

A FEW WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hello again to all members and friends of Sister Cities Australia. Many of you would be aware that I live in the small Tasmanian city of Devonport, Tasmania. As I write these words our entire population of approximately 26,000 is in shock and mourning following the loss of 5 young lives in an incident involving a jumping castle at an end of year celebration. I raise this as a reminder to us all that life itself is an unknown and we should always hold dearly our love and friendship for family and friends. This may also be held true for the relationships we hold between communities. How precious they are in providing so much to all those involved, whether it be in a minor or major role, they are all so important.

SCA has undergone severe restrictions since the advent of Corona and it appears this is going to continue for quite some time. Looking at infection figures from around the world it is quite apparent that we will need to adapt to live

with this virus and not be fooled in to thinking we will defeat it. This will continue to have severe impacts on our relationships and it is going to require adaptation to meet the current restrictions and to this end we are looking to host a Zoom Forum in the New Year in which we will have presentations from a number of communities who are meeting the challenge. This will be well worth your time to be involved and I suggest you keep an eye out for further updates.

For the past two years we have not collected Membership Fees however this cannot continue and so fees are due and payable for the current year. We look forward to receiving your payment.

I would take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued commitment to SCA and a special thanks to my Executive for continuing on with the important task of keeping us on the rails.

May I wish you all a safe and Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Yours in Sister Cities, Bill

What's new in this issue?

- ✓ [What SCA has Planned for 2022*](#) p.1
- ✓ [* Perth Japan Festival](#) p.1
- ✓ [* A Positive Outlook](#) p.2
- ✓ [* Update on the NEW SCA Website](#) p.2
- ✓ [* SCA National Awards](#) p.2
- ✓ [* Membership Subscriptions](#) p.3
- ✓ [* RMIT Research Project](#) p.3
- ✓ [Special Article from Gladstone](#) p.4

WHAT SCA PLANS TO ACHIEVE IN 2022*

* Perth Japan Festival

Each year in the City of Perth there is a Japan Festival that celebrates all things Japanese. Along with traditional food vendors, there are a number of stalls that sell items such as kimono, yukata, Japanese groceries, toys, books and many other items. During the Festival there are also many performances of Japanese culture such as Taiko drumming, dance, kendo, aikido, singing and J-Pop.

SCA, in 2022, is seeking to have a stall that will celebrate the 12 sister city relationships that exist between local councils and their Japanese partners. The stall is also going to celebrate the sister state relationship that exists between WA and the Hyogo Prefecture, which celebrated its 40 year anniversary in June, 2021.

Participation from a number of the 12 WA councils will allow SCA to provide leaflets, flyers and information brochures highlighting the sister cities and to share this with the people of Perth and WA.

The Perth Japan Festival is scheduled to be held on March 26, 2022 and if previous festivals are any guide many thousands of people will be attending this free event. SCA is excited to be a part of this wonderful experience and sharing the benefits that sister city relationships can bring to the community.

* A Positive Outlook

The past two years have been hard for everyone, and for a people-to-people organisation it has been hard to maintain our contact with our members and friends as often as we would have liked. This has been especially true with almost no face-to-face contact in this time.

Looking forward into 2022 our crystal ball is predicting a much more positive outlook. With the imminent opening of local, national and international borders it is not beyond the realms of possibility that SCA could hold a

face-to-face Forum or Conference somewhere in Australia next year. A number of cities have expressed a desire, should conditions prove favourable, to host an event in 2022 which would see us gathering once again with our friends from across the country and overseas.

The SCA Executive will keep you apprised of developments as appropriate and we look forward to being able to share our journeys, stories and highlights in the very near future.

* SCA On-Line Forum

We are in the early stages of planning an on-line Forum where we hope to have several councils share their sister city journey over the past two years. Innovation has been the key to taking relationships forward during these times of difficult communication, and some councils around Australia have done this remarkably well. This will be an opportunity to hear their stories, ask a few questions, and

maybe gather some neat ideas to include in your future programs.

Once the program and presenters have been finalised and a date agreed, we will be sending out details of the session and on how to register for the one hour Zoom event. Your Executive look forward to having you join us.

* Update on the New SCA Website

Back in September, in the previous newsletter, we officially launched the new SCA website. There is so much more information on the new site, and it should be much easier to navigate to it. This is **YOUR** website which means that we would like your feedback on:

- What do you like about the website?
- What don't you like about the website?
- What other features would you like to see?

- MEMBERS – have you visited the Members area? If yes, any comments?
- MEMBERS – is there anything else the Members Area could provide?

Please send any feedback you have to our Secretary, who also doubles as the webmaster, and we will look at your comments and see what changes and/or improvements we can make. The email address for feedback is mike.jakins@sistercitiesaustralia.org.au.

* SCA National Awards

SCA has not held its National Awards for the past two years, but we are going to be resuming competition in 2022. The one major change will be the eligibility period for the Awards. Traditionally this has been for a 12 month period but next year we will be making it for the 18 month

period from 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2022 – there will also (for this year only) be a special Category 6 – Special Program Award to cover from 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2020. This will allow member councils to showcase any activity during those time periods and to

highlight the great work done by councils and the community in furthering the aims of sister cities.

As the Awards are open to SCA Members only, we will be sending out detailed information to all member councils

in the first quarter of 2022. If you are not an SCA member and you would like to enter the Awards it is not too late to join – simply go to our website and click on the Join Us link to access the Membership Form. Also, click here to access full details of the Awards – [ACCESS AWARDS INFO](#).

* Membership Subscriptions

SCA has not charged any membership fees since 2019 and all members that were current on June 30, 2020 have automatically been rolled over. Unfortunately our finances can't handle having no income forever and it was decided at the last AGM that membership fees would be reinstated from the end of this financial year.

The membership fees will remain the same as they were in 2019 and the Treasurer will be contacting all members in early June, 2022 with an invoice detailing fees and payment options. Given that Australia is predicted to begin opening soon then we are more than hopeful that you will be able to receive great on-going value for your membership of your association.

* RMIT Research Project

The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) has, over the last few years, been conducting research that investigates the links between sister city relationships and other benefits to local government and communities. SCA has fully supported these research projects and RMIT are currently preparing a new project, the details of which are below.

Dear Councils,

Sponsored by the Australia-Japan Foundation, we are conducting research on Australia-Japan local government level collaborations with special focus on practices building sustainable and resilient communities.

We would like to hear and promote your experiences and practice to a broader community in both countries.

Please feel free to contact us if you:

- 1. Have successful collaborations between Australian and Japanese councils*
- 2. Have examples in new directions in collaboration, including but not limited to practices in disaster response and public health management (e.g. COVID-19), supporting vulnerable communities, and building smart cities.*
- 3. Have innovative practices that could potentially contribute to international collaboration in the future, not limited to Japan.*

Project info:

Project titled "Australia-Japan local government collaboration: building sustainable and resilient communities" has received the Australia-Japan Foundation grant. The project information can be found by clicking here:

Project description: Australia-Japan local governments have established a foundation of collaboration, especially in cultural and education exchanges to promote peace over the last 50 years (e.g., through sister cities). Our project aims to rejuvenate the collaboration between Australia-Japan local governments by improving the visibility of Australia-Japan city-level international collaborations, identifying new directions and forms of collaborative efforts to build sustainable and resilient communities, such as practices in disaster response and public health management (e.g. COVID-19), supporting vulnerable communities, and building smart cities.

Our project team members:

Dr. Shea Fan (RMIT, Australia)

Associate Professor Hiroaki Mori (Japan)

Dr. Charlie Huang (RMIT, Australia)

Dr. Matthew Walker (RMIT, Australia)

Dr. Tse Leng Tham (RMIT, Australia)

Professor Timothy Bartram (RMIT, Australia)

Our past project outputs are ready for your review:

- Media article: [After 40 years of Australian-Chinese sister cities, how are they faring?](#)*

· [Australia-China Sister Cities: Seizing Opportunities Together](#) (click to download the full report written for Australia-China Council)

Kind regards,

Shea Fan <shea.fan@rmit.edu.au>

If you are able to contribute to the research please contact Dr Shea Fan directly and she will be very pleased

to hear from you and include you in the program. A copy of the final report will be made available on the SCA website once it is made available. Thank you.

Mike Jakins
National Secretary

SPECIAL ARTICLE FROM GLADSTONE

Saiki Shorebird Artwork



Artwork Margaret Worthington, Fabrication Clive Rouse

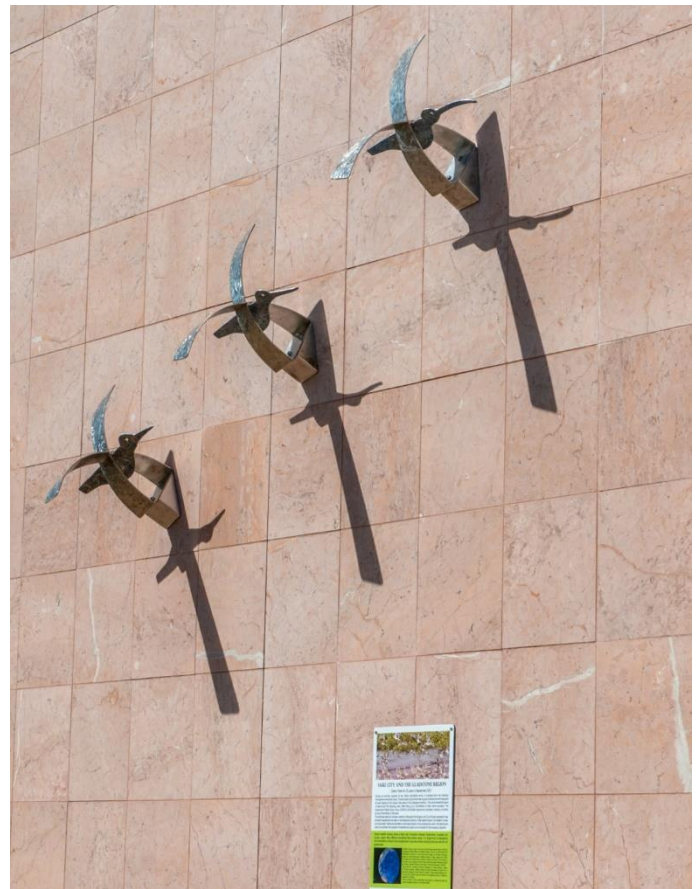
On 4 September 2021, the Gladstone Region and Saiki City celebrated the 25th anniversary of the signing of the declaration of friendship between the two cities. To commemorate this milestone, three stainless steel shorebird artworks have been installed at the entrance of the Gladstone Regional Council Civic Centre.

The three stainless-steel bird shapes created by Margaret Worthington and Clive Rouse, represent three shorebird species that are seen in the Gladstone Harbour. A Bar-tailed Godwit, Far Eastern Curlew and Grey-tailed Tattler are identified by their beak shape in this contemporary work. Shorebirds are used to symbolise how people of Australia and Japan are connected by this amazing migration.

During our summer upwards of two million shorebirds arrive in Australia from the Northern Hemisphere where they breed. The birds start to arrive from late August onwards and can frequently be seen feeding in the coastal, tidal areas of the Gladstone Harbour. The adult shorebirds leave in March-April the following year, often flying up to 30,000kms on their return journeys.

Recent satellite tracking shows a flight path connection between Queensland, Australia and Kyushu, Japan. The tracking shows the birds flying 7,000km nonstop in 6 days to make landfall in Japan, before spending time in South Korea and then the breeding grounds of Alaska, an incredible 13,000km journey!

(Fudan University in China collaborated with Queensland Wader Study Group to provide this data)



Artwork Margaret Worthington, Fabrication Clive Rouse

Artwork Margaret Worthington, Fabrication Clive Rouse



The Shorebird Artwork Project celebrates the sister city relationship, promotes dialogue and enhances awareness

of the meaningful relationship to the residents of Gladstone. It enriches the cultural life of the community and showcases this amazing migration story of our region to help protect the shorebirds for years to come.

The artwork demonstrates that if these little birds can make the journey from the Gladstone Region to Japan, then we also will be able to once again meet in person.

Please visit www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/sister-city-program for further information on the artists and shorebirds.

Community Development Team,
Gladstone Regional Council
communitydevelopment@gladstone.qld.gov.au

SCA Affiliation Directory and Links Update

Does your Sister City Association or Committee have a webpage?

Do you have a Facebook Page?

Do you have a presence on Social Media?

Would you like to share those links with SCA members and friends?



If you would like your website, Facebook page, LinkedIn page, Instagram account, or other social media pages added to the list please let me know by clicking on the link below. Thank you for your help and support with this SCA initiative, which I hope will be a useful resource for all.

Click [HERE](#) to send your link details to SCA.

SCA AFFILIATION DIRECTORY

Have you checked out the Affiliation Directory recently? It has been meticulously updated to reflect all of the Council amalgamations that have occurred in all of the Australian States.

Is there information missing? Is there incorrect data? This Directory is the definitive document on Australian Sister City and Friendship City links and your help is needed to ensure that it remains as up-to-date and accurate as possible.



2021 DIRECTORY OF AUSTRALIAN SISTER CITY AND FRIENDSHIP CITY AFFILIATIONS

Click [HERE](#) if you would like to download the latest version of the Affiliation Directory from the Documents page of our NEW website. Please send me an email if you find any errors or omissions – thank you in anticipation.

SCA on Facebook

Please FOLLOW, LIKE, or SHARE us, we'd love to see your contributions



SCA has had a web presence on Facebook for a while now. We have updated it to allow us all to share our stories and articles on all things sister city related.

Click [HERE](#) to go to our Facebook page

The Facebook Group will still remain as this is where we are able to share files, such as our quarterly newsletter.

Click [HERE](#) to go to our Facebook Group

STAY IN TOUCH WITH SCA

Your SCA Committee

President – Bill Wilson

Mobile: 0491 118 779

Email: [Click here to email Bill](#)

Vice President - Christina Despoteris

Mobile: 0426 682 682

Email: [Click here to email Christina](#)

National Treasurer – Gordon Allen

Mobile: 0412 278 646

Email: [Click here to email Gordon](#)

National Secretary - Mike Jakins

Mobile: 0417 176 568

Email: [Click here to email Mike](#)

Executive Member – Cllr. Jennie Barrera

Mobile: 0437 892 933

Email: [Click here to email Jennie](#)

Executive Member – Greg McCallum

Mobile: 0422 404 129

Email: [Click here to email Greg](#)

Full contact details for any of the Committee are available on the SCA website on the About Us/Administration page.

SCA has a NEW website – <http://www.sistercitiesaustralia.org.au>



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 Newsletter Options and Contributions

[Sign Up for the Newsletter](#)

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

[Opt out of receiving the Newsletter](#)

Have your contact details changed? Click here to [email the editor](#) if they are incorrect.

Please forward this newsletter on to interested colleagues and friends, thank you.