



Intrepid teaching

www.ppta.org.nz

PPTA NEWS

VOLUME 26 • NUMBER 8 • MAHURU/ SEPTEMBER 2005

PPTA News is the newsletter of the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association. Approximately 18,000 copies are distributed free to secondary and area schools and other institutions.

Not all the opinions expressed within PPTA News reflect those of the PPTA.

Deadlines

October edition

5pm, 3 October for articles and 5pm, 5 October for advertising.

November/December edition

5pm, 11 November for articles and 5pm, 14 November for advertising.

Visit the PPTA website for PPTA News ratecard information.

Correspondence & ads

Correspondence and advertising enquiries should be addressed to:

The Editor, PPTA News, PO Box 2119, Wellington, New Zealand; Ph: 04 384 9964; Fax: 382 8763; E-mail: mvelde@ppta.org.nz

PPTA website: www.ppta.org.nz

Editor: Matt Velde

Layout and Design: Ben Weston

Prepress by Toolbox Imaging Limited

Printed by The Print Room.

Contents

PPTA proposes assessment service	3
Technology research	3
Viewpoint	4
Guidance Counsellors' conference	5
News briefs	6
Learnz Project	7-9
In Profile: Donald Reid	10
Union News	11
Book Review	11

Cover photo: Learnz teachers Donald Reid (secondary) and Audrie McKenzie (primary) after spending four hours in the Huntly East underground mine

Correction: The August edition of PPTA News contained an error of context in the page 3 article Retraction and Apology by Tony Smith to Cora Kamp. The error is regretted and the correct version has been reprinted on page 6.

PPTA Member Services



**Life Cover - Income Protection
- Disablement - Living Assurance**

EBS Health Care provides a comprehensive and growing range of low-cost medical benefits.

**Ph 0800 268 3763
www.ebs.org.nz**



**ph 0800 001 154
www.southerncross.co.nz**



**Uni-Care Educational Travel
Insurance Service**

Box 32-167, Devonport, Auckland,
New Zealand

Tel: 64-9-446 1166 Fax: 64-9-445
8832

Email: insure@uni-care.org
www.uni-care.org

Tech. teachers caught in the middle

TECHNOLOGY teachers feel caught between meeting parents' expectations of technology and teaching to the curriculum, the interim results of a PPTA survey show.

The survey also highlights concerns about a lack of professional development, the status and perceptions of technology teaching in schools and class sizes, particularly at junior levels.

PPTA deputy general secretary Bronwyn Cross said the survey's interim results made sobering reading.

"Technology teachers have had to deal with a lot of curriculum change over the past decade, including a move away from making end products to teaching the whole technological process – the concepts and design behind products.

"The survey shows some still prefer the more hands-on approach because it meets the needs of their students, while others see the new curriculum as more appropriate.

"But what many are saying is that a lack of understanding about the new curriculum amongst parents and boards means there is still an expectation that children will come home after each class with an end product."

The high level of concern over status also reflected the problems around the G3 salary group, which had affected many technology teachers. "Clearly they have been badly affected and insulted by the ADR decision in 2002. Even the subsequent development of pathways for some technology



Technology in action at Melville High School.

teachers hasn't replaced the anger at losing parity with their colleagues with degrees."

Concerns over a lack of ancillary support are also to the fore, with many teachers saying they don't have enough support to prepare technology classes, and fix equipment when it breaks down.

Cross said that technology teachers had relished the chance to respond to the survey, as many felt they had had little input into curriculum development.

"We are very grateful to technology teachers for taking the time to complete the survey.

"When completed, this survey will be a valuable resource, highlighting the state of technology teaching in our schools, and enabling PPTA to both lobby government to improve the working conditions

Snapshot

- 365 responses
- 55 % male, 45% female
- Median age: 50 years
- Median years teaching: 20 years
- Median years technology teaching: 13 years
- Key issues: Status, professional development, class size, ancillary support

of technology teachers and ensure the curriculum meets the needs of students."

The full survey will be published later this year.

PPTA proposes assessment service

PPTA is proposing to use practising teachers as advisers to other teachers on assessment for NCEA, by giving them time out of the classroom and extra pay for the work.

PPTA president Debbie Te Whaiti said the assessment advisers would help to build teachers' capacity to assess accurately and effectively, and help them find manageable ways of doing so.

She said the key advantage of the scheme was that the advisers would be practising teachers for

some of the time so they would remain in touch with classroom concerns and problems.

A proposal has been submitted to NZQA and to the Ministry of Education, and is currently under discussion with those agencies.

Te Whaiti said the assessment advisory service was a medium

term solution to address the current issues teachers have with internal assessment. PPTA research showed teachers wanted more support in their role as qualifications assessors, especially from people who were subject experts and who had experience as moderators.

(Continues p5 ...)

For PPTA, business as usual

The shape of the next government should be known by the time this PPTA News reaches schools, but regardless of whether it is Labour or National-led, for PPTA it will be business as usual.



Debbie Te Whaiti

THEY say a day is a long time in politics, so two weeks must be an eternity. But it has been an interesting two weeks for PPTA. Firstly, there was a Dominion Post editorial directing people to ignore the views of teachers and reminding us of the same old prejudices about “provider capture” and teachers being self interested.

Then, after the Exclusive Brethren scandal broke out, the National Party tried to deflect attention by comparing PPTA’s advertising campaign in support of public education with the Brethren’s anti-Labour and Green leaflets. Its party strategist Murray McCully even accused PPTA of attacking National through the ads.

Which, of course we did not. Our Executive endorsed a campaign of messages designed to support public education and highlight the risks of policies that undermine it.

Our ads focused on the issues and promote long-held membership policy - support for public education and zoning, support for improving the NCEA, and opposition to salaries bulk funding.

We had to inform the debate around these issues and through the ads invite wider consideration of them.

The Association has been entirely upfront about the fact that it is opposed to some elements of published education policy but in no way do our ads attack the National Party or

its politicians, or tell anyone who to vote for.

So the comparison with the Exclusive Brethren is desperate and irrational. PPTA does not disguise what it stands for, what it says and why it says it.

The public is entitled to conclude whatever it likes about our ads but we trust people will recognise that secondary teachers have an important perspective that ought to be heard.

Post September 17, electioneering will fortunately be over and it will be business as usual for PPTA.

Regardless of who governs, PPTA will continue to campaign for:

- Additional staff for the effective delivery of NCEA, for smaller classes and to provide an expanded subject choice for students;
- Urgent action to implement the recommendations of the PPTA research, Teachers Talk About NCEA, and the SSC report;
- An above-inflation increase in the Operations Grant to cover the increased range of costs faced by schools and parents;
- Continued planned investment in a national ICT infrastructure to enable all school to make effective use of ICT;
- Continued work to establish pathways for G3 teachers locked out of step 14 due to the inherently unworkable Alternative Disputes Resolution panel’s recommendation

in 2002.

- Upgrading of the physical environment of secondary schools to provide teachers and students with a higher quality learning environment.

- Maintaining a national collective employment agreement – including centrally resourced, not bulk funded salaries – that recognises the collegial and cooperative nature of the secondary teaching workforce and the specific retention and recruitment needs of secondary and area schools.

- The introduction of a revised studentship scheme along with bonding to ensure a sufficient supply of highly trained and qualified secondary teachers.

In addition, we’ll expect whoever is in government to respect the work streams process set in motion by the Secondary Teachers’ Collective Agreement and honour agreements already reached on specialist classroom teachers and sabbatical leave and exit provisions.

Finally, we’ll promote the need for increased funding to ensure that all secondary teachers have access to relevant and timely professional development/learning and the rationalisation and specialisation of secondary pre-service education to ensure a supply of high-quality graduates for the profession.

We hope that whoever governs will recognise that teachers have expertise and experience that ought to be utilised when education policy is developed or implemented. The constructive, willing, supportive involvement of teachers is crucial to ensuring that any change in education is an effective one.

Secondary teachers and the PPTA have been subject to numerous attacks over the past year but we have responded with reasoned argument, research, responsibility and care. Our stance cannot and will not change. We stand for education.

Activist teachers, *activist guidance counsellors*

GUIDANCE Counsellors need to take their part as education professionals in the struggle to defend high quality public education, PPTA president Debbie Te Whaiti says.

In a speech to the Guidance Counsellors' Conference in Napier, Te Whaiti said that while counselling was about individuals and change it was affected by political and educational discourses.

She highlighted the need to unite guidance counsellors with teachers around the big issues that face education in New Zealand today. "It means working together to build coalitions with others who are also committed to quality public education."

A key example of coalition building was for guidance counsellors and PPTA to work together to advocate for schools having sufficient guidance counsellors and good working condi-

tions for them.

"PPTA Executive and National Office can't do this on our own.

"The struggle has to be won in every school, and guidance counsellors need to build coalitions with other members of their school community – teachers, non-teaching staff, students, families – to win this struggle at our local level.

"We must recognise that there are competing interests when it comes to the use of school staffing.

"If we want more staffing to be used for guidance counselling, we have to show how this will make teachers' jobs more manageable."

At the conference, guidance counsellors spoke of the isolation that can often go with the position - difficulties around confidentiality and accountability and the unevenness in the availability and access to community

and government agencies with responsibility for youth.

"Guidance counsellors are often working on the edge when it comes to matching the expectations of families/whanau, schools and the students themselves," Te Whaiti said.

"The regard schools hold for them is often reflected in how they are accommodated - from the privacy of an enclosed office with a waiting area, to a very public corridor in the senior management area.

"Since the position became untagged there has been a less than integrated response to meeting the pastoral/guidance needs of secondary schools. It is sad that some schools only learn the value of a guidance counsellor and a strong guidance network in times of trauma and tragedy."

Assessment advisory service proposed

(... From p3)

"We need to reassure people that internal assessment is as robust and high quality as it can be.

"We need to support teachers to conduct their internal assessment role reliably and consistently across schools, and to find ways that are manageable and do not lead to teaching being assessment-driven."

The assessment advisors would help to ensure that those struggling with internal assessment responsibilities had as their first point of contact a subject and assessment expert who had been freed up and resourced to assist them.

The proposal would also build the capacity of a group of current practising teachers to advise, support and collaborate with other teachers on assessment and build subject specific professional learning communities across schools

to support teachers with internal assessment.

Te Whaiti said that the proposal also connected with work on teacher career paths in the STCA workstreams. It would provide an opportunity for these teachers to use their subject expertise to work with other teachers, while not requiring them to take on the administrative burdens of heads of department.

PPTA's proposal comes as some schools contact PPTA over advice from school relationships managers that they should ask teachers in their neighbouring schools to 'internally moderate' their assessment.

Te Whaiti said PPTA had been assured by NZQA that there was no formal requirement on schools to ask neighbouring schools to moderate their assessment, but it

appears that some schools have been 'strongly advised' to use this as a form of internal moderation.

"PPTA accepts that in some cases, such as where there is a sole teacher department, teachers have established reciprocal arrangements that are working well with teachers in other schools.

"But we see no need to make all teachers and subject departments to do this.

"PPTA is strongly opposed to such suggestions because they will only increase teacher workload."

She said NZQA had promised to produce a circular reassuring schools over the issue. "Teachers should resist any pressure to set up such arrangements where they believe that they already have adequate avenues for critiquing of their assessments."

School finances stretched to the limit

Schools' finances and their ability to raise funds are stretched to the limit, according to a study by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

MOST of the 17 effective schools involved in a three-year longitudinal study into New Zealand schools' financial decision making experienced a tighter financial situation than the previous year. The research also shows that the schools' ability to raise non-government revenue had plateaued.

PPTA president Debbie Te Whaiti said the study showed that schools' bulk funded operations grant was insufficient for them to make ends meet. The downturn in the foreign fee paying student market had also impacted on schools that had relied on them for extra revenue.

"The study is further clear evidence that schools are struggling to meet costs on their current levels of operations funding."

Te Whaiti said schools were

already making tradeoffs within the curriculum but warned that the introduction of compulsory bulk funding if the National Party were elected government could put schools under even more financial pressure.

"It may not be immediately apparent in the first few years of bulk funding if the National Party keeps John Key's promise to fund schools at the top of the salary rate.

"But over time, as salaries increase and school costs rise, there is no guarantee that schools' bulk grant will meet these increases, forcing schools into another tradeoff, between delivering the curriculum and employing the most suitable trained and qualified teachers."

"National Party education spokesman Bill English says that

the lesson of the last six years is that 'centralised salaries are no guarantee a school gets enough money to deliver the core curriculum, and no protection for parents against fees.'

"He fails to grasp that money for teacher salaries, however paid, is not the same money schools use to deliver the curriculum.

"Under bulk funding, there is a real danger that schools will cut either curriculum or teachers to make ends meet. That's a lose-lose situation for everybody."

The study was funded by the New Zealand School Trustees Association.

Visit http://www.nzcer.org.nz/default.php?products_id=1506 to download the report.

Retraction and Apology by Tony Smith to Cora Kamp

IN February and March 2001, the defendant, Mr Tony Smith, who was at the time a staff member at Sacred Heart College, publicly accused the plaintiff, Cora Kamp, of dishonestly claiming in her application for appointment as the principal of Sacred Heart College, that she held a Bachelor of Theology degree. Mr Smith now unreservedly withdraws this allegation and apologises for it.

Mr Smith now accepts and acknowledges that in applying for the position of principal at Sacred Heart College, Cora Kamp did not claim to have a Bachelor of Theology degree, either in her written application or in her oral interview with the College Board

of Trustees. Nor did she give the Board either the indication or the impression that she held a Bachelor of Theology degree.

Mr Smith acknowledges that at all times Cora Kamp acted with the utmost integrity in obtaining her appointment as the Principal of Sacred Heart College and there was no basis whatsoever for his allegation that she obtained her appointment in a dishonest way. He accepts that her appointment was properly made by the College Board of Trustees, on accurate information provided by Cora Kamp and on the merits.

Mr Smith apologises to Cora Kamp for his allegation that she

obtained her appointment as the principal of Sacred Heart College in a dishonest way and did not merit appointment. He made an error which he now very much regrets.

Mr Smith also regrets the pain he caused to Cora Kamp as a result of his defamatory allegations and the damage he has caused to her professional reputation and career. The defamatory allegations he made are withdrawn without reservation.

Mr Smith has agreed to pay damages to Cora Kamp and to make a contribution to her legal costs.

On this basis all issues between the parties are now settled.

Fieldtrips 21st century style



TEAM EFFORT: Donald Reid, (left) and Audrie McKenzie prepare to go underground. McKenzie is the Learnz primary teacher, but she helps out on the secondary fieldtrips, preparing equipment, taking video and still images during the fieldtrips and uploading them to web afterwards. Reid often performs those tasks during the primary fieldtrips.

PPTA News joins Learnz secondary teacher Donald Reid as he takes students on a virtual fieldtrip of Solid Energy’s Huntly East underground mine.

The Huntly East mine is located some 150-250 metres below the level of the Waikato river. It’s a 40km labyrinth of rugged, undulating and intersecting roads that cut a swathe through a rich seam of sub-bituminous coal that is extracted, screened and cleaned before being railed to the mill at Glenbrook to produce steel.

At 162 metres underground stands a small operations room not much bigger than a tool shed. On a table in the room, a polycom sound station has been installed to connect the world of miners with year 10 students at Rotorua’s Western Heights High School.

Learnz secondary teacher Donald Reid and his primary counterpart Audrie McKenzie are preparing to deliver an audio conference to the class. With

them to answer students’ questions are Solid Energy project engineer Francois Mienie, surveyor Stuart Heslop, graduate mining engineer Martin Roedhammer, section manager Lincoln Smith, and ventilation engineer Boris Poborowski.

A few minutes later, Western Heights’ teacher Jocelyn Wood joins the conference and it gets underway.

“We are sitting around a little table in an underground office,” says Reid. “I have got six guys with me and we are all dressed as miners should be, with hard hats, cap lamps, miners vests and survival belts.

“It’s a lovely day down here and it’s getting up to about 22 degrees at the coal face. It is great to have you along.”

Then the students start firing questions at the miners: “What temperature does it get up to underground?”, asks Hayley; “How do you know where the coal is located before you begin to mine it?”, questions Alison; “Can you explain how bord and pillar mining works?”, from Pare; and “What safety equipment do you use to stop breathing in coal dust?”, quizzes Ngawai.

For a growing number of secondary

students, this is field trip 21st century style. It doesn’t replace the traditional outdoor experience, but complements it by taking students to places they wouldn’t otherwise get to, either because of distance, logistics or health and safety.

“To think that nowadays students in a classroom at Western Heights can interview miners while they are underground – that was unheard of a few years ago,” Reid says.

When Learnz (Linking Education and Antarctic Research in New Zealand) was initiated by Christchurch-based company Heurisko as an Antarctic focused education programme virtual fieldtrips were indeed rare.

For its first three years, Learnz took students from mainly small, rural primary schools on virtual learning adventures to the Dry Valleys, the Antarctic coast and the Ross Sea in the depths of an Antarctic winter on-board a research icebreaker.

Since then it has moved on to the New Zealand mainland, taking primary and secondary students from about 400 schools on 16 virtual fieldtrips every year. In the secondary area it covers science and geography topics rang-

The Learnz Project

ing from coal mining and geothermal generation to plate tectonics and the national grid.

Learnz fieldtrips are curriculum driven. Each trip covers a number of achievement objectives from the various curriculum areas. Coal mining for instance includes achievement objectives: Examine resource use in a farming or mining context at year 11; Explain natural landscapes at year 12; and at year 13 Analyse the role of geography in planning and decision-making.

“Teachers are really busy people so the field trips must be relevant to what they are doing in the classroom, not an added extra,” Reid says

He adds that teachers can choose how involved they’ll be with Learnz. Some will join audio conferences while others will opt for the website resources such as the audio archive, web questions, photo gallery, video clips, ‘Donald’s diary’, and curriculum related background information and lesson planning materials.

Teacher handbooks provide guidance and lesson planning ideas, Reid says, but they are not prescriptive and in practice teachers modify them to meet the needs of their students.

Western Heights teacher Jocelyn Wood says her class first used the site to gain information about mining. “I had taught the topic and then when the live mine tour was on, we had gone onto another topic but it served well as revision.”



At school: Kathy Anso links up to the audio conference.

“Learnz is directly related to the curriculum topic, it uses a medium of interest to students, and reinforces her teaching with interesting activities, like the audio conference.

“They (students) all really enjoyed the audio conference as they learned so much.

“I had previously taken a class to Huntly for a day and we really saw very little and gained very little information but this was amazing and brought it alive for the students.

“I’m talking about kids who at the beginning of this topic did not know what coal was - until their teacher crawled into a local school furnace to collect some and pass it around the room!”

Wood says students could also use the programme to see coalmining machinery. “I had no pictures of continuous miners and obviously my descriptions are not that good! One picture really did save a thousand words!

“Donald’s diary was great - reinforcing and giving detail to the kids. He describes everything which sets them off on more questions and stimulates their picture of the whole operation.”

Woods says students really felt part of the action and she intends using the Learnz programme again.

“Teaching time is at a premium with NCEA and a relevant programme like this is extremely useful.”

In recent times, Heurisko has boosted the range of offerings across the science, geography and social studies curricula to meet secondary teachers’ needs.

Changes this year include more focus on the senior curriculum, an increased emphasis on skills – such as ICT and questioning and inquiry skills, and more website background



In the mine: Martin Roedhammer answers questions as Donald Field looks on.

materials to assist student research. the Learnz website is not only for teachers, Reid says, but also for students to use to solve research problems.”

As the audio conference draws a close, Reid describes the next part of the fieldtrip – a trek over slippery and sometimes treacherous surfaces to a new coal seam North 62, to look at roof bolting in action.

During the journey, Reid and McKenzie video some of the equipment used in the mine – the continuous miner used to extract the coal onto a conveyor belt, the electric shuttle car used to transport it to another conveyor belt, from where it is moved to the main belt and on to the blending plant. Later, once the fieldtrip is over, they’ll upload it to the Learnz site for students to see.

Reid believes the field trips can help people discard some of the preconceptions they have about the power and extraction industries.

“Coal mining textbooks, for example, still show picks, shovels and canaries. But modern mining is not like that at all. It is incredibly technically complex. Mining methodology at Huntly East is cutting edge.”

Reid says industry partners Contact

The Learnz Project

Energy, Solid Energy and the Department of Conservation, who fund most of the secondary programme, are hugely supportive. Beyond a professional responsibility to be accurate, they are hands off.

“They are not trying to portray themselves in any way in the classroom.

“They want more informed debate and see benefits in breaking down the preconceptions about their industries and just in sharing what they do.”

In the future, Heurisko director Pete Somerville is keen to extend the smorgasboard of offerings and there are plans for new field trips to shellfish/mussel farms, dairy farms, other electrical generation industries and gold mining.

“The more opportunities there are for virtual fieldtrips the more likely it is that more teachers will see it as a viable option.”

But Reid says there are still plenty of barriers to getting teachers involved: software, security, the rather haphazard nature of IT support in schools and teacher workload.

He notes that in one school, audio conferencing required hooking up to the phone line in the HOD’s office and holding the conference in the corridor. Hardly ideal, but still better than nothing.

Connecting to the web can also be an issue. “Teachers have laptops but ...there is an assumption that because you have a laptop you have got immediate access for you and your students (and) that isn’t so.”

After another stimulating audio conference with Kingsway School Reid’s time at the Huntly East mine is coming to a close. He and McKenzie hitch a lift with some miners ending their shift and 4.2 km later exit into a stunning Waikato day.

Reid feels privileged to be able to keep up-to-date with developments in his field and upskill while on the job and recognises that many secondary teachers don’t get the same opportunities.

“There isn’t a teacher who doesn’t want to be at the leading edge of their field and use that knowledge in their lessons.

“My aim through Learnz is to support teachers to do that.”



PPTA News visited Naenae College in the Hutt Valley to see an audio conference from the students’ perspective. Teacher Kathy Anso’s year 12 practical science class was a little smaller than usual, something she attributes to students’ nerves about asking questions over the phone. Anso had just signed her class up to the Learnz programme and says the beauty of the programme is not only the live audio conference but the ability for students themselves to visit the website later to listen to the audio conference again – it’s easy for them to miss some of the conference due to the nerves of asking questions. She says students thoroughly enjoyed the conference and she now wants them to join the audio conference for the national grid fieldtrip.



Donald Reid with mining surveyor Stuart Heslop in the electric-powered Toyota Landcruiser: “I didn’t realise how big Learnz was until I saw footage of myself on the site,” says Heslop. It was his first experience of a virtual fieldtrip and he admits the audio conference was a little nervewracking. “It is amazing how just speaking to school kids can make you nervous,” he says.

Classrooms outside the school

In profile: Learnz secondary teacher Donald Reid.

IMAGINE your classroom is a mineshaft 165 metres below sea level, beside a steam turbine at the Wairakei power plant, or exposed to the elements atop the Clyde Dam in Central Otago.

These are just three of the places that Learnz secondary teacher Donald Reid “teaches” students from, using a polycom, laptop, video camera and a limitless imagination to bring real life science into the classroom.

Reid has been the Learnz secondary teacher for three years but spent two seasons doing Antarctic fieldwork when Learnz was in its infancy.

“In Antarctica, we pushed the boundaries of communication. To be able to get the students to have somebody actually in Antarctica where you could hear the polystyrene squeak of the snow live in your classroom was very, very motivating for the kids.”

Reid has 27 years experience as a secondary teacher of science and biology, most recently as HOD science at Ellesmere College. He is driven by a love of the outdoors and the untapped potential of virtual fieldtrips.

“I have always had an interest in how the application and extension beyond the classroom adds a whole new dimension of learning for the kids.”

In a job with many highlights, Reid’s favourite is meeting with experts who love what they do and facilitating the transfer of their experiences and knowledge to students.

The miners, mechanics and engineers he works with are always more than willing to share their expertise, he says and provide real life examples of science.

“The real life examples we get are just fantastic – they are all around us.

“Physics teachers understand effects such as inductance and capacitance very well and the impact on power supply if either get too big.

“But few have a career background with industrial applications.



Donald Reid checks out some roof bolts

“My jaw was dropping as that was just the coolest explanation of physics from a guy with a passion and a deep, deep understanding of power generation.”

“Learnz can bring them wonderfully large examples of the smallest bench top experiments, such as how the Otahuhu A power station, which no longer produces electricity but has its generators working like motors, is used to add capacitance to give Auckland a stable electricity supply.

“Often both teachers and stu-

dents go Wow!”

They also help link the theory with industry practice. Reid recounts the story of a Clyde Dam electrical engineer who asked him what practical work students did around alternating current.

After Reid showed him a Y13 physics workbook, the engineer flicked through in one continuous motion, paused and said. ‘Its not really AC, they are just turning DC on and off.’

“He turned up the next morning with a lifesize model of the magnetic lines of flux around a spinning rotor. It was colour coded and had moving parts across real stator windings. Wow. It must have taken him hours and I asked him so. ‘Oh I just did it last night when I was waiting to do some servicing on a Roxburgh machine’, he casually replied.

“We got the video camera out and he gave an excellent explanation of alternating current using that model.

“My jaw was dropping as that was just the coolest explanation of physics from a guy with a passion and a deep, deep understanding of power generation.

“My whole perception has changed about ... how much tremendous support is in the community for teaching.”

A big part of Reid’s job is communicating his experiences and challenges in undertaking the field trips, through “Donald’s diary” and the live audio conferences.

But translating the complex technical processes of a mine or power station into language students can understand isn’t always easy.

“You can’t be ponderous. You have to write in a way that is motivating and interesting for students (and) put a bit of yourself into it.

“The kids want to know what challenges and excites me.”



Union news

EI appeal

EI HAS issued an urgent appeal to member organisations for financial contributions to the **EI Solidarity Fund** to help victims of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath in New Orleans.

EI general secretary Fred van Leeuwen said the hurricane and the flooding which accompanied it, had devastating effects on many teachers and other education workers and their families in the region.

“It is not possible at this stage to establish how many of these have been killed or injured or how many have been left homeless by the disaster. Communications and travel in the region are still extremely difficult for individuals.

“The pictures transmitted each evening on television give an indication of the extent of the disaster and its impact on the people living in the region.”

He said the fund would be used to support the teachers and education workers and their families most adversely affected by the disaster. “EI will work closely with our affiliates in

the US to ensure that any such contributions are used to maximum effect.”

Contributions should be sent to Hurricane Katrina Appeal, EI Solidarity Fund, c/o ING Bank, Brussels Branch, Avenue Marnix 24, 1000 Belgium, Account number: 310-1006170-75, IBAN number: BE05 3101 0061 7075, SWIFT code: BBRUBEBB

Workplace Injury Advocacy Service

The NZ Council of Trade Unions is piloting a 12 month advocacy service for injured union members in the Auckland region. The service is modelled on the Victorian Trades Hall Council’s ‘Union Assist’ programme. The predominantly telephone-based service is available to CTU affiliated union members who require assistance with accessing ACC and a safe return to work.

The service:

- Works with members to find the best way to resolve any problems they are having accessing ACC.
- Helps with entitlements and

processes under ACC law

- Recommends and if necessary demonstrates techniques of improving communication with case managers
- Helps to prepare for meetings with ACC or an accredited employer
- Educates members on their rights under the ACC Code of Claimant rights
- Supports members at meetings with ACC or an accredited employer under the partnership programme, including mediation
- Helps with preparing a statement of evidence for a review hearing (please note, the service does not provide representation at review hearing).

During the pilot, the service will be available to union members in the Auckland Region only (south of Albany and north of Pukekohe), from 8.30am-5.00pm Mon-Fri. To access the service, please contact advocacy@nzctu.org.nz, or call 0800 4 union (0800 486 466). The service is for union members only, and unions will be notified to confirm membership.

Excitement, danger and tenderness

Malcolm & Juliet

by Bernard Beckett

Longacre Press

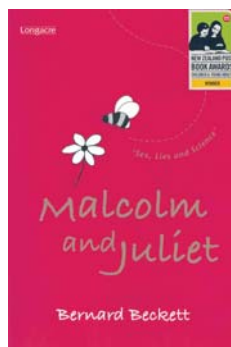
Reviewed by Ben Weston

THIS light-hearted skate through the intricacies of teenage sexual awakening is a clever wee gem.

Pulling few punches in its directness, it never forgets that its intended audience and subject matter are one and the same.

Avoiding simplicity and condescension *Malcolm and Juliet* is the story of Malcolm, “a scientist in the body of a teenager” who embarks upon a project to reconcile the two and produces a documentary about teenage sex for a science fair.

Through his “research” Malcolm soon comes to the conclusion that



the project will have to involve the loss of his virginity. But with whom? When? And where?

The tale that unfolds avoids predictable and purile avenues and journeys to places that are both profound and hilarious in turn.

The writer’s honest prose, devoid of euphemisms, allows the characters and their actions to unfold naturally and at their own pace, so that even the post-teen reader is cast convincingly to a world shadowed by an uneasy alliance of emotions - excitement, danger and tenderness. One is left with a sense of timelessness, that the discovery of sex follows an identical pattern for generations of teens past, present and future.

The counter-weight to Malcolm’s efforts takes the form of his school principal, who wants him to forget his project just as quickly as he’s thought of it. In Malcolm’s almost uncharacteristic tirade in reaction to his principal’s moralising we get a glimpse of the writer’s underlying message.

“Sex is all around us you know. Why, it is this very school that taught me the names of body parts I didn’t even know I had, where I was briefed on puberty, warned of disease and loaded up with condoms ... Sex is all around us Sir. Everybody is fascinated by it.”

Malcolm and Juliet won both the NZ Post Book award Young Adult Fiction category and The Esther Glen Award for fiction.

Bernard Beckett is a PPTA member and a teacher at Onslow College.

More strong results for the Teachers Retirement Savings Scheme

RECENTLY announced returns for the Teachers' Scheme's investment funds put them ahead of most similar funds.

For the year to 30 June 2005, after deduction of tax, fees and all expenses, the returns were:

- the Cash Fund returned 4.14%,
- the Stable Fund 6.95%,
- the Balanced Fund 8.08% and ,
- the Growth Fund 9.14%.

Before tax at 33%, fees and expenses, these are equivalent to returns of 6.48%, 11.02%, 12.76% and 14.39% respectively - excellent results by anyone's standards.

Members will be pleased to know that there will be no change to the current investment strategies from 1 October 2005, when Mercer Human Resource Consulting takes over the management of the Teachers' Scheme from

the Global Retirement Trust. Mercer has established investment funds in the Mercer Super Trust specifically for former member schemes of the Global Retirement Trust such as the Teachers' Scheme. The new investment funds replicate the fund manager structure of the Global Retirement Trust. The same six professional specialist investment managers employed by the Global Retirement Trust will continue to invest members' retirement savings.

As part of the transition to Mercer, members will have access to some exciting new services specifically designed to help them identify and meet their retirement savings goals. The new services include an upgrade to the current website and regular financial education seminars.

As well as all the features currently available, the upgraded website will provide more detailed information about

each of the investment funds and allow members the freedom and flexibility to change investment funds on line. The website will also include two webinars (short, online seminars) specifically designed for the Teachers' Scheme.

Further good news for members is that the additional services will be provided at no extra cost to members, as Mercer has agreed to maintain the existing fee structure for the next five years. In fact, as more teachers join the Teachers' Scheme the monthly administration fee each member pays reduces.

So if you are not already a member of the Teachers' Scheme - don't delay, join today so that you too can share in the success of the Teachers' Scheme.

For more information about the Teachers' Scheme visit the website www.teachersretire.org.nz, call the toll free helpline 0508 4 83224 or email teachersretire@mercer.com.



teachersretirement
SAVINGS SCHEME

...for the teacher

TEACHERS RETIREMENT SAVINGS SCHEME – YOUR SCHEME

Specially designed for New Zealand's teachers and principals

Over 11,200 teachers and principals in state and state-integrated schools have already joined the Teachers' Scheme, now managed by Mercer Human Resource Consulting.

Here are five good reasons why they've chosen to invest their \$56 million in retirement savings in the Teachers' Scheme:

- Track record
- Expertise
- Trustworthy with no hidden costs or agenda
- Independent
- Global strength and local knowledge

11,200 teachers and principals can't be wrong! So don't lose your opportunity! It's never too late or early to start saving for your retirement. Take action today and take the first steps to securing a more comfortable retirement.

- Call the toll free helpline 0508 4 TEACHERSRETIRE (0508 4 83224)
- Visit our website www.teachersretire.org.nz

MERCER
Human Resource Consulting