

WAMGLTA Annual Report

The establishment of a formal association for the Modern Greek language and its teachers has been a long-term dream. In particular, starting such an association was seen to be an important vehicle for the improvement of the teaching and learning of Modern Greek in WA, and for Modern Greek to be on an equal footing with the other languages that are represented in a formal capacity through their own associations; namely, Aboriginal Languages, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. It was after attending a meeting for the Modern Language Teachers' Association of WA (MLTAWA) - the 'umbrella association' - in early 2016 that Mr Pavlos Iosifidis and I began the process of establishing The West Australian Modern Greek Language Teachers' Association (WAMGLTA).

The process of establishing WAMGLTA was rather convoluted; not an easy road, as it turned out. However, on 24 August 2016, WAMGLTA was incorporated as an association by the Department of Commerce and our new association was ready to start its proceedings. We adopted the New Model Rules (otherwise referred to as the 'WAMGLTA Constitution') from the outset, realising that these would need to be modified further down the track.

The first official meeting of WAMGLTA was held on 16 November 2016. History was made. At that meeting, 'Application for Membership' forms as well as 'Nomination for the Executive Committee' forms were distributed, and the date of the first AGM was decided upon; 31 January 2017. Nomination forms for Office Holders and Committee Members were due by 31 December 2016. Payments of \$20 for membership to WAMGLTA were received and receipted. The WAMGLTA Rules were distributed to all present. By the end of the first official meeting, 13 people had become members of the new association. There was an air of distinct excitement at the potential of WAMGLTA to fulfil its objectives; namely,

- (a) To promote the teaching and study of the Modern Greek language in Western Australia;
- (b) To provide a forum in which issues affecting Modern Greek language teachers and teaching are discussed;
- (c) To undertake activities designed to extend the knowledge of members on all aspects of the Modern Greek language and teaching methodology;
- (d) To organise appropriate activities for students of the Modern Greek language;

- (e) To edit and publish or arrange for the editing and publication of materials to assist members and students of Modern Greek;
- (f) To raise funds by subscription, donation and grants from government and private sources to aid the activities of *The West Australian Modern Greek Language Teachers' Association Inc. (WAMGLTA)*;
- (g) To assist members to extend employment opportunities.

By the time that the first AGM was held (31 January 2017) there were 17 paid members. The year ended with 25 paid members, 8 of whom had already paid their membership fee for 2018. At the AGM of 2017, the following Office Holders were nominated and accepted to their respective positions: Chairperson, Dr Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis; Deputy Chairperson, Mr Pavlos Iosifidis; Acting Co-Secretaries, Mrs Irene (Rena) Platis and Mrs Veronique Bournaveas. There were no nominations for Treasurer. Ms Betty Parissis was the sole Executive Committee member. A Constitution Sub-committee was formed with Dr John Yiannakis, Mr Peter Vlachou, and I as members. WAMGLTA decided to become a member of the Professional Teaching Council of Western Australia (PTCWA), which I enacted promptly after assuming the position of Chairperson. Various initiatives that WAMGLTA could undertake in its official capacity were also discussed.

2017 was a year of establishment for WAMGLTA. Apart from the AGM, there were 7 meetings held during the course of the year, inclusive of a special meeting on 29 July to discuss WAMGLTA initiatives. As such, a great deal was achieved in terms of setting up the Association for longevity. Efforts included the refinement of the WAMGLTA Rules (Constitution), a long and arduous task, undertaken by John and Peter, in consultation with me and the Committee as a whole. Other achievements included the establishment of a WAMGLTA Account on 21 July, upon the appointment of a Treasurer, Mr Nick Gile, at the meeting of 6 May 2017. A new online site called 'WAMGLTA Secretary' was constructed by Rena, allowing uploads of agendas, minutes of meetings, and other documents to take place. A smart WAMGLTA flyer was developed by Ms Magda Hasapopoulos for the purpose of advertising and promoting the Association to the wider community, proving effective with new members coming on board after it was launched. A further achievement was the Committee's successful nomination of me to receive the PTCWA Outstanding Professional Service Award at the PTCWA end-of-year Awards Ceremony on 25 October 2017, further promoting the new association

to the wider community. On 21 December 2017, I successfully submitted the obligatory Information Statement regarding WAMGLTA's financial transactions to the Department of Commerce. We ended the year with 25 members and a total of \$552.50 in the WAMGLTA Account.

In 2018 we expect to have our very own logo – an owl – being developed by one of the sons of new member, Mrs Voula Terzoudi. We also hope to offer between 2 to 3 Professional Learning (PL) opportunities to our members. And of course, we look forward to continued growth in our membership.

In closing, I would like to offer my gratitude to various people on the Executive Committee and to the members in general. Firstly, I wish to thank the Deputy Chairperson, Pavlos, as the co-initiator of WAMGLTA and for all of his efforts and support in this venture, and in all other ventures regarding the teaching and learning of Modern Greek in WA. WAMGLTA is sad to be losing Pavlos and Evridiki Politi, both of whom are returning to Greece.

I extend my sincere thanks to the Acting Secretaries, Rena and Veronique; particularly Rena who has taken over the position in Veronique's absence during the better part of the year. Rena has juggled the role, which was new to her, with work and a young family. Despite these challenges, Rena has attended meetings with enthusiasm and eagerness to assist.

I thank our Treasurer, Nick, for accepting the role that was initially not filled for a few months and for his ongoing efforts and contributions to the Committee in general. Nick often sends emails regarding Greek Language Teaching PL opportunities to me for distribution to the members.

Thanks are offered to Betty as a member of the Executive Committee for her attendance at meetings and her ongoing contributions to the Association.

Once again, sincere thanks are extended to John and Peter, who undertook the arduous and unenviable task of streamlining the WAMGLTA Rules to fit our association's needs.

Gratitude is extended to Magda for her work on the WAMGLTA flyer. Together, we managed to refine the flyer to an acceptable standard. Its dissemination resulted in new members to the Association.

Finally, I thank all members of WAMGLTA, particularly those members who are regular attendees at Committee meetings, George Anastasiadis being one of these persons; thank you, George.

It is hoped that WAMGLTA will continue to grow in membership and, therefore, in strength, providing opportunities to all teachers (existing and upcoming) to improve their craft and, in turn, to benefit their students and to offer their expertise to others.

Dr Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis

WAMGLTA Chairperson

29 December 2017