

Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council



- Annual Report 2019

From the President:

The VALBEC committee has had a very successful 2019. The Committee includes representatives from the Learn Local and TAFE sectors. They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the work of making VALBEC both relevant and effective in serving the needs of members and the broader Adult Literacy and Numeracy field.

Throughout the year, the VALBEC committee was active in planning and participating in a range of professional development activities with the needs of practitioners and learners as the central focus. At each monthly meeting issues were raised and discussed with work done between meetings to respond to various issues and concerns. The VALBEC committee continues to have strong connections with ACFE, other peak bodies and maintains ongoing representation on Australian Council for Adult Literacy (ACAL).

The VALBEC Committee:

The VALBEC Committee for the 2019 year was appointed at the AGM in April 2019.

2019 Committee

Linno Rhodes	President
Rhonda Pelletier	Secretary & Public officer, VALBEC conference convener.
John Radalj	Treasurer
Kerry Tomkin	ACAL representative
Liz Gunn	Fine Print Liaison / ACAL representative

General Committee members:

Pam Mahlis
Sandy lyngkaran
Christine Tully
Mieke Alexander

Don McDowell: Administration officer to September.
Anna Musgrove appointed in September to the role.

Committee members attended and contributed to:

ACAL Committee – Kerry Tomkin & Liz Gunn
Reading & Writing Hotline Steering Committee – Linno Rhodes
CGEA Champions group – Chris Tully

Committee members represent VALBEC in other steering committees and advocacy groups. Members attend and contribute on behalf of VALBEC and report on current issues as well as providing expertise on matters pertaining to adult literacy and numeracy provision.

Two VALBEC committee members, who were presenting papers, were financially supported to attend the ACAL conference in Sydney in October.

The VALBEC President was financially supported to attend the 25th anniversary celebrations of the Reading and Writing Hotline in Sydney.

Highlights and activities of 2019

ProLiteracy

In 2019 VALBEC provided a scholarship to one adult literacy practitioner to travel overseas to the ProLiteracy (Adult literacy) conference in San Diego USA. The decision was made to make this scholarship available to acknowledge and recognise that opportunities to travel overseas to investigate best practice are very limited. Other benefits included exploring how other nations are addressing (and are funded to) provide adult literacy provision, networking with other adult literacy practitioners, scoping out possible keynote speakers for future ACAL conferences, and the ability to choose from up to 80 workshops to attend over a four-day conference. The recipient of the scholarship will share her learnings with the wider VALBEC members (and non-members), through writing for Fine Print, sharing at the 2020 VALBEC conference and through other means such as workplace forums. We are proud to have been able to offer this scholarship and hope to be able to continue in subsequent years.

PD/Forums

All forums or workshops were well attended and received positive feedback. The direction of our forums reflected the currency and interest expressed at our conferences and through feedback from our members.

📌 **Carringbush – pronunciation @ Carringbush**

This workshop was held on February 28th . The presenters engaged everyone in the room with strategies to develop their own and their students' knowledge of the phonetic alphabet and strategies for learning to use it effectively in the classroom.

📌 **Pre-conference Forum with International Specialised Skills Incoming Fellow**, Kirke Olson, Sher Kamman and local Adult Education and Positive Psychology expert Marie Macleod. Held at the William Angliss Conference Centre and well attended by members and non-members of VALBEC.

📌 **Positive Psychology for Adult Education** – a further workshop for educators interested in learning more about how to use the tools of PosPsy in the adult education sector. Held at the William Angliss Conference Centre and well attended by members and non-members of VALBEC.

📌 **Digital literacy workshop presented by Shruti Malavde;** 'Navigating Cyber Security' held on Monday 25th November at Olympic Adult Education from 3.30-5.30pm. Shruti's knowledge about cyber security is wide-ranging, extending from appropriate password setting to protecting against malware and computer virus contamination. Shruti's facilitation approach is engaging and empowering. Participants come away with practical skills that they can apply with students in a range of educational settings.

eVALBEC

11 editions of e-valbec are emailed to members and non-members of VALBEC. Committee members all contribute.

Life Members

It was with great pleasure that the VALBEC committee recognised the commitment to the Adult Literacy and the general LLN field, and in particular, VALBEC and Fine Print, by awarding Ann Haynes and John Radalj Life Membership. Both Ann and John are highly regarded in the sector – professionally and personally. Ann and John have served on the VALBEC committee for well over two decades and have each held numerous positions on the executive during that time. Congratulations Ann and John.



Ann Haynes



John Radalj

Thanks to you:

ACFE Support

We would like to acknowledge the support of the ACFE board and the partnership with ACFE that allows VALBEC to continue to play such an important and vital role in the Adult Literacy and Numeracy field.

Thanks to Don McDowell, who stepped away from the Administration role at VALBEC after many years. We owe him a great debt of gratitude for all he has done – not only for the committee but for the whole sector – and many others I'm sure. His skills are shared among a few select groups. We wish Don well in his transition to less work.

When one door closes, we know what happens...another opens and with that we say welcome to Anna Musgrove who has taken on the role of Administration officer for VALBEC. We warmly welcome Anna.

Executive:

I would like to express my thanks to the committee – we all volunteer our time because we are committed to Adult Literacy and LLN in general. We value the importance of adult education and life-long learning. We give our time to VALBEC because we believe that we provide a quality service in the form of conferences, forums and workshops to our members, the benefits of which flow on to the adult students we are all here for.

Thanks to the executive – Rhonda Pelletier who has managed all of the committee's minutes and correspondence as well as pulling together an excellent annual conference. Thanks to John Radalj for mastering the role of Treasurer. Thanks to Liz and Kerrie for taking on the ACAL rep and Fine Print liaison roles.

L G Rhodes

Linno Rhodes
President
VALBEC

VALBEC Treasurer's Report

The VALBEC Committee ensures that the financial status of VALBEC remains in a sound position. The report provides an overview of VALBEC's financial position and includes income and expenditure for the 2019 financial year. Again in 2019 the main sources of income were membership fees, the annual conference and the ACFE grant. The main expenses were the VALBEC Conference, statewide professional development, the production of the 'Fine Print' journal, and the administration and management of the association, including the compilation of the monthly newsletter, e-VALBEC.

Please refer to the attached, audited financial statements for the detailed breakdown of expenditure.

John Radalj
Treasurer

Resilience: connect, educate, empower 
VALBEC Conference • May 17, 2019



2019 VALBEC Conference:

The 2019 title - Resilience: Connect, Educate, Empower, drew on VALBEC's three motivations. The theme looked at how practitioners and students develop and use resilience in their learning. With our keynote speakers, Kirk Olson and Sher Kamman, 13 sessions were provided for participants. Kirke and Sher provided an introduction to becoming a brain-wise teacher: understanding how different student behaviours indicate student defences in response to past trauma and fear. They also presented a very popular and informative workshop – enabling participants to 'dive deeper' into how to become brainwise. The feedback on the keynote and the workshop repeatedly spoke of being inspired and having received some practical things to do for students. The conference was well attended with over 100 people over the day. The feedback for all sessions highlighted the value of new insights, practical ideas and materials. Participants noted the value of meeting colleagues, old and new, and the value of networking. The success of conference can also be attributed to the service provided by William Angliss and the ongoing support of resource providers. VALBEC would also like to acknowledge the support of and funding by ACFE.

Rhonda Pelletier
Conference Convenor

Fine Print Report 2019

The exceptional production standards and high quality of writing in Fine Print continued in 2019. Under the editorship of Deryn Mansell, and the direction and input of the editorial committee, the three editions showcased a range of feature articles, reviews, profiles, resources and information for teachers, managers, practitioners and volunteers working in the adult literacy, language and numeracy fields.

Each edition contained a selection of engaging and relevant feature articles and reports. The regular sections of Practical Matters providing practitioners with teaching and learning ideas and strategies. Innovation and good teaching practice featured in many formats.

Open forum provided a space for reflections and updates, while Foreign Correspondence profiled projects from Timor Leste. The Beside the Whiteboard section was changed to In Conversation to reflect the changing contexts of teaching and learning.

Fine Print proudly carries the baton in Australia as the only journal dedicated to adult language, literacy and numeracy. It continues to present current, interesting and reflective content to VALBEC members and the wider readership through online access to Informit database.

Fine Print is a great forum for local practitioners and researchers to share their work, ideas and observations and we encourage people to consider writing or providing input and feedback.

Thanks to Editorial group members: Sarah Deasey, Lynne Matheson, Linno Rhodes, Elizabeth Gunn, Lini Kane and our newest member, Liane Hughes.

Special thanks to Lynne Matheson, who we said goodbye to after many years dedication as Editorial group member, more recently as Editor. We also thank and farewell Lynda Achren who was an active editorial member and contributor for 6 years. Thanks also to Sarah Tuke for her excellent design and production work and Melbourne Polytechnic print room.

The three editions for 2019 included the following:

1. Academic literacy; EAL in local libraries; literacy narratives; photography exhibition projects for building networks; the Yes I Can! campaign; the review into Australian VET 2019; and two reviews of adult literacy resources and scholarship; Invisible classroom by Kirke Olson, and Workwise English puzzles by Clare Harris.

2. Reading Writing Hotline; teacher action research; memories of Maggie Power; numeracy VALBEC Conference workshop response; learning circles; strength-based approaches; teaching in the prison system; a Learn Local Practitioner Award winner's work in Central Victoria; Sweatshop: Western Sydney Literacy Movement; and two reviews of adult literacy resources; Sweatshop women: Volume one edited by Winnie Dunn and Numeracy: Teaching maths in context by Dave Tout.

3. Paulo Freire; drama in EAL; Brainwise teaching; update to the Literacy 4.0 project; web-based training for SEE students; farewell to Don MacDowall; Learn Local Awards night; response to drama in EAL VALBEC workshop; and two reviews of adult literacy/numeracy resources and scholarship; Literacy, leading and learning: Beyond pedagogies of poverty by Debra Hayes et al, and Numeracy as social practice: Global and local perspectives by Keiko Yasukawa et al.