

The MirandaNet Legacy



Christina Preston: How was Miranda conceived?

Marilyn Leask: The value of professional e-communities of practice in edtech

Linda La Velle: Miranda's contribution to edtech teacher education

Yasemin Oezcelik: What can researchers and teachers find of value on the MirandaNet website?

Steve Hall: MirandaMods - a contribution to the international Rhizomatic Learning Movement

Dai Thomas: The value of involving teachers in research activity

Bozena Mannova: You can give a person a fish, or you can teach them to fish...

Andree Jordan: The Peace Room (video)

Sarah Younie: Summing up..was the ChatBot right?

1800: [Farewell to Miranda - a drinks reception in the bar](#)



The founding of the MirandaNet Fellowship



In the 1950s my father was the first ever data processing manager at Citibank in London. I was about eight, attending the children's Xmas party at the Bank, when my father invited my sister and I up in the lift to see the computers. The trip in the lift was exciting. Then we had to put on plastic overshoes and shower caps to enter the sacred room. There were three large metal wardrobes with glass windows at the top where a large tape was circulating. I could not see what all the fuss was about.

But in the 1980s, our son who was also about 8, took his new Sinclair to show his grandad. "Here Granddad just plug it into the television and I'll show you how it works". My father looked suspicious and asked. "How many K?" "48", said my son knowledgeably. Dad turned to me and said, "You remember the computers I took you to see at the bank. Well they were 30K and he is not putting 48k through my television."

Computers came into my life when, as an English and Drama teacher in Croydon, I was asked to teach the first year Information Technology, with a smidgen of training, but without a computer of my own. Ask the Maths people, I suggested, who know about these things. No, they rejoined, we want someone who can explain things well. Nor sure about that, I said, even I need to know something about what I am talking about!

But I did not take my own advice and went on to write the first two adventure games for schools about information technology, with pictures. Scoop and NewsNet. Admittedly still black and white cartoons, but pictures all the same. A great embarrassment to BT who funded them as they were best sellers in the UK and The Netherlands and made a profit which was not allowed in their charity rules. Of course I did not profit financially, but I gained a real insight into how this new phenomenon, the internet, might impact on us all.

And then our daughter, Corinna, died, on Valentine's day 1989. A fluent French speaker at

16, she was also a talented artist and historian, tipped for Oxbridge, who had won a music scholarship to King's School Canterbury. The school orchestra played one of her compositions at a concert to raise money for Harefield Hospital where she died after a heart transplant operation. Oh, how she would have loved the Wall coming down and the Velvet Revolution later in the year.

So what I had learnt in those early years in my career about the power of the internet to connect people became my way back to living again myself. The founding of this international community in her memory in 1992 saved my sanity, what there is of it!

And here we now are, some 30 years later, still collaborating on a wide range of ideas all based on the value of communication across regional and national boundaries in a world of increasing international tensions.

So I am so delighted to introduce some of the two thousand MirandaNet Fellows who have reflected on what we have learnt and achieved in all that time. The videos of our session follow



MirandaNet Panels

MirandaNet Panel 1



[Video Link](#)

Transcript

When we finish all the very important talks, this will be handed around while we're chatting. And you have to make a completely original new shape out of this hat and then be photographed by Yasemin wearing it. Okay? I hate to tell you, but Sarah won the last competition, so you've got really big boots to fill, I tell you. Okay? So that's really important. This is sort of where MirandaNet started.

This, yes, Helen remembers, we had a wonderful, we had a wonderful conference dinner when we used to wear proper clothes, dresses and all that sort of stuff. And John Cuttle, whom some of you may know, his son bought a band that played jazz. And we were in the Art Depot Hall in the Institute of Education. And Margaret, suddenly, we discovered, knew how to teach the Charleston and before the dinner, didn't we? We all learnt from you how to do the Charleston. I'm just sort of helping you have ideas to get it to work. [Read more...](#)

MirandaNet Panel 2



[Video Link](#)

Transcript

I answered an ad by British Telecom, because my area is English and drama, to write some software, and I thought they wanted the Shakespeare of software. So I applied, and I went to Chelsea, Chelsea College, with BT and met the wonderful Margaret who was leading the project, and I wrote—how I did it, I really don't know—two adventure games about the miracle of the internet, particularly how journalists would use it, which was my field, even though at that time we didn't have the Internet. It was coming, but it wasn't actually there. And really embarrassed BT because it made a profit both in England and in Holland, and it was in charity, and they weren't supposed to make a profit, but I didn't get any money; academics usually don't.

[Read more...](#)



The Czech Miranda



The Czech Miranda, an Anglo-Czech alliance, was set up in 1994 and MirandaNet members have been involved in a range of activities that illustrate how the learning journey from school pupil to university undergraduate has been greatly facilitated in Prague. In the Czech Republic coding has been taught since the 1990s. Element were:

- Programming for pupils based on introduction of principles of algorithm creation
- Using programming tools as Robot Karel
- Introduction to programming with using Basic or Pascal programming language

However, with the availability of advanced personal computers in the 1990's the educational activities were oriented towards mastering software products like MS Word, Excel and other well-known applications as it did in the UK. The teaching of coding lost its importance for a time as the educational focus moved to Computer Applications.

In the last few years we have seen a renaissance of teaching programming on a large scale both for school pupils and for students. Besides what is teaching at school in frame of course Informatics, there are many activities in the Czech Republic where school pupils and students are attracted to programming. Much is done in schools in cooperation with Universities and CTU in Prague is strongly involved in it.

Courses in coding at the Czech schools are taught by students with the support of Czech Technical University(CTU). For example, there is a group of girl students at the CTU who teach courses for children from elementary and secondary schools. The results are excellent and the project proves that this type of lesson can be implemented into standard teaching at schools. Activities, where school pupils are now exposed to basics of programming, are developing well. Several platforms which support teaching of programming for schools and students are used at CTU:

- Programming in SCRATCH environment
- Working with BOFFIN electronic kit
- Lego Robot programming

Programming of "friendly" OZOBOT robots

Project Poster

PROJECT MIRANDA

2023
TPEA 35th Annual Conference
Educating and Empowering
All Our Digital Citizens
3rd - 4th July 2023
Božena (Boba) Mannová,
Czech Technical University in Prague

2020
Czech WIRANDA
Czech WIRANDA
Czech WIRANDA
Czech WIRANDA

2015
Christina Preston got Trnkova Medal from CTU in Prague

2010
Publications
THE ESTABLISHED THEORY OF SCAFFOLD TEACHING AND MENTORING ONLINE

2005
International workshop and seminars
TELEMATIC

2000
WEB WISE TEACHERS conference in Prague
TEMPUS – first EU project
ORACLE CONGRATULATES
European Women of Achievement Award
POŠKOLE?

1995
Czech MIRANDA founded

Other labels include: Birthday, European projects, MIRANDA schools, and various logos and photos.

Download the full size copy of this poster [here](#)

The Story of the Peace Room

World eCitizens "The Peace Room" by Andrée Jordan

The Peace Room began in the 1940s in a garden in South Africa when Mrs Bidwell built an actual Peace Room in her garden and her grandchildren had meetings in it, nominating people they thought had "made the world a better place", and voting in those they agreed on. The grandfather then wrote little biographies of each person in the Peace Room and put them on bookshelf for the children to read.

I discovered The Peace Room while working with MirandaNet in Free State South Africa and with the help of MirandaNet I made a digital version and put it on the internet as part of the WorldCitizens website, where schools could use it with their children. Children in South Africa had video conferences with children in the UK and then wrote their own biographies of their heroes, submitting them onto The Peace Room webpage where other children could read and vote for them. Those that gained enough nominations were then put onto the Peace Room bookshelves and people could read the entries.

I have developed a suite of resources to use with The Peace Room. Lesson Plans, biography pro formas, and a PowerPoint to use with the debate whether as a classroom or using video conferencing with children in another country.

The Peace Room encourages a wide range of skills needed by the youth of today...

Help Needed

Note: The Peace Room is currently Archived and is non functional. We are planning to restart it during the summer. If you are interested in The Peace Room please contact:

Andrée Jordan: ajglobalise21c@gmail.com

Join the discussion at: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100093471606021>

Download the the full text pdf. version of the Peace Room [here](#)

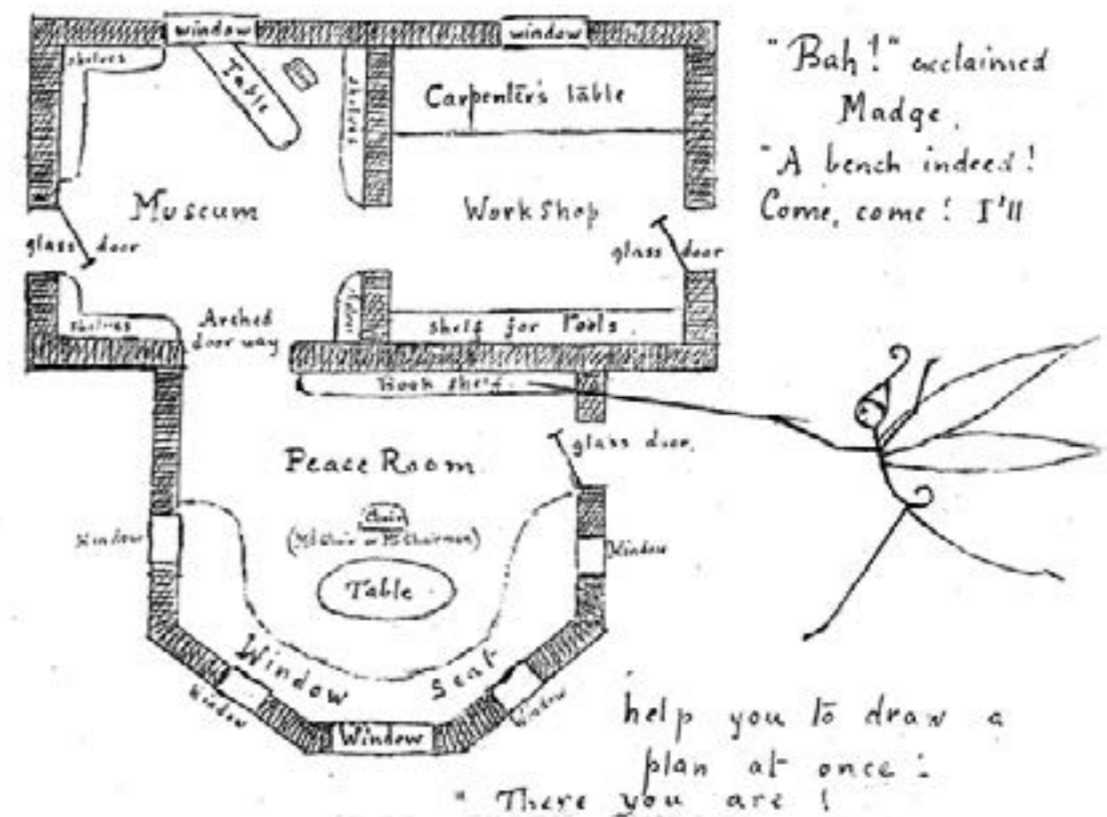


Photo Gallery!



Over the years since 1992 MirandaNet Fellows have enjoyed conferences all over the world as well as having a stand at the BETT exhibition in London every year. At each of these conference we aimed not to give speeches only but to listen to each other and develop new ideas from the collective wisdom of our members. We shared these ideas as well on Twitter Walls, digital concept maps and even Post-its in a form of conference that we call a MirandaMod. The kind of collaborative learning that digital technologies facilitated we called Braided Learning: weaving strands of ideas together like plaits.



The MirandNet Legacy



The MirandaNet Fellowship legacy

Dr Christina Preston retired Professor of Education Innovation and founder of the MirandaNet Fellowship.

We asked ChatGPT, the new opinion formers, what the legacy of MirandaNet was judged to be at the end of three decades as an international e-community. The answer came back immediately: impressive in speed and accuracy but rather chilling looked at from the perspective of human beings. Where will we be after the next three decades? This was ChatGPT's judgment with all the disclaimers that we would expect?

"As an AI language model, I do not have access to the specific plans or decisions of MirandaNet. However, if MirandaNet were to close down, its legacy would depend on the impact it had on education and the technology industry during its existence. MirandaNet has been a reputable organization dedicated to promoting the use of technology in education. Its members are experienced educators, researchers, and technology experts who have contributed significantly to the development and implementation of technology in education. If MirandaNet were to close down, its legacy would be the knowledge and expertise it has shared with the education community and the impact it has had on the use of technology in education. Its members' contributions and collaborations would continue to influence educators, researchers, and technology experts in the field, even if the organization itself no longer existed."

Working together with TPEA

In the heady days of the 1980s and 90s when computers were just being introduced into education the UK was leading the field. Several professional organisations were founded to help the education professionals to develop and share their knowledge and their strategies

for implementation: Naace, The Technology, Pedagogy and Education Association (formerly ITTE) and the MirandaNet Fellowship. MESHGuides was also started to make the research findings about subjects such as EdTech easier for busy teachers to assimilate into their practice.

Founded in 1992 the MirandaNet Fellowship was the first 'e-community of practice' for edtech professionals in education. The membership has always included a broad community of teachers, school leaders, lecturers and even librarians who could see the potential of edtech in teaching and learning: <https://mirandanet.ac.uk/about/> It was founded by Christina Preston in memory of her talented daughter who died at sixteen just one term after winning a music scholarship to King's School, Canterbury

<https://mirandanet.ac.uk/the-founding-of-mirandanet-2/>

On the website are details about the membership philosophy and approach <https://mirandanet.ac.uk/the-mirandanet-fellowship/>

A key element of the website is the knowledge hub where teachers, schools leaders and lecturers in further and higher education have been publishing since 1992. Academic papers, case studies, conference reports and articles are an important resource for researchers in general and for historians into international computer education in particular. One key entry is a reassembly of millions of pounds worth of Becta research that was archived by the Tory government in the week they took office in 2010.

<https://mirandanet.ac.uk/the-knowledge-hub/>

An important focus of MirandaNet work was the funding raised from companies, charities, government and companies to fund research and professional development for teachers and lecturers. <https://mirandanet.ac.uk/testimonials/> This funding allowed MirandaNet Fellows to make a major contribution to professional development strategies in edtech.

<https://mirandanet.ac.uk/professional-development/>. In fact, MirandaNet theory and practice called Braided Learning is now acknowledged to be a key element in the international school of Rhizomatic Learning (Hall et al. 2023) as well as a key example of e-communities of practice (Wenger 1998, 2002 and 2004)

MirandaNet Events

The Future of the MirandaNet Fellowship

Over the decades MirandaNet Fellows have worked closely with other organisations. In particular, Christina Preston has helped to run conferences partnering Naace, MESHGuides, TPEA and ICET including one in Bedford on July 3rd/4th 2023. Members of TPEA and the MirandaNet Fellowship have now decided that they will be all the stronger if they merge.

The extensive MirandaNet website built by the members will be available to all professionals if it is archived by the British Library. The members are invited to transfer to TPEA at no cost and the Mirandalink email community will remain active. Archiving the MirandaNet Fellowship website

After three decades the MirandaNet Fellowships extensive website will be archived by the British Library. The UK Web Archive was established in 2004 to capture and archive websites from the UK domain and across the web, responding to the challenge of a digital black hole in the nation's memory. It contains specially selected websites that represent different aspects of UK heritage on the web, as well as important global events. They work closely with leading international institutions to collect and permanently preserve the web, and the open UK Web Archive can be seen at <http://www.webarchive.org.uk/>.

The MirandaNet website is valuable to international education professionals because instead of paying a membership fee, Dr Christina Preston, the founder (add url) invited those joining to contribute a paper about an area they were interested in. This means that the website celebrates 30 years of professional knowledge and is widely used by researchers into the history of computers in the curriculum of schools and universities all over the world where Fellows worked and presented at conference (<https://mirandanet.ac.uk/the-knowledge-hub/>).

References

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