



RGSQ Bulletin

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In this issue

- Lecture - Social Sustainability, Crime Prevention and Design
- Trek - Gayndah Bridges
- Trek - Elanda Point
- Social - Travel and Tucker: Croatia and Slovenia
- Trek - Gold, Grampians and Great Outdoors

From the President

When the Australian Tourism Commission sits down to promote Australia, the promotion of our very own iconic animals is always near the top of the agenda. A conservative economic evaluation related to tourism estimates that the koala alone creates over 9000 jobs and contributes an estimated \$1.1 to \$2.5 billion per year to Australia. I note Oprah Winfrey was presented with a koala when she visited Hamilton Island during her adventure Down Under at the end of last year.

I might draw your attention to 'Road to Survival Now Field of Battle' (*Sunday Mail* 24 April). Developers warn 'endangered' koala will cost jobs. The Urban Development Institute of Australia has related to a Senate inquiry that further protection of koalas was premature and would cost much-needed jobs.

It's hard to imagine the UDIA would suggest 'protection of koalas was premature'. I would suggest greed was the driving force for development as there is certainly no lack of research papers related to available sound scientific evidence that the number of koalas is in sharp decline.

Surely it's about time koalas had the protection of the endangered species act. In the distant past these rather beautiful animals were shot for the fur trade. In 1919, Queensland had an open season and 1 million koalas were shot. (Information: Australian Koala Foundation submission to the Senate Committee of Inquiry into the status, health and sustainability of Australia's koala.) Current clearing practices, land fragmentation, and past unfettered urban sprawl are no less lethal for koalas today than the rather destructive practices of the distant past.

In March's President's Message I mentioned and commented on the Carbon Tax debate currently raging in the media in Australia. This too is related to the 'Road to Survival now Field of Battle' mentioned in my second paragraph.

The Koala, Sustainability, Tourism, Biodiversity, Forestry, Urban Development, and Carbon Tax – all are inter-related. It's obvious that if the koala is in sharp decline as a result of current development practices then other aspects of our rich biodiversity are also suffering, and sustainability is just a catch word and is not taken seriously by many in our community.

Reading the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) website they raise a number of interesting points. (www.savethekoala.com). I'm sure you are familiar with the AKF slogan 'No Tree No Me' which appears from time to time in advertisements in our daily newspapers and magazines. From the AKF point of view suitable

forest sustainability (large numbers of suitable fodder tree species) is essential if the koala is to survive. The AKF also argues that we should be protecting our 'carbon vault' that is already locked up, instead of mooting incentives to redress current destructive trends.

Since 1788, nearly 65% of the koala forests of Australia have been cleared – over 116 million hectares. The remaining 41 million hectares remains under threat from land clearing for agriculture, urban development and unsustainable forestry.

The AKF indicates that knowing and mapping every tree on the Australian landscape is not actually impossible, and further that AKF's current data comes close to doing just that. On 31 March, KoalaMap was launched at www.savethekoala.com. Related information presented to the Senate Inquiry by the AKF was also reported on this website, and in the *Courier Mail* in following weeks. You might like to log in and see whether you live in a koala habitat area. The

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submission by the Australian Koala Foundation to the Inquiry into the status, health and sustainability of Australia's koala population is informative and interesting reading.

While it's still too early to comment on the fine print related to how Australia's Carbon Tax will actually work, protecting what's left of Australia's forests and koala habitat would certainly be a step in the right direction.

Before winding up I would briefly like to comment on 'La Nina officially over but scientists warn of more extreme weather' (*Courier Mail* 17 May). An International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scientists' meeting on the Gold Coast warned of more radical weather events to come.

IPCC lead author Neville Nicholls of Monash University said Australians were well aware of Victoria's Black Saturday bushfires, in which 173 people died and 414 were injured.

The stark reality of the fires as reported in the media probably masked the number of elderly who died in the heat wave preceding the fires. At least 100 people died in Melbourne alone in scorching 43°C temperatures that lasted for 3 days, and many more died in South Australia and northern Tasmania. The Panel's report to world governments was assessing the connection between cyclones, floods, droughts, heatwaves and fire, and "what needs to be done to adapt to these extreme events".

Following the Victorian fires, and later on Queensland's summer of disaster, Australians can only hope next year won't be a return to the El Nino drought conditions of the past, nor a repeat of the catastrophic La Nina floods and cyclones experienced in Queensland either.

Leo Scanlan

Rocks and Landscapes

These books are now available at the Society for those who ordered them. Please ask for your copy. Members who paid for postage should have received theirs by now.

Lecture – Sustainability, Crime Prevention & Design

The June presentation will be delivered by John Byrne on the topic: *Social Sustainability, Crime Prevention and Urban Design*.

Talk of "triple bottom line sustainability" is common enough today but, unlike the physical environmental and economic strands, the ideas and strategies for social sustainability seem much more vague or ignored. Increasingly, however, a body of knowledge and practice relating to designing the built environment to create safer places and communities has been evolving and given statutory status. John Byrne will discuss this "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" (CPTED) and go on to canvass other evolving or speculative connections between the design of cities and the social well-being of people and societies.

John Byrne has degrees in architecture, history/politics and urban planning, and has been centrally involved with award-winning town centre, social housing and neighbourhood development over some decades. A former Director: Urban Design and Planning with Queensland Housing, he has been a consultant for the last five years, providing advice to a wide range of state and local government agencies and private organisations. The author of the Queensland Government's award-winning CPTED guidelines, he has been, since the mid 1990s, an Adjunct Professor at QUT and a invited lecturer, assessor or keynote speaker at other universities and conferences.

Gayndah Bridges, 17-21 June

The Gayndah area contains several of the most fascinating and different railway bridges in Queensland. We are aiming to visit seven of these bridges, designed by William Pagan and built between 1905 and 1914. The view of the surrounding country and watching the sunset with a glass or two from Mt Gayndah is a must; as is a visit to the museum where the enthusiastic curators have restored many items to working order. Gayndah is noted for its mandarins

and lemons so we'll visit a working citrus farm (no picking required).

The RGSQ cost for the trip is \$15 per person or \$10 per child. Please book and pay the office. We have arranged motel / caravan / camping accommodation, but you **must book this yourself**. Because of this year's late picking season we suggest you book in as early as possible and mention that you are with RGSQ. Prices are \$19 per night per camp/caravan site (powered) and \$74 per night per couple/twin room. Contact:

Karin & Tom Marinucci
Manda-Inn, 11-15 Dalgangal Rd,
Gayndah 4625
Tel: 4161 1911
Email: mandainn@bigpond.com

For more information email
GrahamRees@wombatshollow.com

Elanda Point

If the kids or grandkids are bored during the school holidays, here's an opportunity to keep them occupied and active.

When: Fri 1 July - Sun 3 July
Accommodation: At Elanda Point.
Tent or caravan sites \$9 per person per night. No powered sites and no BBQs. No site bookings are taken.
Facilities: toilets and hot showers; canoes, kayaks and wave skis for hire (or BYO small boat)
Bring: sunsafe gear, warm gear, water bottle, walking shoes that can get muddy, bathers, insect repellent, all food and camping requirements, torch (for tunnel walk)
Meet: 10.30am Fri 1 Jul at Mooloolah Railway Station, or,
10.00am Sat 2 Jul at Elanda Point
Book: with the office by 21 June, including payment for boat cruise option (\$30 see below). Please indicate if you are joining on Friday or Saturday. Pay camping fees direct on arrival.

On Friday morning we'll visit Dularcha National Park and walk to, and through, an historic curved railway tunnel, 100 m long and cut in 1890 – about 3.5 km return walk. Then we'll drive to Elanda Point.

On Saturday we'll set off from Elanda at about 10.30 am. The energetic can hire canoes and paddle to Kinaba NP information centre. The less energetic can walk via Mill Point and perhaps a bird hide – about 5 km return.

Sunday morning, hire a canoe, swim, fish, just laze or take another walk. We may be able to take a trip across the lake by motorboat and walk to Mt Seawah for a view of the ocean and Teewah Beach. It's fairly steep and is about a 2 hour return walk. The boat holds 12 people and would cost \$30 per person. We need a full boat to make this viable.

After Sunday lunch at the historic Apollonian Hotel at Boreen Point, take a stroll on the beach, then it's back to Brisbane with a detour to climb Wild Horse Mountain lookout for fantastic views across the coast and inland to the Glasshouse Mts.

I have space for one person in my car or tent. For that, or for other queries, ring me on 3283 4494 or 0438 159 218.

Audrey Johnston

Gov't House Open Day

Sunday 6 June, 10.00am - 3.00pm
168 Fernberg Road, Paddington

A Community Fair of Queensland and volunteer organisations will provide a fantastic festival atmosphere, with musical entertainment, displays and activities to enjoy and refreshments available for purchase, or bring a picnic. Explore Government House (get a ticket from the booth on arrival). Take a guided tour of the wonderful gardens at 10.30am, 12.00 noon or 1.30 pm. Offsite parking is available.

Don't forget to visit the RGSQ display. If you can help staff this, please ring David Carstens on 3848 5649.

Travel and Tucker – Croatia and Slovenia

What: Nibbles and drinks, a 3-course meal and a slide presentation and talk about these two countries

When: Fri 22 Jul, 6:00pm for 6:30pm

Where: RGSQ

Cost: \$35.00

Book: with the office and pay by 5 July. Numbers are limited so book and pay early. No late booking will be accepted because of catering.

In the summer of 2005, I travelled through Croatia and Slovenia, situated along the east coast of the Adriatic Sea. Each country has its own special personality. Such a contrast of environments – beaches and rocky shores, with lots of nearby islands; coastal plains and cultivation; wetlands; limestone escarpments and caves; thermal regions; forests; spring and summer flowers; Alps and national parks, including Plitvice with 16 lakes and 92 waterfalls. All this contrasting with limestone karst gorges of Paklenika National Park. Much walking and much ... puffing.

Then there were the walled cities, ruins of fortresses, Diocletian's 4th century AD palace, monasteries and churches, magnificent architecture and so much more, much more.

Bring you friends and introduce them to your Society.

Audrey Johnston

Gold, Grampians & Great Outdoors

Only 13 places available.

What: 17 days in Victoria

When: Thurs 13 Oct - Sat 29 Oct

Transport: 25-seater mini bus

Accommodation: self-contained cabins

Geography, geology, history, magnificent Victorian architecture, Chinese artifacts, Botanic Gardens, State and National parks, the Grampians, Aboriginal art sites, underground tours, many mining ruins and gold, gold, gold!!!

Brief Itinerary:

13 Oct - Fly to Melbourne. Melbourne to Ballarat to begin exploration. O/N Ballarat.

14 Oct - Ballarat, Creswick, Daylesford and Hepburn Springs, Mount Franklin, Guildford, Castlemaine. 3 nights Castlemaine

15 - 16 Oct - Explore Castlemaine,

south to Kyneton and west to Maldon.

17 Oct - To Bendigo via Harcourt, Mt Alexander. 4 nights Bendigo.

18 - 19 Oct - Talking Tram Pass and exploring Bendigo in depth.

20 Oct - Explore Bendigo environs

21 Oct - Via Inglewood, Rheola, Moliagul, Dunolly, Timor and Maryborough. O/N Maryborough

22 Oct - Explore Maryborough then via Avoca and Stawell to Halls Gap. 4 nights Halls Gap.

23 - 25 Oct - Explore the Grampians, Stawell and Brambuk Cultural Centre

26 Oct - Via Ararat, 2 state parks and Beaufort to Ballarat. 3 nights Ballarat.

27 Oct - Sovereign Hill and "Blood on the Southern Cross"

28 Oct - Continue to explore Ballarat

29 Oct - Return to Melbourne for flight home.

Maps and further details are on the RGSQ notice board. Comprehensive passenger notes are available from the office or on the website: www.rgsq.org.au.

Cost: \$2600.00. Includes transport in Victoria, accommodation, breakfasts, morning teas, a couple of lunches, "happy hour", 2-course dinners and admission to attractions listed. **Excludes** airfares to/from Melbourne, bedding and towels in some cabins (BYO or hire at own expense), admissions to extra attractions of your choice.

Book with the office as soon as possible as numbers are limited. Bookings close on 19 August. Include a non-refundable (unless trip is cancelled by RGSQ) deposit of \$600.00. A Booking Form is available from the office. The balance of \$2000.00 is due by 5 September 2011.

The bus is a 25-seater with restricted luggage space (stored inside the bus). Luggage is limited to a soft bag (eg duffle bag) no more than 60 cm long and 15 kg, plus a sleeping bag and a day bag.

Accommodation is in 6-berth self-contained cabins, with 4 people per cabin. Following our usual custom everyone will help with food shopping, food preparation and clean-up.

Members will need to make their own airline bookings once we confirm the trip has the minimum number to go ahead. If you want to travel with the group, rather than meet us at Melbourne airport, we'll be travelling from Brisbane to Melbourne on QF 609 6.55am 13 Oct, and returning QF 620 2.05pm 29 Oct (or extend your stay after the trek).

A trek briefing will be held at 6.45 pm on 5 September, prior to the AGM.

For further information phone me on 3283 4494 until about 11.30 am on most mornings.

Audrey Johnston

New Members

We have much pleasure in welcoming Madelon Sutcliffe as a new member. We hope your association with your new Society is long and mutually enjoyable. We look forward to getting to know you at Society functions.

Lake Eyre

Graham and Kay Rees are planning a private trip to Marree and William Creek with a view to the dipping of toes into Lake Eyre around Sep/Oct. If anyone is interested in joining us for any part of such a venture email Graham@wombatshollow.com.

Flinders Ranges Trails

You may not be aware that our sister Society, the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia, develops and maintains walking tracks in the Flinders Ranges. These activities offer further opportunities for links between our Societies. RGSSA is planning field exercises 20 Jun - 1 Jul and 25 Jul - 5 Aug. Details are at www.walkingtrailssupportgroup.org.au. If you are interested in joining these activities, please contact them directly. The RGSQ Treks and Activities Committee would be interested in hearing from anyone planning to join in these activities, including reporting on them after they have participated. *Brian McGrath*

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June 2011

Open Day, Sun 5 June
What: RGSQ display at Government House

National Final, Mon 6 June, 11.00am
For: Australian Geography Competition
Where: Foxtel Studios, Sydney

Lecture, Tues 7 June, 7.30pm
Speaker: John Byrne
Subject: Social Sustainability, Crime Prevention and Urban Design

Short Trek, 17-21 June
What: Gayndah Bridges

Weekend Trek, 1-3 July
Where: Elanda Point, Lake Cootharaba

Lecture, Tues 5 Jul, 7.30pm
Speaker: Nick Murray
Subject: Pest Eradication on Macquarie Is.

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