



# RGSQ Bulletin

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## From the President

The Society was treated to an excellent, topical and informative lecture on 6 August, with the title "Threats to Queensland National Parks". This lecture replaced, at short notice, a scheduled address on the topic with a more southerly geographic interest, tourism in Antarctica. The scheduled lecturer was double-booked as a guest speaker on an Arctic cruise so ecotourism in the very large World Park of Antarctica, was replaced by an outline of the present arrangements affecting National Parks in Queensland. This included ecotourism and the wider use of National Parks and land reserved for future National Parks.

Mr Paul Donatiu, who is Executive Coordinator for the National Parks Association of Queensland, provided an appraisal of the administration of 321 Declared Parks and many more reserved areas such as Scientific Parks, Recovery Parks, Conservation Parks (225) and Nature Refuges (453). The present National Park estate is approaching 5% of the State. In the last few years the Federal Government has

provided funding to acquire additional properties to extend this area. There are twelve National Reserve System (NRS) land purchases awaiting declaration in Queensland. Paul expressed his concern, and that of the National Parks Association, that the process of moving from purchase of NRS land is not proceeding under the present Queensland Government.

In addition the State Government has legislated to allow grazing on selected National Parks to assist drought affected graziers. This arrangement is scheduled to terminate at the end of 2013. Five National Parks and eight of the twelve NRS holdings are affected. Further concern expressed is that ecotourism facilities may be allowed inside National Parks.

The active Question Time after the presentation raised many additional discussion points which were well acknowledged by the lecturer and the audience.

Of particular significance in question time was the commentary by Past President Paul Feeney, pointing out that during recent travel in the drought zone of Queensland it was clear that the shortage of fodder in Queensland was exacerbated by the influx of cattle from Northern Territory, following the closure of the live cattle export trade. The resultant overstocking in the Territory was countered by moving cattle to Queensland.

Paul Donatiu asked that Members of our Society express their opinions on

these matters by communicating with Members of Parliament and National Parks administration. Suitable prepared cards were available at the meeting to facilitate this action.

More information can be found on the National Parks Association website [www.npaq.org.au](http://www.npaq.org.au), with particular reference to "Current Campaigns".

Within our Geographical Society it has become apparent that there is incomplete awareness of the Ken Sutton Trust. The Ken Sutton Trust was established based on a bequest by Ken Sutton BEd, FRGS, FRGSA, MACE. He was a leading geography educator, long term Councillor and President of the, now, RGSQ from 1982 to 1985. A corpus to the order of \$50,000 has been able to grow and sustain funding for Geography Education. In each of the two years 2012 and 2013 the Trust has provided \$6000 towards the funding of Australia's participation in the International Geography Olympiad. The Trust is administered by Trustees appointed by the RGSQ Council.

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President: Mr David Carstens

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The papers setting out the results of the Pungalina Scientific Study are now flowing into the office. Results are interesting. The process of publication is commencing.

The most significant field activity of the Society at present is surely the Lambert Centre Trek. To have some twenty Society Members take this trip to the heart of the Continent of Australia is a challenge and a great exposition of the significance of geography to our Members and our relationship to a large continent. In saying this, it is acknowledged that other organisations and individuals do the same or similar trips. However it was the initiative of our Society which, in 1985, established and monumented this point, the Lambert Centre, and this is core business.

This is my last President's commentary for the elected period. I invite Members to make themselves available to serve on the Council in positions to be filled at the Annual General Meeting on 3 September or on any of the special sub-committees. The Society deserves your contribution. Please discuss your interest with me or any Councillor.

David Carstens

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## Annual General Meeting

As notified in the last *Bulletin*, the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 3 September 2013.

The Council's annual report will be presented, as will the statement of income, expenditure, assets and liabilities of the Society. The meeting will elect the Society's Council for 2013/14 and appoint the auditor for the same period.

A significant item of business will be the election of H.E. Ms Penelope Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland, and of Mr Stuart McCosker, to the status of Honorary Life Members.

This is your opportunity to get an overview of the work of our busy Society over the course of a year and to ask questions about it.

## Brisbane River Exhibition

When: 1.30pm Tues 17 September  
Where: Museum of Brisbane, Level 3, Brisbane City Hall  
What: guided tour of exhibition, and optional afternoon tea  
Cost: \$5.00 per person  
Book: with the office

As the defining symbol of our city, the wayward and beautiful Brisbane River has bought us opportunity, sanctuary and at times, heartbreak.

*The River: A History of Brisbane* explores our ever-changing relationship with the river.

From its importance to the land's traditional owners, its discovery that decided our capital's location, and the industry that was born along its shores, the river has played a critical role in the growth of our city.

Revealing how the river is intertwined in the lives of Brisbane's inhabitants, the exhibition is also a stunning showcase of artworks and objects from the City of Brisbane collection.

*The River: A History of Brisbane* will connect you to the stories of the city as it charts a compelling journey from Brisbane's earliest settlement through to the modern city we call home.

The Society has arranged a special guided tour of this exhibition with a museum curator. It will be followed by an optional afternoon tea in a nearby café. When booking, please advise if you are likely to join us for afternoon tea so we have an idea of numbers.

Please arrive at City Hall a few minutes before 1.30pm to give time to take the lift to Level 3. Meet in the reception area of the Museum.



## Oktoberfest

What: Drinks and nibbles, 3 course meal, illustrated talk on Germany  
When: Friday 4 October 2013  
Time: 6.00 for 6.30pm  
Where: RGSQ  
Cost: \$35.00  
Book: with the office and pay by 11 September. Friends welcome.

Join Audrey as she shares stories and photos of her adventures in Germany. She had 2 minor emergencies – both in the same city.

We'll travel by train, tram, boat, much leg and cable car, to explore the countryside and several major towns and cites from Gottingen (where her nephew was working), to Cologne, Celle, Freiberg, Lindau, Fussen, Heidelberg, Rothenberg ob der Tauber (where she fluked a festival), Munich and of course Berlin ... and others.

So much geography, so much history, so much architecture, so many adventures, so many memories. Look forward to your company.

Audrey Johnston

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## New Members

We have much pleasure in welcoming the following new members: Doug Murphy; Kathryn Scott. We hope your association with your new Society is long and happy.

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## Maps Donation

Many thanks to Society members Barbara and Manfred Cross for a sizeable collection of maps which they have donated to the Society. They cover a range of contemporary and historical maps, mainly of Brisbane and Queensland. Volunteer Peter Nunan is currently processing them to add to our library's map holdings.

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## Nat Geo World Champs

Congratulations to the Australian team on their 5<sup>th</sup> place at the 2103 National Geographic World Championships held recently in St Petersburg. More next *Bulletin*.

## High Morning Tea, Parliament House

Where: Strangers' Dining Room,  
Queensland Parliament House

When: 10.30 am to 12.00 noon,  
Friday 8 November 2013

Meet: 10.20 am at the main gate of  
Parliament House, corner of  
George and Alice Streets

Cost: \$40.00

RSVP: with the office by 11 October  
and pay by 5 November

In this traditional high tea you will be served a tempting selection of sweet and savoury delicacies prepared by the Parliament's resident chefs while taking in the beauty of Queensland's premier heritage building.

The high tea will be followed by a short (half-hour) tour of the Parliamentary Chambers, including a visit to the heritage O'Donovan Library. This is housed in part of the original library as designed by the Parliamentary architect, Charles Tiffin, in the 1860s.

Dress code is smart casual.

After assembling at the corner of George and Alice Streets, we will enter as a group through the Parliamentary Annexe in Alice Street. For security reasons, guests are not permitted to leave the foyer area without an escort. There is no visitor car parking available.

*Leo Scanlan*



## RGSQ Staffing

Members will have seen in an earlier *Bulletin* that the Society's Administrator, Kath Berg, is intending to retire from full-time employment some time next year. Council decided to test the interest of our members first, by advertising only internally. This has been unsuccessful so in due course we will be advertising more widely.

Kath is willing to be flexible in her retirement plans to suit the Society's needs. It could be as late as August/September 2014, or as early as the beginning of Term 1 in 2014 if that suits a current teacher. If you were interested in the position, but weren't quite ready to change jobs, we'd like to hear from you. Please ring Kath on 3368 2066. Feedback on starting dates may influence when we formally advertise the position.

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## First Contact Memorial

I have recently completed a project that took seven years to evolve – the establishment of a memorial to the first contact between Europeans and Indigenous Australians near Mapoon.

The idea for a permanent memorial was something that I considered when preparing the Pennefather River Paper for the Society's Gulf Scientific Expedition in 2005. Subsequently in 2006, the then President of the Netherlands Senate, Mrs Yvonne Timmerman-Buck formally proposed her government's wish to establish a memorial in the Western Cape region. Captain Kasper Kuiper, Honorary Consul for the Netherlands in Queensland, provided great support for the project and was able to arrange corporate sponsorship. The full story about the project is contained in the commemorative booklet published by the Australasian Hydrographic Society on 28 May.

The First Contact Memorial was officially opened on 27 May by her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC, with Elders of Mapoon and Mr Fred de Graaf, President of the Senate of the Netherlands with Mr David Kempton MP, representing Premier Campbell Newman.

*Geoff Wharton*

*Society member Geoff Wharton was involved in the Society's Gulf of Carpentaria Scientific Study, and was also a key member of the group that organised the Cape York Peninsula Scientific Study in 1992.*

*Geoff has donated copy of the booklet mentioned in his letter to the Society's library.*

*Society President David Carstens was invited to the official opening of the First Contact Memorial, but unfortunately Council could not justify the cost of the airfares to attend.*

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## International Geog Olympiad

Australia's performance at the 2014 International Geography Olympiad was excellent. We came 4<sup>th</sup> out of 32 in the team rankings (Romania was 1<sup>st</sup>, Croatia 2<sup>nd</sup>, Singapore 3<sup>rd</sup>), and all four of our students received medals: Sarah Naco won gold; Lachlan Peat silver; and Ali Finnemore and Britt Simmons bronzes.

We're still getting feedback from the students but we've included here abbreviated reflections from the Queensland student, Lachlan:

Participating in the 2013 International Geography Olympiad was one of the most incredible experiences of my life. From the moment I found out that I had been selected for the team I was keen and for weeks leading up to the trip I couldn't think of anything else. The reality that I was going to Japan to compete with some of the brightest students from around the world was just so enormous that I couldn't quite come to grips with it until I was sitting in the plane bound for Osaka.

It was so exciting to say the least (after all, who wouldn't be thrilled about a trip to Japan), but in all honesty a little daunting as well – setting out for a foreign country, with people I had only met once, not knowing exactly what to expect. What would the other people be like? What would I actually have to do for the competition? Where were we staying? Where were we even going? We all felt exactly the same way, a little nervous and unsure but more than anything else, eager to go along for the ride. And that is exactly how I

would describe our trip – like the most amazing ride I've ever been on. From the moment I stepped off the plane there were the highs and lows but none of that even mattered because I was in Japan and after having nine and a half hours to reacquaint myself with the others on the plane, I was in the company of great friends. From the bustling metropolis of Osaka to the ancient capital Nara and finally the Japanese heartland of Kyoto, we saw so many incredible sights that it's impossible to even think about a single place that was the highlight of the trip. This combined with our samplings of the Japanese food and culture was just one component of what was an amazing journey.

The competition in Kyoto itself was great, at times hectically busy and even quite stressful but looking beyond the fieldwork and the tests it was a brilliant opportunity to meet with new people and have a good time. It truly was an amazing two weeks in which I made friendships with people from all over the world, experienced a fascinating culture and saw some spectacular sites. The competition was truly only a minor component of what was a great adventure and we all returned home with far more than just a medal – we returned having made both lifelong friendships and memories which will stay with us forever and that is what made our trip so special.

### **Leichhardt Public Lecture**

Free public lecture in association with the Leichhardt Symposium on Biodiversity and Conservation.

When: 6:15 for 6:30pm Wed 23 Oct  
Where: Abel Smith Lecture Theatre,  
Building 23, St Lucia Campus,  
University of Queensland  
Book: register via [www.biology.uq.edu.au/leichhardt-public](http://www.biology.uq.edu.au/leichhardt-public)

6.30pm - Introduction, Prof Henry Nix  
6.40pm - Biography of Leichhardt,  
Assoc Prof Rod Fensham  
7.05pm - The Biggest Estate on  
Earth: How Aborigines made  
Australia, Prof Bill Gammage  
7.45pm - Panel discussion

# **RGSQ Bulletin**

**September 2013**

**4WD Trek**, 28 August - 18 September  
Where: Lambert Centre

**Meeting**, Tues 3 September, 7.30pm  
What: Annual General Meeting

**Guided Tour**, Tues 17 September, 1.30pm  
What: The River: a History of Brisbane  
Exhibition  
Where: Brisbane City Hall

**Lecture**, Tues 1 October, 7.30pm  
Speaker: Warwick Willmott  
Subject: The (Very) Ancient Geography of  
Brisbane

**Social**, Friday 4 October, 6.00pm  
What: Oktoberfest, a German-themed  
dinner and presentation

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