



History Teachers' Association of Australia
National Conference 2006
Theme : "Pushing Boundaries"

Media Alert

19 September 2006

HISTORY TEACHERS 'PUSH THE BOUNDARIES'

History teachers from across Australia will come together for the History Teachers' of Australia (HTAA) 2006 National Conference at The University of Notre Dame Australia's Fremantle Campus from October 5 – 8.

Once every six years, teachers of History in WA schools have the opportunity to join their peers at the National Conference when it is hosted by the History Teachers' Association of WA. (HTAWA).

The theme of the conference, 'Pushing Boundaries', was generated in June 2005. It matched the mood of the teaching of history then and has become even more apt as the events of the past 12 months have unfolded.

"It is our great good fortune that this conference coincides with one of the most significant change points in our discipline", according to Helen Wills-Johnson, Convenor of the Conference. "History teaching is at the crossroads. As well as the complexities of OBE and the impact it will have on the viability of History as a subject in the upper school, teachers of History are caught in the crossfire between Federal and State politicians seeking to gain control of the History curriculum. At stake are both the content of History courses and funding for WA schools, not to mention the aspirations of students looking towards higher education."

The Conference is an eclectic mix of best teaching practice, cutting edge academic theory, classroom-friendly resources and integrates the Mapping Australia Project which explores the 400 year old Dutch relationship with Australia.

International Maritime History expert, Professor Femme Gaastra from Leiden University will explore The Legacy of the Dutch East India Company as the world's first global organization; respected WA historian Dr Cathie Clement will focus on assertions that non-indigenous people discovered and/or occupied parts of the Australian continent prior to 1606 and Professor John Wood Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Edith Cowan University will direct a hypothetical on who DID put Australia on the map. A panel of prominent media representatives will discuss their role as the writers of the first draft of history.

The Petrov Affair: a nation in fear, by Margaret Fleming from Old Parliament House, links contemporary issues of fear and security with Australia's reaction to the threat of communism; two popular workshops, run by Dr Mark Edele and Associate Professor Charlie Fox from UWA, showcase their latest research in diverse fields - Russian history and the Swinging Sixties – when the young declared war; while Fiona Hooton will present PictureAustralia's latest photographic collections in a workshop designed to help teachers inspire their students' confidence in critical history skills - observation and analysis.

Edith Cowan University lecturer, Dr Bill Leadbetter will question whether it is time to take History out of social education and teach it on its own; Brian Rogers from the Department of Education and Training, will ask teachers for their input on what the history content should be; while Joe Alexander, from Queensland will to present his research results on letting students decide content for themselves and Jacqueline Hollingworth will explore ways of encouraging boys to overcome their resistance to learning History.

Fresh from the History Summit in Canberra, with her proposals in place will be the Honourable Ms Julie Bishop, Minister for Education, Science and Training, who will open the Conference on Friday October 6.

The HTAA 2006 National Conference is sponsored by Houghton's Wines, The University of Notre Dame Australia, the Department of Education and Training, EnhanceTV, PictureAustralia, the National Trust of Australia (WA), Woolridges A&M and the History Teachers' Network of Australia.

The lecture by Professor Femme Gaastra will be made possible by the courtesy of both the ARC Network for Early European Research and the Fred Alexander Fellowship Fund at UWA.

The major sponsor is the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

For more information, please visit the HTAA website at www.historyteacher.org.au and go to HTAA Conference Program

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