

# GEOGRAPHIA

Geographia is the national newsletter of the Australian Geography Teachers' Association Limited.

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Occasional Newsletter of The Australian Geography Teachers' Association Limited

## *In this issue:*

<i>AGTA 108 - Hobart Tasmania</i>	<i>01</i>
<i>From the Chair</i>	<i>02</i>
<i>AGTA Website</i>	<i>02</i>
<i>Geocareers Website</i>	<i>02</i>
<i>Chair Report (AGM)</i>	<i>03</i>
<i>Student Geography Competitions/Activities</i>	<i>05</i>
<i>The Don Biddle: Friends of AGTA Awards</i>	<i>05</i>
<i>National Education Forum</i>	<i>05</i>
<i>AITSL Exemplar Project</i>	<i>06</i>
<i>Exploring 21st Century Geography: A new resource on-line</i>	<i>06</i>
<i>Arab Gateways</i>	<i>06</i>
<i>AGTA Constitution</i>	<i>06</i>
<i>2011 Geography's Big Week Out</i>	<i>07</i>
<i>National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition</i>	<i>08</i>
<i>AGTA 2013 Conference</i>	<i>09</i>
<i>Affiliate News</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Education Services Australia</i>	<i>15</i>



## **AGTA 108 Hobart Tasmania 22-23 October 2011**

Malcolm welcomed all to the 108<sup>th</sup> AGTA Meeting held at The Friends of AGTA School in North Hobart on 22-23 October 2011. A special welcome was extended to Shane Albertson.





## Keys to Geography 2nd Edition

AGTA's financial position continues to be healthy as a result of the sales of the 2011 second edition of its highly successful *Keys to Geography* publication. *Keys to Geography* publications have provided a much needed Australian orientated resource for schools across Australia.

## AGTA 2010 Awards

AGTA presents biennial awards to producers of materials used in the teaching of geography. The following AGTA Awards were presented at the AGTA 2011 Conference in January.

- Primary school resource: Get Connected Publisher, World Vision Australia
- Junior secondary school textbook: Oxford Big Ideas Geography Level 6, Oxford University Press
- Senior secondary school textbook: Our Global Future: the Geography of Planning Cities and Climate Change, GAWA
- Broadsheet, chart, wall map: Oxford Big Atlas 2, Oxford University Press
- Atlas: The Jacaranda Atlas Edition
- Website: DataGenie, Education Services Australia
- Non-commercial, teacher produced resource: Building Global Awareness, Global Education Centre of South Australia
- Geography teaching resource material: Keys to Geography Essential Skills and Tools, Macmillan Education Australia in collaboration with AGTA
- Geographical education publication: Interaction Global Geography Volume 38 No 2 June 2010, GTAV

AGTA thanks all these publishers for submitting their high quality work and looks forward to future opportunities to support publishers in developing the very best products and resources for the teaching of geography in Australian schools.

## Institute of Australian Geographers

The IAG committee is keen to promote academics with expertise to use as keynote speakers and to produce publications/materials, peer reviews and link to the Australian Geographer journal.

## Geography - Going National Poster Series

A series of posters is being developed by Grant Kleeman on the key concepts of the Australian Curriculum: Geography: Place/Space/Environment/Change/Interconnection /Sustainability/Scale/

Other possible poster themes:

- Lifestyle and Culture
- Landscapes
- Human Well being
- Settlements
- Extreme Environment

Proposed Timeline for release of the posters: September 2012, to coincide with the release of the Australian Curriculum: Geography.

## Geographical Education

Geography Going National is the theme for the 2011 volume 24 of Geographical Education.

The papers to date ready for the journal are:

1. Evolution rather than extinction: The future of the Geography textbook
2. A geographically informed vision of skills development
3. Inquiry in Geography and Science: Can it work?
4. Gender, memory and Geography tasks
5. Exploring the content knowledge of experienced Geography teachers
6. Exploring the role of imagination and narrative in geography teaching
7. Lessons from the UK national curriculum in Geography -Dr Rita Gardiner.

Members are asked to provide to the Editor by email at [editor@agta.asn.au](mailto:editor@agta.asn.au) reports/articles that may be relevant to Geographical Education.

## AGTA Website

The major website development this year has been the provision of a new section for the online purchase of AGTA products and subscriptions to *Geographical Education*. This has required the opening of a PayPal account thus ensuring secure online transactions using credit cards (MasterCard and Visa) and direct payment. Options for purchasers to use a school order form or pay by cheque are also available.

The AGTA 2011 Conference section is still attracting a considerable number of online visitors particularly to the keynote video presentations by Rita Gardner, Duncan Chessell and Tim Costello. The AGTA Facebook page has been set up with both general comments and a AGTA 2011 conference wall. It has attracted a number of new members and postings. A full listing of the AGTA Award winners can also be viewed at the AGTA website.

The Chairperson's annual reports provide much useful information for members about the achievements of AGTA whilst the 'Geography discussions' section provides links to Web 2.0 geography websites and a portal to a number of useful blogs, wikis, nings, forums, discussions and other participatory web applications that support geography teaching both in Australia and overseas. Other changes to the website include updates to the news section (e.g. latest issue of *Geographia*), Board members, affiliate details and resources. Updates have also been made to the national geography curriculum website, standards for geography teaching and details of affiliate conferences. The listing of state conferences has been updated where such details are known.

## Geocareers Website

Changes and revisions have been made to the GeoCareers website thanks to the suggestions of people to be included in the profile section being forwarded to Rob Berry. Members are invited to send recommendations of people to be approached with a view to providing a profile for publication as there are still many career areas we would like to include. Please send the person's name, their email address and current area of employment to Rob ([rberry@agta.asn.au](mailto:rberry@agta.asn.au)). Rob will then contact each person nominated and provide them with a standard proforma and agreement sheet.



AGTA has been given the opportunity to play a key role in the development of the Australian Curriculum: Geography. ACARA has made a determined effort to maximise AGTA's involvement.

Tim Costello, patron of AGTA, addressed delegates at the 2011 AGTA Conference in Adelaide. AGTA must make an effort to continue to utilise Tim as a high profile person. An invitation will be extended to Tim to attend the 2013 AGTA Conference in Perth in 2013.

Thank you is extended to AGTA Directors who have taken on portfolio leadership and those who have represented AGTA on National Committees such as NEF, IAG and SSSI.

## Australian Curriculum: Geography continues to develop, as does AGTA as the peak body for geography teachers in Australia

In 2011 AGTA's work has continued to be dominated with the development of the Australian Curriculum: Geography. The curriculum has reached the draft scope and sequence stage of development and all augurs well for the planned launch of the curriculum in September 2012. The imminent launch of the curriculum has meant that 2011 has been an exciting and unparalleled year for geographical education in Australia. October 2008 seems a long time ago when AGTA in collaboration with the Institute of Australian Geographers and the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland established the 'Towards a National Geography Curriculum in Australia' (TNGC) project as a pro-active initiative to prepare the stage for the development of the Australian Curriculum for geography. AGTA is confident, as the curriculum becomes a reality, that the time, money and personal investment involved with this initiative was well worthwhile and put us in a favourable position to ensure that the curriculum to be developed will be a 21st Century geography. It is worth noting at the beginning of this annual report that ACARA has comprehensively used our TNGC work to guide the process and that some of our members (AGTA Board Directors and AGTA affiliate members) have played a crucial and significant role in the development of the Curriculum for geography as members of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) advisory bodies and writing panels. Whilst this work has created an increased workload and investment from AGTA and its officers, this report will show that we have also been able to maintain our regular activities to promote geographical education in Australia.

## Promoting Geography in Australia: Tim Costello as AGTA Patron

To support AGTA's goal to promote Geography in the Australian community and media, in January 2011 Tim Costello, CEO of World Vision and well recognized humanitarian was formally appointed as AGTA Patron. In his Keynote address at the AGTA conference, Tim said in regards to geography: Geography gives students ... "a framework that will enable them to always be mapping their terrain, a primary life skill." Tim's keynote can be viewed on the AGTA website at [http://www.agta.asn.au/conf2011/presentations/costello\\_t.htm](http://www.agta.asn.au/conf2011/presentations/costello_t.htm)

Tim brings a humane and humanitarian edge to the worth of geography as illustrated in his recent articles in major Australian newspapers:

*"We need young Australians who can learn from the past and be critically aware of the issues facing the world in the present and the future. Geography challenges students to investigate, question, evaluate and apply their learning to the world in which they live. It involves hard, critical thinking, the development of important knowledge and skills and an engaged, involved outlook; a desire not merely to observe the world but to change it for the better."*

We look forward to working with Tim over coming years to promote geography in the Australia community.

## AGTA's representative work

AGTA has an important role in representing geography teachers on a variety of national committees to ensure that the voice of geography educators is heard. Such roles are increasingly important in terms of the national focus and the national curriculum developments.

Portfolios for the purpose of representation were allocated as follows:

- *Australian Federation of Societies for Studies of Society and the Environment:* Emmy Terry (voting representative) and Margaret McIvor (AGTA representative).
- *Institute of Australian Geographers:* Malcolm McInerney
- *Australian Academy of Science's National Committee of Geography:* Grant Kleeman
- *National Education Forum:* Malcolm McInerney (Executive member of the NEF)
- *National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition:* Margaret McIvor

- *Spatial Education Advisory Committee:* Malcolm McInerney
- *ACARA Advisory Panel for Geography:* Malcolm McInerney, Rebecca Nicholas and Nick Hutchinson.

I am happy to report that AGTA is considered as an important member of these groups and is considered as one of the associations with a 'Big picture' view of the need for representation via national 'umbrella' organisations and is prepared to invest in members of its board to always be represented at meetings and to participate in required activities

## AGTA's continued involvement in ACARA's curriculum development process

In January 2011 ACARA released the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography*. Since then ACARA has been developing the scope and sequence for geography which is planned to be released in October 2011 for consultation. The process continues to be a challenging but critical task for geography teachers across Australia. AGTA continues to be heartened by ACARA's commitment to involve geography teachers and in particular AGTA in the process of curriculum development. To this end, several AGTA Board members and numerous members of AGTA affiliates have been closely involved as members of the evolving ACARA Advisory Panels for geography over the past two years.

The following ACARA timeline will give an idea of the 2011-2012 curriculum development process for the Australian Curriculum: Geography. Naturally, the timeline may change but at this stage these are the dates, events and milestones ACARA has mapped out for the process:

- **October 2011 – February 2012:** Consultation on the draft scope and sequence
- **February - May 2012:** Curriculum revision
- **June - August 2012:** National consultation and final revisions
- **September 2012:** Proposed publication

AGTA encourages all Australian geography teachers to keep informed of the ACARA process via their website at <http://www.acara.edu.au> and take advantage of the opportunities provided by ACARA and geography teachers' associations in each state to feed comments and ideas into the process. The first of these is the on-line consultation for the draft scope and sequence being conducted between October 2011 – February 2012.

# TEN GOOD REASONS

## to enter the geography competition

Entries close 29 February 2012

**1** PUTS GEOGRAPHY  
IN THE SPOTLIGHT  
IN YOUR SCHOOL

Important in 2012  
with the release of the  
Australian Curriculum:  
Geography

**2** CHALLENGES YOUR  
STUDENTS TO DEMONSTRATE  
THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL  
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

**3** GOOD PRACTICE FOR  
EXTERNAL MULTIPLE-  
CHOICE EXAMS

**4** LOW FEE OF \$3.00 PER  
STUDENT, WITH NO  
SCHOOL CHARGE

**5** FLEXIBLE TIMING  
BETWEEN 26 MARCH AND  
4 APRIL, TO SUIT YOUR  
SCHOOL'S NEEDS

"The kids get a  
buzz out of it"

**6** ACCORDING TO THEIR  
TEACHERS, STUDENTS  
ACTUALLY ENJOY IT!

"The kids loved it  
and had a great  
time"

**7** ALL STUDENTS GET  
RESULTS AND GRADED  
CERTIFICATES IN  
THREE AGE DIVISIONS

"The students are  
very excited to be  
participating"

**8** REWARDS STUDENT  
EXCELLENCE WITH  
GREAT PRIZES

interstate trips,  
books, medals, money

**9** FIRST STEP IN SELECTION  
FOR AUSTRALIA'S  
INTERNATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHY TEAMS

National Geographic  
World Championship  
for younger students,  
International Geography  
Olympiad for older

**10** EASY TO  
ADMINISTER

**26 MARCH – 4 APRIL 2012**

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Full details are sent to all secondary schools in mid January, and are on the web from late December.

Interested primary teachers can use the information on the web or contact us directly.

[www.rgsq.org.au/agc.htm](http://www.rgsq.org.au/agc.htm)    [admin@rgsq.org.au](mailto:admin@rgsq.org.au)    ph: (07) 3368 2066



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## Student Geography Competitions/Activities

For many years AGTA has been involved in conducting in liaison with the GTAQ a range of geographical competitions and activities. These initiatives are extremely important in providing an important goal for students to engage with geography in their school and to raise the profile of geography in the community. I would like to thank Kath Berg (RGSQ) and the dedicated geographical educators from the GTAQ and GAWA for all their hard work with the following activities.

### The National Geographic Channel

**Australian Geography Competition** is a joint initiative of AGTA and the RGSQ and is proudly sponsored by National Geographic Channel. This competition continues to grow and be a great success in promoting geography in schools around Australia. In 2011, over 80 000 students participated in the competition Australia wide. In 2011 the school prizes were awarded to:

- Territories: Canberra Grammar School
- New South Wales: Sydney Boys High School
- Queensland: Brisbane Grammar School
- South Australia: Pembroke School

- Tasmania: Launceston Church Grammar School
- Victoria: Melbourne Grammar School
- Western Australia: Shenton College
- The final for the under 16's was held at the Fox Studios in Sydney on 6 June 2011. The results of the Final were:
- First: Michael Gu, Melbourne Grammar School
- Second: Jesse Tong, Brisbane Grammar School
- Third: Liam Kearney, Christ Church Grammar School, Perth

### The International Geography Olympiad

was held in Taipei, Taiwan, from 29 July to 4 August 2010. The team was chosen from students who participated in the senior level of the National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition via Geography's Big Week Out. The team had an outstanding Olympiad, coming second in the team scores and winning Australia's first ever gold medal (won by Samuel Buttenshaw from All Saints College St Mary's, Maitland, NSW). Congratulations to the team on this outstanding effort.

## The Don Biddle: Friends of AGTA Award

In 2011 AGTA inaugurated the Don Biddle Friends of Geography Awards. We thank Don for being so generous to allow us to name the award after him in recognition of the wonderful work he did with AGTA for many years. The award has been developed by AGTA to recognise individuals, groups or institutions which have made a significant contribution over an extended period of time to the work of AGTA in promoting geographical education in Australia.

The 2011 Don Biddle Friends of AGTA Awards were presented to Mark Manual, Roger Smith and Kath Berg at the AGTA 2011 conference in Adelaide. AGTA thanks these three individuals for their outstanding work for geography in Australian schools for many years and wish them all the best for the future. The next Don Biddle Friends of AGTA Awards will be awarded at AGTA 2013 in Perth.

## National Education Forum Meeting held in July at the Professional Teachers Association, Sydney.

### From a Geographical Perspective Highlights of the NEF meeting included the opportunity to:

- present the paper to the Minister titled "Aligning Australia's National Professional Education Associations with the National Agenda" and get the support of the NEF on the paper (see attached).
- hear Pater Garrett talk about the progress of the Australian Curriculum. In particular, to hear his response to the NEF paper, "Aligning Australia's National Professional Education Associations with the National Agenda".
- discuss with Susan Mann about the possibility of developing learning objects for professional learning that could be developed by ESA.

### Minister Garrett made the following comments in relation to the NEF paper:

- There is an appropriate balance for opportunities for consultation and the effectiveness you need to get on with policy.
- It is difficult as the process requires

significant input from the states and after all, most of the work is the role of states. The Commonwealth is reluctant to interfere.

- There is considerable interaction already with professional associations through prizes and submissions and through work with ACARA. The Minister noted that there are so many hours in the day to conduct consultation processes – this inference was made in relation to the work of ACARA. The Minister felt that the consultation of ACARA had been adequate and comprehensive however acknowledged that the views from the sector differ.
- Enhanced AITSL role has meant that there has been more active engagement through stakeholder forums and this will continue.
- National architecture paper provides an opportunity to strengthen the consultation and to open discussion.
- The Minister recommended that the NEF be part of post Ministerial meetings and that the NEF Executive regularly meet with him to provide updates. This type of formalised engagement needs to occur on a regular basis to inform existing and ongoing policy issues at a policy level.

### Rob Randall: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

Rob outlined ACARA's role in focusing on the curriculum. At this stage most teachers are familiar with the general capabilities. AITSL, ESA and ACARA spending time together, to ensure there are no speed bumps and duplication. Comment from the gathering that "ACARA right from the start stated that they are interested in curriculum not stipulating how it is taught. However, this is hard to do without implying what the best pedagogy is."

### Susan Mann -Education Services Australia (ESA)

Sue indicated that ESA wished to link in early to associations and get their advice on what already exists and where are the gaps. Not looking to create resources from scratch – only where resources are required, ESA would be looking to involve professional associations and Sue canvassed the idea of developing on-line professional learning objects.

## Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Exemplar Project

In June 2011 AGTA was contracted by AITSL to undertake the development of annotated illustrations of practice (exemplars) to support the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*. Rob Berry and Roger Smith will be the managers of the project and will be responsible during 2012 for developing four exemplars of good practice (three static and one dynamic) in geography teaching aligned to the *National Professional Standards for Teachers*. AGTA considers that this AITSL project is an excellent opportunity to build on the *Professional Standards for Accomplished Teaching of School Geography* project AGTA was involved in from 2007-2010. AGTA looks forward to this being a useful resource for the implementation of Australian Curriculum: Geography in coming years.

## Exploring 21st Century Geography: A new resource on-line

In May AGTA released for sale its new product titled *Exploring 21st Century Geography*. The DVD containing spatial technology resources, technology in the classroom links and 21st Century geography materials has been developed by AGTA to support the thinking and resource requirements for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: Geography. Thanks to Rob Berry as our webmaster, the product is available on-line and can be purchased via PayPal. This is a new marketing strategy and capacity by AGTA and will provide the model for Australian Curriculum orientated initiatives which I am sure AGTA will be exploring in future months. The response from schools across Australia has been extremely positive to the availability of the product and shows that schools are looking for support with 21st Century technology and approaches as they begin to engage with the Australian Curriculum: Geography. AGTA sees much of its future work is to provide such resources to support schools during the implementation stage. The *Exploring 21st Century Geography* DVD and its availability to schools is the first step along this path. If interested in viewing information on the resource go to <http://www.agta.asn.au/products/index.htm>

## AGTA Constitution

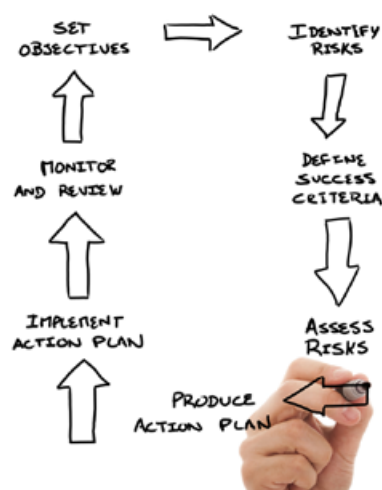
Following the May 2011 AGTA BOARD Meeting the AGTA Constitution was edited in response to GAWA's feedback

Discussion at the October AGTA Board meeting revolved around the following issues:

- Equity of Member Association representation on the AGTA Board and equity of Member Association votes at AGTA General Meetings and its Annual General Meeting.
- Transparency of AGTA's operating processes and protocols.
- Communications between AGTA and its Member Associations in terms of inclusiveness as well as the methods and timing of communications.

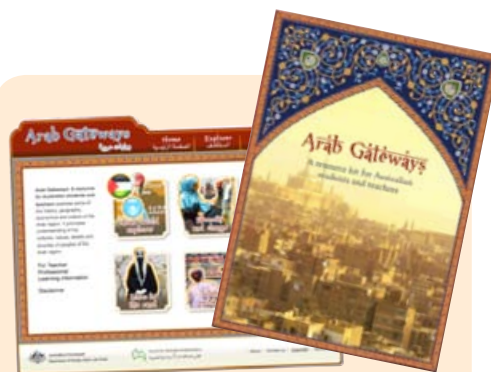
The changes and insertions addressed many of GAWA's concerns on the:

- clarity/accuracy of the document
- the communication processes



- special resolution procedures
- the transparency of AGTA business

A motion will be finalised and distributed to all Affiliates over the next few weeks for consideration and response prior to the May AGTA Board meeting.



## Arab Gateways:

A resource kit for Australian students and teachers.

This new resource, funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade through the Council for Australian-Arab Relations, has been sent to all secondary schools in Australia. It introduces the diverse cultures, environments, histories and economies of the Arab region.

Especially relevant for history, geography, social education and economics teachers and students in years 7–10, **Arab Gateways** consists of a 96-page book, accompanying DVD and a website, [www.arabgateways.edu.au](http://www.arabgateways.edu.au).

The inquiry units are supported by 12 short films profiling the voices of young people from the region; an interactive, Arab Explorer; 17 student activity sheets; and web links – all available on the DVD and website.

A series of professional learning activities administered by the Australian Federation of Societies for Studies of Society and Environment (AFSSSE) will assist teachers to implement Arab Gateways information see their website: [www.afssse.asn.au/ArabGateways](http://www.afssse.asn.au/ArabGateways).

### Objective for Arab Gateways

To promote mutual interests and a greater understanding and acceptance of each other's cultures, values, beliefs and diversity.

### The resource is structured around five inquiry units:

- Diversity and change
- Sustainable water use
- Lines in the sand
- Global exchange
- Different lens.



# 2011 Geography's Big Week Out

Give up a week of school holidays to do geography fieldwork?  
Yes please, say these students ... and can you make it longer next time!

The 2011 Geography's Big Week Out was an outstanding success with great feedback from the participating students. It was held from 2 to 7 October on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria. The student participants were the highest-scoring male and female Year 10/11 students from each state and the combined territories, plus two other high-scoring students.

The organisation of the 2011 Big Week Out was in the capable hands of a committee of dedicated Victorian geography teachers under the leadership of Pat Beeson. The Competition Committee would like to record here our thanks to these leaders who made the 2011 Big Week Out possible:

Pat Beeson; Samantha Davis; Tanya Grace; Libby Hillman; Robin Irvine; Claire Jones; Shirley Lahtinen; Terry McMeekin; Judy McPherson; Adam Nash; Emma O'Dowd; John Ramsdale; Gerry Smith; Lyn Terrett; Karoline Walter.

The students arrived on Sunday 2 October and were introduced to Melbourne through an orientation experience. Following this activity students travelled to Blairgowrie where they settled into a comfortable group accommodation lodge, and continued work after dinner with a briefing on the next day's activity. A number of activities were carried out on the Mornington Peninsula including a visit to the Shire Office where a number of talks were presented by guest speakers. In the afternoon the students began their river studies at the source of Main Creek – struggling through the undergrowth to take measurements.

Tuesday morning started with an early visit to the Peninsula Hot Springs. Most of the day was then taken up with comparing the

sand dune systems on Rosebud Beach and St Andrews Beach. This included measuring dune transects using very sophisticated GPS units – lent by Ultimate Positioning, along with Jamie Portman and Naomi Witham to teach us how to use them.

On the way back to the accommodation, the students shopped for the international cooking competition, a favourite tradition of Big Week Out. The Mexican and Thai groups cooked the first night while the other half of the students prepared a presentation on the dunes. The next night the Italian and Indian cooks provided the feast, while the other students prepared their residential and retail presentations.

Other activities included a trip on Port Phillip Bay, additional river studies on Balcombe Creek and a final dinner at a local restaurant. After dinner the students were presented with letters from the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, and their official certificates. This was followed by a fun quiz.

Victoria has generously agreed to also organise the 2012 Geography's Big Week Out, after which it will rotate to another state.

## The students who won places in the 2011 Big Week Out were:

**Nick Booth**, Pembroke School, Adelaide

**Laura Butler**, Penrith High School, Sydney

**Anthony Chen**, Radford College, Canberra

**Natalie Cvitanovich**, Glenunga International High School, Adelaide

**Lucinda Everson**, St Margaret's Anglican Girls' School, Brisbane

**Nicholas Forrester**, Hale School, Perth

**Sarah Godman**, Cootamundra High School, NSW

**Daniel King**, Distance Education Centre Victoria

**Sarah Naco**, Canberra Girls' Grammar School

**Kate Parrott**, Hobart College

**Brodie Petrolo**, Woonona High School, Wollongong

**Carmen Schoenjahn**, St Mary's Anglican Girls' School, Perth

**Rhys Sharry**, Smithfield State High School, Cairns

**Oliver Vasak**, Sydney Grammar School

**Aleksandra Vasic**, John Monash Science School, Melbourne

**Rob Wilson**, Wynyard High School, Tas





# National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition

The Competition and its associated events are managed by the Australian Geography Competition Committee. The members of this Committee are: Kath Berg (convener, administrator RGSQ); Iraphne Childs (geography academic); Margaret McIvor (AGTA Director); Peter Nunan (retired geography teacher).

## School Round

The final number of students participating in the 2011 Competition was 79,089 from 746 schools. A selection of teachers' comments on the school round is given in Appendix A. A survey of schools that competed in 2010 but not 2011 is underway.

## Final for under 16s

The intermediate winners in Table 1, plus the next highest scorer, David Robertson from Sydney Grammar School, took part in the Final for under 16s. The Final was held on 6 June at the Foxtel Television Centre in Sydney before a packed audience of Sydney students and teachers. The students spent the previous weekend in Sydney, with the highlight a Bridge Climb in perfect weather. The students also explored the historic Rocks area, went on a guided tour of Fort Denison, watched an Imax movie, and took in the fantastic light displays that were part of the Vivid Sydney Festival.

The questions in the Final covered a large range of topics covering physical and human geography, some using maps and photos. The relevance of geography to current events was underlined by questions which focussed on natural disasters, following the spate of deadly disasters in our region,

and on the Arab countries experiencing unrest. Questions on forests marked the International Year of Forests.

## The results of the Final were:

**First** Michael Gu, Melbourne Grammar School

**Second** Jesse Tong, Brisbane Grammar School

**Third** Liam Kearney, Christ Church Grammar School, Perth

## Asia Pacific Regional Geography Olympiad

Australia came first in the Asia Pacific Regional Geography Olympiad held in Mérida, Mexico, from 4 to 9 July 2011. Australia's team was chosen from the students in the Competition's senior division, via the 2010 Geography's Big Week Out:

Bridget Anderson, St Mary's College, Hobart  
Laura Bennett, Coffs Harbour Senior College  
TarangImmidi, Sydney Grammar School  
Jonathan Steven, Camberwell Grammar School, Melbourne

All four team members won medals: Tarang won a gold medal, Jonathan and Laura silver and Bridget bronze. This gave the Australians the highest combined team score in the Olympiad. Other teams competing were Japan, Mexico, Singapore and Taiwan.

## National Geographic World Championship

The Australian team came fourth at the National Geographic World Championship, held 23-28 July in San Francisco – the best result since 1995. Australia's team was made

up of students selected from the 2010 and 2011 Finals for under 16s:

Michael Gu, Melbourne Grammar School  
Riley Kernaghan, MacGregor State High School, Brisbane  
Jesse Tong, Brisbane Grammar School

Competing in the World Championship were teams from Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Taiwan, UK and USA.

Victoria has generously agreed to also organise the 2012 Geography's Big Week Out, after which it will rotate to another state.

## 2012 Competition

The fee for participation will be raised to \$3.00 per student. The anticipated timeline for 2012 is:

**late Oct** Direct mail all contact teachers

**mid Jan** Direct mail all secondary schools with full Competition information

**mid Feb** Direct mail reminder to all contact teachers

**28 Feb** Deadline for entries

**mid Mar** Question packs sent out

**26 Mar - 4 Apr** Competition held in schools

**late May** Post back results and certificates

**4 Jun** Final for under 16s, Sydney

**21 - 27 Aug** International Geography Olympiad, Cologne, Germany

**Oct** Geography's Big Week Out, Mornington Peninsula, Vic



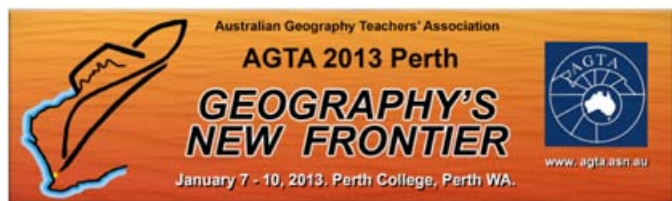
**Table 2. 2011 National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition**

State/Terr	Junior Winner(s)	Intermediate Winner	Senior Winner(s)	School Winner
NSW	Blake Coleman, North Sydney Boys' High School Jason Dong, Shore School Kevin Huang, Shore School	David Gardiner, North Sydney Boys' High School	Ashwin Rudder, Sydney Boys High School Dawen Shi, Sydney Boys High School	Sydney Boys High School
Qld	Dylan Biggs, Mansfield State High School Joshua Hassum, Brisbane Grammar School William Palmer, Somerset College	Jesse Tong, Brisbane Grammar School	Justin Turner, The Cathedral College	Brisbane Grammar School
SA	Lachlan Poel, Tenison Woods College	John McMichael, St Peter's College	Nick Booth, Pembroke School	Pembroke School
Tas	Lachlan Poel, Tenison Woods College	Ben McDonald, Burnie High School	Henry West, Hutchins School	Launceston Church Grammar School
Territories	CallumMacgill, Canberra Grammar School Benjamin Mynott, Canberra Grammar School	Lewis Rosenberg, Telopea Park School	Kenji Strazdins, Lyneham High School Nicholas McClelland, Canberra Grammar School	Canberra Grammar School
Vic	Amelia Rowe, home-schooled	Michael Gu, Melbourne Grammar School	Daniel King, Distance Education Centre Victoria	Melbourne Grammar School
WA	Matthew Gorman, Perth Modern School Ben Slater, Hale School	Liam Kearney, Christ Church Grammar School	CallumNevill, Shenton College	Shenton College

<sup>1</sup> ACT, NT, Cocos Keeling and Christmas Island



# AGTA 2013 Conference



Geographical Education will be entering a 'new frontier' as we implement the Australian Curriculum fully in 2013. The Australian Geography Teachers Association, AGTA, will be holding its biennial National Conference in Perth from January the 7th to 10th in 2013. International and Australasian Geography teachers and academics will be invited to the conference to participate in a stimulating education program of presentations, hands on workshops and field trips. Renowned international Geographical educators **Professor Simon Catling**, from Oxford Brookes University, and **Professor David Lambert**, Geographical Association Chief Executive and University of London, will be two of our keynote presenters sharing their expertise in F – 12 Geography education. **Professor Peter Newman**, Chief Writer on Transport for the IPCC, UN will also be presenting. With the final documentation for the Australian Curriculum – Geography to be released in October 2012 for implementation in 2013, the conference will be a great opportunity for teachers to gain new insights and ideas to assist with implementing the new Australian Geography Curriculum.

We anticipate an unprecedented attendance at the conference in response to the need for professional learning as a result of the new F-12 Geography Curriculum. 250 teachers from around Australia attended the last AGTA conference held in Adelaide, South Australia. Further conference details can be viewed at <http://www.agta.asn.au/conf2013/index.htm>.

## General Program:

### Sunday 6th Jan

- Optional Swan Valley Wineries Tour
- Welcome Barbecue

### Monday 7th Jan - Keynotes/Workshops

- Professors Simon Catling and David Lambert keynotes.
- Workshops with an additional 'primary teachers' stream.
- AGTA Awards at Canapés & Drinks function – Tim Costello

### Tuesday 8th Jan - Whole Day Fieldtrips

- Free Dining night – discounted suggested venues

### Wednesday 9th Jan - Whole Day and ½ Day Fieldtrips

- Barbecue and AGTA Cup games

### Thursday 10th Jan - Keynotes/Workshops

- Prof. Peter Newman - Chief Writer, Transport IPCC UN
- Second Keynote TBA.
- Formal Conference Dinner, Farewell

## Pre-Conference Tour(s)

A 'South West' corner Pre Conference Tour will be held from Wed 2nd – Sat 5th Jan, (4 days/3nights). This will be a Coach based tour with 2 nights in Margaret River and 1 night in Pemberton. Margaret River and the South West of WA are renown for its wineries, big surf, caves and fresh produce. Pemberton is also an outstanding wine producing region and home to the 3rd tallest tree species in the world, the Karri. Costings and further details will be available on the Conference website.

## Fieldwork

- Each field trip to be offered twice and will run according to numbers.
- Rottnest Island. Sustainability, dunes, tunnels and guns, bays and beaches, tourism.
- Mandurah – canals, crabs, climate change, the cut.
- Gravity Centre, Gingin – leaning towers, astronomical geography and Moondah Brook Winery.
- Indigenous Perspectives in Geography – Hills Forest Centre, Mundaring.
- Perth Coastal Environments - Beaches/Climate Change/GPS.
- Perth CBD – walking tour, combining City of Perth heritage, planning, urban renewal and sustainability.
- The Amazing Race – Perth/Fremantle. Cross Perth orientation. GPS, GIS, Geocaching, downloading to Google Earth

## Venue

Perth College is situated in the leafy inner suburb of Mount Lawley, 3km from the CBD as well as within easy reach of the outer metropolitan, hills, river and Swan Valley suburbs. Its placement near arterial roads and excellent links to public transport ensures the school is easily accessible. The ambience, profile and excitement of being part of the Mount Lawley 'café strip' adds a unique buzz to the school environment and places it squarely within the cultural heart of the city.

The recently constructed Judith Cottier Theatre will provide a fantastic venue for our Keynote presentations. Well-equipped, air-conditioned classrooms and laboratories will be available for workshops.



## Accommodation

- Budget accommodation at the Perth College Boarding House, including breakfast - \$40 pp/pn
- Offsite – packages with Rydges Perth – 4 star hotel, and suitable apartment style accommodation in the CBD, Mantra or Quest.

## Submission of Papers, Trade Displays and Registration

Calls for papers for workshop presentations close on the 24th February and can be made online at the Conference website. Application for trade displays and sponsorship can also be made online.

Pre-registration is available now on the conference website and Registration will open online late April early May. Early bird prices will apply until the end of September. Fees will be very similar to AGTA 2011 in Adelaide. All bookings and payments will be made online.

[www.agta.asn.au/conf2013/index.htm](http://www.agta.asn.au/conf2013/index.htm)

For further information contact:

**Darryl Michie**

agta2013 Conference Convenor

[agta2013@inet.net.au](mailto:agta2013@inet.net.au)

## Geographical Teachers Association of Western Australia (GAWA)

President: Trish Harris

Membership: The Association is robust and strongly supported by its membership, which remains stable at 250. Most schools in the state that offer Geography are members. Geography student numbers continue to have variable enrolment patterns.

### Professional Development: New and Beginning Teachers Day

Professional Development for 2011 commenced with the New and Beginning Teachers Day with approximately 40 teachers attending. The PD Committee Members facilitated the day and coordinated the collection of a range of teaching resources to support each stage and Year 11 and 12. Each delegate received resources electronically, and reports from our new teachers were very positive. This year we also offered a mapping and practical skills session hosted by Committee Member, Sandra Tressider which was very well received. Sandra has extensive experience working with ESL students and was able to incorporate literacy strategies too. So positive was the feedback that Sandra agreed to run a session at the GAWA Conference.

**Geography in Action 2B Professional Development** GAWA conducted professional learning based on the 2B Course where an informative presentation from Tim Pearman representing ALCOA was followed by Rob Swan and Johan Ballot from Premier Coal who also gave his insights and about the current situation with coal. Leo Conti also worked incredibly hard to deliver a relevant and interesting presentation.

### GAWA Conference August

The GAWA Conference "Planning for Change" was held 19th August to the 21st August. GAWA greatly appreciated the amazing support of the Curtin University as a major sponsor. Keynote speakers included: Professor Peter Newman from Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute, presented 'Planning for Change: Sustainability and Climate Change'; Associate Professor Laura Stocker also from Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute, discussed 'Climate Change and our Coastal Lifestyle: A Land Girt by Sea Walls?'; Professor Roy Jones from the Curtin Sustainable Tourism Centre presented 'Special Places: Where, Why, How and for Whom? Valuing, Viewing, Sustaining, Caring for and Changing the Informal Settlements of the WA Coastline'.

A number of engaging trips were part of the conference with: Dr Hugo Bekle, Faculty of Education and Arts ECU, (Geography), presenting 'The Fate of Perth's Urban Wetlands' at nearby Lake Joondalup; Phil Houweling from John Calvin Christian College, Spatial Technology in Schools competition winner,

shared his expertise on 'Getting Great Geography Going - Google Earth, GPS & GIS'; visits to Tamala Park and the new Resource Recovery Centre at Neerabup and investigating Urban Change & North West Frontier with Trish Harris, HOD St Marks Anglican Community School.

An Australian Curriculum update was provided by ACARA representative John Gougoulis and Malcolm McInerney. The feedback about the presentation on 'The Work of AGTA' by President Malcolm McInerney was overwhelmingly positive and encouraging as we work towards the Australian Curriculum and hosting the national conference for AGTA.

*Geography in Action 2B Professional Development:* Leo Conti and his team have arranged the second stage two PD in the series of 'Geography in Action' with Fesa presenting on Bushfires, Floods and other natural disasters.

### AGTA National Conference January 2013

The GAWA AGTA conference committee and Darryl Michie are continuing work on the 2013 AGTA Conference. This national event will be a watershed moment for Geography as it also coincides with the launch of implementation of the Australian Curriculum Geography. We hope to have a primary Geography stream and encourage attendance especially if Simon Catling is able to present.

### Publications and projects

GAWA Text books are now available for all WA courses and continue to enjoy good sales. We have arranged reprints of a number of texts as supplies dwindle.

GAWA was delighted when Norm Snell agreed to write the GAWA WACE Revision Guide. He worked with efficiency in semester one to deliver the book in time for WACE revision. Even though it is fresh off the press, we have already sold over 1000 copies.

### GAWA Exam Papers

There has been terrific membership support for the GAWA Exam papers. This year we offered hardcopy and/or email copies for both WACE Stage 2 and 3 exams and answer guides for semester one and two. I am very proud of the efforts of our exam writer, office and checkers. We have a range of exams which provide useful revision for students.

### Curriculum Council WACE Exam Broadsheets

In 2010 we were grateful to the Curriculum Council for the negotiated opportunity to access and distribute the 2010 WACE Geography Broadsheet. We made this resource available for a minimal cost. In 2011, we have worked with the Curriculum Council access to the broadsheet on the proviso that we are able to arrange copyright. They will not be printing an excess number of broadsheets. However, GAWA will be able to arrange for a print run if we can get copyright. We certainly hope to provide the 2011 WACE broadsheet for our members. The costs of printing and copyright will mean a higher cost for this resource.

GAWA continues to promote geography through their website which is the flagship public face for the association. All members have access to a password protected space in which countless resources reside, like the presentations of our keynote speakers from this year's conference. The website is a very valuable mechanism for sharing good practice. The website is rigorously and diligently maintained and updated. Other activities include the *WACE Revision seminars*, *Joseph Gentilli Memorial Award for Excellence in Geographical Education*, and the *PTCWA Outstanding Professional Service Awards for 2011*.

### National Teaching Standards

WA teachers have been encouraged to consider the implications of the National Professional Standards for Teachers which were endorsed by Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) and released on 9 February 2011. The Standards (<http://www.teacherstandards.aitsl.edu.au/>) support the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians and the National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality. Essentially they are a framework for a nationally consistent way of recognising quality teaching. They make explicit what teachers should know, be able to do and what is expected of effective teachers across their career.

In term two teachers attended the Curriculum Council (CC) Assessment Seminars to collect and discuss the Standards Package for Stages 2 and 3. These documents are very useful for the preparation of students engaged in external assessment.

### University Geography

A number of the universities have been assessing their courses. The University of Western Australia has undertaken a new undergraduate programme of general degrees. Hugo Bekle has asked for the association's support of Geography at Edith Cowan University. ECU has decided to reduce the status of Geography to a minor and will have no specialists. A more supportive climate is emerging at Curtin. Amanda Davies is currently working on re-designing the geography offerings at the university. Their intention is to provide an online course like a graduate certificate in geography teaching for already qualified teachers who are seeking to gain some formal geography qualifications.

### Australian Curriculum

WA teachers are waiting for the release of the draft curriculum. A number of WA schools have been selected to run trials for ACARA.

Darryl Michie takes up the position of GAWA President in January 2012.



## Geography Teachers Association of Victoria (GTAV)

President: Trish Douglas

Membership is currently 624 which is a slight increase on 2010. A new category of membership "Friends of the GTAV" has been introduced – this is an Associate membership and is open to past teachers of Geography who are no longer working fulltime. Global Education Project (GEP) also provides access to pre-service and practicing teachers at both secondary and primary schools.

### Professional Development

GTAV offered professional learning to experienced and inexperienced teachers of Geography including; Quality teaching ideas for Middle years Geography, GIS training at a number of levels and Help! How do I teach Geography for inexperienced teachers.

GTAV also hosted a student lecture in August and revision lectures in October – attendance approx. 700.

### GTAV resources

The following resources are in production or have been produced:

- Geography Environments : VCE Units 1 & 2 – almost complete
- Resources and Perspectives : VCE Units 3 & 4 – almost complete
- 2011 VCE Trial Exam – complete
- Full-colour resource catalogue – in production for 2012
- Full-colour Interaction X four editions – 3 published; December edition in production
- GTAV News X 4 editions
- Borneo multimedia game – based on forest and cultural sustainability – in production
- Bushfires resource in conjunction with Country Fire Authority – in production
- Online bushfires resources in conjunction with Education Services Australia – complete
- Australian Children's Television Foundation – primary and lower

secondary Geography worksheets based on the My Place TV series available on the My Place website and on DVD – complete

### Global Education Project (GEP)

Staff now includes the Director of Project as Project Manager and four Global Education staff who deliver the project. Three sessional contractors are also employed to assist during times of heavy demand. Resources produced/in production using GEP funds include:

- Forest and biodiversity CD-ROM – complete
- Forest: a global perspective: booklet for secondary students – complete
- Water booklet: based on the Global Education learning emphases and Geography skills and knowledge and understandings – in production

Plans are in place to produce:

- Geography careers brochure
- Primary research re: Geography resource production

GTAV continues to have an active involvement with Destination Spatial – the Education Committee which includes representatives from the spatial industries, tertiary institutions and education – to promote career pathways into the spatial industry and has developed a similar relationship with the Planning industry.

GTAV has submitted articles to "Inspire", "Australian Teacher Magazine", "VCAA", "Great Scot".

The patron of the GTAV, Rob Gell, has played an active role within and for the Association – he spoke at the AGM and hosted a forum at the Annual Conference on the Conference theme – "What's going on – Understanding our world through Geography".

Numerous other activities have included:

- participating in the writing of curriculum material with a Geography focus for the ACTF television series "My Place".
- continuing to develop the partnership with "The Age" who has advertised GTAV professional learning and GTAV activities. GTAV has engaged in consultation with

The Age in relation to the content of The Age Natural Disasters posters to be published in 2012.

- hosting of 'Big Week Out' in October.
- collaborating with other subject associations to provide professional learning for teachers.
- hosting a Facebook page with approximately 180 members.
- Being a representative on the Committee of Management of CPTAV – the Council of Professional Teaching Associations of Victoria.

### Curriculum Developments

GTAV is providing teachers with information about the Australian Curriculum via GTAV News, website and professional learning opportunities. At the GTAV Annual Conference a forum was held which included Monica Bini – VCAA Humanities, David Howes, VCAA General Manager Curriculum and Susan Caldis, Senior Project Officer Geography, ACARA. Susan also provided a seminar. GTAV has also provided a primary and secondary school representative to an Australian Curriculum Consultative Panel hosted by Monica Bini.

Terry McMeekin (Education Officer) and Trish Douglas (GTAV President) have also provided information and feedback when required.

In collaboration with VCAA, the GTAV will provide the opportunity for primary and secondary teachers to provide feedback on the Draft Australian Curriculum Geography.

The GTAV looks forward to the construction of the shed for the storage of the AGTA materials at the GTAV Office.





## Geography Teachers Association of Queensland (GTAQ)

President: Anne-Marie Gerlach

Membership is similar to the corresponding period for the past couple of years.

Membership continues to be relatively stable in the low 200s (223 total members as at 19 October 2011).

### Professional Development

GTAQ hosted its highly successful annual conference at the University of Queensland in July 2011. This was the biggest GTAQ conference in recent years with over 150 people registering for the day. The format and content of the day changed markedly from previous conferences and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive regarding the choice of workshops which topics ranging from teaching pedagogy, to senior, middle and primary Geography topics, to the use of a number of new technologies.

This year the theme was "Planning for Change" with the committee constructing a fantastic day filled with workshops, guest speakers, and show bags full of "goodies". The huge number of trade displays not only filled the venue and looked great; they provided an opportunity to find out the latest and greatest products and purchase resources. The conference focused on providing information regarding the challenges facing our Geography curriculum, as well as the need to plan for change especially after a summer of wild weather and natural disasters.

Delegates had the pleasure of listening and participating in a vast range of sessions including a new stream this year focusing on primary Geography. Of particular acclaim was the key note presented by Peter Skinner, Head of Architecture at the University of Queensland who discussed "Planning for future floods in Brisbane". Representatives from QSA, ACARA, State Panel and a range of expert presenters gave much needed up

to date information along with our very own AGTA Chair Malcolm McInerney, discussing 21st century Geography and the Australian Curriculum.

The University of Queensland hosted its highly successful Careers Day in July. This day incorporates lectures and presentations for students about the huge range of careers and options available to them at after a Geographical course of study at school or university.

Geography Teachers' seminar hosted by Bond University and Gold Coast GeoNet held at Bond University on Friday August 26. The day comprised four sessions:

- Understanding catchments presented by Emeritus Professor Tor Hundloe – Tor presented an overview of catchments around the world and the important role that they had played throughout world history.
- Sustaining communities presented by Nicole Webb - Nicole focussed on the growing population of many areas, in particular the growing urban populations and what that means in terms of traditional settlement patterns.
- Connecting people and places presented by Amy White – Amy's presentation really gave new meaning to how teachers might teach this focus unit in the Social Environments theme.
- Responding to natural hazards presented by Associate Professor Bhishna Bajracharya – the focus of this presentation was that, in light of the recent summer of natural disasters, there was an urgent need to focus on responding to natural hazards.

Verification meetings this year took place in October in all districts with State Panels meeting in early November to discuss any submissions that were not resolved and to assess comparability of assessment across the state.

### Action for Promotion of Geography

Meetings have taken place throughout the year on a range of issues relating to Geography. These initiatives have been undertaken to provide feedback to ACARA and AGTA regarding the Australian Curriculum and to participate in teleconferences.

Lucie Sorensen – QSA – former GTAQ Councillor, Kaye Schwede EQ – GTAQ Treasurer and Anne-Marie Gerlach -AGTA -President GTAQ all attended the Korean Studies work shop in Seoul in August.

Most recently Anne-Marie Gerlach represented GTAQ at the Transit of Venus (6/06/12) Education Project Reference Group Meeting. Anne met with the Program Manager, Graeme Rush and Nick de Weger from SSSI. The project will develop materials for schools including:

- Lesson plans for both primary and secondary teachers, in the areas of geography, history, mathematics and astronomy.
- A school engagement process that will allow the school to receive a free or subsidized Solarscope.
- Use of "on line access" to a software package that predicts astronomical events, and simulates their occurrence at any time or location on earth.
- Materials promoting the spatial professions
- Advice on the safe viewing of the sun.



## Australian Capital Territory - Sub Branch of GTANSW

Coordinator: Carol Pogson

Membership is stable with good representation across government and non government schools.

A mini conference was delivered by GTANSW in Term 2, focusing on the development of the Australian Geography Curriculum. Rod Lane, David Hamper, Lorraine Chaffer, Nick Hutchinson, Grant Kleeman and Susan Bliss presented interesting content and inspired

teachers to go back to schools armed with readings and updated knowledge. Teachers came from both the government and non-government sectors and from regions around the ACT district. All teachers who attended thought it was an excellent day and valued the interactive style taken by the presents.

Carol Pogson spoke to Graduate Diploma Secondary Teachers regarding life in the classroom and about the teaching of geography. The graduates were interested in hearing about how the Australian Curriculum would impact on them.

Work on the fieldwork project is progressing slowly. The ACT will be working on the fieldwork book in 2012 so that it is ready to roll out with the Australian Curriculum Geography. We will be approaching the ACT Education and Training Directorate for financial assistance and to help deliver professional learning.

As the Australian Curriculum Geography looms interest is gathering. Teachers are contacting the ACT Education & Training Directorate and both Carol & Karen for details. Hopefully, when the final document is made public people will come to meetings for information and support.

## Geography Teachers Association of New South Wales (GTANSW)

President: Nick Hutchinson

Membership stands at approximately 370 financial members.

### Professional Development

**Simple spatial technology:** In May, 2011 a workshop was conducted, titled, 'Simple spatial technology for ACT and regional Geography teachers – Primary and Secondary level', conducted by Mick Law, Contour Education.

The GIS Skills covered over the day include:

- What are Spatial Technologies?
- How can they be easily used in class?
- What online GIS are out there?
- How can my students create their own maps online?
- How can I get started using Google Earth in class?

### Regional mini conferences

Susan Caldis, Senior Curriculum Officer, ACARA, provided an update on the Australian Geography Curriculum, at the four mini conferences held at Newcastle, Canberra, Orange and Coffs Harbour. Rod Lane, David Hamper, Lorraine Chaffer, Nick Hutchinson, Grant Kleeman and Susan Bliss spoke on a variety of topics including: an innovative look at Geography skills; urban dynamics; working with students' ideas to build geographical understanding; Australia in its regional context with a focus on China; and promoting student engagement and conceptual understanding using contemporary issues, geographical skills and visual literacy.

All conferences received excellent evaluations. Teachers' comments included: *Fantastic; This was an excellent conference, thank you; Excellent worthwhile mini conference; Had a great time and well organised; Great resources for Geography; Well planned, timed and excellent content selection; Presenters informative, approachable and constructive toward professional development – excellent; One of the best conferences I have been to – the content given was more valuable than the food; Lots of excellent up to date information and ideas to take back to the classroom.*

The 2011 GTANSW annual conference focused on the topic of People and Hazards

by exploring the changing nature and characteristics of population, as well as the nature, characteristics and impacts of natural hazards. The topics presented at the conference related to Stage 4, 5 and 6 in the Geography curriculum. The morning session included speakers who addressed topics such as the causes of natural hazards and the role of technology in weather prediction as well as the government response to natural disasters. The afternoon session included speakers providing practical approaches in the use of ICT technology in both population and natural hazards.

An update on current ACARA developments concluded the conference. Speakers included: a spokesperson from Emergency Management Australia; Dick Whitaker from the Weather Channel; Mick Law from Contour Education; Pat Beeson from the Australian Bureau of Statistics; and Mark Eldridge coordinator of Shades4Aids.

The successful conference was organised by Sharon McLean with the support of Sarah Menassa-Rose, Grace Larobina, Robert Gandiaga, Paul Alger and Carmel Logalbo. The presentations are available on the GTA website – [www.gtansw.org.au/resources.php](http://www.gtansw.org.au/resources.php)

### Publications and Projects

#### Geography Bulletin

Geography Bulletin is edited by Grant Kleeman and Susan Bliss.

Vol. 43.3 2011 contained sections on the National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition, Racism in the Tertiary Education Sector: a case of Indian student attacks in Australia, Globalisation: coffee from bean to café, Defence: Australia in its regional and global links, AGTA news in brief and Geographia; resources: Arab Gateway <http://www.arabgateways.edu.au> ; free resource called the Atlas of New South Wales <http://atlas.nsw.gov.au> ; Exploring 21st Century Geography DVD

Vol. 43.4 2011 included: an update on the Geography National Curriculum; active citizenship projects (*Shades4Aids, Surfaid International*); use of information and communications technology (*Augmented Reality, Contour Education*); school projects (*Birthing Kit Assembly Day at North Sydney Girls' High School*), classroom activities (*Natural Hazards Using You Tube at Chatswood High School*); contemporary geographical issues (*Famine in the Horn of*

*Africa, The Critical Decade: Climate Change Report*); globalisation and citizenship (*Bitter Sweet Chocolate: From Ground to Mouth, Tobacco: Fatal Global Epidemic*); resources (*ABS website, book reviews, new resources from World Vision, Oxfam and Global Education*); and the importance of *Geography for a future career*.

Future editions of the *Geography Bulletin* will no longer be sent to members as a hard copy but will be presented electronically. Instead of increasing membership fees the Geography Council decided that electronic *Geography Bulletins* will not only be cost saving but also environmentally sustainable.

The Parramatta Park project was launched at Parramatta Park in October, 2011. The resource is a teaching program with worksheets for fieldwork/site study, focused on the World Heritage status of the park as one of the Australian Convict Sites. It is now being published on the Parramatta Park Trust website for schools.

HSC Student Lectures were conducted at: Brisbane Waters Secondary College Woy Woy Campus, Gibbs St, Woy Woy), Callaghan Secondary College (Jesmond Campus, Janet St, Jesmond); St Andrews Cathedral School and the University of Wollongong.

Susan Caldis, Senior Project Officer, Geography, ACARA provided an update on the Australian Curriculum, Geography in the Geography Bulletin, Vol. 43, No 2 2011 and Vol. 43 No 4 2011.

Thanks to Rob Berry the new website, launched on 7 June is progressing well. The Journals have been archived for online access. GTANSW proposes to produce future journals as electronic copies. These can be emailed and attached as PDF copies for members.



## Tasmanian Geography Teachers Association (TGTA)

President: Wayne Sutton

Membership continues to steadily increase and currently stands at 24 active members, with 21 of these teachers actually teaching Geography in 2011. The new additions are teachers who are teaching Geography in Years 7 – 10 in private schools and one who will be teaching it next year.

## Professional Development

A Professional Development day for all Geography teachers from around the state was held in mid October prior to the AGTA Board Meeting. Special thanks to Bec, Anne-Marie, Malcolm and Steve for giving up a day of their work time, coming to Hobart early for the AGTA meeting and preparing a PD session for Tasmanian Geography teachers. It is very much appreciated by us. 17 teachers attended who made up of most of the teachers who are currently teaching Geography in 2011.

TGTA continually circulates resources and information to Geography teachers throughout the state.



## Geography Teachers Association of South Australia (GTASA)

President: Alex Piggott

Currently 125 teachers are members of GTASA.

The new journal editor is Roger Smith. GTASA are delighted that Roger has taken on this role. His first edition was a jumbo version with a focus on Islands. Roger's geographical knowledge and experience will enable him to guide the journal in a new and exciting direction.

GTASA is keen to attract more primary school teachers to be involved with the GTASA and through the promotions and marketing committee have devised some strategies to action this. Succession planning remains an issue along with the dilemma of fulltime teachers being able to give up time to conduct GTASA business.

## Professional Development

The special one day conference "Geography Challenges" was the main professional learning activity for the GTASA in 2011. Professor Millington was the key note speaker. The topic of his address was the *Wild Geographical Frontiers of Cocaine* – new insights into the considerable impacts of the illegal drug trade in South America. His presentation was different and engaging. A range of workshops and an AC Geography session from Malcolm McInerney were also held.

## Publications and Projects

The GTASA marketing and promotions committee met in July and devised a long term plan to attract and service our members, initiated a special primary school membership rate and are investigating the possibility of joining with History re offering joint membership to primary schools.

The primary school geography kit is in its final stages of development and planning for the 2012 conference already underway..

GTASA concerns regarding the demise of Geography was addressed through the following:

- Executive of GTASA met with Professor Nick Harvey, Adelaide University to flag concerns regarding geography numbers and the New SACE. Professor Harvey was supportive, offered some new strategies and will be able to advocate for GTASA at the Adelaide University Council level.
- GTASA has been proactive and has written to other academics to flag the concerns and have had a range of support. In addition letters were written to every SA politician to voice our concerns.

- One approach was to develop a standard letter for each conference participant to personalise and send to the Minister for Education. This was very well received by our members!
- Further letters were written to local papers regarding the new SACE and the drop off in numbers for many subjects.
- The president was also interviewed on ABC radio regarding the demise of Geography.

## Curriculum Developments

First year of Stage 2 Geography has highlighted some concerns regarding the use of the performance standards and general teething problems. Only 375 students are studying Geography at Y12 level, most of whom are in independent schools.





# Education Services Australia

Malcolm welcomed  
Michael Gehling and Leanne  
Robinson from Education  
Services Australia.

The key responsibility of Education Services Australia (ESA) is to provide curriculum and assessment materials, supporting the development of the new Australian Curriculum.

Education Services Australia (ESA) has recently launched SpatialGenie, an online education system to promote GIS in Australian schools. It is available for free use at <http://www.spatialgenie.edu.au/spatialgenie/>

ACARA's, Shape of the Australian Curriculum articulates the importance of the technology skills through the **Information and communication technology (ICT) General Capability**.

Students develop ICT competence as they learn to use ICT effectively and appropriately when investigating, creating and communicating ideas and information at school, at home, at work and in their communities.

The geography curriculum will provide many opportunities to develop and use ICT skills.

These include basic computing skills and the use of computer software to locate, manage, analyse and present geographical information. Geographical ICT skills include the use and application of geographical information systems (GIS) and global positioning systems (GPS) management and representation of geographical data in graphical and other visual forms.

The use of spatial technology is a rapidly growing area of ICT, with significant employment opportunities in the expanding spatial industry. The use of

spatial technologies will be integrated into the curriculum from early primary school onwards to ensure the development of students' ICT skills matches their cognitive abilities, and the application of those skills in the topics being studied. The curriculum will also provide opportunities for students to explore the effects of these technologies on places, the location of economic activities and on people's lives, and to understand the changing spatial relationships enabled by ICT.

ESA has morphed out of The Learning Federation, Curriculum Corporation and EDNA as the resource development arm of the Australian Curriculum initiative. The development of Spatial Genie by ESA is important because for the first time the education system in Australia, via ESA, has invested in the development and promotion of GIS in schools in a practical way."

When commenting on Spatial Genie Malcolm McNerney said that, "Irrespective of some of the platform problems, this development is especially important for the geographer wishing to use GIS in their classroom because of the data access function of the product. ESA has worked hard at acquiring data from government and private providers for use in SpatialGenie. Such a data bank acquired by a government organisation such as ESA is just what Australian geographers have been looking for to make data access, storage and configuration on a national scale a reality. In time Spatialgenie will also have data associated student activities and support materials integrated into the site." (Accessed 22 October 2011 on [http://www.geospatialworld.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=22976:spatialgenie-set-to-promote-gis-in-australian-schools&catid=77&Itemid=1](http://www.geospatialworld.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22976:spatialgenie-set-to-promote-gis-in-australian-schools&catid=77&Itemid=1))



SpatialGenie -Spatial data visualisation and analysis (<http://www.spatialgenie>)

- A basic spatial analysis tool
- Uses open source web mapping technologies
- Access to real data
- Incorporates data from government and organisations

SpatialGenie as a tool provides:

- Easier access to geospatial data and imagery
- Excellent introduction for both students and teachers
- Open- ended tool, exploratory in nature
- For Australian schools this is well suited for Years 4-10

Potential further developments:

- Interactive, editable datasets (combines spatialgenie and datagenie(business intelligence data tool) strengths
- Thematic maps
- User interface improvements
- Analysis tools, temporal and spatial dimensions