



# RGSQ Bulletin

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## From the President

A Saturday afternoon in autumn sitting in a theatre is not my normal choice of activity. However on Saturday 17 May I attended the matinee of the Queensland Pops Orchestra with my wife Kathryn and did not regret missing the open air sunshine available outside the Theatre. The experience sharing the entertainment with an enthusiastic orchestra, top soloists and audience was a memorable (geographic) experience to more than compensate.

The performance was the Thirtieth Anniversary Concert for the Queensland Pops Orchestra, held in the Concert Hall of the Queensland Performing Arts Complex. The architecture and ambience of this venue embellished the occasion. QPAC is surely an icon of geographic significance to Queensland.

My enthusiasm for this concert led me to recognise that there are so many community endeavours which exist to share and promote expertise and knowledge and that Queensland Pops Orchestra is one of many contributors to society.

The remarkable talent and the musical ability of the people of Queensland is showcased enthusiastically by Queensland

Pops as one of the many other musical organised groups. The orchestra is made up of local musicians. The outstanding special guest artists in this recent performance have had a start with the Queensland POPS, gone on to the international stage and return to Brisbane to perform. One first time artist on this occasion was a sixteen year old pianist, Chai Jie Low, a student at St Aidan's Anglican Girls School, who amazed the audience with the performance of "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini" on the Grand Piano out in front of the orchestra. I am sure we will hear more of Chai.

Queensland is indeed fortunate to have such a marvellous Performing Arts Complex and to have it utilised so fully, not only to embellish this Pops Concert but to provide a venue for all the significant activities which occur there. Am I being carried away with this as a geographic theme?

The accent here is on our State of Queensland. As the eclectic range of music and talent filled the hall with wonder and appreciation, the comparison came to me that this Queensland Pops Orchestra was not unlike our older RGSQ.

The Society brings together a special group of talented people interested in Geography as illustrated by the music interlude on Saturday.

The talent and abilities available through RGSQ was strongly illustrated at the Lecture on 7 May with the presentation on the "Pungalina Scientific Study". The outline of the organisational background and the difficulties overcome, for this remote study location in Northern Territory, given

by Tony Hillier, was enlightening. I am sure the general Membership does not fully appreciate the scope of this activity. Or am I only speaking for myself?

The content of the three scientific studies presented to the meeting was also most informative, providing a great understanding of the value of these expeditions. The three presentations were as outlined in the May Bulletin and revealed the importance of being able to access the isolated locations and the value of the results.

The question of continuance of this style of activity was highlighted during the lecture. RGSQ has to grapple with the need for Scientific Studies, managing value against costs.

The report to RGSQ Council from the Australian Geography Competition Committee dated 7 May 2014 advises that 70,766 students entered the Competition from 760 schools. This represented an increase in 35 schools entering the Competition and, interestingly, a reduction of the number individual entries by 3884 students. This is a continuation in the decline in the student entries. As usual there are differences between states.

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Tasmania had a record number of students and schools, perhaps related to recent changes in their school system. Victoria and ACT had a record number of schools entering.

The assistance towards financial viability of the competition by the sponsor Universities named in the Bulletin last month, \$19,000, and that from the Australian Government Department of Education, \$24,000, needs to be recognised.

Our volunteers are scheduled to assemble result sheets and certificates, 21 to 23 May, for postage by the end of May.

The next lecture is the Thomson Address, on Tuesday 3 June 2014. The title seems appropriate in view of my musical enthusiasm herein, "Quality of Life: A Geographical Perspective". Professor Jim Walmsley is looking forward to talking with us in June.

David Carstens

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## An Indigenous Adventure

**What:** Exploring the area around Godwin Beach, Sandstone Point and Redcliffe Botanic Gardens.

**When:** Sunday 22 June.

**Meet:** 9:15am

**Where:** Godwin Beach and Redcliff Botanic Gardens.

**Cost:** \$25.00

**RSVP:** By 3 June

The walk in the morning will have an indigenous focus. Our guide is a descendant of the Gubbi Gubbi mob. He is very knowledgeable, informative and enthusiastic. As we stroll he will tell us about the aboriginal background of the area and early European history. We'll hear, too, about food plants, the 'hanging tree', see a mangrove that is claimed to be about 300 years old, may see a midden, too. The environment and vegetation change along the way.

WEAR shoes that can get muddy; be Sun Safe; bring insect repellent; and, a water bottle.

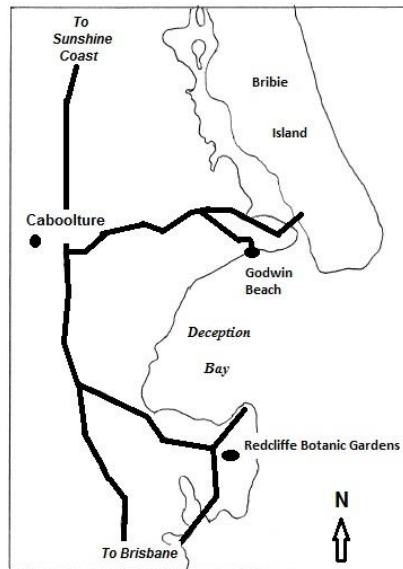
Enjoy a BYO picnic lunch in Redcliffe Botanic Gardens. Then we will meet our next guide for a tour of the Gardens with some focus on

aboriginal plant foods, permaculture and the history of the Gardens.

To get to Goodwin Beach take the Bribie Island road from Caboolture. About 11kms along the road turn right into Bestmann Road (There is a 7-Eleven on the corner). Turn right again about 9kms along into Rose St and meet at the picnic shelter to the left.

Friends are welcome. See you there.

Contact the RGSQ office for bookings on 07 3368 2066 or [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au).



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## Society's Library

The impact of climate change is not something that is going to happen, it is happening now.

We constantly hear of increased flooding and droughts, and rising temperatures and sea levels, but what impact is climate change having on human health and food security?

The March 2014 issue of "Geographical", magazine of The Royal Geographical Society has a number of interesting articles on the subject of climate change and is a worthwhile read.

This is just one of the many interesting publications in our library. Why not visit your library and peruse the collection? Have you thought about writing a short overview of a publication from our Library for the Bulletin?

## Lecture Meeting – Thomson Address

**When:** June 3, 7:30pm

### **Quality of life: a geographical perspective**

How good is the "quality of life" in Australia? Is it improving or getting worse? The lecture will address these questions. The core argument will be that, although national social indicators are interesting, it is essential to consider how "quality of life" varies from place to place. The lecture will present the results of an Australia-wide study that used information from the census. It will then argue the need for place-based studies of how people perceive their quality of life, drawing on examples from country towns and farming communities in NSW. The lecture will highlight the resilience of rural communities in the face of changes in the nature of society.

### **Jim Walmsley**

Jim Walmsley is Emeritus Professor of Geography and Planning at the University of New England. Born in Lancashire in the north of England, he did an MA in Geography at Cambridge University before coming to Australia and completing a PhD in Human Geography at the ANU. He then moved to the University of New England where he spent 37 years, punctuated by study leaves at the University of Reading, University of Manchester, the ANU and the University of Leicester (several times). He has published many books, monographs and journal articles on the interaction between people and their environment, notably in contemporary Australia. He is a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and a past President of the Institute of Australian Geographers.

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## New Members

We would like to welcome the following new members:

Nayef Alghais, John Besley, John Doolan and Robyn Ryan, Marshall and Kimberley Dore, and Thomas Richman.

We hope your association with your new Society is long and mutually enjoyable.

## Behind the Scenes at Queensland Museum + Lunch

**Where:** Entry Foyer of the Queensland Museum

**When:** Wednesday 2 July

**Meet:** 10:45am

**Cost:** \$20.00 per person

Never been in the back rooms of the Queensland Museum? The breadth of research and specimens is quite astounding and unfortunately it's something not many people get to view. So here's your chance to join a tour which will include Arachnology and Entomology, and as many Mammals and Birds, Reptiles and Frogs, Molluscs, Crustacea, Sponges and Parasites as well as the Molecular lab and the Spirit collection, as can be squeezed in.

There will be 30 people max at a cost of \$20 pp including a light lunch half way through the tour. The tour will commence at 10:45 in the entry foyer of the Museum and conclude around 14:00

Contact the RGSQ office for bookings on 07 3368 2066 or [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au)

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## RUSSIA - Then and Now

**When:** Friday, 15th August

**Where:** Gregory House

**Cost:** to be advised

More than 30 years ago Audrey travelled the Trans-Siberian Railway in winter -maximum in Moscow on New Year's Day, 29 below. Many adventures, including almost being left behind at a station- she was busy taking photos. Many contrasts along the way. Visited and explored Moscow and Leningrad (St Petersburg), too.

In May this year -what a contrast. Cruised from Moscow to St Petersburg with a shore excursion every day as well as exploring the two main cities. Many adventures.

The evening will follow the usual format with a 3course meal, a slides presentation and much (hopefully interesting) talk.

## Short Trek: Northern NSW Camping -Bundjalung NP

**When:** 16-19 September

For those not going to America in September, a leisurely camping trek to Bundjalung National Park has been organised for September 16 to 19.

The campground at Woody Head will be the venue for accommodation on the 3 nights Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 16, 17, 18 September; it has cabins and cottages which house 4 to 6 persons, campsites (all unpowered), hot showers and BBQs.

You will need to make (and pay for) your own booking, either online, or by phoning Woody Head camping area on 02 6646 6134, mentioning that you are part of the RGSQ group. Early booking, especially for a cabin or cottage, is recommended. You will also need a NSW National Parks Pass for your vehicle if you haven't got one for 2014.

Our route will be down the coast to Woody Head, returning via Alstonville, Lismore, Nimbin and Murwillumbah. Our time at Woody Head will be one for exploring the Iluka and Clarence River area, or just relaxing on the beach.

The booking fee for this trek is \$30, which will cover a Welcome Happy Hour and Sausage Sizzle on the first night, Happy Hour nibbles on the second & third nights, and a farewell afternoon tea on the Friday at the Tweed Regional Gallery, the home for many of Margaret Olley's paintings.

Further information and a detailed itinerary are available from

Brian McGrath, phone [07 33785960](tel:0733785960), email [brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com](mailto:brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com)

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## Society Trips

Over the coming months a number of our members will be travelling on Society organised trips for a week or more in various parts of the world:

July 14 to Aug 5 – Trek – 4WD to Cape York.

Sept 8 to 28 – North-western USA

Nov 5 to 12 – Hong Kong

## 2014 International Geography Olympiad - Poland

Congratulations to the four students who will be representing Australia at the International Geography Olympiad to be held in Krakow, Poland, 12-18 August 2014:

- Oscar Fawkes, Sydney Grammar School
- Janice Mui, MacRobertson Girls' High School, Melbourne
- Stephen Roche, Sydney Grammar School
- Leon Shi, Melbourne High School

They won their team places through outstanding performances at the 2013 Geography's Big Week Out.

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## Australian Geography Competition

As this Bulletin is going to press, Society volunteers are assisting with the packing and send out the results, certificates, and prizes for the 2014 Australian Geography Competition. Thank you!

I would again like to acknowledge the sponsorship from the Geography Schools/Departments of five Universities who are sponsoring the Australian Geography Competition this year:

Macquarie University, Sydney  
University of Queensland, Brisbane

Curtin University, Perth  
Flinders University, Adelaide  
University of Tasmania, Hobart

Their support makes a substantial difference to our ability to deliver a high-quality competition to school students across Australia. We are also aiming to make links between these Geography Programmes and high-scoring students in the competition (and their teachers).

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## Hays Inlet Festival

30 May to 5 June

Hays Inlet is south east of Redcliffe. Lots of events and activities. For full information visit:

<http://haysinlet.com.au/>

## Thank you

Four months have passed since I started working with the Society. Where has the time gone?

I would like to thank all the members that have made me feel welcome and supported me through my first few months, not to mention the great Society staff Kath Berg and Hayley Freemantle who have provided me with fantastic support.

Our President is correct in his words on the first page of this Bulletin when he said: "The Society brings together a special group of talented people interested in Geography ..."

As a geographer interested in regional and historical geography, I

have been overwhelmed by the Society's characters I have met and the stories I have been told about various places and things they have done in Queensland over the years. Stories that I believe should be captured because of their important Queensland geographical context. What a great bunch of people to be working for!

I have also been excited by the enthusiasm of the Society volunteers: the Council, Committee members, and all those who help out to make this a great Society to be associated with.

I look forward to a long association with the Society.

*Bernard Fitzpatrick*

## Texas Rain

A visitor to Texas once asked, "Does it ever rain out here?" "Yes, it does," replied the rancher. "Do you remember that part in the Bible when it rained for 40 days and 40 nights?"

"Yes, I'm familiar with Noah's flood," the visitor said.

"Well," said the rancher, "we got two and a half inches during that spell."

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# RGSQ Bulletin

June 2014

**Thomson Address**, Tues 3 June 7:30pm  
Thomson Address by Emeritus Professor Jim Walmsley. Quality of Life: a Geographical Perspective

**Activity**, Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 9:15am  
Where: Godwin Beach and Redcliffe Botanic Gardens

**Lecture Meeting**, Tues 1 July 7:30pm  
Kerry Doss, Planning for the future: the New Brisbane City Plan.

**Behind the Scenes at the Queensland Museum**,  
July 2nd. 10:45am

**Short Trek: Northern NSW Camping - Bundjalung NP**, 16-19 September

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