**Secretary's Report**

**Presented to the Forty Eighth Annual General Meeting**

**of The English Teachers Association of Queensland, Inc.**

**Saturday 14 March 2015**

This report aims to cover the activities and interests of ETAQ during 2014.

**Patron**

Professor Catherine Beavis (Griffith University) was elected for a fourth term as Patron at the 2014 AGM. During the year Professor Beavis has continued contributing a regular Patron’s Column for the association’s journal, *Words’Worth*.

**Management Committee**

The Management Committee met 9 times during 2014. Meetings were held monthly except for January, August and December. The February and March meetings comprised members of the 2013-14 committee.

Those elected at the AGM held in March 2014 were:

| **Position** | **Name** | **Meetings attended** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| President | Fiona Laing, Forest Lake SHS | 8 |
| Vice President | Dr Kelli McGraw, QUT | 6 |
| Secretary | Bronwyn Darben, Runcorn SHS | 7 |
| Treasurer | Trish Purcell | 9 |
| Membership Secretary | Diana Briscoe, The Gap SHS | 2 |
| 1. Member | Julie Arnold, Corinda SHS | 7 |
| 1. Member | Garry Collins, UQ School of Education (sessional) | 9 |
| 1. Member | Rebecca Hewitt, St Patrick’s College, Shorncliffe | 6 |
| 1. Member | Sophie Johnson, Stuartholme | 4 |
| 1. Member | Helen Johnston, Brisbane Grammar | 5 |
| 1. Member | Laura McLeod/Cooke, Faith Lutheran College - Redlands | 8 |
| 1. Member | Debbie Peden, various schools | 8 |
| 1. Member | Michelle Ragen, Brisbane Grammar | 7 |
| 1. Member | Dr Stew Riddle, USQ | 5 |
| 1. Member | Matthew Rigby, Go Grammar Consulting | 5 |
| 1. Member | Leah Wells, Brisbane SHS | 0 |
| 1. Member | Melanie Wild, Corinda SHS | 7 |

Shauna O’Connor attended the February meeting as a member of the 2013-14 committee.

The following new members elected at last year’s AGM in March attended the February and March meetings as observers as shown: Laura McLeod (February), Rebecca Hewitt (March). Leah Wells resigned her membership in July with her position left unfilled for the rest of the year.

**Venue for Management Committee meetings**

Meetings of the Management Committee were again held in a board room at the offices of the IEUA-QNT (Independent Education Union Australia – Queensland and Northern Territory Branch, formerly the QIEU, Queensland Independent Education Union) in Turbot Spring Hill. This space is provided free of charge and the union arranges for one of its staff to work late to allow us access to the building. This generous support has been in place for many years and is much appreciated by ETAQ.

**Administration Officer**

Trish Purcell continued in her role as the association’s part-time Administration Officer and Treasurer.

**Membership** The numbers of financial members of the Association for the last three years were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Life** | **Full (i.e. individual)** | **Student** | **Retiree** | **Corporate** | **Total** | **Estimated total # reached** |
| **2011** | 10 | 184 | 34 | 6 | 155 | 389 |  |
| **2012** | 10 | 191 | 38 | 8 | 177 | 424 | 3208 |
| **2013** | 9 | 175 | 23 | 6 | 166 | 379 | 2778 |
| **2014** | 10 | 210 | 64 | 8 | 164 | 456 | 3231 |

Membership has significantly increased in 2014, with an increase in most categories, especially personal and full members.

**Life Membership**

Paul Sherman, one of ETAQ’s foundation members, was elected to Life Membership at the AGM in March and the honour was formally conferred at the State Conference in August.

**PD Activities**

In Brisbane face-to-face PD activities were conducted during 2014 as detailed below. In addition, PD events were also conducted by the Toowoomba, Townsville and Cairns branches.

Seminar 1

* Date: Saturday 15 March 2014
* Type: half-day seminar
* CPD hours: 3 hours 50 minutes
* Theme: The Art and Science of English
* Format: 2 x keynote addresses plus suite of supporting workshops
* Keynote speaker 1: Dr Judy Smeed, QUT – topic: English teachers – abused species or data wise?
* Keynote speaker 2: Professor Brenton Doecke, Deakin University – topic: Creativity in English
* Attendance: 194 (including 15 complimentary registrations)
* Venue: Corinda State High School
* Convenor: Julie Arnold

Beginning Teachers’ Day

* Date: Saturday 10 May 2014
* Type: Beginning Teachers Day – This was the 4th year that ETAQ has run this activity.
* CPD hours: 5 hours 25 minutes
* Keynote speaker: Erin Geddes, Forest Lake SHS – topic: It’s a Marathon, not a Sprint
* Attendance: 56 registrations plus 16 complimentary (presenters, committee etc)
* Venue: Brigidine College
* Convenor: Melanie Wild

Seminar 2

* Date: Saturday 31 May 2014
* Type: half-day seminar
* CPD hours: 3 hours 15 minutes
* Theme : The Power of the Visual
* Format: keynote address plus suite of supporting workshops;
* Joint Keynote speakers : Professor Catherine Beavis (Griffith Uni & ETAQ Patron)and Dr Michael Dezuanni (QUT) – topic: ‘Increasingly complex and sophisticated texts’: Computer games, literacy and design
* Attendance: 110 (of 113 registered)
* Venue: Brisbane Grammar School
* Convenors: Helen Johnston and Michelle Ragen

Grammar Refresher Course

* Date: Saturday 26 July 2014
* Type: full-day (9-3) class activity
* CPD hours: 4 hours 30 minutes
* Title : Grammar for the Australian Curriculum: English – a one-day crash course
* Format: presentations, exercises & discussions
* Presenter: Garry Collins
* Attendance: 26
* Venue: School of Education, The University of Queensland

State Conference

* Date: Saturday 16 August 2014
* Type: full-day conference
* CPD hours: 5 hours 45 minutes
* Theme : Great Expectations: stability and change in English teaching
* Format: 2 x keynote addresses plus suite of supporting workshops
* Keynote speaker 1: Dr Anita Jetnikoff (QUT) – topic: The Teacher as Chameleon
* Keynote speaker 2: Dr Alison Scott (UQ) – topic: late cancellation
* Attendance: 212
* Venue: Lourdes Hill College
* Convenors: Dr Stew Riddle and Matthew Rigby

Repeat of Grammar Refresher Course

* Date: Saturday 10 October 2014
* Type: full-day (9-3) class activity
* CPD hours: 4 hours 30 minutes
* Title : Grammar for the Australian Curriculum: English – a one-day crash course
* Format: presentations, exercises & discussions
* Presenter: Garry Collins
* Attendance: 29
* Venue: School of Education, The University of Queensland

After-school forum #1

* Date: Thursday 16 October
* Type: after-school forum
* Topic: English Communication, Queensland’s Year 11 & 12 English subject alternative for non-OP students
* Format: general discussion plus 2 short teacher presentations
* Attendance: 52
* Venue: MacGregor State High School
* Convenor:  Laura Cooke

Literary Breakfast

* Date: Sunday 19 October 2014
* Type: morning literary breakfast
* CPD hours: 1 hour 30 mins
* Format: address with breakfast
* Guest speaker:  Adjunct Professor Roley Sussex
* Attendance: 50
* Venue: Fountain View Room at The Summit, Mt Coot-tha
* Convenor:  Rebecca Hewitt

**2014 AATE/ALEA joint national conference**

The 2014 AATE/ALEA joint national conference was held at the Darwin Convention Centre over the period 9-12 July. The theme was “aNTicipating new territories: building strong minds, places and futures”.

**Utilizing digital technologies**

ETAQ’s new website was launched in January 2014. ETAQ elected to pursue an independent website rather than becoming an offshoot of AATE’s new website, as did several other states. Using the company, Bloomtools, the website offers a range of new functionality, including online registrations for PD events, online membership payments, emails using ETAQ logo as well as a space ‘behind the wall’ for resources such as videos of PD presentations. Previous years’ issues of Words’Worth are being added to this area. Teachers in schools covered by corporate membership and non-members are able to sign up to receive e-pistles and other news items which are regularly emailed out. Currently 199 people are registered for this news service. The new website has made registrations for events smoother and allowed ETAQ to venture further with a refreshed and more professional look as well as vastly improved functionality. Communications are also more efficient as they have links to registration forms and other key links from the website.

ETAQ currently maintains both a Facebook page as a wider public presence and a closed group for members which shares resources and links. Currently the Facebok page has over 500 like and the closed group hosts 195 members- both are primarily maintained by Kelli McGraw. Also, AATE’s Facebook account went from a ‘closed group’ by invitation only with a focus on new and emerging leaders to a new ‘open group’ with a more broad AATE focus that anyone can ask to join and admin accepts. ETAQ has also continued to utilize twitter as a social media communication tool- thanks to Michelle Regan for her contribution in maintaining the content in our stream.

**Assisted attendance at conferences**

Assisted attendance was offered to the following for the state conference in August. This covered registration and $200 towards costs for travel and accomodation:

Camilla Meyers (Riverside Christian College, Maryborough), Danielle Grove (Tec College, Townsville), Grace Loyden (Spinifex State College, Mt Isa), John Thomas (Cairns) and UQ student Rhiannon French.

The following were sponsored for the National Conference in Darwin:

Fiona Laing (AATE representative), Natalie Fong (Citipointe College)

**Competitions**

2014 ETAQ/IEUA-QNT/James Cook University Literary Competition

Another brilliant year unfolded with ETAQ’s 55th annual literary competition: nearly 900 entries were submitted (a significant increase over 2013 with 741 entries) from both students and teachers alike. The quality of the entries was again exceptional suggesting that Queensland and the Northern Territory are the source of much literary talent. The winning entries were published in the November 2014 issue of the IEUA-QNT’s journal, The Independent Voice as well as on ETAQ’s website.

The Presentation Evening was conducted on Wednesday 15th October at the Queensland Multicultural Centre at Kangaroo Point in Brisbane. It was attended by around 200 people (prize winners, family members & friends as well dignitaries from IEUA-QNT and ETAQ). Many of the students had travelled long distances to be in attendance to collect their prizes. They came from as far afield as the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Cairns and Melbourne. And it was also heartwarming to hear the story of Year 7 student Dana Pavalovic whose father had arrived in Brisbane from Serbia some twenty years previously with no English and as a refugee, to the very place we conducted the Presentation to award his daughter a literary prize! It is stories such as these – and many others – that the Literary Competition is built. Mr Terry Burke, Secretary of the IEUA-QNT, made the welcoming address at the presentation evening, and provided an overview of the history of the competition. The audience was entertained and inspired by author and guest speaker, Tristan Bancks, who has published widely for both children and teens.

We acknowledge the support and sponsorship of the Independent Educators Union of Australia, Queensland and Northern Territory branch. I would especially like to convey our appreciation to Kay Holloway and her team for their invaluable help and sponsorship. We also acknowledge the ongoing support and sponsorship of the senior non-fiction section by James Cook University. Sincere thanks also to Random House in Sydney for their contribution of age- and category-specific book prizes for each place-getter.

Acknowledgement goes to all students and teachers for their valued submissions. Congratulations to the winners, place-getters and highly commended awardees. The 1st place-getters for 2014 are:

Section A Non-Fiction Prose – Hannah Nugent, Fairholme College, Toowoomba

Section A Short Story – Stella Lisle, The Rockhampton Grammar School, Rockhampton

Section A Poem – Rosie McCrossin, Sandgate District State High School, Sandgate

Section B Short Story – Jakob Ivanhoe, Anglican Church Grammar School, South Brisbane

Section B Poem – Sequoia Taylor, Redlynch State College, Cairns

Section C Short Story – Khushi Shelat, Brisbane State High School, South Brisbane

Section C Poem – Angus Cronin Harrison, Brisbane State High School, South Brisbane

Section D Short Story - Dana Pavlovic, Beachmere State School, Caboolture

Section D Poem – Olivia Trempus, St. Pius’ Primary School, Banyo

Section E Short Story – Damian Nelson, Marist College, Ashgrove

Sincere appreciation and gratitude is extended to the judges for their time, commitment and wisdom. These wonderful individuals are Dr Karen Moni, Pam Schindler, Esme Robinson, Paul Sherman, Dr Stephen Torre, Dr Richard Lansdown, Rachael Briggs, Garry Collins, Zenobia Frost, Cindy Keong, Beryl Exley and Debbie Peden.

Commendations to Deb Peden who continues in the role as co-ordinator, now into her fifth year. She says “Five years hence I’m still as enthralled by the talent of our writers. May they continue to be creative and celebrate their work through our literary competition. “

Digital Story Competition

With continuing generous sponsorship from Jacaranda (John Wiley), a digital story competition was conducted in 2014, its second year of existence. The number of entries was again quite modest but it is hoped that student interest in this activity will grow in the future. It should be noted that unfortunately some students' entries could not be considered for selection because they had breached the copyright regulations specified in the Competition's published rules*: 3. All images, music, and sound used must be either original material, or materials that are suitable for use under copyright regulations (e.g. copyright-free materials or material appropriately licensed under the Creative Commons).*

**Curriculum Matters**

Australian Curriculum: English

The federal government instituted a review of the Australian Curriculum in 2014. This review, conducted by Dr Kevin Donnelly and Professor Kenneth Wiltshire, was completed by October. There were serious questions raised by ETAQ and AATE as to the authority of these individuals to complete a review of the curriculum from P-12. This was added to, in the latter half of the year, with the identification of the experts drawn upon for the English curriculum, Professor Barry Spurr and Dr Fiona Mueller, with the former since stood down from his position at the University of Sydney over a separate controversy. AATE responded to the review with a submission. ETAQ submitted in a similar fashion after consultation with members.

During 2014, ACARA also conducted its regular review with this report released in time for the Minister’s Meeting in December 2014.

Interaction with **the QSA/QCAA**

2014 was a year of great change for the Queensland Studies Authority with a change of name in July to become the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The state government also instituted a major review of Senior Assessment and Tertiary Entrance, conducted by Gabrielle Matters and Geoff Masters. Their report was released in October 2014.

The essence of the report is the proposal to move from the current QCS test to a system of 50% external exam combined with 50% internal assessment, comprised of 3 assessment items, using a different system of moderation. Several elements have been proposed to increase the efficacy of the moderation system, including Endorsement of assessment prior to its implementation, confirmation (through blind re-assessments) and ratification (responding to anomalies between school-based and external assessment). The process of endorsement is currently being trialled by the QCAA in several subjects.

ETAQ developed a response to this report, in consultation with members. The minister responded to the report, largely suggesting supporting it, in December 2014. However, with the change of government since that time, it is difficult to know how likely the changes are to be instituted, especially given the expense of any new system.

ETAQ has been arguing for inclusion in the Learning Area Reference Committee (LARC) for English for some time. ETAQ has been invited to join the new Senior Assessment Working Group for English with the president taking on this role. Meetings are currently planned for semester 1 2015 with the aim of gathering stakeholder feedback on these proposals for such major change.

Members are strongly encouraged to engage by feeding back to ETAQ and making personal submissions on the proposals.

**AATE**

AATE, the Australian Association for the Teaching of English, is the umbrella national body with which ETAQ and the other state and territory English teacher associations are affiliated. During 2014, Garry Collins, the immediate Past President of ETAQ, was in the first year of his 2-year term as the national President, having succeeded Associate Professor Karen Moni in that role. As is ETAQ’s usual practice, the President, Fiona Laing, served as our delegate to the AATE national council.

The 2014 AATE/ALEA joint national conference was conducted in Darwin in early July. The 2015 event will be held in Canberra over the period 3-6 July.

Council business was conducted via email, teleconferences and two face-to-face meetings. One of these was held in Darwin following the national conference and the AGM was conducted in Sydney on the weekend 25-26 October. The AGM is usually held at English House, AATE’s headquarters in Adelaide, but was run in Sydney on this occasion to enable a briefing from the CEO of ACARA and some of his senior staff to be part of the agenda.

Besides this routine business, some key AATE advocacy activities during the year were:

• Made submissions to reviews of the Australian Curriculum and teacher education

• Presidents of AATE, ALEA and PETAA met with a member of Minister Pyne’s staff in Sydney on 20 January

• President and SAETA council delegate participated in a meeting with Australian Curriculum Review panel in Adelaide on 11 April

• members of national council members participated in a teleconference re NAPLAN results with ACARA staff on 14 August

• Wrote to federal and state/territory education ministers and shadow ministers about the recommendations of the review of the Australian Curriculum

Three reports on ETAQ activities were provided for publication in the AATE journal English in Australia.

**Book Sales**

The bookstall which sells a selection of AATE and Phoenix publications was well patronised at the March and May seminars and the state conference.  The financial results appear in the Treasurer’s Report.

**Branches**

During 2014 branches operated in Toowoomba under the leadership of Paul Irwin, Townsville under the leadership of Heather Fraser and Cairns under the leadership of Stephanie Wheeler-Sokolitch and John Thomas, who has recently moved to Cairns.

Each branch conducted a series of seminars for members including:

Cairns:

May – Seminar on appraisal in May by Lindsay Williams

November – Seminar on Text in context Model by John Thomas

Toowoomba:

May – breakfast with local journalists

September – Seminar Crossing Bridges – into other places, other times, other cultures by Kathleen Hannant

October – Seminar on Popular or Pulp – Reading for pleasure or reading for challenge by Rohan Davis

Booking made for Garry to present on Grammar on March 21

Townsville:

July – Seminar on Engineering a culture of creativity by Tamara Dawson

September – Seminar on Middle Years of Schooling by Annabel Evans

Booking made for Garry to present on Grammar on March 28 – booked out (75) with a substantial waiting list

With Google Hangouts offered at Seminars 1 & 2 and state conference, regional and remote members are being offered a means of accessing quality PD from the south-east corner. Members are also able to access these presentations in the members own section of the website under Member Resources.

**Publications**

***Words’Worth*:** Three issues of Words’Worth were distributed to members in 2014 under the editorship of Dr Stewart Riddle. Articles and teaching resources included: lesson and unit plans, research papers, feature articles and opinion pieces, poetry, book and resource reviews, literary competition winning entries, and much more.

***English Matters*** went through a redesign for the second edition of 2014, using the renewed logo and a magazine format including a range of graphics. Seven editions were distributed in 2014 with all editions now available on the website. Garry’s famous letters are no longer included but are still available on blog section of the website.

Email Bulletins – ETAQ E-pistles:

Communication with members was also effected via more than 30 email bulletins entitled ETAQ E-pistles.

**Peter Botsman Memorial Awards**

**T**he Peter Botsman Memorial Award (school category) for 2014 was awarded to Katie Lipka from St Laurence’s College for her extensive contribution to English teaching. Details of Katie’s achievements can be found on the website.

**JCQTA**

ETAQ continued its membership of the Joint Council of Queensland Teacher Associations (JCQTA) with the Immediate Past President, Garry Collins, attending meetings held at the Queensland College of Teachers offices at Toowong.

**Conclusion**

Although not always seen, I would like to acknowledge the enormous effort and commitment contributed by members of the Management Committee and various sub committees. It is through the tireless effort of these people that the opportunities for teachers and students of English in Queensland happen so efficiently.

Finally, thank you, our members for your continued support. I trust your membership of the ETAQ has brought you opportunities to develop, improve and inspire.

Bronwyn Darben

Secretary

14 March 2015