



# RGSQ Bulletin

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## From the President

I have had a fascination with volcanos since I was a kid. Stories of the devastating eruption of Mt Lamington in PNG in January 1951, recounted around our dinner table later in the year by a family friend, Bert Speer, were more graphic than any of the newspaper photos or newsreels of the day. Bert was a medical assistant and had been based at Higaturu, 14 km from the volcano, and was the first to provide medical aid to the many casualties. His photos of the event (now in the National Library in Canberra) and his stories perhaps sparked my interest in geography and set me on a career path that has taken me to many of the world's volcanos.

In the early 1960s I was based for two years just outside of Rabaul in PNG. The Rabaul volcanos had erupted less than 30 years previously, killing over 500 people. The surrounding Gazelle Peninsula, with its rich volcanic soils, supported one of the most vibrant indigenous populations in PNG – the Tolai – as well as extensive expatriate plantation agriculture. The Gazelle became the subject of my first piece

of academic geographic research and later became the subject of my Masters thesis.

Another PNG volcano, Karkar Island, provided a close encounter with the forces of nature that I will never forget. The Karkar volcano had been in low-level eruption since 1974, but on 8 March 1979 it erupted suddenly and violently killing volcanologist Robin Cooke and his Tolai assistant Elias Ravian who had been monitoring its activities from a camp on the caldera wall. At the time I was based in Port Moresby and became involved in planning for the evacuation of the island. As part of that work I visited Karkar and just happened to be there when volcanologist Chris McKee had arranged a helicopter to fly him into the caldera to measure temperatures at the still very active central vent. He had a spare seat, so off I went. The experience of landing less than 100m from the roaring mouth of a very active volcano is something I will never forget. 'Awesome power' doesn't come close as a description.

A less 'awesome' but probably no less bizarre volcano experience was swimming in the thermal waters of the Deception Island volcano in the sub-Antarctic while on a cruise to the Antarctic in 2002. The air temperature was around -4°C but the water close to shore was a pleasant 20°. Unfortunately you only had to move a few more metres away from the shore and the temperature dropped very rapidly!

For someone with a passion for volcanos, a visit to Pompeii and Mt

Vesuvius was a must-do. I came away a few years ago with a strong impression that brooding Vesuvius poses an incredible threat to the city of Naples, a threat that the Neapolitans seem to accept or ignore. When (not if) it does erupt violently again the 4.4 million citizens of Naples will certainly not be in a good place.

The recent eruption of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull (which I am told is pronounced A-ya-fyat-la-yok-utl), is another reminder of the intricate relationship between the various forces of nature. The explosive nature of the eruption in April, which pushed through 240 m of glacial ice, threw an ash cloud some 9000 m up into the atmosphere. Unfortunately, Iceland sits directly under the jet stream with the result that the very fine ash was carried directly over the UK and western Europe – some of the busiest airspace in the world.

When the Rabaul volcanos again erupted in 1994 the ash cloud thrown up was (surprisingly) carried south as

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far as Mackay before westerly winds took it out over the Pacific as far as Fiji. On that occasion aircraft were warned about the potential danger but no flights were cancelled. All of the modelling and disaster planning had been based on the assumption that the ash plume would be taken to the west by the persistent easterly upper atmosphere winds. If there is one thing I have learned about volcanos it is that they are a law unto themselves.

Ken Granger

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## Lecture – Creating a Geography Curriculum

In August we continue our series of 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary lectures, looking at aspects of the Society's past and current work. The August lecture will focus on geographical education (an area into which the Society has put a lot of resources), specifically on the national geography curriculum currently under development.

The presentation, *Creating a Geography Curriculum for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* will be delivered by Malcolm McInerney.

Malcolm is the Chair of the Australian Geography Teachers' Association (AGTA). After 31 years teaching geography in secondary schools in South Australia, Malcolm is now working as the Society and Environment Curriculum Manager in the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services.

Since 2000 Malcolm has been involved in conducting professional learning for teachers and developing classroom materials using spatial technologies and innovative pedagogies in the geography classroom.

With the development of a national geography curriculum and his membership of the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Geography Advisory Panel, Malcolm is finding his focus being directed towards the work of ACARA and the challenge to develop a 'state of the art' geography curriculum for Australian students in the 21st Century.

The development of an Australian curriculum for geography has produced a significant challenge for geography educators in Australia. Words often thrown around by curriculum developers include; 'state of the art', contemporary, 'world's best practice', for the 21st Century, relevant, engaging and many more. In his presentation Malcolm will outline the development of the new curriculum for all Australian students, the challenges for educators, the needs of the 21st Century learner and what a modern geography curriculum can look like for Australian students.

Contentious curriculum development issues such as defining geography for schools, the use of technology, the degree of contestability, the specificity of content, the teaching of issues, preferred pedagogies and the themes approach are providing the opportunity for some interesting discussion amongst educators and community geographers.

The work of the RGSQ, AGTA and the Institute of Australian Geographers via the 'Towards the National Geography Curriculum' project has been influential in the development of the Australian Curriculum: Geography over the past two years. In his talk Malcolm will highlight the importance of this work and how this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to develop a dynamic, contemporary geography curriculum for the 21st Century.

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## Icons Trek Reunion

When: 8-11 August

Where: Woodgate Beach

Book: register your attendance with the RGSQ office by 30 July, and book your own accommodation (see below)

To renew the friendships made on the *Icons of Queensland Trek*, and to share memorabilia and stories, a relaxing camp has been organised for Woodgate Beach in August 2010.

On Sunday 8 August 2010, people will drive to Woodgate Beach (348km from Brisbane), booking into the Woodgate Beach Tourist Park (phone 4126 8802). Dinner will be a group function at the Bowls Club.

Monday and Tuesday will be spent relaxing, walking on the beach and in the National Park, fishing, swimming, etc, and re-living the wonderful moments – including the Happy Hours – of the Icons Trek.

Leaving Woodgate on Wednesday 11 (Exhibition Wednesday public holiday in Brisbane), we drive back to our homes.

All Icons Trekkers are invited to attend, and of course **everyone else is welcome too**.

Please register your intention to attend with the office before July 30. There is no registration fee; make and pay for your own accommodation bookings. You can find full details of the costs of cabins and campsites at the Tourist Park at [www.woodgatebeachtouristpark.com](http://www.woodgatebeachtouristpark.com) but you must phone the Tourist Park to book your accommodation/campsite. It is a busy time at Woodgate, so an early booking is advised.

For any further enquiries, please contact Brian McGrath, email [brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com](mailto:brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com), or phone 07 3378 5960.

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## Annual General Meeting

Members are hereby notified that the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at RGSQ, 237 Milton Rd, Milton, at 7:30 pm on Tuesday 7 September 2010.

The business to be transacted at this meeting shall be:

- receiving the Council's report and the statement of income and expenditure, assets and liabilities of the Society
- receiving the auditor's report
- electing Council members
- appointing an auditor

If any member wishes to add an item of general business they should notify the Secretary of this by 16 August 2010. Any changes to the business to be transacted at the meeting thus arising shall be notified to members via the What's New page of the Society website by 23 August 2010.

## Council Nominations

Any two members of the Society may nominate any other member to serve as an officer or other member of the Council during 2010-2011 by completing the nomination form below and returning it to the Secretary by 23 August 2010. Only if at the commencement of the AGM there is an insufficient number of candidates nominated, may nominations be taken from the floor.

If you would like more information on serving on Council, please ask a Councillor at the next meeting, or ring Kath or Keith in the office. There are insufficient existing Councillors re-standing to fill all the positions so members are asked to think seriously about contributing to the Society in this way.

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## Office Hours

Kath Berg will be accompanying the Australian team to the International Geography Olympiad. She will be away from the office from when you read this *Bulletin* until 11 August. During this time the office should be open every day, but it is likely to either open later or close earlier. Please ring and check that it is staffed before visiting.

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## Vale

We regret to inform members of the death of Leah Shaw. Leah was a member of our Society for over 10 years and participated in a couple of long treks. Our sincere condolences to family and friends.

## New Members

We have much pleasure in welcoming the following new members:

Beverley and Noel Bowley;  
Graeme Congdon; Cheryl,  
Michael, Clare and Kaitlyn  
Feeney; Robert Hacon; Heather  
Healy; Janice and Phillip Imison;  
Jocelyn May; Bart and Jenni  
McKnight; Bob and Sue Reid;  
John Rhoden; Dianne Smith;  
Deslie Troeger.

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

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## Haddon Corner Trek

A reminder that there will be an Information Night for all coming to Haddon Corner on Wed 18 August, commencing at 7.30pm in Gregory House, 237 Milton Rd, Milton. There is no cost, but for catering purposes please **advise the office by 10 August** if you intend coming along – a light supper will be served.

Come along to meet and get to know your fellow Trekkers. Of course, any RGSQ member is welcome to attend, whether coming to Haddon Corner or not.

Members booked on this trip are reminded that, if not already paid, the **balance of the trek cost is due on 1 August**. This is:

\$2430 per person coach  
\$140 per person 4WD

At the time of writing the 4WD section is full with a waiting list. There are a couple of seats on the coach but these may be gone by the time you read this, so check NOW.

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## RGSQ Trips Blog Launched

The convenor of the Treks and Activities Committee, Brian McGrath, has set up Brian's Travel Blog. The aim of the blog is to publicise and report on the Treks and Activities organised by the RGSQ for its members and their friends. It is a fact that the younger generation gets a lot of its information from the web, and Brian's Blog is an attempt to spread the message of our trips to that generation, as well as for the general interest and information of our existing members. These goals will be achieved only if people regularly view the blog postings, and, when necessary, comment on them.

You will find the blog at <http://brian-rgsqtravel.blogspot.com> Please enter this web address in your computer favourites/bookmarks and please forward it to your relatives and friends for their use also. Brian hopes to see lots of "hits" and comments on the blog postings.

If you wish to have any notes or other information about RGSQ Treks and Activities added to the blog, please email same to Brian at [brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com](mailto:brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com) and Brian will do what he can to incorporate them in the blog.

Finally, Brian is new to blogging, and any tips, hints to improve the blog will be welcomed!

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## Council Nomination Form

We, being financial members of The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland Inc, nominate:

\_\_\_\_\_ for the position of:

(Please circle one of)    President  
                                    Vice-President (2 positions)  
                                    Secretary  
                                    Treasurer  
                                    Councillors (8 positions)

on the Council of the Society for the 2010-11 year.

Nominator's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Secunder's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I, being a financial member of the Society, agree to the above nomination, and confirm my preparedness to serve if elected.

Candidate's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidates may wish to provide a brief resume of their involvement with and interest in the Society.

## International Geog Olympiad

The 2010 International Geography Olympiad will be held in Taipei, Taiwan, from 29 July to 4 August 2010, followed by a fieldtrip from 5 to 9 August. Australia's team was chosen from students who participated in the 2009 Geography's Big Week Out. Selection was based on formal assessment and on student performance during the week. Representing Australia in Taiwan will be:

Samuel Buttenshaw, NSW  
Baris Dilaver, WA  
Sophie Miller, Tas  
Emily Thoday-Kennedy, SA

Between 26 and 28 countries will take part – depending on the outcome of last minute visa problems for two teams from Africa. The Australian team will be accompanied by Society members Kath Berg and Margaret McIvor, and Anne-Marie Gerlach (GTAQ President).

Kath is Secretary of the Olympiad Task Force and has working hard in the lead up to the Olympiad. She will be acting chair of the Task Force in Taipei and will be responsible for the administration and marking of the tests. So she's looking forward to the fieldtrip following the Olympiad which won't be so full-on for her!

## Forthcoming Conferences

3rd International Urban Design Conference, 30 Aug - 1 Sept, Canberra, [www.urbandesignaustralia.com.au](http://www.urbandesignaustralia.com.au)

Open Geospatial Consortium Technical Meeting, 29 Nov - 3 Dec, Sydney, [david.lemon@csiro.au](mailto:david.lemon@csiro.au)

ISO Technical Committee on Geographic Information/Geomatics Meeting, 6 - 10 Dec, Canberra, [chris.body@ga.gov.au](mailto:chris.body@ga.gov.au)

Australian Earth System Outlook Conference, 9 - 10 Dec, Australian Academy of Science, [www.science.org.au/natcoms/nc-ess.html](http://www.science.org.au/natcoms/nc-ess.html)

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August 2010

**Internat Geog Olympiad**, 29 Jul - 3 Aug  
Where: Taipei

**Lecture**, Tues 3 Aug, 7.30pm  
Speaker: Malcolm McInerney  
Subject: Creating a Geography Curriculum for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

**Icons Trek Reunion**, 8 - 11 Aug  
Where: Woodgate Beach

**Trek Briefing**, Wed 18 Aug, 7.30pm  
For: Haddon Corner Trek

**Meeting**, Tues 7 Sept 7.30pm  
What: Annual General Meeting

**Trek**, 13 - 27 Sept  
Where: Through Cooper Country to Haddon Corner

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