



# RGSQ Bulletin

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## From the President

On Tuesday 7 August it was again my pleasure to welcome Her Excellency Ms P Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland to our Society, to our evening lecture entitled *Geography and Diplomacy*.

His Excellency Mr Paul Madden, British High Commissioner to Australia was the guest lecturer for this meeting. His lecture once again highlighted the advantage of a geographical background when applied to international relations in the 21st Century. Topics covered included natural resources, the relationship between history and geography, boundaries, place identity, and diplomatic initiatives following recent natural disasters around the globe.

Last month I reported on some of Sharyn's and my experiences in Paris and would like to wind up my comments this month with reference to some of our travels in the southern part of England over the past four weeks.

In the past, both Sharyn and I have enjoyed a wide range of 'touring' holidays both in Australia and

overseas and the one complaint we always had was that it was too fast and didn't leave enough time to really soak up the atmosphere in many of the places we visited. Part of the excitement of travel is the experience of looking in on a different culture, the landscape, the people, and that talking point we all like to relate to one another, the weather.

Over the past couple of years we have been involved in a 'home swap' arrangement that does facilitate a closer and more inclusive look at specific geographical areas, and over the past month we've enjoyed the time we've had to look, talk, walk, and explore much of the County of Dorset and neighboring shires in the southern part of England.

I would like to share the experience of The New Forest and Brownsea Island with you. While only part of our trip, they did open a significant geographical window on this rather beautiful part of the world.

In August we experienced once again the 'Ekka', that showpiece of our industrial and agricultural production right here in Queensland. Last month we visited The New Forest and Hampshire Country Show. Cattle, dogs, sheep, horses, food, cars and agricultural machinery were all on show and of course comparisons with our own lifestyle here in Queensland were inevitable. One interesting animal on show was that curse of many an Australian outback endeavour, the rabbit, and we did have a good laugh when we saw part of the rural entertainment included ferret racing.

The New Forest and Hampshire Agricultural Society is a registered charity committed to the restoration and upkeep of the ancient site of New Park and its aims are to support farming, equestrian and horticultural activities. The activities within The New Forest include riding, walking, picnics, history, re-forestation. The site of the show itself is situated in a very picturesque piece of English countryside within The New Forest.

An added bonus was Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth visited and passed close by on this particular day on the last phase of her Diamond Jubilee visit to the Dorset and Isle of Wight region.

The second area I would like to mention is Brownsea Island which is the largest island situated in Poole Harbour which is second in size to our own Sydney Harbour here in Australia. This is the place where Lord Baden Powell first experimented with introducing boys to a camping and outdoors experience which resulted in the formation of the Boy Scout movement and its

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later development into a world wide organization.

This is the one area in Britain where its possible to see Red Squirrels (the natural squirrel of the British Isles) without the intrusion of the American Grey Squirrel which I did see running around Kew Gardens in London.

Despite having had a quite extensive area of land reclaimed from the heathland and marshland, starting as far back as the 16th century, Brownsea Island has survived with the help of the National Trust and Dorset Wildlife Trust as one of the premier nature reserves in Britain. It's a birders paradise with over 230 bird species having been recorded here – we did manage to see terns (Sandwich and Common Terns), Common Sandpipers, Black-tailed Godwit's, Oyster Catchers, Little Egret's, Moorhen, Grey Heron, Black Headed Gulls, and Avocet from one of the hides situated on the northern shore of the island, facing Poole township on the other side of the harbour. It was also interesting to see the number of non-indigenous trees that have been planted here from around the world (including a lone eucalypt).

Poole Harbour is also interesting historically going right back to the Viking raids recorded around this part of Pirbeck, and its more contemporary history prior to the start of Operation Overlord towards the latter part of the Second World War, when the harbour was used as a staging and embarkation point for France.

I returned to Australia on 2 August and now have 16 days to prepare for our second trek to Southern Africa. As the Annual General Meeting of RGSQ will take place on 4 September, and as I will be away with the South African trekkers until 12 September, this will be my final 'From the President's page' before the installation of our new President. On Thursday afternoon I met once again with the RGSQ African Trekkers from our April excursion to Southern Africa. It was a great opportunity to reminisce and relive a truly memorable experience.

I have enjoyed immensely my time as President of RGSQ and would like

to thank all our members for their co-operation and dedication to the many tasks that help promote and make The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland the great success that it is. As I step back to Council, I hope to continue my contribution through some of our committees in coming years.

At this time, I would also like to particularly thank Kath, Keith, and Hayley for their help over these past two years and would like to offer my congratulations to our incoming President.

*Leo Scanlan*

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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 4 September 2012.

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 2012/13 and appoint the auditor for the same period.

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.

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## Hinze Dam & Numinbah

Members and friends are invited to join this day trip on Sunday 9 September, which includes a guided tour of Hinze Dam. Early birds could make a full day of it, taking in the Nerang River's source area at Natural Bridge, while others could opt for the core afternoon activities.

For early birds, gather at the beginning of the Natural Bridge walking track at 10.30 am. The Natural Bridge walk takes about half an hour and is well worth seeing. Nearby, the Qld/NSW border gives brilliant views over the Tweed Valley towards Mt Warning.

There'll be plenty of time to get back to the Hinze Dam picnic area in time for lunch.

We'll gather from about noon for lunch. The meeting point is the picnic area below the Hinze Dam wall, down Hoop Pine Road. (Look for the magnetic RGSQ signs on vehicles.) BYO picnic or purchase from the kiosk at the top of the dam wall.

Our tour of the dam starts at 2.00pm with Michael Fiechtner of SEQ Water. After the tour, there's still plenty to take in – like a walk across the dam wall or through the adjoining park area.

To get to Numinbah/Hinze Dam, you take Exit 71 off the Pacific Highway at Nerang and turn right at the top of the exit ramp. Follow the signs indicating Murwillumbah or Numinbah Valley or Natural Bridge – (route 90, then route 97).

Hinze Dam turn-off is 10 km from Exit 71 where you left the motorway.

Natural Bridge is 29 km further on from the Hinze Dam turnoff through the beautiful Numinbah Valley.

Please register with the RGSQ office, including payment of a fee of \$5.00 per person. Bookings will close on 4 September at the latest, but the guided tour may reach capacity before then.

*John McWatters*

(Please note that the 7-10 Sept trek shown in the printed programme has morphed into this one.)

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## Millmerran Festival

The Society has organised a long weekend at the Millmerran Camp Oven Festival. A very interesting programme is planned from Friday 5 through Sunday 7 October.

On Friday we plan to visit Cecil Plains Homestead, Yandilla Anglican Church (originally part of the Gore family's run, est. 1841), and the Oakey Power Station. Mr Grant Unergang, of the Millmerran Historical Society, will be presenting a slide show on the Millmerran District on Friday evening.

Saturday, we'll be joining enthusiastically in all the Camp Oven Festival has to offer: bush poets'

breakfast, music, demonstrations, stalls, displays, camp oven cooking competitions, and best apron competitions.

On Sunday we will be visiting the Millmerran Museum, Mt Basalt, Commodore Peak, and the Forrest Estate Olive Grove, for a tour of the olive grove production and lunch.

Accommodation is at the Millmerran Village Caravan Park, e-mail [mvcaravanpark@bigpond.com](mailto:mvcaravanpark@bigpond.com); phone 07 4695 2020. Accommodation is now very limited — mention RGSQ. If you miss out, there is an alternative temporary campground in the showground; enquiries to [dtwidale2@bigpond.com](mailto:dtwidale2@bigpond.com). You need to organise this directly yourself.

In the last *Bulletin*, we advised a cost. However, since then we have been able to confirm a booking (but not the price) for a tour of the Oakey Power Station. Industrial visits are increasingly difficult to arrange because of occupational health and safety concerns. We will notify members of the new price in the October *Bulletin*, and email those who have already booked.

*Greg Lewis*

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## Contrasts in China

What: nibbles & drinks, a 3-course Chinese meal, slide presentation  
When: Fri 19 Oct, 6.00 for 6.30pm  
Where: RGSQ  
Cost: \$35.00  
Book: with the office & pay by 2 Oct

China is a fascinating country — huge, bustling cities, one with a population about the same as the whole of Australia; tiny villages with only 3 or 4 huts; kilometres of vibrant green paddy fields; sheer bare mountains; temples with huge, weird statues of gods; ancient history, beliefs and customs; arts and crafts; dramatic scenery; historic gardens; its food; and much more.

I've travelled in China three times, basically in different regions each time. My first visit, in 1977, was during the time of Mao — when we were 'watched'. In 1985/86, with more than a touch of temporary insanity, I joined a cycling group,

cycling only about 500 km in 15 days through the most magnificent countryside, tiny villages and small towns. We were always the centre of attention. We flew from there to Beijing — in winter — to explore several ancient monuments, walk some of the Great Wall, visit the Ming Tombs and the Summer Palace.

Last year my tour included Beijing and its ancient monuments again, in summer. From there we flew to Xian to view the Terracotta Warriors, the face on each of the about 8,000 figures, different. Indescribable. Then to Chongquin to begin a ten-night cruise on the Yangtse, the third longest river in the world, with the world's largest hydro power station in the world. On shore excursions each day we visited a school, temples, towers, a pagoda, an ancient pottery, gardens, caves, the Lesser Three Gorges with haze-shrouded cliffs, the Three Gorges Dam, a silk factory and museums and heard a performance on bells about 2,000 years old.

The tour ended in Shanghai but my friend and I chose to spend more time in Shanghai, to take another cruise to the mouth of the Yangtse, about 30 km from the city to the mouth — an unbelievable number of sampans, junks, shipyards, naval bases, and with industry almost the whole way to the river mouth.

After travelling by plane, ship, boat, coach, bicycle and leg we'll end our vicarious adventure with a gentle cruise on the Li River, past countless finger-shaped limestone karst mountains, many cloaked by dense vegetation.

Bring your friends and introduce them to your Society.

*Audrey Johnston*

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## Cruisin' Down the River

What: cruise the Brisbane River to the river mouth and return  
When: Thursday 1 November  
Cost: \$35  
Book: with the office & pay by 2 Oct  
Meet: NO LATER than 9.20am at the pontoon near the Big Wheel at South Bank  
Bring: your camera  
Wear: sunsmart gear



Anchors aweigh before we enjoy a Devonshire morning tea. As we cruise downstream we'll hear a comprehensive commentary about major and minor features along the river bank and on the water. We'll pass many familiar sights and some that we don't know — historic and modern buildings, older and newer bridges, parks, City Cats, refineries, the airport and the Port of Brisbane. There'll be many unfamiliar sights and stories, too.

On the return journey we can chat over lunch, tea and coffee. There's a licensed bar, too (at your own expense).

Arrival back is about 2.00 pm.

Numbers are limited so book early. Friends are welcome too.

*Audrey Johnston*

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## Maritime Museum

At the Queensland Maritime Museum on Wednesday 8 August, 18 members of RGSQ enjoyed a very informative tour of the *Diamantina* and the docks with our superb guide and fellow RGSQ member, Peter Nunan. He pointed out so many aspects of the life of the ship and his stories made her come alive.

By late morning and a short walk to the Southbank Institute of Technology restaurant, we were ready to enjoy a superb lunch. The staff were most attentive and the food was very appetising.

A return walk to the Museum found us being met by Peter who introduced us to the CEO, Ian Jempson. Ian gave us a very interesting talk on celestial navigation, giving us an insight into how ships had to navigate the oceans without the modern use of GPS. The rest of the afternoon was spent looking at the many artefacts on site. An extremely pleasant day.

*Kay Rees*

## Scientific Study

As the fieldwork part of the Pungalina Seven-Emu Scientific Study is now over, we would like to thank our partner, Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC); John Kanowski, AWC Ecologist and Liaison; Sharyn Yelverton and Herman Mouthaan, *Pungalina* Station Managers; our wonderful, hard-working team of RGSQ volunteers, and our top group of researchers. Due to your assistance, organisation and generous spirit this Scientific Study was a great success. Please visit Graham Rees's website for magnificent images of *Pungalina*: <http://wombatshollow.com/pungalina/> Hayley Freemantle, Project Officer

## New Members

We have much pleasure in welcoming new and rejoining members: Iraphne Childs; Glenda and Paul Donovan; Carol Norcott; Amelia Travers; Gregory and Jeanette Wehl. We hope your association with your new Society is long and mutually enjoyable. We look forward to getting to know you at Society events.

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## Rocks and Landscapes

The Geological Society of Australia Qld Division has published a revised colour edition of *Rocks and Landscapes of Brisbane and Ipswich*.

This guidebook looks at the geological origins and landscapes of the region. This second edition includes new content on Brisbane's building stones and tunnels, as well as a revised section on excursions where the rocks and landscapes can be seen.

As we have done with previous guidebooks in this series, the Society will be coordinating a bulk order. If you'd like a copy (or more than one), please let the office know and pay by 4 September.

The cost is \$11.00 if the book is collected from the Society, or \$14.00 for it to be posted out to you.

# RGSQ Bulletin

September 2012

**Overseas Trek**, 18 Aug - 12 Sept  
Where: Cape Town to Victoria Falls

**Meeting**, Tues 4 Sept 7.30pm  
What: Annual General Meeting

**Day Trip**, Sun 9 Sept  
Where: Hinze Dam, and optionally  
Numinbah Valley

**Lecture Meeting**, Tues 2 Oct 7.30pm  
Speaker: Mr Adrian Holbeck  
Subject: Achieving Zero Carbon Emissions

**Weekend Trip**, 5 - 7 Oct  
Australian Camp Oven Festival, Millmerran

**Social**, Fri 19 Oct 6.00pm  
What: Talk and themed dinner - China

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