

# Personalised Education Now

(Trading name for the Centre for Personalised Education. Charity number 1057442)

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## Newsletter - July 2005

Dear Member

We hope you have some plans for relaxation during this summer period. It is a time for us, at PEN, to both reflect on some of the events and achievements of the past months, as well as undertaking some future planning. During this period for renewal of membership, we have been delighted to read the personal notes enclosed with renewals. It is good to have this contact with members and to receive some feedback from them. As you already know, we welcome both feedback on the activities of the organisation, and contributions to the Journal and Newsletter.

### **Book Launch: *Finding Voices Making Choices...Creativity for Social Change* on 21st March at the New Art Gallery, Walsall**

This event proved to be an uplifting occasion – we were treated to splendid presentations by the 6 speakers on the values and practice of the Community Arts Team in Walsall which (not surprisingly) upheld the values of personalised learning that underpin the work of *Personalised Education Now*. Peter remarked at the time, “*This could have been a PEN Learning Exchange!*” All those attending also enjoyed a free lunch provide by the Community Arts Team.

### **Learning Exchange at Burleigh Community College on 17th April**

The focus was on one of the issues that PEN needs to address ie. *A Personalised Learning Practitioner Development Scheme*. Following the discussion the Trustees have gone ahead with the scheme and details will appear on the new redesigned website in late Summer. At that point feedback from members is welcomed. The *Learning Exchange*, yet again, provided a supportive environment for members to discuss concerns and issues.

### **Future Conference at Toddington on Saturday and Sunday 15th and 16th October 2005**

The next *Learning Exchange* will take the form of an overnight, residential conference on 15th/16th October at the *Planned Environment Therapy Trust Conference Centre*, Toddington, Gloucestershire. Although the conference will begin **at 10.30 with drinks on Saturday 15th October** and end **at lunchtime on Sunday 16th October**, some members may prefer to travel each day, or just come for the day on Saturday, or Sunday morning. This is what some members elected to do last year. The **main themes** for the conference are:

- Saturday 15th - *The Importance of Play in Personalised Learning*
- Sunday 16th – *Devising a Personalised Learning Programme from ‘Learning Episodes’*

Josh Gifford and Linda Fryer will provide a stimulus to stimulate discussion on the theme of *Play* which will encompass ‘play as exploration, play as research, play as work, play as relaxation’. Roland Meighan will develop the ideas of his article on *Devising a Personalised Learning Programme* (see the Journal of *Personalised Education Now* No.2).

We decided to return to this conference centre in Toddington after the conferences held there in 2003 and 2004 as it is an extremely attractive, comfortable, friendly venue. Accommodation is in twin-bedded rooms with adjacent bathrooms. We are indebted to the *Potential Trust* who are again supporting this event with a grant, as is the *Centre for Personalised Education*. As the result of these grants there will be substantial assistance for members towards the costs of this conference, which is **free to members**. For any further information please contact me (Janet) at the usual address, or, if you know you would like to participate, return, the enclosed green form by 1st September 2005.

Last year's conference at Toddington was extremely successful, enjoyable and productive. Details of this are now recorded in the splendid article by Linda Fryer and Carl Wilson in the PEN Journal No.2.

### **Home Education Fair in Notting Hill, London – Saturday 17th September**

Details of the above Home Education Fair are to be found on the enclosed leaflet.

### **Developing a DVD on *Personalised Learning***

The Trustees are at present engaged in applying for funding to produce a DVD on this theme in order to present the principles and values of personalised learning with tangible examples, in another accessible media.

### **Support from the TES (Times Educational Supplement)**

Recently two very supportive reviews of books reflecting appeared in the TES. The first on 27th May was on Roland's *Comparing Learning Systems: the good, the ugly and the counter-productive*. Written by Gerald Haigh this review was very sympathetic to the ideas developed, and, in fact, the book was featured as the TES 'Book of the Week'! Whole page coverage with a pretty good photograph, but also the suggestion that this was to be Roland's final book (a fact he says to be correct, although he does have updates in mind) has sparked a number of cries of '*don't retire Roland*'. I think we shall find his name on many articles to come!

The second review on 1st July was the first research report on home-based education commissioned by *The Centre for Personalised Education*. Written by Mike Fortune-Wood, *The Face of Home-based Education*, was also sympathetically reviewed by Gerald Haigh.

### **New Website for Personalised Education Now**

Our new website is under construction and should be operational by the autumn. The intention is this becomes a substantial site giving us a comprehensive and more influential presence in the wider world. We will be able to ensure everyone is continuously updated with what is going on within PEN, what is happening in our affiliated organisations whilst archiving our journals, newsletters, articles, research and so on. It will mean that more people will have access to the work, ideas and materials. It will also permit those of you who wish to have another canvas for your writing to publish to the website in addition to the journals and other opportunities.

### **HESFES**

In May Roland, Janet, Peter and Mike all attended HESFES at Charnmouth, Dorset. It was a marvellous event and once again emphasized the contribution home-based educators and educated make to our lives and communities and how much we need to learn from them. Mike launched *The Face of Home Based Education* during HESFES.

### **Futures and Education Research – NERF and the Tomorrow**

Peter represented PEN in a consultation concerning futures and education research which the Tomorrow Project are undertaking with the National Education Research Forum (NERF). The project involves a series of consultations pertaining to the implications for education research of a set of major trends affecting the future of people's lives.

### **William Booth Infant School Nottingham**

Peter, Roland and Janet visited the William Booth Infant School in Nottingham during May to provide support and encouragement for the way staff are transforming the learning and teaching. It was an uplifting visit showing just what can be done by those brave enough to stand by principles. Such schools will be the basis for recycling our current schooling system into a personalised educational landscape.