

TEACH Bulletin

Thorough Education Achieved in a Caring Home

Number 64

October 2002

Self-Taught Scientist NZ's Foremost Expert

It is astounding to realise that New Zealand's foremost authority on resident dinosaurs never formally studied at tertiary level.

Joan Wiffen earned an honorary doctorate from Massey University in 1994. But Dr Wiffen was already nationally known as "the dinosaur lady".

It was a combination of some old-fashioned attributes clearly possessed by Dr Wiffen, and consistently applied, which drove her to the standard of academic, field-work and laboratory excellence which Massey was so happy to recognise. Curiosity, hard work, persistence, careful observations plus continuing study and research enabled Joan Wiffen to make New Zealand's first dinosaur discovery in 1972. Her efforts demonstrate how a home-based education is particularly well-placed to allow students to follow their passions to whatever depth of knowledge and understanding they desire.

Before she and her late husband, Pont, made the discovery, palaeontologists did not know if there had ever been dinosaurs in New Zealand. Her contribution to science and New Zealand's natural heritage is invaluable. Dr Wiffen, the self-taught scientist, now regularly travels to lecture alongside the world's palaeontology professionals.

Dr Wiffen first became interested in fossils in the 1960s when she joined a rock and mineral club, becoming a swift hand at unearthing gemstones and polishing them for attractive ornaments and key rings. "It was quite trendy to study

rocks back then, and I suddenly became aware of the significance of fossils, with each specimen representing some form of ancient life."

The Wiffens' knowledge grew with their fossil collection, and they soon noticed a difference in several specimens among the more obvious fossils of marine reptiles. However, the Wiffens' had to wait several years before their finds were formally identified as dinosaur remains, due to the rarity of fossil specialists in New Zealand. Finally a trip to an

Australian museum confirmed Dr Wiffen's instincts when she matched her unidentified fossils (toe bones and vertebrae) to certified dinosaur remains.

Her finds have included three species of carnivore, three species of herbivore and a flying dinosaur species. These have all come from the Mangahouanga countryside in western Hawke's Bay, still the only place in New Zealand where dinosaur bones have been found.

In the early days the Wiffens' fossil hunts were a family affair with help from two children and, later, five grandchildren. Between them, thousands of rocks were hauled from rivers and carried back to the tent-site for further examination.

(Continued on page 2: Dinosaur)

I Know I Did the Right Thing

(The Editor received this letter on the 14th of October and just had to share it with *TEACH* readers. Home education is best!)

I was speaking with you recently about homeschooling my children Devon (6) and Tarn (5). I thought you may be interested to know I got the exemption OK (thanks for your help), and we have been homeschooling for a week now. I am just so happy, and I know I did the right thing taking my kids out of school. They are happy too.

On Monday I said to Devon, "Let's do some Maths," and she cried and cried...she is very stressed about Maths! She cried Tuesday and Wednesday too. Thursday she didn't cry, and on Friday she said to me, "Mum,

let's do some Maths!!!" She has always found numbers difficult, but the one-on-one attention did wonders!

I can't believe how much happier our household is. No rushing anywhere, the kids like each other again and they still want to talk to me at 4pm (when they are normally so tired and grouchy). Initially I was very concerned about the TV...I thought they would want to be turning it on every time my back was turned. In reality it's been the opposite...now that they are friends again, all they want to do is play with each other! I don't think it's been on more than twice in the last eight days. Every day they surprise me! I just love it!

Fiona Hishon
Te Anau

(Continued from page 1: *Dinosaur*)

"After a while my husband and I bought a rock-saw, which made the job a lot easier, although I was only too delighted to carry the rocks back to camp. We also taught ourselves how to take fossil castings from books," Dr Wiffen says.

Just like the dinosaur bones themselves, Dr Wiffen has demonstrated that an education to a rarefied specialist level is just sitting there, waiting for anyone with the motivation and willingness to dig for it. Family outings can take on a new perspective, specialist knowledge and skills are available through recreational clubs as well as from universities, and libraries are mostly free. Recognition for expertise and specialist knowledge does not always require academic qualifications.

And Dr Wiffen is still fossicking... even at age 80! She plans to be there again this summer.

(From "Dinosaur Lady Keeps Digging", *Massey News*, 14 October 2002, <http://masseynews.massey.ac.nz/2002/masseynews/oct/oct7/stories/dinosaur.html>)

Australian Academic Slams NCEA

A report released by the Education Forum on 21 October 2002 and written by Dr Kevin Donnelly, executive director of Melbourne-based Education Strategies, gave the NZ education system a real roasting. The paper, *A Review of New Zealand's School Curriculum: An International Perspective*, compares New Zealand's curriculum against international "best practice".

Dr Donnelly argues that the New Zealand curriculum has failed to achieve the Ministry's stated goal of raising the achievement levels of all students and ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is of the highest international standard. "While the intention has been to improve standards, there is no readily identifiable evidence that this has occurred," he said.

"The New Zealand model embodies a 'student-centred', 'outcomes-based' approach which has since been largely abandoned by equivalent education systems, such as those in Australia and the United States, in favour of a 'standards approach'," said Dr Donnelly. Apparently New Zealand's curriculum represents a diminished view of what students should learn. The English framework, for example, fails to properly teach the "basics" such as grammar and a phonics approach to reading. "One only needs to look at the number of remedial English and maths courses in New Zealand tertiary institutions to understand how low standards have fallen," he said.¹

Dr Donnelly predicts that if changes are not made, it will not only "adversely affect New Zealand's ability to survive in an increasingly competitive global environ-

ment, but worse, generations of students will be forced to complete an educational experience impoverished by a curriculum that is both outdated and seriously flawed."²

His report also took the gloss off the high international rankings achieved by New Zealand 15-year-olds in a survey released at the end of last year where the kiwi students ranked third in literacy and maths, and sixth in science – well above averages for other OECD countries. This good showing was probably because four countries that consistently outperformed New Zealand – Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and the Netherlands – were not included in the survey!³

Is Dr Donnelly qualified to comment? He was a former secondary school English teacher³ and is now executive director of Education Strategies based in Melbourne. His doctoral thesis deals with developments in school curriculum over the last 25 years both in Australia and overseas. He has published over 180 articles in the daily media and professional journals, writes regularly for the Melbourne daily newspaper, *Herald Sun*, and often speaks on radio.¹ In addition, he was commissioned to do the report by the Education Forum, a crowd set up 10 years ago by Business Roundtable executive director Roger Kerr and King's College principal John Taylor to contribute to debate on education policy.³

The Ministry of Education was not to be drawn into this debate, however, for it simply dismissed Dr Donnelly's report. Senior policy analyst Stephen Benson said Education Forum reports were not supported by other international reports commissioned by the Ministry.³ It would appear some significance is attached to who actually commissions the reports, a variation on the proverb, "He who pays the piper calls the tune" perhaps.

In any case, home educators and others who know what a real education is will not be phased by such dire warnings as offered by Dr Donnelly. If the state system continues to disintegrate, some private schools, private tutors and home

(Continued on page 3: *NCEA*)

TEACH Bulletin

is a monthly publication of the Home Education Foundation, and is concerned with those things which may impact on home educators. Articles will deal with political developments, statist and professional trends, correspondence with educationalists, and other items of general interest to home educators. Information herein is not to be construed as legal advice. Opinions expressed in TEACH Bulletin are those of the writer and should not be assumed to reflect those of the Home Education Foundation Trustees or Board of Reference Members.

TEACH Bulletin is available for a subscription of \$16 per year for 11 issues (none in December) or two years for \$30.

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Hear, my son, your father's instruction,
and reject not your mother's teaching.
— Proverbs 1:8

Trading Post



(Items for Trading Post, both "Wanted" and "For Sale" are included free of charge to genuine home educators. The service is not intended for commercial enterprises.)

(Continued from page 2: *NCEA*)

educators will all notice an increased interest in their services. After all, the supply of education (unlike the supply of seats in schools) is unlimited, nor does its supply decrease as more people partake of it. As most home educators will testify, a good education is virtually free to anyone willing to do the work and study to get it for themselves.

Notes:

1. Education Forum Media Release, 18 October 2002, "Report Says New Zealand's School Curriculum Obsolete", http://www.educationforum.org.nz/documents/mediareleases/school_curriculum_obsolete.htm
2. "NZ school curriculum called outdated by world standards", *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 21 October 2002, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/inl/print/0,1478,2086949a6003,00.html>
3. "Report pans NZ education system", *The Press*, 22 October 2002, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/inl/print/0,1478,2087394a6530,00.html>

NCEA Working

An interim research report with the intriguing title of "From Cabbages to Kings" has been released by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER). The research is looking at how Level 1 of the NCEA has worked for year 11 students in six representative cabbage patch...I mean, schools.

The report shows students in the case study schools:

- have access to a wider range of subject courses;
- are offered an increased number

of alternatives within compulsory subjects to better meet their individual learning needs;

- are encouraged to value learning and lift achievement levels.

"An interesting factor was that NCEA was stretching the most able students as well as providing qualifications for those who previously got none," said Minister of Education Trevor Mallard. Clearly this does not happen when all students are assessed on the same material, as in the traditional students-on-the-conveyor-belt factory model of schooling. Alternative subjects that better meet individual learning needs, as mentioned above, would challenge bright children and give some successes to those who rarely experience any. Happily schools are discovering more of the secrets of home education: tailoring the curriculum to the student's abilities, learning styles and interests.

The full report "From Cabbages to Kings" can be viewed in Adobe PDF at www.nzcer.org.nz/pdfs/11691.pdf or contact: Astrid Smeele (NZCER press secretary) ph. (04) 471-9080.

(From NZQA, "Research Shows NCEA Is Working for Students," 10 October 2002, <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/news/resncea.shtml>)

NZVCC Accepts NCEA

"New Zealand universities have confirmed that they will accept results from a combination of NCEA level 2 and the transitional Sixth Form Certificate award," says acting CEO for NZQA Karen Van Rooyen.

Professor Roger Field, chair of the New Zealand Vice Chancellors Committee (NZVCC) entrance committee, said universities had worked closely with the NZQA to define university entrance requirements from NCEA level 3 credits

and address other entrance issues. "We are determined to create mechanisms that will not jeopardize the opportunities for suitable students to enter tertiary courses directly from year 12."

Professor Field said the NZVCC was supportive of the NCEA, that it would give them more information about the specific abilities of school leavers which would in turn assist in guiding students to appropriate programmes.

(From NZQA Release, "NZQA chief welcomes university endorsement of NCEA," 8 October 2002, <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/circulars/pressreleases/weluencea.html>)

Australia Accepts NCEA

All Australian universities have confirmed they will accept NCEA results once the new qualification for secondary school students replaces University Bursaries, according to NZ Qualifications Authority Chief Executive Karen Van Rooyen. "The NZQA belongs to an organisation called ACTAC, the Australian Conference of Tertiary Admission Centres. ACTAC has already agreed that level 3 NCEA results will count towards a student's tertiary entrance rank," she said.

Apparently there are very few such international agreements, so this one is crucial to any NZ students who want to do further study in Australia. According to Van Rooyen, one of the most overlooked strengths of NCEA is simply that it will be NZ's only school leaving qualification. And because New Zealand's education system is internationally respected and admired, and Bursary results have been accepted world wide, NCEA will be as well. Yeah, right.

(From NZQA "NCEA accepted by overseas universities," Sept 2002, http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/news/int_cred.shtml)

State Schools Pushing Values: But Whose?

Education Minister Trevor Mallard addressed the Values Summit on Monday 21 October. In his opening remarks he first acknowledged the “growing problems with truancy, suspensions, bullying and violence” then rhetorically asked, “Are we as a society brave enough to say no to our kids?” He did not elaborate or give examples on what it was we were to say “No” to, but did say many of us look the other way when it comes to behavioural expectations.

The Minister expressed his belief that all teachers modelled values – the good, the bad and the ugly (his words) – all the time. It is impossible for them to be “ethical bystanders” in schools, even should some people want them to be. One teacher expressed it this way: “I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom... As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal.”

And teachers will do both the positive *and* the negative *by the same action*. A story read in class about a girl living with her two mummies might be very supportive to a child actually living in such a situation, while possibly unsettling to one from a nuclear family. An art project to paint Easter eggs will fill some with excitement and anticipation of the holiday break approaching while offending others as too Christian and offending still others as too pagan. The sensitive son of a beef farmer, when asked to do a role in a play featuring vegetarians, may end up harbouring doubts about his own father’s ethical morality. The values portrayed at school, if they vary from those inculcated at home, can actually drive a wedge between a child and his or her parents.

Mr Mallard did point out the problematic nature of values:

whose values should be promoted and how? Yet he said the role of values in schools is assuming greater importance right around the world due to “increasing globalisation, environmental concerns and changing conceptions of citizenship...as a way to build a sense of connectedness.” Mr Mallard did not point out, however, that all these things are also heavily laden with value judgements and assumptions, thus adding to, not facilitating, the problematic nature of whose values should be promoted in state schools.

Apparently the person with values has a better “emotional intelligence (EQ)” (sic), “increasingly seen as a better predictor of success in academic achievement, employment, marriage and physical health.” Again, we don’t know which values are being assumed, but Mr Mallard referred to such a person as “well-rounded”, and that this well-roundedness will be the new criteria for judging prospective employees. “It is no longer just how smart we are, or what training and expertise we have, but how well we handle ourselves and others. This yardstick is increasingly being applied in choosing who will be hired and who will not, who will be let go and who will be retained, who passed over and who promoted.”

This “yardstick” of values is perhaps the one listed in the curriculum framework as “honesty, reliability, respect for others, respect for the law, tolerance (rangimārie), fairness, caring or compassion (aroha), non-sexism, and non-racism.” So it appears we have a state-mandated set of values which are currently being consciously inculcated by teachers, as well as those others (good, bad and ugly) which are being modelled by these same teachers whether they are aware of it or not. The Prime Minister herself called for schools to take a lead in reasserting social values at the last UNESCO national summit in 1998; the Ministry of Education’s stocktake project is saying values need to be taught across the curriculum; and Mr Mallard added that “schools and their communities must have the right to deter-

mine their own direction, to cut their own tracks” because, after all, “values are learned through each student’s experience of the total environment, rather than through direct instruction alone.”

Sounds like the Government has started with a basic list of values, which are left undefined; is encouraging schools and communities and children each to make up their own complementary values to add to the list; and then wanting schools to be aggressive about pushing some of these values. Sounds confusing. It is. Mr Mallard’s address ended by stating, “It is clear that we are grappling with a range of complex issues to which there are no easy answers.”

Schools have a habit of making everything complex. They are *artificially constructed* environments *carefully separated* from the real world and from other age groups, and sometimes from the other gender as well, where the children are taught a *politically mandated* curriculum and further *constrained by the impossible logistics* of political correctness among a class of 25 children from up to six or more language and cultural groups and the entire range of abilities and learning styles who must be herded through a set number of pages by a set time whether the children understand the material or not with an increasingly vocal and even abusive parental element at one end and those at the other extreme who appear to have totally abdicated.

Home educators have an easy answer to this complexity: let families determine their own values as families within communities. To forcibly separate children from their families and then immerse them into a melting pot of ill-defined values for six hours a day, five days a week seems counter to the curriculum framework’s listed values of respect, tolerance and fairness.

(From *The School Daily*, “Promoting Values Education in the Nation’s Schools and Homes,” 22 October 2002, <http://www.theschooldaily.com/articleView.asp?articlePK=16435>)

School Sexual Assaults: Serious Problem or Game Needing Rules?

After six girls, aged 11 to 13, complained about sexual assaults from a group of boys at their integrated school in Upper Hutt, "Zelda's" father said, "It has just been appalling. You don't expect this sort of thing to happen anywhere, let alone a school." He said 12-year-old "Zelda" was sexually assaulted in a classroom while a teacher was nearby. Another parent couldn't believe a teacher had not noticed her daughter being held down by a group of boys in a classroom. Something else is rather unbelievable: that these parents continued to send their daughters to the school even though the alleged offenders were still attending classes with them.

Such is the grip schools have on even concerned parents that they continue to toss their daughters into the worst of environments rather than miss out on even a day of "school". Even though at least one girl was having rape counselling, some parents said the whole incident was over-hyped by the media. One mother commented: "This sort of thing went on behind the bike-sheds in form two and three when I was at school. Children are coming to an age when they are exploring their sexuality, but in saying that, school is not the place to do it." Is this parent suggesting the worst part about these sexual assaults is not that they happened, but that they happened at school?

Police and sex offender counsellors say there has been a surge in the number of reported cases involving sexual abuse by children. Hamish Dixon, the manager of Wellington's Stop sexual offender treatment organisation, said there was an "awful lot of sexualisation" in the community, meaning in part that many children had easy access to all kinds of pornography. He said some pre-adolescent (children younger than 13) sexual offending could be very serious with penetration, intercourse, sodomy and threats of violence. Yet even this social worker declared that offenders had to be taught what constituted consent!

Dr Ian Lambie, a psychologist and psychology lecturer who released in July this year the results of a five year research programme of a group of 482 New Zealand adolescent sex offenders who have been through the rehabilitation programme run by SAFE, says, "Adolescents are committing quite serious and violent offences, and I think the public would be surprised to find they are offending in ways adults offend." Even so, Lambie reckons none of these young abusers has had too much formal sex education, but rather too little, claiming no one had ever talked to them about the emotional and social responsibilities that go with sex, let alone the basic issue of mutual consent.

Why the mixed message that sex play among school mates is an offence unless consensual? Indeed, at least one of the boy offenders in the Hutt Valley incident said it was all part of a game the girls were in on.

The sexualization of society affects not only the children, but obviously the parents and social workers and researchers as well. Consequently they don't know why referrals for treatment are growing, but all the experts agree a lot more goes unreported and that there will be more young offenders.

Figures from the Child Youth and Family Service identify 160 sexual offenders aged from 12 to 16 in the year to June last year, up from 117 the previous year, although not dissimilar to the figure for the year before that.

Lambie has no doubt that repeated exposure to pornography and violent video games changes people's perceptions, perhaps more so in young malleable minds. Commissioner for Children senior advocate Trish Grant said she had no doubt that there had been an increase in the amount of sexual offending by youths, adding that the amount of sexual violence in music videos, films and in computer games and its effect on children had to be questioned.

Nicola Atwool, senior lecturer in

community and family studies at Otago University, is surprised that children are apparently becoming sexualised at younger and younger ages. In her child psychotherapy work, she sees girls of 8 or 9 whom she considers "alarmingly aware" about sex. "The thing that worries me," she says, "is that it's a strong theme on television very early in the day."

At the end of the 1990s, CYFS senior psychologist Sue Lightfoot dedicated her master's thesis to discovering the key difference between children from problem homes who had been referred to the service for other reasons and those who were sexual abusers. All 20 of the abusers she studied had been introduced to sexually explicit material either at home or by their peers. "And I'm not talking about watching *Friends* on television," says Lightfoot, "but pornographic material." Significantly, she found the sexual abusers were no more likely to have been sexually abused themselves than those who had other problems.

And our sex-drenched society is taking down teachers as well as students in the schools. It is hardly any wonder when someone like School Trustees Association president Chris France says there are some "scary" statistics about pornography in schools. He said there was "more of this stuff than we should be willing to accept." John Thackray, a computer forensics expert, said every school computer he had checked and maintained had contained some form of internet pornography. "It is not only child pornography . . . it is distressing when we are finding that sort of material, but we are also finding bestiality, snuff-type material, violent sex and rapes," he told National Radio on July 17. Harvey McQueen, interim council director of the Teachers Council, the professional body for registered teachers, confirmed that in the year to July, eight secondary and primary teachers had been deregistered or were in the process of being deregistered after being sacked for accessing pornography at school. None of the cases involved criminal charges. However at least four teachers have been charged over pornography in the past three years.

Adding to the problem are huge, tax-payer funded organisations such as NZ Family Planning who praised French officials for legalizing the distribution of the morning-after pill in schools, and advocates the same for New Zealand. NZFP spokeswoman Dr Christine Roke says it seems a good way to increase teenagers' access to contraceptives. Like "Zelda's" father observed, "I really think that New Zealand's public needs to know what is going on at schools. They can't assume it's safe at school."

(Facts extracted from: *Dominion Post*, Surge in sexual abuse by children, 31 July 2002, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/inl/index/0,1008,1283095a10,FF.html>; *NZ Herald*, School sex claims get full police treatment, 3 August 2002, <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storyprint.cfm?storyID=2347661>; Young sexual offenders on the rise, 31 July 2002, http://oneneews.nz.com.com/oneneews_detail/0,1227,120700-1-7,00.html; *NZ Herald*, Suffer the little children, 3 August 2002, <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storyprint.cfm?storyID=2347630>; *Auckland Star Times*, Alleged sexual assaults labelled a game, 04 August 2002, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,2012105a11,00.html>; Pornography in schools a 'problem', 16 July 2002, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/inl/print/0,1103,1269357a10,FF.html>; *NZ Herald*, Principal accessed porn for 15 months, 17 July 2002, <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storyprint.cfm?storyID=2098077>; Worst porn found on school computers – expert, 17 July 2002, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/inl/print/0,1103,1269889a11,FF.html>)

Secondary Schools Are Violent Places

Nearly 500 students were suspended last year — for assaulting teachers! The secondary teachers' union, the PPTA, says the number of verbal and physical assaults is increasing and safety measures are urgently needed. Among those proposed are cellphones for teachers on duty or in distant classrooms and the use of buzzer alarms for dealing with angry parents and visitors at schools. Yes, parents are also becoming abusive. A common problem is parents ringing and abusing teachers over marks or other classroom incidents, and students and their families leaving abusive messages on teachers' home voicemail systems.¹

PPTA president Jen McCutcheon said schools and teachers were often

blamed for social failure. "[Cannabis use and violence] are not things that can be fixed by attending a course which seeks to change teachers' views on student behaviour. It is not teachers' perceptions that are the problem here; what we are facing are objectively observable, nationwide social problems that are neither caused by schools, nor will they be solved by them."²

Ms McCutcheon cannot so easily wash her hands of the problem. New Zealand's 125 years of compulsory, secular schooling has usurped several generations of parents of a huge proportion of their child rearing authority and responsibility. It is a testimony to the resiliency of the family unit that there is any sense of parental responsibility left toward children the way the state schools demand to monopolise most of their waking hours for much of the year with getting to and from school, being at school, doing school home work and attending extra-curricular school functions, all of which activities are imbued with the state schools' secular value system which makes no effort to harmonise, sympathise or empathise with the child's home value system.

State schools have contributed a great deal, Ms McCutcheon, to this nation's social problems, and it won't do to dodge the fact or shift blame. It is the community of home educating families who are rediscovering how to effectively tap into a child's motivation and learning style and to train up responsible, eager-to-learn children who are socially competent with those outside their peer group.

You did get one thing spot on, though: these problems will not be solved by state schools; the problems will only continue to be perpetuated and aggravated by them.

Notes:

1. *NZ Herald*, "Secondary teachers seek aid to stop classroom assaults," 25 September 2002, <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storyprint.cfm?storyID=2848833>
2. "Teachers call for help to stop

violence," 25 September 2002, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,2059909a11,00.html>

Making Schools into Homes

Defyd Williams' column in *TheSchoolDaily.com* e-letter of 25 October 2002 described the message of one Prakash Nair from an American company called Designshare which specialises in designing school buildings. Mr Nair toured New Zealand giving seminars for the MoE on how schools can be changed (re-designed buildings and grounds, new furniture, etc.) to be more like...guess what? Homes!

Prakash had four "primordial" learning metaphors:

1. **The Campfire** – where stories are told and lessons learned. (Who's telling the stories? The mentoring model schools are trying to adopt could mean it is the teens telling stories to the younger ones. I admit it: I am not particularly comfortable with an unknown 13-year-old telling stories to my 8-year-old.)
2. **The Watering Hole** – takes learning to a new level, for example school lunchroom. (Prakash cunningly did not say whether this new level was up or down....I remember what I got up to in the school lunchroom....it was bargain basement.)
3. **The Cave** – a place of solitude, where creativity takes place, where a slower and quieter way is found. A sense of a summer holiday may be experienced here – where there is nothing to do. (Pretty good: students and teachers coming up with creative ways to do nothing!)
4. **Life** – is everything else and has an agenda of its own. (I'll guarantee there is a lot more of this off-campus.)

Prakash's message also promotes learning that nurtures the spirit (sorry, illegal under our secular state system), is personalised (Ha!, it can never compare to what the average mother can do), and is in family groups (meaning ad hoc peer groups, a very poor imitation). Home education does all this and more far more efficiently.

Coming Events

January/February the Hogans are considering a tour of New Zealand. South Auckland will probably have them at a workshop at the end of January or beginning of February. They will only be in New Zealand for approx. two weeks. So possibly Auckland, Palmerston North or Wellington then Christchurch. You can check out their web site www.BrightIdeasPress.com <<http://www.BrightIdeasPress.com>> to see their stuff.

February 21 Tau-ranga

North Shore has usually had a workshop in April/May each year but did not last year. There have been lots of discussions going on about them doing one this year in this period of time. It would depend on when a speaker was available. They are considering possibly March or June. But more seriously looking at March as it is colder in the rooms in June.

April 26 THEN (Hamilton) Home Educating Conference

25-27 July HEART CAMP in Totara Springs - Matamata
Above Rubies has a family camp in Auckland August/September with Colin and Nancy Campbell - somewhere there.
Jonathan Lindvall is looking to do a tour of New Zealand later this year and the North Shore is seriously considering organising this for Auckland. He too would possibly be only available for a couple of weeks so would spread his meetings out over the country.
<http://www.BoldChristianLiving.com>
<<http://www.BoldChristianLiving.com>>

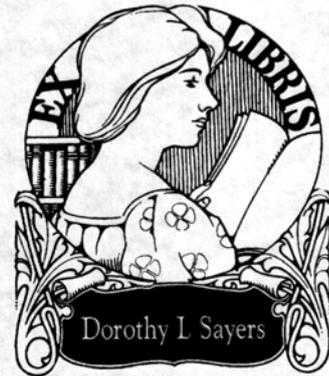
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