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2021 Council Report to Members

The Council is pleased to present its report for the Financial Year, 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

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OVERVIEW

In the twelve months to 30 June 2021 the RGSQ has again faced the challenges of dealing with COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns which have had impacts on RGSQ activities, travel and member interactions. All sections and operations of the Society have been affected by COVID restrictions as can be seen in the detail of this report. Despite these challenging circumstances, the RGSQ has done well to continue as a viable Society, engaging with our members in new ways. As this report demonstrates, there has been much achieved over the year by the continual enthusiastic work of volunteer members on all of our Committees, Councillors and staff resulting in a busy and productive year. Some major achievements and new initiatives that were accomplished during the year include:

- Conducting the Society's first-ever **AGM via zoom** in October 2020 with 39 members participating
- Launching the **inaugural RGSQ photographic competition** & publishing the **RGSQ 2021 calendar**
- Adapting to flexible arrangements for office staff to work from home/stagger their presence at RGSQ during lockdowns
- Presenting monthly **lectures both via zoom** and, whenever possible, in-person at RGSQ premises with recordings made publicly available on the **RGSQ YouTube channel**
- Accommodating Council and Committee meetings via **Microsoft Teams** as required
- Utilising government support to RGSQ as a not-for-profit organisation e.g. **Job Keeper**
- Continuing to publish the monthly **Bulletin** and also 5 issues of the new **Member Connect newsletter** during 2020 lockdowns
- Completing the **Preservation Needs Analysis** of our Collections and acquittal of grant funds
- Completing the **in-school round of the AGC** in March 2021 with 73,000 students participating despite disruptions to schools across the country
- Organising **Map group and TAAC** activities and trips
- Holding the outdoor **Christmas BBQ** and gathering on Mt. Coot-tha in December 2020

I commend to members the work and on-going efforts outlined in this report of our current Council, office staff and member volunteers who have worked tirelessly to keep the RGSQ "afloat" and on track in difficult times again this year. Their assistance, valuable perspectives and ideas to secure the Society's immediate and longer-term future have been greatly appreciated.

On behalf of RGSQ members, I extend our thanks to all who have been involved during this year. I hope that the future will bring opportunities to further increase the profile of the Society and to develop more outstanding and enjoyable activities in the promotion of Geography.

Dr. Iraphne Childs, President



September 23 2021

RGSQ 2020/2021 COUNCIL

	Name & position
	Executive
1	President: IrAPHNE CHILDS
2	Secretary: John TASKER
3	Treasurer: Annie LAU
	Vice President (vacant)
	Councillors
4	Kath BERG
5	Jonathan CORCORAN
6	Ian HARDING
7	Patrick MOSS
8	Leo SCANLAN: resigned February 2021
9	Daphne STEPHENS
10	Pamela TONKIN
11	Stephen TURTON

RGSQ ACADEMIC PRIZES

J. P. Thomson award

Professor Alaric Maude was awarded the 2020 J P Thomson Award. He was finally able to travel to Brisbane to present an in-person lecture '*What makes Geography powerful?*' at Gregory Place on 1st June this year. This was well received and attended. Several RGSQ Councillors and Honours committee members accompanied Alaric and wife, Sandy, for an enjoyable pre-lecture dinner at the nearby Alliance Hotel.

Ken Sutton Trust award

The 2020 Ken Sutton Trust award went to **Professor Ian Rutherford, School of Geography, University of Melbourne** for his work on river systems management, both within Australia and in China, and his involvement and support of high-school Geography in Victoria. Due to COVID travel restrictions Professor Ian Rutherford presented his lecture on 6 October 2020 online via zoom.

University prizes

The Society provides Academic Prizes (an engraved medal, certificate and twelve months membership to the Society) for high achieving university students majoring in Geography.

One institution offered the prize in the 2020-2021 period and the awardee was:

- The University of the Sunshine Coast – Ms Stefanie Aguina

MEMBERSHIP

The membership/member profile by category as at 30 June 2021 compared to June last year is shown in the Table 1 below. As expected, due to COVID restrictions on movement and reduced number of in-person meetings and activities, the Society has seen a decrease in memberships and members from 241 last year to 214 this year. The Society, however, also welcomed 40 new members this past year (see Table 2). Given the COVID-19 circumstances, the Council is grateful to its members for supporting the Society and renewing their memberships throughout the year.

Membership Category	To June 2020		To June 2021	
	Memberships	Members	Memberships	Members
Ordinary	86	86	87	87
Household Bundle	46	88	40	79
Educational	2	2	2	2
Student*	41	41	29	29
Life	23	23	16**	16
Honorary Life	1	1	1	1
Total	199	241	175	214

Table 1: Membership by category 1 July 2020-30 June 2021

*Student membership is free for the duration of student enrollment.

** the reduction in the number of life members is due to non-confirmation in a membership survey

New Memberships 1 July 2020-30 June	
Ordinary	15
Household Bundle	9
Educational	1
Student	15
Total	40

Table 2: New Memberships 1 July 2020-30 June 2021

Finally, it is with great sadness that we noted the passing on 21st June 2021 of RGSQ member Michael McInnis, whom many members knew personally. Mike and Liz participated in many RGSQ trips both overseas and within Australia as active members on TAAC activities.

MANAGEMENT and ADMINISTRATION

COVID response: In the 2020-2021 Financial Year the Society has faced COVID challenges like all other non-profits and organisations and has had to adapt its services and delivery modes.

Streaming of monthly lectures: As part of the adaptation the Society started streaming its monthly lectures online and these are available to the public on our website under <https://rgsq.org.au/pastlectures> and [YouTube](#) channel

Newsletters: during April to August 2020 the Society published an additional monthly newsletter [Member Connect](#) as well as the traditional monthly [Bulletin](#). Activities have been rescheduled and continually re-organised during periods of lockdowns and easing restrictions

Grants: the Society applied for three new grants during the period:

- (1) Community Heritage Grants stage 3 for Conservation Activities and Collections Management
- (2) Gambling Community Benefit Fund Grants (April 2021 round)
- (3) Stronger Communities Programme, Australian Government

At the time of writing this report the outcome of (1) is pending; the Society has been notified in August 2021 that we were successful with (2) and we were unsuccessful with (3)

Preservation Needs Assessment: In the second half of 2020, the Society's application for stage 2 of Community Heritage Grants Preservation Needs Assessment (PNA) was successful and the project was acquitted in April 2021. The PNA report can be accessed on our website under <https://rgsq.org.au/reports>

Sunshine Coast Chapter: Towards the end of June 2021, the re-established Sunshine Coast Chapter organised its first activity with plans to expand activities offered to members and hoping to increase membership in the area

Staffing change: with the resignation of Bernard Fitzpatrick in September 2020, the position of Australian Geography Competition Coordinator was advertised. Fortunately, the Society was able to appoint an excellent new AGC coordinator, Rachel Honey, who took up the position in October 2020

All activities have been enthusiastically and tirelessly supported and progressed by the Society's Council, dedicated volunteer members and office staff. Much appreciation and thanks are due to all who have assisted with these major projects.

FINANCIAL RESULTS AND POSITION

The Society has reported an overall surplus of \$330,573 for the year to 30 June 2021, but this is after taking account of realised and unrealised gains on investments of \$293,298, resulting in an operating surplus of \$37,275. This compares to the deficit of \$38,399 in 2020, as shown below:

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Australian Competition Income	2	368,412	273,598
Other Income	2	162,238	277,963
Distribution of (profit)/loss to AGTA		(51,072)	6,286
Exploration and research		-	(9)
Employees benefit expense**		(92,392)	(182,380)
Depreciation expense		(27,139)	(30,468)
Australian Competition expense		(266,268)	(301,675)
Administrative expense		(56,186)	(81,218)
Loss on disposal asset		(318)	(496)
Surplus / (Deficit) from ordinary items		37,275	(38,399)
Extraordinary items:			
(Decrease)/Increase in market value of investments		271,073	(220,542)
Realised gain on investments		22,225	556
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year		330,573	(258,385)

***The drop in the employee benefit expense can be explained by the corresponding drop in other income (Australian Geographic Competition (AGC) overhead allocation). The drop was due to the change in accounting for AGC allocation charges, in prior year there was a significant overhead charge allocated to AGC to recover the AGC Coordinator wages paid by RGSQ, however, this year, the AGC Coordinator wages is recorded directly under AGC Expense.*

Table 3: Income and Expenditure Statement for Year Ended 30 June 2021

The loss or deficit above includes the surplus for the Society and half of the surplus for the Australian Geography Competition (AGC). The other half is attributable to the Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA).

As in the previous financial year, we have received government support in the form of Job Keeper and cash flow boost of \$35,035, which has helped us considerably. Included in the accounts were non-cash depreciation costs of \$28,578.

RGSQ: The Society, excluding the AGC, had a deficit of \$13,798. This included government support; investments income better than expected, yielding more interest and dividends; In other areas, costs were very carefully controlled, but the Society's income in many areas (e.g. event and travel income, rent received, member subscriptions, donations) were below budget.

AGC: Surplus \$102,144 is retained for future use by AGC but in the accounts is split equally between RGSQ and AGTA. Since GBWO trip was cancelled last year and postponed this year, and the iGeo trip was conducted domestically, operating costs were generally lower. Income was above budget as schools paid their entries fees on time and some fees from the previous financial year were paid late. We took the advice from the auditors to carry forward the unspent part of the grant from the Department of Education since international and some interstate trips were cancelled.

Balance Sheet: The Society continues to carefully maintain and manage its assets and the Society continues to have a strong Balance Sheet, as shown below, and improved this year due to the increase of the value of investments.

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	267,444	150,275
Trade and other receivables	4	38,870	29,680
Total Current Assets		306,314	179,955
Non-Current Assets			
Investments	5	1,755,303	1,461,913
Property, plant and equipment	6,7	1,414,162	1,443,287
Total Non-Current Assets		3,169,465	2,905,200
TOTAL ASSETS		3,475,779	3,085,155
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	8	14,301	19,608
Income in Advance	9	51,961	30,641
Employee Benefits	10	17,426	17,065
Amount due to associated party	11	77,056	25,984
Total Current Liabilities		160,744	93,298
Non-Current Liabilities			
Employee Benefits	10	9,490	16,885
Total Non-Current Liabilities		9,490	16,885
TOTAL LIABILITIES		170,234	110,183
NET ASSETS		3,305,545	2,974,972
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		3,228,489	2,948,988
Accumulated profits reserve - Competition	11	77,056	25,984
TOTAL EQUITY		3,305,545	2,974,972

Table 4: Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021

Audit. Williams Hall Chadwick, the Society's auditors, has provided an unqualified audit report as attached to the published accounts.

Outlook. The Society's total asset position is still very favourable, but the Council is concerned about the low income and increasing expenses. Notably, government support is not available in the next financial year (2021-2022). The 2021/22 overall budget is showing a deficit of \$39,838 (including depreciation of \$33,101). This includes a deficit of \$6032, RGSQ's share of the \$12,065 deficit due to the digitalisation of the competition in 2022, (an upgrade that will lower the running cost in the long run). The budget deficit in RGSQ is \$33,806, but close to break-even on a cash basis after adding back depreciation. It is important to continue to minimise costs and to increase income by growing our member numbers and exploring new sources of income.

COMMITTEES

Australian Geography Competition Committee (AGCC)

Members: Co-Chair J Davis (AGTA) and Co-Chair K Berg (RGSQ), J Tasker (RGSQ), S Albertson (AGTA), T Bourke (Independent, Faculty of Education, Queensland University of Queensland). Ex-officio member: R Honey (AGC Coordinator)

Overview: The Australian Geography Competition (AGC) is a joint initiative of RGSQ and the Australian Geography Teachers' Association (AGTA), administered by RGSQ with oversight from the Competition Committee under a memorandum of understanding between RGSQ and AGTA. The in-school Competition and its associated events, Geography's Big Week Out (GBWO) and Australia's participation in the International Geography Olympiad (iGeo), received some funding from the Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment and from sponsorship by the University of Melbourne. RGSQ member volunteers provide an important contribution to the success of the Competition through their assistance with mailouts and the scanning of returned answer sheets.

2021 Competition in schools: The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to present challenges for the Competition in 2021. The Competition was to be held in schools from Thursday 18 March to Wednesday 31 March; however, an extension of two weeks for return of answer sheets was given due to lockdowns affecting several states during the Competition timeframe. The Committee was pleased that entry numbers returned to pre-2020 Competition levels, with 728 schools and over 73,000 entries.

Geography's Big Week Out: The 2020 Geography's Big Week Out (GBWO) was scheduled to have been held from 27 September to 2 October in Perth and surrounds. However, this had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. In place of GBWO, 16 top-performing year 11 students were invited to complete a two-hour written examination to determine the students to be selected for the 2021 iGeo team. The four students selected came together with members of the Competition Committee during the Easter school holidays to receive some of the training that would normally be provided by GBWO. This training was to have been held in Brisbane, but COVID-19 border restrictions interfered again, and it was transferred to Sydney at short notice.

The 2021 GBWO was scheduled to be held in Perth in July. However, in February the Competition Committee took the decision that it should be postponed to later in the year when the vaccination programme would be further advanced and to avoid any winter spike of COVID cases. As the Western Australian teachers were unable to host it later in the year, the 2021 GBWO has been rescheduled to take place on the Gold Coast in December 2021. Given the COVID-19 cases in four Australian states in July and the closing of Western Australia's borders, this has proved to be a wise decision.

International Geography Olympiad: Due to COVID-19 the 17th International Geography Olympiad (iGeo) which was to have been held in Istanbul, Turkey in August 2021, instead was held as a virtual event. The 2021 Australian team members were:

- Gemma Snyman – Roseville College, NSW
- Imogen Cooper – Wesley College, Vic
- Nikki Ballinger – Walford Anglican School for Girls, SA
- Rhea Sankar – Canberra Grammar School, ACT



Australia's iGeo team in Sydney for training

Travel restrictions permitting, the Committee had hoped to have all team members gather in one location in Australia, to compete in the iGeo. This is the preferred protocol set by the International Geographical Union Olympiad Task Force, and it would also have been the best experience for the students. However, lockdowns and border restrictions made this challenging to organise.

2022 Competition: Planning is underway to change the delivery of the Australian Geography Competition from paper-based to online. To prepare for this, a trial competition will be held in September 2021 using the Education Perfect platform. A total of 58 schools from urban and country areas will take part in the trial and feedback will be sought from teachers.

Collections Committee

Members: R Cook (Convenor), R Carlisle, J Graham, P Griggs, P Lloyd, N McManimm, L Darii

Rob Cook took over as Convenor of the Collections Committee in early 2021. The Committee met four times during the year. Focus areas have been:

- The completion of work funded by the Preservation Needs Analysis grant and submission of the report to Community Heritage Grants (CHG) and acquittal of funds



Conservationists undertaking the preservation needs assessment of RGSQ's collections

- Investigations leading towards a collections catalogue that can be accessed by members via the web, and potentially by a wider audience via the National Library of Australia Trove system
- An implementation plan for the various areas of collections
- work that takes into account the recommendations of the CHG funded project reports

Led by the committee, RGSQ submitted an application for a CHG Conservation Activities and Collections Management grant to assist the Society with urgent preservation activities and with the move to a member-accessible catalogue.

Reports for the special interest groups of the Collections Committee follow.

Archives Group P Griggs, P Lloyd

During 2020/2021 efforts focused upon allocating unsorted documents to files in the appropriate archival boxes, checking archival box lists for comprehensiveness and finishing the overview document which describes the Society's archival collection. These tasks are nearly completed. A university researcher in mid-2021 expressed interest in using some of the Society's archival material on Carnarvon National Park. This request prompted the development of an "Access Agreement for the RGSQ Ltd's Archival collection". This form outlines the policies and conditions applying to the use of the Society's archival material. The next major tasks will be to devise a way to archive the Society's growing amount of digital and electronic records and to secure funding to begin digitizing the Society's most valuable and fragile documents.

Artefacts Group P Lloyd

Society Images: A comprehensive report on the Society's image collection was completed in March 2021 and is now being used to prioritize management options for the resource. Any member interested in the Society's images is welcome to participate in this process.

Society artefacts: The various artefacts have been identified and described in a spreadsheet. In March 2021 the artefacts were assessed in the external Preservation Needs Assessment funded through a Commonwealth Heritage Grant. This report is now helping to drive decisions aimed at improving management of the collection, for example, improving access to members.

Library Group J Graham, N McManimm

Work has continued on ensuring that all books are catalogued onto our system. This project is now complete in readiness for our proposed move to a new internet-accessible, multi-user system. Work has also started on cataloguing some of our monographic series, currently held with the serials, as books onto our computer system starting with the Department of Primary Industries Shire Handbooks.

Map Collection Group R Carlisle, P Nunan

Identification and digital listing of historical and heritage maps in the Society's collection continued in anticipation of the Society establishing an online catalogue for its collections including the estimated 8000-9000 maps. Following the delivery of the Preservation Needs Assessment Report, steps have been taken to improve the storage and preservation of historical and heritage maps pending clarification of future directions. This has resulted in some re-organisation of the map collection.

Finance Committee

Members: A Lau (Chair), C Spriggs, I Harding, I Childs, L Darii

The Finance Committee provides financial guidance to the Society's Treasurer and Council and meets during the year regarding budget, financing, and investments. The committee has updated the Society's investment strategy paper, reviewed the AGC allocation and investment portfolio management strategy this year. The committee thanks John Nowill for his many years of service as he stepped down from the committee in February 2021.

Honours Committee

Members: D Wadley (Chair), J Holmes, L Isdale, D Cook

Fellowship Recommendation: After several email exchanges in late spring of 2020, the Committee moved unanimously (and enthusiastically) to recommend *Ms Kath Berg*, a long-term member and supporter of the RGSQ, for a Fellowship award in 2021.

Meetings: For reasons set out immediately below, no formal meetings were either necessary or held during 2021, though Honours Committee members were well advised of the awards night on 1 June 2021. It is anticipated that the Committee will resume its normal arrangements later in 2021 to assess possible medal and fellowship award(s) for 2022.

Thomson Medal 2020-21: David Wadley and John Holmes attended the preceding dinner for Thomson medalist Dr Alaric Maude and his lecture at the Society's rooms which took place after David Wadley had presented him with the Thomson Medal. It was decided not to recommend a Thomson medal award for 2021 because the 2020 recipient, *Dr Alaric Maude*, was able to come to Brisbane to deliver an address and receive his 2020 award on 1 June 2021. The 2021 round was therefore withheld due to the COVID pandemic of 2020-2021.

Comment: During 2020, Leo Scanlan resigned from the Honours Committee and his replacement is recommended. Perhaps a female member of the Society could step into the role.

Property Committee

Members: P Tonkin (Chair), D Stephens, N O'Connor

The Property Committee applied itself to maintaining the RGSQ premises and also making substantive improvements to WH&S, on-line meeting capability and other amenities.

Webcam: COVID -19 caused an almost complete cessation of the ability to host lectures, and special interest group in-person meetings at Gregory Place. It was realized that if RGSQ was to serve its members and continue to deliver lectures and other presentations we would need to do this online. A webcam was purchased and this has enabled RGSQ to present and hold meetings through ZOOM

Defibrillator: The Property Committee was successful in obtaining a grant through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF) to purchase a defibrillator. As chance had it the model chosen was on sale by the time the grant was awarded leaving excess funds from the grant. RGSQ was able to have six staff and volunteers trained in First Aid through Australia Wide First Aid, with the remaining funds. Those trained were Jeanette Lamont, Lilia Darii, Rachel Honey, Ian Harding, Daphne Stephens and Pamela Tonkin

Grant application: The Property Committee unsuccessfully applied through the office of our local member, Trevor Evans for a grant from the Australian Government's Stronger Communities Programme. Another version of that grant application was submitted to the Queensland Government's Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF) in April 2021, requesting funds to improve lighting and up-grade presentation facilities. Notification was received in August 2021 that this grant had been successful

Electrical: There have been problems with the office lighting. Silvio's Electricals, the electrician used by RGSQ, has advised that because the lights are all on one switch this results in a heavy load. The Property Committee have included replacement lighting in the grant from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF) which has been approved in August 2021

StrataCare: Lift - StrataCare contracted for the removal of asbestos from the brakes in the building's lift, and an engineering audit on the lift which has recommended a full replacement. The Body Corporate Committee is now investigating options for the lift replacement - an undertaking which will see the building without a lift for up to 2-3 months and cost between \$180,000 and \$200,000.

Other items: The WH&S manual and The Disaster Preparedness Plan were both completed. A replacement hand trolley was purchased in time to cope with the heavy loads of materials associated with The Australian Geography Competition.

Publications Committee

Members: I Childs (Chair), J Corcoran, I Harding, K Rees

The Publications committee was pleased to be able to complete two projects in the 2nd half of 2020:

- **The inaugural RGSQ photographic competition** of Queensland Geographical landscapes. Fifteen RGSQ members submitted a total of 45 images. The Committee met on 8th September to judge the entrants and 3 prizes were awarded: First prize, a 2-night accommodation package at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat, won by Stuart Watt; 2nd prize 1-year free RGSQ membership won by Roger Grimley; 3rd prize a bottle of the best red wine won by John Tasker.
- **The RGSQ 2021 calendar** using the best images from the photo competition. The calendar went on sale in October 2020 and a profit of \$438 was made for the Society.

Meetings: The committee met several times in August and September 2020 and again on March 30 2021. Matters discussed included planning the 2021 photographic competition; updating the history of RGSQ from 1985; sale of surplus books and digital versions of the Scientific Expedition reports on the RGSQ website. The committee is exploring possible funding opportunities for future projects.

Scientific Studies Committee

Members: I Childs (Chair), P Moss, A Lau, P Nunn, K Scott, T Sigler

- **Stradbroke Island project:** Following the Committee's resolve in September 2019 to develop a scientific study on Stradbroke Island, unfortunately the project has not been able to proceed mostly due to COVID restrictions in 2020. Stradbroke Island was off-limits to the public for much of 2020. Members of the Scientific Studies committee have strong research links to Stradbroke Is. In early March 2021 Patrick Moss met with QYAC (Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation) representatives on Stradbroke Is and ascertained that QYAC continues to support collaboration with RGSQ for a research project.
- **Field mapping and GIS database capture of cultural sites:** It is still the intention to focus on sites initially around Dunwich - middens, indigenous place-names, dreaming stories, convict history – and possible impacts of sea-level rise on coastal communities. This research would include work by both physical and human Geographers and provide opportunities for RGSQ members and university students to volunteer in the project along a "Citizen Science" pathway. In June 2021 Council approved a budget for Stage 1 of the project: a 2-day (overnight) reconnaissance visit to Stradbroke Island by 4 committee members for a follow-up meeting with QYAC and scoping of the study to identify mapping sites. It is hoped that progress can be made in the 2nd half of 2021.

Treks and Activities Committee (TAAC)

Members: W Mackenzie and C Spriggs (Co-chairs), J Lamont (Secretary), M Comer and B Reid

TAAC has had an interesting and eventful year, however many advertised activities were either limited in numbers, cancelled or postponed until a safer time due to Covid 19. Most events were filled very quickly but participants needed to be able to attend the rescheduled times. We aimed to vary the means of travel and destinations in Brisbane and Regional areas of Queensland.

Date	Activity	Coordinator	Comments
14 July 2020	Christmas in July Maleny	Jeanette Lamont	Bus trip rescheduled to 26 July
2 September 2020	Spicer's Gap Walk	Bob Reid	Self-Drive; rescheduled from March, successful
16 September 2020	Scenic Rim Boonah and Mt French	Mary Comer	Self-Drive; postponed
22 October 2020	Binna Burra walk	Mary Comer	Self-Drive; road just open after bushfires; great success
10 November 2020	Southbank Land Use changes	Mary Comer	Well supported
5 December 2020	Christmas BBQ Lunch at Grey Gum picnic area Mt Coot-tha Sausage sizzle and Christmas cake	TAAC committee and RGSQ Council	Very successful; well supported
2 February 2021	Welcome Night	Committees and Council	Cancelled
5 March 2021	Herbarium Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens	Chris Spriggs	Over filled with wait list; very successful
7 April 2021	St Lawrence's Urban Farm and Boggo Road Goal	Wayne Mackenzie	Very interesting; inspired by a previous monthly lecture
24 April 2021	No 2 Herbarium Mt Coot-tha Botanic	Jeanette Lamont	Another successful event; fully booked

	Gardens		
7 May 2021	Summerland Camel Dairy Harrisville	Jeanette Lamont	Self-Drive; fully booked
22 June 2021	RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre and Workshops Rail Museum	Ron Owen	Bus trip; rescheduled from 2020; well supported

Unfortunately, the major trek to the Lambert Centre, which had been fully booked and organised, had to be cancelled.



*RGSQ group at RAAF Amberley
Aviation Heritage Centre, June 2021;
courtesy of Ron Owen.*

Two Committee members have notified their intention to resign at the end this year - Wayne Mackenzie and Mary Comer. We thank them for their time and commitment over many years. They have organized many very interesting trips and will be missed. Thankfully two new members will join the Committee: Ralph Carlisle and Roger Grimley.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Map Group

Members: L Lowry, N McManimm and K Rees (Co-chairs)

RGSQ Map Group has been able to hold several events during the last financial year 2020-2021. We were able to manage the new technology of Zoom with only one cancellation and one postponement due to Covid restrictions.

- In August 2020 our 2-day trip to Boonah to explore and find out more about the Dixon Line, was able to cater for 22 members. A huge shout-out to Neville McManimm for organising this.
- In October, our guest speaker, Greg Hallam, spoke via Zoom from his office in Toowoomba. This was a combined event holding the webinar at the office with 8 members attending in person, while 14 members viewed it online.
- To finish off the year, once again Map Group held a Show'n'Tell where its members brought along some very interesting items for discussion. This is becoming one of the highlights of Map Group's year.

In 2021:

- In April Map Group member, Neal O'Connor, provided the group with an interesting talk on "My Explorer", whose identity wasn't revealed until the end of the presentation.
- In May, RGSQ President, Iraphne Childs, presented an enjoyable informative talk on Polynesian Navigators including a display. This also was available via Zoom and also later via YouTube.
- Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions, "The Challenges of Town Planning" talk planned to be given by Daphne Stephens scheduled for June, had to be postponed due to COVID restrictions.



Map Group presentation "My Explorer" March 2021. Courtesy of Kay Rees



Map Group presentation: Polynesian Navigators, June 2021

The Map Group Committee of Len Lowry, Neville McManimm & Kay Rees have enjoyed the challenges presented during this past year and look forward to hosting more mapping events in the coming months.

Young Geographers Group

Members: J Tasker, G Pickering (Co-chairs)

RGSQ Young Geographers Group continues to take an active role in promoting geography to students and early-career geographers. In response to ongoing restrictions, many of the group's activities shifted online or became hybrid events. Key events for the year included an extremely successful documentary evening, presentations at the GTAQ Conference, and the annual Young Geographers Forum. Looking into 2022, there is significant potential for growth and further collaboration to promote geography across Queensland.

KEN SUTTON TRUST

Trustees: I Childs, C Spriggs, J Tasker

Selection Committee members: I Childs (Chair), D Cook, A Lau, A Powell (MLA)

The Ken Sutton trust provides a platform for the best Geographical research and/or Geographical education work in Australia by an Australian geographer. During 2021 the Society has again been seeking legal advice to simplify the Trust Deed and process when a change of trustees becomes necessary and to regularise operation of the Trust.

The 2020 Ken Sutton Trust awardee was ***Prof. Ian Rutherford***, School of Geography, University of Melbourne. Professor Rutherford's multi-disciplinary work on river systems management, both within Australia and in China, and also his involvement and support of high-school Geography in Victoria aligned very well with the objectives of the Sutton Trust. Due to the situation in 2020 with COVID-19 in Victoria and restrictions on travel to Queensland at the time, Professor Rutherford presented his lecture via zoom on 6th October 2020.

ADDRESSING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Council, staff and members continue to address the objectives of the Society's Strategic Plan, contributing to our five broad strategic objectives.

1. *Engaging people in Geography – To continue to offer a range of services and opportunities for the Society's members to participate in, engage with and enjoy Geography through daytime activities; short and long treks within Australia and overseas; evening lectures; scientific expeditions; and opportunities to be involved with activities that support the promotion of Geography.*

- The **lecture program** has attracted good audiences with both in-house presentations where possible and online via zoom, the latter mode reaching a wider audience across members who are unable to travel to Brisbane and some further afield across Queensland. Topics ranged from Brisbane urban development, mapping pest animals, difficulties in presenting weather information and megafauna extinctions. In June the annual Thomson oration was presented by Professor Alaric Maude from Adelaide in both modes in-person at the RGSQ Premises and via zoom.
- The **Map Group** program of presentations and hands-on activities have continued to provide opportunities for member participation.
- **Map Group and TAAC** resumed some excellent overnight and day treks in Southeast Queensland from late August 2020 through to June 2021 following Qld Health guidelines
- The **Young Geographers Group** has helped to engage younger geographers and professionals with the Society with through various activities and social media
- The monthly **Bulletin** continues to present reports from the office, Council and special interest groups. Featured articles include *Focus on Geographical Research* bringing news of recent scientific and geographic endeavors from around Australia; 'Geographers in the Spotlight' celebrates noted achievements of geographers and "Get to know your Councillor" provides personal insights and backgrounds from new Councillors
- The **Member Connect** newsletter was introduced in April 2020 and continued until August 2020 including *Letters from the homefront*, *Geographical quizzes*, *Geofacts* and interesting online resources as an initiative to provide light relief and engage members during the COVID-19 lockdown period
- A new segment was added into the Bulletin each month **What's Happening on Council** – a summary of Council deliberations to keep members informed on management and policy decisions

2. *Enhancing membership – To understand, appreciate and strengthen the Society's membership bonds and to widen the membership base, as the foundation of a vibrant and successful Society.*

- The **President's welfare phone calls** throughout lockdowns of 2020 and times of restricted movement assisted in keeping in contact with Society members, updating them on Society initiatives and encouraging them to maintain their involvement with RGSQ
- The **Photographic competition and publication of the 2021 calendar**, featuring winning photo entries, raised the profile of RGSQ through sales to members and the wider community
- The efforts of the **Young Geographers Groups** have helped to widen the Society's membership base
- The **Archives, Map Collection and Library**, the **Australian Geography Competition**, **Map and Young Geographers special interest groups** have provided opportunities for member volunteer participation
- The increased use of **Facebook** has helped to expand awareness of the Society, particularly through the Society's lecture program. Along with the new RGSQ website capabilities, it is envisaged that greater communication among members will result from more use of social media

3. Knowledge and understanding – To promote geographical understanding amongst the Society's members and the wider community, to advance geographical knowledge.

- The **Scientific Studies Committee's** research proposal to engage with the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation (QYAC) on Stradbroke Island to conduct a Scientific Study based in initially around Dunwich plans to include a citizen science component which could incorporate participation by members and the public
- **Map Group** has offered a consistently wide variety of topics and excellent presentations available to members and the public e.g. *Who am I: Explorer?*, *Polynesian Navigators*, and *Challenges of Town Planning* (postponed until later in 2021)
- The **Australian Geography Competition** with its associated events Geography's Big Week Out (usually a field work type exercise) and Australia's participation in the International Geography Olympiad continue to be excellent avenues to advance geographical knowledge in secondary schools

4. Growing our reputation – To further build the Society's profile and reputation, nationally and internationally, reinforcing and publicizing its role as a leader amongst related societies and a partner of choice in geographical endeavours.

- The Society has continued its membership and participation on the **Australian Academy of the Sciences, National Committee for Geographical Sciences (NCGS)**. This enables RGSQ to increase the Society's profile within the wider geographical sciences community. The President, Dr Iraphne Childs, has represented RGSQ at the NCGS meetings in 2020 and 2021.
- The Society is a member of the **Queensland Science Network (QSN)**, has a dedicated page on the QSN website, contributes notices of RGSQ events to the QSN Newsletter and collaborates in various ways with the Royal Society of Queensland.
- RGSQ and has been invited and represented on various occasions at **Government House Queensland**. This enables our Society to strengthen its ties with our Patron, the Governor of Queensland, and with other scientific not-for-profit organisations present at these gatherings
- Links with the **School of Earth and Environmental Sciences (SEES), the University of Queensland** are strong with four RGSQ Council members being teaching and research staff at SEES. Notices of RGSQ events are included in the monthly SEES Newsletter.

5. Securing the future – To enable a robust future for the Society, by increasing income sustainability, using technology effectively, and enhancing staff capabilities. To support the Society's activities, through the effective use of good business practices and evolving technologies.

- The economic difficulties due to COVID-19 continues to have serious implications for the Society's financial resources. A high priority is being placed on **securing more future income** through a different model for our travel programs and through grants. Our Business Manager, Lilia Darii, and Society committees continue to investigate a wide range of private and government funding opportunities to increase and supplement the Society's funds.
- Continual **upgrading of the Society's information technology, data storage and presentation facilities** results in communication and booking efficiencies, addresses cybersecurity by implementing appropriate measures and ongoing improvements in data management. Thanks to Graham Rees and Lilia Darii for continually monitoring, updating and improving the Society's website and monitoring our IT systems.

THE 2021-2022 YEAR AHEAD

The uncertainty surrounding the on-going situation with COVID-19 across Australia and the world means that RGSQ will need to remain vigilant in the year ahead adhering to health advice and regulations, particularly given the demographic profile of our members in the older age-groups. It is hoped that things will improve as the vaccination rollout continues. We will, however, maintain Society operations and strive to continue to offer RGSQ activities as far as possible.

The Society is, indeed, well placed to make positive progress in several ways. The incoming Council for 2021-2022 will comprise mostly re-nominating Councillors and two new Councillors who altogether provide continuity, wide-ranging expertise and fresh ideas to critical deliberations. Council has a good mix of academic, professional and business expertise on board to lead the Society going forward.

In the year ahead efforts will be focused on projects targeted to increase income and membership to secure the Society's future. For example:

- Exploring financially beneficial arrangements with local travel companies, initially for domestic tourism and, as international borders open up, resuming RGSQ international travel
- Procuring grants for RGSQ projects e.g. Scientific Studies, Collections and Publications
- Continuing to stream lecture programs and presentations online to reach a wider audience
- Moving the Australian Geography Competition to digital format in 2022
- Re-establishing and expanding links between RGSQ and Binna Burra Lodge
- Exploring avenues for more sponsored articles and advertising arrangements for the *Bulletin*
- Investigating opportunities for presenting more lectures on the Sunshine Coast

Finally, on a personal note.....

As President of RGSQ I have served in this role for the past four years (2017-2021). Under our Constitution no member shall serve more than four consecutive one-year terms as President and so I shall be stepping down from this role at the forthcoming AGM. If elected, I will continue to serve as a Councillor for the coming year.

I am humbly and continually grateful to the Society's membership for having afforded me the opportunity to be the President. It has been a tremendous privilege, honour and pleasure for me to have served in this role for two terms – my previous term was 2003-2005. I sincerely thank all who have assisted me on Council, volunteer members and office staff through major changes in the Society's structure and management, through some difficult times and some great achievements over the past four years.

I wish the incoming President every success in leading the Society going forward, with a very collegiate, supportive and wise Council.

On behalf of the Council



Dr Iraphne RW Childs, President

September 23, 2021

APPENDIX

RGSQ Program for the period July 2020 – June 2021

August 2020

TUE 25: Lecture Landscapes of the Ancient Maya:
insights from geoarchaeology, geomorphology, and remote sensing
by Dr. Duncan Cook
WED 12: Activity
Exploring the Scenic Rim Boonah

September 2020

WED Sep 2 & WED 23: Spicers Gap Day Walk
TUE 22: Student Forum

October 2020

TUE 6: Ken Sutton Lecture
Geography at the interface: The science and management of land along rivers
by Prof. Ian Rutherford
WED 14: Special Interest Group - Map Group – Activity
Railway History Presentation
TUE 20: Annual General Meeting – Brisbane
THUS 22: Activity
Binna Burra Walk

November 2020

TUE 3: Lecture
Where to begin with mapping the planet's coral reefs?
by Dr Emma Kennedy
TUE 10: Activity
South bank and land use changes

December 2020

SAT 5: Event
End of Year Christmas Celebration
MON 7: Special Interest Group - Map Group – Activity
End of Year Show and Tell and Social

FEBRUARY 2021

WED 10: Lecture
Why city policy to 'protect the Brisbane backyard' is failing, *by Rachel Gallagher, UQ SEES*

MARCH 2021

TUE 2: Lecture

Mapping Pest Animals – Identifying and Managing Impacts, by *Matthew Ryan, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry*

FRI 5: Activity

Herbarium Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens with Lecture on Arctic Ocean and Antarctica

THU 18: Special Interest Group - Map Group

My Explorer

APRIL 2021

WED 7: Activity

St Lawrence Urban Farm & Boggo Road Gaol

TUE 13: Lecture **Difficulties of communicating**

weather, by *Kate Doyle, ABC*

SAT 24: Activity

Herbarium Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens with Lecture on Arctic Ocean and Antarctica

MAY 2021

TUE 4: Lecture

Mega fauna extinction – a palynological perspective from eastern Australia, by *Prof Patrick Moss, UQ*

FRI 7: Activity

Visit to Summer Land Camel Dairy, Harrisville

TUE 11: Special Interest Group - Map Group

Polynesian Navigators presentation

JUNE 2021

TUE 1: Lecture

Thomson Oration: What makes Geography powerful? by *Prof Alaric Maude*

TUE 22: Activity

Amberley Museum RAAF Base and North Ipswich Railway Workshops Museum