



President's Report

Dr Susan Caldis

Welcome everyone to a new year of teaching Geography. Hopefully our in-person return to the classroom is going smoothly and we are drawing confidence in knowing that we can be adaptive and responsive in our pedagogical practice for geography.

As I commence my third year as President, I would like to use this report to set the scene for the year ahead. In looking ahead, whilst it is important to ensure the Association caters specifically for the needs of Geography teachers in NSW and ACT, it is also important to continue to ensure we do so in alignment with the bigger picture of and for the discipline of Geography.

During my time on Council and as President, I have spoken many times about the Decadal Plan for Geography, *Geography: Shaping Australia's Future* (National Committee of Geographical Sciences, 2018). This document offers a framework for engaging research, teaching and industry that aligns strategically with contemporary social, economic and environmental challenges of our region. Chapter 13 is targeted at Geography in Australian Schools and there are key recommendations to ensure the future of Geography flourishes within the school education and initial teacher education context. The recommendations of Chapter 13 continue to frame the focus for Association activities, advocacy and messaging over the next 12 months, particularly around:

- Geography and STEM;
- increasing awareness about the urgency of out-of-field teaching in geography;
- developing collaborative opportunities between school and university geographers.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to do so, I encourage you to download and read *Geography: Shaping Australia's Future* <https://www.science.org.au/files/userfiles/support/reports-and-plans/2018/geography-decadal-plan.pdf> as part of your professional reading and if time is tight, please ensure you have a read through Chapters 1, 2 and 13.

The *Professional Standards for the Accomplished Teaching of School Geography* will also feature in our work ahead as another testing point for identifying

where our focus and activities connect with evidence-based practice and recommendations from research. The GEOGStandards can be accessed via <https://www.agta.asn.au/files/Professional%20Standards/geogstandards.pdf>

Throughout 2021, Council continued to respond to the need for change in professional learning during uncertain times. It was challenging to make decisions about how to best respond to the demands of teaching and delivery of professional learning in an ongoing pandemic-era. The 2021 Annual General Meeting (AGM) occurred online on 22 November 2021, hosted on Eora Nation, the unceded lands of the Cammeraygal People. I verbally presented the Annual Report of the Association to those in attendance. The written report will be available in an upcoming edition of the *Geography Bulletin*. The AGM confirmed there will be a small increase to the fee structure for 2022. The AGM also brought some changes to our Council for the year ahead, and we both farewell and welcome Councillors.

For 2021–2022 the governance of Council is shown in Table 1 and this information will also be available on the Association website.

Table 1: Governance of GTA NSW & ACT Council for 2021–2022

Name	Position
Dr Susan Caldis	President
Lorraine Chaffer	Vice President (Immediate Past); Journal Editor
Dr Grant Kleeman	Honorary Treasurer; Public Officer
Dr Paul Batten	Vice President
Katerina Stojanovski	Vice President; Minutes Secretary
Alexandria Warnock	Vice President
Stephanie Boden	Councillor

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Kieran Bonin	Councillor
Michael Da Roza	ACT representative; Councillor
James Harte	Councillor
Christopher Jenkins	Councillor
Grace Larobina	Councillor
John Lewis	Councillor
Alexandra Pentz	Councillor
Martin Pluss	Councillor
Rebecca Sutcliffe	Councillor
Karen Bowden	Co-opted
Drew Collins	Co-opted
Amy Freshwater	Co-opted
Keith Hopkins	Co-opted
David Latimer	Co-opted
Sharon McLean	Co-opted
Katherine Simpson	Co-opted

The GTA NSW & ACT Council for 2021–2022 remains strong with reach across the ACT and regional NSW, including the Central West, Hunter, Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions.

I would like to take the opportunity to farewell and thank Paul Alger, Cath Donnelly, Adrian Harrison, and John Petts for their time and contribution to the Association and work of Council. We know our paths will continue to cross and we wish you the very best in your endeavours beyond GTANSW & ACT.

I would also like to acknowledge the sustained contribution of David Latimer, Keith Hopkins, and Sharon McLean to the work of Council; each remain with us for 2022 but this time as co-opted members. I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to David Latimer who stepped into a Relieving President role for six months during 2021 whilst I completed my doctoral thesis.

The Executive group changes slightly for 2021–2022 with Katerina Stojanovski being new to the Vice President role.

I would also like to welcome five new members, Stephanie Boden, Kieran Bonin, Amy Freshwater, James Harte and Christopher Jenkins. We have much to learn from your fresh eyes over Council, and from your experiences in regional and metropolitan classrooms. On behalf of Council, let me say that we look forward to you sharing your insights during the year.

The Awards of *Life Membership to GTANSW & ACT*, and of *Outstanding Service to the Profession* are immense accolades and recognition of significant contribution and active service to the Association and to geography education. I am delighted to share with you that in 2021, Lorraine Chaffer and Sharon McLean were announced as receiving *Life Membership to GTANSW & ACT* at the AGM. Catherine Donnelly was awarded *Outstanding Service to the Profession*. The citations are available in this edition of the Bulletin and I encourage you to read through the inspiring work enacted by Lorraine, Sharon and Catherine.

There is much to look forward to in our program for 2022. During Terms 1 and 2, our professional learning events will occur online-only. During Terms 3 and 4, our professional learning events will move between blended and in-person form. There will be opportunities to engage with Council in-person through small social events. Planning for all events are underway. A couple of examples for Terms 1 and 2 are identified below, and further information will be distributed shortly:

- an online HSC geography 'Meet the Marker' focused event (March 2022)
- an online symposium focused on showcasing STEM in geography (May–June 2022)
- an in-person social night with GTANSW & ACT Council to celebrate GeoNight – an initiative of the International Geographical Union Commission for Geographical Education (April 2022)
- the webinar program to run in Terms 2, 3 and 4; the suite of e-learning courses available across Terms 1–4.
- an in-person networking event with the Geographical Society of NSW (May 2022)

Wishing you all an enjoyable Term 1 and I look forward to our paths crossing.

Dr Susan Caldis
President, GTA NSW & ACT