

Welcome to the second edition of the Geography Bulletin for 2014. Featured in this edition are a series of articles on New Zealand by Nick Hutchinson, Convener of the 2015 biannual conference of the Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA). Nick contributes articles on Pure Canterbury, a geographer's perspective of New Zealand's Canterbury Plains; an article, A Millennium Ago, which is an historical geography of New Zealand; an investigation of the perceptions of liveability on the Kauri Coast and the East Coast of the Far North District; a study of the South Island Highlands; and a transect across the Volcanic Plateau from Tukorehe Scenic Reserve to Te Urewa National Park.

By way of contrast, Brendan Stewart of the King's School, Parramatta, investigates why students, particularly boys, can develop a deeper understanding of Geography through an engagement in fieldwork.

The GTA thanks Nick and Brendan for their valued contributions.

GTA HSC Student Lectures

More than 350 HSC students took advantage of the HSC student lectures in 2014. Lectures, presented by Grant Kleeman, David Hamper and Chris Tanna, were held at the Hurstville Civic Centre, Callaghan Secondary College in Newcastle, the University of Wollongong and St Andrews Cathedral School, Sydney. In 2015 GTA NSW will be taking the lectures to a number of regional centres.



GTA NSW Annual Conference

The GTA's Annual Conference will be held on 5 August 2014 at the Rydges Hotel World Square. The theme of this year's conference is Liveability—Geography Comes Alive. The focus will be on syllabus links to Stage 6, and Australian Communities and Issues in Australian Environments (Stage 5). Fieldwork opportunities will be offered after lunch at key CBD and inner city places. Professor Phillip O'Neil from UWS will present the opening keynote speaker and lead a fieldwork activity. Representatives from Barangaroo, Contour Education and NSW Department of Planning and Environment will conduct presentations and run fieldwork. As an alternative to fieldwork, Sydney Olympic Park Education Unit will also be running a workshop in the afternoon, presenting their education resource about urban dynamics affecting the Olympic site and surrounding suburbs.

Conference information and the registration form can be found at: http://www.gtansw.org.au/files/prof_learning/2014/GTA%20conference%20flyer_14_v2.pdf



Dr Grant Kleeman, Editor



AGTA Conference 2015

The 2015 AGTA conference will be held from 11-16 January 2015 in Rotorua, New Zealand. The conference's major sponsor, **Group Events**, have arranged special return conference airfares with Air New Zealand, conference accommodation as well as pre and post-conference tours.

Conference program:

Date	Activity
Sunday 11 January	Registration and welcome function
Monday 12 January	Welcome, keynote presentations, workshops and evening social event
Tuesday 13 January	Fieldtrips
Wednesday 14 January	Fieldtrips and conference dinner
Thursday 15 January	Keynote presentations and workshops
Friday 16 January	Post-conference tours

Pre-conference tours

- Tour 1: Northland (Tuesday 6 January–Sunday 11 January)
- Tour 2: Central North Island, Middle Earth & Blue Duck Station (Tuesday 6 Sunday 11 January)

Conference fieldtrips:

- Tour 1: White Island
- Tour 2: Hells Gate Geothermal Process & Mokoia Island Urban/Environmental & Rotorua
- Tour 3: Scion – Forest products – Innovation & Farm Tour focusing on sustainability
- Tour 4: Waimangu Volcanic Valley, GNS Volcanic Activity Centre, Huka Falls, Wairakei Geothermal power & Lake Taupo

Post-conference tours

- Tour 3: Christchurch only (Friday 16–Sunday 18 January)
- Tour 4: South Island (Friday 16–Wednesday 21 January)

Additional information regarding the conference can be found at:
<http://agta.asn.au/Conferences/conf2015/index.php>

2014 Australian Geography Competition

The Australian Geography Competition is a joint initiative of the Australian Geography Teachers Association and the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland. In New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory the Competition is sponsored by Macquarie University, Sydney.

The number of students entering in 2014 was 70,719, from 761 schools. While this represents a decline in the number of students from 2013, it was great to see an increase in the number of schools entering this year up from 725 in 2013. From New South Wales, 275 schools entered with 25,892 students and from the Australian Capital Territory, 19 schools entered with 2,682 students.

Congratulations to the NSW and ACT students who came first in their age divisions, and to the school winners:

Category

NSW Junior	Andrew Guang, <i>Sydney Boys High School (equal first in Australia)</i>
NSW Intermediate	Wai Lam Wong, <i>James Ruse Agricultural High School</i> & Jeffrey Wang, <i>Shore School (both equal first in Australia)</i>
NSW Senior	Jamie Abel, <i>Shore School</i> Oscar Fawkes, <i>Sydney Grammar School</i> Joshua Hinton, <i>Fort Street High School</i> Angus Konta, <i>St Andrews College – John Paul II Campus</i> Alexander Morony, <i>Smith's Hill High School</i> Keita Richardson, <i>Normanhurst Boys' High School</i> Stephen Roche, <i>Sydney Grammar School (all equal first in Australia)</i>
NSW School	Sydney Grammar School (<i>Australia first</i>)
ACT Intermediate	Tara Dabrowski, <i>Canberra Girls Grammar School</i> Tristan Miller, <i>Lyneham High School</i> Joshua Welling, <i>Canberra Grammar School</i>
ACT Senior	Niels Beowulf-McGowan, <i>Canberra Grammar School</i> Miles Davis, <i>Canberra Grammar School</i> Thomas Willson, <i>Canberra Grammar School</i>
ACT School	Canberra Grammar School

The following students also received prizes for outstanding results in the Competition:

Junior	Matthew Blyth, <i>Merewether High School</i> Nicolas Janjevski, <i>Barker College</i> Yongqin Li, <i>Sydney Girls High School</i> Maxwell Semmens, <i>The Scots School - Bathurst</i> Luke Stewart-Yates, <i>Normanhurst Boys' High School</i>
Intermediate	Sophie Booth, <i>Frensham</i> William Hughes, <i>Merewether High School</i> Brendan McKee, <i>Cherrybrook Technology High School</i> Andreas Orsmond, <i>Sydney Grammar School</i> Philip Rowe, <i>Barker College</i>

A number of NSW and ACT schools ranked in the top 10 schools in Australia.

Rank	School
1	Sydney Grammar School
2	Canberra Grammar School
3	Normanhurst Boys' High School
4 (equal)	Camberwell Grammar School
6	Sydney Boys High School
7	Merewether High School
8 (equal)	James Ruse Agricultural High School
8 (equal)	Shore School
10	Baulkham Hills High School

High-scoring senior students in Year 11 or less are selected from the Competition to take part in Geography's *Big Week Out*. This is a week of geographical activities focusing on fieldwork and spatial technologies. In 2014 it will be held in Sydney's Northern Beaches from 28 September to 3 October, and organised by a Geography Teachers' Association of New South Wales committee under the leadership of Milton Brown. Australia's team to the 2015 International Geography Olympiad in Moscow will be selected from students who participate in Big Week Out. Representing NSW and ACT in the 2014 Big Week Out will be:

NSW	Jamie Abel, Shore School Catriona Calantzis, Danebank Anglican School for Girls Canada Gavin, Kinross Wolaroi School Keita Richardson, Normanhurst Boys' High School
ACT	Emily Alder, Canberra Girls Grammar School Miles Davis, Canberra Grammar School

The 2014 International Geography Olympiad will be held from 12 to 18 August in Krakow, Poland. Thirty-seven countries are expected to participate. Four students have been selected to represent Australia, based on their performances at the 2013 Geography's *Big Week Out*:

Janice Mui, MacRobertson Girls' High School, Melbourne
Oscar Fawkes, Sydney Grammar School
Stephen Roche, Sydney Grammar School
Leon Shi, Melbourne High School

With the greater flexibility allowed by the discontinuation of the Final for Under 16s, the Competition organisers made a determined effort to raise the average score this year by including more skills questions and fewer based on place-specific knowledge (i.e. the state and territory questions). This is reflected in the comparison of the Australian average scores for 2013 and 2014 presented in the following table:

Age level	2013	2014
Junior (out of 30)	12.5	15.7
Intermediate (out of 40)	17.6	22.7
Senior (out of 35)	14.8	18.9



The Competition organisers are currently investigating commencing a competition for Year 5– 6 students. The organisers would encourage any Primary teachers interested in providing input or ideas to contact me (contact details below). I would ask secondary teachers in F–12 schools to pass this on to their primary colleagues.

The Competition organisers appreciate the support of NSW and ACT teachers in entering their students in the Competition. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries.

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