

## REFLECTION

### The end is where we start from

*Tony Ryan, PBA FM, Salisbury SA*

People working in Adult Community Education really do deserve much wider acknowledgement for the great work being done in this sector around South Australia. For me, it has been a real privilege to be part of this sector over many years, and to be able to see, reflect on and broadcast some of your great, but so often unrecognized, stories and achievements.

Therefore, after some 300 weekly Learning Works broadcasts, it is with more than a little sadness that I am working to finalise Learning Works by 30 June. In the more than six years of the life of this unique weekly half hour radio program through PBA FM, *adult community education, lifelong learning, literacy and numeracy, neighbourhood houses and community centres, pathways, returning to learning, RPL and learning journeys* have all been regular topics in Learning Works.

In addition to over 350 online podcasts in areas such as social history, health wellbeing and relationships (a COAG priority), film and book reviews, and legal studies, there are now some 250 ACE-related podcasts online – [www.learningworksradio.com/contents.htm](http://www.learningworksradio.com/contents.htm) This site will remain available, thanks to the tireless work of the Learning Works Web Manager Barb Campion in Canberra.

Twenty three separate CDs have been distributed to 20 community radio stations around SA, and several CDs given to everyone present at the annual launches of Adult Learners Week. I have also had the privilege of being MC for ACE Unit events and Adult Learners Week dinners, and membership of state and national Adult Learners Week committees.

Learning Works has gained several media awards, made possible by the great contributions by many people who have willingly contributed their expertise in interviews. Well over 65% of the contributors to the ACE-related items have had their first experience of a recorded radio interview – some good but gentle basic media training for many people in the Adult Community Education sector.

Learning Works would not have been possible without financial and other support. PBA FM acknowledges the assistance of the SA Government - the ACE and Community Partnerships Unit of DFEEST has part-funded the Learning Works project over the past three years.

I also acknowledge additional funding or support from Adult Learning Australia, SA Dept of Families and Communities, Australian Council for Adult Literacy, Australian Society of Archivists, Community Centres SA, Australian College of Educators, WEA, Aged Rights Advocacy Service, and the Office of the Commissioner for Victims' Rights.

We particularly appreciate the funding support from the Law Foundation of South Australia, most recently for the production of The Law Spot.

In reflecting on transitions, I was reminded that my involvement with the Adult Community Education sector goes back to 1985 - 1991 when my substantive position with ABC Radio National was national Executive Producer, Adult Education Radio. And then to my ten years as Executive Producer Lifelong Learning with (5UV) Radio Adelaide at Adelaide University, and now six years of Learning Works with PBA FM .

Endings do indeed present us with a time for reflection. And I did find myself thinking back to the time recently when, driving alone from Sydney to Adelaide, I was able to stop off in the Riverina, and stand again in my first classroom, way back in 1958.

It was a seminal moment and a time to reflect on a career encompassing teaching, broadcasting and much else, through to my other current “encore” career, that of Archivist for the Australian College of Educators. Beginning my career in education in that classroom over fifty years ago, it would have been impossible to see where my career would take me.

*What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from. (T. S. Eliot)*

Well, after more than six years and 324 episodes, Learning Works is about to be archived into that great repository in space where all good radio programs are stored, to be discovered and enjoyed in some distant future time. A special word of thanks to Manager Denise Guest and to all the great people here at PBA FM . And to you dear listener - it's your local community radio station, with a long history of putting your community first, so, do stay tuned to PBA FM.

Producing Learning Works from 2005 to mid-2011 has marked for me a return to radio. How different is today's technology – for example online editing – from the reel to reel tape, sticky tape and razor blade editing of the 1960s. And what a great resource now exists for adult learners and community education, through linking broadcast media and the best of internet technology. It continues to be an interesting journey!

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