



UNESCO has designated 8 September as International Literacy Day. The aim of International Literacy Day is to raise awareness throughout the world and many international organisations arrange events to coincide with this date.

\* Since 1967, International Literacy Day has been celebrated as the focus of learning festivals, to recognise that the basic learning needs of all people of all ages should be met in each and every country, both developing and developed. In 2000, the event was expanded to become International Adult Learners' Week in order to provide a link between individual national adult learners' weeks, to promote the sharing of and learning from the experiences of other countries, and to amplify the co-operation between agencies that work to promote adult learning at an international level.

Adult learner's weeks have been held in countries as far and wide as Australia, Bosnia, Botswana, Czech Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Ghana, Hong Kong, Iran, Jamaica, Japan, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Palestine, the Philippines, Russia, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland and Zambia. An international forum has been set up (hosted by Adult Learning Australia) for national coordinators and others to share their ideas and experiences and nurture the development of the week as a truly international event. Subscribers will receive all messages sent and, likewise, any messages of their own will be forwarded to all other subscribers. To join, send an email leaving the subject line blank and with just the word subscribe in the message to [alw-international-list-request@ala.asn.au](mailto:alw-international-list-request@ala.asn.au) or see <http://alwala.asn.au/>

See also the UNESCO website at [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) for current information on events and awards for successful initiatives.

\* Extract courtesy of the National Literacy Trust website, [www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk)



The Democracy, Disability & Society Group launched a website on 7 July 2003 for training taxi drivers on disability awareness.

DDSG are a group of disabled and non-disabled people who meet and campaign to try and break down the barriers which prevent disabled people's inclusion in society. The group are supported by the Thistle Foundation and Community Education.

Last year the group felt that one of the main barriers was the lack of accessible public transport, resulting in a lot of disabled people relying heavily on taxis to get around. They decided that they wanted to do something about the problems they faced when using taxis. One of these problems was the lack of training for taxi drivers on disability equality and also a lack of knowledge of disabled people's needs when using taxis.

And so (with some extra funding from the Royal Mail) the group decided to write a training pack for taxi drivers which could be published on the web and distributed to all local authorities in Scotland.

At the start of the project the group wrote to all local authorities in Scotland, asking questions about training for taxi drivers and telling them about the website. This generated interest in the website project and told us that only 6 out of 32 authorities provided training.

The process of writing the pack involved many literacy activities, including writing letters, reading responses, reading other training packs, talking and listening to people and writing the content of the training pack. There were a lot of decisions to be made about the content of the pack related to the layout, structure, tone and language. In addition to this the group worked closely with a variety of people, including taxi drivers, a web designer, a cartoonist, a disability consultant and video editors.

The result of the group's hard work and sheer determination is an excellent and innovative piece of work. I would like to invite you all to have a look at the website at [www.ddsg.org.uk/taxi/](http://www.ddsg.org.uk/taxi/)



Hello everyone, I've recently joined CLAN as Jobcentre Plus project worker. One of the main tasks for me will be to find out if there are possible links between the organisations. I'll be talking to the staff at Jobcentre Plus and also the customers, trying to find out from staff what their experiences are in relation to literacy and numeracy and what referral systems they have in place at the moment. I'll also be talking to customers to find out if there is demand for provision and if there is, identifying ways to support this.

If you have any experiences in this area, it would be great to hear from you. Email: [lorraine@clanedinburgh.org](mailto:lorraine@clanedinburgh.org)



## Cyberbeans

Cityconnect, part of Edinburgh Learning, is a groovy organisation that does things differently. We run taster sessions in the use of computers and the Internet in venues all over the city, from community centres to shopping malls and pubs. We have been nominated for a BECTA Practice Award and our portal [www.myEdinburgh.org](http://www.myEdinburgh.org) has been nominated for an International Telecities Award. Cityconnect are also part of the European Sill\_Net Learning cities network.

Our staff are called 'Cityconnectors', and in the year January 2002 to January 2003, ran 889 computer and Internet taster sessions, as well as 615 workshops in 97 different venues throughout Edinburgh. Of the 4006 people attending these sessions around 87% or 3485 were new learners<sup>1</sup> and 57% did not have access to an Internet connected or networked computer in their home or place of work. It is envisaged that the number of sessions offered to citizens will increase as staff and volunteers in community organisations, who have been trained in the last year by Cityconnect, begin offering taster sessions in their own venues, supported by the Cityconnectors.

Key to the success of these taster sessions is ensuring that all participants get an experience which is relevant and exciting and that all are able to take appropriate 'next steps'. The methodology used in the taster sessions has proved to be extremely successful, with little or no work on traditional computer applications, but rather an emphasis on individualised learning, using multimedia and the Internet to quickly illustrate what ICTs can do for each individual. Providing every participant with a 'hook' encourages new learners to carry on using the Internet, either in a local venue or in a learning organisation.

<sup>1</sup>The definition currently being used is someone who has not taken part in a formal learning opportunity in the previous two years.



Tel: 0131 557 9051  
Email: [pete@cityconnect.org.uk](mailto:pete@cityconnect.org.uk)  
Web: [www.cityconnect.org.uk](http://www.cityconnect.org.uk)



PETITE MCDUGALL



THE GOTIPUA DANCERS

**Edinburgh Mela** will take place on Friday 29, Saturday 30 & Sunday 31 August at Pilgrim Park, off Leith Walk.

It is Scotland's biggest intercultural festival and attracted around 30,000 people last year. Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian communities in Edinburgh brought this family celebration of peace and friendship to Edinburgh nine years ago. It is a world festival with a distinct south Asian feel - a vibrant, colourful, collaborative display of international and local talent, with music, dance, art, craft, fashion, food, the Mela Bazaar, sports and children's activities.

The Libraries have kindly asked CLAN Edinburgh to share a stall at the Mela. If anyone is interested in helping out on the CLAN stall on Sunday 31 August, please contact Fiona Holmes on 0131 270 6073 or email [fiona@clanedinburgh.org](mailto:fiona@clanedinburgh.org)

More information at [www.edinburgh-mela.co.uk](http://www.edinburgh-mela.co.uk) or call 0131 557 1400.

## Web Resources

[www.moneymatterstome.co.uk](http://www.moneymatterstome.co.uk)

NIACE, the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education in England and Wales, has produced a new website aimed at helping adult learners deal with money. It is especially aimed at adults who are aged between 25 and 50 with a particular emphasis on women and families.

The Workshop section provides interactive simulations including an ATM with cash withdrawal facilities and the Money Matters area explains 'where money comes from' and 'where money goes'.

**PROS:** The resource can be used in a personal as well as in an educational environment and provides a large degree of choice to motivate users while supporting and guiding them through the content.

**CONS:** I can't think of any but I'd be happy to be contradicted by anyone who thinks otherwise.

## Listening to Learners

Learning Connections has recently advertised a series of seminars for adult literacies practitioners. In addition to these, CLAN will be organising some for Edinburgh folk, starting with 'Listening to Learners' on Thursday 11 September.

The report 'Listening to Learners: Consultation with Learners about Adult Literacy Education in Scotland'<sup>1</sup> was published by the Scottish Executive in 2001. Dr Juliet Merrifield, who was commissioned to carry out the research, will look at the report's key findings in the week of International Literacy Day and highlight the bigger issues, for example:

- what do learners want to be involved in?
- how do we encourage learners to be more actively involved in the design and evaluation of provision?
- the value of learner led forums?

There will be opportunities for discussion.

Juliet Merrifield is Principal of the Friends Centre, an independent adult education centre in Brighton. She has worked in adult education for the past 25 years, both in the USA and England. Publications include research and policy analysis relating to adult education on both sides of the Atlantic.

Folk who are interested in adult literacies learning are welcome to attend this free seminar which will take place on Thursday 11 September at New Dalry House, Orwell Place from 1.30 - 4pm.

Please let [mags@clanedinburgh.org](mailto:mags@clanedinburgh.org) know if you're planning to attend.

<sup>1</sup>The report can be downloaded from [www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/lifolong/alltl-00.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/lifolong/alltl-00.asp)

<sup>2</sup>Juliet refers to the Scottish context and learner forums in a chapter in a new book published by NIACE: 'Adult Learning, citizenship and community voices: Exploring and learning from community-based practice'.

## More Bytes

Contributions for the next issue should reach the editor by **Monday 1 September**.

Fiona Holmes, CLAN Edinburgh  
1 - 3 Canon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5HE

Tel: 0131 270 6073  
Fax: 0131 270 6074  
Email: [fiona@clanedinburgh.org](mailto:fiona@clanedinburgh.org)

Beans can be accessed online from [www.clanedinburgh.org](http://www.clanedinburgh.org)