

President's Report for January – December 2020

Presented at the SASTA AGM 13 April 2021

It is an understatement to say that 2020 has been a difficult year. During last year, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected students, teachers, science education and SASTA in so many more ways than can be recorded here in this report. Having been so very difficult for students, parents, schools and teachers, it is extraordinary that so many positive changes have resulted from the human ingenuity used to deal with this devastating disease and its consequences.

For the SASTA Office, ably led by Kate Dilger, it was business as usual, except of course that the staff were working from home, planning independently then communicating electronically, as well as facilitating Board and Committee meetings via Zoom and continuing to post out thousands of physical resources to support teachers as they worked face to face and remotely with their students.

Winning the Educators SA Innovative Association of the Year Award was a tremendous accolade for the SASTA staff. This award recognises and encourages education associations that develop innovative and creative professional learning structures and opportunities. Our submission focussed on a number of initiatives and improvements on current practices for the Oliphant Science Awards competition. Some of these were a result of the impacts of COVID-19 however, given their success, we will continue to implement them in future years.

Membership

2020 was another successful year for SASTA. Total members stand at 396, comprising 258 Personal (Individual) Members and 138 Corporate/School Members. Our 138 Corporate Members are able to have up to 20 teachers attached to their school membership accounts. The number of these teachers, called corporate associates, had a pleasing increase from 791 in 2019 to 818 in 2020. This means that our newsletters and other communications reached out to a total of 1,214 teachers.

Finances

Financially, we had a healthy surplus of approximately \$211,381, which represents an increase in the surplus from that of the previous year. Peter Turnbull will elaborate on the reasons for this in his Treasurer's Report.

Board

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my fellow Board members who have met regularly throughout the year, steering SASTA by providing guidance and oversight to our many endeavours.

At the beginning of 2020 there were eight Board committees. An important early change was to amalgamate to just three - the Membership and Awards Reference Group led by Anthea Ponte, the Professional Development Reference Group led by Dr Jane Wright, and the OSA committee led by Peter Turnbull and Gerald Little. More recently we have added a Policy Development Reference Group led by Pete Beveridge. This arrangement has been very successful, as streamlining the committee structure in this way has reduced overlap and increased our efficiency.

Staffing

There were limited changes in personnel at the SASTA office during 2020. Toby Spencer completed his one-year contract as replacement SASTA Marketing and Communications Officer on May 1st 2020, with Tegan McClean, returning from maternity leave for 3 days per week from 28 April.

Kate Dilger continues in her role as the SASTA Executive Officer, in conjunction with her role as the SASTA Education Officer. Our OSA and Events Coordinator, Becci van Schuilenburg, continues to work 2 days a week and Rebecca Cooke continues in her full-time role of Office Manager.

Resources

Members would be aware that SASTA relies heavily upon the sale of its resources for income. Overall resource sales increased during 2020 from a total income of \$628,866 in 2019 to \$683,414 in 2020. For many years, this SASTA income was primarily from the sales of its study guides and these publications are still important, with sales increasing slightly in 2020 to 9982 compared to 9650 in 2019.

For several years now, SASTA has been expanding our number of other publications to include trial exams, text books and workbooks for senior secondary science subjects, Stage 1 & 2 Research Project resources and Year 8 & 9 Student Practical Workbooks.

To keep up with curriculum changes, in late 2019 SASTA produced second editions of the Stage 2 workbooks for biology, chemistry and physics. It was pleasing to see an increase in sales of all of these workbooks during 2020.

2020 Professional Learning

One of SASTA's important roles is to conduct regular conference and professional learning activities for science teachers throughout the year.

To support teachers new to teaching the Stage 2 SACE science subjects of biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, and nutrition, SASTA ran 5 different 'Teachers New to... Workshops' in February and March 2020. A number of other Stage 2 workshops were held in 2020 including Marking and Moderation workshops and Task Design workshops.

Kate Dilger ran a number of STEM based workshops for both primary and secondary teachers in Term 1, before face-to-face meetings were restricted due to COVID.

Carolyn Pinchbeck convened the Psychology Summer Conference in January and Dr Jane Wright was the convener of the Annual Conference to be held in April and the STEM 6 – 11 Conference to be held in November. Unfortunately, both these latter conferences were cancelled at the last minute due to COVID restrictions. In addition, Peter Beveridge convened the SASTA Early Career Teachers conference in September 2020.

Two new Psychology workshops were run in October, one at EDC and one at Adelaide Botanic High School. A total of 105 teachers attended the workshops and in a successful innovation, the ABHS workshop also had 33 delegates attending via ZOOM.

SASTA continued its tradition of facilitating Exam Post Mortems for teachers of SACE Stage 2 science subjects. For the first time these sessions were conducted via ZOOM. This facilitated a much larger participation at each of the sessions. We thank our generous hosts and those teachers who presented at these events.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all contributors, together with the members of the Professional Development Reference Group, led by Jane Wright, who help to plan and shape these events.

Oliphant Science Awards

With remarkable ingenuity and creative planning, the 2020 Oliphant Science Awards was highly successful in spite of COVID restrictions.

The overall number of entries increased slightly from 2100 entries in 2019 to 2114 in 2020, although the total number of students participating decreased to 2839 from 2890 students in 2019, while the total number of schools participating in the Oliphant Science Awards decreased from 98 schools in 2019 to 92 schools in 2020.

Innovations for 2020 included a new blog to guide and support students and teachers and video submissions of projects from students. A more streamlined online judging process was developed along with training presentations for judges. Although the OSA Open Day was cancelled due to COVID, a Virtual Open Day showcasing all winning projects proved to be an excellent substitute under the circumstances.

It is also very gratifying to acknowledge the number of outstanding South Australian participants from the Oliphant Science Awards who were finalists in the BHP Foundation Science & Engineering Awards. There were three Primary Finalists and two Primary Semi-finalists and for Secondary, three students were selected as Finalists and three as Semi-finalists.

SASTA Board member Anthea Ponte was the BHP Foundation Science and Engineering Awards National Teacher Award winner for 2020. As well, during OSA in 2020, Alexandra Fowler from Woomera Area School, was chosen as the 2021 South Australian Teacher finalist in the BHPSEA and she will be in the running with other state and territory finalists when the national winner is chosen for 2021. Well-deserved congratulations are offered to both these teachers for their successes.

I would like to congratulate the staff, the Oliphant Science Awards committee and other volunteers ably led by Conveners, Peter Turnbull and Gerald Little, who put so much work into the Oliphant Science Awards competition on behalf of students and their teachers.

In conclusion, I would like to thank, our many SASTA volunteers, including board members, who continue to give freely of their time and expertise, and our SASTA staff for their contribution to SASTA's ongoing strength and success.

Jane Wright
SASTA President
13 April 2021

SASTA Annual Report 2020

SASTA Board

As at 24 April 2020

Jane Wright (President), Peter Turnbull, Anita Trenwith, Yvonne Zeegers, Marianne Nicholas (Treasurer), Peter Beveridge, Anthea Ponte.

As at 31 December 2020

Jane Wright (President), Peter Turnbull (Treasurer), Anita Trenwith, Katrina Elliott, Peter Beveridge (Vice President), Anthea Ponte, Katie Gloede, Dina Phan, Marianne Nicholas.

Staff

Kate Dilger (Executive Officer and Education Officer), Rebecca Cooke (Office Manager), Tegan McClean and Becci van Schuilenburg (Events Coordinator).

Awards

- **SASTA Medal:** not awarded
- **Helen Castle Memorial Scholarship:** not awarded
- **Credit Union SA/SASTA Outstanding Teacher Awards:**
 - Primary Jade Tinney, Salisbury Park Primary School
 - Middle years Samantha Brown, Mount Gambier High School
 - Senior Secondary Catherine O'Halloran, Cabra Dominican College
- **BHP Billiton Teacher Awards:**
 - Winner – Anthea Ponte – Hawthorndene Primary School, SA
- **Graduate Teacher Awards**
The University of Adelaide:
 - Alicia Pollett (Science Award)
 - Carmen Cabrera Jimenez (Science Studies Award)
 - Emily March (Physics Award)
 - Jack Stewart (Biology Award)
 - Ebony Brouwers (Chemistry Award)
 - Alexandra Gavrillidis (Psychology Award)

UniSA:

- Elisabeth Tenikoff - Bachelor of Education (Primary and Middle)
- Ben Michael Robinson - Bachelor of Education (Primary)
- Clinton Mark Dubieniecki - Masters of Teaching (Secondary)

Professional Learning

- Psychology Summer Conference - 17 January at Education Development Centre. Convener: Carolyn Pinchbeck
- Workshops for Teachers new to SACE Stage 1 and/or SACE Stage 2 Biology, Chemistry, Physics Nutrition and Psychology were held in February and March.
- Annual Conference & Expo cancelled
- Marking Workshops for Stage 2 Psychology, Biology, Chemistry & Physics were held in Term 3.

- Early Career Teachers Conference - 28 September at Immanuel College. Convener: Peter Beveridge.
- STEM 6-11 Conference in conjunction with Mathematical Association of SA: cancelled
- Workshops in STEM and Science teaching and learning were provided by Kate Dilger in Term 1.
- Psychology workshops with online access provided in October.

Resources

SASTA published a range of resources including SACE Stage 1 & 2 Workbooks, Study Guides, Trial Exams, Living Science Biology Textbooks Stage 1 & 2, Research Project Workbook and Guide, Year 8 & 9 Student Practical Workbooks and What if we do Science?, Watch This & Watch This Too!

Publications/Communications

- Newsletter: Distributed in February, May, August and November
- SASTA E-News: Distributed the first day of each month excluding January
- Journal: Two editions per year: Editor – Brent Banham
- Website
- Facebook - approximately 1287 likers (up from 916 last year)
- Twitter – 1191 followers (up from 1033 last year)

Student Activities

- **Oliphant Science Awards**

The Oliphant Trophy Winner 2020 was awarded to Raihanah Pranggono from Glenunga International High School. 2114 entries were submitted by 2131 students who entered the competition.

A number of outstanding South Australian participants from the Oliphant Science Awards were finalists in the **BHP Foundation Science & Engineering Awards**. They are:

Primary

Finalists

- Rashmi Adiga Engineering | Mawson Lakes Primary School
- Abigail Atkinson Investigations | Virginia Primary School
- Eugene Lee Investigations | Pedare Christian College
- Semi-finalists
- Aislinn Lauder Engineering | Woomera Area School
- Charlotte Atkinson Investigations | Virginia Primary School

Secondary

Finalists

- Blake Tourneur Engineering | St John's Grammar School
- Lachlan Miegel Engineering | St John's Grammar School
- Raihanah Pranggono Investigations | Glenunga International High School

Semi-finalists

- Winston Telfer Engineering | Eyre Peninsula
- Zeina Aljawhari Engineering | Walford Anglican School for Girls
- Sienna Hill Investigations | Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College

National Science Week Grants

- Grant Applications – Priscilla Martinus

Examination Preparation Seminars (The University of Adelaide)

- Biology – 31 August: Presenter – Tony Diercks / Karen Palumbo
- Chemistry - 14 September: Presenter –
- Physics - 7 September: Presenter – Paul Gavini
- Psychology - 7 September: Presenter –

Representation and Advocacy

- Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA) Vanessa Fay/Jane Wright represented SASTA as Federal Councilors
- SASTA Patron – Throughout the year we appreciated the support of our Patron, Prof Caroline McMillen
- EducatorsSA – Marianne Nicholas represented SASTA