WALDORF (RUDOLF STEINER) SCHOOLS AS SCHOOLS IN THE PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION TRADITION

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Abstract

The Waldorf school movement is the largest non-denominational, non-sectarian, independent school movement in the world. Since its beginning in Germany in 1919, over six hundred schools have been founded in forty countries including Australia. This paper will outline the foundation and development of the Waldorf schools, addressing such questions as the educational context of the Waldorf schools; their relationship to the early progressive education movement in Europe; the background to Rudolf Steiner and the key characteristics of Waldorf education; the founding of the first Waldorf school in Germany and the spread of the Waldorf school movement across the world. The paper will then focus on how and why groups of Australians, especially within the Anthroposophical Society, came together and founded Rudolf Steiner or Waldorf schools, and of the role that teachers and parents played in their development. The paper considers the effect of the rapid expansion of Waldorf schools in the 1980s noting the factors that assisted their growth and limited their development, and concludes with a review of the movement's current situation.

The Early Progressive Education Movement in Europe

The origin of Waldorf Education is to be found in the general educational awakening that took place towards the end of the 19th and in the first third of the 20th century. The most appropriate context in which to locate the Waldorf schools seems to be that of the progressive education movement, and therefore a short outline of the important developments in that movement will be given. However, there are some aspects of Waldorf education which belong more appropriately to the then prominent neo-Herbartian stream in state education, and yet other aspects are related to the more ancient Mystery school tradition. While Waldorf education is often seen to be, by its adherents, a unique addition to Western education, the point to be emphasised is that, without underplaying its special character, Waldorf education must be seen as an expression and product of its time, and an appreciation of the historical events surrounding its genesis will lead to a fuller appreciation of that special character.

The history of Western education in general has been described as being, in large part, the record of creative innovation in the face of conservative tradition.[1] The major advances in educational thought and practice, from the 18th century, were introduced and carried forward by philosophers and educators like Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel and the schools they inspired or founded, introduced creative innovations in both the way that children were viewed and treated, and how they were taught. The trend of progressivism in education was towards respect for the individual and the use of a child-centred approach. By the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, progressivism became more urgent because the interests of the individual appeared to diminish in the interest of mass education as governments increasingly provided schools, trained teachers, and legislated school codes.

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[1] James Bowen, A History of Western Education (3rd ed.) London: Methuen, 1981, p. 403.

In the years leading up to the First World War there were very few progressive schools in Europe. Most were in England, of which the first well known was Cecil Reddie's "Abbotsholme". Those that did exist were fully residential and costly and therefore only reached a small group of children, usually those of the well-to-do, *avant garde* parents. Copies of Abbotsholme were carried into Germany by Hermann Lietz who established the *Landerziehungsheim* or country boarding schools, and these "progressive schools" spread to other countries in Europe.[2]

In the optimistic post-war decade there was considerable activity in the progressive education movement, and the many educational efforts came together in the world-wide movement, formally initiated in 1921 as the New Education Fellowship (NEF), the founding of which was largely due to the efforts of Mrs. Beatrice Ensor of the Theosophical Society. The movement promoted reconstruction in education through the goals of progressive, child-centred education. The first Waldorf school was founded in Germany soon after the First World War and although the NEF had spread to twenty-eight countries in the 1920s, Germany was excluded from participating at its foundation conference. This may be one reason why Waldorf education did not have a higher public profile.

In mainstream education in Germany on the other hand, the "ruling force" was Herbartianism.[3] This movement was promoted by the neo-Herbartians such as Stoy and later Ziller[4] who at the end of the 19th century and into the 20th extended its influence throughout Europe and America. Ziller's ideas on concentration, formal steps, culture epochs, and interest were taken up and further developed by educators like Wilhelm Rein[5] who, at the turn of the century, was the most important international figure in education.[6] Some of his ideas, notably the cultural epochs theory, were incorporated into Waldorf pedagogy.

Thus the educational milieu, at the time when the founding of the first Waldorf school was imminent, can be characterised by increasing formality in and dominance of State education, and a newly emerging wave of progressive educational ideas. While some of the progressive ideas, notably those of Froebel and later Montessori, became very influential in State early-childhood education this was not so in the secondary sector. The often radical innovations of the progressives were unworkable in large numbers, perhaps even inimical to them, and therefore highlighted the conflict between *progressive* but elitist and *state* but mass education.

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[2] W.F Connell A History of Education in the Twentieth Century World, Canberra: Curriculum Development Centre, 1980, pp.128-132; Bowen, op.cit. p.406.

[3] Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) Professor of Philosophy and Pedagogics at Gottingen, who combined an interest in metaphysics and ethics with one in psychology and pedagogy.

[4] Karl Volkmar Stoy (1815-1885) Professor of Pedagogy at Jena in 1843, and Tuiskon Ziller (1817-1882) Professor of Pedagogy at Leipzig in 1864.

[5] Wilhelm Rein (1847-1929) studied and worked with Ziller. Became professor of education at Jena. Made a systematic study of the curriculum and teaching methods.

[6] Connell, op.cit. p.56; William Boyd The History of Western Education (6th ed) Adam and Charles Black, London, 1952, pp. 382-388.

Background to Rudolf Steiner and Waldorf Education

Having sketched the educational background, we will now give a brief biographical picture of Rudolf Steiner in order to gain a perspective on how he came to found the Waldorf school movement. Although Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) has made a unique contribution to twentieth century educational thought and practice, his life and the educational ideas he espoused are not widely known.[7] Steiner was born in a border town in the Austro-Hungarian empire in relatively humble circumstances. At an early age Steiner showed an ability for learning and a devotion to knowledge which led his parents to give him the best possible education within their means. Accordingly he eventually graduated from the Vienna Technical University, where he had pursued a scientific course, and where he also helped to maintain himself by tutoring in both scientific and classical subjects. His association with Karl Julius Schroer[8] led the latter to recommend him to the German publisher Kirchner, who was preparing a complete edition of all Goethe's published and unpublished works. As a result Steiner was invited to Weimar, where he took charge of editing the great poet's comprehensive but lesser-known scientific works.

It was during this period that Steiner also wrote his earlier philosophical works, in which he laid the foundations of his own spiritual scientific views and experiences, and in which he vigorously challenged the prevailing Kantian view of knowledge. One of these works, *Truth and Science*, he submitted successfully to the University of Rostock for his doctor's degree in Philosophy. Later he developed the substance of this thesis in his *Philosophy of Freedom*, which has since become the accepted philosophical basis on which his subsequent work rests.[9]

Thus, until nearly his fortieth year Steiner led the life of an accomplished if conventional academic. However, after laying a studied epistemological foundation for his major vocation in life, Steiner struck out in an unexpected direction as a "scientist of the invisible"[10]. Following this disengagement from mainstream academic life, Steiner lectured and taught, at first mainly to members of the Theosophical Society[11] and later within the Anthroposophical Society, which was founded in 1913. However, it was not until the period following the First World War that he began to be approached seriously by teachers, doctors, farmers, scientists and others, asking for help for a renewal in their practical work[12]. The founding of the first Waldorf school also occurred in this period and this will be developed later.

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[7] John Davy, "The Movement that Everyone tries to Forget", *The Times Educational Supplement*, March 23, 1973.

[8] Karl Julius Schroer (1825-1900) Professor in German literature at the Vienna Polytechnic.

[9] Alan Howard, in Foreword of Francis Edmunds Rudolf Steiner's Gift to Education: The Waldorf Schools, London, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1975. Johannes Hemleben, Rudolf Steiner : A Documentary Biography (East Grinstead, Sussex: Henry Goulden, 1975) .

[10] Hemleben, ibid p.65, and see also A.P.Shepherd, A Scientist of the Invisible; An Introduction to the Life and Work of Rudolf Steiner. London, Sydney etc. , Hodder and Stoughton, 1954.

[11] Steiner was the leader of the German Section of the Theosophical Society from 1902 to 1912.

[12] See A.C.Harwood (ed.), The Faithful Thinker : Centenary Essays on the Work and Thought of Rudolf Steiner. 1861-1925 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961) and Rudi Lissau, Rudolf Steiner : Life, Work, Inner Path and Social Initiatives (Stroud: Hawthorn Press, 1987) p. 111

As a philosopher and educator, Steiner was very familiar with the German philosophers and their educational ideas, including those of Herbart and his followers.[13] He clearly selected elements which corresponded to his own thinking about the nature of human beings and incorporated them into his comprehensive pedagogy. Among his contributions to the search for a truly child-centred curriculum was a detailed account of children's physical, psychological and spiritual development; many features of which have subsequently been confirmed and elaborated by the developmental research of Piaget and the child studies of Gessel and others. However, Steiner's perspective on spiritual development is unsurpassed. Further and equally important he gave an approach to a curriculum designed to support this development. This curriculum is still, in its conception and detail, unique among progressive educators.

Reference to Steiner's work rarely appears in mainstream educational literature, however it is more widely recognised within the stream of writers on progressive educational theory and practice.[14] Although Rudolf Steiner often rates a mention, he is sometimes included in the general category of "Theosophist" (albeit as one of the leading schismatics of the Theosophical Society) and therefore by implication, of carrying on a tradition begun by the Theosophical schools. For example, in his work on Australian progressive schools Petersen implies that because "Theosophy and Anthroposophy are kindred systems of belief [the] Waldorf schools resemble the Theosophical schools".[15] Not only is this conclusion a dubious generalization but the juxtaposition of the two movements tends to focus attention on their common elements, thus paying insufficient attention to the features unique to Waldorf schools.

While Waldorf schools seem to fit more or less comfortably within the stream of the progressive education movement that flourished in the early decades of this century, there are as we have noted, aspects that have their source elsewhere than in the progressive movement. At this point it is appropriate to list some of the philosophical and methodological characteristics of Waldorf schools.

Key Characteristics of Waldorf Education

It is not possible within the scope of this work to outline the sources of the various existing educational ideas and practices which Steiner had absorbed, and how he wove them together into a unified and internally consistent whole to form the edifice of Waldorf pedagogy. However, it will be necessary to briefly outline the key characteristics of this approach to education in order to understand why it captivated people's imagination to such an extent that the movement spread across the world.

Waldorf pedagogy has its basis in a picture of the human being that is described as comprising of body, soul, and spirit. The term 'body' refers to the physical result of the hereditary forces of the past, while 'spirit' refers to that which bears the child's potential. This spiritual potential may become more accessible as the child grows towards adulthood. Teachers are not primarily concerned with these aspects of the child's being because the body is given and already fixed, and the spirit must be left free to unfold its own destiny. However, the 'soul', a tripartite entity incorporating the faculties of will, feeling and thinking, is the substance and content of the human being which is engaged in the educational process. A

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[13] Rudolf Steiner, The Riddles of Philosophy (N.Y.: Anthroposophic Press, 1973), originally published in 1914 as *Ratsel der Philosophie*, provides an excellent exposition and critique of some of these philosophers.

[14] A notable exception in the mainstream category is S.J.Curtis & M.E.A. Boultwood's A Short History of Educational Ideas, (London: Uni. Tutorial Press, 1953); of the writers in the progressive stream W.A.C.Stewart's Progressives and Radicals in English Education, 1750-1970 (New Jersey: Augustus M.Kelley, 1972) provides a fair coverage.

[15] R.C. Petersen, "Australian Progressive Schools: I. Theosophical Schools," The Australian Journal of Education Vol. 13, No. 3 (1969): pp.241-250, esp. p.249.

thorough understanding of the process by which the soul unfolds provides the basis for both the content of the curriculum and the educational methodology.

Steiner's views on child development stress a seven-year cyclic evolution. The first seven years is complete with the change of teeth; it is characterised by the predominance of the forces of the will, which is exercised and directed through imitation and strengthened by repetition and rhythm in an environment imbued with goodness. The cycle from seven to fourteen extends over the period of primary education; it is characterised by the predominance of the forces of imagination, exercised through the cultivation of the feelings predominantly through artistic activities in an environment imbued with beauty. The cycle from fourteen to twenty-one, introduced by the changes of puberty and embracing the five years of high school, is characterised by the birth of the capacity to think abstractly and to reason logically; is exercised through disciplined academic pursuits, artistic self-expression, and practical work in an environment imbued with the ideal of striving for truth.

The divisions from early childhood into primary and secondary education are seen to be based, not on social convention, but on the realities of human development, and Waldorf education aims to lay the groundwork for the development of a healthy soul-life, characterised by creativity in thinking, a feeling for morality, and willingness to be a socially responsible member of the community, or in Steiner's own words: "The need for imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of responsibility - these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education".

Some of the key features, as well as common organisational and methodological practices that have emerged from Steiner's ideas include the following:

(1) Waldorf schools are non-denominational and non-sectarian. They invite students of any race, ethnic or religious background. They are co-educational and all students do all subjects.

(2) In the years of their primary education, the class teacher accompanies the same group of students for the full cycle from 7 to 14 years, providing a loving authority, stability, consistency, strong interpersonal relationships between the teachers, children and their families. This form of primary class organisation provides a realistic opportunity to attend to individual needs of children while encouraging the social development of the class.

(3) The teaching of subjects occurs in integrated block periods (called 'Main Lessons') in the first two-hour period of the day, for the whole of the twelve years. Each Main Lesson lasts a minimum of three weeks, making possible more in-depth treatment of subject matter and promotes continuity and concentration.

(4) A balance of academic, artistic and practical activities is provided in the belief that all the faculties of the soul should be nourished and exercised. The organisational form to support this aim is the three-fold division of the day whereby the morning period emphasises more formal academic learning, the middle period of the day focuses more on artistic subjects, and the afternoons are devoted to practical activities.

(5) The 'College of Teachers' is responsible for the educational policy making and administration. This means that, rather than a principal, deputies and seniors making the decisions, all teachers participate in and are responsible for decisions made and therefore are clearly accountable for their implementation. Committees of the 'College' attend to specific portfolios of management. All teachers, whether working in the kindergarten or high school, are considered to be of equal status as members of the 'College'.

(6) The school, while being a reflection of the wider community, is also a place of shelter where children are permitted to be children and allowed to progress at their own rate without competitive pressure. Ideally, each school should contain the age range from the little children in kindergarten to the young adults of year twelve, so that the different stages of consciousness are represented in a total school community.

(7) Anthroposophy, both as a body of knowledge and a path of inner development, underlies the educational philosophy, and although teachers are expected to continually strive to deepen their understanding of it, it is not taught or promoted in the school. However, one of the fundamental ideas in Anthroposophy is the evolution of consciousness, and this underlies much of the humanities curriculum. The theory of recapitulation, which claims that each child in his or her mental evolution passes through all

the great culture epochs that have marked the development of the human race[16] is fundamental in the organisation of curriculum content from year to year. The story curriculum[17] parallels the cultural epochs and from class to class the cultural history, including the major myths and legends are studied.

These are some of the major features of Waldorf education, and while most of these practices were unusual in the early decades of this century, many are now common-place, even in mainstream schools, at least in theory. However, the unifying force which keeps the Waldorf schools on track all over the world is the interpretation of the nature and development of human beings which Steiner describes in a systematic and inspiring spiritual anthropology which he called "Anthroposophy". That the relevance of an educational method based on Anthroposophy was appreciated early this century, and continues to be adopted by an increasing number of people around the world, is testified by the growth of the movement which took place since the founding of the first school.

The Founding of the First Waldorf School

The first Waldorf school had its beginning in the context of economic, social and cultural renewal in the aftermath of the First World War. Among a number of Steiner's contributions to this renewal was a social theory in which he reinterpreted the ideals of the French Revolution, *Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite,* towards a restructuring of the cultural, political and economic spheres of society.[18] Emil Molt, the managing director of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart, Germany, was among the many supporters of Steiner's initiative for social renewal. With regard to the renewal of education it was Molt who desired to found a school for the children of his employees, and he requested that Steiner take on its planning and leadership.[19]

The request was readily taken up by Steiner, and work on the Waldorf school went swiftly ahead during the summer months of 1919. In the weeks that followed Steiner held concentrated courses of lectures and seminars for the teachers-designate of the new school concerning the principles and practice of his educational ideas.[20] On 7 September 1919 the educational movement was launched in D*ie Freie Waldorfschule* in Stuttgart with the hope and intention that it would play its small part towards social renewal.[21]

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[16] As noted earlier, this theory was current in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and was supported by some mainstream German educators and others. See for example "The Child and the Species" in Cleverley and Phillips Visions of Childhood, pp. 42-53.

[17] Alduino Mazzone,"What's the Story? The Story Curriculum in Steiner Schools". *Musagetes:* Vol. I No. 2, 1994, pp. 24-29.

[18] Rudolf Steiner, The Threefold Social Order (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1972)

[19] Emil Molt and Christine Murphy, Emil Molt and the Beginnings of the Waldorf School Movement: Autobiographical sketches (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1991) 137-8.

[20] This first course comprises the works titled "Study of Man", "Practical Advice to Teachers" and "Discussions with Teachers", and are basic texts for teacher study. Published by Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1966.

[21] Gilbert Childs, Steiner Education in Theory and Practice (Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1991) p.17.

The Growth of the Waldorf School Movement

By the time of Steiner's death in 1925 a second Waldorf school had been founded in Germany, at Hamburg, another at The Hague in Holland, and two in England: at Streatham, London, and at Kings Langley, Hertfordshire. Gradually the Waldorf school movement spread, and other schools opened; in 1928 the first American school was founded in New York City, and by the outbreak of World War II sixteen schools in all were operative, being distributed as follows:

Germany	3
U.K.	5
Norway	2
Holland	2
Switz.	2
Italy	1
U.S.A.	1

All independent schools in Germany, including of course the Waldorf schools, and those in the occupied countries were closed by the Hitler regime, so during the war years the only Waldorf schools to remain open in Europe were those in Switzerland and the United Kingdom. However, within about a year of the ending of the war in Europe, twenty four schools in what had become West Germany had been newly founded or re-established. Since then growth in the number of schools worldwide has accelerated.[22]

With the post-war European migration the movement spread further to North and South America, South Africa and eventually Australia. In other instances the movement was felt indirectly, as in Indonesia where the State school curriculum was influenced by some of Steiner's ideas, no doubt a legacy of Dutch colonialism.[23]

Worldwide expansion followed rapidly. By 1962 there was a total of sixty six schools.[24] In 1973 it was reported that "some 40,000 pupils attend the ninety-odd Rudolf Steiner schools all over the world "[25], while in 1975, there was a "sum total of just over one hundred."[26] The list of Waldorf (Rudolf Steiner) Schools, published in the periodical "Child and Man,"[27] contains a useful record of the growth of schools. The school numbers published in the following issues have been selected to demonstrate the growth.

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[22] ibid. pp.17-18 including the table above.

[23] Zainu'ddin, Ailsa, "Education in the Netherlands, East Indies and the Republic of Indonesia", in Selleck R.(ed)" Melbourne Studies in Education (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press,1970): pp.17-83. esp. p. 38

[24] Hemleben, op.cit.(footnote 10) p.126

[25] Davy, op.cit.

[26] Francis Edmunds, Rudolf Steiner's Gift to Education: The Waldorf Schools (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1975) p.138.

[27] *Child and Man: Journal for Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Education*. Vol. 28 No. 2 July 1994, Published by Steiner Schools Fellowship, Forest Row, E.Sussex, UK.

Year	Schools
1979	177
1980	193
1981	257
1983	306
1985	351
1989	447
1994	619

The development from the five schools (up to the time of Steiner's death in 1925) to 619 in 1994 reveals an almost exponential rate of growth. The Waldorf schools have become a world-movement for the education of children from nursery to university entrance. However, the word "movement" needs to be clarified, for it is in no sense organised or directed from any given centre. It is a cultural movement sustained in its growth by independent and spontaneous efforts wherever the ideas underlying Waldorf education fire human imagination and will.[28]

So far, a picture has been developed of the founding and world-wide expansion of these schools. From this broader context we can now direct our focus on how, why and by whom Waldorf schools have been and are being founded in Australia.

The Role of the Anthroposophical Society

The introduction of Waldorf education to Australia was due primarily to the existence of the Anthroposophical Society. In the twenty one years from 1957 to 1978 the seeds of Waldorf education were planted, but the ground had been prepared by a small but active group of members of the Anthroposophical movement in both Sydney and Melbourne. In this period three schools were founded: Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School, Lorien Novalis School for Rudolf Steiner Education, and Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School. The three schools had different beginnings and developed their own ethos, but each in its own way has influenced the other schools that followed. The nature of this influence can be understood by the way in which key people in each school interpreted Anthroposophy and the relation they had to the Anthroposophical Society.

Because the creation of the first schools is inextricably linked with the existence of the Anthroposophical movement, the contribution of a number of key anthroposophists in the period leading up to the founding of "Glenaeon," the first school, will be considered. In a talk given to parents on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of Glenaeon school, Miss Sylvia Brose, the founding teacher, explained that long before its opening "the concept of the school had been developing in the minds of its three real founders and the young people around them".[29] These were Lute Drummond, Alice Crowther and Eric Nicholls.

It was Lute Drummond who introduced Brose to Anthroposophy and the works of Rudolf Steiner. During a visit to Europe in 1923-24 Drummond met Rudolf Steiner and heard him speak at Dornach[30] in Switzerland and later in England. There were very few Anthroposophists in Australia at this

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[28] Edmunds, op.cit. p.14

[29] Speech given by Miss Brose to A.G.M and Parent's Meeting, June 1977.

[30] The Goetheanum in Dornach, near Basel, is the centre of the General Anthroposophical Society. It houses the *Freie Hochschule fur Geisteswissenschaft* (Free University of Spiritual Science), which offers foundation and graduate studies in a wide range of professional and artistic courses.

time, but a small group had been studying Steiner's work in Sydney since the 1920s. At first a member of this group, Drummond later became the General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia. It was Drummond also who suggested to young Miss Brose that she contact the Frensham school at Mittagong to enquire about teaching vacancies. Miss Brose was at Frensham for seven years[31] during which time came into close contact with the headmistress, Miss Winifred West, another outstanding educational pioneer. Some of the key features at Frensham, notably its ethos and atmosphere, no doubt impressed themselves on Miss Brose, and subsequently were partly recreated at Glenaeon.

Another area, besides Anthroposophy, in which Miss Brose entered with great enthusiasm was the Arts, and these were later to become a cornerstone of the curriculum at Glenaeon. She became involved with a group of adults (who were mostly anthroposophists) who presented plays, festivals and eurythmy performances in an open-air amphitheatre, designed by Walter Burley Griffin, at Castlecrag, and it is at this stage that the second figure in the trilogy of "real founders" makes her appearance. Alice Crowther arrived from England in 1942, and opened her studio for Drama, Speech, and Eurythmy in Sydney. While in England, Miss Crowther worked for a time at Dartington Hall, a progressive boarding school in Devon. She was largely responsible for the artistic impulse that became woven into Glenaeon school's life, overseeing among other things the eurythmy lessons for the first five or six years. Miss Brose declared that it was "To [Alice Crowther that] Glenaeon owes the beginnings of a love and appreciation of these arts so basic to Rudolf Steiner Education"[32] Miss Crowther not only trained many professional actors but also gave a firm foundation to the first teachers in Rudolf Steiner Education.[33]

The third figure who was influential in the founding of Waldorf education in Australia was Eric Nicholls. Nicholls trained as an architect in Melbourne and in 1920 entered the employ of Walter Burley Griffin, who had come to Australia to implement his winning design for the Federal Capital at Canberra. In 1924 the Griffins moved to Sydney where they became associated with the founding Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia, Edith Williams.[34] In 1930 the Nicholls followed the Griffins to Sydney where they were introduced to Anthroposophy by them and subsequently joined the Society in 1934. In 1948 Eric Nicholls succeeded Lute Drummond as General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia and served in that role until 1966.

Eric Nicholls had wanted to send his children to a Steiner school and, although this did not come about, he remained dedicated to the task of establishing one. The idea of forming a school developed further at a meeting in 1951 attended by Eric Nicholls, Sylvia Brose and other members of the Anthroposophical Society. Here it was proposed that Miss Brose would train in Waldorf education in Edinburgh, then return to Sydney to begin a school. The opportunity to obtain a venue for a school arose in February 1956 when the Anthroposophical Society purchased "Dalcross" at Pymble, and "Glenaeon" (11.75 acres of natural bushland) at Middle Cove. In 1957 Eric Nicholls formed the nucleus of a School Council and Sylvia Brose returned from Waldorf training in the Edinburgh Rudolf Steiner School to take charge of the foundation class at Dalcross.[35]

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[31] Initially for three years, then trained as a kindergarten teacher at Sydney Teachers College, and later returned to Frensham for four more years.

[32] S.H.Brose, "Alice Crowther", Glenaeon Magazine, 1985.

[33] S.H. Brose, ibid.

[34] From this association the Griffins became members of the Anthroposophical Society, Marion in 1930 and Walter in 1931.

[35] Marie Christina McClelland, "The Eric Nicholls Building - Who was Eric Nicholls?", Glenaeon Magazine, 1985.

Thus the transportation of Waldorf education to Australia, and the founding of the first school, was inextricably linked with Anthroposophy and the initiatives taken by influential members of the Anthroposophical Society.

"Glenaeon" The First School, 1957.

The first Steiner school in Australia opened in February 1957 with three students and one teacher. Miss Brose had been training at the Edinburgh Steiner school from 1951 to 1956, and had returned "full of enthusiasm for her task". The fledgling school began in "Dalcross", a previously established kindergarten in King Edward Street, Pymble, a suburb of Sydney. The land and building, a converted residence, were gifted to the school by the Anthroposophical Society. After four years increase in number to 60 students led to a move to the present site in Glenroy Avenue Middle Cove. Two campuses existed until 1973 when the Kindergarten joined the main school, called "Glenaeon".[36] From 1957 Glenaeon grew, one class at a time until it reached Year 12 in 1968.

Because Glenaeon was, for fourteen years, the only Waldorf school in Australia, curriculum and physical resources were scarce. Very few of Steiner's educational works had been translated from the German and supplementary texts by other Waldorf teachers hardly existed, so in-service training was eagerly pursued and gratefully received. Once again the initiative of Eric Nicholl in 1962, assisted the school by bringing Francis Edmunds[37] to Glenaeon. Mr. Edmunds, an experienced teacher and lecturer in Waldorf education, gave the class teachers much help in developing their skills and understanding of their work. In 1969 he returned to contribute to the training of the high school teachers, and then again in 1978 gave the impetus towards developing a teacher training course.

Edmunds clearly recognised that without a supply of trained teachers the school would flounder, and the movement as a whole could not grow in a healthy way. His encouragement led to the establishment of the "Orientation Course in Anthroposophy" in Sydney, offering foundation studies in Anthroposophy and artistic courses. Today, with a name change to "Parsifal College", it continues to offer adult courses in Anthroposophy, but has added full-time courses in Early Childhood Education (to service the growing need for Kindergarten teachers in Steiner schools) and Waldorf education. The two-year course, comprising a Foundation Year and a second year of specialist training, was accredited in 1993 and recognised by the University of New England (Armidale) as equivalent to an Associate Diploma in Education, and a further two years of study could lead to gaining a Bachelor of Education degree. The accreditation of a three-year diploma course is currently being negotiated.

In keeping with the theme of the connection of Waldorf education to the stream of progressive education, it is relevant to note that the founders of the Orientation Course in Anthroposophy[38] were not only active in the Anthroposophical Society, but were also influential members of the organising group of the New Education Fellowship (later called the World Education Fellowship) in Sydney, and were largely responsible for organising the NEF Summer Camps at Morpeth and Frensham in the late 1960s. The Waldorf Teacher Training programme of the Orientation Course in Anthroposophy has, since 1985, been conducted largely at Glenaeon school.

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[36] John Poiner, "The Growth of Glenaeon School". Glenaeon Magazine, 1985. An article by a School Councillor published in a commemorative edition celebrating the 28th anniversary of Glenaeon School.

[37] L.Francis Edmunds (1902-1989) was the founder of Emerson College, a training centre for Waldorf teachers in Sussex, England. He was a lecturer and advisor to Waldorf schools around the world, stimulating the founding of many new schools.

[38] Erwin Berney and Susan Haris were founders of the Orientation Course. Beryl and Dick van Leer, and David Hatton (a senior teacher at Glenaeon), were also a part of the organising group of the NEF and WEF Summer Camps.

Glenaeon operates as a non-denominational, co-educational school, registered to teach pre-school, primary and secondary classes. It aims to teach a Waldorf curriculum consistent with the indications which Steiner gave for the first Waldorf school. Its position in Middle Cove locates it in a largely upper middle class population, and although the school draws students from a wide area and of different social background, the school reflects its socio-economic setting. Glenaeon attempts "*to provide the child with his grounding in basic subjects in accordance with the requirements of the State Education Department but the material... is carefully selected to introduce him to the sciences and humanities."*[39]

Thus, whilst providing an artistic and culturally rich education, the academic aspirations of many of the parents has led to a strong emphasis, in the high school, on academic content and preparation for examinations. Since 1968 Year 12 students at Glenaeon have been prepared for the state examinations and the High School Certificate. Now the high school has begun a second stream in classes 7, 8 and 9 with the intention of carrying this through to a Year 13. This will enable the school to offer a full 12 year Steiner curriculum. In 1985 there were 360 children which by 1994 had grown to around 420 students. To accommodate the increasing numbers the school has acquired a former state primary school in nearby Castlecrag and now is facing once again the challenges of operating on two separate campuses.

"Lorien Novalis" The Second School, 1971

Lorien Novalis School for Rudolf Steiner Education is at Glenhaven, Dural, some forty kilometres north-west of central Sydney. It was established in the spring of 1971, fourteen years after the founding of Glenaeon. At the time of its founding the location was in a rural setting with bushland, open spaces and beautiful views over the ranges, but now, due to creeping development, has become a part of the greater metropolitan area.

The founding group met regularly, in 1971, to work together artistically and study Anthroposophy.[40] Two of the participants, Alan Whitehead and Rainer Fiek, were at that time teachers at Glenaeon. In an article on the founding of the school Alan Whitehead states:

> *The Lorien Novalis impulse was based on two shining pillars; the first was to 'Australianise' Steiner Education, drawing inspiration from our own time and place, rather than from central Europe of the 1920s. The second was to imbue every element of the work with the Spirit of Creativity (as recommended by Steiner) - to seek fresh new forms, whether academic, artistic or activity. Only then can the soul and spirit of the child be truly illuminated.*[41]

The idea of starting a second Steiner school in Sydney emerged, consolidated and manifested eventually as a group of eight children and twelve adults (all teacher potential).[42] Although Lorien opened with eight students they grew to thirty within six months. This almost immediate response to an alternative education can be understood partly by the fact that the 1970s was a time when some sectors of the

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[39] Information handbook prepared by Glenaeon School.

[40] The original founding group consisted of Susan and Alan Whitehead, Hans and Pam Schulz, Eva and Rainer Fiek, Thomas and Gudrun Ludescher, Markus Harkness, Ruth Marx and Jenny Marx.

[41] Alan Whitehead, "Under the Sun - of Spiritual Science," in *Musagetes: Education Journal for the Community of Steiner Schools.* Vol I, No. 1, Autumn/Winter, 1994.

[42] Gudrun Ludescher, "Lorien Novalis School for Rudolf Steiner Education". Correspondence (14/4/94). Ms. Ludescher was one of the founding group who later became a staff member at Lorien.

community were questioning the value of State Education and were seeking alternative education. Their views often received support from the apparent lack of agreement between educationalists about what education should mean.[43] Parents who were seeking an alternative turned to schools that proposed an ideology more in line with their thinking. In an article published in The Way Out Alan Whitehead made clear his school's position on the most desirable climate in which children ought to be educated; that the school is neither a free school in which there is no authority, nor is it an authoritarian school with fear-inspired authority, but operates in a creative middle way in which there is developed a "natural authority based on intimate and longstanding relationships between children and teachers." He emphasises, rather paradoxically, that "Lorien Novalis is not a 'progressive school' - it is, however, a very progressive school."[44] Evidently this approach to educating children suited the wishes of some parents, and so the school flourished. By 1978 the school had over 100 students, in 1981 the full primary school complement had been achieved, and the first year of the high school had begun.[45]

From its small beginning the school grew in scope and activity and became a dynamic cultural centre for anthroposophic activity. Alongside the teaching and administrative work there was a strong programme of in-service education for the teachers which drew on the expertise of a number of anthroposophist-artists and teachers. From this grew the Lorien Novalis College of Teacher Education. This facility provided an apprenticeship-type teacher training and provided the school with a ready source of assistants and new teachers. Some of these trainees later became founding teachers or staff members in other Steiner schools, for example Marek Chodkiewicz went to teach at "Chrysalis" in the Thora Valley near Bellingen in 1983, and hence the Lorien mission to Australianise Steiner education and work out of the "Spirit of Creativity" was disseminated further afield. The expansion into the high school at Lorien Novalis was made possible by the purchase of the property adjacent to the school and by 1988 registration of classes 7 to 10 had been achieved.[46] Today, with about 200 students, the school has in place a full twelve-year Steiner curriculum.

"Lorien Novalis grew out of the rich soil of Glenaeon," said its founder," in turn providing yet another way for the many new schools in its wake. The wide path of Steiner Education has many 'ways'; Lorien Novalis expressed just one of these".[47] The 'way' of Lorien, which is elaborated in Whitehead's publications,[48] has been "teacher creativity and Australianising the curriculum". The implication is that this "other way" is a contrast to "the rich soil" out of which it grew. This position indicates the rehearsal of the age-old conflict between traditionalism and progressivism, social conformity and individualism, accountability and libertarianism.

This has been a perennial theme in Western education and it is not surprising that it exists also in the Waldorf school movement. This polarity has characterised the differences in approach between Glenaeon and Lorien Novalis. However, other factors play into them, such as the time of founding. Glenaeon had accumulated fourteen more years of experience and established a particular way of working

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[43] John Cleverley, "Non Denominational and Alternative Schools", in John Cleverley (ed),Half a Million Children, op.cit. pp. 260-269

[44] Alan Whitehead, "An Example of Rudolf Steiner Education", in Margaret Smith and David Crossley (eds), The Way Out: Radical Alternatives in Australia (Melbourne: Lansdown Press, 1975) pp. 74-76.

[45] "Class 8 at Lorien Novalis has 18 students and is becoming a strong group for the task of pioneering the high school." A. Whitehead in Minutes of Rudolf Steiner Schools Association meeting 4/7/1981.

[46] From the Lorien Novalis school report by Steven Bennett, RSSA meeting, Adelaide, March 1988.

[47] Alan Whitehead, "Under the Sun", op. cit.

[48] The Spiritual Curriculum Series, published by Golden Beetle Books.

with the curriculum, so there was something to 'rebel against'. The greater emphasis given to academic pursuits at Glenaeon contrasted with the more arts and crafts emphasis at Lorien. Demographic factors also influenced the school's parent population; Glenaeon's location in an established upper-middle class suburb in contrast to Lorien which had located itself in a more rural but rapidly developing area. Glenaeon students wore uniforms whereas Lorien's dress policy specifically argued against them, and Glenaeon children addressed their teachers formally whereas Lorien teachers were called by their first name. Glenaeon school celebrated the festivals belonging to the yearly Christian church-calendar cycle whereas Lorien celebrated festivals that were based on the year's seasonal cycle. These factors characterise the major differences between the two schools and underlie the differences between some of the schools which they influenced.

"Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School", The Third School, 1973

In February 1973 the third Waldorf school in Australia was opened in the undulating hills of Warranwood, near Croydon in the outer south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Like the two schools before it, and parallel in time with Lorien Novalis, the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School developed from an anthroposophical study group whose members wished to establish a school on the basis of Steiner's indications. In 1969 a group of Melbourne teachers[49] who were members of the Anthroposophical Society, began to work towards its establishment. Anthroposophy places a high value on spiritual freedom and social equality and therefore it is hardly possible to be an active teacher/anthroposophist and not be concerned about promoting individual development, holistic education and social justice and progress. These are some of the major pillars upon which progressivism in education rests. Since the founding group were already practicing (mostly high school) teachers, their informal preparatory training focussed on re-orienting existing educational ideas and practices in the light of Steiner's ideas on child and curriculum development.

In 1972, towards the end of this preparatory period, when sufficient knowledge about, and interest in the venture had been generated, the beginning was made by the opening of a kindergarten in a private home at Donvale. As the success of the Steiner approach became obvious, resources became available, in the form of money donated and pledged, and parents and teachers worked together to acquire a five acre site "in the wilds of Warranwood, a sparsely settled area, just reachable by public transport and vigorous walking"[50]. Today the greater Melbourne metropolitan area has caught up and, like Lorien Novalis' situation, housing development has encroached on the school.

As the founding of the school falls in the same period as that of Lorien Novalis, the same socio-cultural and political conditions apply with regard to the search for educational alternatives and supportive government funding policies for new schools.[51] From the start the school received Commonwealth and State Government per-capita grants, and charged in addition only a "moderate" fee in the hope of attracting a broader social stratum of children and parents. This was consistent with Steiner's wishes that Waldorf education was an education for all children and not merely for the economically privileged members of society.

The school grew, in expected fashion, one class per year, and without pause continued into the secondary stage and on to the Higher School Certificate and the VCE, reaching Class 12 in 1984. For reasons similar to those given by Glenaeon, high school students were prepared for the State examinations, and certain modifications to the comprehensive Waldorf curriculum had to be made in order that this could

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[49] "School Beginnings," an undated leaflet from the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School lists the group as Paul Martin, Robert Martin, Ruth Wittig, Joan Bite, Tim Coffey, Pam Martin, and Pauline Ward. Though not listed in the leaflet, Helen Cock says she was a member of the founding group.

[50] "School Beginnings." op. cit.

[51] Cleverley, "Non-Denominational and Alternative Schools op. cit.

be achieved. By 1988, five Year 12 Classes had graduated, the school had 380 students (not counting the kindergarten) and the senior secondary students were getting "good HSC results"[52].

In order to ensure that each year a ready supply of teachers, who had the requisite background in Anthroposophy and training in Waldorf pedagogy, was available, the school paralleled Lorien's initiative and began its own Teacher Education programme. Initially this was offered on a part-time basis, later one-year full-time and three-year part-time courses were offered. Now a two-year full-time course is available for which accreditation as an Associate Diploma through Monash University is being sought. A number of new schools in Victoria (and further afield) are staffed by ex-Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School teachers or graduates from its teacher training course. For example, the founding teacher of Sophia Mundi (an inner city Steiner school) was an ex-Melbourne class teacher, Wendy Duff. The Little Yarra Steiner School was founded by another ex-Melbourne teacher, Johannes Schuster.

High school student numbers continued to grow. The demand by smaller Waldorf schools seeking a Waldorf high-school education is one reason for this. In 1995 the school achieved a second stream in the high school. With 459 students at the end of 1994, the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School has the largest enrolment of any Australian Waldorf school.

The expansionary phase: 1979 to 1992

Compared to the founding of the three schools in the previous twenty-one years the growth in new schools during the period 1979 to 1992 was dramatic. This reflected the world-wide trend cited earlier. In Australia an average of two schools per year were founded so that by 1989 Waldorf schools had opened in all capital cities except Darwin. In 1979, two schools were opened, one in country New South Wales at Maitland, about 100 km north of Sydney, and one in Adelaide, South Australia.

"Linuwel", A School for Rudolf Steiner Education, in Maitland had a close association with Lorien Novalis, where the founders received much of their training and from which issued considerable support. Today the founding teachers, Ron and Margaret Caisley, are still in the school, and along with other teachers, provide about 120 students with a primary education.

The Adelaide Waldorf School began in February 1979 with 37 children (from Kindergarten to class 3), and five teachers[53] in Norwood, an inner suburb east of Adelaide. By the start of the following year it had relocated on twenty acres of gently-sloping farmland on the outskirts of the small country town of Mount Barker, about 40 kilometres to the south-east of Adelaide. The Anthroposophical Society was instrumental in bringing this school into being in that the land was donated by one of its members[54] and finance to buy the first portable buildings came from a group of Anthroposophists.[55] After the initial three classes, the school grew by one class each year until class 10 in 1986, when a pause was made for two years, to consolidate the work in the high school, before adding the final two classes and establishing in 1990 a full twelve year programme. There are currently about 350 students in the school receiving a single-stream comprehensive Waldorf education from Kindergarten to Year 12.

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[52] Pauline Ward to the Rudolf Steiner Schools Association meeting in Adelaide, March 1988.

[53] The founding full-time teachers were Milton Mellor (K), Jennifer Bundey (Class 1), Jennifer West (Class 2), Alduino Mazzone (Class 3), and Thomas Ludescher (Eurythmist).

[54] The donor, Mr. George Sickel, as a member of the Anthroposophical Society generously supported the school venture.

[55] The Steiner School Trust Fund, which financed the first buildings, was begun by the Michael Group of the Anthroposophical Society led by Mrs. E. Tolstoshev, and was later administered by the Novalis Group, under the leadership of Mrs. C. Schwenczner.

The Eighties: A Period of Rapid Expansion.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide a detailed survey of the nature and growth of approximately thirty Waldorf schools which opened in Australia in this period, however one of the schools in each capital city will be mentioned briefly. In addition, the major ways in which schools were started and a list of those that did begin and are currently operating will be given.

One of the first of the new wave of schools to open in this period was the "Orana School" in Canberra. In September 1981 the school began in a rented Y.M.C.A. building with eleven students. It moved in 1990 to its present site in Weston where currently the Orana School for Rudolf Steiner Education offers schooling from Kindergarten to class seven to 180 students and is presently expanding into the high school.[56]

The Perth Waldorf School was conceived in 1982, beginning as a Playgroup and Kindergarten in Leederville in 1982 and in 1985 moved to Castledare where in 1987 began the first class with six children.[57] In 1988 the school moved to its present site at Bibra Lake. It has 242 students enrolled and having embarked on a high school programme in 1994 intends to systematically progress to year twelve.[58]

The Samford Valley Steiner School was also conceived in 1982 when a public meeting was held to begin the work of founding a Steiner school in Brisbane. It was not until 1987 that a playgroup began in a house at Kenmore but moved to four other locations before settling at its present permanent site at Wight's Mountain. In 1994 the school completed its year with six teachers and one hundred children ranging from kindergarten to class six. A working group of parents and teachers is preparing for the transition into high school in the near future. Tarremah School for Rudolf Steiner Education in Tasmania parallels in time the developments in Brisbane. It began in a house in South Hobart in 1988 and moved to its present site in Huntingfield, Kingston in 1992, and also caters for a similar number of students from kindergarten to class six.

There seems to be three main ways in which new schools have been founded. The decisive role of the Anthroposophical Society has already been shown in the case of the older schools in the capital cities. A second impulse can be seen, when in response to the success of the first school in an area, a group of teachers and/or parents from the first school started another school at a little distance from the first. This was clearly the case with the Sophia Mundi and Little Yarra schools in and around Melbourne, Kameroi school as an offshoot of Glenaeon, Aurora Meander from Lorien Novalis and the Willunga school from the Mount Barker Waldorf School. A third major impulse, seen mainly in country areas, has arisen among parents who have wanted Waldorf education for their children. Many have spent time studying together meanwhile searching for a teacher, but the lack of trained teachers has often led to parents becoming teachers.

The Phase of Rapid Growth

Of the twenty-eight schools founded in this period of rapid expansion twenty-one offer only primary tuition while five have embarked on secondary education. Some centres are operating at Kindergarten stage and some are preparing to start as soon as conditions are satisfied. Some of these schools would have taken a further step in their development had the eligibility criteria for Commonwealth *per capita* funding been less limiting. The chart below is in the form of a time-line depicting the year of

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[56] From an interview with Michael Simmons and the school report by teacher Damien Gilroy to the RSSA meeting in Adelaide, 18th March 1994.

[57] James Wishart "The History of the College" July, 1992, a school document.

[58] The author has conducted in-service training at the school in 1988 and 1992. High school plans and student numbers reported by Mark Molloy, class teacher, at the RSSA meeting March 18th, 1994.

each school's founding in relation to the state or territory in which it was founded. It is immediately obvious that NSW and Victoria, the most populous states, have the greatest number of schools.

Changing Climate for Non-Government Schools.

The Commonwealth Department of Employment Education and Training (DEET) has the reponsibility for administering both Government and non-Government Education institutions in Australia. In relation to assisting with the financing of Non-Government Schools, DEET applies the New Schools Policy to: (a) New schools; (b) Schools changing location; (c) Schools changing their profile (eg. primary to high school). The "New Schools Policy" has been operative since 1984 but the guidelines have become more and more restrictive to Waldorf schools becoming established (minimum of 50 students) and for established schools progressing to high school classes (minimum 25 students per grade per year). These conditions being met, the maximum level of funding would be Level 6 (on a scale of which Level 10 is the maximum *per capita* funding level) with no right of appeal in the first three years. The Educational Resource Index (ERI) is a formula used by DEET to calculate a school's funding level (*per capita* grant). Among others, it takes into account such factors as teacher/student ratio and a school's private income (level of school fees, including 'contributed services').

STATE	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	
N.S.W.													
	Linuwel, Maitland												
			New castle, Glendale										
			Chrysalis, Thora										
				Blue Mtns., Hazelbrook									
				Aurora Meander, Richmond									
					Eukarima, Bowral								
						Daystar, Lismore							
							Kangia, Murwillumbah						
							Michael, Leichhardt						
								Casuarina Coffs Harbour					
									Mumballa, Bega				
										Armidale			
										Cape Byron			
										Kameroi, Belrose			
A.C.T.			Orana, Canberra										
VIC.													
				Ghilgai, Kilsyth Sth.									
							Sophia Mundi, Abbotsford						
							Maindample, Mansfield						
							Milbi, Katandra						
								Little Yarra, Yarra Junction					
									Castlemaine				
S.A.	Mt. Barker												
										Willunga			
W.A.					Perth								
									Golden Hill, Denmark				
												Yallingup	
Q'LD.									Samford Valley, Brisbane				
TAS.											Tarremah, Hobart		

Waldorf schools place a high value on teacher/student relations and therefore generally prefer to have student numbers determined by educational rather than financial considerations. They value having children from a broad range of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, however they also tend to attract families who cannot afford to pay high fees. The increasing restrictions being imposed on all schools can be viewed in the context of the changing political and economic climate in Australia. Over the past thirty years there has been a vast expansion in educational activity. However there has also been a change of atmosphere from one in which the tendency was to measure educational quality by the volume of "inputs" (resources) that were available, to one in which "quality of outcomes" became the increasing concern.[59] The Australian Schools Commission in 1973 was concerned with implementing recommendations "on the immediate financial needs of schools, priorities within these needs, and appropriate measures in assisting to meet those needs".[60] By the early 1980s constraints on educational spending were imposed and increasing debates on "state aid" led to strategies to limit funding to private schools. Although these failed, the Quality of Education Review Committee (QERC) redirected the stress away from quantity of "inputs" towards quality of "outputs". The shift was away from independence in education towards educational objectives being directed by economic priorities.

> *For national economic well-being ...education is and will increasingly be nationally strategic. Hence resource agreements, hence performance indicators, hence outcomes-targeted grants, hence national priorities, hence programme budgeting, hence efficiency reviews.*[61]

Waldorf schools, which as a matter of principle, do not stream children, nor grade them into ability groups, nor conduct examinations, whose interest is in the education of the whole human being in as broad and comprehensive a way as possible, and which want to be as independent as possible from centralising and restricting bureaucracies are clearly swimming against the tide of these national trends.

Current Conditions Within the Movement.

With regard to academic status, the four oldest Waldorf schools have established a successful curriculum up to year 12, and generally students from all four schools have been successful in gaining entry to tertiary studies. Another six schools have entered into high school classes and nineteen have reached at least Class 6 or 7, the accepted end of primary schooling in the state system. Many of these schools hope to develop a high school but lack of trained Waldorf secondary teachers is a limiting factor which will need to be addressed. In addition to the schools listed, there are about ten other initiatives, some having one or two classes already, others still at the kindergarten or play group stage. Their viability is not yet assured, and some are not even certain of their connection to Steiner education, let alone the Anthroposophy which underlies it.

In the larger schools, class sizes are typically around 28 - 30, which seems to be the number that allows financial viability. The fee level for most schools is at the low end for private schools in Australia. Most schools are eligible for and receive government funding, though the funding level varies markedly between schools. Once a school is established at a certain level of funding it is difficult to change. Capital grants, to help with building programmes, have assisted many Waldorf schools.

Most smaller schools, as well as facing financial struggles, usually have composite classes, and experience the restriction of not being able to attract or pay such specialists as eurythmists or foreign

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[59] Peter Karmel, "Quality and Equality in Education," Australian Journal of Education Vol. 29, No. 3 (1985): pp. 279-293.

[60] ibid.

[61] Hedley Beare, "Shared meanings about education: the economic paradigm considered." in Anderson, J. Shaping Education Australia ACE. 1987, pp70-78.

language teachers. Eight schools do not have eurythmy (a movement form inaugurated by Steiner), although a number have offered it in the past and would like to continue if it were possible. Keeping class teachers is becoming increasingly difficult, especially where teachers do not have a strong commitment to the school beyond their own class. While most schools now pay around award wages, several smaller schools pay at least 25% below this. The constant high demands of administrative work in a school with a small faculty contributes to the problem of 'teacher burnout', which is not confined to teachers in small schools but is more common there. An added challenge is working with the increasing number of children (up to 30%) with developmental or learning problems, creating a greater demand for therapeutic and remedial programmes.

Many schools surveyed[62] have mentioned the difficulty of maintaining continuity in foreign languages. Just over half the schools have German, with Japanese and French being the next most common. There is a lack of language teachers with training or experience in Steiner teaching, and smaller schools often call on parents to help out in the language programme.

In looking at the challenges facing the Waldorf schools, many identified the practical problems mentioned above of finances and finding good teachers. About 10 - 15 teachers graduate each year from the two main full-time teacher training courses that exist. Already mentioned are Parsifal College and the Teacher Training Course at the Melbourne Steiner School in Warranwood. Teacher training is also offered within a number of schools such as Lorien and Chrysalis, and these provide a few more teachers. The accreditation of courses as Associate Diplomas, and the offering of Steiner Education components within current degree courses (for example, at the University of New England, Armidale), has already led to more students being able to enrol and train as Steiner teachers.[63]

Summary and Conclusion.

A line of development has been traced in which the origins of Waldorf education were found to emerge out of the background of the ideas of some German educators of the late 19th century and the progressive education movement in the first two decades of the 20th century. After the opening of the first school in 1919 the Waldorf education movement spread across the world at an increasingly rapid rate. The groundwork for its genesis in Australia was laid by the Anthroposophical Society, and after beginning in 1957 there was a period of quiet consolidation followed by sporadic developments in the 1970s and a steady proliferation of new schools in the 1980s.

This paper has highlighted some of the historical and organisational aspects of the Waldorf school movement. In the attempt to outline the major characteristics of the Australian schools in more recent times it has become obvious that much more work could be done in documenting the many efforts that have been made in developing the organisational and methodological aspects of Waldorf schools and in articulating the educational philosophy of Waldorf pedagogy in a language that is more accessible to contemporary educators. Research for this paper has highlighted the lack of systematic organisation of documentary information within the movement. There is clearly much anecdotal information but relatively little effort has been directed to the writing of formal histories or analyses of various schools, although this now appears to be changing. The present study is no doubt an expression of the emerging desire to record the schools' stories before the leading founders are no longer present to tell their version.

The endeavours of the many pioneering teachers and parents involved in the establishment of this unique progressive educational movement promises to be a rich source of historical research into the

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[62] The survey considted of telephone calls to schools asking specific questions, a short questionnaire handed to participants at the Rudolf Steiner Schools Association meeting, and interviews during the Science Conference in July 1994.

[63] At the time of writing 42 students had been interviewed for enrolment in the Parsifal College's Orientation Course for 1995.

personal and social values, and educational aspirations of a heterogeneous sub-group of Australians. Such research would benefit not only the Waldorf school movement in particular but would add to the body of knowledge of the Australian progressive education movement. This paper is a first contribution to this end.

About the author.

Alduino Mazzone was a founding and pioneer teacher of the Mount Barker Waldorf School. He is the Chairman of the Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia, and currently works as an Educational Consultant, Adult Educator and a father of four. He is Principal Lecturer at the Rudolf Steiner College (SA) in Adelaide and does part-time lecturing in the School of Education at the Flinders University, South Australia.