

Project 2001

At Wynyard, in Tasmania, they're building a time capsule. At Camden, in New South Wales, they're holding a constitutional convention. Bundaberg, in Queensland, will have a theatre restaurant. And in Perth, Western Australia, they will be holding a quiz night.

As Centenary of Federation celebrations get into full swing, schools across the country are joining in with innovative projects to help students understand what Federation means. And the Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) has been lending a helping hand, devoting its Parliamentary Fellowship Program to the Centenary of Federation.

Each year, the PEO offers parliamentary fellowships to teachers and education officers who have an interest in promoting active citizenship in their schools and local communities. Parliamentary fellows spend a week at Parliament House in Canberra getting first-hand experience in the operation and work of Parliament and developing projects and resources that they can use to teach students about their Parliament.

For 2000-2001 there are eight parliamentary fellows. They come from Upper Mt Gravatt School and Burnett Heads State School (Queensland), Sutton Public School, Mount Annan Christian College and St Georges High School (NSW), Belconnen High School (ACT), Table Cape Primary School (Tasmania) and the Constitutional Centre of Western Australia.



Year 6 students from Sutton Public School leapt back in time when (from left to right) they took on the roles of four famous Australians from the Federation era: Catherine Spence, Arthur Phillip, Rose Scott and Edmund Barton.

Each of the parliamentary fellows has had the challenge of developing a project for their students that will help them to better understand how Federation came about and why it is relevant to them. All the projects have a strong community focus, so that the students are encouraged to become active participants in their local communities.

The parliamentary fellows have brought their own special skills to their work, helping to create a rich tapestry of projects to celebrate 100 years of nationhood. Robyn Robinson, from Sutton, for example used her previous experience in producing plays to produce a musical about the Centenary of Federation performed at her local school on the last day of term in 2000.



Students from Sutton Public School stand ready for their Federation play.

One of the projects will have a life beyond the Centenary – in fact it won't be ready until the Bicentenary of Federation. Richard Freeman from Table Cape Primary, near Wynyard in Tasmania, is working with his Year 6 students to build a time capsule that won't be opened until 2101. The time capsule will be used to show people 100 years from now how Australians celebrated the Centenary of Federation in 2001.

So that others can benefit from the work undertaken by this year's parliamentary fellows, information about the projects is available on the PEO web site at:

www.peo.gov.au/programs/fellowships.htm

This web site also has information about past fellowship projects, which are a valuable resource for teachers.

For more information on Parliamentary Teaching Fellowships

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