

GTANSW President Report, AGM 2018

Lorraine Chaffer

President GTA NSW & ACT, October 2017 – October 2018

The Geography Teacher's Association of NSW (GTANSW) has had another highly successful year providing professional support for Geography teachers and students across NSW and the ACT. GTANSW professional learning events have been inclusive of all sectors and continue to actively promote Geography across all stages. Professional Learning activities are open to members and non-members.

MEMBERSHIP has grown from 375 to 431 as of October 1, 2018. Most memberships are corporate, covering all faculty members within a school. Fees for non-members remain higher to encourage membership.

GTANSW COUNCIL

On October 22nd before the 2018 AGM the GTANSW Council had 18 elected councilors (including a president and four Vice Presidents) and five co-opted members. There are five regional representatives from Wagga (1), Canberra (1) and Newcastle (3). Until recently GTANSW also had a North Coast representative who has recently moved to Queensland. GTANSW would like to thank Melinda Rowe for her contributions to GTANSW over the past year, particularly at the Annual Conference and assistance organising the Tweed Regional Conference. Over recent years the number of councilors from outside Sydney has increased. Council meetings are a mix of members attending in person and online (through Adobe Connect and recently trialing ZOOM). This has successfully allowed the full involvement of councillors unable to attend in person.

GTANSW outsources administrative, financial, publishing and organisational tasks to the Professional Teachers' Council NSW and rents office space within the PTC NSW premises.

2018 PROGRAM

2018 was an extremely busy year as we expanded the professional learning opportunities and resources for our members. None of this would be possible without a team of dedicated council members who contribute what time and circumstances allow throughout the year. Thank you. I will name individuals as I run through our 2018 achievements.

I have a few other people to thank before I report on the 2018 program.

- Sharon McLean for facilitating our online meeting forum through Skype, Adobe and more recently Zoom
- Milton Brown (and others including John Lewis and Susan Caldis) who took meeting minutes in his absence.
- Grant Kleeman for financial management as the ongoing GTANSW treasurer.

For office administration thanks go to all of the PTC NSW staff but in particular

- Julie Pham for event management. Whatever the event, Julie makes us all look good and has added a level of calm and sophistication to everything we do.
- Jill Sillar for her publishing skills to satisfy our constant demand for flyers and other promotional materials and of course the publication of the *Geography Bulletin*.

Lastly to Rob Berry for continued service to keeping the website current – even when he is on holidays overseas.

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A. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EVENTS

- Two-day **Annual Conference** in April. This involved 41 sessions (masterclasses, presentations or workshops) attended by over 220 teachers each day. Additionally, there were 32 exhibitors, over 30 presenters and 15 GTA councilors present.

The focus for 2018 was on pedagogy, literacy and skills with content-focused workshops and presentations making up the remainder.

2018 was the second year with sponsorship allowing the awarding of scholarships and bursaries to teachers in more rural or remote to attend and offsetting other costs.

- Two one-day **Regional Conferences** at Tweed Heads (South) and Canberra (NW)
- Six **Webinars**

Thank you to Sharon McLean for your organisation of these important events to service our city, rural and regional colleagues.

- Two **Skills Workshops**

Thank you to Grant Kleeman organise events desperately needed to meet the high demand for training in skills but those untrained in or new to teaching Geography.

- Two **ESRI GIS in Schools** events
- **Senior Geography Teachers Conference** (Now an annual event in November)

B. OTHER EVENTS

- **HSC Exam Preparation Lectures** to assist HSC exam preparation.

Thank you to Catherine Donnelly and those who became MC's and presenters at these events.

- **Arthur Phillip Fieldwork Awards Competition** and ceremony – competition to promote geographical inquiry through fieldwork.

- **Top HSC Achiever Awards Ceremony** – Top 10 HSC students AND their teachers recognised in the Awards Ceremony during Annual Conference.

Thank you to Grace Larobina for organising the collection and marking of the competition entries and organising the Award Ceremony at the Annual Conference. Thanks also to those of you who assisted Grace with these two activities, they could not run without a team effort.

- Many of you also represented GTANSW at several events throughout the year, particularly by visiting schools who had requested assistance.

To Alexandria Lucas, Grace Larobina, David Latimer, Louise Swanson, Lorraine Chaffer and Susan Caldis thank you, and my apologies if I have missed someone in the process.

- GTA NSW and maintains a close relationship with the Geographical Society of NSW.

Thank you to Martin Pluss and Susan Caldis for maintaining links and keeping us informed.

- Most recently GTANSW has submitted responses to NESA Review of the Stage 6 Syllabus and Draft Directions Paper. Many of you attended events and gave feedback that informed GTA's submission to NESA. This is an ongoing process.

Thank you to Sharon Mclean for being the GTA representative on the Board Curriculum Committee for Stage 6.

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C. PUBLICATIONS

- The **Geography Bulletin** remains the key publication with four digital editions for K–12 teachers and two special editions for senior Geography.
- **Primary Geography Alive** – an online resource of teaching units with integrated resources published on the GTANSW website with free access to primary teachers. Units continue to be added.

Thanks go to Lorraine Chaffer as editor of the Geography Bulletin and Grant Kleeman as coordinator and developer of the primary resource.

- GTANSW maintains its **Facebook Page** for official notifications and general interest items, two **Facebook Support Groups** for HSC Teachers and Primary teachers and Twitter for conference events.

It is anticipated that all of these programs will continue into 2019. Discussions on the delivery of Professional Learning to **primary teachers** will continue with a potential focus on the use of webinars, twilight functions held in schools, and further ahead, online courses.

NEW INITIATIVES FOR 2019

- **Assessment packages** based on each of the 7–10 NSW Geography Syllabus Topics but applicable to all jurisdictions. The packages will contain a stimulus booklet and a range of different assessment activities, marking guidelines and suggested answers. These will be available for purchase. The first unit is in development now.
- **Online Professional Learning** through Open Learning and developed under the umbrella of a PTC NSW initiative involving other Subject Associations. The first course is in development now with a number of proposals submitted for approval.

GTANSW remains a hard-working team of volunteers with a passion for supporting Geography teachers in NSW and for that I am extremely grateful and proud of what we have achieved in 2018.

We anticipate the development of a new Stage 6 Syllabus in 2019, based on the Australian Senior Curriculum.

Lorraine Chaffer
President GTANSW



NOTE: From November 2018 GTANSW will be known as the Geography Teachers Association of NSW and ACT