

GEOGRAPHIA

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

JULY 2007

Occasional Newsletter of The Australian Geography Teachers' Association Limited

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AGTA Board Meeting May 2007

The 98th meeting of AGTA Limited was held in Melbourne on the weekend of 5-6 May 2007.

Of significance to AGTA, as a national organisation, is that it is truly representative of all affiliates across Australia. At this meeting, AGTA board members were delighted to have the opportunity to unanimously endorse the motion of GAWA's re-affiliation. Within the current political climate, the drive for a national agenda and the push for Geography to be a compulsory component of the curriculum, it is appropriate that all affiliates and states have the opportunity to provide input and feedback.

Mike Fazio (President GAWA) assumed responsibilities as an AGTA Director. We welcomed Mike to the meeting and acknowledge the valuable contribution he made.

Professional Teaching Standards

Teaching Australia has released a consultation paper on National professional standards for advanced teaching and school leadership. Organisations have been encouraged to respond. In addition, Teaching Australia plan to convene a national standards forum on 29-30 July 2007. It is anticipated that AGTA, along with other associations will be invited to attend.

At its May meeting AGTA discussed the proposals within the paper. A written response, on behalf of AGTA, will be collated by Jeana Kriewaldt.

Following agreement to move forward, a Standards Drafting Group, representing the teaching profession, will be appointed. The Group will settle on common organising categories, draft the capabilities for advanced teaching

and school leadership and propose guidelines and criteria for professional associations to use in drafting descriptors for their specialisations.

The Standards Drafting Group would report to a Standards Council to be established as a standing committee on the Teaching Australia Board of Directors.

Teaching Australia
CONTINUING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXCELLENCE AND LEARNING

Promoting Geography at a National Level

AGTA has continued to develop a national profile in promoting Geography. This has been demonstrated by the diversity of activities undertaken over the last six months. Significant highlights include:

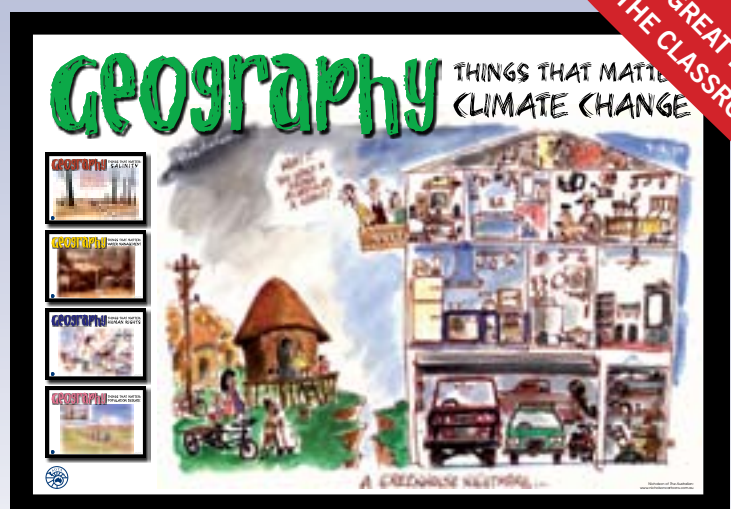
- AGTA Board Members meeting with the Hon Minister Julie Bishop and developing articles and documents that articulate the importance and need for children across Australia's to study geography. Additionally AGTA has been a strong advocate in supporting the inclusion of geography in the national curriculum.
- Increasingly delegates from all states represent AGTA at the national level in a range of forums including National Education Forum, Australian Federation of Societies for Studies of Society and Environment, human rights in education conference and Spatial Sciences Institute. Board Members have nominated their preferences and have shown commitment to promoting and participating at this national level.
- The development of the new improved website provides a higher profile for AGTA and its board of directors—all affiliates are represented on the site and have links to this site – www.agta.asn.au. Linked to this website will be the new Geography Careers Web site AGTA has commissioned. The separate website, with its own domain name will provide a window on the relevance of geography in young people's lives. (www.geocareers.net.au).
- The development of the new geography text 'Keys to Fieldwork' has progressed with writers being identified for various components of the book. This text is based on the same concept as 'Keys to Geography Skills' that has received incredible success across Australia.
- Responding to the National "Teaching Australia" consultation document regarding the development of Education Standards for Advanced Teachers and School Leaders. This should lead on to the development of professional standards for Geography Teachers.
- AGTA's financial position continues to grow from strength to strength with current assets exceeding \$125,000. (Once again, congratulations to Company Treasurer Bronwen Perry for all her continual work and effort in furthering the healthy state of AGTA's finances).
- The Beijing 2008 Olympic Games publication (in conjunction with the Geographical Association in the UK) has progressed, with the identification of four key units – further details are provided on [page 12](#) of this newsletter.
- The 'Weather Channel' documentary series has continued to receive exceptional reviews and remains a show-case for geographical education. See www.weatherchannel.com.au

These achievements indicate the central role that AGTA has undertaken in co-ordinating a national approach to lifting the profile of Geography and promoting geographical education in Australia.

AGTA's 'Things that matter' Poster Series

The Australian Geography Teachers' Association, in support of its ongoing commitment to the promotion of Geography in Australian schools, has produced a series of five posters featuring cartoons by Peter Nicholson, The Australian newspaper's cartoonist.

The high quality, A2-size laminated posters feature cartoons dealing with important Geographical issues: climate change, salinity, water management, human rights and Australia's population debate. Classroom use of the posters will be facilitated by a series of activity-based worksheets published in the journals/newsletters of the state-based affiliates.

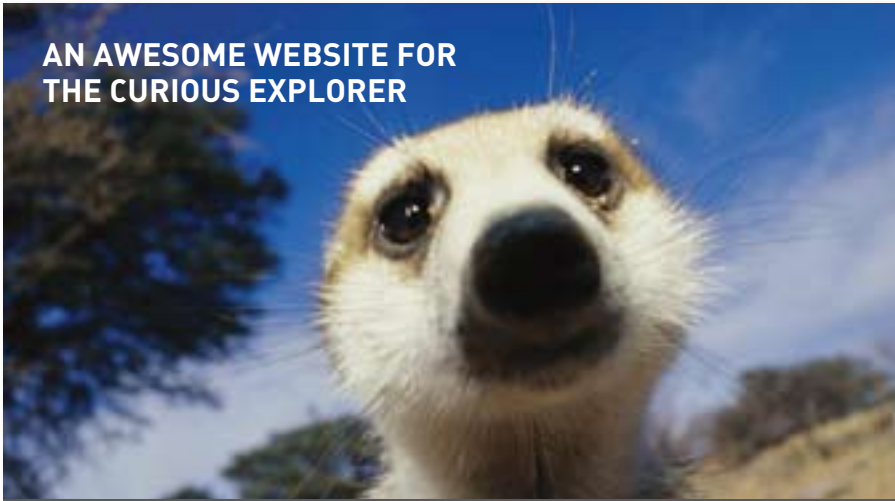


GREAT FOR
THE CLASSROOM

For details about this initiative please contact **Grant Kleeman:**
grant.kleeman@mq.edu.au

Cost: \$25.00 per set

AN AWESOME WEBSITE FOR
THE CURIOUS EXPLORER



For more education information log onto www.nationalgeographic.com.au/gsi



Think again.

National Geographic Channel's GSI Kids



Building on the National Geographic Society dedication to education, National Geographic Channel's GSI Kids prepares the next generation of global citizens, helping kids understand the world and their place in it.

GSI Kids, for Geography Science Investigation, is a one-stop learning resource combining on-air and online factual, entertaining and curriculum relevant information. The website and the programming block are formatted to be a comprehensive learning tool for the classroom and the curious young explorer.

Each school day National Geographic Channel broadcasts documentaries that meet Australian Education Standards in GSI Hour (10.00am EST). All GSI documentaries are categorised into Curriculum Key Learning Areas: Global Biodiversity, Earth and Beyond, Humans and Impact, Natural and Social Systems, and Life and Technology. To compliment these documentaries in GSI Hour, National Geographic Channel adds short film segments ideal for motivating students and inciting discussion. These locally produced and acclaimed knowledge capsules explain topics such as: Why is the Sky Blue? What are our Ethnic Origins? and What is DNA?

GSI documentaries are particularly suitable for syllabus application in Upper Primary and Lower Secondary levels with special more in-depth programming

for Senior Students also programmed each week. With a Geography Science Teacher on the National Geographic Channel team, students receive prompt and comprehensive homework advice.

National Geographic Channel's commitment to education doesn't end there. After viewing the documentary students can discover GSI Kids Online on www.nationalgeographic.com.au/gsi

GSI Kids Online includes News Briefs on global and local events, Science and Geography Interactive Games, fascinating Career Profiles, Student Fieldwork reports, Video streams, Homework Resources, Maps, Programming Information and Classroom Activity Sheets relating to every GSI documentary - reinforcing the learning experience.

Anne Chesher

Education Consultant
0418 289 632
National Geographic Channel



AGTA GeoCareers Website

A new domain name
(www.geocareers.net.au)
has been registered.

A list of contact people in each state was nominated at the AGTA Board meeting held on 21 October 2006 (see below) and I have sent numerous emails to these state contact people. These emails have

- outlined the purpose of the GeoCareers website
- explained the nature of their role as the state contact person
- requested that they forward a list of people (with contact email address) in their state who have studied Geography and are now employed in an interesting career.

The intention of this approach is to ensure that the people in the profile section of the website includes people located in each state, as well as ensuring that a cross-section of careers is included. In addition, it is hoped that the profiles will include a balance of careers in semi-skilled and professional areas with a gender and age balance. The formation of a contact group of people was also intended to provide advice to Rob regarding the structure of the other sections of the GeoCareers website.

Regrettably feedback from the state contact group members has been minimal. It is not too late! The concept of the GeoCareers Website is exciting and will play a key role in promoting Geography across the nation.

Please contact and assist
Rob to develop this site.
r.berry@melbpc.org.au

The Council of the Institute of Australian Geographers met at the Queensland University of Technology. An outcome was the writing of a letter to Minister Julie Bishop by IAG Secretary Alaric Maude. The letter was subsequently published in *The Australian*, 5/10/2006.....

"The Australian is to be applauded for its support for the teaching of geography as a separate subject, for more teaching of basic knowledge in geography, and for that teaching to be done by teachers qualified in geography. However, your editorial ("Don't know much about geography", 4/10) ends up confusing these concerns with a more ideological attack on concepts that your writer seems to associate with left-wing political correctness. As an example, one of the concepts identified in your editorial as 'nebulous' is 'ecological sustainability'. One of the basic principles of ecological sustainability is that a renewable resource

should not be exploited faster than it can be renewed or regenerated. There is nothing nebulous about this principle, and neither is it a principle only supported by left-wing ideologues. It underlies, for example, Commonwealth Government policies on protected marine areas in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and is well understood by farmers, water managers and most of the forestry industry. In relation to ecological sustainability in general, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage, with a majority of Government members, is currently holding an inquiry into a sustainability

charter. An examination of the submissions to that inquiry will show that ecological sustainability is a concept that is widely supported by professional bodies and business, as well as by environmental NGOs. Where ideology (both left and right) can become an issue is in explaining the causes of unsustainability and the policies that should be adopted to overcome it, but the concept itself is not nebulous, left or postmodern."

Alaric Maude

Secretary

Institute of Australian Geographers

In addition, Jim was interviewed on ABC Life Matters. Following is the transcript of Jim Warmlesley's interview....

Life Matters - Jim Warmlesley, May 2007

"OK everyone, it's quiz time. What's the fifth longest river in the world? What about the capital of Mongolia? Where might you see orthographic precipitation? It's questions of this particular kidney (the sort that can put you in a cold sweat in a pop quiz) which have given geography a bad name. Not with me, I hasten to add, I love geography! I'm the son of a woman who did her degree in it and I could very happily have done the same. But there's no doubt that the discipline is in a bad way in Australia. There's been a sharp decrease in the number of students studying it at school, and according to our next guess we now have a critical shortage of Australians with geographical understanding, and a community that's less able to make informed decisions about some of the key issues of our times. With us now is Jim Warmlesley - President of the Institute of Australian Geographers, and professor at the School of Human and Environmental Sciences at the University of New England.

Hello Jim.

Hello there.

How bad is the situation at schools?

Well, it's not that bad but what we're seeing is that in schools, geography, below the High School Certificate level, is being watered down to having been put in subjects like society and its environment. People are losing a geographical focus and therefore students are not becoming aware of the interest the geography generates, or the relevance of its society. They're not carrying it through into higher degrees, into higher school certificate

studies, and not taking it up at university. So the danger is that we get a lot of people graduating from schools who don't really have a fundamental understanding of the world in which they live, which is exactly what geography can give them.

Well that's it, and look, in year twelve - the numbers that I've seen - the number of students enrolled in geography has decreased over the last couple of years by almost a quarter.

This is true. I mean, it varies from state to state, but by and large, the pattern is national. I think this is because they are

not being fired with a love of geography in earlier school, and they're not seeing the relevance of geography to the job market, to an understanding of the world about them.

Well alright, now's your time. What's the pitch?

Well the pitch is that everything in life hinges on geography. Geography is fundamentally about answering the question: who does what, where, when, why, with what effect? So the big issues that we're facing in Australia nowadays is you know: what to do with the water

supply in the Murray Darling; whether we should have nuclear energy; whether the standard of living is going up or down; how many migrants we should take; what sort of economy we should have. These are all fundamentally geographical because everything happens somewhere, and one place is very different to another place. We talk a lot about globalisation and we assume there's some sort of homogenous world out there that we're going to interact with, but that's far from the case. Places are very different and if we're going to live and succeed and adapt to a globalising world, we need to be aware of: what's happening where; which countries we're trading with; which countries are sending us migrants; what our relationships with different countries are; how the world is developing and the way it is. Not least because we only have one Earth, and with things like climate change coming to the fore, we've got to appreciate that the impact will be different in some places than others.

So that fundamental interface between people and landform, land scale, environment, that's what geography is all about?

It is. It's one of the very very few subjects that integrates the social sciences with the natural sciences, and if we fragment knowledge we might get all sorts of botanists and scientists that are brilliant in understanding environmental processes, but if you've got no understanding of society and human behaviour, then you run the risk of being in a situation where some of your suggestions may be, I think, inappropriate. You've got to take a holistic view, and see people and the environment

as interacting with each other, and how places come to be different, and what we need to know about those places.

Well State and Territory Governments have recently announced that the subject of society and the environment will be scrapped from the more traditional subject groupings: history, economics, and geography. Positive, I would've thought?

Very positive. I mean, this comes as a result, I would like to think, of a lobbying that the Institute of Australian Geographers have been doing, with the Australian Geography Teachers Associations, and the various state bodies, and with other geographical bodies in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, and so on. We've had meetings with the minister to put our point of view, and I think this is a step in the right direction. I think once we have this study of society and the environment, it became such an all-embracing topic that, particularly the specialisms, got lost. The rigor got lost, the understanding of particular issues got lost in this broad sort of mish mash. So I think this abandonment of the study of society and its environment, and reintroduction of geography as a free-standing subject is an excellent move.

Yes, ABC rules prevent me from saying how delighted I am by this Jim. What other changes would your association recommend to boost geographic knowledge in Australia?

Well I think one of the things we've got to look at is the materials that school teachers have to work with. I think that

one of the difficulties that have arisen in recent years relates to the interface between universities and schools. There's a lot of talent in both schools and universities. In the past, going back ten or fifteen years, you'd find academics in universities prepared to put a lot of time and effort into outreach, into schools and helping with teaching materials and so on. Nowadays, because of the way universities are funded, this is changing. There are no brownie points any longer for being involved in schools. We've got to put our efforts into what might be deemed by the Commonwealth Government as more important issues. I don't think they are necessarily more important. I think we need to look, we've been urging the minister, to look at ways of encouraging academics in universities to relate more to what's happening in schools, and to help with the delivering design of materials that are directly relevant to the Australian context because this is what will fire the enthusiasm of students, this is what will give them a big kick, and make them want to do geography.

I think you're coming back Jim, and it's been a pleasure to have you here today.

Good. Thank you very much indeed.

Jim Warmesley - President of the Institute of Australian Geographers, and professor at the School of Human and Environmental Sciences at the University of New England. It is coming back that discipline, and not a moment too soon either."

On a different note...

On a different note, AGTA provided input in a briefing paper for Minister Bishop into the proposed Study Outlining Where Geography Sits in Schools. Terms of Reference for the study on teaching Geography in schools include:

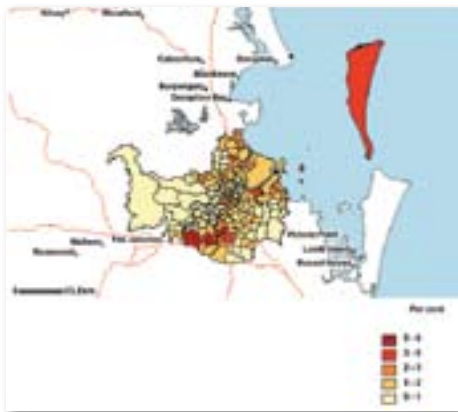
- a.** A study outlining what geography is taught in each jurisdiction from Years 3 – 10, where it is structurally located within the curriculum (as a stand-alone subject or as part of Studies of Society and the Environment); the number of hours mandated (where applicable) and including appendices with relevant excerpts on geography content from syllabuses and curriculum frameworks across the country.
- b.** Discussing current pedagogical practice in the teaching of Geography in Australian Schools;
- c.** Identifying any gaps in existing provision; and
- d.** Considering what geography every Australian student should know before they complete Year 10.

2006 Census

The 2006 Census is soon to be released and it will be in a form that is very accessible for classroom use. The first release occurs in late June and it will feature online mapping.

Called MapStats, census data will be displayed down to Collection District level (approximately 200 homes) for local government areas, suburbs, postal enumeration areas, State and Commonwealth electoral areas. This is an exciting way for students to explore spatial variation within their own area or between districts. The maps are generated in 3 easy steps; choose a location, choose a topic and generate the thematic map.

The example below shows the percentage of the population using the internet in the local government area of Mossman, New South Wales.



The second example shows the distribution of indigenous people within the statistical local areas of Brisbane.



Other ways in which the census data will be available include:

QuickStats which provides key census data benchmarked against Australia for a range of areas from national level right down to a single Collection District. This example shows employment in the local government area of Bass Coast (Victoria).

Census Tables provides individual tables of census data on a range of topics for a chosen location.

Community Profiles provide detailed statistics for a chosen location. Both Census Tables and the Community Profiles are presented as Excel spreadsheets.

CData Online is to be released later this year and it will allow several geographic

areas to be combined and integrated into a GIS.

Did you know that ABS publications are available free online? This also includes digital boundaries for the ABS geographic areas. These are available in a format that may be used by MapInfo and ESRI users. See Catalogue no. 1259.0.30.002 and click on the Details tab.

ABS Education Services is a unit within the ABS dedicated to supporting schools to improve statistical literacy and bring data to life in the classroom. Education Services has a range of FREE resources available on the web including classroom activities, learning objects, multivariate datasets and learning projects, such as CensusAtSchool, an integrated online data collection and analysis project. Look out for the new-look Education Services web pages, released on 2 July 2007 with a wide range of classroom resources and activities for Geographers.

Email: education@abs.gov.au

Ph: 1800 623 273

INDUSTRIES OF EMPLOYMENT (Population aged 15 years and over) MAIN RESPONSES FOR SELECTED REGION

	Selected Region	% of persons aged 15 years and over for Region	Australia	% of persons aged 15 years and over for Australia
Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants	692	3.6%	410,589	2.8%
Agriculture	679	3.5%	287,589	1.9%
Health Services	641	3.3%	570,442	3.8%
Education	581	3.0%	595,398	4.0%
Construction Trade Services	559	2.9%	342,542	2.3%

In Bass Coast (S) (Local Government Area), the most popular industries of employment were Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants 3.6%, Agriculture 3.5%, Health Services 3.3%, Education 3.0% and Construction Trade Services 2.9%.

Affiliate News – Around the Nation

Geography Teachers' Association of New South Wales



GTANSW has demonstrated increased membership as a result of the 2006 initiative that members pay a reduced rate at conferences/workshops.

The success of GTANSW quality professional development program in 2007 would be impossible without the support, time and effort of the enthusiastic hard working councillors. Their aim is to improve geographical knowledge and teaching/learning methodologies across all sectors in urban and rural areas. GTANSW's goal is to hold over 20 professional development activities in 2007. Global Education topics and resources are integrated within all programs.

- NSW Institute of Teaching Standards and Accreditation (New Scheme Teachers). Certificates of accreditation. All professional development workshops and conferences held by the Geography Teachers' Association of New South Wales address the NSW Institute of Teaching Standards (<http://www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au/Main-Professional-Teaching-Standards.html>). Particularly Element 6 (Teachers continually improve their Professional Knowledge and Practice) and Domains such as professional knowledge, professional practice and professional commitment.
- Water for Life - The NSW government provided funds to the NSW Science Teachers' Association and the NSW Geography Teachers' Association to: (i) identify existing resources and gaps and needs for water conservation teaching/learning materials; (ii) develop teaching

learning materials for identified curriculum areas; (iii) develop a professional development package to train a corps of teachers from the Sydney/Blue Mountains/Illawarra regions in the implementation of the teaching resources within their own schools and districts; (iv) conduct training across the region, and (v) evaluate the program and provide recommendations for future action if required.

The project is managed by Nick Hutchinson and at present GTANSW has completed and employed Shayne Reid to write the material and professional development activities will continue into 2008). The project is being continually evaluated.

- The GTA is supporting a new program of overseas walking tours led by a retired Geography teacher, Greg Pashley. He has developed these tours in conjunction with Colin Sale, San Michele Travel and the Geographical Society of NSW. The first tour, a 22 day walking holiday in the Alps, in July 2007 will take a group of 12 on a series of alpine day walks in Italy, Austria, Germany and Slovenia. The treks will take them through such regions as the Dolomites, the Julian Alps, the Hohetauern Alps and the Otztaler. The group will also visit Bolzano, Salzburg and Venice.

Demand for PD is growing. Often this is combined with other associations e.g. history and primary school groups. Identified areas include: skills; GIS; ICT; Global Citizenship; Careers and Geography and teachers new to geography.

Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria



Again, GTAV is demonstrating increased membership. 2007 commenced with a raft of professional development activities for teachers of Geography including "Meet the Examiners" session to unpack the 2006 VCE geography exam and a new teachers' conference.

Early in 2007 GTAV staff and committee embarked on strategic planning for the future of the organisation. Working in four groups, discussions and plans centred on major areas of concern. Namely: The Future of Geography, Products and Organisational Structure. In particular, discussion on the Future of Geography highlighted issues that appear to exist at the school level,

with students and parents, at primary schools, community perception and relationships with Universities.

VELS continues to be updated, reviewed and supporting documents are being released. It is evolving and implementation in schools currently varies widely. Reporting is also evolving and changing.

GTAV have established a committee and working parties as it prepares for its 50th birthday. Working parties are focusing on celebrations and events and on "Remembering the Past?" in the lead up to and during this momentous year for the association.

Geography Teachers' Association of Queensland



Membership of the association is on a par with the same period last year.

As with other state affiliates, GTAQ continues to focus on providing a range of engaging professional development activities for its membership.

GTAQ State Conference is being held at the end of Queensland's Geography week at the University of Queensland. The theme for the week will be "the International Polar Year". Students will visit the university during the week as part of Careers in Geography day on Friday 20 July. Chairs of Geography Panels will also be at UQ all week discussing the implication and requirements of the new syllabus and Saturday 21 July will then be the annual GTAQ conference.

Promoting Geography came into prominence with the Courier Mail preparing a double page spread on the importance of Studying Geography in the Headstart section of the paper. Kath Berg (RGSQ) was instrumental in getting this done and the article showcased several leading teachers including Rebecca Nicholas (GTAQ's Vice President). It would appear the Courier Mail is prepared to have another spread in the Headstart section in relation to the International Polar Year.

In addition, letters were written to the editor and published in support of Geography as a stand alone discipline.

GTAQ members also met with Kevin Rudd's advisors in May regarding the

inclusion of Geography as a stand alone discipline in any national curriculum. GTAQ co-signed numerous letters with RGSQ to the Senate and local representatives to promote the discipline.

The new revised Geography Senior Syllabus (2007) has been released to schools across the State and work shops are currently underway in-servicing teachers on the changes and requirements for implementation in 2008 for yr 11 students. It is proposed that this syllabus will remain in place until 2014.

There is a new order to the themes and there are some changes to the internal topics or focus units within each theme. Themes include: Managing the Environment; Social Environments; Resources and the Environment; and, People and Development. Focus units need to run for 6 – 10 weeks and be studied at different scales. Electives can be undertaken for similar periods. However one focus unit must be completed each semester.

A minimum of 20 hours or 4 school days must be spent in the field across the two years of study and a minimum of 40 hours should be spent using computers. Verification folios to include a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 8 pieces of summative work. One piece must use ICT and spatial technologies and knowledge from all units studied in year 12 must be assessed.

Geographical Association of Western Australia



Changes continue to be made to the Courses of Study. Changes are being made to the structure and philosophical basis of the course. Teacher juries have been appointed to supervise and provide feedback on the courses. Juries have been selected by the Electoral Commission.

The GAWA 2007 Conference (August) will be held in Bunbury and has the theme of "Geography for a Sustainable Future". Professor Peter Newman from Murdoch University will be the keynote speaker. His views on growth and sustainability will be of great interest to conference delegates.

The Beginning Teachers' PD was once again a very successful event. The Annual PD session attracted 32 teachers

who provided glowing feedback on the professional nature of the delivery and the usefulness of the materials provided.

Other PD activities include a Solstice Dinner, Geography Week, Course of Studies Workshop, and TEE Revision Seminars for students in both Perth and Bunbury, and, Post TEE social function.

The popular GAWA text "Geography Skills for WA Students" has been revised and limited copies are available for sale. The book is based on the existing syllabus but will also be relevant for the new Geography Course of Study. GAWA has commissioned the writing of a new Geography skills book based on the Geography CoS. The new resource book should be available later this year.

Tasmanian Geography Teachers' Association



Membership of TGTA is mainly from Year 11/12 government colleges and private schools. These are the only places where Geography is still taught as a distinct subject. At government high schools, Geography is part of a large group of subjects called Society and History.

Hydro Tasmania's Hands on Energy Discovery Centre conducted 2 free workshops in late 2006 to assist students and teachers in the use of GIS for making maps for the Schools Map Competition which was part of the Spatial Sciences Institute Conference held in Hobart in May 2007. Hydro Tasmania's Hands on Energy Discovery Centre sponsored the competition.

The Tasmania Curriculum has changed its name from Essential Learnings. There are now seven learning areas and Geography is part of Society and History (previously SOSE). It is interesting that History has been given more prominence with the name change following the debate in Federal Politics about the importance of History.

The Post year 10 Curriculum review is continuing this year and six learning areas have been identified. Geography is in a large group of subjects called People, Languages and Societies. The development of courses using the curriculum framework will start this year.

A major concern in Tasmania is that the number of students studying Geography has steadily declined over the years to just 200 students in 2007. This decline is attributed to competition from new subjects such as Environmental Science and Health Studies, which have overlapping knowledge base. Also, there is less student choice because students can now study fewer subjects over two years. Scaling of subjects, for TE scores by the Certifying Authority (TQA), results in the most capable students studying subjects such as Maths Specialised.

Geography Teachers' Association of South Australia



In line with trends in other Geography Associations, GTASA demonstrates an increase in membership with 154 members.

The recent 2007 Conference focused on fieldwork. Simon Nasht, the author of "Sir Hubert Wilkins: the Unknown Explorer", was the keynote speaker.

Due to the success of the "Tourism in the Classroom" DVD, six free one day Spatial Technology workshops are being conducted for teachers during the year. This DVD that focuses on geographical perspectives in tourism, was released in September 2006 and has already been purchased by over 150 schools across Australia. Other projects recently completed and released include the CD Rom "Virtual Tourism". The program explores the area of virtual tourism via internet sites and provides GIS activities in ArcView3x and ArcGIS 9 to support the area of tourism and world studies. Additionally, "Surfing Geographical", an interactive CD containing over 1000 internet links, was recently released. (See article on page 10).

The new SACE Stage 1 and 2 Geography is being in-serviced this year via workshops and the GTASA Conference. A new SACE is being introduced in 2008 called Future SACE. This will have a significant impact on subjects such as Geography in view of subject patterns and subject requirements.

A Wilkins prize for students recognises the South Australian polar explorer Sir Hubert Wilkins, has been initiated by GTASA in an effort to increase the profile of geography in the community and schools. It is hoped primary schools will be attracted to engage in the competition. Further details are provided on Page 12.

Surfing Geographical:

A Rich Resource Using the Internet

The GTASA has recently released the 'Surfing geographical' CD Rom resource which provides over a 1000 weblinks to Internet sites relevant to the study of geography. In particular the resource provides a useful overview of what geography involves and breaks the weblinks into the key fields of geography. In turn each of these fields is described and weblinks associated with them to provide a convenient and useful resource for the geography classroom.

The geography weblinks fields include:

- Urban geography
- Environmental issues
- Regional Geography
- Historical Geography
- Tourism
- Spatial technology
- Atmospheric conditions
- Resources and energy
- Water resources
- Atlases and references
- Natural hazards
- Agricultural Geography
- Economic Geography
- Pollution issues
- Development Geography
- Social geography
- Development Geography

The resource also has a section on careers in geography and links to the GTASA weblinks site. It is to be noted that each of the weblinks has a brief description of the Internet site content and usefulness. The CD can be installed as an interactive resource on the school network and comes with an unlimited site license. For \$49 a school can purchase a network site license and for only \$20 students can get their own copy to use as a research aid at home.

For more information on this new resource for teachers and students go to the GTASA website at http://www.gtasa.asn.au/products-surfing_geographical

GIS ACROSS AUSTRALIA IN 2007

2007 has seen continued growth across Australia in the use of GIS in schools.

Interestingly it is 10 years since the first efforts to introduce GIS technology into Australian classrooms via the AURISA GIS in schools competition in 1997. Much has happened over the years to the point in 2007 where the use of spatial technologies such as GIS is accepted as a necessity for schools endeavouring to promote spatial literacy. In many parts of Australia we have moved on from discussing what is GIS and why introduce it, to how can we meaningfully integrate the use of GIS into geography courses? To illustrate this growth and acceptance, the following recent happenings are worth noting:

1 In January 2006 in Launceston, the first AGTA initiated GIS for Education users Conference (ESRI Education Users Conference) was run in cahoots with the AGTA National Conference. The 2008 AGTA Conference in Queensland and its planned association with Education Queensland's ICT Learning Innovation Centre will naturally build on the focus and impetus developed by the inaugural Australian GIS in Education conference.

2 2006 also saw the first VET in schools, Certificate 2, Spatial Information Services courses embedded in Geography courses in South Australia. The National VET Certificate 2 Spatial Information Services course is due for implementation later this year.

3 The Queensland ICT Learning Innovation Centre is again conducting its highly successful annual Spatial Technology Expo on September 6th and 7th on the Sunshine Coast. This Queensland model of professional development is sure to be picked up by other states in the future.

4 The NSW Geography Teachers conference on August 17th is focussing on the use of technology in the teaching of geography. It is hoped that this event will potentially provide the basis for an increase in the uptake of GIS in NSW schools over future years.

5 The development of the spatial technology educator's network has provided considerable impetus to the dissemination of information and pedagogies associated with the use of spatial technology in geography classrooms across Australia. If interested in the network, contact Meegan Maguire in Education Queensland at STIS@eq.edu.au.

6 Since 2004 AGTA has been a member of the Spatial Science Institute (SSI) Spatial Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). This group meets regularly in Canberra and has the mission to promote spatial education in schools, TAFE's and Universities. Presently SEAC is busy compiling a report and website which highlights the magnitude, importance and potential of the Spatial Industry for young people. Most importantly the commissioned report will articulate the area of courses and careers using spatial technology and develop ways to promote an awareness of the spatial industry amongst Australian educators. AGTA sees its participation on such an industry committee to be an important adjunct to the development and promotion of the vocational outcomes for students studying geography.

In conclusion, it is to be noted that the broader term of spatial technology is increasingly being used to define and describe the use of technologies such as GIS in schools. This broader term is being seen as a better fit and more useful in informing educators of what technologies are available and the possibilities for the future. Maybe the AGTA GIS Working Party should be called the Spatial Technology Working Party in the future? Watch this space!!



Asia Education Foundation Fourth International Conference September 30 - October 4, 2007

The importance of India to the world is not a new phenomena. Albert Einstein said 'We owe a lot to the Indians, who taught us how to count, without which no worthwhile scientific discovery could have been made.'

India - the world's largest democracy, the largest English speaking nation, the second largest pool of engineers and scientists, a middle class of over 240 million people and more millionaires than the whole population of Australia - much of this is unknown to many of us.

India is on the rise. Take a lead and join 250 Australian educators in India to prepare your students to be global citizens of the 21st Century.

Don't miss out on the AEF's Linking Latitudes India Conference occurring over five days in New Delhi and Agra, September 30 - October 4, 2007. Pre and post-conference fieldwork programs will further explore India's rich

diversity. Leonie Brown (GTAV/AGTA) has agreed to lead a tour on behalf of AGTA.

The Conference provides an opportunity for AGTA members to attend an international conference. AGTA will be prominent in the program and official thanks – promoting AGTA to the broad education community. AGTA's participation continues to build strong relationships with the Asia Education Foundation.



The Conference brochure is available electronically:
linkinglatitudes@asialink.unimelb.edu.au

Australian Geography Competition

Test your knowledge with a few questions from the 2007 National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition:

Which city's water supply may be supplemented by a weir blocking the flow of the Murray into Lake Alexandrina?

- A Adelaide
- B Canberra
- C Hobart
- D Melbourne
- E Perth

In December 2006, troops from which adjoining country crossed into Somalia in support of its interim government?

- A Algeria
- B Colombia
- C Ethiopia
- D Namibia
- E Nigeria

Which is a correct sequence from north to south?

- A Costa Rica, Mexico, Guatemala, Panama
- B Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Honduras
- C Honduras, Panama, Guatemala, Costa Rica
- D Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua
- E Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico



Digital Resource Finder

A comprehensive on-line educational resource – film Australia's unique archive is now on-line and tailored for teachers. The site is searchable via curriculum, topic or keyword. www.filmaust.com.au/learning

Asia Pacific Economic Council APEC: Strengthening our Community Building a Sustainable Future



A new resource package that includes a Teacher's Guide and a student learning program (4 investigations), aims to raise awareness about APEC and to develop student knowledge, understanding and appreciation of its work, as well as its importance to Australia and the region. The Asia Education Foundation (AEF) and the Curriculum Corporation (CC), on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

(DFAT), managed development of the student resource and professional learning program. Copies have now been sent to all schools and will be available for download from the Web.

AFSSSE members are providing professional development activities to support the implementation of the APEC resources developed by the Asia Education Foundation.

Asia-Australia China Project The Olympic Games - China and Australia

An exciting new set of resources has been produced by AFSSSE (Australian Society for the Studies of Society and Environment) to support teaching about the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. Four units for environment education, history and culture, economics and business, and geography are available now.

With the Olympic Games to be held in China in 2008, these resources can be used to build a better understanding of China and promote

mutual understanding between Australia and China. The resource includes inquiry-based activities and resources enabling students in the middle years of schooling (Years 7-10) to develop a positive image of China and explore Australia's relations with China.

The project was funded by the Australia-China Council and is available for download from the AFSSSE website at <http://www.afssse.asn.au>.

A New Initiative in South Australia: The Wilkins Prize

Recently the life and work of Sir Hubert Wilkins was documented in Simon Nasht's book titled "The last explorer: Hubert Wilkins - Australia's unknown hero". As a South Australian by birth and a man who achieved so much as an explorer and environmentalist on the world stage, it is remarkable that he has had so little exposure in our educational sector and in fact the general community in South Australia. The story of Wilkins reads like a great adventure tale and is even the more remarkable when one considers he came from a poor family on 'the margins of the good earth' in South Australia.

In response the GTASA in 2007 has developed the Wilkin's prize for Primary and Secondary students in South Australia and has invited teachers across the state to nominate a student or group of students showing environmental initiative. As an Association the GTASA has committed significant funds for competition prizes because they want the competition to be seen as a significant initiative to help increase the profile of geography in the educational community.

Next meeting
Melbourne. 12-13 October 2007

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Conference Convenors:
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& David Lergessner

For the latest information:
Email: agta08@hotmail.com or www.agta.asn.au