

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT



As we slowly get back to some sort of “norm”, post Covid, let us reflect on why we are all involved with sister cities.

The Sister Cities movement worldwide encapsulates all that is good in mankind working together for a common goal. Sister city organizations promote peace through people-to-people relationships – with program offerings varying greatly from basic cultural exchange programs to shared research and development projects between cities with relationships.

Although “Covid” was good for some relationships that utilized Zoom and other such technology, as international borders opened, we have seen some travel between sister cities, such as Blacktown in NSW and Porirua in New Zealand (NZ). For details about the delegation visiting NZ and the subsequent celebrations, read the article which follows.

We at Sister Cities Australia (SCA) are hoping to get back to face-to-face communication with our members. We are currently in negotiations with a Victorian Council to host our next National Conference/Forum later this year. More information will be sent out to all members very soon.

Our National Awards are back for 2023. I encourage all members to peruse the Awards Guidelines and to enter events and programs which you have been working on in the last couple of years. This year we have also included a special category for events held during Covid.

The Awards will be presented at the National Conference/Forum.

SCA has recently produced a series of podcasts which have been uploaded on our website. We will continue to produce more on a regular basis but obviously rely on you to provide us with content. The idea is to highlight and promote your activities to other groups involved with sister cities.

The same can be said about our Newsletter. Please keep the articles coming. We publish a Newsletter every three months. We have had some positive feedback about the articles produced. It is nice to read about events organized by other sister city connections, but it also may give you an idea to develop for your own relationship.

Although not everyone celebrates Easter, the religious holiday celebrating the resurrection, others mark the day/s by having family get-togethers, going out for brunch or even part-taking in activities like painting eggs.

To those celebrating, I wish you have a Happy and Safe Easter, and others Happy Holidays. Enjoy this special time with your family and friends.

Thank you,
Christina Despoteris OAM
President, Sister Cities Australia

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SCA PODCASTS – SERIES ONE

SCA has released the first series of three podcasts on our website. Listen to conversations with our members from Cairns, Frankston and Blacktown as they discuss how they keep their Sister City relationships alive and vibrant. There are many golden nuggets of information that you might think about using in your relationships to keep them sustained in spite of the issues we have had due to COVID lockdowns and travel restrictions. Each podcast is a little over 10 minutes, well worth the time to hear what each has to say. Please enjoy.

Series two is in the pipeline and will contain an International Perspective on sister city relationships. If you would like to know more then look out for notifications via email, on Facebook and LinkedIn in early May.

You will find the podcasts for Series One here - <https://www.sistercitiesaustralia.org.au/media/sca-podcasts/>.

SPECIAL ARTICLE FROM BLACKTOWN, NSW

Blacktown City Council Delegation to Porirua, February 2023

The Mayor of Blacktown City Council led a delegation to Porirua our Sister City in New Zealand in February 2023.

An invitation was received from the Mayor of Porirua Anita Baker with attendance at the Waitangi Day Festival and celebrations the focus. Blacktown City and Porirua are fast approaching 40 years since the signing of the agreement in 1984.

development were a great balance of the past and present.



The delegation consisted of the Mayor and Mayoress, Deputy Mayor, Chief Executive Officer, Members of the International Links and Sister Cities Committee, key staff and Youth Ambassadors from 2022 and this year.

The reception we received from the City of Porirua was outstanding. A number of tours of historical and cultural awareness were organised. The Ngati Toa historical tour and a tour of the Harbour restoration/ Riparian planting



A Civic Reception was held at Pataka Art and Cultural Centre hosted by Mayor Baker and attended by Councillors both current and past. Friendships were renewed and new relationships formed. The President and Secretary of Māori Wardens Australia Rawiri and Beverley Iti were an important addition to our delegation. Blacktown has Australia's largest Māori community. Rawiri's presence on the trip enhanced the delegation's experience.

Mayor Tony Bleasdale OAM Blacktown City and Mayor Baker Porirua City with



On Waitangi Day the delegation attended Takapuwahia Marae for a very moving traditional Māori ceremony.

The Waitangi Festival held in the city centre was a spectacular fusion of tradition and current themes. Over 5000 were in attendance during the day and were entertained by

traditional Māori and modern hip hop performers. A real treat.

This was Blacktown City Council's first delegation since 2019 with Covid causing international travel disruption. However the relationship between our cities is firmly back



Blacktown City delegation and local dignitaries at the Takapuwahia Marae

on track and looking forward to the 40 year celebrations in 2024 when we will host a delegation from Porirua to celebrate in our Festival period.

Greg McCallum,
International Links and Sister Cities Project Officer
Blacktown City Council
greg.mccallum@sistercitiesaustralia.org.au

SCA NATIONAL AWARDS FOR 2023

The National Awards Program was implemented in 1983 to enable our members to record and enter successful sister city activities both locally and with their sister cities overseas. It is great to be able to resume the Awards this year and we encourage you to send in as many entries as you can to highlight and showcase the amazing work done in the name of Sister Cities.

Due to the COVID disruption to the SCA Awards over the past three years a couple of changes have been implemented for this year to allow everyone a chance to enter as many times as possible:

- There are **TWO eligibility periods**, as noted below in the Important Dates list.
- We have also implemented a **special Category 6** designed to reflect the use of innovative ideas and techniques to maintain relationships during the initial COVID period.
- All Entry Forms are now available for **download from the Members section** of the SCA website (www.sistercitiesaustralia.org.au).

Please contact the National Secretary, Mike Jakins (mike.jakins@sistercitiesaustralia.org.au) should you have problems with either accessing the Members section of the website, or downloading any of the Entry Forms.

NOTE: the Entry Forms are editable Word documents, and some firewalls or anti-virus software may try to block downloading them - they are safe!

Comprehensive notes outlining the Process, Important Dates, Information and Category Criteria are detailed in the 2023 SCA Awards Handbook attached to this e-mail. Entering an award will be accomplished by downloading and completing an electronic MS Word Entry Form for each of the 6 award categories you wish to enter. The Entry Forms have full instructions included at the start of each document, including how to get them to the Chief Judge, along with any additional supporting files, once completed.

Important dates are:

- **Eligibility Period for CATEGORIES 1 to 5:** 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023
- **Eligibility Period for CATEGORY 6:** 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022
- **Date submissions must reach judges:** Friday 14 July 2023
- **2022 SCA National Forum/Conference:** Venue and date to be confirmed.

We wish you every success with your entries.

SPECIAL ARTICLE FROM CAIRNS, QLD

Celebrating The Japan Emperor's Birthday in Cairns



In honour of the birthday of His Majesty, The Emperor of Japan, this year's celebration in Cairns, was highlighted with pop-up booths of fresh sushi and sashimi served by Chef Hiro as well as a Japanese sake tasting station serving a variety of beverages including rice wine (Sake/Nihonshu) from Hiroshima and a fruit liqueur (Umeshu) containing gold leaf.



There was also a traditional Japanese sweets stall, hosted by Mr Koji Kajiyama, Director of the Tokyo Seika Gakko – School of Confectionary, who travelled to Cairns from Japan. Mr Kajiyama assisted by his team of assistants, created a selection of Japanese sweets – known as wagashi, for guests enjoyment. Of particular significance for the evening was the chrysanthemum shaped wagashi,

due to the use of its shape as an Imperial Seal, by the Emperor of Japan.



The special occasion was hosted by Consul-General ONO Masuo and his wife Mrs. Kimu Ono, on the 24th of February 2023.

Cairns Mayor, Bob Manning and his wife Claire, Mrs Sim Hayward, Ambassador for Cairns Sister Cities attended the evening with representatives from the Cairns community.



Sim Hayward
Ambassador, Cairns Sister Cities

DO YOU HAVE A SISTER CITY DAY?

A Novel Way to Celebrate a Sister City Relationship

Did you know that some cities around the world have declared a Sister City Day in order to celebrate their ongoing relationships? Why not explore the possibility of

your Council embracing the option of nominating to have a <Name of Sister City> Day declared to be held on the anniversary of the signing of the sister city agreement!

This could provide a number of benefits:

- 1) Re-focus councils and communities as to the benefits of the relationship post-COVID.
- 2) Lead to resurrecting interest in 'dormant' relationships.
- 3) Highlight the relationship in a very positive way.
- 4) Provide a day each year that the community can all gather to celebrate the relationship, get to

know the sister city's culture much better and explore future options to grow the relationship.

- 5) It costs nothing, except a little time, to make the declaration, and it will enhance the relationship with this symbol of recognition.

Should you decide to progress this idea and the Day is declared, SCA would be thrilled to hear from you and to keep a record of this milestone

SPECIAL ARTICLE FROM THE CITY OF BUNBURY, WA

Sister and Friendship Cities Engagement

Although the in-person delegate exchanges between Bunbury and our sister and friendship cities were cancelled or postponed this year, the City of Bunbury actively collaborated with local stakeholders to celebrate our inter-city relationship:

Friendship City Marketing

嘉兴国际友城风采之三 | 澳大利亚班布里市：西澳州的一颗沿海明珠 (qq.com)



Online Museum Exchange



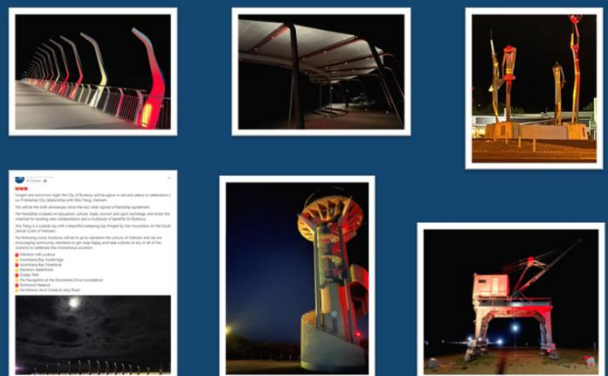
Friendship city marketing and online museum exchange between Bunbury and Jiaxing

- After Bunbury's negotiated and delivered Aboriginal artwork to the Jiaxing online gallery, on Chinese National Day (the 1st of October), the Jiaxing Foreign Affairs Office team made a marketing post on WeChat - the dominant social media of China - to commemorate and promote our friendship city relationship.
- The Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre delivered an exclusive guided tour to the Setagaya exchange students from ECU Bunbury Campus students to introduce the history of Bunbury through the Museum on 8 Oct. Students were also encouraged afterwards to try on the costumes showcased for the onsite "Century of Dance" event.
- The Volunteer South West team partnered with Thommo's Community Garden to offer the

Setagaya students at the ECU South West Campus a volunteer opportunity at the Community Garden on 17 Oct.

- During the nights of 26-27 Oct, eight Bunbury landmarks were aglow in red and yellow to celebrate our friendship city relationship with Nha Trang, Vietnam.
- The Bunbury Museum showcased marketing videos selected by the Setagaya Cultural and International Affairs Division team in the Theatre Room on 8-20 Nov.

Lighting Project



Lighting Project in Bunbury to celebrate the friendship city relationship with Nha Trang

- During the nights of 23-24 Nov, eight Bunbury landmarks were aglow in purple and white to celebrate our friendship city relationship. The Photography Group of Bunbury proactively made it a team event and provided a collection of professional photos to capture the beautiful lighting project for post-event marketing.
- On 26 Nov, the South Regional TAFE and the City of Bunbury international engagement team

collaborated on filming an “Online Cooking Workshop From Bunbury” as a trial project. The recorded video will be edited and uploaded to YouTube for a broader audience to enjoy and learn



from.

- To narrow the gap caused by international travel hassles, the Adam Road Primary School has been

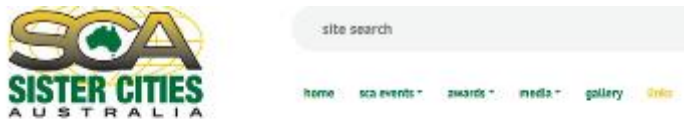
hosting an online student exchange with their counterpart school in Setagaya (Kimikitazawa Elementary School) over the past couple of months. As all the schools that have Japanese courses in Bunbury are invited to participate, the Carey Park Primary School also accepted the offer and matched to a paired school in Setagaya (Kyosai Elementary School) to launch an online student exchange.

- On 16-18 Dec, the Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre will partner with the Jiaxing Museum to deliver an “Online Museum Dialogue”. While the selected marketing videos from each city will be showcased in the main theatre of the counterpart museum, the virtual guided museum tours will also be live-streamed to each other.

Qing Ye (Ip)

Economic Development Officer
City of Bunbury

SCA Affiliation Directory and Links Update



Council amalgamations that have occurred in all of the Australian States.



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

2021 DIRECTORY OF AUSTRALIAN SISTER CITY AND FRIENDSHIP CITY AFFILIATIONS

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.

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

The OFFICIAL SCA Facebook Page

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 OFFICIAL SCA Facebook Group

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 – Christina Despoteris OAM;

Mobile: 0426 682 682;

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

National Treasurer – Gordon Allen;

Mobile: 0412 278 64;

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

National Secretary - Mike Jakins;

Mobile: 0417 176 568;

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

Full contact details for any of the Committee are available on the SCA website on the [About Us/Administration](#) page.

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](#)

Executive Member – Peter Filmer OAM;

Mobile: 0416 150 055;

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

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



site search



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