

FROM THE PRESIDENT – 2007 IN REVIEW



By National President Alec Tzannes

As a new year gets underway, it is timely to reflect on our success in 2007 – not an easy task, given the breadth of RAIA activities. Across the nation, in every state and territory, as well as offshore with the International Area Committee, there are different perspectives, issues and memories – both corporate and individual. Here I offer you a brief overview as a National Councillor and President.

Strategic

Of prime significance to the future of the RAIA are the principal ideas behind the Strategic Plan that were adopted and are now being more fully developed. Of all RAIA activities this may be the most significant, as it underpins all other activities and is transforming our decision-making and implementation processes.

The next phase of work is to develop a transparent and effective way of prioritising activities, linking budgeting processes to these activities and reporting on their outcomes, with accuracy, at any time. This may sound simple, but in an organisation such as the RAIA, with its structure and range of activities, it is not. This next phase is already advanced and is likely to be implemented by mid-2008.

Following the successful sale of property in Western Australia, and the purchase of the heritage-listed former showroom/furniture gallery designed by Julius Elischer and adapted for RAIA use by architect Bernard Seeber, the newly renovated and fitted out WA Chapter premises were opened, with Archicentre and the WA Registration Board as tenants. We now own, occupy and manage another spectacular building, with only the Northern Territory Chapter and regional offices remaining in leased premises.

Engagement

The RAIA's engagement with various stakeholders was a highlight, including a constructive dialogue with government on balanced and equitable client-architect agreements. I hope this is not a "false dawn". For the work to date there are

many people to thank, including CEO David Parken.

Our policy – not as yet fully implemented, but "getting there" – of securing government architect positions, including a national government architect, has helped on this issue. For example, among the many issues Victorian State Government Architect John Denton is working on is improving balanced and reasonable conditions of engagement on government contracts, with some advances already close to implementation.

Dialogue at this level is also underway in NSW and with the federal Department of Finance and Administration. These initiatives follow the successful publication of the RAIA guide *Balanced and Equitable Client-Architect Agreements* in 2006.

The federal election was successfully targeted, with each political party surveyed on its position on RAIA policy initiatives. With Labor winning the election it is worth noting that their pre-election responses to our questions were hopeful, promising the reintroduction of urban policy at a national level as well as support for significant cultural activities promoting the work of architects internationally. All the responses from the surveyed political parties were posted on the web for easy member access.

Also notable were the development and implementation of new RAIA policy. The National Architecture Awards in Alice Springs were the first under the revised policy to nationally align categories and projects, and there was positive reference to the RAIA Indigenous Housing Policy (introduced in July) by presenters at



Above: Snapshots from the 2007 National Architecture Awards held in Alice Springs, NT. Photographs Moving Pictures.



Above: Snapshots from the opening of the WA Chapter's newly purchased, heritage-listed premises at Nedlands.

the "Which Way?" conference. At its November meeting the National Council endorsed two new policies on Heritage Conservation and Universal Access, which are now available online. In the schedule of new policies to be presented at every National Council meeting, Sustainability and OH&S are planned for March 2008.

RAIA activities prompted outstanding media coverage, notably the national programme of Awards and the "Which Way?" indigenous housing conference. We

also captured a "share of voice" on sustainability, planning reform and members' work. I will be able to report on the equivalent dollar value of our media coverage in the 2007 Annual Review.

Design Culture

The year ahead builds on the success of the annual National Architecture Conference held in Melbourne in 2007 under the creative direction of Timothy Hill – a prescient choice in 2006, given >>>

EMERGING ARCHITECTS AND GRADUATES FIND NEW VOICE

The RAIA's National Council has unanimously endorsed and agreed to fund a national supporting network for graduate and emerging architects established late last year and now active in all states and territories.

The "Emerging Architects + Graduates Network" – which will go under the acronym "EmAGN" (pronounced "Imagine") – will represent the interests of graduates and emerging architects on a national level and give them a national voice on key issues.

EmAGN Chair Dominic Pelle said: "The network aims to create a design community for graduates and emerging architects to mutually support each other and to foster a culture of architecture."

"We believe that there is a growing, vibrant group of young professionals who have a considerable amount of enthusiasm, talent and energy to share with the profession, and we're interested



EmAGN Chair Dominic Pelle.

in developing ways for them to engage more broadly in the architectural community and beyond."

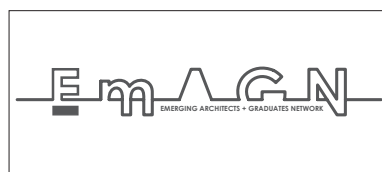
The network's establishment follows moves over recent years by groups of graduates and emerging architects to self-organise in all states and territories

around Australia. These groups, all uniquely named and branded, have each developed a local culture and supporting network for graduate and emerging architects within their state or territory.

As the scope and importance of each group has grown at a local level, so has the opportunity and need to establish a national group to facilitate further group development and to allow cross-pollination between the groups to best represent the interests of graduates and emerging architects throughout Australia.

A range of initiatives are now being developed by EmAGN, both on a national level and for all local chapter groups, including the Dulux Study Tour 2008, a monthly national newsletter, a chapter-based Emerging Architect Prize and an "RAIA Diary" with an architectural photography competition.

As at November 2007, EmAGN



representatives are: Chair Dominic Pelle (ACT), Nathan Judd (Yarch, ACT), Marcus Trimble (Darch, NSW), Andrew Schulze (YNTA, NT), Y E Ng (YarchQ, QLD), Danielle O'Dea (NAG, SA), Peter Walker (YAG, TAS), Michael Roper (V-YAG, VIC) and Paul Edwards (Merge, WA).

Dominic said that EmAGN would particularly like to thank RAIA supporting corporate partners Dulux and Virgin Atlantic for their support, especially with the sponsorship of the Dulux Study Tour. The tour will see five emerging architects/graduates travel with selected others to London in May for a tailored study experience.

Dominic said EmAGN would also like to thank RAIA staff members David Parken, Ross Clark, Shahana McKenzie and Lucy Bourke for their help in securing the successful launch of the group.

2008 KEY RAIA DATES

RAIA members are reminded to log the following upcoming events in their 2008 diaries, and to contact the National Events Team for further information, and confirmation of dates closer to the events, on (02) 6121 2000 or log on to www.architecture.com.au

GOLD MEDAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Thursday 13 March, Sydney

GOLD MEDAL TOUR

Canberra	Tuesday 29 April
Melbourne	Monday 12 May
Tasmania	Tuesday 13 May
Hong Kong	Wednesday 28 May
Adelaide	Monday 1 September
Perth	Wednesday 3 September
Brisbane	Monday 29 September
Darwin	Wednesday 1 October

AS HOOK ADDRESS

TBA, Sydney

RAIA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Thursday 10 April – Saturday 12 April, Sydney

STATEWIDE: NEW DIRECTION FOR NSW



By NSW Chapter Manager Roslyn Irons

Hello to RAI A members around Australia and offshore, but particularly those in NSW. As the Institute's newest chapter manager, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, to let you know a little about my work experiences, and my aspirations for the NSW Chapter.

It goes without saying that I'm very excited about working with current NSW President Dr Deborah Dearing and the NSW Chapter Council, in particular, to help steer the chapter forward through the coming year. With more than 3,000 members spread across the state, we remain the largest RAI A chapter, and I look forward to addressing the many needs of our talented and disparate member base.

During my career, I've gained broad experience across a number of key industry sectors, primarily in a sales and marketing capacity. Over the past 25 years, I've conducted hundreds of major public and trade conferences, exhibitions and events throughout Australia and New Zealand, and have worked both internally and as an external consultant

for many not-for-profit organisations.

The building and construction industry is very much second nature to me, as I have previously managed a number of trade and public events for the housing sector throughout NSW.

Having now participated in most RAI A NSW Chapter committee meetings in recent months, I have a good understanding of some of the programmes requiring assistance, and I intend to hone my sales and marketing skills to develop a programme of activities which I believe will be attractive to potential sponsors but, more importantly, these are initiatives needed by our members at both metropolitan and regional levels.

The Chapter will communicate details about the various programmes as they come to fruition, and members will be updated regularly via our weekly ENews. In the meantime, I would encourage any members who have queries or suggestions to contact me personally on (02) 9246 4055 or via email at Roslyn.Irons@raia.com.au.

Finally, I look forward to working with the team at Tusculum and to contributing to the Chapter's continued success.

CONSTRUCTIVE MENTORING SCHEME ROLLS OUT

An RAI A-supported "Constructive Mentoring Programme" designed to better support women in the architectural profession has been rolled out across eastern Australia following a successful pilot scheme in NSW over the past 12 months.

Late last year the programme was extended from Sydney to Newcastle and other regional areas in NSW, before being launched in Victoria and the ACT. There are plans to offer the scheme to all states and territories in Australia by mid-2008.

Kick-starting the roll-out was an inaugural NSW State Forum in mid-November, attended by around 40

members and featuring a half-day format. This included a guest speaker panel session, a small group workshop circuit, drinks and informal networking. Guest speakers included former City of Sydney Lord Mayor and the RAI A's Venice Architecture Biennale Commissioner Lucy Turnbull, Penrith Lakes Development Corporation CEO Dr Patrice Derrington and Jones Lang LaSalle Australian CEO Christine Bartlett.

Over the following three days, similar events were held in the ACT (with 10 attendees) and Victoria (21 attendees). Plans are now underway for more February briefing sessions. The feedback for all three sessions was very encouraging, with plans to match as many of the participants as possible before the New

Year, pending their online enrolment.

NSW Chapter Manager Roslyn Irons said the programme was currently working

successfully in Sydney, with more than 50 matched mentoring pairs made to date. While focused on women, it doesn't exclude men from participating. Pairs are matched according to a number of factors, with RAI A member architects matched with other architects. The greatest demand for matching continues to come from the RAI A, ahead of NAWIC and MBA members.

"I liked the concept of the speed-circuit workshops and jumping in and out of some key topics. I thought the guest speakers were extremely interesting; their journeys were inspiring."

PROGRAMME ORIGINS

The mentoring scheme had its origins in 2005, when the RAI A's "Supporting Women in the Professional Environment" committee (SWIPE) focused on the issue of retention of women in the architectural profession. One of the outcomes was to create a mentoring programme which would help provide guidance and support to female architects through different stages of their careers.

To secure funding for such a programme, the RAI A's NSW Chapter combined forces with NAWIC NSW and MBA NSW. Together, they sought and received federal government funding. Initial funding was for activity in 2006-2007, which was to be NSW-focused and considered a pilot programme. The programme linked the three parties through a mentoring scheme based on the current MBA NSW Mentoring Programme. This pilot was to provide a trial run of a multi-party programme and to be rolled out in participating states in 2007-2008.

The programme was designed to be run from NSW and is administered by an independent company, Orijen, who have provided mentoring in corporate environments for 25 years. Orijen takes direction from a steering committee comprising NAWIC, MBA and RAI A representatives. For more information, log on to www.orijen.com.au/constructive_mentoring/.



Snapshots from the inaugural NSW State Forum that kick-started the RAI A-supported Constructive Mentoring Programme.

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Donovan Hill's extraordinary recognition at the National Awards. Richard Francis-Jones is the creative director of "Critical Visions", the 2008 national conference to be held in Sydney, with an unparalleled programme of

international and local guest speakers taking shape.

Also on the cultural front, the creative team of Kerstin Thompson, Wendy Lewin, Neil Durbach, Vince Frost and Gary Warner was selected for the 2008 Venice Biennale in September. The exhibition (under the working title *Abundance*) promises to be an exceptional

demonstration of Australian architecture, past and present, and takes a generous and inclusive approach to exhibiting the work of architects throughout Australia.

These activities are only a very small percentage of those undertaken in 2007 from a national perspective. Of at least equal importance are the many exceptional local chapter events, exhibi-

tions, publications, CPD and many other services representing RAI A "core business".

At a personal level I have made many new professional friends in my position and have experienced, often for the first time, an extraordinary range of skilful architecture throughout Australia. My impression is that our profession's standing in the community is increasingly

appreciated and our role as designers increasingly recognised as essential to helping address issues of environmental, economic and social sustainability in our cities. I wish all members the very best for 2008. It is a privilege to serve as National President and I look forward with enthusiasm to my remaining term in office.



Panel discussion at the National Indigenous Housing Conference, from left to right: Tom Calma, Carroll Go-Sam, Paul Pholeris, Richard Ahmat, Olga Havnen, Fred Chaney. Photograph Moving Pictures.