

# NEWSLETTER

Issue 1: June 2009

## Reggio Emilia Aotearoa New Zealand



### INTRODUCING THE Trust Members OF REANZ

**Lorraine Manuela, Therese Visser, Prue Crarer, Wendy Larmer, Chris Bayes, Glenys Waller, Julianne Exton, Denise Heald, Helen Aitken, Diti Hill, Lesley Pohio.**

It is with great pleasure that we bring our inaugural newsletter to you. This issue will share information about the launch of our new organisation Reggio Emilia Aotearoa New Zealand (REANZ). We are a group of eleven educators who have formed the REANZ Trust and we have over 100 'Friends of REANZ'. We welcome new 'friends' and look forward to meeting up with you at the many professional learning opportunities we are planning. Our Trust deed states that our purpose is to share information about the educational practice of Reggio Emilia with teachers. This deed also sets out the rules of the Trust. The Trust members are in place for a five-year term. As a charitable trust, all profit will be used for the promotion of the Trusts purpose and aims.

### THE LAUNCH of REANZ

We celebrated the launch of REANZ at Highwic House in early June. Jan Millikan our friend and mentor from Melbourne was our special guest. The focus of the launch was 'values' and Lorraine Manuela reminded us of the words of the Dalai Lama; "**Open your arms to Change, but never let go of your values**". Lorraine went on to say that the launch of REANZ gave us the opportunity to embrace new beginnings, never letting go of our values. Values we believe are paramount in the footsteps we take on our journey with children. Thelma Chapman read this whakatauki that embraces our links with the koru frond.

Whakatauki

*Tau ana ko te noho tahitanga  
O nga whanau, o nga tuakana  
Me nga teina I roto I te whariki ngahere  
Ara, ka puawai nga tamariki a Matariki*

*Mahia nga mahi o nga tamariki  
Hei apopo ka tu  
Hei rangatira*

*Peaceful earthy colours from the forest weave a mat  
For the koru frond to rest upon,  
smaller koreu are securely nestled.  
From this embrace stars burst forth to realize their potential.*

*Fulfill the needs of our children and tomorrow  
they stand strong.*

(International Children's Day)

For further information about becoming a friend of REANZ, please email us on  
[reanz@Inspire.net.nz](mailto:reanz@Inspire.net.nz)

Our members enjoy access to information about international study tours, seminars, newsletters,

This quote encapsulates the challenges we face in reconceptualising the pedagogy of Reggio Emilia, and what this might mean in Aotearoa.

"The cultural knots that become apparent when observing another culture's interpretation of education can serve as a doorway into reconceptualising our own ideas of education. These knots are untidy complexities that emerge when differing cultural contexts intermingle. Can we make the gaze upon Reggio Emilia's educational experiences a cultural knot, rather than a mere replica? (Mardell, 2001, cited by Robertson, 2006 p.152).

### THE KORU REPRESENTS OUR NEW BEGINNING: PRUE CRARER'S STORY

For weeks the children and I had been engaging in much discussion about the amazing trees and bush surrounding our centre and after using different languages to portray their interpretations( of what the trees meant to them personally), I began to see that these representational experiences became central to children's learning processes. Delving deeper and exploring and querying different emotions such as "Do trees have feelings?" a small group of children became fascinated with the koru. Upon investigating fern fronds in real form, all of different sizes, their study became intense and so following research on the internet and collaborating on their findings, these and many more exquisite koru drawings emerged from the children, using pen and ink. Further dialogue about new life, tenderness with regard to the delicate nature of the baby koru, and the incredible detail of the unfurling frond, became a focus. What followed were delicate, intricate representations of what the children observed, what they had come to understand and make meaning of, in their own unique way. What better way in which to celebrate these beautiful symbolic creations, than to use them in all of our documentation with regard to our REANZ organisation, where New Beginnings, Growth and Harmony stand at the very core of our vision. Kia ora.



Library. We are in the process of establishing a library. We have been extremely fortunate to have received a very generous donation from the Menzies Family Trust. This has enabled us to purchase a number of texts, which as funds allow, we will continue to build upon. Details related to the lending process will be circulated soon. If you or your organisation would like to donate a book for the library, please contact Chris at [chris.bayes@xtra.co.nz](mailto:chris.bayes@xtra.co.nz). We will acknowledge all donations on the inside cover.

### KEEP THESE DATES FREE

- **Conversation Groups** - Wednesday: July 29<sup>th</sup> and August 26<sup>th</sup>
- **Centre Visits:**
  - **Browns Bay Preschool**. Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August. 6.30 – 8.30 pm
  - **Kids Domain**. (Auckland Hospital Preschool) Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September. 6.30 – 8.30 pm
- **Hamilton Seminar Day, WINTEC** - Sat 22nd August. 9-3.30 pm
- **Margie Carter – Evening session** - Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October, 6.15 – 9.00 pm
- **Margie Carter – Seminar Day** - Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 9.00 – 3.30p m

**For further information & enrolment details please go to our website [reggioemila.co.nz](http://reggioemila.co.nz) or email Denise at [reanz@inspire.net.nz](mailto:reanz@inspire.net.nz)**

Have you been inspired by Reggio Emilia pedagogy in your practice? Do you have a story to share from your region, centre, school, life? If so, we would love to incorporate this in our future newsletters

[www.reggioemilia.co.nz](http://www.reggioemilia.co.nz)