

GUEST EDITORIAL

The Ninth Annual Conference of the Australian Association of Special Education, held in Sydney from 29th August to 2nd September 1984, provided the 500 participants with a feast of information encompassing a wide range of topics with the theme "Initiatives in Special Education". In view of the fact that the conference was conducted during the school holidays and in the middle of one of Sydney's most protracted rail strikes the daily attendance at the conference was remarkable. It certainly showed that people will go to all sorts of lengths to ensure that they take the opportunity when it is available, to quench their thirst for further professional development and renewal.

The 1984 Conference brought together a number of keynote speakers of exceptional quality, so many in fact that the publication of all the papers presented is not possible in just one journal. It is, therefore, proposed that some will be featured in the current issue and others in a later issue in the A.A.S.E. Journal.

Both the address by the Federal Minister for Education, Senator Susan Ryan and the N.S.W. State Minister for Education, Mr. Rodney Cavalier M.P. have been included as a record of where these governments see special education initiatives developing in the future.

Professor Hayes' paper on the "Legal Rights and Wrongs of Special Education", whilst not a keynote address, is included because of its obvious value to all who are interested in advocacy for children with special needs. Also of common interest is the paper by Rev. Brian Briese on "initiatives in Religious Education for Handicapped Children, Adolescents and Adults".

Three papers from overseas keynote speakers are also included.

Mrs. Margaret Walker's paper, "The Makaton Vocabulary: From Britain to the Antipodes", traces the development of this project in a number of countries since its development in England by Mrs. Walker during the 1970's.

Professor Hill Walker in his paper "The Current Status of Classification, Assessment, Programming, and Service Delivery Issues Relating to Children with Externalising Behaviour Disorders in the School Setting" has provided some information concerning effective approaches to dealing with behaviour disordered children in school settings.

The paper by Professor Lee Wiederholt et al from the University of Texas at Austin is titled "Special Education Resource Program: A Perspective from the United States", provides readers with some critical views regarding resource programs in the U.S.A. whilst at the same time noting progress that has been made in the last decade.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the many speakers not listed here who also contributed so superbly to the success of the conference. There was much positive feedback after it was all over and I feel sure that participants generally enjoyed the stimulating and in some cases provocative sessions that have become traditional at all A.A.S.E. Conferences.

I hope to see many return for the 10th Annual Conference, to be held in Launceston, Tasmania from 4th-8th September, 1985, where it is hoped that keynote speakers will be Professor Peter Mittler from the University of Manchester and Professor James Ysseldyke from the University of Minnesota.

WARREN FAIRFAX,
Conference Convenor
and Guest Editor.

COMMENTS BY THE EDITOR

I would like to thank Warren Fairfax for his excellent work in preparing this journal. The collection of papers provides a representative reflection of the diversity of the Ninth Annual Conference of the Australian Association of Special Education, a conference so capably convened by Warren and organised and conducted by the N.S.W. Chapter of A.A.S.E.

JEFF BAILEY