



# 86th ANNUAL REPORT

## Geographical Society of New South Wales Inc.

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# 86th Annual Report

## Geographical Society of New South Wales

### 1. PUBLICATIONS

#### 1.1 Australian Geographer

AG performed in 2012-13 much as it did in 2011-12. There was a continued steady flow of papers, still about four per month – with about a 60% success rate- slightly up from the previous year. The turnover – usually two to three months – is superior to most international journals. The new section called “Thinking Space” seems to have attracted considerable interest both amongst readers and writers. One particular article – in the last issue of 2012 - attracted unusual national and global interest and has given the AG a very wide and diverse readership. Hopefully that may continue. A new Editorial Board came in at the start of 2013 but we are yet to see any real outcome of this. The book reviews are still only slowly taking off. This next issue (September 2013) will be a special issue on the Pilbara. Another possible special issue for 2014 will cover livelihoods in SE Asia.

John Connell, Editor, Australian Geographer

#### 1.2 Geographical Society Web Site

The Society’s new-look web site at <http://www.geogsoc.org.au>, launched in December 2011, continued to be refined and enhanced, with two significant additions to its pages. These were:

- Geography in the News – a collection of items of interest concerning geography and geographers making news.
- An online membership applications and renewals facility with provision for secure credit card payment.

Web site content is regularly refreshed with updates to study tours, news, events, awards and publications as and when new material becomes available.

John Bliss, Web Manager

### 2. AWARDS

#### 2.1 2012 Prize Night

The 2012 prize night was held at Wests Leagues Club, Ashfield. GSNSW President Gordon Waitt welcomed award recipients and their guests to what was a very enjoyable evening. The new GSNSW tag-line of “encourage-engage-excite” was promoted. The 2012 prize night was a successful event that encouraged young geographers, engaged them and their guests with geography and the GSNSW, and excited them about a future in geography. The Marketing and Promotions Committee worked on the media aspect of this event. Local newspapers were notified of University Student Prize winners, resulting in a story on geography and UNSW prize winner Robbie Bishop-Taylor in the *Great Lakes Advocate*. University of Sydney awardee Amy Lanson was also featured on the USYD School of Geosciences news webpage. Robbie’s story can

be seen at: 'Geography flair puts Robbie on the map'

<http://www.greatlakesadvocate.com.au/story/1224776/geography-flair-puts-robbie-on-the-map>

Phil McManus, Honorary Treasurer & Chair, Marketing and Promotions Committee

## 2.2 University Student Prize Winners

Students from all NSW Universities who topped geography in second year receive a certificate, gift voucher and membership of the Society for one year. In 2012, prizes were awarded to:

- Australian Catholic University: Natalie Neilson
- Macquarie University: Christopher James Patfield
- University of New England: Michelle Hales
- University of New South Wales: Robbie Charles Bishop-Taylor
- University of New South Wales (ADFA): Brianna McConville
- University of Newcastle: Rachel Donnelly
- University of Newcastle: Melina Ey
- University of Sydney: Amy Ianson
- University of Western Sydney: Rachelle Dimitui
- University of Wollongong: Nicola Curtis

Phil McManus, Honorary Treasurer & Chair, Marketing and Promotions Committee

## 2.3 Fellowship of the Society

Award of the fellowship was deferred until December 2013.

## 2.4 Macdonald Holmes Award

Nomination process commenced for award of the medal in December 2013.

## **3. PROGRAM OF SOCIETY ACTIVITIES**

### 3.1 Honours Conference, 2012

The 16th Annual Geographical Society of NSW Honours Conference was hosted by the University of Sydney on Friday 16th November, 2012. Associate Professor Bill Pritchard coordinated this highly successful event and welcomed people on behalf of the University of Sydney. The President of the Society, Gordon Waitt, welcomed students, staff and other guests to the conference on behalf of the Geographical Society of NSW. The program involved 16 student presentations from 6 different universities, including two students from the University of Melbourne. Presentations given by students representing the University of Sydney, UNSW, the University of Newcastle, UWS, the University of Wollongong, and the University of Melbourne were all of a high standard. Topics covered included: football, climate change, migration, emissions trading, risk and trees, residential estates, apple growing and impact assessment, to name but a few.

Associate Professor Deirdre Dragovich presented the Jim Rose Geography Awards. Deirdre spoke eloquently of the qualities of Jim Rose, who was the foundation Professor of Geography at Macquarie. Deirdre Dragovich spoke of how Jim Rose was a very enthusiastic supporter of

honours research, geographical research generally, and of the NSW Geographical Society. In 2012 The Jim Rose award for the best presentation at the conference was given to Alex Tindale (University of Wollongong) for his paper titled: "Heterogenous households: geographies of inter-ethnic intimacy in NSW". Jennifer Jackett (University of Sydney) received the Highly Commended award for her presentation titled "Life on the Edge: An everyday geography of people flows and the social construction of peri-urban space at the Bangalore periphery, India". Chloe Desgrand (University of Sydney) received the Highly Commended award for a presentation on a physical geography topic, for her paper titled "The sands of time: Decadal scale responses of coastal sand dunes in response to climate variation in southeast Australia".

During this conference four students participated in the GSNSW video production Why Study Geography? Alex Tindale (Wollongong), Jennifer Jackett (Sydney), Nerida Godfrey (UNSW) and Ryan Jones (Newcastle) generously donated their time to work with freelance producer Sam Bruce (<http://www.linkedin.com/pub/sam-bruce/51/85a/174>) and Phil McManus, with assistance from Gordon Waitt and Natascha Klocker. These four short videos can be accessed from the GSNSW website under <http://www.geogsoc.org.au/site/index.cfm?display=332785>

Gordon Waitt closed the conference, and congratulated all the students for participating and commented on the extremely high quality of the presentations. He thanked Bill Pritchard for organising this event, thanked the Session Chairs and assessors for the student prizes and encouraged the students to continue on with their geographically focused research, become members of the Geographical Society and to write up their work for *Australian Geographer* or *Geographical Research*.

Phil McManus, Honorary Treasurer & Chair, Marketing and Promotions Committee

### 3.2 Study Tours

In the year from August 2012 to August 2013, Colin Sale organized and conducted the following two Study Tours, his 55th to 56th such tours since the first one in 1988.

1. The "Mystic Mekong" Study Tour ran from 12 September to 10 October, 2012 (29 days), and was a repeat of the very successful tour of 2010; 21 people participated with Colin as Tour leader, and its itinerary extended from the Golden Triangle in the north of Southeast Asia, where China, Thailand, and Laos are linked, and extended though Laos and Cambodia, to the delta in Vietnam in the south. It included three cruises of 2, 3 and 7 days. It was the last of three tours in the calendar year of 2012, the other two being Myanmar, Yunnan and Tibet in April, 2012, 2with 23+1 participants, and Scenic Scandinavia in July, 2012, with 27+1.
2. The "National Parks of Western USA" Study Tour ran from 02 to 27 June 2013 (25 days) and included some very spectacular natural landscapes in 12 major National Parks of the country, covering 9,632 km across 8 states (California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Washington and Oregon). 24 people participated with Colin as tour leader. It earned commission to the Society of \$6000.

Two future Study Tours are expected to be Colin's last ones. The first is the "Exotic Ethiopia and East Africa National Parks" Study Tour – departing next month, the second Study tour of 2013. It is fully booked with 23 participants plus Colin as Tour Leader, runs 09 September to 11 October (32 days), and will earn the Society commission of \$5,750. The second one, the "Surprising

Bangladesh" Study Tour, with the brochure just out, having places for 15 to 20 participants, and running from 07 to 23 February, 2014 (17 days) is expected to be Colin's last. Study Tours after that are expected to be organized and conducted by Heather Rushton and Sandy Smith, working together, with plans well under way for a "Mongolia and South Korea' Study Tour" in July, and Stephen Codrington, expecting to return to Australia after living abroad for many years, having plans to organize and conduct a variety of new Study Tours for the Society; he was a past President of the Society and a previous Study Tours Leader.

Colin Sale, Study Tours Committee Convener

### 3.3 The Travellers Club 2012–2013

We had a good variety of talks this year, with no obvious decrease in interest, and attendance holding at about 35.

The talks were:

16th September: "Game parks of East Africa" by John Bliss.

11th November: "North Sea to Black Sea: river cruising across Europe" by Colin Sale.

10th March: "A slice of Turkey: Istanbul, Bursa and Cappadocia" by Bob Solomon.

12th May: "Ukraine. Is it little Russia?" by Graeme Marshall.

21st July: "Sabah, Malaysian Borneo" by Margaret Ball.

Our old friend Bruce Ryan will be speaking about Wild Wales on 15th September. Which prompts me to remind Councillors past and present that speakers are always needed -- you yourself, or nominate another traveller you know.

While our personable caterer Rosalie Atie is clearly missed, Garth Lean has refined his skill to provide very attractive fare for an outlay which the Society can still afford.

Our thanks are also due to Lee Craymer, who has retired as doorman, through infirmity. His place has been taken by Christine Edwards, who is managing the crowd well.

Peter Steffan remains our helpful contact man at Riverview, and our only lock-out was overcome by one of Garth's hidden skills.

Bob Solomon, Travellers Club Convenor

### 3.4 Postgraduate Three Minute Thesis Talk

On Monday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June, 2013 the Council of the Geographical Society of New South Wales organised its inaugural Postgraduate Three Minute Thesis Talk. The event was held at the Royal Hotel, Ambercrombie Street, Newtown, Sydney. The event was designed especially to support postgraduate students in a collegial and convivial environment. The aim of the event was to provide an opportunity to meet other geography postgraduates from universities across NSW and the ACT. The event was free – and encouraged participation regardless if postgraduate students were members of the Geographical Society of New South Wales. Participants were invited to bring along an object to help illustrate their presentation and talk for three minutes about their research, or what inspired them to study geography. Over twenty postgraduate student representing at least five NSW universities attended the event. Sixteen postgraduates

spoke with passion about their research on the day. Their talks were a source of inspiration. Our thanks are due to Garth Lean for organising the event, to Karina Luzia for acting as three minute thesis host.

Gordon Waitt, President

#### 4. GENERAL SOCIETY INFORMATION

##### 4.1 Archives

The Society's archival collection remains housed at Storage King, 24A Anzac Street, Greenacre, NSW 2190.

##### 4.2 Council Membership

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<b>COUNCILLORS x7</b>
Professor Gordon Waitt	Dr Rod Lane
<b>VICE PRESIDENT x4</b>	Dr Karina Luzia
Professor Kevin Dunn	Dr Fiona McKenzie
Mr Peter Herborn	Dr Kathy Mee
Dr Emma Power	Dr Wendy Shaw
Mr Colin Sale	Dr Krishna K Shrestha
<b>HONORARY TREASURERS x2</b>	Dr Bob Solomon
Associate Professor Jim Forrest	<b>STUDENT COUNCIL REP x1</b>
Associate Professor Phil McManus	Ms Alanna Kamp
<b>HON SECRETARIES x2</b>	
Dr Natascha Klocker	
Mr Martin Pluss	

##### 4.3 Planning Day Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2012

Planning Day was held on Thursday 25th October, University of Western Sydney, Kingswood. Planning Day provides an opportunity for the Council to discuss the role of the Geographical Society of New South Wales. Planning Day in 2012 was particularly important, given the election of new Council members at the AGM 2012.

Planning Day 2012 was divided in three sessions. The first sessions involved addressed two core business matters of the society: the Australian Geographer and Study Tours. Alex Lazzari (Taylor and Francis) and John Connell (Professor, University of Sydney) led discussions around the Australian Geographer. Alex Lazzari provided insights to the marketing, impact, citations and global audience of the Australian Geographer. Downloads of articles suggest that the audience for the Australian Geographer is primarily with Anglo-American geography. Alex pointed the huge market potential for the Australian Geographer within China and India. Overall, Alex Lazzari confirmed the market strength of the Australian Geographer in terms of subscriptions with university libraries, 5-year impact factor and downloads. John Connell reported on four strategic changes to enhance the national and international profile of the Australian Geographer: (1) revision of the Editorial Board; (2) a new section entitled 'Thinking Space', (3) announcement of



Journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special invitation to distinguished geographers</li> <li>• New editions – market through IAG list serve</li> </ul>
Logo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New logo – competition?</li> </ul>
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct links</li> <li>• Link to Facebook</li> <li>• Stronger social media presence</li> </ul>
Travellers Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 for the price of one membership</li> </ul>
Walking Tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organising walking tours</li> </ul>
Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New research awards – professional geography award; research impact award</li> <li>• Award Macdonald Holmes Medal and GS Fellowship annually</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Potential new activities for the Society**

<b>And now for something completely different: What would you like the Society to do?</b>
<p>Engaging Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSC – top 100 – target as potential new members through sending congratulatory letter</li> <li>• School competition – poster topic? Photographic competition?</li> <li>• Engage with a specific school – what year? Why High school Geography?</li> </ul> <p>Engaging Early Career Geographers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postgraduate conference – workshop – master class, seminar : topics grant writing; writing for publications</li> <li>• Careers in Geography Networking – why we employ geographers</li> </ul> <p>New Journal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-line format physical/human/environment</li> </ul> <p>Social media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facebook/twitter/blog</li> </ul> <p>Social Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal dinner – ‘food safari’</li> </ul> <p>Archive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of archive material – creating a research opportunity – assessment/report/digital archive/exhibition</li> </ul> <p>Quarterly Email as a replacement or the Newsletter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly email of Geog Soc Activities</li> </ul>

Implementing the ideas outlined in these Tables has informed the practices and discussions of Council members in 2012/13. Of particular note are the implementation of the suggestions to improve present activities in regards to the Honours Conference and Awards Nights. Equally, significant, is the engagement and encouragement of postgraduate students through the organisation of a Three Minute Thesis Talk event in June 2013.

Gordon Waitt, President

#### 4.4 Education Sub-Committee

During 2013 ACARA published the F-10 Geography curriculum. The NSW Geographical Society's submission to the consultation process was taken into account in the development of this document. Throughout 2013, representatives of Education Subcommittee were involved in developing and validating the achievement standards for the 7-10 curriculum. The aim of this process is to ensure the standards provide a clear progression of achievement across each year of learning in the revised document. The committee is also continuing the process of mapping specific resources to key topics within the curriculum. This task will be completed once the final senior curriculum is released.

Rod Lane, Chair, Education Committee

#### 4.5 Marketing and Promotions Sub-Committee

The Marketing and Promotions Sub- consolidated on previous work around the website, and promoting geography through video productions and media work. John Bliss is a stalwart contributor to the GSNSW through his management of the website, with features such as 'Geography in the News', 'Member in Profile' and 'Where in the World?' being excellent examples of how the GSNSW manages to encourage-engage-excite. The four short video productions 'Why Study Geography?' were promoted to other geographical organisations and particularly to geography teachers to encourage younger potential geographers to see a future career based on a geographical education. Fiona McKenzie's work with David Clifton on obtaining a new GSNSW banner was fantastic, and ensures that the Society has a visible presence and suitable photo opportunity at events such as the prize night, the three minute thesis event for postgraduate students, the geography honours conference and for other events where the GSNSW is represented. These photographs assist to promote and extend our communications, with the website providing a suitable record and overview of the GSNSW for members, prospective members, and people who are interested in geography.

Phil McManus, Honorary Treasurer & Chair, Marketing and Promotions Committee

86<sup>th</sup> Annual Report Compiled by: Gordon Waitt (President) and Garth Lean (Office Manager),  
Geographical Society of New South Wales