



# RGSQ Bulletin

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## From the President

On Monday morning, 16 April, 19 members of RGSQ including myself embark on our trek to Southern Africa, so I'm writing my 'From the President' prior to our departure.

As well as our common interest in all things geographical, I'm sure, somewhere along the way, we will be confronted with what's on show regarding the sustainability of communities and their impact on the biological diversity in this part of the world. I will report on our Trek in next month's *Bulletin*.

## Closer to home

On opening *The Courier Mail QWeekend* this morning, I applaud the editorial feature, ('Our Fading Emblem', p. 18) for highlighting, and at the same time express my dismay at, the continuing demise of the koala. This month our Federal Environment Minister, Tony Burke, is expected to announce his verdict on whether the koala will be listed as a threatened species under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

During my term as president of RGSQ, and immediately before, the term 'sustainability' has surfaced in

the *RGSQ Bulletin* on at least 10 occasions.

When we look at the plight of our diminishing koalas, we might also couple that with coal seam gas developments in Queensland and elsewhere and the demise of prime agricultural land, the Gladstone Harbour environmental meltdown, and planned development of port facilities and heavier traffic within shipping lanes inside the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. All these issues are related to our continued prosperity and the sustainability of the environment we live in and if managed properly ensure a very sustainable tourism industry.

Fifteen years ago respected economist Clive Hamilton estimated koalas generated \$1.1 billion in annual tourism revenue (*QWeekend* p. 22) and foreign tourists he surveyed nominated the creature as the animal they most wanted to see during their stay in Australia. I've no reason to expect if surveyed again, opinions would have changed.

Later in the year in November, we are to host Ms Deborah Tabart at RGSQ for our monthly lecture. Ms Tabart is the driving force in the emergence of the Australian Koala Foundation as an internationally recognized scientific organization. Her subject for the lecture is: "The Koala Habitat Atlas: How Good Mapping Can Save Koalas". I urge you to click on the internet and log onto the Australian Koala Foundation *Aussie Icon Under Threat* <http://au.news.yahoo.com/today-tonight/lifestyle>.

## Importance of applied biology in maintaining our rich biodiversity

Following last month's President's message where I referred to 'Hunting Utopia' and early acclimatization practices in both Australia and New Zealand, it was interesting to see over the ensuing couple of weeks a report in *The Courier Mail* March 17-18, 'Not feeling fantastic now are you Mr Fox?', related to foxes having been seen in many of the suburbs of Brisbane and their impact on smaller (below 5kg) local fauna. Reportedly this has resulted in localized extinctions of ground dwelling mammals in some cases.

On the same day in *The Weekend Professional* (behind the job ad) section of *The Weekend Australian*, the concept of sustainability of local flora and fauna and the importance of research into applied ecology with the aim of helping to preserve Australia's biodiversity, was highlighted when recruiting a new assistant professor to bolster the study of population genetics/conservation biology at the University of Canberra.

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While not the only culprit, The European Red Fox (*Fighting foxes and ferals*), was again singled out for attention. The study of the Red Fox in Tasmania is just one example of a specific reason to undertake research to manage this issue and ensure the survival of many different native species.

Mention was also made of the farming and irrigation industries, and the importance of research projects (using population genetics) to ensure the sustainability of the Murray-Darling Basin (Australia's most significant agricultural area) and in managing the environment and the tactics employed there to ensure a sustainable future for the farming and irrigation industries and the people living in the Murray Darling Basin.

Leo Scanlan

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## Thomson Address – Australia's Population

The Thomson Address is named after the Society's founder, Dr James Park Thomson. The 2012 Address will be delivered on 1 May by Prof Graeme Hugo on the topic, *Australia's Population Future: Challenges and Opportunities*.

Australia stands at a turning point in its demographic development and it is crucial that a vision of our future population is developed which takes full account of the best scientific and policy thinking and knowledge but which is also inclusive of the wishes and opinions of all Australians.

The population and immigration debates in Australia have too often been dominated by interest groups and focussed on extreme positions. On the one hand there are those who believe that Australia should increase its population as rapidly as possible and strive to attain a population of more than double current size. On the other there are extreme environmentalists who argue for an immediate cessation of population growth. Both of these extreme positions would have negative consequences for Australia and most Australians.

In fact Australia faces a dilemma. At the same time as we are faced with a clear demand to grow the population to meet the demands of the workforce, replace retiring baby boomers and maintain a balance between our working and non-working populations, we are experiencing the effects of the constraints which environment places on population growth, effects that are likely to be exacerbated by climate change. What Australia needs is a population policy which takes full account of both these elements.

Graeme Hugo is Professor of Geography and Director of the National Centre for Social Application of Geographic Information Systems at the University of Adelaide. His recent research has focussed on population, migration and development, environment and migration, and migration policy. In 2009 he was awarded an Australian Research Council Australian Professorial Fellowship over five years for his research project 'Circular Migration in Asia, the Pacific and Australia: Empirical, Theoretical and Policy Dimensions'. He is currently Chair of the Advisory Committee on Demography and Liveability of the Commonwealth Department of Sustainable Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

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## Scenic Rim Safari

A camping trek around the Scenic Rim is planned from Friday 18 May to Saturday 26 May. Two camping places have been chosen, spending 4 nights at each spot:

- Fri 18 - Mon 21 May: Queen Mary Falls Caravan Park near Killarney offers cabin accommodation as well as camping on powered and unpowered sites
- Tues 22 - Fri 25 May: Mt Warning Rainforest Retreat which has cabins, caravans and powered and unpowered camping sites.

If you wish to participate in the total trek, the RGSQ fee will be \$40 pp and will cover a group BBQ dinner and a group lunch. However, if you only want to join us for one sector or the other, you will be most welcome

and the fee will be \$20 pp. Please book with, and pay the fee to, the RGSQ office **by Monday 14 May**.

There are many places to visit in this area and we will be doing some of the less strenuous walks, taking in the views, partaking of some of the local food but most of all, enjoying peace and quiet away from the city.

Members will need to make and pay for their own bookings for accommodation, online or by phone, mentioning RGSQ (approx. \$30 for a powered site):

- Queen Mary Falls - [www.queenmaryfalls caravanpark.com.au/index.html](http://www.queenmaryfalls caravanpark.com.au/index.html); ph 4664 7151
- Mt Warning Rainforest Park - [www.mtwarningrainforestpark.com/rates](http://www.mtwarningrainforestpark.com/rates); ph 02 6679 5120

It would be worthwhile to make your bookings sooner rather than later.

More information will be emailed to those who register for this trek.

Kay Rees

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## New Members

We have much pleasure in welcoming Graeme Detering 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 events.

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## Gov't House Open Day

Her Excellency, the Governor of Queensland, Ms Penelope Wensley AC has invited the Society to submit an expression of interest to mount a display on Sunday 3 June at Government House on the Open Day to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen and to celebrate Queensland Day.

If you can spare a little time to assist in staffing our stall between 10am and 3pm, please phone the office to volunteer. For any queries, please phone Heather McGrath, 3378 5960.

Brian McGrath

## Volunteers Please

We'll soon be sorting the results of the National Geographic Channel Australian Geography Competition to send back to schools. We had over 79,000 entries from 774 schools this year.

We're calling on our wonderful members to help again. This will be from Tuesday 29 May to Thursday 31 May.

This is the job where you have to walk along a line of certificates and results, matching them by school code. Not to put you off, but this is the job that some opt out of – though the high tables do make the job a bit easier. Please ring Kath at the office on 3368 2066 if you can help.

Thanks to the members who helped sort the returned answer sheets:

Helen Bismire, Ben and Sarah Jeffrey, Bev Leggett, Maureen Meier, Digby and Helen Warren

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## Underground & in the Skies

Well we won't actually be underground or in the skies, but it will seem like that! On Wednesday 6 June we will visit the Legacy Way Tunnel Visitors Centre and the Planetarium. The programme is:

Meet at 10am at the Visitors Centre, 80 Jephson Street, Toowong for morning tea, a talk about the Tunnel project and visit the displays. There is 2 hr free parking in the Wilson Parking area next door. It's a short walk from Toowong Railway Station, and transport should be able to be arranged for those without a vehicle from the Visitors Centre to and from the Planetarium, provided you let us know with your booking.

12.15pm Buffet Lunch with tea/coffee /juice in the Botanicals Restaurant, Mt Coot-tha Gardens.

1.30pm view Transit of Venus. Telescopes will be set up outside to view, cloud permitting, what really marks the starting point of all Australian geography (from a European settlement point of view), for it was to observe the Transit of Venus in 1770 that Cook came to the

South Pacific and mapped the east coast of Australia. The transit concludes at 2.45pm.

Attend the 3pm Show in the Planetarium. Trek concludes 4pm.

There will be time before and after lunch and in the late afternoon to see something of the Gardens.

Cost is \$34 per head (children \$30), and includes morning tea, lunch and Planetarium admission. Book with the office; numbers will be limited, so book early.

Enquiries *Brian McGrath*  
brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com

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## Cave Hill Book

Long term member, retired geographical and environmental educator, Rob Simson, has a new novel, *Cave Hill*, published with Strictly Literary as an eBook and in paperback print version. The novel will appeal to all dedicated geography and outdoor educators, as well as keen bushwalkers and those who have been or intend to visit Carnarvon National Park.

Cave Hill synopsis: Who is David Makepeace and what is his motivation in leading the Project Carnarvon student expedition in 1967? What does the party learn about the landscape and the history of the Carnarvon Ranges? What setbacks and hardships befall them along the way and what event at midnight 20th August brings the expedition to a tragic end at the base of Cave Hill? And when, thirty-three years later, six of the survivors reunite to re-visit the tragedy site at Cave Hill, what would they remember and what would they wish to hide?

The print version is available from Strictly Literary or from Lulu in USA for around \$20 plus postage; while the eBook costs less than \$3 from Google Books or Amazon. I recommend the Google version because it includes Quick Response Codes which take you direct to websites with relevant information. I will be at the RGSQ June meeting with copies of the book for sale.

*Rob Simson*

## Robert Collins

The Hon RM Collins was President of our Society in 1898-1899. His great-granddaughter, Society member Christine Taylor, has donated to our library a facsimile copy of *Pioneering: the life of the Hon RM Collins, MLC* by Harry Perry. Thank you Christine.

Christine recently hosted a visit by Society members (part of the Bigriggen trek) to Tamrookum Church, dedicated to the memory of RM Collins. She writes:

"We were so pleased to be able to show our RGSQ friends around the church and really appreciated ... the generous \$50 donation from the Society which I, as a Trustee, accepted with great pleasure and gratitude

"We welcome visitors to Tamrookum and hope that other members may like to come out 'under their own steam' on some other occasion. We will always try to have someone there to give them a little guided tour if we know in advance that they are coming. Visitors are always welcome in the grounds, but sadly, of necessity, we have to keep the church locked when it is unattended."

The address is: Tamrookum Church Rd, Tamrookum, Beaudesert Shire (off Mt Lindesay Highway).

To see a photo of Christine and her cousin Alison in the lovely church, visit the RGSQ facebook site.

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## Millmerran Festival

The Society is planning a weekend at the Millmerran Camp Oven Festival, 5-7 October – more details later.

Accommodation will be in demand, so if you intend to come, please book your accommodation as soon as possible with Tony and Dawn Smith at the Millmerran Village Caravan Park, phone 07 4695 2020, email [mvcaravanpark@bigpond.com](mailto:mvcaravanpark@bigpond.com) mentioning you are part of the RGSQ group. Per night costs are powered sites \$26 for 2 persons, studio cabins \$85 for 2 persons; book for the nights of Friday 5 and Saturday 6 October. Please let the RGSQ office know when you have booked.

## Lambert Centre Trek 2013

A reminder that we are planning a trek to the Lambert Centre in September 2013. (The Lambert Centre is the centre of Australia, calculated for RGSQ to celebrate Australia's bicentenary.)

The Trek will formally start at Broken Hill and will include Lake Eyre, Coober Pedy, Uluru and Kata Tjuta, West MacDonnells and Alice Springs. The Trek will formally end at Alice Springs.

If you are interested and haven't yet done so, please get in touch with Brian Mealey, phone 3379 2783, or [bsmealey@bigpond.net.au](mailto:bsmealey@bigpond.net.au).

## Queensland Spatial Excellence Awards

The Queensland Spatial Excellence Awards have been launched for 2012, and include a special category for SSSI Teacher of the Year. The Award will acknowledge leadership not only in empowering primary and/or secondary students in the use of spatial technologies, but also in supporting other teachers to acquire knowledge and skills.

All information including criteria can be found in the Individual Nominations brochure on the SSSI Qld website [www.sssi.org.au/QSEA](http://www.sssi.org.au/QSEA). We welcome your nomination by Friday 22 July 2012.

## Queensland Surveying and Spatial Conference

The Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute invites you to the Queensland Surveying and Spatial Conference, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, 13-14 Sept 2012. The Conference is a unique platform for members of the spatial community to network, share ideas and learn about innovations and industry advancements. The theme this year is: *The future of surveying and spatial science is Open: Open collaboration, open data, open standards and open opportunities*. See [www.sssi.org.au/qssc](http://www.sssi.org.au/qssc) for more information.

# RGSQ Bulletin

May 2012

**Thomson Address**, Tues 1 May 7.30pm  
Speaker: Prof Graeme Hugo  
Subject: Australia's Population Future:  
Challenges and Opportunities

**Week Trek**, 18-26 May  
Where: Scenic Rim

**Volunteer Days**, Tues 29 - Thurs 31 May  
For: Australian Geography Competition

**Open Day**, Sun 3 June, 10.00am  
At: Government House

**Evening Meeting**, Tues 5 Jun 7.30pm  
Speaker: Mrs Melva Hobson  
Subject: Geography in/and my Life as  
Mayor

**Day Trek**, Wed 6 June, 10.00am  
Where: Legacy Way and Planetarium

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