



# RGSQ Bulletin

ISSN 1832-8830

Vol 49 no 2 March 2014

Published by The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland Inc, a nonprofit organisation established in 1885 that promotes the study of geography and encourages a greater understanding and enjoyment of the world around us.

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## From the President

The first Lecture for 2014, on 4 February, attracted a capacity audience of Members and Guests. The topic "Transformations: The Simpson Desert from Drought to Flood and Fire", presented by Mr Andrew Harper, was of special interest to a large number of Members who have visited Simpson Desert and or contiguous areas and contributed to Scientific Studies. A large number of the general public, who became aware of the lecture through media notifications, extended the attendance. From having to boost the normal seating capacity of the auditorium, to saving time by dispensing with questions, and the extended discussion over refreshments after the lecture, the presentation must be judged a great start for the year.

The number of non-members attending our public lecture speaks well for the use of community service on line and media notifications of these lectures. This approach shows to be effective compared with the costly, single entry newspaper advertising used until last year.

The programme for 2014, which has now been promulgated, speaks for

itself in quality and quantity across the Lectures, Activities and Treks proposed, not forgetting that major commitment, the Australian Geography Competition. The serious work on the 2014 Competition is underway.

As President of our very active Society, I am continually reminded and I have had to recognise the scope and depth of activities which go beyond my key personal interests. I do not think that I have to apologise for a somewhat limited view of Society activity, namely the importance of the Lecture Programme, a special interest in Antarctica and the value of the monthly Bulletin. There exists in the Council the wisdom to see more broadly and to guide my personal limitations.

All that which has been achieved and recorded in the past is a marvellous example for the planning for the future, which, as Members are aware, is ongoing. Your Council does recognise the need to meet the needs of the future – not forgetting our 128 year heritage. The records of the Society enthuse me and provide the beacon for the future.

In the past I have not been highly involved in the Treks and Activities of the Society. I have participated in Treks and outside activities, which I appreciated and enjoyed and wish I had done more. My lack of participation is compensated through reading the reports in the Bulletin.

The Treks and Activity programme of the Society is highlighted by the

excellent Report by Leo Scanlan in the last Bulletin on the Trek to Peru, which he led in October 2013. This outline of geography on the ground sparked regret, for me and for others, for not having been involved, while at the same time involving the reader in learning through the experience of the eighteen members participating in the Trek.

This is merely one good example of the value of the Bulletin. I had reason recently to search through previous Bulletins for pieces of information and constantly found most interesting information and reminders, apart from that which I sought. This becomes very time consuming when I am distracted from the special reference which I wanted – and found. Yes, I do have all Bulletins since 1974.

The National Library of Australia featured display 'Mapping Our World' has been most topical for the last months. It continues to 10 March 2014. Several Members have visited

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this historical display and report enthusiastically. Large crowds have viewed the display over the duration, starting from 9 November 2013. Bookings for one hour sessions continue to be used to facilitate viewing. Entry is free however. The Catalogue for the Display of Maps is excellent value, with comprehensive illustrations and information. Refer to February Bulletin (Page 6) for references.

David Carstens

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### Lecture Meeting – Caves, cognition, animals & artists

In our March lecture Paul Taçon will address the Society on *Caves, cognition, animals and artists: an illustrated journey through time, space, rock art and the human mind.*

Paul Taçon FAHA FSA is Chair in Rock Art Research and Professor of Anthropology and Archaeology in the School of Humanities, Griffith University, Queensland. He also directs Griffith University's Place, Evolution and Rock Art Heritage Unit.

Prof Taçon has conducted archaeological and ethnographic fieldwork since 1980 and has over 84 months field experience in remote parts of Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, southern Africa, Thailand and the USA. Prof Taçon co-edited *The Archaeology of Rock-art* with Dr Christopher Chippindale (1998 and republished 4 times) and has published over 200 academic and popular papers on prehistoric art, body art, material culture, colour, cultural evolution, identity and contemporary Indigenous issues. Much of his current research is related to better situating Australian archaeology and contact history in a Southeast Asian regional context and to more fully involving Indigenous peoples in archaeological research.

Prof Taçon leads the Protect Australia's Spirit campaign devoted to raising awareness about and threats to Australia's unique rock art heritage and the establishment of an Australian national rock art heritage strategy.

In this highly visual presentation we will journey across time and space from rock shelters to deep caves focusing on the dawn of both behaviourally modern humans and rock art – paintings, drawings, engravings, stencils, prints and other forms of rock marking. It has long been recognized that the oldest surviving rock art of Europe, southern Africa and Australia is dominated by naturalistic depictions of key species of animal that would have been important for past populations of hunter-gatherers, both economically and symbolically. This is also true of some parts of northern Africa and India. The rock art of greater Southeast Asia is not as well-known but a detailed review, including field investigations in various countries, has revealed a comparable pattern as well as similarities in form between widely separated rock art bodies.

The art of naturalistic animal depiction undoubtedly was an essential part of early hunter-gatherer behaviour that developed in Africa rather than Europe. The practice was subsequently exported by different waves of modern humans to other parts of the globe. Neuroscientific studies show that humans have shared responses to certain types of rock landscapes, especially dark caves, and a shared potential to produce naturalistic figurative art. The fact that this mode of depiction persisted for tens of thousands of years in various parts of the world attests to its adaptive value no matter what specific indigenous meanings it once held. This form of depiction was also an essential human hunter-gatherer way of transforming natural landscapes into places with human meaning and history. The making of hand stencils also transformed places but this form of rock marking appears to have arisen outside Africa. The significance of this observation will be discussed in the context of recent studies of rock art, human cognition, DNA and fossil remains.

Ultimately, the human question will be explored – what makes us human and in what ways do we differ from other creatures.



### XXXX Brewery Tour

**Fully Booked**

**Participants Please Note**

When: Wednesday 12 March

Meet: 10.45 am at entrance Level 1 (there is a lift) to allow time to sign in. Footwear requirements. Feet must be covered; no open toe or open heel (no sandals).

Bags, back packs or handbags are not allowed during tour. They will be stored for you in a safe place till after the tour.

Lunch is available at your own expense in the Restaurant \$10 - \$30.

Where: Cnr Paten & Black Sts Milton  
How: Train to Milton Station (Springfield/Ipswich Line) or drive to Paten St. Very limited free undercover visitor parking. There is paid street parking available. You will not be able to park at RGSQ or St Francis.

Leader Jeanette Lamont

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### Geography Competition Supporters

We are pleased to announce that the Geography Schools/Departments in five Universities are sponsoring the Australian Geography Competition this year:

Macquarie University, Sydney  
University of Queensland  
Curtin University, Perth  
Flinders University, Adelaide  
University of Tasmania

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).

## Volunteers Please

We need to call on our generous members again for help with the school geography competition – to mail out the question sets. For those with experience, this is the mail-out where you use the counting scales to weigh questions and answer sheets.

We're looking for more help on Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13 March. Thanks to the members who have already volunteered, we have enough people on the Tuesday.

Please ring Kath or Bernard in the office (3368 2066) if you can help – or see them at the March meeting.

And a big thanks to the members who mailed out the competition information packs in January and prepared the envelopes beforehand:

Bob Abnett; Ralph Childs; Mary Comer; Roger Grimley; James Hansen; Margaret Hardy; Paul Lambert; Bill McIvor; Karen and Peter Nunan, Kay and Graham Rees, Wayne Spearritt; Sue Stevens-Hoare; John Walker; Ron Wallace

The next main working bee after that is scheduled for Tuesday 20 to Thursday 22 May, to send back the results and certificates.

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## Port of Brisbane and Fort Lytton Outing

This is scheduled for Monday 7 April. The cost of \$20.00 covers the bus tour (about 1 hour) of the Port of Brisbane, the approximately 1½ hour guided walking tour of Fort Lytton and a final cuppa at the Fort to complete the tour. I recommend lunch (at your own expense) at the Port of Brisbane restaurant which provides good quality food (including sandwiches and good coffee) AND views across the river and bay.

The Port bus tour commences at 11.00 am so it's best to assemble on the ground floor of the Port Office by 10.45 am. Lots of parking is available. Our tour of Fort Lytton is set to begin at 1.30 pm, which should allow time for lunch and the short drive from the Port of Brisbane.

The Port is the arrival point for most of Queensland's imports including all imported motor vehicles for Queensland and northern and north-western New South Wales.

Fort Lytton is a historic area dating back to the 19th century and has been used recently as a location for the films 'The Railway Man' and the forthcoming 'Unbroken' directed by Angelina Jolie.

Unfortunately the tour has to be limited to 19 people (including me) because of the Port's bus capacity.

Please register and pay at the RGSQ office by 1 April.

*John McWatters*

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## St Helena Outing

When: Sunday 18 May

Meet: 9:45 am

Where: William Gunn Jetty,  
Wyvernleigh Close, Manly Boat  
Harbour

Pursuing our 2014 watery theme, we will visit St Helena Island in Moreton Bay. We'll board the vessel *Cat O'Nine Tails* at the William Gunn Jetty, Manly Boat Harbour for the cruise to the Island where there will be a guided tour of the convict ruins and stories about the convict settlement there. A picnic lunch is included in the cost, and coffee, bottled water, etc, is available for purchase on board. The vessel will return to Manly Boat Harbour at 3 pm.

Come along and join us for this fascinating insight into the early history of European settlement in the Moreton Bay region.

Children are very welcome on this Sunday outing.

Cost is \$70 per adult, \$42 per child.

More details: Brian McGrath,  
brian.mcgrath@bigpond.com, or  
33785960.

Bookings and payment to be made with the office. Bookings close on Friday 2 May.

## Cape York 4WD Trek

When: 14 Jul – 10 Aug 2014

Take in the extraordinary beauty, history and geography of Cape York with fellow RGSQ members. The trek will start/finish at Mt Carbine and take 16 days exploring up to the Cape and 10 days back. If time does not permit, some participants may shorten the return journey.

The trip up will include exploring Cooktown, Laura, Weipa and then the Jardine River area of Bamaga to take a 'selfie' photo at the very northern tip of Australia. There will be an optional day tour of the Thursday Island group. The down trek will include Lockhart River, Port Stewart and Rinyirri NP. The itinerary may change according to conditions at the time.

While it is possible to visit some of the Cape York area by 2WD vehicle, the trek will be travelling to some areas where a 4WD is necessary, however, we will not be undertaking hazardous or dangerous 4WD activities.

There will be a booking fee of \$50 to cover RGSQ administrative costs and participants must be current RGSQ members. All on-route costs will be made individually. Some fees are cash only, for example, the Jardine River Ferry which is currently \$130 per vehicle. Further details, itinerary and booking forms will be made available to those registering interest. Numbers will be limited – register your interest now with the office [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au).

If you are a like-to-be-a-passenger or have room in your vehicle for an extra person and their kit let the office know [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au), and they may be able to put you in touch with potential partners. It will be up to individual drivers and passengers as to whether satisfactory travelling arrangements can be negotiated.

If you have recently travelled to the Cape, even if you are not intending to participate in this trek, we would appreciate any information about your journey. Please email your contact details to the RGSQ office [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au)

*Russell Saunders*

## Northwestern United States

8 - 28 September  
20 days/18 nights

Come with The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland in September 2014 to Washington, Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, Colorado and Utah ... land of Diversity, National Parks, History, Wide open spaces and Frontier Excitement.

The Itinerary: Seattle, Mt St Helens, Spokane, Perce Nez Historic Park, National Bison Range – Glacier National Park, Kalispell, Helena, Yellowstone, Cody, Grand Teton Park, Little Big Horn, Sheridan, Rapid City, Cheyenne, Denver, Rocky Mountain National Park, Vail, Moab, Cedar City, and finishing in Salt Lake City.



Tour price: \$8,795 per person Brisbane to Brisbane – share twin accommodation.

Bookings can only be accepted on receipt of the Tour Booking Form and Deposit. For further information, or to be emailed a detailed itinerary and booking form phone Mel at Travel Concepts on Mobile 0413 756 797 or for further information phone Leo Scanlan on 3343 4398.

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## New Members

We have much pleasure in welcoming the following new members:

Wallis and Judith Anderson;  
Virginia Dale; Ian Harding; Ken Horton; Ronald Owen; Peter Smith; Daphne Stephens and Errol Wood; Peter Thorpe and Paula Nucifora

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

## Treks Revisited

It was pleasing to see our President David Carstens present when over 50 members attended 'An Evening of Treks Revisited' at RGSQ Milton on Friday 14 February.

Both the 4x4 group and the Peru trekkers presented displays related to the Lambert Centre and Peru 2013 Treks and both were well thought out and so completely different. Peru was always going to be colourful with the striking colours of the various artefacts brought back from our recent Trek in sharp contrast to what's available in Central Australia.

John Nowill set the tone of the evening with an excellent historical presentation related to our original 'Centre Safari' and the establishment of the Lambert Centre Point which took place in Australia's Bicentennial year 1988. Six members of our original 'Centre Safari' were present on this occasion.

John was followed by Brian Mealey, whose presentation explained the many complex and various difficulties associated with planning and executing our most recent 4x4 expedition to the Lambert Centre in Central Australia for the 25th anniversary of the 1988 event.

Brian McGrath followed with a slide presentation related to both the Lambert Centre and Northern New South Wales – both extremely interesting and, hopefully, both generating interest in our forthcoming 4x4 trek to Cape York planned for July/August 2014.

Supper was to provide time for social networking, and a time to renew friendships forged on the various treks throughout 2013.

The second part of our programme was a presentation of a participant's view of our recent Trek to Peru delivered by the RGSQ Secretary, Chris Spriggs. Chris's turn of phrase certainly added a certain amount of humour to his description of various aspects of our October/November 2013 Peru trek.

This was followed by a photo presentation on Peru delivered by Andrea Smith. The photographs spoke for themselves and were full of

colour and couldn't help but detail some of the excitement the trekkers experienced in South America. Culturally, the experience was really so different to what we're used to here in Australia.

As well as a wonderful social event which I'm sure was enjoyed by all, promotion of events such as these can only help to advertise and generate interest in Treks planned for 2014 and beyond.

*Leo Scanlan*

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## New Society Email Address

Please note that the Society has a new email address:

***info@rgsq.org.au***

With Bernard joining the Society's office we required an additional email address. Please use the above email address for all queries and correspondence with the Society's office.

As Kath and Hayley move into changed roles from the first of March, Bernard will be the Members' main contact in the Office.

An outline of the office changes will be provided to you in the April Bulletin.

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## Australia Day Success for Geographers

Professor Ruth Fincher, Professor of Geography, Department of Resources Management and Geography at the University of Melbourne has been awarded a Member (AM) in the General Division in the Australia Day Honours for significant service to education, particularly geography and urban studies, and to national and international geographic associations.

The President of the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia, Roderick Shearing, has been awarded the medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia in the General Division for service to Geography.

## Parking

As you are most likely aware, parking around the Society's office has some limitations. In Baroona Road there is a 2 hour limit 24 hours a day, and in a number of side streets on both sides of the rail line there is a 2 hour limit only between 7am and 7pm. Since the Society lectures start at 7:30pm there is opportunity for parking in the streets starting before 7pm and still within the Council's parking limits.

As advised in the July 2013 Bulletin, when attending the Society's lectures **AT NIGHT**, members may enter St Francis's grounds from Milton Road and proceed to the first junction. You can park either in the paved, marked spaces to the left of this junction, or on the gravel area to the right. You may **NOT** park on grassed areas, or go beyond the NO ENTRY signs. If there is no space in the specified areas you **MUST** park in the street.

If visiting **during the day** you may park in the Society's driveway, on the gravel area as above, or in adjacent streets. You may not park in the paved, marked spaces in St Francis's.

St Francis's generously allow us to park in their grounds, so please do the right thing. It would be a great shame if the Society lost this generosity of St Francis's and we were no longer able to park in their grounds.

## Lost Property

Has anyone lost a copy of *The Wagon Route from Springsure to the Barcoo*?

A copy found in the meeting room has been handed into the Society's office. Please contact the office [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au) or phone on 33682066.

## Primary Geography Book

*Understanding and teaching the Australian geography curriculum for primary schools* is a new book by Alaric Maude, published by Hawker Brownlow, Melbourne, 2014.

Primary school teachers have a very significant role in the teaching of geography in Australia, because they will be responsible for seven of the nine years in which the subject will be compulsory in probably the majority of schools. However, they may be unsure what this subject is all about, as few will have done more than a minimal study of geography at the tertiary level. The aim of this book is to help them understand the Australian geography curriculum that is about to be implemented across the nation, and feel confident in teaching it.

The author, Alaric Maude, is a retired Associate Professor of Geography at Flinders University in Adelaide, South Australia. He was the Lead Writer

and Writing Coach for the Australian geography curriculum.

The book may be ordered online from the publisher, Hawker Brownlow, at [www.hbe.com.au](http://www.hbe.com.au), code HB1710. The price is \$35.95.

## The Longitude Problem

It was the conundrum that baffled some of the greatest and most eccentric experts of the 18th century – and captivated the British public during an era of unprecedented scientific and technical transformation.

The full story of attempts to solve the longitude problem – unravelling the lone genius myth popularised in film and literature – is now freely available to everyone via Cambridge University's Digital Library.

The complete archive of the Board of Longitude, held by Cambridge University Library and associated National Maritime Museum collections, have taken their place alongside the works of Charles Darwin and Isaac Newton on the Cambridge Digital Library site <<http://e.jisc.ac.uk/QHI-1PP7H-5Z/WFGM-OZMZJ-1/c.aspx>>.

Treasures of the Longitude archive, available to view in high-resolution, include accounts of bitter rivalries, wild proposals and first encounters between Europeans and Pacific

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## 2014 Membership Renewal

Membership fees for 2014 were due on 1 January. According to our records, your membership has been paid up to the year shown in the top right corner of your mailing label. (For life members this space is blank.) Please contact the office if you think there may be a mistake in our records. If you have not yet paid, please circle the appropriate fee and send this in with your payment. The mailing label on the back of this sheet gives your name and address. Please correct it if there are any errors. You may like to consider making a tax-deductible donation for the Society's environmental and educational work at the same time. Thank you.

Ordinary	\$40.00
" Pensioner rate	\$25.00
Household	\$55.00
" Pensioner rate	\$35.00
Student/Junior	\$25.00
Schools/Non-profit organizations	\$55.00
Corporate	\$150.00
Life	\$400.00
Donation	\$.....
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$.....</b>

I enclose a cheque/money order payable to RGSQ; or, please debit my  Visa  Mastercard

Card no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cardholder signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I'd like my Bulletin delivered by email. My email address is: \_\_\_\_\_

peoples. This includes logbooks of Captain Cook's voyages of discovery, the naming of Australia and even a letter from Captain Bligh of *HMS Bounty*, who writes to apologise for the loss of a timekeeper after his ship was 'pirated from my command'.

In July 1714 an act of parliament established a £20,000 prize, worth about £1.5 million today, for the discovery of longitude at sea: determining a ship's position east and west from a fixed meridian line.

Cambridge historian Professor Simon Schaffer said: "The problem of longitude could be a lethal one. The act of parliament established the Board of Longitude – think the X

Factor, only much more money and much more important – that would reward anyone who could solve the problem of longitude.

"The longitude story is a spectacular example of expert disagreement and public participation. As well as attracting the greatest scientific minds of the day, the Board enticed people who belong to one of the most important traditions in British society; the extreme eccentric."

The hugely significant archive preserves detailed minutes from the first recorded meeting in 1737 right through to the Board of Longitude's dissolution in 1828.

Royal Museums Greenwich's Dr Richard Dunn said the archive proves that John Harrison, while a towering figure in the story, is not the start and end point for all things longitude.

"The archive places the familiar story of Harrison in its richer context. He was a crucial figure but the story is much broader. It takes in the development of astronomy, exploration and technological innovation and creativity during the period of the Industrial Revolution, the work of the first government body devoted to scientific matters, and public reactions to a challenge many considered hopeless."

# RGSQ Bulletin

March 2014

**Volunteer Days**, Tues 11 - 13 March  
For: Australian Geography Competition

**Lecture Meeting**, Tues 4 Mar 7.30pm  
Speaker: Paul Taçon  
Subject: Caves, cognition, animals and artists

**Activity**, Wed 12 Mar 10:45am  
What: XXXX Brewery Tour and Lunch

**Geography Competition**, 24 Mar - 2 Apr  
Where: In schools across Australia

**Lecture Meeting**, Tues 1 Apr 7.30pm  
Speaker: Dr John Kirkwood  
Subject: Antarctica: Is Ecotourism  
Compatible with Wilderness  
Preservation?

The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland Inc  
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