



RGSQ Bulletin

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From the Editor

As the RGSQ President and other RGSQ members travel around South Africa exploring the untapped beauty of Madagascar and Tanzania, we, at RGSQ have decided to explore the science of geography. The article below is the first in a series of three. It follows the evolution of geography as a discipline in itself, from the Greek philosophers to modern times.

PART ONE: EARLY HISTORY OF GEOGRAPHY

"The great challenges of the 21st century are geographical in their formulation, analysis and consequence, and they transcend the physical/social divide." So starts Carl Lee and Danny Dorling in their article in the Times Higher Education which has four essays under the heading "Geography's place in the world" (<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/geography-place-in-the-world>). While these essays provide professional/academic points of discussion on the subject of geography, it is indisputable that in today's society, geography is pervasive.

- Location based mobile devices providing information on the location of cafes, restaurants, and Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) within one kilometre of where you are.
- The ability to view parts of the world online using high spatial resolution imagery to see where that conflict we have just heard reported on the news is happening.
- Video communication with a friend or family on the other side of the world starting with the question "How are things there?" and getting a response about the local weather, economics, politics, or how little Tammy's day at school started by having to ski to school because there was so much snow everywhere.

Geography can be very personal or very public through understanding the differences between the way our lives, our family and/or friends' lives, and people in other countries lives are impacted by our/their local socio-economic, environmental, and political influences. Simply appreciating the differences between the need to travel 30 km from the homestead in western Queensland, or walk five minutes from home to the nearest pharmacy is geographical. Considering the international socio-economic and political impacts of the results of the upcoming US presidential elections is geographical.

The Macquarie Dictionary defines geography as "the study of the areal differentiation of the earth's surface, as shown in the character, arrangement, and interrelations over the world of elements such as climate, relief, soil, vegetation, population, land use, industries, or states, and of the unit areas formed by the complex of these individual elements." (https://www.macquariedictionary.com.au/features/word/search/?word=geography&search_word_type=Dictionary).

The word geography is derived from Greek, *ge* "earth" and *graphein* "to write". Simply, geography is writing about, describing, studying or appreciating the spatial (location) and temporal (time) variability of the world around us.

Geography is part of being human. To survive, humans have had to understand where they could source their basic resources of life (food, water and shelter) in different seasons, or which neighbours might be about to invade them. From a European context, the Greeks are credited with formalising the early disciplinary philosophy of geography. Thales of Miletus, Herodotus, Eratosthenes, Aristotle, Strabo, and Ptolemy were major contributors to early geography discipline. As the Roman Empire expanded, so too did the formalisation of exploration and mapping, and describing of the places and people (geography) of the Empire.



Modern copy of the *Tabula Rogeriana* created by Muhammad al-Idrisi in 1154. Sourced from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tabula_Rogeriana.

Twelfth Century Arab geographer, Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Idrisi commissioned by King Roger II of Sicily wrote the "Book of Roger" (*Tabula Rogeriana*) which is credited as marking the end of classical age of Arab geography. Al-Idrisi's work drew on his early travels through Asia Minor, North Africa, Spain, France, and possibly the English Coast, and his gathering of information from other travellers and writings. The 12th century marks the decline of the great Islamic civilizations and the European Renaissance period. Building on the exploration tools developed during the Middle Ages, it

was the Renaissance Period when advances in map compilation and improvements in shipbuilding with ships powered by sails, rather than men using oars, provided the vehicle for Europeans to explore across the oceans. A new geographical understanding of the Earth, at least for Europeans, was about to commence.

Bernard Fitzpatrick

Meeting/Lecture

Tuesday, May 3, 2016

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

Time: 7:30 pm

Thomson Address

"To promote and stimulate the study of geography: reflections on RGSQ's mission"

presented by Kath Berg

At the May meeting, Kath Berg will be presented with the Thomson Medal. This will be followed by the Thomson Address. The evening honours James Park Thomson who was instrumental in the formation of our Society in 1885. Dr Thomson was the Society's Secretary or Secretary/Treasurer until 1941 except for 1894-1897, when he was President.

Kath Berg was RGSQ's Administrator from 1989 to 2015 and will be well known to many of our members. For the last two years she has been working part-time as the Society's Education Officer. She has now ceased paid employment but will continue her involvement with the Society as a volunteer, particularly through her on-going membership of the Australian Geography Competition Committee.



Kath Berg with Audrey Johnston and Eric Savage, City Mall display, 1990 Geography Awareness Week.

Kath believes passionately in the importance of bringing a geographical understanding to many issues – whether they are issues facing us as individuals in our daily lives, or whether they are issues confronting the nation or the world. She feels privileged to have had such a fulfilling and worthwhile career with RGSQ. Kath has chosen as the topic of her Thomson Address: *To promote and stimulate the study of geography: reflections on RGSQ's mission.*

Kath will look back at the work of the Society over her 28 years and reflect on the broad range of activities undertaken during that time to 'promote and stimulate the study of geography'. She will also look at what has not been done, and why, and what might be done in the future.

May Activity: QPAC Discovery Tour

When: Friday, May 27

Time: 9:50 am for 10:00 am tour

Where: meet in QPAC Lobby

Cost: members \$22 and non-members \$25

RSVP: Friday, 13 May

Ever wondered what happens behind stage?

We'll step behind the footlights and explore the many facets of our Performing Arts Centre. Their guide will intrigue you with many little known facts about QPAC and the people who have performed there.

Join us on the Backstage Discovery Tour and casual lunch at the Café.

A selection of finger sandwiches and Tea/Coffee/Juice will be available.

Please notify RGSQ Office of any *dietary requirements*.

Be aware that there are a number of steps within the tour route.

Note: The tour is currently fully booked, however, due to possible cancellation of reservations before the RSVP date, members who wish to join the tour will be waitlisted. Please inquire with the RGSQ Office.

Jeanette Lamont

June Activity: Engineering Heritage Walk

When: Thursday, 23 June

Time: 9:30 am

Where: Queen Victoria statue in Queens Park, cnr Elizabeth and George St

Cost: members \$32 and non-members \$35

RSVP: Tuesday, June 7

On Thursday 23 June 2016, an Engineering Heritage Walk will take us along William Street where we will note what it looked like in days gone past and imagine what it may look like after the major casino development planned for that precinct is completed. We will then walk through the QUT campus and across the Goodwill Bridge and visit the Maritime Museum and South Brisbane Dry Dock. The walk will finish with a 2-course light lunch in an historic site nearby. Participants may elect to return to the Maritime Museum after lunch if they wish.

The cost is \$32 per member (\$35 for non-members) and covers the cost of entry to the Maritime Museum and lunch, and everyone will receive a copy of a booklet describing many engineering heritage sites around Brisbane.

The walk will commence at 9:30 am sharp at the Queen Victoria statue in Queens Park, corner Elizabeth and George Streets. Please wear comfortable walking shoes

and a hat, and bring a bottle of water, and don't forget your RGSQ name badge. The route is quite flat. Lunch should be completed by 2:30 pm.

Bookings close with the Office on June 7, but there is a limit on the number that can be accommodated on this outing, so early bookings are advised.

Any queries may be directed to Brian McGrath, phone 3378 5960, or email brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com.

Brian McGrath

July Activity:

Jumpers and Jazz Long Weekend Warwick

When: July, Friday 22 to Monday 25

Cost: \$30 members, accompanying non-members \$35

Note: Accommodation and meals NOT included; Accommodation will be required on July 22, 23, and 24 inclusive

The price includes a return vintage train ride to Hendon on Saturday 23rd of July. If the steam trains will not be available following current maintenance, we'll hop on the diesel train.

As for accommodation, we've decided to make *Kahler's Oasis Caravan Park* our base for the weekend on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 22nd, 23rd and 24th of July. We expect the cabins to be in demand, therefore, if you're interested, please BOOK EARLY. The cabins all have reverse cycle air conditioning which could be very handy at that time of year. Prices vary depending on the facilities in the unit. There are also plenty of powered sites for caravanners and motor home owners which probably don't require such early booking. Depending on the weather, we've found caravan parks to be better for social activities.

In addition, the park has a camp kitchen area with BBQs, microwaves, etc. and we propose an afternoon/evening 'happy hour' on Friday the 22nd of July. This can be followed by a meal for those who wish to participate.

Please note: own food, drinks, cooking skills etc. are required.

Kahler's phone number is (07) 4661 2874 if you wish to book directly, alternatively, you can book online with one of the accommodation websites.

To find out more details about the festival visit <http://jumpersandjazz.com/>.

John McWatters

Welcome New Members

We have much pleasure in welcoming **Jason King and Ian Francis** as new members. We hope your association with your new Society is long and mutually enjoyable.

Geography goes from strength to strength at USC



Jason King was the 2016 winner of The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland Prize for the Highest Achieving Graduating Student in the Geography major at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC).

Jason follows Lauren Crompton who won the prize in 2015, the first time the prize was awarded at USC.

Geography has gone from strength to strength at USC. USC opened in 1996 as Australia's newest and smallest public university. A core geography-based course *Australia and its Global Context*, was taught by USC's inaugural geographer, Pam Dyer, who is now USC Professor Emeritus of Geography. Another geography-based compulsory core course, *Science and Sustainability* was also taught by Pam. The entire USC first-year cohort of 500 students took both courses in the first year.

As the university grew, new courses were introduced and students were able to specialize. Pam introduced an interdisciplinary *Environmental and Planning Studies* major, which comprised courses in specialist fields of geography including environmental geography, social and cultural geography, urban geography, population geography and tourism geography. Courses from cognate disciplines such as planning and environmental ethics were also available in the major. This major served the teacher education (Studies of Society and Environment) students.

Jennifer Carter was appointed in 2002 and from 2006 was appointed Geography Discipline Leader. By this time, the Environmental and Planning Studies area had grown sufficiently to introduce a stand-alone geography major and stand-alone planning program. New courses were progressively introduced from 2008 and covered introductory human geography, rural and regional geography, Indigenous geography, historical geography, hydrology and geomorphology, coastal geomorphology, biogeography, and animal geography, and one course in which students were individually supervised to prepare them for diverse workplaces. Lecturers in Human Geography (Harriot Beazley) and Physical Geography (Javier Leon) were then appointed. Geography also is one of the core disciplines of new research staff and higher degree students in the university's Sustainability Research Centre.

One of the problems of a small regional university is attracting and retaining students in an increasingly competitive tertiary education sector. New programs in environmental science, planning, international studies, international development and environmental management were progressively introduced at USC in subsequent years and Jennifer was able to offer one of

more geography courses in the different degree programs. Some students, after doing a single course, would then choose other geography courses as electives – or an entire minor or major if there was room in their program. This partially led to the success of geography at USC. Undoubtedly the introduction of geography in the National Curriculum for primary and secondary schools has been the recent driver of growth in geography at USC. Students are now actively seeking a geography major or minor as their specialist area for teaching, which helps to grow the profession and next generation of geographers. Jason and Lauren are the first of, hopefully, a long line of outstanding, passionate and dedicated future geographers! **Assoc. Prof. Jennifer Carter, University of the Sunshine Coast**

Map Group Gathering

When: Monday, June 6

Time: 10:00 am

Where: Gregory House, 237 Milton Rd, Milton.

Map Group Program

May, 2016

- Hema Maps Visit – on one of the following three dates - Monday 16 May, or Tuesday 17 May, or Wed 18 May. Map Group members will be emailed details, when a final date has been set.
- John Oxley Library Visit – 10:00 am, Tuesday 31 May. Map Group members will be emailed further details closer to the date.

June, 2016

- Map Group Gathering – 10:00 am, Monday 6 June, Gregory House, Milton. Key Event: Les Isdale's presentation on Maps in the RGSQ Library: Queensland Geographical Journals.

July, 2016

- Map Group Gathering – 10:00 am, Monday 4 July, Gregory House, Milton. Key Event: Review and Study of key historic/rare maps held in RGSQ's Map Library. The aim is to determine and then later, prepare a Map Display for the wider RGSQ membership. Map Group members will be emailed further details closer to the date.

August, 2016

- Map Group Gathering – 10:00 am, Monday 1 August, Gregory House, Milton. Key Event: Ron Wallace's working session on The Use of GPS. Map Group members will be emailed further details closer to the date.
- Visit to Queensland State Archives Maps Section: this visit has yet to be organised, but will hopefully occur during the next few months.

Visit to Museum of Lands, Mapping and Surveying, March 2016

The Museum: It was started in 1982 by the Department of Natural Resources, and then made a branch of the Queensland Museum in 1985. The Museum collection includes historic surveying and mapping equipment, historic maps, especially original survey plans and maps,

plus historic documents and photographs relating to the mapping and surveying of Queensland, during the 19th and 20th centuries. The main Museum is located at the Landcentre, Woolloongabba, whilst a large storage facility, designed to house historic surveying and mapping equipment and other relics is located within the State Government's Queensland Stores, Hendra.

The purpose of the Museum was originally to house Queensland based historic surveying and mapping equipment, relics, plans, maps, document and photos from 1839 to 1950. For example, the Museum's photographic records encompass 6,000 photos received from surveyors over the years.

However, in recent years, this purpose has widened to include:

- surveying and mapping equipment up to the latter part of the 20th century;
- provision of information, especially on historic maps and surveys, via a computer database;
- provision of map images, via use on the internet;
- synchronising the Museum's mapping records systems to that of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM), the major State Government map production department still operating today.



Map Group members, with Museum staff, when visiting the Museum of Lands, Mapping and Surveying.

The Museum has access to first Survey Plans produced in Queensland, dating from 1839. There are thousands of these original plans, which are comprised of a paper plan attached to a linen backing, which can last for multiple decades. Map Group members were taken into the map room and shown some of these original survey plans with all of the surveyors notes recorded on them. They are stored in a very secure room, with environmental controls to ensure survival of these historic plans.



An original Survey Plan of a rural holding near Injune, Queensland, held in the secured DNRM Map Room. It shows all the surveyors' notes and alterations over the years.

Implications of the Museum Visit for the RGSQ Map Library - the aim of the Museum visit was to gain relevant knowledge on modern mapping storage, cataloguing, conservation and scanning systems and techniques for potential use in the RGSQ Map Library, which members of the Map Group are now investigating. The key outcomes of the visit were:

- There is no single map cataloguing system utilised by the various external map collections in Queensland and elsewhere that RGSQ's Map Library can use. The Map Group will need to see more catalogue systems and then choose what is appropriate for the RGSQ Map Library.
- To scan and digitise maps, especially historic and rare maps, requires knowledge of modern computer based mapping systems, including types of imagery software required, plus storage and retrieval methodologies and techniques for digitised maps.
- The conservation of historic and rare maps does involve the use of Mylar Envelopes (large plastic sleeves), and the horizontal storage of hard copy maps, versus vertical storage. RGSQ Map Library has some historic/rare maps in plastic sleeves in horizontal storage already, but the majority of the map collection is not protected and is in vertical storage.

Bob Abnett, Co-ordinator, Map Group

RGSQ Ken Sutton Memorial Library

When: Monday 9 May

Time: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Please bring your lunch.

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

Enter via the main entrance on Milton Road.

Are you interested in discovering what items are in the Society's Ken Sutton Memorial Library? Would you like to help with maintaining our Library? Would you just like to visit the Society's Library with like-minded members, peruse the shelves, and discuss geography related items and books?

Rob Simson would like to invite all interested members to join him on Monday 9 May between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm to discover the RGSQ Ken Sutton Memorial Library and discuss what an RGSQ Library Group might like to achieve. Please contact the office to register your interest or turn up on the day.

Library Policy Input

Rob has recently been following up some crucial initial work that a number of RGSQ members (Ann Hanger, Jill Don, Stuart Watt, and Peter Nunan) have done over the last 12-18 months. He is currently working on finalising an RGSQ Library Policy and would welcome comment from members.

If you would like a copy of the Draft Library Policy, which will be available by mid-April, please contact the Society's Office, ph.: 07 3368-2066, or email admin@rgsq.org.au.

RGSQ Council Casual Vacancy

Audrey's resignation leaves a vacancy on the Council, which the Council would like to be filled, as a casual vacancy appointment, until the next (September) Annual General Meeting. Members interested in contributing to the management, development and governance of the Society are encouraged to consider putting their name forward for appointment to the Council. The Council meets at the Gregory House, Milton, on the second Tuesday of each month (6:00 pm). Any member interested in joining the Council, please talk to one of the Council members, or contact the Executive Officer, Bernard Fitzpatrick by phone (07 3368-2066) or email at execofficer@rgsq.org.au.

Ada's Slides

Some of the Society's longer-time members may remember Ada Sirett. Ada volunteered in the Society's library and helped out at displays for many years, including the time of my Presidency. She was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in 1993. Between 1966 and 1988 Ada travelled the world alone as an intrepid, white, single female who could speak five languages, having been born in Switzerland. She meticulously recorded her experiences in slides which she catalogued, annotated and also added narratives for some country visits.

Ada died a few years ago at the age 94 and left no immediate family. Through a series of circumstances I have inherited Ada's life collection, including the six to seven thousand above-mentioned slides. If any member has an interest in the collection, or knows of anyone who could make use of it I need to know fairly soon. Otherwise it will all have to be dumped as it is fast deteriorating. The material can be viewed at my home in Sunnybank Hills where it currently resides. If a lot of interest is generated I could convey the lot to the Society for inspection and sample viewing. A listing of the material is available on request for anyone who is interested.

To arrange a viewing day and time, or for further information, please contact me on 07 3345 4440 (leave your name and a return number & I'll get back to you a.s.a.p.). Thank you. **Peter Lloyd**



Ada gave several talks to the Society about her travels. Here she is speaking about Lapland at Brookes Street in 1993.

Australian Geography Competition helpers please!

There is one more Australian Geography Competition mail-out when we will require volunteers:

Wednesday, the 20th of July to Friday, the 22nd of July - Packing of Results, Certificates and Prizes.

Please contact the RGSQ Office on 07 3368-2066 if you would like to help on any of the above days. Your help is greatly appreciated and assists with making the Australian Geography Competition one of the largest school based competitions in Australia.

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

Member contributions to the RGSQ Bulletin, small or large are welcome. Please send any articles or snippets of information to info@rgsq.org.au. Please start the subject of the email with "Bulletin."

Deadlines for contributions to the Bulletin are the second Tuesday of the month. For example, the deadline for the June Bulletin is Tuesday, the 14th of June.

RGSQ Bulletin

May 2016

Lecture/Meeting: Tue 3 May 7:30 pm

Thomson Address: "To promote and stimulate the study of geography: reflections on the RGSQ's mission"

Presented by Kath Berg

Tours and Activities: *Fri May 27, Day Outing: QPAC Tour*

Member Gathering: Mon 9 May 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, *RGSQ Library Group inaugural meeting, "Gregory House", 237 Milton Rd, Milton*

Volunteer Days: Wed-Fri July 20-22, *AGC Mail-Out. "Gregory House", 237 Milton Rd, Milton*

Council Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month.

The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland Inc
"Gregory House", 237 Milton Road, Milton Q 4064

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