

Vale Anne Bishop

November 5, 1934 – July 20, 2019

Anne Pringle and Mim Davidson pay tribute to Anne Bishop, a former President of LDA who was a strong supporter of LDA's role in the provision of support for children with learning difficulties.

Anne Bishop joined LDA in the early 1970s, at the time that it was first established as the *Diagnostic and Remedial Teachers' Association of Victoria* (DRTAV), and was the President of the Association from 1976 to 1979 and again from 1989 to 1990. She was particularly interested in the provision of support to students with learning difficulties by trained specialist teachers, and instrumental in the establishment and running of the LDA referral service, which was set up to ensure that children from all schools had access to a trained specialist teacher in a school or practising privately.

As a trained occupational therapist Anne began her working career with child-psychiatrist Dr Brenda Ridley, who proposed that she enrol in a teacher training course. She contacted Chris Davidson, one of the founding members of LDA, early in 1971. Both she and Chris had attended Winton Junior School in Ballarat. Chris suggested to Anne that she enrol in the *Diagnostic Testing and Remedial Teaching* course founded by Fred Schonell, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland. Prior to his appointment in Australia Fred Schonell had published his book *Backwardness in the Basic Subjects* in the UK, together with his wife Eleanor, a teacher involved with

supporting the educational needs of polio victims, many of whom had missed out on schooling in their early years. Further publications followed.

The University of Queensland course was established to give experienced registered teachers, as well as other child focussed professionals, greater understanding of the educational needs of children with learning difficulties. It attracted experienced professionals working in the area of leaning difficulties from all states of Australia and overseas, including many of the founding members of DRTAV.

Anne successfully applied the knowledge gained in this course in her private practice as an occupational therapist and remedial teacher in South Yarra, a suburb of Melbourne, and was welcomed as a member of DRTAV of Victoria.

The *Diagnostic and Remedial Teachers Association of Victoria*, established in 1965, was initially formed of graduates from the University of Queensland course, many of whom were employed at private schools. Later, after the closure of the Queensland University course, specialist trained graduates from local courses, working in state and private special schools, were accepted in the association. This widened the scope of input into the association, which moved on to become the Australian Association of Remedial Educators (AREA), then the Australian Association of Resource Educators (also AREA) and finally Learning Difficulties Australia (LDA). Over this period the association grew in membership and its activities were extended to include the publication of a quarterly Journal as well as a regular Bulletin, and the provision of professional development for its members, including the organisation of a number of national conferences.

Anne included practical knowledge of horticulture from her studies at the Burnley Horticultural College Victoria in her teaching, and successfully gave her pupils an insight into the development of plants as well as the ability to observe the change in seasons, and possibly also the ability to read botanical names,

which can be challenging to good and poor readers alike.

Anne and her Labrador and Red Setter dogs always welcomed clients, having travelled from near and far, at their appointed times. She was willing to discuss her observation of a child's needs with schools and suggest practical intervention to compliment teaching techniques.

Anne kept in touch with the original foundation group who established the *Diagnostic and Remedial Teachers' Association of Victoria*. She fought an incurable lung condition in her later life, which reduced her ability to carry on her practice. Her extended family, partner of many years, and firm friends, supported her during this time.

Anne expressed a wish to have her Celebration of Life in a garden and Burnley Horticultural College happily agreed to have it in their beautiful setting.

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Learning Difficulties Australia began life some 40 years ago when a small group of remedial teachers in Melbourne – mostly employed in independent schools – began meeting for informal discussions over coffee...

Many of these teachers had undertaken the certificate course in remedial education at the Schonell Special Education Centre at the University of Queensland.

Thus was born the Diagnostic and Remedial Teachers Association of Victoria, its broad aim to foster a professional image of teachers who worked with students with learning difficulties through a range of activities, including a consultancy referral service, lobbying of funding bodies, professional development and publications.

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