

# 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

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## 104 AGTA Board Meeting

The 104th meeting of AGTA Board was conducted in Melbourne on 1-2 May 2010. A special welcome was extended to Alaric Maude, Lucie Sorensen – Senior Project Officer ACARA responsible for Geography; Mark Manuel – Geography 2011 Conference Convenor; Roger Smith – past AGTA president.



## National Committee for Geography

Professor Nigel Tapper has taken over from Professor Lesley Head as Chair of the Academy's National Committee for Geography. Associate Professor Alaric Maude will take up membership of the National Committee from July 1 when Lesley Head's term ends. Lesley's leadership of the NCG has been recognised by the incoming Chair.

### Developments since the meeting

Subsequent to the last meeting of the Committee in Canberra, the Council of the AAS approved funding of \$10,000 for the commencement of the decadal review of the discipline. At this stage funds have only been approved for 2010, but Council is aware that additional funding will be required for 2011 and 2012. This is excellent news, but will involve significant effort on the part of the NCG. The Work Plan called for a mid-year Workshop in Canberra to kick-start the discipline review process, but the Committee may need to meet as a group in the shorter term, either via teleconference or face-to-face, to discuss our approach.

At the last meeting in Canberra we also had some discussions about how the NCG

might contribute to capacity building in the discipline both nationally and regionally - at least partly in support of the new national curriculum. Margaret Robertson took the initiative on this and with some engagement from other members of the NCG, developed a proposal submitted to ICSU entitled "Strengthening the bonds between scientific literacy and human understanding: Local area networks to help build cross-border solutions for disaster management." Margaret's application has been successful.

Grant Kleeman undertook to investigate the number of prospective Geography teachers currently enrolled in Australia's tertiary institutions. This information will be used to support the Committee's call for adequate Commonwealth support for the introduction of the Australian Geography Curriculum.

Alaric Maude has commenced discussions with universities. This will potentially generate the move away from generalist teaching back to strengthening subject areas such as Geography.



### AGTA Conference 2011 – Geography going National, Adelaide

Plans are well underway for the AGTA conference in Adelaide from January 10-13, 2011. The conference is being held at Scotch College in Adelaide and is being convened by the Geography Teachers' Association of South Australia. A great program has been developed with plenty of field trips and classroom relevant workshops. We are pleased to announce that Dr Rita Gardner, Director of the Royal Geography Society in London, Duncan Chessell, adventurer and explorer – having climbed Mt Everest 3 times, the latest being in May 2010, and Peter Hill (CEO ACARA) have agreed to be our keynote speakers. Considering the increased profile of Geography and the National Geography Curriculum being imminent in 2011 we are expecting a great attendance at this event (not to mention the attractions of South Australia!!)

The 2009 AGTA Geographical Education journal was posted to all affiliates in February 2010. The focus of the journal was "Exemplary teaching in the forthcoming national geography curriculum". There are some excellent articles on pedagogy in Geography and associated considerations in preparation for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: Geography.

The highly successful MacMillan **Keys to Geography (2005)** and the **Keys to fieldwork (2009)** books continue to sell well. These books provide an Australian orientated resource for schools. This is particularly important when one considers the future needs of the Australian curriculum: Geography to provide resources in the Australian context. Presently AGTA is editing the **Keys to Geography book for a revised edition in 2010** and negotiating with the Geography Association in the United Kingdom for a UK version of the books.

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 2009, 87,060 students from 802 schools participated in the competition Australia wide. All students participating in the competition receive a detailed results sheet and a certificate in one of four categories – High Distinction, Distinction, Credit, Participation.

One of AGTA's promotional activities is the **Geocareers** website at [www.geocareers.net.au](http://www.geocareers.net.au). The site, developed by Rob Berry, is proving to be an outstanding resource for educators and students, linking geography with potential careers. At present the major sections include Meet a Geographer, Studying Geography, Using Geography and Resources.

AGTA has been closely involved in the **Strengthening Standards of Teaching through Linking Standards and Teacher Learning** Australian Research Council Linkage project. The project is a joint venture of the University of Melbourne, AGTA, GTAV and the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The project involved the filming of geography teachers teaching and conducting panel discussions with geography teachers across Australia. The panels were an excellent professional learning activity and provided wonderfully rich data for the work on teaching standards for geography. This work is seminal and ground breaking for geography and I am sure will provide excellent and necessary research data for the implementation of the Australian curriculum: geography and further national work with quality teaching in geography.

#### Australian Curriculum: Geography

- The following ACARA timeline will give an idea of the 2009-2011 progression with the writing process for the Australian curriculum: geography.

## Professional Standards For Teachers

AGTA coordinated a response to the National Standards Working Group. Members will be kept informed of developments.

## AGTA Awards

The Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria is coordinating the AGTA Awards for 2011. Proposed categories (to be confirmed) include:

1. Primary School Resource
2. Junior secondary school textbook
3. Senior secondary school textbook
4. Broadsheet, chart, wall map.
5. Atlas
6. Digital multi-media
7. Website
8. Non-commercial, teacher produced resource
9. Geography teaching source material
10. Geographical education publication
11. GIS/spatial technology teaching resource
12. Other geography teaching material or equipment
13. Geography Pedagogy – article/text/book
14. Journal

#### Closing date for entries:

Friday 29 October 2010.

#### Presentation date/venue:

AGTA Conference 2011, Scotch college Adelaide, South Australia.

## Geography Time-Line

Stage	Activity	Timelines
Review of literature and development of position paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of literature associated with geography teaching and learning.</li> <li>Development of a position paper identifying key issues and how they may be resolved.</li> </ul>	June 2009 - September 2009
Curriculum Shaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial Advice paper, Australian Curriculum: Geography. Release date: March-April 2010.</li> <li>April 2010: National Forum on the Initial Advice Paper.</li> <li>April-May 2010: Development of the <i>Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography</i>.</li> <li>May-June 2010: Broad national consultation on the <i>Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography</i> document. Including schools, authorities, universities, associations, business, industry and relevant community groups.</li> <li>August-September 2010: Release of the final <i>Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography</i>.</li> </ul>	October 2009 - June 2011
Curriculum Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>July-December 2010: Appointment of writers and an advisory group (application) to develop the scope and sequence of the <i>Australian Curriculum: Geography</i>.</li> <li>September-December 2010: Broad national consultation scope and sequence of the <i>Australian Curriculum: Geography</i>. Including schools, authorities, universities, associations, business, industry and relevant community groups.</li> <li>January-June 2011: Course writing in line with the final scope and sequence document for Australian Curriculum Geography.</li> </ul>	September 2010 - June 2011
Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital publication.</li> </ul>	July 2011

The work of the **Towards a National Geography Curriculum (TNCl) initiative** was not completed with the handover of the TNGC report to ACARA on June 30th, 2009 (report can be downloaded at [www.ngc.org.au/](http://www.ngc.org.au/)). The steering committee has now turned its attention to the issue of implementation and is still meeting to develop strategies to support the 'roll-out' of an Australian curriculum: geography. This has involved writing a submission to the Federal Government requesting funding to ensure that whatever geography curriculum is developed by ACARA, there will be appropriate and adequate teaching resources and professional learning opportunities for teachers. AGTA, IAG and RGSQ consider that they have an important role to play in both the development of resources and providing professional learning during the implementation phase of Australian curriculum. However as non-profit organisations run by 'time-poor' professionals we require government support to fund much needed implementation strategies for the new curriculum. Over the next few years, issues associated with the implementation of Australian curriculum: geography is likely to dominate the work of AGTA and affiliates.

**As this report shows**, there is much happening in the world of Australian geography! We are facing the challenges of being closely involved in the development of a national geography curriculum, promoting the 'brand' of geography in the community, integrating modern technologies into our teaching, whilst continuing our normal role as an association supporting teachers.

## Special General Meeting

A special General meeting was held on Sunday 2 May 2010. The meeting was held to discuss and vote on the following motions associated with capitation fees.

**Notice of Motion:** That the annual capitation fee for the 2010-2011 year will be \$15.00 excluding GST per member.

**Notice of Motion:** That the annual capitation fee after the 2010-2011 membership year be indexed annually based on the Australian CPI for the preceding 12 months.

Discussion identified the pros and cons of the two motions. It was pointed out that AGTA has been very proactive in furthering the National Agenda and the need to maintain its commitment to progressing this.

Both motions were carried. Associations will be informed of change in capitation and indexing in line with the CPI. Following the AGM in October affiliates will be invoiced for the 2010-2011 membership year.



Malcolm McNerney,  
Chair AGTA



# Conference 2011 Update



The four day event is to be held at Scotch College in Adelaide between 10-13 January 2011.

Australasian Geography teachers and academics are invited to the conference to participate in a stimulating education program of presentations, hands on workshops and field trips. The 2011 conference is particularly opportune considering that this is the presentation year for the new National Geography Curriculum, which is due for implementation in 2012. AGTA anticipates an unprecedented attendance at the conference in response to the need for professional learning as a result of the requirements of the new K-12 National Geography Curriculum. Workshops will be held on Monday 10 and Thursday 13 January.

The focus of the keynote speakers and workshops is on Geography Education and should be related to the implementation of the National Curriculum. Submissions should be classroom focused.

Dr Rita Gardner, Director of the Royal Geography Society in London, Duncan Chessell and Dr Peter Hill (CEO ACARA) have agreed to be keynote speakers.

**Theme:** bring along to share your Best Geography Lesson or a model of Good Classroom Practice. AGTA welcomes primary school teachers who would like to share how they might deal with some of the issues

of implementation of the K-7 component of the national Geography Curriculum. All workshops will contain an element suitable for primary school geography.

Brochures have been sent to over 3500 schools and 125 publishers across Australia. At this stage 95 pre-registrations have already been received.

Associations are invited to set up a trade display at no cost. Please let Mark Manuel know if you require space for this.

A number of pre and post conference tours have been organized including:

## Pre- Conference Tours

- Option 1: 5 – 8 January - Kangaroo Island Tour - Scotch Kyrre Campus will be used – Onsite tents, plus external caterers. – approximately \$500
- Option 2: 5 – 8 January - Kangaroo Island Tour - Timber Creek Hostel (3 star) - external caterers (bookings to be confirmed with deposits) approx \$600 costs includes, buses, ferries, all meals, National Parks pass, accommodation leaders from Scotch staff and GTASA executive.
- Pre conference accommodation is reserved at Walford for the night of 4th January for \$40.00 per person – gear can be stored until return on 8th Jan
- Pre Conference Winery Tours: Sunday 9th January

- Barossa Option: Local provider \$95.00 including Lunch
- Alternative/additional – McLaren Vale/ Adelaide Hills (Mark negotiating with Scotch Community).

## Fieldtrips:

1. Adelaide Metropolitan Coastline
2. Adelaide Suburbs (Urban growth and Renewal)
3. Adelaide's CBD – an urban field trip within the terraces.
4. GPS Golf
5. Lower Lakes and Coorong (Tuesday)
6. Lower Lakes and Coorong (Wednesday).
7. Port Adelaide – More than a Football Team
8. St Kilda Mangroves and Salisbury Wetlands and Storm Water Recovery.

## Social Program

Social activities begin on the Sunday 9th January with several winery tours, registration, wine tasting and BBQ – more details to follow on Registration.

Conference Dinner: Belair Country Club – If you have booked a cabin or site at Belair National Park Caravan Park you will be next door.

## Registration

**REGISTRATIONS WILL OPEN IN LATE JUNE 2010. EARLY BIRD PRICES WILL APPLY UNTIL THE END OF SEPTEMBER**

– All bookings and payments will be online.

Full Cost about \$500

[www.agta.asn.au/conf2011/index.htm](http://www.agta.asn.au/conf2011/index.htm)

## For further information contact:

Mark Manuel  
agta2011 Conference Convenor  
[agta2011@scotch.sa.edu.au](mailto:agta2011@scotch.sa.edu.au)



# National Geography Curriculum

Feedback is currently being analysed by Lucie Sorensen (Project Officer – ACARA). Consultation will commence on the Draft Shape Paper from June 2010. This will occur over a three month period and will be an intense consultation period. ACARA's view is that all should be in this together.

Feedback – a general overview was provided by Alaric Maude and Rob Randall in the concluding session.

It was evident that skills, structure of paper, scope and sequencing are issues that were universally identified as areas that required more work.

ACARA was complementary on how well Geography teachers worked together.

## Key Points of Discussion

- Two areas of great concern – scope and sequence 7-10 and the senior years – much negative feedback.
- Too much economic/human geography.
- Repetition should be avoided – A general view that the senior years should not repeat what has been taught previously? Should this take account of what may have been taught at, for example, year 6 level?
- Fieldwork is an essential component of the Geography curriculum.
- Balance between Australia and the global perspective. Geography must look at a variety of scales ranging from local – global.
- The ultimate aim for students is to eliminate the notion of competition but to be complementary with other subject.
- Components/topics that may overlap e.g. is it better to look at these in the same year by different subject areas or build on in the next year with a different perspective.
- 'Hazards' is an area of concern as it is being dealt with in a number of learning years – this needs to be looked at by ACARA.
- Two areas in primary can be highlighted regarding comparison with science – how water and wind shape the surface of the earth, local climate/ measuring temperatures are addressed in Geography two years prior to when science addresses these.
- The more we can get science to teach (i.e. various components of geography) the broader the curriculum could be for students.
- Time component for teaching geography in years 8-9 is half of that compared to history.
- Curriculum for the future must be extendable – deeper and wider; must be flexible to suit different sectors.
- Shape paper must allow teachers to conceptualise the curriculum – the framework must be right. The framing paper shapes the "how".

## ACTION

1. AGTA needs to lobby ACARA regarding time component. Argument should focus on: How can Geography be a viable course with 1 hour per week? What time is required to teach a world class geography? Comparative analysis with other countries – argument should be on the basis that the aim is to produce a world class curriculum however, the amount of time allocation is too light comparatively. This is a political decision in which AGTA must take the lead and lobby.
2. Letters to the editor is an effective course of action.

## STRONG THEMES IN FEEDBACK

1. Global perspectives – where does this fit in the Australian Curriculum?
2. Fieldwork
3. Scales of study and multi-sector comparison.
4. Need skills – what skills?
5. Spatial technology.
6. Nature of the discipline = Active, decision making, spatial awareness
7. Inquiry – like inquiring – want skills
8. ICT
9. Framing the senior years.
10. Years 7-10.

## National Curriculum: Geography Implementation Proposal

The Institute of Australian Geographers, the National Committee for geography of the Australian Academy of Science, the Australian Geography Teachers' Association, the Geographical Societies of Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia presented a proposal to Julia Gillard for government funding for the implementation of the National Geography Curriculum. The proposal aimed to gain Australian Government funding for:

- The preparation of handbooks for teachers on the teaching of Geography
- The preparation of materials for teachers and students on the core topics in the new curriculum.
- Professional learning programs for teachers.
- A national website for teachers that guides them to resources and creates a learning community that shares ideas and experiences across jurisdictions and systems.

There has been no response from the Minister's office to date. Minister's advisor suggested we contact the Digital Revolution component of DEEWR who again stated that their role has changes and this is now the role of Education Service of Australia.

A nationally coordinated program is essential to implement the national curriculum. An organization such as ACARA could do this however, implementation is not one of their roles even though ACARA has placed much interest on this component of the National Curriculum: Geography..

It appears that no-one in the national architecture bureaucracies (Education Services Australia, ACEL and ACARA) is really looking ahead to implementation.



# National Education Forum Report

**acara** AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM,  
ASSESSMENT AND  
REPORTING AUTHORITY

## NATIONAL ASSESSMENT P Literacy and Numeracy

- Alan Reid debunked the myth that NAPLAN is a diagnostic tool. Rather it has become a 'high stakes' test at the core of the 'My School' website. Alan elaborated on the limitations of the site by not giving any indication of the cultural/social capacity of school sites. Alan fears that the MY School site will force people to 'teach to the test'.
- Tony Mackay, Chair of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (to replace Teaching Australia) and Deputy Chair of ACARA spoke about the latest developments with the Australian curriculum.
- The Curriculum Corporation has amalgamated with the *The Learning Federation* to become *Educational Services Australia* within ACARA.
- It is planned that a version 2 of "The Shape of the Australian Curriculum" paper is to be produced in the near future.
- Tony emphasised that the development of the Australian curriculum: geography will see the "rebirth" of geography.
- AITSEL established on January 1st 2010. Relocated to Melbourne and Brisbane.
- AITSEL's work will involve the validation of National Standards and 2-3 'signature' professional development programs aimed at implementing the ACARA agenda.
- Discussion with Tony on the role of associations in the implementation process and the place of Values Education and Civics and Citizenship in the Australian curriculum.

### Association reports:

#### English:

- Concerned about the draft and the lack of links between the strands.
- Overemphasis on grammar (knowing things instead of using as a tool)
- By default English teachers will become literacy teachers.

#### Math:

- Huge issue of professional development for the more difficult maths in upper-primary and Year 9.

- The AAMT is convening a national, by invitation conference to develop a framework of advice on the materials, resources and professional learning opportunities needed over the next few years.

#### History:

- Concerned about how they will support primary school teachers to have the knowledge, skills and capacity to teach the more rigorous history content.
- Fear a "media hi-jack" of the history curriculum.

#### The Arts and Languages:

- Are behind geography in development.

The issue of Journal ratings was discussed. Geographical Education is rated as a 'B'.

Discussion on the broader perspectives of the associations that need to be addressed:

- Pedagogical approaches
- Professional judgement
- Links with professional standards
- Professional learning
- Teacher education
- Showing (exemplars) of best practice
- Across curriculum perspectives
- Exclusivity
- Best use of data
- Links with Melbourne Declaration.

The Australian Curriculum Studies Association Symposium will be held in Sydney on September 26 and 27. Issues to be discussed will be structure of schools, curriculum planning, professionalism of teachers and engagement of students.

There is a need to continue to be a consistent voice at all AITSEL, NEF and ACARA meetings to ensure that AGTA continues to be seen as a major player in the shaping of the Australia curriculum – not just geography curriculum. In particular this relates to the *Cross Curriculum Dimensions and General Capabilities*.

#### Relevant websites:

[www.acara.edu.au/](http://www.acara.edu.au/)  
[www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go](http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go)  
[www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go/home/op/edit/pid/531](http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go/home/op/edit/pid/531)

## AGTA Website

The AGTA 2011 Conference section has been the major area of development on the AGTA website during the past six months. Mark Manuel has provided regular updates and new material including a call for presenters and pre-conference registration. Further information for participants, publishers and sponsors will be added during the coming months. In addition, information about the AGTA Awards including timelines, categories, conditions of entry and entry forms is expected to be added shortly.

A substantial set of resources to support the use of the AusAID Pacific Neighbours: Understanding the Pacific islands resource package has been added to the website. All sections of the booklet can be downloaded in PDF format as well as PowerPoint presentations and additional resources that support teachers using the resource. It was most pleasing to receive a copy of the Malcolm's chairperson annual report for 2009 and it is hoped that such reports will continue to be published as they provide useful information for members about the achievements of AGTA. The 'Geography discussions' section provides links to Web 2.0 geography websites and provides 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, Board members, affiliate details and resources. Updates have also been made to Geographia, the national geography curriculum website, standards for geography teaching and details of affiliate conferences. Please advise Rob of any changes to these details as they become known.

It is most important that affiliates forward details of changes when these occur so that the relevant pages can be updated. The listing of state conferences has been updated (where such details are known) with links to each state association's website.



## National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition



The number of students entering the 2010 Competition is provisionally 85,363. This includes students from schools who have not yet paid, so the number will therefore drop slightly. Numbers have fluctuated since the peak in 2006. The fall in numbers can largely be attributed to reduced numbers in New South Wales. Student numbers there have fallen 9,062 over the last 4 years, and the overall student number by 7,079 during the same period. Western Australia and Queensland both had record student and school numbers this year.

The 2010 school round was held from 22 to 31 March. At the time of writing this report the Queensland Studies Authority had almost finished scanning the answer sheets prior to transferring the data file to the systems analyst.

### Final for under 16s

Students win a place at the Final for under 16s based on their scores in the school round. As part of the naming rights agreement, the Final for under 16s is held in Sydney. The Final will be held on Monday 7 June at Foxtel Studios. National Geographic Channel will be filming the Final again.

The prize weekend will include special 'behind-the-scenes' tours at both Taronga Zoo and the Australian Museum. Malcolm McInerney will officially represent AGTA at the Final, and other AGTA members are most welcome. Sydney schools that entered the Competition are being invited to attend.

The student coming first at the Final (and possibly the second-placed student) will represent Australia at the National Geographic World Championship in 2011. The National Geographic Society (Washington) is considering Sydney as a

venue for the 2011 contest, but this will depend on their sponsorship negotiations.

### Geography's Big Week Out

The 2009 Geography's Big Week Out was a jam-packed week of fun and friendship, with plenty of hands-on Geography fitted in there as well. It was held from 7 to 11 December 2009 at Perth and Rottnest Island. 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, who took part in the senior division of the Competition. The number of students at Big Week Out who came from outside the capital cities was very pleasing. Of the 16, there were 6 students from non-metropolitan schools, and another 3 country students who board at city schools. Comments from the students and photos are on the website at [www.rgsq.org.au/gbwo.htm](http://www.rgsq.org.au/gbwo.htm).

The Australian Geography Competition extends its thanks for the contributions of the following:

Kath Berg, RGSQ; Lidia Di Giuseppe, GAWA; Mike Fazio, GAWA; Allan Hallett, GAWA; Trish Harris, GAWA

Phil Houweling, Armadale Christian College; Patrick Mackenzie, Christ Church Grammar School (an ex-GBWO student); Margaret McIvor, GTAQ; Denise Moore, Cheryl O'Connell, Emmy Terry, Sandra Tressider, and Anne Tumak, GAWA.

The Perth teachers have nobly volunteered to do it all again in 2010, but we are looking for another group of teachers to volunteer for 2011. Please start thinking about it as we would like representatives of the next 'hosts' to come to the 2010 Big Week Out in Perth.

### International Geography Olympiad

The 2009 Geography's Big Week Out was a jam-packed week of fun and friendship, with plenty of hands-on Geography fitted in there as well. It was held from 7 to 11 December 2009 at Perth and Rottnest Island. 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, who took part in the senior division of the Competition. The number of students at Big Week Out who came from outside the capital cities was very pleasing. Of the 16, there were 6 students from non-metropolitan schools, and another 3 country students who board at city schools. Comments from the students and photos are on the website at [www.rgsq.org.au/gbwo.htm](http://www.rgsq.org.au/gbwo.htm).

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## Geography Ambassadors Pilot Program

AGTA is considering implementing a Geography Ambassadors pilot program in 2011. The pilot program to involve the following work in 2011:

- AGTA proposes that the Australian 2011 Geography Ambassadors pilot program involves one state, one university and 30 visits to schools.
- Present a proposal at the IAG Board meeting in 2010. The proposal to request that the IAG identifies a university willing to conduct the program in 2011.
- Seek sponsorship of the program from the identified university and corporate sector (ESRI Australia, Mapping) through liaison with the University and SSI. Meet with the SSI to present the proposal – University to be identified beforehand by the IAG liaison.



Students arrived at Perth airport on Monday, December 7 and transferred to accommodation in Scarborough by bus. On the way, they stopped at Kings Park for the first field work activity, a field sketch of Perth from Mt. Eliza. A welcome BBQ was held that evening at Scarborough at which the various teachers involved in the week's activities were introduced to the students.

Early Tuesday morning, students transferred to Rottnest Island which is located 18km off the Western Australian coast by ferry. Following a 30 minute trip across calm waters morning tea was provided after which all staff and students participated in a guided bus tour of the island. The Island, called Wadjemup by the Noongar people, has an iconic status for West Australians and students were able to view some of the cultural and natural environments that make it so attractive as a holiday destination.

During the afternoon students took the

opportunity to relax and go for a swim at a nearby beach. In the evening dinner was undertaken at one of the local restaurants. The highlight of the evening was a keenly contested Geography Quiz.

Wednesday started with an address by one of the Island Education Officers and dealt with issues of tourism, environmental degradation and conservation. This was followed by a series of fieldwork activities focusing on the coastal and lake environments. The use of bicycles to travel from one location to another proved to be very popular with participants.

The ferry trip back to the mainland proved to be rather 'uncomfortable' but fortunately none of the students or teachers suffered from sea sickness unlike some of the other passengers. The International Cooking Competition on Wednesday evening again demonstrated the multi-talented nature of the students. The meals prepared were outstanding and quickly devoured.

On Thursday, students were bussed to Wesley College for a two-hour session of GIS (Geographic Information Systems). Students were asked to input data gathered while on Rottnest in order to analyse environmental problems (mainly dune blowouts) observed both on the bus tour and while conducting coastal field work.

Students were then bussed to the city for what was termed The Amazing Race. This involved groups of students 'racing' to various locations within the city to study aspects of the built environment and sustainability issues. A key emphasis was placed on decision making. The evening saw students travelling to a nearby restaurant for the farewell dinner. The "W" theme for the dinner saw some strange costumes being worn particularly by the teachers.

For the students, the week finished with a test held at the School of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE), where they completed a series of activities. Analysis of these results would be used in selecting candidates for the forthcoming Geography Olympiad to be held in Taiwan.

The week although exhausting was highly enjoyable by all participants be they students or teachers. Students left with new friend and many happy memories of Perth and Rottnest Island, while teachers were refreshed by working with such talented and motivated students. We are looking forward to next year's event.

## Keys to Geography *Edition 2*

The first pages of Keys to Geography, second edition (book and accompanying CD ROM) have been edited by Bob Digby and Jeana Kriewaldt.

Jeana would like to particularly thank Nick Hutchinson and Steve Cranby for their extensive work in fully revising their sections. The work of Alex Robertson, Debbie Doyle, Emmy Terry and Chris Nedkoff, who have contributed to the revision, and Rebecca Nicholas, Mick Law and Kerry Bainbridge in writing additional text is appreciated. Bob Digby's contribution has been excellent in sharing the editorial oversight.

The new edition has been completely redesigned, including text, layout, book dimensions, extent, CD ROM components and style.

It is anticipated that publishing will occur in mid September.

Malcolm McNerney has raised a proposal to produce a separate UK edition on recent trip to the UK with the Geographical Association. Bob Digby intends to follow this up on behalf of AGTA once the Australian edition has been completed.

## Geographical Education

*Geography in Australia's national curriculum* is the theme for 2010 Volume 23 of *Geographical Education*.

Geoffrey Paterson as editor of the book reviews and other curriculum materials, is again doing an outstanding job in that section with a range of resources that is critically examined for their suitability for Australian Geography teachers and their classes.

It is anticipated that the journal papers, reports, etc. will be sent to the publisher in July/August. The main concern is that affiliates provide a brief paper in a timely manner.



# Asian Education Foundation Summit Report

- The summit involved 130 representatives from every state and territory, including DEEWR, professional associations, state and territory curriculum officers, principals and some from universities.
- The **AEF Asia Literate Charter** was updated via group input. Some interesting discussion in terms of the definition of Asia literacy and what needs to be added to the Charter in view of the needs of the Australian curriculum cross curriculum dimension on Asia.
- **Panel inputs**

**Tony Mackay** Believes if we continue on our current trajectory we will be the most Asia literate country in the West. Identified four elements:

- Potential through the Australian Curriculum in learning areas, cross curriculum, and in general capabilities.
- Professional standards (AITSL) to also include Asia literacy.
- Merger between Curriculum Corp and Edna provides potential for best online resources.
- Continued commitment of state and Australian Governments.

## **Dr Phil Lambert, a regional director from NSW**

Spoke of the 'Expanding horizons initiative' in which schools from China and India are signing MOUs and becoming sister schools with schools in Australia. Believes that there is a need for Australians to be globally connected. The initiative aims to improve communication and understanding of students in all countries involved.

## **Wendy Caramarco, Principal Wallan Secondary College Vic**

Her vision is to create an Asia literate school. Wendy wants to keep the discussion studentcentric. Commended the tools which have been provided to assist leaders in this task. Described what it looks like - all embracing, not just about LOTE, but about cultural understanding and building the capacity of young people in a monocultural part of the world to engage with Asia.

Identified initiatives taken so far include:

- Sister school
- Teacher exchanges

## **Recommended the site**

[www.p21.org/index.php?Itemid=120&id=254&option=com\\_content&task=view](http://www.p21.org/index.php?Itemid=120&id=254&option=com_content&task=view)

Wendy believes that teacher efficacy is important but she wants it to be learner-centric.

## **Adam Smith CEO, Foundation for Young Australians**

Believes we are struggling to interact with Asia and that the curriculum needs to be twenty years ahead of where it is now.

Identified five aspirations and three enabling factors:

- Language will become less of a barrier.
- Market place to be defined by how we as a nation relate to Asia.
- Media and positive stories about Asia.
- Icons that we celebrate with Asian background.
- Respect

## **Enablers**

- Explicitly address fear that exists
- Technology and don't over regulate the system
- Enable young people to travel more easily in Asia and welcome those from Asia and not just their money.

Discussion followed about the underlying racism in the media and in many television programs such as 'Border Patrol'. It was suggested that the answer lies in relationships and the need to break down stereotypes and myths. Investment is a collective responsibility and not just the government's. Require input from business and other organizations. Households/communities must also be on board. Importance of the General Capabilities in the Australian Curriculum was emphasised.

- **Launch of Asia Literacy Ambassadors** – Partnering Businesses and Schools project. Launch of the 'Business Ambassadors program' in which skilled professionals from business sectors are being matched to schools across Australia to share their stories and help schools/communities better understand the diverse career and life opportunities available to employees who are knowledgeable about Asia and can effectively engage with Asian peoples. Dr Lethbridge emphasized that Asia was the working coalface for Australians in the future and that 25% of those employed by the ANZ last year could speak at least one Asian language.

- Professor Tim Lindsey, Chairman, Australia-Indonesia Institute, Director Asian Law Centre, The University of Melbourne

and architect of **the BRIDGE Australia – Indonesia Project**. The recent visit by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono marks a new era, and high point in intergovernmental relations. Challenge still exists to improve people to people relations. Indonesians see Australians as supportive of separatist Christians. Australians see Indonesia as a hot bed of terrorists ruled by a military dictatorship rather than the thriving democracy, which it is. Key to people to people relationships is education. And yet he bemoans the fact that in recent times more than 10 000 fewer students are studying Indonesian in schools than previously. The BRIDGE project is designed to improve intercultural understanding although this is difficult while Indonesia has a DFAT level 3 travel advice which prevents trips by groups of students from travelling there. The program has great potential for engaging inter-cultural understanding via geography. There is now an Australian – Korean bridge so the idea is catching on and there is the potential formore.

## • **Intercultural understanding**

**Dr Margaret Byrne** Explained what intercultural understanding provides opportunities for, but suggested that the definition goes beyond understanding alone. Provided definitions of culture and the one which she prefers by Spencer-Oatley2009

- "Culture is a set of basic assumptions, values, orientations to life, beliefs and behavioural conventions shared by a group of people that influence (but do not determine) their behaviour and their interpretation of others' behaviour." Any rationale will include the following components:
  - Globalisation
  - Australia's relationship with Asia
  - Technological change
  - Social change
  - International collaboration on complex problems

Australia's cushioning from the global economic crisis as a result of our engagement with Asia has led to a shift in thinking about whether or not we should engage. Has seen a real shift in our relationship with Asia. Once it concerned wearing of clothes etc, now it involves scientific research and ways of working together.

Spoke of inclusion and the essential components of an inclusive community – 'In an inclusive community, all differences are valued, belong and contribute "You can make a difference"

Referred to the downside of the research with regard to diversity the more diverse the situation the harder it is to feel you belong so the less you contribute.

While the up side is that diverse teams out perform brilliant individuals working alone, or teams of like-minded experts. Dr Byrne concluded that to be innovative, an organisation needs diversity. Balancing the two is a challenge

Described the components of intercultural understanding as:

- Affective – attitudes and identity
- Cognitive - there are things that you need to learn
- Behavioural – skills and capabilities

Byram Model of "Intercultural Competence". This work has informed much of the work which has gone into the Leonardo intercultural understanding project in Europe. A model which is influencing curriculum development in other countries.

Components of Intercultural understanding are developed at an early age, especially values. Educators have the ability to have an influence.

Focussed on the affective domain – Attitudes and identity

- Self-awareness
- Openness
- Flexibility

Takes us into being a good citizen and of belonging to groups. Germany is doing the best and recommends looking at their curriculum materials. There is a need to:

- The need to explore the intricacies of inter-cultural understanding in geography

and to ensure the cross curriculum dimension of Asia is adequately described and covered in the Australian Curriculum: Geography.

- To check out the 21st Century skills materials at
- [www.p21.org/index.php?Itemid=120&id=254&option=com\\_content&task=view](http://www.p21.org/index.php?Itemid=120&id=254&option=com_content&task=view)
- Review the Asialink 'Bridge' program.

## Relevant websites:

[www.asiaeducation.edu.au/default.asp](http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/default.asp)

[www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/calendar/events/past/australiaindonesia\\_bridge\\_project\\_teacher\\_training](http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/calendar/events/past/australiaindonesia_bridge_project_teacher_training)

[www.asiaeducation.edu.au/resource/bridge\\_website.html](http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/resource/bridge_website.html)

[www.p21.org/index.php?Itemid=120&id=254&option=com\\_content&task=view](http://www.p21.org/index.php?Itemid=120&id=254&option=com_content&task=view)

[www.acara.edu.au/](http://www.acara.edu.au/)

## Teaching Australia National Curriculum & Assessment Roundtable

Tony Mackay is to be the Chair of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (to replace Teaching Australia). "The interface between ACARA and this new body is critical" (Tony Mackay). The work of ACARA, Curriculum Corporation and Education.au are merging. Work involves:

- National Curriculum
- National Assessment
- National data collection and reporting

It is planned that a version 2 of "The Shape of the Australian Curriculum" paper is to be produced in the near future. The timeline for the development of the Phase 1 subjects is for a February 2010 draft curriculum and published curriculum by June/July 2010. Phase 2 subjects to be 12 months behind (February 2011 draft).

National Curriculum is still to be stated as "What teachers are expected to teach "and "what students will learn".

Achievement Standards are based on the expectation of the quality of learning that students should reach by a particular point in their schooling (every year).

Broader perspectives of the associations need to be addressed:

- Pedagogical approaches
- Professional judgement
- Links with professional standards
- Professional learning

- Teacher education
- Showing (exemplars) of best practice
- Across curriculum perspectives
- Exclusivity Best use of data
- Links with Melbourne Declaration.

Professional driven initiatives are required to inform government. "Associations have a significant leadership and support role to play in the development and implementation of national curriculum" (Rob Randall).

"Pedagogy is the responsibility of the classroom teacher but some curriculum documents will inevitably give direction." (Rob Randall).

The Melbourne Declaration is the important reference point for national curriculum. In particular Goal 1 (Equity and excellence) and 2 (all to be successful learners, creative individuals and active and informed citizens).

## Major issues to be addressed:

- Year by year specified content must reduce clutter to achieve depth of treatment
- Need to build in assessment of and for learning
- Teacher capacity and professional development to support implementation
- Access to supporting resources

Sharyn Lidster (ACARA Assessment and Reporting Manager). ACARA is responsible for NAPLAN in alignment with the new curriculum. Presently this involves NAPLAN literacy and Numeracy, ICT, Science and Civics and Citizenship testing (3 year cycle). Despite considerable discussion with Sharyn on the nature of the changes, at this stage assessment and reporting is still being worked out as the national curriculum is being developed. The Maths association was particularly vocal in this section of discussion.

The meeting involved lively discussion on:

- The nature of the assessment demands of ACARA
- The nature of the achievement standards
- The capacity of schools to respond to the national curriculum demands
- How will issues of pedagogy be addressed by ACARA?
- Is the new curriculum going to be progressive for the 21st Century?
- The need to broaden the X curriculum perspectives to include globalisation and civics and citizenship
- The need to embed sustainability in a more meaningful way across the curriculum.
- ACARA needs to provide a model of cooperation between associations and jurisdictions. Associations need to be

*Continued on page 15*

## Geography Teachers Association of Western Australia (GAWA)

Current Membership stands at approximately 250. At this point of the year registrations are still being processed. Despite the competition from a range of subjects on offer with the new WACE 2010, student numbers in this subject are similar to 2009.

Each year GAWA conducts a planning day to determine the best way to support members in the coming year. The Professional Development Subcommittee outlined a range of new professional development opportunities in response to the new WACE courses. A new approach will involve a series of guest lecture events to better acquaint teachers and students to new content areas of the course.

### Professional Development

Approximately 25 teachers attended the New to Geography Teaching Professional Development session held after the March long weekend. The GAWA PD Committee Members facilitated the day and coordinated the collection of a range of teaching resources to support the new course in Year 11 and 12 examinable for the first time in 2010. The One World Centre also showcased their resources.

The majority of students within WA are using the semester one Stage 3A GAWA Exam. To gain feedback for the association and individual professional learning, a joint association, system and sector Professional Development is planned for June 8. The day will consist of a series of workshops dealing with different parts of the exam to better understand the statistical performance of candidates and discuss work samples that demonstrate each grade level. The opportunity to share the issues and performance levels, exam stage 3 standards and be guided on interpreting statistical data encapsulates good preparation PD for teachers with WACE candidates.

The Winter Solstice Function is planned for June 19. This year teachers and students will be invited to a screening of The Burning Season which examines issues of carbon trading, resources and sustainability.

GAWA is yet to determine the status of WACE revision seminars for Year 12 students. In previous years GAWA has offered a general revision course to large groups in a range of locations. However, with the new WACE courses there is significant choice in the syllabus content areas which makes this format problematic.

Planning for the 2010 Conference is underway. It will be held on 6-8 August 2010 at the Esplanade River Suites Conference

Centre in Como. GAWA has also regularly promoted the 2011 AGTA conference through publications and PD.

### Publications and Projects

Texts currently being published and on sale include:

- **Hazards, Impacts and Responses** by Norman Snell and **Sustainable Planet** by Tamara Boyer each typically representing a semester of the Year 11 course.
- Norm Snell's **The Geographers Toolkit** and its companion student activity book are GAWA's main skills texts.
- With the new course invigilated for the first time this year, the association is deciding the fate of **A Student's Guide to the Geography (WACE)**. The Curriculum Council (our state certification body) has stated they will be producing resources to develop standards in all areas which may impact on GAWA's revision book publication sales. Whilst this text has been a relatively stable revenue stream for the association, we are yet to determine if a revision book based on the range of choices available in the syllabus is possible/viable.
- In December 2009 GAWA published a new Stage 3 text: **Our Global Future: Planning for Cities and Climate Change**, written by Kathryn Ford and Norman Snell. The authors unpacked complex theory and issues ensuring that Geography is at the heart of each context. Excellent sales have been recorded and much positive feedback received.
- **Mock Exams**  
This year GAWA has extended its external exam product and produced a semester one Stage 2A Sample Exam and Stage 3A Sample exam with sales covering virtually every student. GAWA will also produce mock exams that cover the whole course.

### Action for Promotion of Geography

- The GEES (Geography, Earth and Environmental Science Day) was held on April 30. This event promoted Geography careers with practical hands on activities at the Perth Zoo. GAWA is hosting a series of hands on GIS activities in conjunction with our state land information agency, Landgate/ WALIS.
- The **John Forrest Competition** provides an excellent opportunity for members to involve their students in an activity that focuses on application of knowledge and skills developed through their study of Geography.
- GAWA also acknowledge and reward excellence in Geography teaching and

consider nominations for **Joseph Gentili Memorial Award for Excellence in Geographical Education**. The *Joseph Gentili Memorial Award for Excellence in Geographical Education* is conferred on a GAWA member who has made an outstanding contribution to Geographical Education and in recognition of its importance the award comes with prize money of \$2000.

- The Big Week Out was a fantastic opportunity to get to know passionate, enthusiastic students and showcase WA Geography. Mike Fazio as convener of the Big Week Out organized a terrific event. The committee has decided to modify the 2010 program in light of running the event in 2009 and subsequent discussion and feedback. Rottnest is an A Class reserve, and we were considerable hampered by the restrictions imposed by this status. Our intention is to use the Mandurah area to conduct this fieldwork.
- **The Bulletin** – The GAWA Bulletin is published 4 times per year. With the new WACE in place for Year 11 and 12 there has been a greater emphasis on the provision of classroom teaching resources, articles and the publication of useful websites and events.
- **Website** – The website template is close to completion. It is anticipated that the site will provide a 'login' capacity to further support the provision of service and resources to GAWA members.
- **Curriculum Development** – Curriculum development is centered on revisions to WA Syllabus- required as problems come to light in the teaching of new courses. GAWA has produced resources for senior secondary and will now plan for the Australian Curriculum Geography as information becomes available.
- **Australian Curriculum: Geography** – A number of GAWA members attended the Australian Curriculum Geography Forum held on April 27. The delegates provided feedback on the initial advice paper to inform the Geography Shaping Paper. GAWA will be providing formal feedback to ACARA.

### Issues

New WACE Course Sample Exam: - Teachers attended Curriculum Council (CC) Assessment Seminars to collect and discuss the final sample papers for Stage 2 and 3. These papers are supposed to mirror the first WACE exam and as such are very important documents for the preparation of students engaged in external assessment. A part of the CC Assessment Seminar gave teachers



the opportunity to provide feedback. The course officer encouraged teachers to send in any feedback which would be passed on to the Geography Examining Panel. GAWA has taken up this request and await the CC response.

A GAWA subcommittee of experienced teachers and past examiners has undertaken

a significant and time consuming audit and review of both stage papers. A detailed and critical report has been sent to the Curriculum Council. The GAWA Committee is very keen to see quality papers presented to candidates at the end of 2010 and as such GAWA felt it important to identify general areas of concern and also clearly target specific issues and inaccuracies. GAWA

hopes the panel can make use of this report and through the Curriculum Council clarify the approach on a range of issues.



## Geography Teachers Association of Victoria (GTAV)

Current membership stands at a total of 571. The new process for invoicing members has been successful, with more registrations being received earlier this year.

### Professional Learning Activities

Five professional learning activities have been organized and delivered. In addition to the annual conference, the GTAV also has 13 additional professional learning activities planned between now and the end of term 3. It is hoped that a country round of professional learning will be delivered on the topic of 'Spatial Technologies for "beginners"'. In addition geography has also had a presence at the Year of the Tiger Conference at Melbourne Zoo.

The annual conference will be held at a venue in the "heart" of Melbourne with the theme of "The Diversity of Urban and Rural Landscapes". It will be conducted over 3 days and has been successful in attracting two significant sponsors.

GTAV has organized four consultations on the Mathematics and Science National Curriculum documents. More consultation sessions will be held when the Geography documents are released later in 2010.

There has been a trend for decreasing numbers attending professional learning programs throughout 2010. Possible reasons include lack of funds in schools, a lack of awareness about the impending curriculum changes and the continued retirement of Geography teachers (with geography methods) and their replacement with SOSE/Humanities teachers. GTAV is planning to hold some joint History/Geography professional learning sessions for new teachers to the profession late in 2010, with a follow up in 2011.

Barrie Jones is organizing a field trip to Vanuatu in July this year. At this stage there are sixteen eager participants booked.

### New Technologies

A new network is being organized by Bek Nicholas who is demonstrating new ways of using technology for teachers. These are supported by sessions organized by Mick Law. The GTAV also has a Facebook page.

GTAV is hoping to tap directly into interested teachers. In addition the committee is starting to use other social networking sites to gather opinions.

The GTAV welcomes the new version of the GTAV website and thank Rob Berry for his effort. The new website will have a members section only. It will also have backdated copies of Interaction.

As a result of a meeting with representatives from the Spatial Industries Business Association the industry is enthusiastic in developing ways to work with the GTAV in the future. At this stage a professional learning activity for Career teachers is being contemplated.

### Publications

Geospatial Skills Book  
Supplement for current VCE text.  
Geography has been given space in the most recent edition of "The Australia Teacher" magazine.



## Tasmanian Geography Teachers Association (TGTA)

Membership currently stands at 20, with 13 of these teachers teaching Geography. The number of schools and colleges teaching Geography this year is similar to 2009. Members are still mainly from Year 11/12 government colleges and private schools, which are the only places where Geography is taught as a distinct subject.

### Professional Development

Professional Development opportunities in GIS with Mick Law have been advertised, Other PD opportunities have also been canvassed.

### Action for Promotion of Geography

The National Geographic Australian Geography Competition was promoted in high schools and colleges in Tasmania.

## Curriculum Developments in Tasmania

Post Year 10 Review – at the time of writing, the results of the recent state election are still unknown, but two of the three parties have promised to roll back the re-structuring of TAFE and Year 11 and 12 Colleges into Academies and Polytechnics. This followed a concerted campaign by teachers and the AEU. We wait to see who will be governing and what they will do in the post year 10 sector.

Statewide, the number of schools, colleges and academies with viable Geography classes has been maintained in 2010 and the number of students studying Geography in 2010 is also similar to the previous two years.

### Other Activities and Developments

As individuals and at association level, TGTA has established good links with the School of Geography and Environmental Studies at UTAS and this will be further enhanced in 2010 with some new initiatives from the School.

Following a submission from the TGTA and individual teachers, Geography has been re-accredited as a subject for the TCE until the introduction of the National Curriculum in 2012.

### Issues

What will happen in the post year 10 sector is the big question? Will we go back to senior secondary colleges and TAFE, with the colleges as part of the Department of Education again and TAFE as a separate entity or will we have a hybrid of the new and previous structure or will the new structure prevail? This issue has certainly taken up a lot of the time and energy of the teachers in the post year 10 sector in the past two years and looks likely to continue for most of this year.



## Geography Teachers Association of Queensland (GTAQ)

Membership is similar to the corresponding period for 2009 with 105 members.

Membership is expected to grow in coming months (double) as forms are returned and PD and conference material is distributed to members.

### Professional Development

Several spatial technology workshops are planned for this term in Brisbane, Mt Isa and on the Sunshine Coast at St Andrew's Anglican College.

The Environmental Education Expo was held on the 10 March at Everton Park SHS.

The expo covered key notes on the topic of sustainability. Workshops on the day covered everything from biodiversity studies of backyards, to understanding standby power and availability of VOC Ed courses in sustainable energy.

GTAQ will host its State conference on July 31 at the University of Queensland with the theme – 2010 Sustaining Biodiversity. The organisers are expecting approximately one hundred delegates, a range of trade and publisher displays, there will be heaps of opportunities to mix and mingle with colleagues as well as listen to some topical professional discussions.

### Publications and Projects

GTAQ has continued its promotion of the discipline through the sale of AGTA posters.

### Issues

Revenue raising needs to be considered in the context of providing members with more professional development

opportunities and resources – servicing members. Membership costs have risen slightly post AGM.

David Lergessner is currently managing the web site and updating information



## Geography Teachers Association of South Australia (GTASA)

Currently membership stands at 45. GTASA anticipates that there will be a flood of renewals and new subscriptions in the next 3 weeks as the information for its annual conference hits schools. This has historically been the pattern for the Association

### Professional Development

The main focus was the annual conference 27 - 28 May 2010. The theme was "Geography Challenges". Professor Barry Brook (Adelaide University) spoke on climate change. He currently holds the Sir Hubert Wilkins Chair in Climate Change. Professor Iain Hay (Flinders University) spoke on Geographies of the Super Rich. In addition a wide range of workshops were presented by local and interstate experts. An afternoon of fieldwork ranged from a tour of the education facilities at the new SA Water building to a visit to the enviro-dome at the Adelaide Zoo and a look at the Pandas!

### Publications and Projects

A new map kit is being produced using the same format as the Goolwa Map kit of 2008. This will focus on the rural urban fringe and will include a set of 30 maps and additional material along with structured questions that can be edited for individual class use. It will be available for sale at the conference.

The Y12 SACE Geography Study Guide was published ready for sale at the conference. This is the GTASA's annual study guide that is sold to Y12 students. It is updated each year and includes new material as well as practice questions and tips for the two large assessment pieces.

The Y12 student night is planned to be conducted in August at Adelaide University. The program will be finalized by early July.

Flinders University is again keen to facilitate a Professional Development night for Y12 teachers. It was very successful last year and the GTASA is in the process of collaboratively organizing the dates and program.

Ross Johnson is again running online GIS training using the CentraSystem.

### Action for Promotion of Geography

There continues to be interest in our various prizes and awards for both teachers and students in the field of Geography.

The annual conference acts a real focus point for the promotion of geographical education in SA with teachers travelling from the regional areas to attend. We have also encouraged student teachers to attend with a special rate.

Later this year, once the draft documents for the National Curriculum are released, the GTASA will investigate running some forums and information sessions for Geography educators to comment on the program.

### Curriculum Developments

The new Y11 course has begun. The whole system was redesigned. Although the process has commenced fairly smoothly many teachers are still trying to fully grasp the use of performance standards in the assessment of the learning.

The SACE Board of SA is rolling out the PD sessions to prepare teachers for the new Y12 course s of 2011. Term 2 has a big focus for Geography and there are around 10 different courses being run across the state.

### Issues

Numbers taking humanities generally in Y11 appear to be slightly down as there is now no prescribed pattern for students to follow. GTASA is hopeful that this is a short trend and students will make their way back to Geography and the humanities. With the roll out of the national Curriculum in 2011 and 2012 it is important to maintain the quality of teaching and learning in these areas.

Teacher education is going to need a fairly big shake up to match the needs of the new National Curriculum. As it stands many of the new teachers coming into the profession who claim to be geography teachers may only have completed Y11 or Y12 studies in the subject and their level of knowledge is found to be lacking. The past focus on SOSE facilitated a more generalist approach, however the new courses are not likely to be as forgiving and there will need to be a new strategy in teacher education.

2011 AGTA Conference: planning is well underway and the GTASA is excited to be able to host this prestigious event.

GTASA is exploring the possibility of the Northern Territory becoming part of their association with the ultimate view of being incorporated into AGTA.



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

GTANSW made considerable effort in rationalising the Association's membership records to eliminate duplication. The GTA now has 455 members and our objective is to secure a total membership of 500 by the end of 2010.

GTANSW still need to further develop an email distribution facility and online registration and renewal facility. This initiative has the potential to increase membership, significantly reduce postage expenditure and enhancing communication with members.

### Publications

The **Geography Bulletin** continues to be the principal means by which the Association communicates with, and supports the work of, its members in schools. The design of the journal continues to evolve and costs have been reduced substantially through more competitive pricing, aligning the print run to the number of members and moving the design process to the PTC. We hope to further reduce the cost of producing the journal in coming months. The amount (and in some instances the quality) of the material submitted for publication has increased.. The GTA has had the Geography Dictionary reprinted.

### Professional Development

The GTA has mounted its most ambitious professional development program including:

#### HSC Examination Review

A review of the 2009 HSC Geography examination by experienced markers and teachers. In response to the needs of our members, this activity was held in three locations using different presenters.

#### HSC Geography 2009 Awards Ceremony

The ceremony, held at Sydney's Parliament House, is the GTA's opportunity to recognise the hard work and success of the top ten students at the 2009 HSC Geography examination. Acknowledgement is also given to the teachers of these students.

#### Confidence with Skills and the School Certificate

Due to popular demand and the success of last year's skills workshops, the GTA conducted four additional workshops in 2010. Next year they will go to nonmetropolitan NSW as well as the major urban centres. Once again the main audience is teachers of Geography

who are not confident with the principal geographical tools and skills developed in Years 7-10. The workshop includes research and fieldwork skills along with examination techniques.

#### Making a Difference by Teaching about Water In Geography

These workshops are being held in the Sydney Water region of Sydney, Blue Mountains and Illawarra as part of the Water for Life initiative. They are focused on case studies of local water efficiency projects and fieldwork opportunities.

Each workshop in the series is different, using local speakers from schools, government and business organisations. Each workshop will include a practical session or inspection of a water project.

#### Using Contemporary Resources in Global Geography

This is the Global Education series of workshops. These workshops are always well supported and the evaluations are impressive. This series has a focus on quality teaching using contemporary resources in the classroom. The resources used have applications from Years 7-12. A central feature of these workshops is the DVD: The Burning Season, which is a documentary on climate change, threatened habitats and land degradation. The movie uses a case study on rainforest burning in Indonesia to investigate these issues and what can be done to change it. Teachers attending the workshop will receive a copy of the DVD, included in the registration fee. These workshops will include practical sessions on skills and vary in structure at different locations.

#### Sc Workshop: What is Geography?

This workshop is an introduction to the discipline of Geography, specifically designed to meet the needs of teachers teaching Geography without a background in the discipline. It was held in Canberra to prepare teachers in the Canberra system for the National Geography Curriculum. Speakers came from Sydney, local NSW schools and universities.

#### HSC Workshop: Urban Planning for Sydney

This workshop featured speakers on the Urban Places topic, with a focus on planning for Sydney. The 26 teachers attending the workshop received a class set of the urban planning books for Sydney.

#### HSC Mini Conference: People and Economic Activity

This mini conference is specifically designed for the HSC Geography course. The

presentations will focus on global tourism and the challenges facing the global wine and viticulture industries.

#### HSC Student Lectures

This is the annual series of HSC lectures designed for students in Year 12 Geography. Experienced teachers, HSC markers and distinguished academics provide students with a summary and a fresh perspective on the HSC course. As in 2009, the lectures will be presented in four locations: Sydney, Wollongong, Central Coast and Newcastle.

#### Other Activities

**Annual Conference; Arthur Phillip Fieldwork Awards; AGM and Dinner - Wednesday 20 October**

**Global Education** - The GTA has been associated with AusAid's Global Education initiative for two contractual periods. Dr Sue Bliss managed the project over this time and is to be congratulated on its tremendous success. The strength of the program is due to Sue's passionate commitment to the ideals of Global Education. So successful has Sue been that the scale of the initiative exceeded the organisational capacity of the Association. We supported Sue's decision to join with the PTC in a bid for a third contract. Sue's success in gaining the new contract reflects her skills in building networks of committed 'fellow travellers' and the wide reach she has been able to achieve. There can't be a teacher left in NSW who has not been inspired by Sue's in-service presentations and her contributions to the Geography Bulletin, not to mention being a recipient of AusAid resources.

The GTA will continue to be an active supporter of Global Education.





## Australian Capital Territory - Sub Branch

Local Geography teachers met on March 26 to determine whether they should join the NSW GTA as a sub-branch. Nick Hutchinson from GTANSW also attended the meeting. Carol Pogson (CGS) outlined the reasons for joining as a sub-branch rather than trying to form a local branch. People who attended the meeting agreed that it was wiser to begin this way and watch the progress. The vote for teachers of geography, and interested members of the public, to join NSWGTA as a sub-branch was unanimous. Carol Pogson was declared coordinator of the branch and Karen Tuhon secretary. It is envisaged that these positions will rotate on an annual basis.

Corporate Membership so far involves at least 12 ACT schools and 3 regional schools from a range of Government and Independent schools, mainly high schools.

### Professional Development

The first professional development day facilitated by GTANSW and ACT was on March 26. The Enhancing Geography in the Classroom professional development opportunity was well attended by teachers

in both government and non-government schools and from around the district. The program offered interesting lecture style information on the teaching of geography as a discipline by John Fields who maintained our interest with practical information teachers could use in the classroom. Nick Hutchinson also spoke about the relevance of teaching Geography and how it had changed over time. Nick shared many of his precious resources with teachers and presented teaching ideas that teachers could apply in their classrooms. Practical ideas were also offered by Graeme Sixsmith who taught at Karabar High School in Queanbeyan and Sandy Goddard from Canberra Grammar. Graeme engaged us with ideas for a local field trip to the waste management facilities in the Queanbeyan and Canberra areas and on local places where students would be exposed to land and water management systems. Sandy inspired teachers with the idea for a local suburb study that he undertakes with year seven students, as well as taking participants through a field trip of local areas in Canberra. Dr Anne Holland from Canberra Girls Grammar School and Karen Tuhon from Alfred Deakin High School shared some examples of how they teach mapping and climate graphs to their students.

To conclude the day Nick Hutchinson gave a presentation on the progress of the National Geography Curriculum which was of interest to all. The day was a great success as there was something for everyone, both beginning and experienced, with practical examples.

Other PD opportunities the ACT/ NSW are offering include a workshop 'Using contemporary resources in Global Geography' and perhaps another on ICT skills- GIS in particular.

### Action for Promotion of Geography

The National Geographic Australian Geography Competition was promoted in high schools and colleges in ACT and surrounds, as was the AGTA 2011 conference.

### Curriculum Developments in ACT

At least 9 Teachers and government representatives attended the National Curriculum forum to contribute their views to the shape of the Geography curriculum.

### Other Activities and Developments

The ACT region sub branch is pleased to be affiliated with the GTANSW and subsequently AGTA. Members look forward to a positive and active role in shaping and participating in Australia Geography.

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- "embraced by jurisdictions" as bodies who are presently conducting the majority of discipline based professional learning. How are associations going to be supported in the likely increased demand for professional learning as a result of national curriculum?
- There seems to be groups of associations, i.e. subject, across profession and Principal. Are we all equal in the eyes of ACARA?

There is a need to continue to be a voice at all Teaching Australia (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership), NEF and ACARA meetings to ensure that AGTA continues to be seen as a major player in the shaping of the national curriculum – not just Geography curriculum.

### Relevant websites:

[www.acara.edu.au/](http://www.acara.edu.au/)  
[www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go](http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go)  
[www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go/home/op/edit/pid/531](http://www.teachingaustralia.edu.au/ta/go/home/op/edit/pid/531)

## GeoCareers website

Only minor changes and revisions have been made to the GeoCareers website. Invitations to submit profiles have been sent, however, as yet response rates have been low despite follow up letters being sent. Each affiliate was asked at the last AGTA Board meeting to make a special effort to send Rob Berry a list of people who might be invited to submit a profile for publication. At present the major sections include Meet a Geographer, Studying Geography,

Using Geography and Resources. Additions will be made to each of these sections and if necessary, refined as the website extends its scope.

Please forward suggestions of people who might be approached to submit a profile to Rob 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@melbpc.org.au](mailto:rberry@melbpc.org.au)). Rob will then contact each person nominated and provide them with a standard proforma and agreement sheet.



## NEXT MEETING 30-31 October 2011 – Venue: Adelaide

*National Geographic Channel promotes and encourages Geography education in Australian schools.*

Registered Address  
503 Burke Road  
Camberwell South  
VIC 3124

Postal Address  
PO Box 2066  
Camberwell West  
VIC 3124

