



# European Forum on Educational Administration

# NEWSLETTER

## Forum Européen des Administrateurs de l'Éducation

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**Editorial Note**

The editor welcomes contributions from Forum members. These can include letters to the editor, notes of books published on themes of cross-European interest, requests for assistance from the members, or other matters.

These should be sent (preferably in English) to the editor by E-Mail. We would be grateful if material for publication could be sent as soon as possible.

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**IN MEMORIAN TO LEN WATSON AND HEINZ ENGEL**

by Juan Salamé Sala

The first number of our Newsletter of the year 2007 has a sad mission- the one to remember the memory of two great persons, two friends, two convinced European –Len Watson and Heinz Engel. Both left us in 2006. They create a big space, impossible to fill in again.

Foundators of the EFEA, our association, they had known in the whole time of their lives, they showed us the way of heritage and friendship. They built up a big family around one idea. Europe. They transmit the lines between the different peoples, who reinforce themselves for education.

They let us back, but their work is alive and they leave an important heritage: the EFEA. The way is pulled out by their acting, their illusions and their courage. It's now up to us to continue the work, to open the doors of the EFEA to all, who will knock at this door in the same way as Len and Heinz has welcomed us, in the different moments, our friends of Central Europe.

Len and Heinz, you will be, you could be sure, that we make an effort from the basic to keep and reinforce the EFEA, for continuing your task, for taking the power, what you let us to do. As Pessoa said: "We are living as long as the others will speak of us." Len and Heinz you are living with us. From the bottom of the heart we thank you for your friendship.

Juan Salamé Sala  
President of the EFEA

**IN MEMORIAM LEN WATSON**

by Jože Mlakar

The English are actually just as good a people as the Italians or Germans or Poles or Slovenians. But yet, if you wanted to reproach Len with his English imperial superiority complex, he responded: «I'm not an Englishman, I'm a New Zealander. « Len Watson had the advantage of not being English, even though he always and everywhere represented his acquired motherland, England. It will be a daunting task for the Diocesan Classical Gymnasium to find such a true and devoted friend as Len was. Even when he lay on his deathbed, he bought a plane ticket to spend a week in Slovenia at St. Stanislav Institution. Instead of going to Slovenia he went to hospital and never returned from it again.

When once in Slovenia, Len was offered to stay at a hotel, but he refused the offer and choose to stay at the Institution's modest accommodation instead. He enjoyed walking along long school corridors, meeting students, teachers and cleaning and maintenance staff. Probably noone is aware that he paid a special attention particularly to the later. It seemed to him that we do not treat them with a proper respect and kept reminding us about our attitude. If you mentioned financial problems related to school, he waved the hand and said: »This can not be a problem, the main concern of a headmaster and a director should be the mission of the school.« Once he asked: « Does your school really live up to all your expectations? ». What should it be like? « was my answer. » Catholic, of course, « was his answer short and to the point ».

People who knew Len well were ashamed of harbouring any kind of hypochondriacally inclinations. He was always full of life, especially enthusiastic about and attracted to everything related to school, teachers and students. Although suffering from severe pain in his right leg affected by the spreading cancer, he attended the Centenary of St. Stanislav Institution and also the appointment of Dr. Anton Jamnik as the new bishop, whom he highly respected and deeply cared for.

When remembering Len Watson, we can only say: it is good to have such true friends and it is worth maintaining and fostering such relationships. Thank you, Len, for all your well meant thoughts, words and deeds!

Jože Mlakar

Head of Diocesan Classical Gymnasium Ljubljana and Vice president of EFEA

## PROFESSOR LEN WATSON

by Tim Simkins

The last twelve months have been ones of great sadness for the world of educational leadership and for BELMAS, in particular because Len Watson passed away on 28 July 2006 at the age of 73. What follows is a tribute to Len Watson, who appointed me as a lecturer to Sheffield Polytechnic as it then was in 1977, and was colleague, friend and role model for almost 30 years.



Len was a New Zealander – and proud of it! Following training as primary teacher, Len worked in a range of roles, including running a one-teacher rural primary school and working as an educational psychologist. He then worked for a year as a senior research fellow at the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. As if this wasn't enough, Len continued his studies on a part-time basis, completing a bachelors degree (starting in history and then converting to education) and a masters degree and then doing more work on sociology. Bitten by the 'sociology bug', Len came to England in 1965 to do a doctorate in the sociology of education at Oxford. However, while there he was offered a research post in the Department of Educational Studies by Bill (now Sir William) Taylor and then a staff tutorship at the Oxford Institute of Education. He was invited to run short courses for heads, deputies and school heads of department and it was the interest that he found in this work – and his growing reputation for it – that led him to decide to stay in England.

In 1969 Len left Oxford to take up a principal lectureship in education management at what had just become Sheffield Polytechnic. Len has reflected on what this move meant to him. Exciting and challenging debates were taking place in the field of educational administration as it was then called and the convergence of a changing field and a new kind of higher education institution which he viewed as young, expand-

ing and exciting produced tremendous creativity in Len and his colleagues in Sheffield. He was appointed to a management studies department and there met a whole new range of ideas and concepts, many of which he felt challenged traditional approaches to the study of educational administration. These not only included the centrality of aspects of organisational theory, but also a particular philosophy which prioritised, first, effective processes of management learning – for example, the use of in-tray exercises – and, secondly, the importance of the practical application of ideas, exemplified by the management ‘project’ as opposed to the traditional dissertation. These ideas of ‘theory for practice’ underpinned the developments he led at Sheffield in the years that followed: first a Diploma in Education Management was established and then a masters degree – the first awards in the country, I believe, to be so titled.

Len and his wife Kathy had now found their home at Sheffield and stayed there. He founded the Department of Education Management and presided over its expansion until it was one of the largest such teams in the country. Many of the students who passed through its doors went on to take up leadership positions in schools and colleges and others went on to play leading roles in the development of the field in universities. Throughout this period Len’s leadership embodied his core values: designing learning processes that enable leaders to develop their thinking within a context of robust practical application, and the importance of developing and sustaining partnership between higher education institutions and educational professionals in the field. Len retired from the University in 1997.

Len was a great servant of BELMAS. He was a founding member of the Society in 1971, served on Council for many years and as chair from 1988-90. Later he took on for number of years the role of the Society’s administrator – he gave himself the more modest title of ‘Office Manager’. That period was an important one for the Society – as with many voluntary organisations growth was presenting challenges and Len’s development of our administrative procedures was major contribution.

Len was also actively engaged internationally with a wide network of friends and colleagues in all parts of the world. He was one of the small number of British scholars who attended the first International Intervisitation Programme held in North America in 1966, and he chaired the conference organising committee when this four-yearly event returned to the UK for the second time in 1990. That conference presented a

particular challenge. Our Dutch partners were forced to pull out 6 months beforehand when enrolments looked uncertain. However, Len contributed to the British decision to carry on alone and led its implementation when all had seemed lost – as a member of the committee commented, this was an indication of his ‘courage, decisiveness and determination’. Needless to say, the conference was a great success.

The breadth of Len’s international contribution was considerable. He was much involved with the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration, and led a range projects in many countries on behalf of the British Council and others. Perhaps his most significant international contribution, however, was in Europe. He was a key figure in the European Forum for Educational Administration, acting as its Honorary Secretary for many years until his death. Despite his wide international experience, Len was initially reluctant to take this on because as a ‘mere colonial’ he knew nothing about Europe. However, he was persuaded to do so with great success. He played an active part in the organisation of the intervisitation programme jointly organised on EFEA’s behalf by the Society for Management of Education in Ireland and BELMAS in 2003 and jointly edited a volume of papers arising from the meeting. This was one of series which Len edited on behalf of EFEA and which provide a valuable contribution to the comparative study of educational leadership and management. A British colleague in the European Forum has commented on Len’s contribution, and in particular on his diplomatic ability to build consensus in an unthreatening way within contexts that could contain conflicting agendas and differing national perspectives.

Len was a great teacher and a mentor. He was always ready to listen and, most important, to engage in discussion and debate. The respect that he received from colleagues and students alike was enormous. In particular those facing the challenges of leadership in schools and colleges found Len unfailingly supportive – ready and able to engage with them on their own terms but also using his analytical ability and wide experience to challenge their ideas and broaden their perspectives. For example, he was always one of the first to draw new members into the inner circles of BELMAS, and he also encouraged and supported practitioners to develop their writing for publication. He used his editorship of two series of occasional papers – at Sheffield and for the European Forum – to facilitate this. As one head put it, he was ‘a guiding figure and almost a sponsor...his gentle comments moved us on... we appreciated his real human warmth and savvy... he was one of those people who helps others to grow’.



papers which he introduced to that conference made the event far more participative and interactive – a characteristic of BELMAS conferences to this day.

For many of us, Len has been a great personal and professional influence as well as one of the key figures in the development of educational leadership and management over the past 35 years. He will be sadly missed. He is survived by his wife Kathy and his two daughters, Elizabeth and Vivienne.

Tim Simkins

Note: I am grateful to the friends and colleagues who have helped me to compile this tribute and to Helen Gunter for providing me with a transcript of the interview that Len undertook with here as part of her PhD.

## OUR PROFESSOR: LEN WATSON

by Sjek Derks

Len was a Professor, a real one.

What is a real Professor?

Len could and was never tired to do so, explain everything to everyone. Unfortunately I never asked him what is a real professor.

There was no need to.

It was obvious for everyone Len was one. He has seen many countries, read many books, published fanatically, knew lots of people and he was a born teacher. In an approved and for some a little bit old fashioned way. By telling stories.

But, he could make you think.

Of course only when you had some energy left when he was finished educating you.

One of the many charming traits of Len was that he knew what he was doing to you. There was always a way of self-mockery in it. To newcomers he sometimes introduced himself as a “Kiwi”. Where were his roots?

I often thought the real ones were in EFEA.

Len was EFEA's Publications Officer and later our Honorary Secretary. All these words should be written full in capitals. But he was much more than that. In the Executive he functioned as our Conscience, documenting everything and asking the right questions about the relation between new ideas, past policies and statutes. For the marketing of the European Forum on Educational Administration he made Brochures, edited books and chased everyone to contribute to our Newsletter. And many many notes with

Those who worked closely with Len will have strong memories of his personal style. He had his own particular ways of doing things – he frequently asserted that ‘it is better to seek forgiveness than permission’. A former colleague remembers as a new lecturer trying something new which didn't work. Len's reaction was not one of blame or reprimand but of learning from the situation – indeed, ‘if some things don't go wrong you're not as innovative as you might be’. Len was always ready to challenge conventional thinking, but whatever he proposed was based on his core values about seeking solutions that worked, treating people as if they really mattered and engaging in honest, open debate, always underpinned by an impish sense of humour.

He was a great net worker and a great entrepreneur, before those skills became as essential for survival in the world of leadership development as they are today. Len brought these qualities to both large and small questions. For example, in 1976 when he led the organisation of the, then, BEAS conference in Sheffield, he argued that the rather traditional plenary/lecture formats that had dominated conferences until then were too stilted and outdated; the idea of members'

questions and remarks.

All this made Len become much more than a cornerstone of EFEA. He was the concrete of the building. Humorous, proud of his family, modest about himself.

A real big loss now he is gone.

Len knew that his end might come soon. He never complained about our lack of cooperation, he accepted us as busy people and tried to make our lives easier.

He must have worked day and night to get our archives in order.

It is up to us now to continue.

## HEINZ ENGEL

by Jože Mlakar

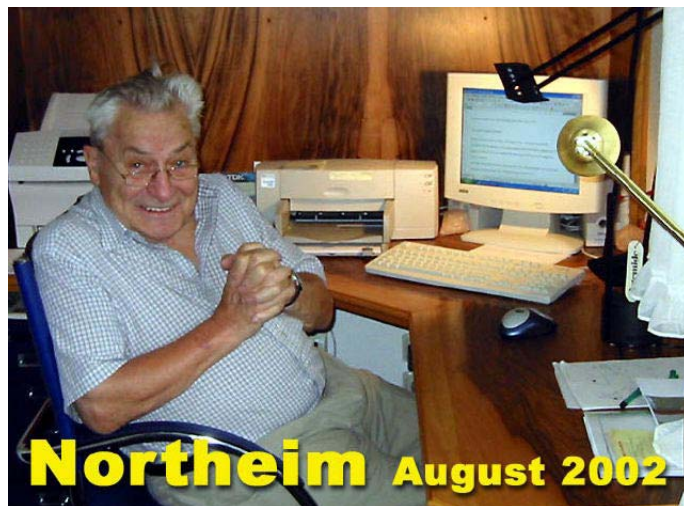
After the death of our dear friend Len Watson, the most active member of the EFEA, a man of diligence devoted so much to the idea of European connection in the field of educational system, we have derived comfort from the thought that there is still Heinz Engel among us, one of the founder of the European Forum on Educational Administration. Heinz was ill for some length of time. His last meeting with some of the members of the EFEA was in spring 2005 in Berlin during the regular conference of the Steering Committee. After that we had a correspondent with him only by e-mails. We also had some phone calls in that time.

Each time I could feel his great devotion towards the movement of the EFEA and his care for its future. I cannot avoid the fact that Heinz and Len had so many similarities in those last months of their lives. They both were suffering very much, but were keeping secret their pains to give us courage, good temper and optimism.

I feel as a consolation because I visited Heinz last September at his home in Northeim. We had together with his friend Peter Hütter a nice talk and went to a restaurant for lunch. I couldn't imagine that there is such a short time left to Heinz. They gave me some sandwiches and juice because I had about 1200 km back home by car. They wished me a safety drive back to Slovenia and Heinz called me during my drive to see if everything was all right.

I still remember that farewell with deep gratitude.

Jože Mlakar, Vice-President of the EFEA



## IN MEMORIAM HEINZ ENGEL

by Hermann Avenarius

Heinz Engel is dead. He died on the 5th of December, 2006 in his home town Northeim, Lower Saxony. His death at the age of 86 years brought an end to a long period of illness and pain. He died, however, peacefully and, according to his wishes, not in a hospital, surrounded by a complex technical equipment, but at his home, surrounded by his family which had taken care of him over many weeks in an admirable way.

Heinz was one of the founding fathers of the European Forum on Educational Administration. In 1976, he attended together with other educational administrators from the Continent the annual conference of the then British Educational Administration Society where it was in particular Professor George Baron of the University of London who brought up the idea of inaugurating a European association of education managers and of scientists in this field. One year later Heinz took part in the formal foundation of the European Forum at Sorbonne University in Paris. He was also one of the initiators of establishing the German Association for Educational Administration (DGBV).

In his active professional life as a teacher and, later on, as a school principal Heinz was a passionate educator and organiser. He had clear ideas about how to promote students and how to manage the development of education institutions. By his cooperative mind he motivated colleagues and students to perceive their roles not only as specific and distinct tasks but also as a joint responsibility. For eleven years, until his retirement in 1985, he was the director of the Regional Education Authority in Göttingen, Lower Saxony. This was the peak of his professional career, the more so since this office was a so called model institution which served as an experimental basis for new devel-

opments in organising and managing schools. In this capacity Heinz took part in new initiatives to support the professional development of school managers in the whole Lower Saxony and also in other German Länder.

After his retirement he did not rest, but committed himself in diverse fields of activities. It was above all the European Forum and the DGBV where he invested a lot of energy and time. He was member of the Steering Committee of the Forum and of the board of the DGBV during the first years of its existence, later on, from 1983 to 1993, as National Correspondent of the European Forum. When I was President of the European Forum in the years 1985 to 1987, Heinz was its Honorary Secretary. Our teamwork was splendid and it was me who profited most from it. He was so reliable a man, down to earth, with an astonishing ability to judge people. His mind was clear and precise, his capacity to communicate legendary, his sense for accurate planning impressive and great was his empathy towards colleagues with whom he had to work together. Heinz took great care especially in fostering the French-German ties within the European Forum. His deep personal friendship with Paul de la Taille contributed to a cooperation between French and German educational administrators which went far beyond mere professional dimensions. After the political change in 1989/90 with the fall of the Berlin wall and the break-down of communism in Central and Eastern Europe he spent a lot of energy, time and money in order to assist education administrators in building up under the umbrella of the European Forum their own national associations. His engagement was acknowledged by honorary memberships: of the European Forum, of the Association Française des Administrateurs de l'Éducation, of the DGBV, of the Latvian Forum. (I hope I did not overlook one.) Heinz was proud of these awards.

It was not only the achievements in official and semi-official functions by which Heinz supported the development of the network of the European Forum. Even more important were his social competencies. As firm and solid his convictions were, he was by no means rigid and obstinate in his attitudes. He perceived others as they were, respected them, did not treat them in a know-all way. He was a self-confident and simultaneously a modest man, often asked for his advice – not surprisingly so since he was an excellent unobtrusive advisor. I remember him as a fair and constructive mediator in preventing or solving conflicts. Great was his capacity and willingness to help when there was needed for help. He was a genius of friendship.

During the last years of his life he suffered from his increasing physical immobility, dreadful in particular for a man who liked mobility: as a passionate walker, as a passionate automobile driver and as a passionate pilot. But even here, thanks to his bravery, to his inventive capacity and last but not least to the driving support by his pilot friend Peter Hüter, he sometimes managed to outsmart his handicap so that he could attend meetings and see friends here and there. In his old days he learned to handle the PC and to become an expert in using the Internet which helped him to stay in contact with friends and colleagues world wide. He demonstrated how lifelong learning can compensate for deficiencies.

I had the opportunity to visit Heinz one day before he died. He was full of emotions recalling the encounters and activities within the European Forum. For him this network was of existential importance. I dare to say that it helped him to survive the difficulties of the last period of his life.

Heinz Engel – unforgotten, unforgettable.

Hermann Avenarius



HEINZ, “ANGEL” FROM NORTHEIM  
by Sjek Derks

Now he is dead Heinz might have a little appreciation for this silly wordplay with his family name, but alive he definitely would have protested to be called an Angel. However, not only for me he often was.

I first met him in Birmingham about twenty years ago. At that time I was pretty unfamiliar with the people and the mores of our Forum. I only knew it was hard

to become a member of the Dutch Forum, you had to wait to be invited and it was known standards were high and members were highly respected too. They were people dedicated to educational administration of various positions in the national system and I felt very honoured when finally I was asked to join them. My proud grew substantially, even when I noticed that the Dutch Forum at first sight looked like an old boy's network, with many references by their nicknames to international personalities I only knew from publications, but in reality they made me feel I was all but not an old boy yet. Nevertheless, the meetings were interesting and very useful.

How pleased I was to be invited for my very first intervisitation programme and how good it felt I was asked to chair a working party there. These feelings changed dramatically when I saw the list of participants in my working party. Mr. Engel would be member of my group. All good feelings about me immediately turned into big nervousness. Mr. Engel, one of the founding fathers of EFEA, often been cited in the Dutch Forum with great respect. A Very Important Person, one of the inner circles of EFEA, member of the Presidency, a real big Authority in Germany and in EFEA, a distinguished School Leader and Inspector, qualified in many regards, here before my young nose in a group I was responsible for in a country I didn't know much about.

However, this VIP introduced himself like: I'm Heinz Engel from Northeim; I would like to learn here..... And then he listened, intensely, his clear eyes fixed at the speaker in a gentle way. He always looked interested even in stupid procedural deliberations and always invited her or him to tell more.

I was sweating and nervous, but not for long. Every break Heinz came to compliment me with my leadership but dropped some suggestions how to continue as well. Just a remark, he said, it is very good, do it your own way, but may be it is helpful when you.....

Heinz was a master in using the so called "sandwich-method: first you say something nice, then you put a critical remark and at last you say something nice again.

The big difference with many sandwich-method users was however he always was true in all three. He saved me from quite a lot of mistakes, in particular at the visits to educational institutions. From that time it was Heinz who always when he introduced me to someone referred to me as the wonderful leader of a working party in Birmingham he enjoyed so much to

have been a humble member from.

Heinz was really interested in both the personal and professional life of the people he met.

Birmingham was the start of a friendship that deepened when our President Andre Lafond got ill and I, being Vice President, had to take over. Many advices came from Northeim, and lots of information. I started calling him our living memory and thanks to E-mail I could put Heinz on the mailing list of the Presidency and so we got an extra dimension in our discussions: An Angel guarding us and keeping the Forum on track in his subtle sandwich way.

When I was President I often consulted him. One of his great moments was in Riga the way we could honour our Treasurer for so long Bernadette Satin and our Publications Officer Len Watson. I'm sure Heinz has functioned many times for the Latvian Forum as an angel too.

Our friendship deepened in Portugal, in particular in the bus to Evora and the Algarve where we really understood each others deeply in the actual troubles of life. From that time more phone calls and visits to Northeim followed.

Heinz had a mission in life and he was great in the way he could make you trust him.

For me his name was his life, Angel from Northeim.

An Angel who knew his mistakes.

These are the best.

I would like to memorize two more angels from Northeim, Peter and Bärbel Hütter.

They made it possible to have Heinz with us, even when it actually was not possible any more like in Slovenia. This kind of friendship is something one can only hope to experience in ones life. From the time Heinz and Peter flew together till the day he and we all had to let him fly alone. Physically away from us, but in a sense still with us.

Like an Angel?

Sjek Derks and Hanneke Braaksma

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