSID award was Eddie Bartnick, who is currently the Director of Metropolitan Services Coordination at the Disability Services Commission in Western Australia.

Eddie has made exceptional and significant contribution in the field of intellectual disability over the past 28 years within Western Australia, Australia and in more recent years internationally. The work has covered service delivery, policy and program development, research, and teaching. In all of these areas Eddie's contribution has been sustained and important to the advancement of quality outcomes in the lives of people with intellectual disability and their families.

Some of Eddie's achievements include:

- The development of the first policy and funding framework for the non government sector in Western Australia. This work was instrumental in laying the foundations of what is the effective and unified structure of disability funding that exists today in Western Australia. One of the most significant achievements was the introduction of an individualised funding model for accommodation funding – a first for Australia.
- The development and statewide expansion of the Local Area Coordination program. The current service is a testament to the vision of Eddie and is the fundamental building block of disability services in Western Australia today. This model is widely recognised within Australia and internationally, as a progressive and contemporary approach to supporting people with disabilities and their families. As a consequence Eddie has been asked to consult on the development of LAC in Queensland, the Northern Territory and in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- Significant service reforms in the area of specialised professional services to reflect contemporary values of individual and family empowerment, family centred practice and evidence based strategies. Eddie has overseen a major realignment of professional practice, standards and quality which has created highly valued and respected services.
- The ongoing introduction of innovation and service development to Western Australia and Australia through the connection to new ideas and concepts especially focussing on the long term sustainable development of family leadership. An example of this work is the introduction of the PLAN concepts which has resulted in the development of numerous families groups focussing on sustainable planning for the future.

Eddie is recognised as a leader in disability services in Western Australia, both within Government and more widely in the sector. His passionate commitment to the achievement of a good life for people with disability and their families drives all of his work which is carefully visionary and intentionally creative in its scope and design. Eddie's commitment to ensuring that sustainable outcomes are achieved for people with disabilities and their families is evident in all his work, demonstrated by his focus on long term agendas such as family leadership and community connections.

Eddie has been a member of ASSID for 27 years serving as State President in Tasmanian, the National Council, and Conference Committees. Eddie has been a regular presenter at ASSID conferences.

ROBERT MARTIN

The Fellow of ASSID award was also made to Robert Martin. Robert gave a very moving acceptance speech when presented with his award. The speech is reproduced below as it provides information about Robert's many achievements and his significant contribution to the field. The speech also provides an important chronology of events in relation to advances in self advocacy that highlight the dedication, determination, and hard work on the part of Robert and his colleagues that have made these advances possible.

Acceptance Speech

Your Excellency, distinguished guest, fellow self advocates, ladies and gentlemen. I first want to thank the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability for this award. I feel very privileged to be granted this recognition and I will always remember this very special occasion.

I want to acknowledge the support I have received from my wife Lynda who is here tonight. Lynda has always been in the background and I am very proud that she is here to share this presentation with me.

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FELLOW OF ASSID AWARDS 2005

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My journey started in Wanganui around 1985. I was tired of always being told what I could and could not do. I looked around for support and this came from my friends who were also using IHC services. People like Paddy Rauhihi, Josie Khoury, Wendy Keetch and Lana Brook supported me to have a real say.

The term self advocate had not been invented or we were not aware of it. We just wanted to be listened to and to be heard. In those early days staff such as Alison Campbell also helped me to believe in myself as a person and I started to speak out. I was also encouraged by members of the Wanganui Branch Committee, especially Beryl Montgomerie and later Betty Bourke.

A few people have probably wished I never learnt that skill.

IHC supported me to travel to the first meeting of the Taskforce on Self Advocacy held in the Netherlands in 1993. The Taskforce was supported by Inclusion International. Desmond Corrigan came as my support person and on the way home we plotted how we would strengthen self advocacy and the People First Movement in New Zealand. Desmond and I have worked together ever since and he still assists me with my International work. Through this work we have become lifelong friends and he shares my commitment to self advocacy.

I would also like to acknowledge some other people who have supported me in my journey. JB Munro a past Chief Executive of IHC employed me as the National Coordinator of Self Advocacy and encouraged me in my international work. Jan Dowland a past Chief Executive of IHC and Ralph Jones the current Chief Executive both continued this support. I have also received support from so many other staff of IHC and I am thankful for that. In particular I would like to mention the invaluable support given to me by Sue Gates, Jane Brooke, Peat Lynam and all my colleagues in the Centre for Learning.

But most of all I want to thank my fellow self advocates and I accept this award in recognition of the support and trust they have given me. There are too many to thank personally but I would like to mention David Corner and Hamish Taverner, Denise Bennet and Rosemary Scully who have been long term friends and given me heaps of good advice.

I want to mention two highlights in my work in Self Advocacy. The first is the work that I have been part of in New Zealand. I always had a dream. A dream that one day we would stand alongside others as equals and be respected for who we are. Many of us have achieved that dream. You will find us everywhere, be it on branch committees, New Zealand Council, interviewing staff, assisting with audits, working as Self Advocacy staff and so much more. Yes and our last institution is closing in 2006. Our time is coming and I am very proud that I was able to be part of all this. We still have more to do, there are still many challenges to meet but there is no going back. We have built the foundation and we will now build the rest of our house. We will achieve our dream.

The second highlight for me has been my International work. When I started in 1993 I had no idea that I would spend the next 12 years doing this work. Self advocates such as Barb Goode from Canada, Ake Johansen from Sweden and Carol Pein from Australia taught me so much. Together with a few others we wrote the Beliefs, Values and Principles of self Advocacy which is still very relevant many years later. I was able to use the knowledge I gained to promote self advocacy in many countries throughout the world. I have also been able to contribute to the work at the United Nations on the Convention for People with a Disability. I will be forever grateful for the support of Inclusion International who have believed in me and enable me to do this work.

I wish to thank IHC for the support they continue to give me. Without their help none of this would have been possible. I want to thank my fellow self advocates for the trust and faith they have also continued to shown in me. I will always value this trust greatly and am pleased that some of you are present to share this award with me. Finally I want to thank Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability for the tremendous honour they have bestowed on me and I will remember this occasion for the rest of my life.

TREVOR PARMENTER

The third ASSID member to be honoured as Fellow was Trevor Parmenter. Trevor has appeared on previous occasions in issues of IDA, having made a huge, career-long contribution to people with intellectual disabilities and to ASSID. For this he was honoured with an Order of Australia last year (see IDA September 2005). Trevor is Foundation Professor and Director of the University of Sydney's Centre for Developmental Disability Studies. He is also Adjunct Professor of Education at the Faculty of Education & Social Work at the University of Sydney, Visiting Professor in Education at Macquarie

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Journal of Intellectual and Development Disability

ASSID 2005 AWARD WINNERS

JIDD EDITOR'S PRIZE:

Awarded to:
Judith Cockram (Dr)
(Centre for Social Research, Edith Cowan University),

for a paper titled:
"Justice or differential treatment? Sentencing of offenders with an intellectual disability"
(published Volume 30, Issue No. 1 (2005), pp. 3-13)

AUSTRALASIAN RESEARCH PRIZE:

Awarded to:
Nick Hagiliassis (Dr),
Hrepsime Gulbenkoglu (Ms),
Mark Di Marco (Mr),
Suzanne Young (Ms),
all of the above from Scope, Victoria &
Alan Hudson
(Professor, RMIT University, Melbourne)

for their paper titled:
"The Anger Management Project: A group intervention for anger in people with physical and multiple disabilities"
(published Volume 30, Issue No. 2 (2005), pp. 86-96)

FELLOW OF ASSID AWARDS 2005

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University and Honorary Lecturer at the Lancaster University Institute for Health Research. He has made an immense contribution to the field of education and research through scholarly publications, approximately 50 commissioned reports to government and non-government agencies, over 200 presentations at symposia and conferences, and has supervised over 40 higher degree students.

Trevor has not only made contributions through his teaching and research work, but has also made an enormous voluntary contribution to numerous non-government services, both in Australia and overseas, concerned with advancing the interests of people with disabilities and their families. Trevor's contribution to ASSID has been extensive since joining the organisation in 1974 and being elected to National Council at that time. Between 19985 and 1991 he continued on Council in the role of Editor of the association's journal, The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Developmental Disabilities (now JIDD). Under Trevor's editorship, the foundations were laid to develop the journal into an internationally respected scientific publication.

Trevor also represented ASSID on the Council of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disability (IASSID) from 1985. He served IASSID as President Elect from 1992-1996, as President from 1996-2000, and as Immediate Past President from 2000-2004. Through his efforts, Australia hosted the 1992 IASSID World Congress.

In addition to his work with ASSID and IASSID, Trevor was a Foundation Member of the Board of the Global Applied Disability Research Network on Employment, and a member of the Board of the American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR). Trevor is highly respected in ASSID and in the wider community as an educator, scientist, and advocate for people with disabilities. ◆

IDA Advertising Rates

(from Jan 2005 - until Dec 2005)

- **Display advertisement:**
  $176 (incl GST) for quarter page (artwork supplied). Where art work has to be arrange, add $70 (incl. GST).
- **Pre-printed inserts:**
  $220 (incl. GST). Weight restrictions apply, contact editorial assistant for details.

For information regarding closing details for receipt of advertising and material, please contact:

The Editorial Assistant,
Intellectual Disability Australasia
email: krvt3@bigpond.com

ASSID Australasian Board 2005 / 06 (as at March 2006)

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	Ms	Sharon	Brandford	04 0415762		Sharon.brandford@ihc.org.nz

UPCOMING EVENTS

11 - 12 May, 2006	**Council of Intellectual Disability Agencies Conference:** ***You've got a friend: Relationships, connection, social engagement.*** Further information http://www.cida.org.au/conference.shtml
30 - 31 May, 2006	**ACROD Inaugural National Conference on Social Participation.** To be held at Star City, Sydney. The conference will offer policy and practice presentations designed for the interest of hands on service providers, management staff and funding bodies. Speakers include Tim Costello and Fiona Given. Further information http://www.acrod.org.au/conferences/SP2006/home.htm
2 - 6 July 2006	**International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development 19th Biennial Conference** To be held at the Carlton Crest Hotel, Melbourne. Further information: http://www.issbd2006.com.au/
4 - 6 July 2006	**4th International Conference on Developmental Disabilities: Policy, Practice and Research** To be held at the David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv. Pre Conference Workshops will also be held 2-3 July 2006. Further information http://www.ortra.com/beitissie
2 - 5 August, 2006	**2nd Europe-IASSID Congress:** ***Bridging Research, Policy and Practice.*** To be held at the University of Maastricht, Maastricht, the Netherlands. Information on the Congress, as well as information on lodging and registration arrangements can be found at the Congress website: http://www.unimaas.nl/congresbureau/e-iassid2006
1 - 3 Sept 2006	**National Conference on Autism Spectrum Disorders (Hosted by Autism New Zealand Inc)** To be held at the Duxton Hotel, Wellington, NZ. Further information at http://www.autismnz.org.nz/
5 - 8 Sept 2006	**Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability (ASSID) 41st Annual Conference:** ***Risk and Resilience: Hope for the Future.*** To be held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory
6 - 8 Sept, 2006	**The Association of Competitive Employment (ACE) Conference** to be held in Perth. Further information at http://www.acenational.org.au/
30 Sept – 2 Oct, 2006	**Australian Association of Special Education (AASE) National Conference:** ***Learning together: Leading practice in inclusive education.*** To be held at the Hyatt Hotel Canberra, ACT. Further information at http://www.aase.edu.au/2005_National_Conference.htm
15 -17 Nov, 2006	**CDDS_AADDM Health Conference:** ***The Right to the Right Health Care:*** ***Evidence, ethics and health in people with developmental disability*** SMC Conference Centre (Sydney Masonic Centre), 66 Goulburn Street, Sydney, Australia Further information: www.cdds.med.usyd.edu.au Ph: +61-2-8878 05000 Email: tonyharman@med.usyd.edu.au

Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability:

41st Annual Conference

Risk and Resilience : Hope for the Future

4 - 7th September 2006

National Convention Centre, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

CALL FOR PAPERS

The theme of the conference is linked to the changes that have occurred over the last twenty years in the lives of people with disabilities, their families, service providers and professionals. A strength of ASSID is that it involves a range of individuals – service users, parents, researchers, clinicians, professionals and others - so the Conference provides an annual update on what is happening holistically across the life span for people with disabilities and their families.

Presenters should ensure that their paper or poster addresses the conference theme. We encourage presenters to be innovative in their approach and forward thinking. Papers should be evidence-based and, where appropriate, provide recommendations for the future.

We encourage experienced and new presenters to present their work in a way that allows all participants to gain insight into the many issues and challenges people with intellectual disabilities are facing each day.

Presenters may nominate their paper for consideration for the Peer-Reviewed stream of the conference. Presenters whose papers are accepted into this stream will have the opportunity to have their abstract published in a forthcoming issue of the Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability.

Proposals for papers, posters, symposia should be submitted by 30 May 2006 and be submitted by e-mail to: assid_41st@confco.com.au following the guidelines - available at http://www.assid.org.au

Intending presenters will be notified by 30 July 2006 on whether their paper has been accepted.

Conference Committee:

Linda Goddard, Convenor lgoddard@csu.edu.au Tel: 0260 516875

Tony Tinlin, President ASSID (NSW) ttinlin@bigpond.net.au Tel: 0260 231800

Confirmed Keynotes:

Dr Stuart Todd *Cardiff University, Wales*

Dr Levan Lim *National Institute of Education, Singapore*

Professor Jeff Sigafoos *University of Tasmania*

Professor Gwynnyth Llewellyn *University of Sydney*

Professor Tony Shaddock *University of Canberra*

Dr Roger Stancliffe *Centre for Developmental Disability Studies*