



RGSQ Bulletin

May 2015

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Patron: [H.E. Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland](#)
President: [Mr Leo Scanlan](#)

In this issue

- **Lecture meeting:** May 5 – *What happened to Queensland's Ice Age megafauna?*
- **Activity:** May 13 – *Pumicestone Passage Larc Experience*

From the President

The most important meeting on the RGSQ calendar at the moment is the **SPECIAL MEETING on Tuesday 5th May 2015 at 6.30pm** to be followed by our normal monthly lecture at 7.30pm.

RGSQ has an extremely hard working executive who have been working for the last few months to finalise RGSQ's Strategic Plan. We still have a very long way to go and we would appreciate it if as many members as possible could attend this Special Meeting. Bob Abnett will explain the changes which, we believe, are of interest to all our members. It will also help explain how the many diverse aspects of our Society help promote the study and the promotion of geography.

Pumicestone Passage Larc excursion: We still have a number of spots left if you intend to join us on the Larc excursion on Wednesday morning, the 13th of May in Caloundra. If you would like to come along, please book and pay with the office. Details, directions, etc. are all on Page 2 in your April Bulletin.

In April's edition of the RGSQ Bulletin we introduced **Geographical comment:**

Again, this month, I would like to comment on *'Plastic Seas'* which appears in the March-April edition of *New Zealand Geographic*.

Did you know that there are some positively huge garbage hot spots in all the world's oceans? Geonews, on page 18 and 19 of *New Zealand Geographic*, reports that there is an estimated sixteen shopping bags of plastic rubbish entering the ocean each year for every metre of the world's coastlines.

The earth's wind patterns form gyres – circular ocean currents which swirl clockwise or anticlockwise, depending on the hemisphere. The North Pacific gyre sweeps plastic marine pollution into its calm centre, creating the largest of the oceans' trash eddies. *NZ Geographic March-April Edition 'Plastic Seas'*.

It gets worse. There is a North and South Atlantic garbage patch, a Great Pacific Garbage Patch, an Indian Ocean Garbage Patch, a Bay of Bengal Patch, and the Mediterranean being almost enclosed has an extensive problem on the northern coast of Africa.

After reading this information I thought I would search a little further so I entered one of the scientists names mentioned (Jenna Jambeck) into my internet browser and found she was from the University of Georgia in the United States. I also found this National Geographic article by Laura Parker (<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2015/02/150212-ocean-debris-plastic-garbage-patches-science/>) so I printed the contents and I will pin it to the notice board in the RGSQ auditorium. It is certainly something to think about.

CSIRO have also been actively involved in estimations regarding plastic waste in the seas around Australia

[http://www.smh.com.au/environment/dumping-is-trashing-australian-](http://www.smh.com.au/environment/dumping-is-trashing-australian-beaches-says-csiro-report-20140914-10qs10.html)

[beaches-says-csiro-report-20140914-10qs10.html](http://www.smh.com.au/environment/dumping-is-trashing-australian-beaches-says-csiro-report-20140914-10qs10.html). Again there was a wealth of information.

If you would like to have a quick look through the March-April edition of *NZ Geographic*, our magazine rack is now directly at the back left hand side of the office as you enter RGSQ through the front stairs. Avail yourself of our very extensive collection of books and periodicals.

Orbiting space station: Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in an orbiting space station? How do they sleep, eat and exercise? Log into Departing Space Station Commander Provides Tour of Orbital Laboratory – You Tube <http://www.youtube.com/embed/doN4t5NKW-k> there's some amazing science happening here too.

Looking towards the future and implementing our Strategic Plan, it is RGSQ's intention to modernise the *'RGSQ Bulletin'* and perhaps expand and accept geographical comment from a variety of sources. You could be part of that transition so if you have anything interesting that you feel you would like to contribute to **RGSQ's Geographic Comment** please email the details and supporting information to info@rgsq.org.au.

Leo Scanlan

Nanette Yule

Many members will know Nanette. Unfortunately, Nanette has suffered a stroke and has had to be placed in a nursing home. Her son, Robert wrote: *"For many years she and Dad had many great experiences thru the Society. Thanking you on her behalf"*

Lecture Meeting – Tues 5 May, 2015

What happened to Queensland's Ice Age megafauna?

By Dr Gilbert Price

Where: "Gregory House,"
237 Milton Rd, Milton.

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Dr Gilbert Price a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in palaeontology at The University of Queensland. He obtained his Ph.D. in Palaeoecology from Queensland University of Technology in 2006. His Ph.D. and subsequent post-doctoral projects have spanned a wide breadth of distinctive research fields that include palaeoecology, geochronology, zoology and modern conservation. He is especially focused on developing key datasets with which to test hypotheses concerning the extinction of Australia's Pleistocene megafauna.

Topic

Research into the timing and causes of extinction of the Ice Age megafauna – giant land mammals, birds, and reptiles – has led to one of the greatest ever debates in Australian palaeo-sciences. Who or what caused the extinctions? A flurry of recent research papers have pointed the finger directly at the culprit: human hunters did it shortly after their arrival in Australia sometime in the last 50 thousand years. The potential role of climate change in contributing towards the losses is considered by many to have been modest at best, and could in no way have been a major factor involved in the extinctions. Indeed, some researchers have argued recently that the data are now so overwhelming, and that the overhunting hypothesis is so well tested, that its scientific status should be elevated to that of a 'theory'. Like any good debate, this is a tenet that has not garnished complete acceptance amongst the broader research community. In this talk, I will discuss the currently available datasets critical for the testing of the leading extinction hypotheses, as well as new evidence from field and laboratory work on the Ice Age megafauna of Queensland.

For more info: www.Diprotodon.com

PUMICESTONE PASSAGE LARC EXCURSION

When: Wednesday 13 May

Time: 9:30 am

Where: Short Street, Golden
Beach Queensland

Cost: \$50 per person

RSVP: Book and pay by the
morning of Friday May 1.

How about coming along for a great day out with RGSQ once again on May 13th for a unique look into Pumicestone Passage on the North Western side of Bribie Island.

This 2 hour excursion delves into the history and the flora and fauna at the southern end of the Sunshine Coast. This part of Pumicestone Passage abounds with over 350 species of migratory and regional birds, and varied marine life including an occasional dugong, dolphin and turtles.

All this from the deck of a living piece of history the LARC V which was originally build in the 1960's. Other than the custom passenger deck this LARC has been kept in as original condition as possible. This is a great opportunity to see a small part of the northern Pumicestone Passage from a different perspective.

This tour lasts approximately 2 hours. Cost of this excursion is \$50 payable to the RGSQ office. Numbers are limited. Bookings and payments need to be finalised by the morning of Friday May 1st to facilitate bookings for the tour.

DIRECTIONS

Driving into Caloundra on Caloundra Road/Bulcock Street

- at the main traffic lights out front of Stockland Shopping Centre turn Right from Caloundra Road/Bulcock street on to Landsborough Parade
 - Proceed about 500m then just after the pedestrian crossing
 - Turn Left from Landsborough Parade into Short Street
 - Follow the road about 200m to the boat ramp
 - You are at your destination LARC
- ABOUT TOURS**

Following this 2 hour excursion we will move on to the Caloundra RSL for an enjoyable lunch (own cost). Wednesdays are always good in Caloundra because I'm told the

entertainment is special at lunchtime.

Following lunch, the Caloundra RSL have a small militaria museum which is open on Wednesdays until 2pm.

I will be there to meet you at the boat ramp --- **Leo Scanlan**



Treasures in Your Library (2)

A thirty-year-old atlas can hardly compete with Google for up-to-date geographical information, but the **Ordnance Survey Atlas of Great Britain** is still an asset in the Library. Its clear colours and symbolization, its contour information, and especially its historical geography of its evolution from pre-Roman times to the late 19th century make this a go-to book for a quick reference to England, Scotland and Wales. The gazetteer of place names is very comprehensive – you'll be able to find and name the hill where you took the photo, and establish its height above mean sea level!

A partner volume, in time and topic, is the **Historical Atlas of Britain**. It's a beautiful, readable book, whose serious scholarship is evident beneath the wealth of illustration through maps photos and diagrams. Here you'll find fascinating articles on the first farmers, the henge monuments, Roman Britain, mediaeval arts, wars and worship, '1066 and all that'. Its history is sound almost to the end, where the post-WWII story begins. The supplementary essays on politics and battles, India and Ireland, population, textiles, trade – provide a wonderful overview of the 'mother country'. Only in that sense is it 'about us' – in the Chronology of World History with its parallel timelines, Australia gets one entry, '1788, British Colony founded at Botany Bay, Australia'.

This is a library for all reasons, full of delightful surprises in its coverage of 'life, the universe and everything' through the eyes of geographers. Don't delay in making its closer acquaintance.

Les Isdale

REMINDER OF A SPECIAL MEETING

Where: "Gregory House,"

237 Milton Rd, Milton.

When: Tuesday, 5 May, 2015

Time: 6:30 p.m.

A Special Meeting of the Royal Geographical Society will be held at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 5 May, 2015, at Gregory House, to present the Strategic Plan 2015 - 2019 to members.

The aims of the Special Meeting are:

- To give a presentation on the role, function and purpose of the Strategic Plan.
- To seek the engagement of members on the Strategic Plan's implementation during its first year of 2015.

Immediately following the Special Meeting, the normal monthly lecture will take place at 7.30pm.

We have already received some valuable feedback following the last Bulletin. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please do not hesitate to send comments through to the Society's Office:

Email: info@rgsq.org.au, or

Mail: "Gregory House" 237 Milton Rd, Milton QLD 4064

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 – 2019

Over the past 6 months the Council of the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland has been working upon the formulation of a Strategic Plan to carry the Society forward in coming years. In March, 2015, the Council adopted the Strategic Plan 2015 – 2019 and a copy of it is attached to this Bulletin to inform members.

Why have a Strategic Plan?

There are a number of reasons:

- **A generational change in the operations of the Society:** This is most evident at the officer level, with new staff running the Society's office. They need to know what the Society stands for and what it wants to do, in order to be more effective at helping members run the Society. Also, there are newer members helping run the Society at both Council and general volunteer levels. They too need to know what the Society is about.
- **Technological change:** The Society has significantly updated its use and application of computers. Better computer technologies open up avenues the Society could not previously pursue under manual systems of operations. A Strategic Plan and its associated Implementation Tasks per annum, can help members and officers take full advantage of these new opportunities.
- **A changing financial world:** Since the GFC, the Society's long term sources of revenue (investments and property income) are no longer as lucrative as in the past. Hence, the availability of ready finances

to fund the Society's projects and activities has changed, requiring more rigorous assessment of what can be undertaken now. A Strategic Plan provides a framework of priorities which can be implemented over time.

- **Access to public and private funding sources:** Increasingly, volunteer organisations seeking public or private funding, have to demonstrate they have a plan for their future. A Strategic Plan provides this basic requirement and the Society may now have better access to public and private funding bodies, regarding funding specific projects and programs.

What Does the Strategic Plan Contain?

- **Statements of Intent:** These are a number of statements emphasizing what the Society is about and what it stands for, specifically in relation to Geography, and how, via the **Vision, Mission and Strategies**, the Society intends to achieve certain goals.

The **Strategic Objectives** or goals cover the following:

- Engaging people in geography
- Enhancing membership
- Knowledge and understanding
- Growing our reputation, and
- Securing the future.

- **Implementation:** There are a number of Tasks to be implemented on an annual basis to achieve the strategic objectives or goals. In this first year of the Strategic Plan, the Tasks to be achieved during 2015 are highlighted. As each year passes, new Tasks will be identified and incorporated into the Strategic Plan for implementation. Every year, a Progress Report will be made to the Society's Annual General Meeting on the implementation of Tasks. It is also proposed that at the beginning of each year, the Council selects new Tasks to be implemented in the coming year and informs members via the Bulletin.

Bob Abnett

Strategic Implementation Committee

ERRATUM

"FINAL" should not have appeared on the copy of the Strategic Plan circulated with the last Bulletin.

My apologies, I mistakenly included the incorrect copy of the Society's Strategic Plan. It was "Final" for the Society's Council, ready to go to Society Members for input and comment.

A correct copy is included with this Bulletin.

Bernard Fitzpatrick, Executive Officer

Scenic Rim Robotic Dairy

What: Day Trip

When: Wednesday 24 June, 10 am

Where: Tamrookum, via Beaudesert

Cost: Call the office, as the cost had not been finalised prior to going to press.

RSVP: Wed 17 June Booking and payment to the Office, 07 -3368 2066

Join fellow Society members on a tour of the family run Scenic Rim Robotic Dairy. Located at Tamrookum, just south of Beaudesert, about a one and a half hours drive from Brisbane.

One of the longest running dairies in the area, the Dennis family tour of the dairy farm gives you a fantastic snapshot of dairy farming through the generations... from the horse and cart days when cows were milked by hands through Box Bales; machine milking with the introduction of electricity in 1949; introduction of a 6 a side Herringbone in 1972, the 50 platform Rotary and milking 360 cows in 1991; to the current LELY robotic milking system.

Transport will be by your own vehicle, meeting at the dairy at 10:00am.

Wellcamp & Oakey Airports

What: Day Trip

When: Wednesday 15 July

Where: Eastern Darling Downs

Cost: \$15 per person booking fee

RSVP: 7 July Booking and payment to the Office, 07 -3368 2066

The outing has been arranged to visit the new Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport and the Australian Army Flying Museum at Oakey Airport.

The Brisbane West Airport is the first major airport built in Australia since Tullamarine in 1970, and the first ever funded and built completely by private enterprise in this country. The runway can handle 747 aircraft. Its potential as a base from which to export products of the Darling Downs and Southern Queensland to SE Asia is huge.

In contrast to Wellcamp, which opened to commercial traffic in November 2014, the Oakey Flying Museum features displays from the earliest days of Aviation.

We will meet at the airport at Wellcamp, situated on the Toowoomba – Cecil Plains Road some 15km west of Toowoomba, at 10am. There will be ample time to purchase a coffee in the Altitude café and get to meet the airport's Public Relations Officer Sara Hales, before Sara takes us on a walking tour at 10.30am of those parts of the airport accessible to the public. This tour will take about 1.5 hours.

You can purchase lunch in the Altitude café or in any of the Oakey cafes etc, or BYO and eat it in Oakey.

In the afternoon we will meet at the Oakey Airport at 1.30pm for a conducted 1.5hour tour of the displays in the Aviation Museum.

Transport will be by your own vehicle. It may be possible to arrange transport for anyone having difficulty driving to the Downs – please notify the office if you would like transport.

The booking fee for this outing is \$15 per person to cover the cost of admission to and the guided tour at the Oakey Aviation Museum, and the Society's administration costs.

We hope to see many of our Darling Downs members joining this outing.

Brian McGrath.



RGSQ SRI LANKA 2015

Members of The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland will be travelling to Sri Lanka in early September, 2015. One of the highlights of the trip will be Yala National Park with one of the highest concentrations of leopards anywhere in the world. Yala is the habitat of 215 bird species, a resident elephant herd of approximately 300-350, Sri Lankan sloth bears, and water buffalo. All 5 globally endangered sea turtles varieties also visit the park and it is home to two species of Sri Lankan crocodiles.

Sri Lanka is brim full of history and culture; Sigiriya Rock Fortress, King Kasyapa's citadel is a step back in time and one of the finest examples of Sri Lankan arts and culture. A tour of Polonnaruwa: once a medieval capital, with Buddha and Hindu sculptures, and examples of ancient irrigation canals. Kandy: the last

royal capital of Sri Lankan kings, and, of course, the Temple of the Sacred Tooth relic of Lord Buddha, and more.

Members are looking forward to a tour full of culture, wildlife, and excitement.

The Society is organising a trip to **Tanzania and Madagascar in April 2016**. If you are interested in being kept informed about this trip, please contact the office so that we can send you further information when it is available.



Adelaide & Kangaroo Island Trek

What: 7 nights in Adelaide & 9 nights on Kangaroo Island

When: Fri 9 – Mon 26 Oct

Cost: \$40 per person payable to the RGSQ Office.

RSVP: 31 May 2015

Numbers are limited. Several members have already booked their ferry and accommodation, so places are filling fast.

Most activities on this trek are optional and user pays at the time, including a special bus tour if there is enough interest.

Trek notes and detailed itinerary covering activities and likely costs will be available in June.

For any further information contact **Kay Rees** - kayrees@gmail.com or the RGSQ Office.

2015 GTAQ Conference – Doing Geography

July 24th & 25th, QUT Gardens Point

Keynote addresses from Professor William Cartwright (RMIT) and Mellini Sban (QUT)

If you are interested in presenting a workshop or seminar please contact jdavis@vnc.qld.gov.au

RGSQ Office Closed the Afternoon of Friday 1 May

Please note that the Society's office will be closed the afternoon of Friday 1 May as Bernard has to attend a meeting elsewhere.

EXPERIENCING MEGA CYCLONE PAM

When extreme Category Cyclone Pam struck the Vanuatu capital of Port Vila it caused massive destruction that was eventually shown on our TV screens. A good friend and colleague of mine, who has worked with me in many disaster risk studies, has lived in Port Vila for more than five years and experienced the full force of that storm. His first-person account of the impact and its aftermath are both chilling and inspiring. The story that he tells is too important to keep within a small circle of friends and colleagues. With his permission I have placed the full text of his serial emails on the following web site, [www](http://riskaudit.com.au/2015/04/first-hand-account-of-tropical-cyclone-pam/).

<http://riskaudit.com.au/2015/04/first-hand-account-of-tropical-cyclone-pam/>.

To give a flavour of his reports I include here a small sample of the material received over the space of two weeks.

"I have an experience now that I never wanted but can talk about forever. The wind was indescribable. Every time you believed it had peaked it went up another notch. It sounded like a 747 coming and then an explosion when it hit. Our ears were being sucked out and every crack in the building was screaming as wind pushed in or out. Water was actually squirting up into the air from door tracks. I got to the point where I wasn't sure the building would hold and wasn't sure what the result would be if it didn't. A three storey concrete house was actually shuddering in the gusts! A couple in the house above us sheltered in a cupboard as their house disintegrated around them. Brand new expat houses have blown apart while tin shanties in a sheltered location have survived. Many of the multi storey office blocks lost their roofs. I will be stunned if the death toll doesn't go up when they get to the outer islands. The stories of near

misses from flying iron and flash flooding are chilling....."

"How do I estimate winds at that speed? Particularly when we were hunkered down in the basement. If they were 250 km/hr then I never ever want to endure 350 km/hr. The wind force was beyond anything I could have imagined. One yachting today who stayed on his boat until it was blown ashore and sunk told me he was marking his barometer and it dropped below the scale. The needle was bumping on 900 hPa but couldn't go any lower....."

"Today I saw a massive Banyan tree inverted. Roots facing up and branches down, perfectly balanced. A picture of our world, upside down. Whole houses blown away and people, almost in a trance sitting in the ruins when we arrived. As we cleared, chain sawed and gathered possessions they came to life and joined us. Slowly gaining energy from the progress we made and eventually talking about rebuilding and starting again. Of course they are planning to use the iron (kappa) that they have recovered from the wreckage plus what has fortuitously been delivered to their location from who knows where....."

"Life is returning to 'normal' here now. Every day in the newspaper we have Greenpeace hyping the event into a forerunner of a global warming catastrophe. I would love to know how they explain Cyclone Ouma in 1987 and the big one before that in 1959. Apparently the three have been 28 years apart! Now surely we could build a theory around that little coincidence. I wonder if 10% of what has been spent on 'climate change' workshops, conferences and feel good projects had been spent on disaster preparedness in local communities where we would be now?"

As a personal note – TC *Pam* was certainly the most intense cyclone recorded in the South Pacific since at least 1899 (TC *Mahena* in Far North Queensland). The reported lowest central pressure was 896 hPa which is getting close to the theoretical lowest possible for that part of the Pacific – around 885 hPa. To put that into perspective, the lowest central pressure of Category 5 TC *Marcia* that struck the Yeppoon area on 20 February 2015 was 930 hPa.

Ken Granger

2015 Marks Twenty-One years of the Australian Geography Competition

Members' assistance with the Competition each year has helped make it a successful national competition.

Through April the following members providing valuable assistance with the scanning of the answer sheets: Roger Grimley, Maureen Meier and her daughter Susan, and grandson Ben, Mary Nowill, Judy Rechner, Sue Reid, Wayne Spearitt, and John Walker. Thank you for your help.

Volunteers Required - We also need a few more helpers for the final Competition working bee to sort and send the **results and certificates on Wednesday 20 and Thursday 21 May**. Please ring Bernard in the office (3368 2066) if you can help.

Exploring Geographic Connections

Institute of Australian Geographers Conference, 1-3 July 2015 at the Australian National University, Canberra

The theme of the conference for 2015 is 'Exploring Geographic Connections' and focuses on exploring and strengthening the links between geography and the diverse domains that geographers apply themselves to regarding current and emerging challenges. The conference draws attention to geographers' existing (and potential) contributions to the policy sphere. Beyond the formal policy arena, the theme of exploring connections also draws attention to the wider governance systems in which geographers have a contribution to make – such as through interactions with the business sector, the not for profit sector and others, in a wide range of contexts, from urban to rural. In pursuing the theme of geographic connections, the conference also turns the spotlight on the discipline itself, to inquire where Geography is heading from national and international perspectives. What new connections should geographers be cultivating and what aspects of our disciplinary tradition are valuable to retain for the future?

www.iag2015.com.au

Rethinking the Region and Regionalism in Australasia: Challenges and Opportunities for the 21st Century

31st Aug – 2nd Sept 2015, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Cities and regions in Australia and New Zealand have experienced more than 30 years of social and demographic dynamism as a consequence of micro economic reform, greater engagement with the global networks of production, new patterns of migration, rising national prosperity and the shift towards a service based economy.

For further information visit <http://www.regionalstudies.org/conferences>

John Gilbert, Naturalist and Explorer

Clemency Fisher who travelled on the Society's 1990 trip which retraced the Leichhardt Expedition, recently wrote:

It's been a long time, but I thought you would like to see this:

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/collections/zoology/john-gilbert/index.aspx>

Please note RGSQ is included in the Acknowledgements. I have such happy memories of that trip! RGSQ may also find it useful, particularly the transcript of John Gilbert's diary from the Leichhardt Expedition, and the maps.

It is the results of my research on John Gilbert so far; I've had a Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship for the last two years. We hope to collaborate with the Australian National University in the future and get more photos of specimens, etc, posted online.

I hope all is well with all at the RGSQ, and one day I shall return! Best wishes, Clem.

RGSQ Bulletin

May 2015

Special Meeting: Tues 5 May 6:30pm. RGSQ Strategic Plan

Lecture/Meeting: Tues 5 May 7:30pm
What happened to Queensland's Ice Age megafauna? Dr Gilbert Price

Activity: Wed 13 May, Pumicestone Passage Larc Excursion

Volunteer days: Australian Geography Competition, 19-21 May.

Lecture/Meeting: Tues 2 June 7:30pm
Thomson Address by Distinguished Professor Jamie Kirkpatrick
How the interagency between people and trees creates spatial patterns in Australian cities

Activity: Wed 24 June, Scenic Rim Robotic Dairy

Trek: 9 – 26 October, Adelaide and Kangaroo Island