

geographia



AGTA News
October 2020

First STEM Ambassador for
Geography Education

AGTA Conference 2021

Geography Unlocked Series

Around the Affiliates

AGTA Geographia 2020

Welcome to the latest edition of Geographia, the national newsletter of the Australian Geography Teachers Association.

AGTA Membership

The Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA) has seven members being the geography professional associations in each State and the Northern Territory.

Individuals, schools and other institutions, non-government organisations and businesses should join the relevant member association in each State or Territory (NT).

AGTA's 15 directors consist of two directors from each member affiliate, one being the President of the Affiliate Association and the other being nominated by the member.

Individuals can only make representation to AGTA through their association to bring issues to the national attention.

AGTA exists as a national body representing the interests of Geography Teachers across Australia.

If you have an issue that you believe would merit national attention you can raise it through your local state Geography Association.

You can inquire about membership and connect with your local associations.

[New South Wales](#)

[Northern Territory](#)

[Queensland](#)

[South Australia](#)

[Tasmania](#)

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AGTA Board

Executive Chair: Trish Douglas (VIC)

Vice Chair: Joanne Wegener (WA)

Immediate Past Chair: Grant Kleeman (NSW)

Secretary: Anna Griffin (WA)

Treasurer: Grant Kleeman (NSW)

Appointed Directors & Nominated Directors:

Leo Conti (GAWA) Shane Albertson (QLD)

Anna Griffins (GAWA) Joanne Wegener (SA)

Lorraine Chaffer (NSW) Simon Miller (SA)

Susan Caldis (NSW) Rowan Harris (TAS)

Steve Hawkins (NT) Karen Caporelli (TAS)

Julie Hearnden (NT) Jeana Kriewaldt (VIC)

Julie Davis (QLD) Trish Douglas (VIC)

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First STEM Ambassador to Represent Geography Education

In November 2019, Susan Caldis (President, GTANSW & ACT) was selected on merit to attend Science Meets Parliament (SMP) as a delegate of the Institute of Australian Geographers and the Australian Geography Teachers Association. SMP is the annual event hosted by Science and Technology Australia (STA) and it is held in Canberra.

As a participant, Susan had to communicate a policy, and pitch an in-practice example relevant to her field of expertise. To do so, Susan drew on the following recommendation from *Geography: Shaping Australia's Future*, that Geography be recognised as a partial STEM subject. The pitch was 'Geography Education; Geography as a STEM subject' with the in-practice example taken from a GeoSTEM unit being implemented in a local school to teach Changing Nations.

In March 2020, Susan was appointed, again on merit, as one of STA's 16 STEM Ambassadors. Susan is the first STEM Ambassador for geography education. In this role, Susan will work alongside Mr Trent Zimmerman MP to help bridge the gap between science and government in Australia.

The focus will be to build connections between parliament and the broader STEM sector regarding policy and practice, and to enable federal politicians to gain a deeper understanding of the potential impact of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in Australia. In doing so, Susan will also advocate for geography education to become more visible in STEM education and for geography to become formally recognised in policy and practice as a STEM subject.


The STEM field plays an important role in shaping Australia's health and wellbeing, economic prosperity and environmental sustainability and the discipline of Geography has an important contribution to make in such areas.

Since March 2020, Susan has completed STEM Ambassador training sessions, with more to come. She also had the opportunity to meet with Mr Zimmerman to discuss their vision for the work ahead in the STEM Ambassadors program.



Photo: Mr Trent Zimmerman MP and Susan Caldis meet to discuss possibilities for their work together in the STEM Ambassadors program.

Photo credit: Hugo Robinson, Office of Trent Zimmerman MP.

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AGTA Conference 2021

Register your interest [here](#).



THE ACTIVE GEOGRAPHER

AGTA 2021

HOBART TASMANIA • 29 SEPT - 1 OCT

Looking forward to travelling again?

AGTA CONFERENCE 2021

Crowne Plaza - Hobart - Tasmania

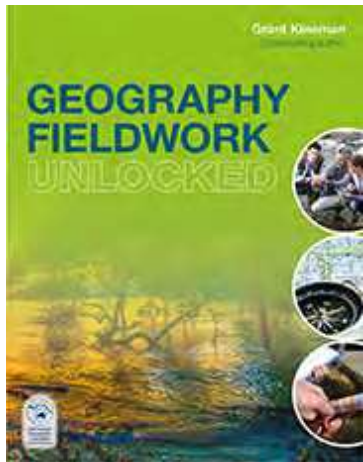
29 September – 1 October

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Geography Unlocked Series

Geography Fieldwork Unlocked

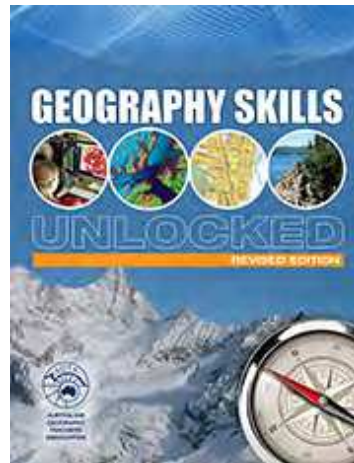
The latest instalment in the Geography Unlocked series is here. It features 34 inquiry-based fieldwork activities developed by a team of experienced Geography educators. Activities are targeted at both primary and secondary levels. It provides guidance in developing fieldwork action plans, research methodologies, and data collection tools and approaches as well as guidance on the presentation and communication of fieldwork findings.



Revised! Geography Skills Unlocked

Looking for a current textbook to support the teaching of geography skills in your classroom? *Geography Skills Unlocked* (Revised Edition) is written by teachers for teachers. This exciting and fully revised skills book is up-to-date with the demands and requirements of teaching geography today and features a statistical update. Features include:

- Contents aligned to the inquiry and skills-based requirements of Australian Curriculum: Geography.
- An engaging, easy to navigate design.
- A student friendly approach with step-by-step explanations, descriptions and worked examples.
- A focus on emerging technologies used to gather, analyse and present geographical data.



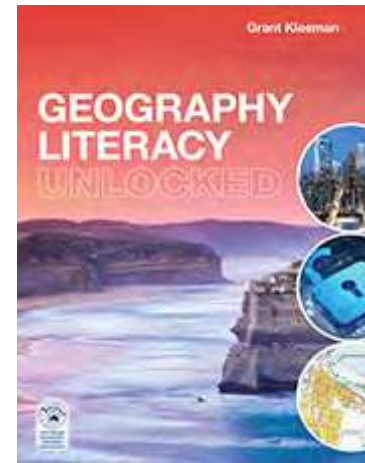
- GeoSkills and GeoInquiry activities that scaffold student learning.
- A wealth of stimulus material including a diverse range of maps, graphs, aerial photographs, satellite images, diagrams and photographs.
- Examples drawn from each Australian state and territory with additional international material.
- Key terms explained in embedded glossary boxes.

Geography Literacy Unlocked

Geography can make an important contribution to your school's literacy enrichment program. To help promote literacy in secondary schools AGTA offers the relevant resource, *Geography Literacy Unlocked*. The text incorporates a wealth of material covering written, visual and oral literacy.

More details are available [here](#).


Contact your state or territory affiliate to order an inspection copy or class set of any the *Geography Unlocked* texts.



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Geography Unlocked Series

Pre-Service Geography Teachers get the Unlocked bundle at a reduced rate!



PRE-SERVICE GEOGRAPHY TEACHER STARTER PACK

The Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA) offers pre-service Geography teachers the opportunity to access three essential teaching resources at a considerable discount on their recommended retail price. All three resources are available for the heavily discounted price \$115.00.

Geography Skills Unlocked a comprehensive coverage of the key geographical skills including those related to the focus on the emerging technologies used to gather, analyse and present geographical data. It provides the user with a student-friendly approach with step-by-step explanations, descriptions and worked examples. The book includes a wealth of stimulus material including a diverse range of maps, graphs, aerial photographs, satellite images, diagrams and photographs.

Geography Literacy Unlocked focuses on developing the literacy skills of students. It includes a focus on written, visual and oral literacy.

Geography Fieldwork Unlocked features 33 inquiry-based fieldwork activities developed by a team of experienced Geography educators. The book introduces the reader to concept of inquiry-based fieldwork. It also provides guidance in developing fieldwork action plans, research methodologies, and data collection tools and approaches. It also provides guidance on the presentation and communication of fieldwork findings.

Each fieldwork activity is framed by one or more inquiry questions. They also feature: a statement of expected learning; a list of the equipment needed to successfully complete each fieldwork activity; a short introduction; background information that contextualises student learning; pre-fieldwork activities; and detailed step-by-step instructions on how to complete each fieldwork task.

TO ORDER – Email: gta.admin@ptc.nsw.edu.au or Phone: 02 9716 0378

Find out about the AGTA Geography Unlocked series – www.agta.asn.au/Products

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Around the Affiliates:



GAWA 2020

2020 Vision and Operational procedures involve three themes for WA Geography:

- Service to the classroom Geography teacher via PD's, Workshops and Conference.
- Support to the Yr 7 - 12 geography students via Revision seminars and Student PL's.
- Strengthen Geography profile discipline and connection to future careers via HaSS packages and electronic resources.

Five Teacher Professional Development days are being offered. Targeting inexperienced, new and returning HaSS/geography teachers, these TPD's include Workshop based professional learning, Conference, Planning and implementing effective incursions and excursions and a

Yr 11 and 12 Planning Day. Two teacher PD's were successfully presented. COVID-19 has temporarily impacted other events.

Two Student Professional Learning Seminars are being offered. Their aim is to present short, condensed and concentrated case study content that is directly linked to the Year 12 ATAR course. The first was postponed due to COVID-19, however the second is being advertised and will run, thus offering support to Year 12 ATAR students.

Promotion of geography is continuing through planned activities: revision seminars in second semester will run; Conference will occur in August (teacher attendance will be capped at 100 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions); the Joseph Gentilli Award honouring

and recognising outstanding work completed by a geography teacher will be announced at Conference as will the Young Geographer of the Year competition - years 5 to 12.

Finally, publications have been keeping many on the committee busy. Though COVID-19 has been disruptive to 'normal proceedings', GAWA was fortunate to be published in the West Australian newspaper (24th February) with an article titled "Geography 'vital now' for students". This article recognises the importance of geography as a school subject helping students understand the links between climate change and bushfires.

Leo Conti, President GAWA

GAWA

June 2020 GAWA has 120 metropolitan members and 26 country members and 3 University/student members.

GAWA Committee

President: Leo Conti

Vice President: Laura Billington

Vice President: Lidia de Giuseppe

Treasurer: Tracy Smith

Secretary: Angela Jones

Immediate Past President: Anna Griffin

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GHTANT

As with all associations, GHTANT's plans for 2020 have been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. Although for the most part teaching has continued as usual, physical distancing and travel restrictions prevented face-to-face professional learning.

GHTANT was fortunate that our mini-conference for March occurred before restrictions were implemented. 13 teachers attended our event at St Philip's College, Alice Springs. This event occurred in conjunction with the English Teachers Association, and Rosalie Triolo from Monash University attended to support history teachers. GHTANT president Steve Hawkins presented one geographical-related session on Infographics, a repeat of a session run at the 2019 Festival of Teaching in Darwin. This session explored online tools

such as Infogram and Visme can be used to present data in a visually interesting and interactive way.

As with other associations, GHTANT worked to create additional resources for our members to support distance learning, a process that was limited due to the voluntary nature of our association and the pressure placed on our members due to COVID-19 uncertainty. However, we were able to develop a self-paced hazards unit for Year 7 and 8 Geography, as well as some general resources on effective research. We were fortunate that teaching continued in Term 2 as normal, but some of our members are using (or are planning to use) these resources.

GHTANT is hopeful that Semester 2 will provide opportunities for face-to-face

professional learning. We have been exploring the possibility of engaging She-Maps to run some drone workshops and hope to run workshops on local fieldwork opportunities. With interstate travel restrictions easing for the Northern Territory prior to Term 3, we will be better placed to plan these events, though caution remains a priority with our planning. The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over, and reduced border restrictions means local cases in the Northern Territory may eventuate.

Steve Hawkins,
President GHTANT

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GTANSW

The Annual General Meeting occurred on 27 November 2019. Lorraine Chaffer stepped down as president having completed a three-year term, and the Council would like to thank her for her service to the Association as President. The Association has 620 members.

In January 2020, our Executive was compelled to act due to the extent of devastation to environments, places, human and more-than-human species caused by the bushfires. A public statement of support to geography teachers in fire-affected communities was released in response to the situation and in alignment with the statement issued by the Australian Academy of Sciences. Other action undertaken included the provision of a complimentary package of Geography teaching resources to

fire-affected schools; targeting Annual Conference scholarships towards geography teachers in fire-affected schools; holding future regional conferences in fire-affected communities to support the 'Empty Esky' and 'Spend with them' initiatives.

The COVID-19 pandemic required adjustment to the conduct of Council meetings and the professional learning program:

- The Annual Conference is on-hold pending government advice about group restrictions.
- The face-to-face HSC Student Lectures are now a package available for purchase and include a set of recorded lectures and supporting resources.
- The proposed study tour to China is cancelled.

- The webinar program, journal, support of the charity Picture You in Agriculture, and the Association developed online learning courses continue as usual.
- Café Conversations emerged as a new no-fee, online networking focused initiative.
- A selected curation of classroom-ready resources from previous editions of the journal are now available on the Association website as free-to-access articles.

Please see www.gtansw.org.au for further information.

Susan Caldis, President
GTANSW & ACT

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GTAQ

GTAQ membership stands at 128 schools and 75 individuals for the first half of 2020. At the AGM Life Membership was bestowed upon two long serving members of GTAQ:

Past President: Lerece Roberts

Current Treasurer:
Kaye Schwede

AGM and New Committee

The AGM was held in March and the following people were elected to the AGC Committee:

President: Julie Davis

Secretary: Jenny Knight

Treasurer: Kaye Schwede

Council Members:

Shane Albertson, Bec Nicholas, Elin Charles-Edwards, Shane Thackeray, Donna Googe, Kate Buchanan, Nina Holland

Co-opted members appointed post AGM: Wendy Bolton, Anne-Marie Gerlach, Wendy Hart

Annual Conference and Professional Development

With the COVID-19 restrictions impacting the ability to gather in large numbers we made the decision to cancel our 2020 Annual Conference. This was a decision not made lightly given we did not hold a conference in 2019 as we hosted the AGTA conference on the Gold Coast. We are currently discussing the options of a one-day, online series of workshops in lieu of a full conference event.

We have commenced presentation of a series of online 'twilight' professional development sessions for members. The format is a hands-on guide through some practical skills developments related to the new senior geography syllabus. As teachers navigate their first implementation of the new assessment there is a growing demand for professional development.

Regional schools in particular have been thankful for online professional development.

- May - 'How to create population pyramids with excel' presented by Jenny Knight.
- July - 'Understanding data transformation for the Communication criteria' presented by Shane Thackeray.
- August - 'Creating Story Maps'
- September - one-day online workshop/presentation series (various).

Julie Davis, President GTAQ

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GTASA

Membership at mid 2020 stands at 87 members, of which 32 are school members. Pre-service teachers are invited to join the association for free during their final year of study.

GTASA Committee

Our Committee consists of 14 active members and following the June AGM our Office Bearers are:

Co-Presidents: Simon Miller and Fiona Greig

Treasurer: Joanne Wegener

Secretary: Domna Margaras

Other roles include:

Journal Editor: Elise Walker

Website Manager: Jacob Hayes

Conference Convenor: Jeannine Malcolm

Professional Development and Activities

Prior to the COVID-19 restrictions approximately 100 teachers, students and friends attended the 2040 film night with guest speaker Damon Gameau at the Capri Theatre. This event was well received by all who attended.

Term 1 also saw a well-supported networking session for SACE Geography teachers. This was an opportunity for teachers to hear from the SACE Board about the e-Exam format for this year, share ideas, ask questions and generally support one another in the delivery of SACE Geography. Unfortunately our Annual Conference planned for 28th and 29th May was cancelled and there are no plans at this stage for a rescheduled conference date.

While we continue to produce our journal and newsletter, social media has become our most popular form of communication. Our Facebook page has received over 500 likes, and our Facebook Group for "members only" has 50 members. This group was created so that members can actively contribute to geography networking and promotion.

Joanne Wegener, Immediate Past-President GTASA

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IGTA

Membership currently stands at 24.

TGTA Committee

President: Rowan Harris

Vice President: Caryn Shield

Secretary: Karen Caporelli

Treasurer/Public Officer:
Greg Calvert

Committee Members:
Debbie Claridge and
Bianca Coleman

Recent Activities

Professional learning was halted earlier this year, however, we are now in a position where this can resume and planning for this is now underway.

We are happy to announce the confirmation of the Crowne Plaza Hobart as the venue for AGTA conference in September 2021. The Committee has booked a tour of the facilities in July as it has not been operational during COVID-19. Convenors of AGTA conference 2021 have been confirmed and planning has begun.

A Maps and Drinks event was held at the end of 2019. Members were invited to attend this social occasion to browse the surplus map collection from UTAS. Drinks and nibbles were served while members perused through the collection of maps. It was a successful event and a great way to finish off the year.

Rowan Harris, President TGTA

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GTAV

The GTAV has been significantly disrupted since March by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The impacts of initial social-distancing regimes in our office were soon followed by the decision for all staff to work remotely from home with its attendant need for regular telecommunication and coordination. Major face-to-face events such as our Conferences, Public Lectures and Professional Development meetings were either cancelled, postponed or changed to online offerings.

The well-attended weekly Professional Development webinar series is a highlight, and greater offerings of teaching resources and learning materials have been placed on our website. Our online Professional Development courses for

Geography teachers have also received greater patronage this year, sales of e-books have grown, and Student Lectures have been offered in an online format. Thanks to our staff, committee and members for all of this extra work creating new opportunities.

Reductions in revenue have been challenging, and this has necessitated a prioritisation of expenditure or modification of deliverables such as with some existing and potential projects. VCAA's recently announced delay, by a year, of the introduction of the revised VCE Geography curriculum has also been factored into our project and professional development timelines.

Dr Stephen Legg, President GTAV

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