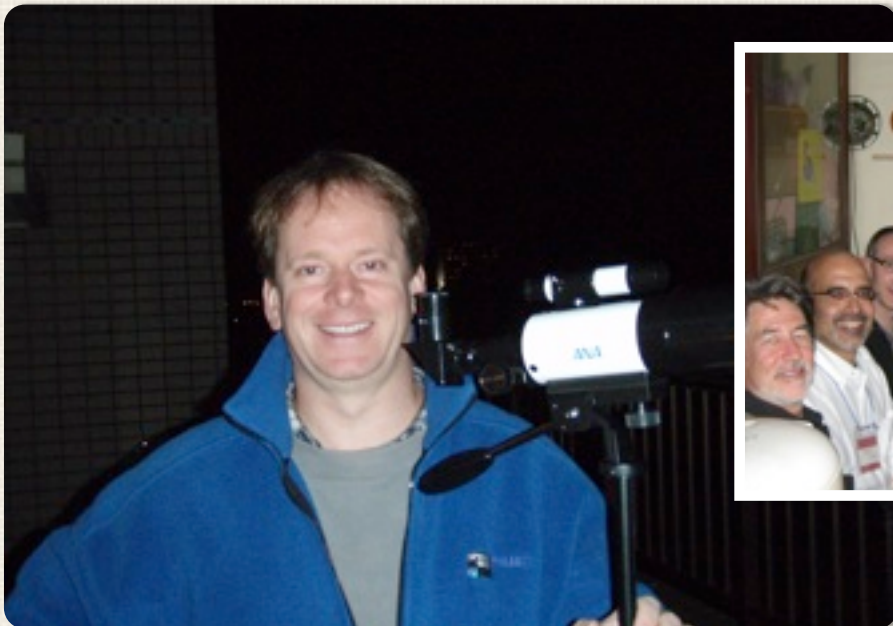


## STEPHEN J. DAVIES



LEFT: STEVE DAVIES  
ABOVE: AT LD/CUE/TC DINNER,  
NOVEMBER 2008, AT PINK COW  
IN SHIBUYA

## Please join us in remembering Steve...

追悼：スティーブ・デイヴィスを偲んで...

### Steve Davies of Miyazaki

International College, a long time Learner Development SIG member, passed away early February. He not only wrote *the Adventure of Magenta M* series (*Learning Learning*, 2008, (15) 1 - 2009, (16) 2), but also contributed his views on learning and teaching in both *Autonomy You Ask!* (2003) and *More Autonomy You Ask!* (2006), taking a unique approach of blending fiction and theory. This section of *Learning Learning* is dedicated to honor and celebrate Steve's work and life.

長年に渡り学習者ディベロプメント部会メンバーとして活動されてきたスティーブ・デイヴィス（宮崎国際大学）が2月初旬に母国・英国にて永眠された。彼は本誌・「学習の学習」における「マジェンタの冒険」シリーズのみならず、部会発行の論文集「Autonomy You Ask! (2003) 及び[More Autonomy You Ask! (2006)]にフィクションと教育理論を融合させた独創的な論文を発表した。この

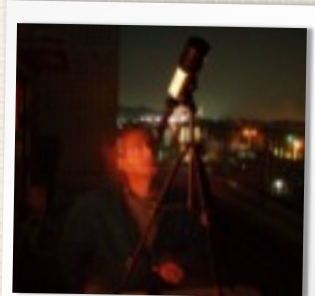
セクションではスティーブの功績と人柄を偲びたい。

### Memories of Steve

[from Stacey Vye]

Steve was one of a kind and I think if someone had had a chance to meet him -even just once- he was that kind of person you would never have been able to forget. When I hung out with him at JALT conferences, he'd either have this impeccable timing to be able to deliver a funnier-than-anything cynical joke and ask the right questions for me to spit out a funny joke right back; kind of like a 'manzai' team without an audience. In fact, I didn't realize I could be humorous and I continually wonder how could he draw that kind of cynical banter right out of my mouth. But my best memory of Steve is when he and Hugh Nicoll got their return flight time after a JALT conference in Tokyo back to Kyushu off

by a couple hours, so they had to rush from the venue in order to catch their flight. When Hugh realized the time glitch and told Steve the situation, Steve playfully laughed, packed up his gear, smiled, waved, and ran for the door as he said goodbye to me like a little kid with his bags and luggage waving about. It's a memory that really sticks with me because he drew one of the biggest smiles from me instead of a joke! Well Steve, I want to tell you a joke now, but instead my heart is sending you a lot of smiles, love, and light your way. May you rest in peace, buddy.



STARGAZING STEVE

# Please join us in remembering Steve...

追悼：スティーブ・デイヴィスを偲んで...

[from Andy Barfield]

I didn't really know Steve D. until the Autonomy You Ask! (AYA) project, and then we didn't meet for a while because he didn't make it to the Writers' Retreat in Osaka. Steve had, though, sent in a draft of his chapter, and people at the Retreat wrote feedback to his draft, which was then faxed to him a few days later. Steve also joined us in writing the Preface to AYA and in helping to fashion an ironic and playful tone to the opening of the book (toning things up... and quite definitely sideways, too, I hasten to add).

I have a very happy memory of Steve standing in front of a wall-size poster in an LD forum, a few years ago, the poster an extremely large version of one of the drawings from his AYA chapter. Slightly shy, a little lost, looking almost like he would prefer to be painting, Steve just stood there with an ironic smile and those deep, sometimes sad, shining-with-warmth eyes, as if saying 'Come on guys things are a whole lot more wacky than that!'

Steve had a great sense of mischief there and interest in authoring the world in different quite idiosyncratically creative ways.

He delighted in noticing the quiriness of life around him, as in this short PS from an email message he sent last November from England:

"PS Very cold this morning. Below freezing. Ice on puddles. Frost. So why was that geezer de-icing his car in a tee-shirt?"

He also wrote about joining a writers' group in Cheltenham:

"We sit scribbling in the back room of a pub called the Beehive where they have these hideous low wattage bulbs. It

has a real Dickensian feel, not that it seems to help the quality of the writing much. At least the ale is up to the mark, but at £3.00 a pint it ought to be."

I smile and almost chuckle each time I read those vignettes. At least the beer wasn't Dickensian, either, and neither was Steve. Creative to a fault, sad eyes, warm smile, dry humour, laconic sense of the absurd. Steve.



AT LD/CUE/TC DINNER, 2008

[from Amanda Bradley]

I worked with Steve from 2000-2007 when I left our common workplace. On my arrival I had met with an unforeseen cultural challenge for which all my skills were useless. Steve would offer me blackcurrant tea and comforting chat. He talked about things and ways back home, London Uni, and joked about the two great social menaces of our nation (in the past that is!)...Oxon and Cantab.

When I left, Steve alone bade me farewell and insisted on helping me move, carrying my most treasured books to a new office and a new life in a place of greater beauty and peace where I will finish my career. Steve mused on the empty office and how it would take on a life. It has now. The books we carried and arranged are the reflection of myself and all that is dear

to me. And until now only Steve was party to this.

Steve was the mercurial emissary for my journey as a teacher. He will always be special to me.

[from Ellen Head]

I got to know Steve through working on the AYA and MAYA anthologies. I remember him being surrounded by a group laughing at the illustrations of the weird creatures in his article – the Clarissa, Naals and Metakins. The creatures had fairly obvious symbolic relationships with stereotypical actors in the story of language learning in Japan, which made me uneasy even though I couldn't suppress a laugh: "The Naal had always been a home-loving species, fond of complicated mind-games and rarely going anywhere..."

They took delight in composing elaborate written texts before slipping back into biostasis." (Davies 2003, p. 234) The story becomes a framework for looking back at material related to Steve's own teaching, but at the same time setting the story in a future sci-fi world allows him to question the very basis of classroom teaching: "The Metakin have no need for education since...they have learned how to surgically enhance their own brains." (p. 234). If this paper was a disturbing but amusing read, the next one was even more so. For MAYA Steve wrote a medieval murder mystery, and I was

lucky enough to be paired with him as "reader-responder". I enjoyed the melodrama of the medieval setting, used here to highlight the paradox that when we monitor someone else's work, we may be infringing on their creative freedom. Of course this is what teachers do every day by asking students to show us their writing, but

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追悼：スティーブ・デイヴィスを偲んで...

we hope that in the context of a trusting pedagogic relationship, such monitoring is not a violation. Not so among the power-hungry monks of this story, who make life a misery for their subordinates and stick at nothing to take the credit for their work. The rebellious scholar in this story refuses to work at the pace and within the parameters demanded. Asked to self-evaluate, he writes "I am a multiple of selves and all of them is me." (Davies 2006, p. 209). This poses the question "Can you honestly say you are never in the role of the pressurizing, hypocritical overseer?" I have known Steve mainly through his writing so that is what I have concentrated on here. During the time when he wrote the Magenta M detective serial for LL, I would often be caught laughing wildly in my office late at night as a new draft arrived. Thank goodness we have Steve's writing. If you haven't read them yet, check out the Magenta M stories and the AYA and MAYA pieces. His blending of fiction and linguistic theory was unique and brought not only humour, but underneath it a strongly critical voice to our group. I wish I could have got to know him better. I also wish we had his critical and witty voice still with us reacting to the things that are going on now.

[from Alison Stewart]

I first met Steve at the LD/CUE SIG party in the Pink Cow in 2007. "I've got some ideas for a series of articles in Learning Learning", he said.

"That's great! Tell me more."

"Well, it's a fictional treatment of language teaching issues. It's set in the future in an inter-galactic language teaching center. The main character is a kind of troubleshooter who goes out

and investigates these teaching problems on various distant planets. For instance, she goes to this planet where the women learn to read English, but the men just want to stick to their old alien hunting practices."

"Erm..."

"I was thinking of another episode where the heroine - I'm thinking of calling her Magenta - has to interact with robotic pets who are more intelligent than humans. That would be more a critique of research methods in academia. Then there's another on motivation: what does this mean when beings from other planets have completely different value systems?"

"That sounds ... interesting."

"Science fiction is a great way to think about critical issues like inter-galactic communication and the ethics of imposing our language and culture on another planet. I've got some other ideas too: how about learner autonomy and missionaries in the South Pacific? Or a language learning and mind-reading? Or the Wild West, or ....."

Steve was a true inspiration: creative, funny, wacky, thoughtful, irrepressible, original. I'm grateful to have had the chance to know him a little.

## Steve's Contribution to LD Publications

### Anthologies

Davies, S. (2003). Learner portfolios: Who is at the controls? In A. Barfield & M. Nix (Eds.), *Autonomy You Ask!: Learner and Teacher Autonomy in Japan I*. Tokyo: Japan Association for Language Teaching Learner Development Special Interest Group.

Davies, S. (2006). Sebastian's journal: A short story about the darker side of learner autonomy. In E. Skier & M. Koyama (Eds.), *More Autonomy You Ask!: Learner and Teacher Autonomy in Japan 2*. Tokyo: Japan Association for Language Teaching Learner Development Special Interest Group.

### The Adventure of Magenta M Series

Episode #1, *The Adventure of Magenta M*. Learning Learning, 2008, Vol. 15 (1), 32 - 37.

<http://ld-sig.org/LL/15-1toc.html>

Episode #2, *The Strange case of Lady Camilla Blemley*, Learning Learning, 2008, Vol. 15 (2), 27 - 34.

<http://ld-sig.org/LL/15-2toc.html>

Episode #3, *Dinner for two*, Learning Learning, 2009, Vol. 16 (1), 35 - 37.

<http://ld-sig.org/LL/16-1toc.html>

Episode #4, *Mandroids, fembots, and the power of learner literacy*, Learning Learning, 2008, Vol. 16 (2), 40 - 47.

<http://ld-sig.org/LL/16-2toc.html>