



Geography Teachers' Association of S.A. Inc.

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President's Report - May 2016

The last twelve months have been a busy and exciting time for GTASA as we prepare for our 80th year as your association.

1. Membership

- Our current membership for 2016 stands at 104 members: 42 individual members; 47 school members; 15 life members. A new life membership will be awarded at our 80th Anniversary Dinner to Rita Shepherd.

2. Committee

- Our committee currently comprises 17 members. At the AGM we farewell Yolanda Hyde who has served us so diligently as Secretary. Dan Crane will also be stepping down from the Executive committee for the time being, along with long standing committee member Sandy Stuart. Malcolm McInerney, who has been a significant contributor to our committee over many years as President and active Life Member will also be stepping down from his roles on the Executive Committee. All these members have made valuable contributions to GTASA over their years of involvement.
- There are a number of new openings on the committee and all individual financial members of GTASA are encouraged to consider joining the Executive committee.
- Executive members have been attending various CEASA seminars this year including a Michael McQueen seminar on *Winning the Battle for Relevance*. Other relevant CEASA workshops have included strategic planning and the use of social media for associations. The knowledge gained from these workshops is driving the development of a strategic plan for the next 3-5 years.

3. Professional Development

- Ian Johnson and the conference sub-committee have yet again put together an inspiring Annual Conference under the theme of *Sustainable Places*.
- Mick Law presented a one day spatial technologies workshop at the beginning of Term 3, 2015. The workshop was attended by 25 teachers (all secondary school). General consensus was that these workshops are invaluable to teachers, and highlighted the continued need for workshops focused on spatial technology.
- In March we hosted the AGTA Roadshow. Presenters included Grant Kleeman, Susan Caldis and Mick Law (from interstate) along with our local talent (Malcolm McInerney and John Butler). We had 40 people attend this event, mostly secondary school teachers.
- GTASA continues to offer mentor support to all of its members. Anyone seeking a mentor is encouraged to contact GTASA (admin@gtasa.asn.au)
- As the new SACE Geography is rolled out, GTASA intends to work with the SACE Board in offering teachers workshops to assist in the implementation of the new course.

4. Publications & projects

- The online publication of *SA Geographer* has been favourably accepted by our members. Our current editor is Elise Walker.

- Slow progress is being made with the SSSI partnership project. Some teacher workshops have occurred in 2015. Malcolm McInerney and Dan Crane have been the GTASA contacts in this project. The future of this project is uncertain into the future.
 - A new mapping kit, focusing on the Sampson Flat bushfire has been produced and will be launched at the Conference.
- 5. Action for promoting Geography**
- Rita Shepherd organized another successful Year 12 Geography Night in August. This annual event was well attended by many Year 12 students and teachers. The two guest lecturers from Adelaide University – Dr John Tibby and Dr Helen Feist – gave excellent presentations on issues related to water and population from a South Australian perspective.
 - Positive partnerships between GTASA and the universities continues to be a priority. We are looking at ways we can develop these partnerships in the hope of further promoting Geography teaching and learning in this state.
- 6. Curriculum Developments**
- The SACE Board is due to release the new Geography curriculum for Stage 1&2 (Years 11 & 12). Stage 1 will be implemented in 2017 and Stage 2 in 2018. The curriculum has been developed with reference to the ACARA Senior Geography Curriculum, however, with modifications to suit our local requirements.
- 7. Issues / problems**
- Low numbers in Senior School still continues to be an issue in our state. Mandatory curriculum requirements in SACE (ie. PLP at Year 10 and Research Project at Year 11/12), along with an ambivalence towards the relevance of Geography in future careers, seem to be key factors affecting Geography numbers.
 - An ACER report on the Teacher Workforce in Australia (March 2015) revealed that Geography teaching has the highest percentage of out-of-field teaching of all subjects across the country. This finding highlights the need for effective support of teachers with limited background in Geography.
- 8. Other**
- In August 2015, Malcolm McInerney, representing GTASA, attended the NT Conference as a presenter. In 2016, we are hoping to offer similar support and partnership to our neighbouring state.
 - 10 years ago the association was bequeathed a substantial sum of money. Recently, this money was invested into a managed fund with the long-term view of increasing the income capacity of the association.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first 12 months as GTASA President. I've loved meeting many of you at various conferences, workshops and Geography related events in our state. I'm blessed to be supported by a hard-working Executive committee. I look forward to the exciting year ahead and to continue growing Geography as a relevant and essential subject in our state's curriculum.

Joanne Wegener

President

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