

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am pleased to see that sister city activities are getting back to some sort of normality post Covid. Although I can acknowledge that, a lot of relationships excelled creatively, introducing different forms of communication, and developing interesting ways of connecting during this difficult time.

I would like to thank our members that have continued their support for our organization as well as

non-members who chose to attend some of our activities during this time. By the time we meet again face-to-face later this year, it will have been four years since the last time we met in Perth in September 2019. In the meantime, we have had some very successful Zoom Forums.

Which leads me to some exciting news.

I am delighted to invite you all to participate in our **2023 National Conference "Sister Cities – Linking the World Together"** which will be presented in Partnership with Wyndham City Council (see page 8).

At this stage I would like to thank Cr Susan McIntyre Mayor of Wyndham City and Stephen Wall CEO who embraced the idea of the conference and have been very supportive of the event. It will be remiss of me not to also thank Cr Jennie Barrera Deputy Mayor of Wyndham City, and an Executive Member of our organization who, when asked, very enthusiastically initiated contact with the Wyndham Executive Team and was very supportive of our request to hold the conference in Werribee.

The National Conference will be held from Wednesday 11 October to Friday 13 October at the Wyndham Civic Centre 45 Princes Highway Werribee, in Victoria.

The National Conference will begin on Wednesday 11 October at 6.00 pm with a Mayoral Reception hosted by Cr Susan McIntyre to be held at the Holiday Inn Werribee.

The following day Thursday 12 October you will have the opportunity to hear from some very interesting speakers. The day will begin at 8.30 am with Registrations and will run through till 4.45 pm. Speakers will include the Hon John Brumby AO Chancellor of La Trobe University and

Former Premier of Victoria; Mayor Grant Smith Palmerston North City Council and President of Global Cities New Zealand; George Shaw Chairman of the Melbourne Osaka Yacht Race; Vivienne Nguyen AM Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission; there will be presentations from the Cities of Wyndham, Mildura, and Blacktown.

Members as well as non-members are encouraged to participate in what is to be a very informative, engaging and entertaining conference. It will also give delegates the opportunity to network with colleagues from Victoria, across Australia and overseas.

We have put together an exciting program covering topics such as the benefits of sister cities; the impact of sister cities on international relations; globally connecting cities for a more peaceful, sustainable and prosperous future; sister cities linked by the ocean; cultural aspects of sister city relationships; and the sister school model.

On Thursday night we will have our conference dinner and announce the winners of our National Awards. You still have time to nominate your council or organization under one of the six categories. Visit our website for more information and copies of the application form.

We suggest you come to Werribee for the conference and go on the bus tour to experience the wonders of Werribee and surrounds as well as walk through the State Rose Garden, visit the Werribee Mansion, eat at one of Werribee's finest venues, visit the Werribee Open Range Zoo and go on the safari (I did this recently and thoroughly recommend it).

The Holiday Inn Werribee, Quest Werribee and the Lancemore Mansion Hotel Werribee Park have come on board offering delegates special conference rates. Follow the links on our website to get the special deals.

We have also provided you with some travel and transfer options. [CLICK HERE](#) to visit our website for full details.

People across Australia are looking for opportunities to travel again. What better way to start your travels than by attending our National Conference in October. I can guarantee a very exciting experience, meeting with old friends and making new ones and of course listening and partaking in some serious discussion about sister city relationships and their benefits as well as their future.

Put the dates in your calendar: Wednesday 11 October – Friday 13 October 2023.

I was very saddened to hear of the recent passing of Jan Teasdale, a former Executive Member of Sister Cities Australia (SCA), and long time friend, supporter and representative of the sister city movement over many years. I was fortunate enough to have met and worked with Jan over the years and found her to be a very warm, sensitive and compassionate individual who would do anything for you. There are special people in our lives who never leave us, even after they are gone. Jan was one of those people for me. She will always be remembered for the special moments we shared.

I would like to express my deepest sympathies to Ted and all of Jan's family. You are in my thoughts and prayers. We at SCA will miss Jan, she touched so many of our lives. Forever in our hearts.

Thank you,
Christina Despoteris OAM
President, Sister Cities Australia

What's new in this issue?

- ✓ [Vale Jan Teasdale](#) p.2
- ✓ [Introducing Peter Filmer](#) p.3
- ✓ [Special Article from Blacktown, NSW](#) p.4
- ✓ [SCA National Awards Update for 2023](#) p.5
- ✓ [Do you have a Sister City Day?](#) p.6
- ✓ [Special Article from Port Stephens, NSW](#) p.6
- ✓ [SCA 2023 National Conference Invitation](#) p.8
- ✓ [China International Import Expo, 2023](#) p.9
- ✓ [Australia-Japan Local Govt Collaboration](#) p.9

VALE JAN TEASDALE



It is with much sadness we report that SCA has lost one of their own, the much loved and admired Jan Teasdale. She passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family, on June 2nd and it was with great honour that Gordon Allen and myself were able to attend her funeral and pay our respects to her family. I am sure that all of you who came into contact with Jan over her many years of involvement with sister cities will be as devastated as we are that we have her knowledge and wisdom no longer to draw on.

Although she was born in Victoria, she considered herself a very proud Western Australian and she threw herself, along with her husband Ted, into many areas of community involvement. Our records don't indicate when she became a member of the old ASCA (new SCA)

but it would have been well over 30 years ago, and she truly deserved her Life Membership of SCA. Her last official role with SCA was to present the winners of the 2019 National Awards with their trophies at the Forum held in Perth that year. As well as with ASCA/SCA, Jan also held a number of key roles in other organisations and they are listed here:

- Vice-President of the Belmont Sister Cities Association from 1985 onwards.
- Vice-President of ASCA/SCA from August 2001 until November 2019.
- Past President of Probus Victoria Park from July 2012 onwards.
- President of Rotary South Perth from July 2014 onwards.
- Long time member and Committee member of the Australia-Japan Society of WA.





Along with all of the above she found time to raise a wonderful family, spend time on her beloved hobby of sewing and quilting, and enjoying time with husband Ted, and their four legged fur baby Jethro.

On a personal note, I first met Jan in 2003 at the ASCA National Conference in Orange, NSW and from there she

became a mentor as I took on roles associated with the National Awards and then the Executive Committee. In the ensuing years we became good friends and I also got to know the lady outside of the sister city bubble. It was impossible not to like her and be swept up in her enthusiasm for whatever she was doing, or her enthusiastic support for whatever you were doing. My life has certainly been enriched by Jan's support, knowledge, gentle nature and her wicked sense of humour – I am going to miss her greatly.

Sincere condolences to the Teasdale family from your colleagues and friends in sister cities.

Mike Jakins
National Secretary, SCA

INTRODUCING PETER FILMER OAM

SCA's newest Executive Committee Member



Peter is a recently retired Manager in Local Government. He retired in July this year after 45 years of consecutive service both at Blacktown and Penrith Councils. Commencing in finance Peter changed his career direction in the nineties and was appointed to the

Community Relations Officer position which first introduced him to Sister Cities. From there he made Sister Cities one of his passions ultimately achieving Life Membership of Sister Cities Australia. Peter had stewardship of Council's Sister Cities program for over 25 years partnering with cities in New Zealand, South Korea, China, The Philippines, and Liverpool Plains in rural New South Wales. This program has delivered some wonderful commensurate benefits and outcomes.



" I am sure that like so many of us, Sister Cities was a very foreign (no pun intended) concept to me until I inherited our programme at Blacktown. I was on a very steep learning curve but it didn't take much for me to generate great enthusiasm for the movement that is Sister Cities. I was fortunate to have a highly supportive Council that not only pursued the one agreement we had in place but also sought to form new partnerships. I was so pleased to be

a part of forming partnerships in South Korea, China, The Philippines & Liverpool Plains. The latter has been quite a brilliant partnership.



In terms of community, Peter was responsible for Council's extensive events program including iconic celebrations for Australia Day, Blacktown City Festival,

Blacktown Medieval Fayre, Cities Marathon and more recently developed Council's Central Business District Activation Strategy.

Peter also has a passion for sport being a former NRL first grade referee, A grade cricketer and average B grade golfer. Peter has been President of a number of sporting organisations and is currently serving on the Boards of both the NSW Rugby League Referee's Association and Springwood Golf Club.

In 2014 Peter was awarded the Order of Australia for service to sport and the community and upon retirement from Council was awarded the Key to the City of Blacktown. Considering all of the above Peter's most important achievement is the love of his family, 3 kids and 3 grand children.

SPECIAL ARTICLE FROM BLACKTOWN, NSW

Blacktown City Council Suseong-gu Mayoral Delegation, May 2023



Blacktown City hosted a formal Mayoral Delegation from our sister city Suseong -gu from Thursday 25 May until Monday 29 May 2023.

The party of nineteen was led by Mayor Dae-Kwon Kim and included two Suseong-gu Councillors and

a number of Directors including city planning, business strategy, educational, business CEO's and performers.

During the delegation's time in Blacktown they visited Blacktown North Public School who accepted a formal invitation to form a Sister School relationship with Sahmyook elementary School from Suseong-gu. Blacktown North Public School Principal Mrs Carmen Cefai accepted the invitation from Mayor Kim for the relationship to be formed.

Blacktown City Mayor Cr. Tony Bleasdale OAM and Chief Executive Officer greeted the delegation at Council Chambers for an informal morning tea before a visit to Mitchell High School who has a long established relationship with Daegu Dong Middle School. The delegation watched a state wide Soccer fixture and were entertained by performances by Mitchell High School performers.



An emotional visit to the Korean – Australian Peace Enhancement and Pacific War Victims Memorial located in RAAF Memorial Park, Mount Druitt followed. The memorial was dedicated in May 2019.



A community event was hosted by Plumpton High School where the Suseong-gu performers gave a stunning fusion of Korean music, song and dance to a packed auditorium.

Other activities included a visit to BARC – the new animal re-homing centre in Blacktown as well as tours of the Leo Kelly Arts Centre and Max Webber Library.

A Civic Reception was hosted by Blacktown for the delegation which also included the Mayor Doug Hawkins OAM, Councillor Jason Allan and GM Gary Murphy at The Colebee Centre. The Korean Delegation were entertained by performances from a Philippine student group from Plumpton HS and a rousing Maori Haka after a full indigenous Welcome to Country and performance. It was a wonderful event and great to share it with two our Sister City family and a connection with two others through performance – NZ and the Philippines.

The Delegation participated in the Streets Alive Blacktown Festival showcasing all that is Blacktown before visiting the Glow exhibition at Western Sydney Zoo.

A tour of Sydney including the Royal Botanical Gardens, Opera House, Sydney Harbour Bridge, North Head and Manly preceded a Korean BBQ dinner.

The Delegation culminated in a Conference with local Blacktown businesses where the Korean leaders showcased their organisations and heard from a number of local bodies.

The delegation visit to Blacktown was a great success. We were able to celebrate face to face our approaching 30



year Sister City milestone but also shared all that is great in Sister Cities relationships – cultural exchange, educational perspectives, city growth, sharing of common issues and performance to name just a few. The business conference gave also a strong economic connection between our cities. We look forward to reciprocating a visit in 2024 to celebrate 30 years.



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

SCA NATIONAL AWARDS UPDATE FOR 2023

Hurry – Awards closing soon on July 14!

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 available from our website. 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
- **2023 National Conference "Sister Cities - Linking the World Together"** at Werribee on 11-13 October.

We wish you every success with your entries.

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 PORT STEPHENS, NSW

Hunter Birdwatchers Welcomed in Japan

Port Stephens Sister Cities Committee facilitated a birdwatcher visit to Japan 11-25 May – its first international exchange since the Covid 19 pandemic halted exchanges. The committee is hopeful the visit will presage the resumption of cultural, sporting and

educational exchanges regularly conducted pre-Covid. A delegation comprising eight Hunter Bird Observers Club members headed by Dr Alan Stuart toured for two weeks, commencing with birdwatching activities in Kushiro, Hokkaido. Other

birdwatchers were Margaret O’Leary, Ross & Kate Zimmerman, Liz Date-Huxtable, Ann Lindsey, Chris Herbert and Liz Crawford. With the group for the first three days was University of Newcastle behavioural ecologist and senior lecturer Dr Andrea Griffin, who is investigating student exchange opportunities.

They were welcomed by Kushiro Mayor Hiroya Ebina and their Japanese counterparts, attended a civic reception and enjoyed interactions with local birdwatchers and with the general community, including homestays with Japanese families.

They went birdwatching with local enthusiasts and saw many birds including the Red-crowned Crane, Japan’s national bird and the elusive Latham’s Snipe, which breeds in Hokkaido but spends about six months of the year at wetlands in Australia including the Newcastle and Port Stephens areas.



Dr Stuart and Dr Griffin took part in presentations and panel discussion at a two-hour bird information sharing conference in Kushiro arranged by the Kushiro International Wetlands Centre.

Sister wetlands agreement

Port Stephens, Newcastle and Kushiro Councils signed a sister wetlands agreement in 1994, to exchange knowledge and skills for the conservation and wise use of our wetlands. Preservation of wetlands is vital to the continuation of an extraordinary natural phenomenon – annual bird migrations between wetlands of Hokkaido and the Hunter estuary a non-stop journey of 8,500km.

The best-known migrant from Japan is Latham’s Snipe. Others include the Eastern Curlew, Grey-tailed Tattler, Bar-tailed Godwit and Little Tern, which also visit the Mambo Wanda wetlands in Port Stephens.

After excursions in the Kushiro region, the group headed to sister city Yugawara for further



birdwatching. They were met by Yugawara International Exchange Association president Yoshinori Hayatoh and attended a civic reception. Birdwatching expeditions included visits to the Hakone Wetlands botanic gardens, the Yugawara precinct and Mt Fuji. A highlight of the Hakone visit was sighting a male Green Pheasant and to hear it calling. All up the birdwatchers saw about 150 species of birds, making for a most fulfilling exchange.



Footnote: Dr Griffin, her research team and Hunter Bird Observers Club A-class banders have partnered to band shorebirds in the Hunter for the first time since the early 2000s as part of a national program. Just prior to her visit, a Bar-tailed Godwit shorebird from Stockton NSW was sighted more than 8000 km north in the Ramsar-listed Higashiyoka-Higata mudflats in Japan – a frequent ‘layover’ site for migratory birds. The bird was fitted with a unique identifying band last December as part of research work to understand movement patterns of shorebirds. This is the first time in decades that a bird that has been banded in the Hunter Estuary has been sighted overseas.

Nigel Dique

Port Stephens Sister City Committee

SCA 2023 NATIONAL CONFERENCE INVITATION



SISTER CITIES AUSTRALIA IN PARTNERSHIP WITH *Wyndham City*

Invite you to the 2023 National Conference
Sister Cities – Linking the World Together

Wednesday 11 October – Friday 13 October 2023
Wyndham Civic Centre, 45 Princes Highway, Werribee Victoria

11 OCTOBER WEDNESDAY	12 OCTOBER THURSDAY	13 OCTOBER FRIDAY
6.00pm MAYORAL RECEPTION Holiday Inn	8.30am-4.30pm CONFERENCE 6.30 pm NATIONAL AWARDS DINNER Holiday Inn	BUS TOUR OF REGION

To Register for the Conference,
please use the link below.
www.trybooking.com/CJMIK



CHINA INTERNATIONAL IMPORT EXPO, 2023

An opportunity for those who have a sister city in China.

The Australia China Friendship Society is organising a delegation to the 2023 China International Import EXPO which may be a wonderful opportunity to investigate providing an economic arm to your sister city relationship.

This could provide a number of benefits:

- 1) Amazing networking opportunities with business professionals in China.
- 2) Unlocking the secrets to setting up a business relationship with China.
- 3) Learning what support is available in China and Australia to assist you in your endeavours.

The proposed dates for a delegation to the EXPO is:

- Arrive Shanghai on 4th Nov.
- Expo starts on 5th Nov.
- Depart Shanghai on 8th Nov.

If you are in WA the Perth Chinese Consulate will be holding an information session in July and you can register your interest with Roz Hanley at the email address below. For additional information please check out the CIIE official website: <https://www.ciie.org/zbh/en/>, or contact Roz Hanley at hanley@iinet.net.au.

AUSTRALIA-JAPAN LOCAL GOVT COLLABORATION

A research report released by RMIT, and supported by SCA.

You are invited to join RMIT on Friday 18 August as they launch their report: Australia-Japan Local Government Collaboration: Enriching Communities Through International Engagement. This year we will celebrate 60 years since the first Australia-Japan sister city relationship between Lismore City Council (Australia) and Yamatotakada (Japan), and there are now over 100 Australia-Japan sister cities and inter-city links operating. Sister city partnerships are important grassroots, people-to-people platforms that continue to play a pivotal role, strengthening and enriching relationships between local governments and communities in both Australia and Japan.

Our research report was sponsored by the Australia-Japan Foundation, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia and investigates the Australia-Japan city-to-city relationships between 2021 and 2023. Come along to hear about the importance of International engagement through sister city partnerships and share your insights and experience at our roundtable discussion.

Event Date: Friday, 18 August 2023

Event schedule: Registration from 10am (tea & coffee will be available)

Session 1: 10:30am – 12.15pm Report launch - Dr. Tse Leng Tham, Professor Hiroaki Mori, Dr. Shea Fan and Professor Timothy Bartram will share key findings and insights from their report Australia-Japan Local Government Collaboration: Enriching Communities Through International Engagement.

The report launch will be followed by remarks from Mr Junji Shimada Consul-General Japan, City of Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp AO and the Australia-Japan Foundation.

Networking lunch: 12.15pm – 1.00pm

Session 2: 1.00pm – 2:15pm Roundtable discussion facilitated by Ms. Christina Despoteris OAM, President, Sister Cities Australia

Venue: The Green Brain, RMIT Storey Hall, Level 7, 336 Swanston Street, Melbourne

Register now by clicking this link [RMIT Registration](#). Printed and digital copies of the report will be available at the event. RMIT looks forward to welcoming you.

SCA Affiliation Directory and Links Update



Is there information missing? Is there incorrect data? This Directory is the definitive document on Australian Sister



2021 DIRECTORY OF AUSTRALIAN SISTER CITY AND FRIENDSHIP CITY AFFILIATIONS

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.

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.

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

Don't forget to register for the 2023 National Conference "Sister Cities – Linking the World Together" at www.trybooking.com/CJMIK.

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](#)

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](#)

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>



site search



members



[home](#) [sca events](#) [awards](#) [media](#) [gallery](#) [links](#) [about us](#) [contact](#)

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.