

## GTA NSW President Report, AGM 2019

**Lorraine Chaffer**

**President GTA NSW, October 2017 – October 2019**

Firstly, let me thank all board members for supporting my role as President of GTANSW for the past 3 years. It has been an interesting journey of discovery, one that didn't come with an operating manual or role description, but one that has given me the opportunity to lead change for the benefit of members and the subject of Geography. I look forward to supporting the new president and hope to continue with the development of new resources and events in the future.

For the purposes of this report I will refer to GTA NSW as per the Constitution although the association now goes by the name GTA NSW and ACT, this change is yet to be legalised. This will be addressed further in the AGM agenda.

2019 has been a highly successful year for our association in providing professional support for K–12 Geography teachers, pre-service teachers and students across NSW and ACT. Professional learning events remained inclusive of all sectors, members and non-members and actively promote Geography across all stages.

**MEMBERSHIP** was 601 as at Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019, and has continued to grow (375 in 2017; 431 in 2018). Of these 118 are non-paying pre-service teachers. This means an additional 50 paying members. The majority of members are organisations (schools), covering up to six faculty members within a school. Fees for non-members have continued to remain higher to encourage membership.

- 35 GTA Concessional Membership
- 120 GTA Personal Membership
- 6 GTA Primary School Membership
- 322 GTA School/Organisation Membership
- 118 Pre-service teachers

### **GTA COUNCIL**

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 the GTA NSW Council comprised 18 elected councilors (including a president and four vice presidents) and three co-opted members. Six councilors live in regional locations Wagga (John Petts), Canberra (Michael Da Rosa) and Newcastle (Catherine Donnelly, Alexandria Warnock, John Lewis and Drew Collins). Remaining council members live across Sydney (Susan Caldis, Sharon McLean, Grant Kleeman, Louise Swanson, Martin Pluss, Grace Larobina, Alex Pentz, David Latimer, Paul Alger, Karen Bowden, Adrian Harrison, Milton Brown), Central Coast (Lorraine Chaffer) and Illawarra (Paul Batten, Keith Hopkins). Council meetings can be attended in person and online allowing all councilors to contribute meaningfully to GTA meetings.

GTA NSW continues to outsource administrative, financial, publishing and organisational tasks to the Professional Teachers' Council NSW and rents office space within the PTC premises at Auburn.

### **2019 PROGRAM**

2019 was a busy year as we consolidated and expanded professional learning opportunities and resources.

None of this would be possible without a team of dedicated council members who contribute what time and circumstances allow throughout the year. Thank you. I will name individuals as I run through our 2019 achievements.

I have a few people to thank before I report on the 2019 program.

- Sharon McLean for consistently facilitating our online meetings through Zoom
- Susan Caldis for her detailed and comprehensive meeting minutes
- Grant Kleeman for financial management as the ongoing GTANSW treasurer.

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

- Rona Afenir for event management, a huge undertaking that makes every event professionally organised and delivered
- Jill Sillar for her publishing skills and for satisfying the ongoing demand for flyers and other promotional materials and of course the publication of the Geography Bulletin.
- Shreela Pradhan for negotiating and facilitating the new GTA website

### **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EVENTS**

- **Two-day Annual Conference "The PLACE of Geography"** continued the approach of maximising teacher choice by providing a wide variety of presentations and workshops.

Innovations in 2019 included

- three full day immersion courses to target professional learning in one area Spatial technology – ESRI; Drones – Albury TAFE;

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Fieldwork skills – SOP)

- two Keynotes (Anika Molesworth and Den Barber)
- a careers keynote presentation linked to the use of drones (She Maps).
- a panel of experts linked to topics taught in 7–10
- a Twilight Event for Primary teachers
- the involvement of universities as exhibitors and expert panelists.

There were 36 individual workshops and presentations. Over 200 teachers attended each day. Additionally, there were 27 exhibitors on Day 1 and 22 exhibitors on Day 2, over 30 presenters, and GTA councilors.

The focus for 2019 was on Classroom Practice and Learning Across the Curriculum.

2019 was the third year with sponsorship, allowing a diversity of interstate presenters to be funded and scholarships / bursaries awarded to teachers to attend.

- **A two-day Regional Conference at Kiama with a focus on Fieldwork**
- **Six webinars covering a range of pedagogical, skills and Geography content**

*Thank you to Sharon McLean for your organisation of these important events to service our city, rural and regional colleagues. Thank you also to Sharon's co-presenters at Kiama Lorraine Chaffer, Susan Caldis and Michael Da Rosa.*

- **Two Skills Workshops**

*Thank you to Grant Kleeman for organising these events and for Sharon McLean and Susan Caldis for co-presenting with Grant. These workshops fill the continued high demand for training in skills by those untrained in or new to teaching Geography in particular.*

- **Online Professional Learning through Open Learning. Geo101** has proven to be a highly successful professional learning experience that has the flexibility in delivery to suit teachers' needs. As we come to the end of 2019 GEO 102 is now online and ready for registration.

*Thank you to Paul Batten for driving this successful initiative and providing support to participants, administering feedback and ongoing course development.*

## OTHER EVENTS

- **HSC Exam Preparation Lectures** to assist students prepare for the Geography HSC exam

*Thank you, Catherine Donnelly, for your organisation and thank you councilors who ran and presented at these events. David Latimer, Alexandria Lucas, Lorraine Chaffer, Grant Kleeman,*

- **RivSSTA HSC lectures** were supported by GTANSW but funded by RivSSTA.

*Thanks to Karen Bowden and Lorraine Chaffer for supporting this event.*

- **Arthur Phillip Fieldwork Awards Competition and ceremony** – a competition to promote geographical inquiry through fieldwork.
- **Top HSC Achiever Awards Ceremony** – Top 10 HSC students AND their teachers recognised in the Awards Ceremony during Annual Conference.

*Thank you to Grace Larobina for organising the collection and marking of the competition entries and organising the Award Ceremony. Thanks also to those of you who assisted Grace with these two activities, they could not run without a team effort including those who gave their time to mark the fieldwork entries in their January holidays. Grace Larobina, Sharon McLean, Lorraine Chaffer, Alex Pentz, Paul Alger and Karen Bowden.*

- **AGTA19 Conference on the Gold Coast**

*Thank you to those who were able to attend this event to support the professional development of Geography teachers on a National scale.*

*GTANSW & ACT provided a strong state presence through Grant Kleeman, Susan Caldis, Michael Da Rosa, Sharon McLean, Louise Swanson, Alexandria Warnock, Catherine Donnelly and Lorraine Chaffer. Further thanks to those who presented workshops at the event Susan Caldis, Lorraine Chaffer, Catherine Donnelly and Louise Swanson.*

- **Representative roles**

In 2019 Lorraine Chaffer represented GTANSW at the NSW Cross Sectoral HSIE committee meetings and HSIE Professional Teachers' Associations, tertiary educators, NESAs and NSW DoE HSIE Advisors meetings.

Sharon Mclean represented GTANSW on the NESAs BCC for Stage 6 Geography and Alex Warnock provided input by invitation to two consultation meetings.

Catherine Donnelly filled a position of GTA representative on the PTC NSW Board

*Thank you to Sharon, Alex and Cath.*

- **Affiliations**

GTANSW is an AGTA affiliate with the following persons attending Board meetings and contributing to the operation of the Association throughout 2019 Lorraine Chaffer (Director), Susan Caldis (Nominated director) Grant Kleeman (treasurer) Michael Da Rosa (ACT rep)

*GTANSW maintains a close relationship with the Geographical Society of NSW. Thank you to Susan Caldis for maintaining links and keeping us informed.*

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- throughout the year, visited schools who had requested assistance or liaised with other groups.

*Thanks to Grace Larobina for working with primary teachers in the NW Sydney region and Catherine Donnelly for working with teacher groups in the Newcastle region.*

- **Advocacy**

GTANSW is active in presenting the interests of Geography teachers in areas of public concern, by investigating and making recommendations to appropriate authorities (including the NSW Education Standards Authority) on educational policies and other matters of state and national interest in which Geography teachers are involved. This advocacy includes close liaison with the Australian Geography Teachers' Association (AGTA) and the Professional Teachers' Council of NSW (PTC NSW).

Most recently GTA has submitted or are preparing to submit responses to NESA on

- *Draft Stage 6 Geography Syllabus*
- *NSW Curriculum Review*
- *NSW Curriculum Review Draft Report*

*Thank you to Susan Caldis and Sharon McLean for producing submissions in 2019.*

## PUBLICATIONS AND DIGITAL PRESENCE

- The **Geography Bulletin** remains the key publication with four digital editions for K–12 teachers. 2019 saw the introduction of Blackline teaching activities (provided online as appendices) to support the use of articles appearing in the Bulletin. Work is in progress to trial a subscription mechanism through which members can obtain print copies of the Bulletin.

*Lorraine Chaffer continued the role of sourcing material and editing the bulletin and is keen to continue that role for the immediate future.*

- A new **website** was created to enhance engagement with teachers and the community

*Thank you to all councilors who provided input when designs were being considered.*

*Thanks specifically to Paul Batten and Louise Swanson for assisting Lorraine Chaffer in developing and fine tuning the website and agreeing to be involved in maintaining up to date content. Rob Berry was thanked with a certificate and gift for years spent maintaining the old site.*

- **Primary Geography Alive** – an online resource of teaching units with integrated resources published on the GTANSW website with free access to primary teachers. Units continue to be added and should be completed by the end of this year.

*Thank you to Grant Kleeman as coordinator and developer of the primary resource.*

- **Pathways with Geography poster** – showing courses linked to Geography at NSW Universities was produced late 2019 and is now for sale to schools.

*Lorraine Chaffer led the development of the poster and will consult with other councilors to develop a further set of support careers posters in the near future.*

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

It is anticipated that all of these programs will continue into 2020. Discussions on the delivery of Professional Learning to **primary teachers** will continue with a potential focus on the use of webinars, further twilight functions, and further ahead, online courses.

GTANSW continues to provide accredited professional learning through NESA (NSW teachers) and TQI (ACT teachers)

## INITIATIVES IN DEVELOPMENT

- **Assessment packages** based on each of the 7–10 NSW Geography Syllabus Topics but applicable to all jurisdictions. The packages will contain a stimulus booklet and a range of different assessment activities, marking guidelines and suggested answers. These will be available for purchase. Packages will be available and launched at the Annual Conference in May 2020.

- The **Geography Learning Journey poster and banner**

The poster is in the early stage of development with availability anticipated for early 2020.

*Lorraine Chaffer is leading the development of the Assessment packages and posters.*

GTA NSW remains a hard-working team of volunteers with a passion for supporting Geography teachers in NSW and for that I am extremely grateful and proud of what we have achieved in 2019.

Thank you  
Lorraine Chaffer