

BELATED 80th BIRTHDAY GTANSW

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The information in this brief historical record comes from documents belonging to Dr Don Biddle.

Introduction

March 17th 2016 marked 80 years since the beginning of the GTANSW in 1936.

The initial aims of the association were to:

1. Provide an opportunity for discussion of problems occurring out of the teaching of Geography.
2. To stimulate enthusiasm for the teaching of Geography in secondary schools

Following English Schools practice

The inaugural meeting on the 17th March 1936 was given over to the presentation and discussion of a paper, *The Scheme of Study to the Intermediate Standard*. (I believe this paper may have been about a draft Geography syllabus)

The paper asserted that there was a fair measure of agreement with English schools' practice in secondary education.

The first year of geography study was divided into three sections: Preliminary, Transition and Regional Stage.

- Preliminary Stage: Geography vocabulary and basic skills to enable simple map reading. These skills are then applied to a study of the home district as a basis of later regional comparison.
- Transitional Stage: Linking the study of home districts to that of a larger sub-region. Introduction of what constitutes a Geographical Region followed by a study of British regions.
- Regional Stage: Towards the end of the first year, students were introduced to world geography.

The **2nd and 3rd years** were to dedicated to the study of the southern continents, North America and Asia.

4th year was aimed at Europe and

5th year was a dedicated geographical study of the British Isles.



Frank Hurley with Cinematograph, 1915
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Cinematography was a new tool in 1936

The September meeting was devoted to the use of Cinematography in the teaching of geography. The initial barrier of course was the prohibitive cost of the 16mm projector which at the time was anything between 26 to 70 pounds.

The meeting discussed the hire of film, the costs of producing their own films and the possible establishment of a film library with such titles as "Anthracite Coal" and "Growing Cotton". There were some business films that were available as well.

Other activities, apart from monthly meetings, included:

1. A questionnaire distributed amongst schools to collect reliable information about the teaching of Geography in the State.

2. The establishment of a Geographic Library of texts suitable for use in schools.
3. Keeping members informed of current trends in geographical thought and reporting of interesting articles and geographical journals.

Varied venues

The inaugural meeting on 17th March 1936 was convened by Miss Dorothy Yates, a geography teacher at Ascham Girls' High School. The meeting was convened during a vacation course held at Sydney University to assist teachers in the interpretation and implementation of the new syllabus, putting more emphasis on human geography and the widened choice of activities available to study different environments.

In May, the GTA adopted a Constitution who's stated aims were:

1. To stimulate enthusiasm in the teaching of Geography.
2. To provide an opportunity to discuss problems arising from the teaching of geography.
3. Collect and distribute data with regard to the teaching of geography.
4. Stimulate public interest and improve the status of geography in secondary schools.

In the years from 1936 to 1961, the NSW GTA remained a small group of qualified and dedicated geography teachers who taught in secondary metropolitan schools. The meetings were reduced during the war years and aftermath but from 1948 meetings were held 8 times a year. They were held in the Geography Department of Sydney University, but this proved inconvenient, especially during the war. Meetings were moved to

centrally located schools but were more often held in the homes of council members. In the 50's and early 60's, they were moved to the Inspectors' Institute Room in Bridge Street.

45 years since the Geography Bulletin began.

From 1962, the GTA began producing the Geography Bulletin and various teaching resources and by 1980, syllabuses, teaching techniques and materials had changed radically. A new Constitution was adopted reflecting these changes as well as the expanding role of the Association in the development of the Geography Syllabus, the teaching of Geography in schools and the support of teachers in and out of the classroom. It's aims were:

1. To further the study and teaching of Geography.
2. To represent professionally the views of all persons connected to its teaching.
3. Provide a forum for discussion.
4. The support of activities that may assist teachers.
5. Encourage the development of higher values in education.
6. Develop cooperation with interested individuals and groups in the teaching of Geography.
7. Encourage and disseminate educational research with particular reference to the teaching of Geography.
8. Publish and distribute materials related to Geography teaching.
9. To investigate and make recommendations to appropriate authorities on education policies concerning the teaching, and examining of, Geography in NSW schools.

From cinematography to augmented reality, virtual reality and QR codes



Above: AR Sandbox. (L Chaffer)

Left: Google cardboard
(<http://www.techtimes.com/tags/google-cardboard>)



Above: QR codes (<https://www.slideshare.net/kbonanno/using-technology-in-the-geography-classroom>)