



ASTEN

AUSTRALASIAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EXHIBITORS NETWORK

NEWS UPDATE

August 2001

WELCOME

By Annie Ghisalberti
ASTEN President

Thank you to Julie Catchpole and her staff at the Science Centre and Manawatu Museum in New Zealand for hosting the ASTEN Conference on 1-2 March 2001. It was a great meeting. I'm still amazed at how much we have in common, whether a small or a large centre, whether in Australia or in New Zealand. Thanks to Robin Garnett and others at Palmerston North, and to Brenton Honeyman for their role in organising the conference.

One of the hot topics of discussion was how to liaise with each other and coordinate the increasing number of state-based and national-based outreach programs provided by Australian centres so as to minimise competition and ensure the viability of these programs. Areas of overlap and conflict were discussed and strongly debated. At the end of the meeting, it was agreed to develop a National Outreach Strategy which, in its first stage, would collate data to report the objectives, target audience and geographical reach of each program, and analyse the data to identify overlaps and gaps. In the meantime, Questacon has been working with the Queensland Science Centre and the Investigator Science and Technology Centre to ensure that national programs are not adversely affecting statewide programs.

This edition of ASTEN News contains information about how to apply for an ASTEN Fellowship. In addition to the two fellowships

funded by ASTEN, I am contributing from my budget a third fellowship to the value of \$1000 to enable a member of staff from a science centre in the ASTEN Network to participate in the 3rd Science Centre World Congress, 10-14 February 2002. I am funding this from the savings Questacon will make by sending electronic (email) Christmas Cards this year.

Some of you may recall meeting Jim Marchbank, CEO of Science North, Sudbury, Canada, who spoke at the 1999 ASTEN Conference in Sydney. Recently I evaluated Science North as part of the process for renewing their full membership of ASTC. Science North is a vibrant, entrepreneurial centre set in the nickel mining area of Northern Ontario. Their IMAX Theatre, object theatres, Butterfly House, nature exchange, and restaurants make them the largest tourist attraction in Northern Ontario. If you're traveling in that region, I certainly recommend that you visit Science North.

I look forward to seeing you all at the World Congress which will feature a special ASTEN function ... the ASTEN Valentine's Day Breakfast!

Join us for the
3rd Science Centre World Congress

National Convention Centre
Canberra, Australia

Sunday 10 to Thursday 14 February 2002

www.questacon.edu.au/iiiscwc

ASTEN'S NEW WEBSITE

By Steve Winter
The Roadshow

At the ASTEN Conference in March of this year, I agreed to take over the responsibility for developing ASTEN's new website. The new site has its own domain name, and can be found at:

<http://www.astenetwork.net>

The site features a directory of Australian and New Zealand science centres, online editions of the ASTEN News, information about how to apply for an ASTEN Fellowship and reports from past Fellowship recipients, information about ASTEN conferences and meetings, contact details for related networks, and information about related conferences and events. I am working with ASTEN officers to ensure that the information is up-to-date for each of these sections. Please let Brenton Honeyman, ASTEN Executive Officer, know of any information which needs to be updated.

At the March Conference, I offered to develop a web-based registry for travelling exhibitions. This new development has progressed well and a trial version of the system is now available. If you tour or receive exhibitions, please check out this new scheme on the new ASTEN website (address above). This system will be as useful as the information contained in it. Therefore, it is important that you regularly up-date your information on this database. Please let me know of any suggestions for improvement of the system. In particular I am interested in knowing if there is currently enough 'depth' of information about the exhibitions, or if more fields should be added and what these fields might be.

Following up on other suggestions which were made at the ASTEN Conference, I am planning to establish a 'For Sale' section and

an 'Exhibition Concepts' section, once the main system is fully operating.

ASTEN FELLOWSHIP 2002

The application form for 2002 ASTEN Fellowships will be posted out in early September. For additional forms, please contact Brenton Honeyman, ASTEN Executive Officer:

bhoneyman@questacon.edu.au

As in previous years, ASTEN is offering up to two fellowships for staff of ASTEN member institutions. This year, Questacon is contributing a 3rd fellowship to enable a recipient to participate in the 3rd Science Centre World Congress, Canberra, 10-14 February 2002. Each fellowship provides up to A\$1000 towards a project which involves travel to another science centre (ASTEN Member Institution) and a minimum stay of five days. Preference is given to applicants who have limited opportunities to meet professionally with other science centre staff.

Project proposals must have a clear focus and demonstrate how it will benefit not only the recipient, but also ASTEN and its member organisations. Possible projects might involve learning about marketing strategies at another centre, working with a staff member at another centre to co-develop a new public program, or sharing exhibit ideas with designers and workshop staff.

Project proposals which request support towards participating in the 3rd Science Centre World Congress, to be hosted by Questacon in Canberra on 10 - 14 February 2002, will also be eligible for consideration.

Project applications for 2002 ASTEN Fellowships must be received by the ASTEN Executive Officer **no later than 30 October 2001**. Successful applicants will be notified by Friday 9 November.

ASTEN AND THE 3RD SCIENCE CENTRE WORLD CONGRESS

The 3rd Announcement is now being distributed worldwide to science centres and museums.

Thank you to ASTEN member institutions who are participating in the scheme to encourage visits by delegates to their centres and museums as they journey to or from 3SCWC. Note that pages 20 and 21 contain a map of our region, showing the locations of ASTEN and ASPAC member institutions and listing website and email contact addresses. Hopefully delegates will take the opportunity to visit, thereby gaining an appreciation of the richness and diversity of science centers in our region.

The preliminary program and registration information is also available on the Congress website:

www.questacon.edu.au/iiiscwc.html

This site is being regularly updated to include the latest information about Congress sessions and events.

Plan now to attend for a professional development and networking opportunity that you won't want to miss! Registrations can be made online ... **earlybird discount registration ends on 16 November 2001.**

RESEARCH PROJECT

By Robin Garnett
Special Projects Officer
Questacon

I am writing to let you know of a new research study that I am carrying out on behalf of a group of science centres. The aim of the study is to collate and make accessible reports that show the impact that science

centres are having on their surrounding communities.

If any of your institutions have reports or research studies that are relevant to the study I am keen to have access to them. In return, I would be pleased to send you an email summary of my final report. There will be a panel discussion about this research during the 3rd Science Centre World Congress, 10-14 February 2002. For further information about the research project, please contact me at:

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