

PEDALS OUTLINES ICPA HISTORY



The suggestion that I write something to mark the publication of Issue no 150 sent me browsing through my copies of Pedals, of which I have an almost complete set. This brought home to me the important role Pedals has played in the life of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association since it was introduced in 1981.

The early issues of Pedals were published, and sent to all members, long before the days of emails and the internet so they were used to disseminate much material and information that today can be delivered to the members via modern technology as soon as it is received by Federal and State Secretaries. They are filled with detailed Conference and Delegation reports, updates on the progress being made in the implementation of policies and motions passed at Conferences as well as much other information of importance to members.

Rereading the issues published during the time I was a member of Queensland and Federal Councils I was reminded of much I had long forgotten. For example I was amazed to read in my President's report to the 1987 Federal Conference that since the 1986 Conference I had been to Canberra 15 times as well as attending some State Conferences and travelling to other parts of the country as a member of the Commonwealth Schools Commission which was preparing a report on Schooling in Rural Australia.

The excellent record of so much of ICPA's history contained in Pedals nos 1 – 149 also reminded me of how quickly some goals were achieved but also how long some issues were pursued before being ultimately successful. The introduction of the Assistance to Isolated Children Scheme and the major changes that have made all state Distance Education systems so effective today were among those achieved quite quickly but others, such as the ability to receive allowances when bypassing a school considered inappropriate for a student's needs, were brought to Conferences and pursued by Councils for more than twenty years before being accepted by government and implemented.

That they were ultimately successful is due to the thoroughness of the research and consultation ICPA has always undertaken, in pursuit of goals that do not ask for anything more than what is available to other Australians.

It is also for this reason that ICPA has always been held in high regard and has often been asked to contribute to

discussions on matters of importance to rural and remote communities. Pedals has been there recording these involvements from the launching of the first communication satellite AUSSAT to the NBN, trials for the use of satellites for delivering distance education and other technology as it became available.

In later years as methods of communication with members changed many other topics of interest to members were included. Access to universities, careers, teacher training, pastoral care in boarding schools and hostels – all these issues and many others have been discussed. There are also wonderful stories from members as well as poetry from adults and children, excellent photographs and other colourful illustrations. It is always an interesting and informative read. Congratulations are due to all the editors and publishers who have maintained such a high standard for so long. May Pedals continue to be a valuable means of uniting our members across the country for years to come.

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