

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



This is our first newsletter for 2016 and in reality, due to a few hiccups along the way, the first for some months. Problems now sorted and we may look forward to the future with both clarity and anticipation.

Following on from the 2015 Conference, I am able to advise the makeup of the new Executive

team. I have accepted another two year term along with VP Jan Teasdale, Treasurer Caisley Graham and Sim Hayward. We welcome new "kid" on the block Mike Jakins who I know is going to provide us with some new ideas and an undoubted passion for his role. Thanks are due for those retiring members, Matt, Jie and Shannan who, for many and varied reasons, have moved on. I trust they shall all enjoy their future challenges and I wish them well.

The past year has been, once again, full of interesting events and wonderful programs and as usual some of these have been featured in our Awards. Special mention here to VP Jan for the power of work that she undertakes every year and also to the great work done by our judges, The 2015 Conference was, without doubt, a truly superb event. Full praise to Blacktown City, Mayor Steven Bali and his Councillors with a great team led by Peter Filmer and Gordon Allan for presenting such an enjoyable event and showcasing their wonderful facilities.

Speaking of conferences, due to an unfortunate change of circumstances, unless there is a city out there ready to accept hosting rights, there will not be a National Conference in 2015. So if there is a host city waiting in the wings for just this

opportunity I would love to speak with you. There may even be a few incentives offered for this one and only occasion. Strangely there are several cities who have expressed interest in hosting in 2017.

During the year we have completed many hours in streamlining all our paperwork, including the constitution and the rules for hosting so to make everything easier and more relevant. Thank you to all Executive members for your input.

International visitors this year have included delegations from Japan, China, South Korea, New Zealand, Vietnam and the United States and I am more than pleased to be able to report that our relations with all these has remained at an extremely high level.

Peace and harmony around the world is definitely under threat and now, more than ever, organisations such as ours have an extremely important role to play and I implore you to not only continue with your current relationships but, where possible, to explore future opportunities. SCA is your organisation and it is up to you to ensure we remain steadfast and relevant.

Should you have any constructive ideas please contact any of your Executive and I can assure you we shall take them on board.

In closing I would like to request any suitably qualified member out there who may wish to contribute in a more meaningful manner, we are looking for a competent, dedicated individual to take on the position as Secretary. Not an arduous task but a very rewarding one. Contact me directly should you require further information.

I look forward to a productive 2016 and trust you and your communities have a great year in Sister Cities.

Bill

SCA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2015 Conference Overview

The 2015 Sister Cities Australia conference was held at the Rooty Hill RSL Club, hosted by the wonderful folk from Blacktown City Council and ably supported by the RSL staff. As Bill mentioned in his message, the team lead by Peter Filmer and Gordon Allan did Mayor Stephen Bali and his council proud in organising a wonderful agenda filled with highly absorbing and relevant topics from some

wonderfully inspiring and passionate people. I believe that all who took the time to attend the conference found it very useful and thought provoking along with entertaining at the various social activities. It was also an honour to be able to participate in the RSL's Remembrance Day service which included a passionate address from Peter FitzSimons AM.

SCA 2015 National Awards

THE WINNING ENTRIES

Community Involvement - Category 1 Cairns, Queensland

Sister Cities Youth Ambassadors Program -

The aim was to promote international understanding and friendship, and to introduce Cairns as a student friendly city. The program invited two students aged 15 to 17 years chosen by their respective local governments in: Zhanjiang, China; Oyama City, Japan; Minami Town, Japan; Riga, Latvia; Sidney, Canada; and Scottsdale, USA. Students were hosted by a family and attended a secondary school with a local student of the same age to act as their "buddy".

Youth Project - Category 2 Logan, Queensland

Shibukawa Japan & Logan Sister City's children's art exchange exhibition

Shibukawa and Logan Sister Cities children's art exchange exhibition is a biennial art exhibition developed in collaboration with Logan City's sister city, Shibukawa in Japan. Every two years primary school students from both cities create artworks on a shared theme. 60 Artworks were selected and sent to Japan to be exhibited alongside the Shibukawa artworks at the Shibukawa Art Museum. All artworks are then displayed in at the Logan Art Gallery.

Tourism & Trade - Category 5 Bankstown. NSW

In 2014, Bankstown City Council celebrated 25 years of its Sister City relationship with Suita City, Japan. Council prepared a year-long celebration including displays, events and activities which showcased the benefits of the Sister City relationship and the beauty and majesty of the Japanese culture to Western Sydney. The Experience Japan Silver Anniversary Celebration was a huge success, with thousands of residents and visitors taking part the various activities and programs.

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Overall Program - Category 7 Bundaberg. QLD

Nanning holds an impressive 19 Sister City relationships worldwide, but it is its 17 year bond with Bundaberg that was recently recognized as a prestigious award. In November 2014, Nanning and Bundaberg received a Chinese national award to recognize their bond as one of the Best Sister City Relationships in the People's Republic of China. Tangible results include improved joint educational opportunities, enhanced relationships in agricultural and expanded cultural experiences through commitments to Bundaberg's Chinese New Year celebrations and the "China Ready" tourism initiatives.

Congratulations to the winning cities.

Sister city activities are a fascinating adventure into the cultural awareness we experience with our sister city relationships. Summaries of each entry can be viewed in the 2015 SCA Commemorative Record. Trophies are awarded to the Australian city and its Sister Cities.

Log onto the SCA Website for details of each award:
www.sistercitiesaustralia.com

Jan Teasdale

Chairman, National Awards

Email: jan.teasdale@sistercitiesaustralia.com

SCA SPECIAL ARTICLE

Australian-China Sister City Research by Chelsea Jacka

Dear Member Councils of Sister Cities Australia.

As some of you may be aware, I am a student researcher in Beijing specialising in local-to-local ties that facilitate international interaction between

Australia and China. As my research specifically examines Australia-China sister city relationships, I have been contacting relevant Shire and City Councils requesting information, perspectives and opinions in the form of a survey.



NEWSLETTER

www.sistercitiesaustralia.com

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I really appreciate the assistance and support that has been granted to me by Sister Cities Australia and the many Council members who kindly took time out of their busy schedules to take part in my research and complete the survey. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you. Your efforts are valuable contributions not only to my research and future research in this field, but also in highlighting the importance and utility of forming and maintaining official platforms for local-to-local relations with China in the form of sister city affiliations.

The recent intensification of the international relationship between Australia and China makes the efforts of the local councils in establishing local-to-local connections evermore vital for the diversification of contact points, facilitating more local access to benefits for both countries. I believe

this can only be a positive contribution, not only to the bilateral international relations, but also for adapting the prevalent broad international focus to concentrate on the local-global interaction. The integrity of those Australian local councils engaging with China increases opportunities for local constituencies and promotes understanding through exposure and cultural engagement. I have learnt a great deal from your combined efforts so far, and I endeavour to continue delving into this important and developing area.

If you have an interest in learning more about my research or receiving a summary of my findings feel free to contact me directly by email at 1502073109@qq.com.

[Chelsea Jacka, Master Candidate in the Contemporary China Studies Program, Renmin University of China]

STAY IN TOUCH WITH SCA

Your SCA Committee

President - Bill Wilson

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Executive Member - Mike Jakins

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Full contact details for any of the above are available on the SCA website on the Administration page, accessed through the About Us link.

SCA has a website – www.sistercitiesaustralia.com

Visit the association's website for: information about us; what activities we are involved with; any events that are of interest; all the details on the annual awards; access to our publications and images; and how to contact us.

If you notice any changes that need to be made to the website, or if you have any suggestions for improving the site please let us know. Send an email to the [Website Editor](#) (click on this link) with your comments and/or your suggestions.

SCA on Social Media

In essence the goal of every Sister City program is to understand and appreciate other cultures and ways of life. Join us on **Facebook** ([link here](#)) and embark on this journey together. SCA invites you to

contribute stories, photos, successes and even failures to our Facebook page so that we can all learn from one another and take our relationships to a higher level.

SCA Newsletter Options and Contributions

[Sign Up for the Newsletter](#)

[Submit a story \(plus up to 4 images\)](#)

[Opt out of receiving the Newsletter](#)

LATE SCA CONFERENCE NEWS

Blacktown Council are conducting a brief survey that they are requesting conference attendees to complete. The purpose is to provide them with feedback, pass this on to the SCA and the 2016 conference hosts.