Linda Willis’ commitment to ALEA has covered a number of roles. Almost all of these roles are in collaborative situations, thus highlighting the priority Linda gives to sustaining the ALEA community. Linda has been an active volunteer of the ALEA Meanjin Local Council, serving as an elected Committee Member from 2014. She leads the role of awarding ALEA certificates to preservice teachers at UQ, QUT and Griffith University. In 2016 she hosted the ALEA Meanjin Writers’ Camp with author Nick Earls for 55 young student writers. In 2014 she assisted with professional development for teachers and preservice teachers and has been a regular workshop presenter at ALEA National Conferences.

Linda’s most significant contribution is the nine editions of Practical Literacy: the Early and Primary Years (PLEPY) she co-edited from 2014 - 2017. One issue stands out as particularly memorable, the 20th Anniversary special edition. Linda also served as a book chapter reviewer for ALEA’s 40th birthday occasional publication.

Linda has actively promoted the aims and purpose of the Association. In her role as PLEPY co-editor, she was instrumental in bringing the ALEA Declaration to the attention of journal readers. Linda has also been a regular contributor to ALEA’s publications.

Linda’s active service to ALEA commenced with Meanjin Local Council in 2014 and continues today. Her tireless work as PLEPY co-editor commenced in 2014 and continued until 2017. Linda was an invaluable resource when ALEA Queensland hosted the AATE/ALEA National Conference in July 2013. Linda served as a volunteer pre-conference workshop host and as a conference host for the duration of the conference. She also worked with the AATE/ALEA Conference Steering Committee during 2010.

Linda actively enhances ALEA’s visibility, building positive ALEA connections with teachers, authors, academics, researchers, preservice teachers, literacy experts in each Australian State and Territory by extending personal invitations to write for PLEPY. She has built enduring connections between ALEA and local Universities and schools by mentoring experienced as well as graduate teachers to write publications and present their work. She promotes ALEA and its publications through university courses (setting articles and occasional publications for coursework; workshopping activities from ALEA journals and occasional publications; advocating for the benefits of membership) and online through FaceBook (which includes contacting past students to advertise ALEA professional learning).

It is therefore with great pleasure that ALEA honours Linda Willis with a Special Services Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to ALEA.