



The
Geography Teachers' Association
of New South Wales Inc.

Annual Report – December 2014

1. Membership

- As of 1 October 2014, membership was 428. This has steadily risen from 370 during May 2014. The GTANSW looks forward to continued growth during 2015.
- After the AGM on 15 October 2014, the Committee for 2014-2015 will be:

Executive Officers:

President: Susan Caldis
Vice Presidents: Milton Brown, Lorraine Chaffer, Grant Kleeman, Martin Pluss
Honorary Treasurer: Grant Kleeman
Minutes Secretary: Paul Alger
Secretary: Martin Pluss
Immediate Past President: Nick Hutchinson

Council Members:

Paula Cooper, Keith Hopkins, Brett Jackson, Grace Larobina, David Latimer, John Lewis, Sharon McLean, David Proctor, Louise Swanson, Darren Tayler, Steve Weingarth

Co-opted:

Karen Tuhon, Carol Pogson

The GTANSW Council would like to extend their sincere thanks and appreciation to Sarah Menassa-Rose for her work over many years as Secretary of GTANSW. Due to family and work commitments Sarah has decided to step down from the secretarial role but will remain as a Councillor, and we look forward to her continued involvement. For 2014 – 2015, the GTANSW Council welcomes two new Councillors: David Proctor (Menai High School) and Louise Swanson (Epping Boys High School). Finally, meeting space has been a concern for 2013 –2014 and the GTANSW Council would like to again extend their sincere thanks and appreciation to Steve Weingarth who was able to secure a suitably located venue for the Council to meet during 2014 at no cost to the Association.

2. Office

- The GTANSW Council greatly appreciates the sustained, efficient and quality work by key staff from the NSW Professional Teachers' Council - Kim Tsolakis, Shreela Pradhan, Mai Mai Lin, Jill Sillar and Bernadette Motulalo. They provide extensive support to the GTANSW through their ongoing work in administrative, financial, publishing and organizational tasks.

3. Professional development and student engagement

- There is no 'sub-committee' allocated to organise professional development and student engagement activities, instead, committee members volunteer to coordinate these events. Professional development and student engagement events for 2014 included the Arthur Phillip Awards, the HSC Exam Review series; a Hunter Valley Mini Conference; Global Education's Australia's Engagement with Asia: Indonesia; the HSC Geography student lecture series; the Annual Conference; and Geography's Big Week Out.

- **The agreed focus for our professional learning and student engagement program in 2014 was around Stage 5 and 6 Geography – skills, content, inquiry based learning and fieldwork; and in providing support for early career teachers and those new to teaching Geography.** These focus areas have also been reflected in many of the articles submitted for publication in the *Geography Bulletin*.
- **Thank you to Keith Hopkins for organising the 2014 HSC Review series.** They were held during March at two venues: Newcastle (Merewether High School) and Sydney (Loreto Kirribilli). Each one was well-attended, after school hours. The focus was to deconstruct the 2013 HSC Geography examination questions and to provide insight to the marking guidelines so that teachers could identify potential strengths and areas for improvement in their delivery of the HSC course and related assessment. The Council would like to sincerely thank Keith for his sustained contribution to this program over the last few years. We look forward to the continuation of this program in 2015 by David Latimer.
- **Thank you to Grace Larobina for coordinating the Arthur Phillip Awards; to Paul Alger and Brett Jackson for assisting with the marking process; and to Martin Pluss, John Lewis and Susan Caldis for their attendance and participation in the ceremony.** The Arthur Phillip Awards recognises outstanding achievement by students - and their teachers - in the HSC Geography exam from the previous year. There is also a marking and feedback process for students who submit fieldwork projects (often the Senior Geography Project or the Research Action Plan). Awards and prizes are presented at an awards evening with a guest speaker. This year, the event was held at ACU Strathfield on Friday 2 April 2014. The guest speaker was Professor Deirdre Dragovich from the Faculty of GeoSciences, University of Sydney. The Council would like to sincerely thank Grace for leading this program over the last couple of years and welcome her continued involvement with the Arthur Phillip Awards for 2015.
- **Thank you to Keith Hopkins, Sally Egan and Susan Caldis for hosting teacher professional learning around the Global Education Australia's Engagement with Asia: Indonesia resource.** These events were held at their schools on 9 September (Loreto Kirribilli), 11 September (Dubbo Distance Education facility) and 13 May (Castle Hill High School) respectively. There were 45 attendees registered for the May event and 17 registered for each of the September events. Feedback and evaluations indicated strong support for the locations, the quality of the presentation by Rod Yule and depth of information available as part of the teaching resource.
- **Thank you to Dr Grant Kleeman for organising the Hunter Valley Mini Conference; and to Susan Caldis, David Hamper, Nick Hutchinson and Dr Grant Kleeman for delivering the presentations.** This was held in mid-March 2014 at Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley. There were 98 attendees who traveled from regional NSW (such as, Grafton, Dubbo, Upper and Lower Hunter, Newcastle, Echuca) and also from Sydney. The focus of the conference was on Stage 6 Geography (HSC course and the Preliminary course Senior Geography Project). There was also a session devoted to discussing ways in which GTANSW can better engage with members and schools from regional NSW. Due to the success of this mini-conference program, the Council has decided to extend the program of regional mini-conferences for 2015.
- **Thank you to Susan Caldis for organising the Annual Conference; to Dr Grant Kleeman, Lorraine Chaffer and Nick Hutchinson for MC-ing the event; and to Milton Brown and Sharon McLean for delivering fieldwork opportunities in the afternoon.** The conference was held on 5 August 2014 at Rydges World Square. The theme was 'Liveability – Geography comes alive' and the day was organised around keynote sessions in the morning and fieldwork in the afternoon - a move away from recent annual conference structure. The conference theme represents key components of Urban Places (Stage 6); Issues in Australian Environments (Stage 5); and Changing Australian Communities (Stage 5) and will provide fieldwork and inquiry based learning opportunities that teachers could repeat with their students. Professor Phillip O'Neill, Foundation Director of the Urban Research Centre at UWS was the opening keynote speaker, followed by presentations by Mick Law from Contour Education; a representative from Barangaroo Delivery Authority; and Evelyn Ivinson from the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure.
- **Thank you to Dr Grant Kleeman for organising and delivering presentations for the HSC Lecture series for students.** Thank you also to David Hamper and Chris Tanna for delivering presentations as well. The lectures were held in Sydney City, Wollongong and Newcastle during Term 2 and based around Skills and each HSC topic: Ecosystems At Risk, Urban Places, and People and Economic Activity. Due to the increasing presence

of teachers attending these lectures without students, the GTANSW will work towards gaining accreditation for this event in 2015 to formalize teacher professional learning.

- **Thank you to Milton Brown for organising and conducting Geography's Big Week Out for 2013 and 2014. Thank you also to Brett Jackson, Steve Weingarth and Lorraine Chaffer for their involvement in the program during 2013; and to Steve and Susan Caldis for assisting in 2014. Thank you also to Kath Berg, Margaret McIvor, Rebecca Nicholas and Mick Law from RGSQ and GTAQ for working with Milton in delivering GBWO.** The top 16 students from the Australian Geography Competition completed a week of rigorous fieldwork activities around the Northern Beaches, culminating in the completion of an assessable, skills-focused, real world geographical problem task. The top 4 students will compete in the Olympiad later this year in Russia. Whilst GBWO has been a tremendous success in NSW, the agreement is that GBWO will rotate throughout states and territories every 2 years. For 2015-2016 GBWO will be hosted in Queensland.
- **Planning for professional development and student engagement for 2015 began in September 2014 and a planning day is scheduled for early January 2015 to finalise activities, dates and venues.** The agreed focus is to continue to explicitly provide support for early career teachers and those new to teaching Geography; and also to connect more directly with regional NSW teachers. Strategies such as greater provision of accredited workshops; greater incorporation of fieldwork, inquiry and skills based activities in to professional development; an improved presence in regional NSW; and a new meeting venue are proposed for helping achieve these focus areas and help raise the profile of Geography.

3. Publications and projects

- **Thank you to Dr Grant Kleeman and Lorraine Chaffer for their joint role as Editors of the *Geography Bulletin*.** There are 4 issues scheduled for 2014. The journal is now in electronic form accessed via a membership password. During 2014 the focus reflected our agreed position on encouraging best practice Geography methodology for the classroom, and geographical articles about New Zealand in preparation for the AGTA conference:

Volume 46 Number 1

Editorial – Dr Grant Kleeman
 Senior Geography Project – making it count
 Submission to the Review of the Australian Curriculum
 PD Event – Australian Curriculum: Geography
 Global Tourism Update
 Las Vegas, USA
 Global Cruise Industry
 AGTA Conference 2015
 Resources from the Global Education Project NSW
 Benefits of GTANSW Membership
 Advice to Contributors

Volume 46 Number 2

Editorial – Dr Grant Kleeman
 Worldview: a heuristic device to inform the Australian Curriculum: Geography
 Why students, particularly boys, could develop a deeper understanding of geography from outside the classroom
 New Zealand – Pure Canterbury
 New Zealand – A millennium ago
 New Zealand – Perceptions of liveability in the Kauri Coast and the East Coast of the Far North District
 New Zealand – A notional transect across the volcanic plateau from Tukorehe Scenic Reserve to Te Urewa National Park
 New Zealand – Addressing some inquiry questions about South Island High Country
 Global Education Study Tour – China

Benefits of GTANSW Membership

Advice to contributors

Volume 46 Number 3

Editorial – Dr Grant Kleeman

GTANSW submission to BOSTES around the draft K-10 Geography syllabus incorporating Australian Curriculum content

Desertification and environmental geography

Desertification: science, conservation, discourse, narratives, paradigms and visions

Desertification and the social sciences

Assessment for learning in a Geography classroom – can we bring about change to reflect evidence based practice?

Fastracking the future Education Program (resource around the North West Rail Link)

Arthur Phillip Awards

Benefits of GTANSW Membership

Advice to contributors

- **Thank you to Nick Hutchinson for his role as Editor of *Geographical Education* – a peer reviewed journal.** *Geographical Education* will be published during the last quarter of 2014 and includes contributions from the GTANSW Executive. This journal is also in electronic form and the 2014 edition will include the following articles:
 - Sustainability in the Australian Curriculum: Geography, by Alaric Maude, retired Associate Professor of Geography at Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia.
 - Interested and influential: the role of a professional association in the development of the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum: Geography, by Susan Caldis, President GTANSW, Head Teacher HSIE, Castle Hill High School, NSW.
 - Investigating the impacts of global education curriculum on the values and attitudes of secondary students, by Dr John DeNobile, Dr Grant Kleeman, and Ms Anastasia Zarkos, School of Education, Macquarie University. Post-primary Education and Energy Literacy: An Analysis of the Potential for Geography curricula to contribute to Australian Students' Energy Literacy, by Brad Maddock and Jeana Kriewaldt, University of Melbourne.
- Thank you to Nick Hutchinson for his role as 2015 AGTA Conference Convenor and liaison with Group Events. The 2015 AGTA Conference will be held in New Zealand between 12–16 January 2015. There are 86 registered attendees. Thank you also to Susan Caldis, Lorraine Chaffer and Dr Grant Kleeman for their commitment to the AGTA Conference and willingness to present workshops.

4. Action for promotion of Geography

- There is no 'sub-committee' to specifically organise events to promote Geography to students or teachers, instead Committee members volunteer to coordinate these activities and work closely with NSWPTC staff as appropriate.
- **Thank you to Lorraine Chaffer for preparing a collection of resources for ScoopIt.** These resources are accessible from the GTANSW website page under Resources.
- **Thank you to Martin Pluss for presenting lectures at the UWS HSC Enrichment Day.** This year the event was held on Friday 22 August at UWS Parramatta Campus
- **GTANSW continues to be approached by schools, organisations and businesses to assist with teacher professional learning and/or the development of geographical education resources.** Those who have approached the GTANSW include those such as Environmental Education Centres, Education diocese and sectors, Department of Planning and Environment, Barangaroo and Lend Lease. Thank you to all Council members involved in this work to ensure the delivery of quality, rigorous, user friendly geographical education resources.

- **Thank you to Milton Brown for his continued participation in the DET HSIE Cross-curriculum committee.**
- **Thank you to Martin Pluss for his continued liaison with the Geographical Society of NSW.**
- **GTANSW contributed to the AGTA Curriculum Review.** Thank you to Nick Hutchinson who compiled the AGTA submission. Thank you also to Dr Grant Kleeman who was invited to attend and participate in a roundtable discussion with Donnelly and Wiltshire as part of the Australian Curriculum Review in March 2014.
- **GTANSW contributed extensively to the development of and consultation on the draft K-10 Geography syllabus incorporating Australian Curriculum content.** Thank you to Lorraine Chaffer for her participation on the syllabus writing team. Thank you to David Latimer for officially representing GTANSW as part of the NSW BOSTES reference group. Thank you to Susan Caldis, Nick Hutchinson, Martin Pluss and Steve Weingarh for officially representing the GTANSW upon invitation to a BOSTES targeted focus group in early August. Thank you to all Council members who attended and contributed to the consultation feedback meetings around Sydney during August and September. Thank you to Susan Caldis who compiled and submitted a formal GTANSW response on behalf of GTANSW Council to NSW BOSTES around the draft K-10 Geography syllabus incorporating Australian Curriculum content. This response was published in Issue 3 of the *Geography Bulletin*. The proposed timeframe for implementation of the NSW BOSTES K-10 *Geography syllabus incorporating Australian Curriculum content* means that NSW is now significantly behind the majority of other states and territories. Many teachers have expressed disappointment at the delayed timeline. The GTANSW has requested, and will continue to request that.
- **Thank you to Rob Berry for working with NSWPTC staff in maintaining and updating the GTANSW website as required.**
- **The distribution of emails to members by NSWPTC staff, maintenance of the GTANSW website, and publication of the *Geography Bulletin* are effective in providing geographical education information to members and in advertising events.** Thank you to Shreela Pradhan, Jill Sillar, Rob Berry, Grant Kleeman, Lorraine Chaffer and Susan Caldis for their work across these areas of promotion.

5. Council

- **Thank you to all Council members for their support of and participation in GTANSW activities throughout the year.** Particular thanks to our Immediate Past President, Nick Hutchinson; and the Vice Presidents, Dr Grant Kleeman, Lorraine Chaffer, Milton Brown and Martin Pluss for their continued support, generosity of time and expertise, and willingness to take on additional and/or multiple roles within the Association, often at short notice.

6. Awards

- **Brock Rowe Award 2014**
This year, the process has been slightly amended to also include nominations for the award from GTANSW members. The winner of this award is yet to be determined.
- **Geoff Connolly Award 2014** – The winner of this award is yet to be determined.
- **PTC NSW Outstanding Professional Service Award 2014** – Milton Brown was nominated and received this award in November 2014.

Overall, 2013-2014 was a busy, productive and successful year for the GTANSW, achieved through the enthusiasm and commitment from Council members; the interest and support from association members; and the efficient, ongoing administrative support from the NSWPTC office. We aim to bring Geography to life for all through the provision of quality professional learning opportunities and continued recognition of student and teacher achievement in geographical education. I look forward to working with all of you in 2015 as we continue promote the uniqueness, relevance and rigour of Geography.

Susan Caldis, GTANSW President, HT HSIE Castle Hill High School