



RGSQ Bulletin

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

On behalf of the Council and Staff of The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland I would like to offer a warm 2014 Christmas Greeting to all our members and their extended families and wish you all a prosperous and healthy 2015. Hope to see you all at some of our functions during 2015.

*Leo Scanlan
President*



From the President

18 extremely tired trekkers arrived home yesterday morning (Sunday 16th November) from our latest overseas trek to Hong Kong. While it is not my intention to steal any of Frank Birchall's thunder by reporting the day to day activities that appear later in this RGSQ Bulletin related to this latest trek, I feel I would like to make a few comments.

Frank's choice of Hong Kong for our first static overseas destination was a very worthwhile exercise in studying one of the great cities of the world. Hong Kong is large, vibrant,

rich, culturally rich, and a great place to study all aspects of the development of a very successful urban environment. I would like to thank Frank for all his work and all my other travelling companions for their company on what was a very enjoyable and educational experience.

Part of our activities while in Hong Kong was to visit The Royal Geographical Society Hong Kong's evening lecture on The First Ascent of the Angel Falls: the World's Highest Waterfall, and the RGSQ Annual Dinner where Paul Theroux, America's most famous travel author was their guest speaker. While I don't wish to comment on the content of either of these events, I believe they may point us in the right direction regarding how we might finance similar events for our members in the future.

Next Saturday (22nd November) your RGSQ Council are to meet at St. Francis Theological College at the back of RGSQ Milton to formulate a strategic plan. On the front of *The Globe*, the Annual Review of RGSQ's activities for 2013 presented to all who attended their 2014 Annual Dinner, were the sponsors of various events. *The Globe* has some colour, a feature article, and a number of short reviews regarding RGSQ events stretching back to April 2012. Their lectures are a mix of geographical topics related to people, place, weather, political geography, a number of short field trips, geography and nature, historical geography, and travel and culture mixed with some adventure topics.

Cathay Pacific are the airline sponsors, *Hongkong Land* provide premises for RGS HK's office staff,

The Mandarin Oriental Hotel provide room nights for visiting lecturers, the Expedition Lecture Series Sponsor is *The North Face*, *KPMG* are the venue sponsor, and they even have a Beverage Sponsor from St. James's Street in London, while the Review itself is sponsored by *ExecutiveCounsel*.

The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland and Royal Geographical Society Hong Kong have some considerable differences. RGSQ annual membership fee is quite a deal more expensive than ours despite these rather powerful sponsors.

Looking at the list above, we have a couple of good airlines we might lean on here in Queensland, there are many land developers, hotel chains are many, The North Face, Katmandu and others are big in the adventure clothing trade here, and KPMG are also found in downtown Brisbane.

RGSQ don't actively approach business for help. RGSQ engage at least one speaker a week throughout the year and I'm sure we can't compete regarding the calibre of many of these eg: Tony Wheeler, Lonely Planet; Dr. Alexander Kumar,

**Patron: H.E. Paul de Jersey
AC, Governor of
Queensland**

President: Mr Leo Scanlan

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

Tel: (07) 3368 2066
Fax: (07) 3367 1011
Email: info@rgsq.org.au
Web: www.rasa.org.au

A Winter at the South Pole; The Hon. Victoria Glendinning, Raffles and the Golden Opportunity: from Governing Java to Founding Singapore; Caroline Courtauld, The New Burma; to name a few.

On the positive side, RGSQ have 350 members which, when we look at our very successful programme of treks, free lectures, events, and our geography competition, we compare very favourably with RGSQ's activities with over 2000 members. RGS HK don't own their own premises, they don't have a successful geography competition or a successful travel programme either.

I will forward my copy of 'The Globe' and other information to my fellow councillors within RGSQ for further thought and consideration.

Leo Scanlan



You and your friends
are invited

to the Society's

Christmas

Party

7:30pm

Tuesday 4th December

"Gregory House"

237 Milton Road, Milton

Drinks, nibbles and good
company provided.

Come along to meet old
friends and make new
ones.



THE NORTH WESTERN UNITED STATES TREK

(Part 2)

The morning of day 10 we visited the site of the Little Big Horn Battlefield about an hour out of Sheridan. This was the site of the famous Battle of the Little Bighorn where General George Armstrong Custer was defeated in battle by the Plains Indians. In a historical sense, this site is quite significant in that while the victory was the Indians, it heralded their ultimate demise at the hands of the US Army, the destruction of much of their culture and a new chapter in European/Indigenous relationship on the North American Continent. Fortunately for myself, I had visited the Little Big Horn Battlefield site some years ago as, unfortunately, both myself and Kay Rees were to visit the doctor on this particular morning so we were not there with the rest of the group. Kay and I were driven around Sheridan by the engineer from the Holiday Inn on an impromptu tour on the way to the doctor. Fortunately Kay had her camera with her and we witnessed a number of mule deer and drove past Buffalo Bill Cody's former residence.

Mid-day saw us at Gerry and Gwen Geis residence on a working 10,000 acre cattle ranch. A good wholesome country meal was enjoyed by all before we ventured forth on a hay ride around the property where we visited the pigs, the horses, the hay storage, the chickens and their prize Hereford cattle.

From Sheridan we moved on next morning to Mt. Rushmore National Memorial; that famous mountain carving featuring the faces of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln. These mountain carvings, blasted out of solid granite, are the work of an extraordinary sculptor Gutzon Borglum who carved them using explosives over a period of 14 years. The flags of the 56 states and territories fly below this much visited icon of American culture.

We had missed a couple of featured stops earlier on in our tour, namely Leavenworth, because of a road closure, and the Perce Nez Historical Park because of a transportation breakdown. As the Crazy Horse memorial is practically adjacent to Mt. Rushmore we decided to include

this in our itinerary. I had driven past this partly finished memorial a couple of years ago, taken a few brief photographs and moved on – this time we actually stopped at the visitor centre. To my surprise, I thought the presentation was every bit the equal of Mt. Rushmore and potentially, more spectacular. The carving was commenced in 1948 by Polish American, Korczak Paderewski, and is continued today by his wife Ruth and seven of their children. Korczak died in 1982.

This afternoon was again full of surprises when visiting nearby Custer State Park, also home to a significant number of bison and wild burros. The latter were eager to make our acquaintance and plunder whatever edibles they could – cameras were again working overtime beside the bus.

Cheyenne, our next destination, was a good 310 miles and took up most of the next day. In transit from Cheyenne to Denver, we had stops in Laramie where we visited the University of Wyoming Campus and their Geological Museum, and, still later in the day, we visited the Budweiser Brewery in Fort Collins before finally arriving in Denver, the capital of Colorado in the early evening.

Denver, 5,280 feet above sea level (the mile high city), is situated where the Great Plains give way to the Rocky Mountains. Next day we visited Rocky Mountains National Park, sat and listened to a ranger talk about black bears, and toured the park from elevations from 8,000 to 13,000 feet. Rain did close in around lunch time at the top at Longs Peak but by evening on our return to Denver, the weather was quite warm.

The next morning we had a brief stop and walk around the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens in Vail, then a further lunch and mall stop in Grand Junction, before driving for a time along the Colorado and Gunnison rivers to our destination in Moab. Moab to Arches National Park and then on to Canyonlands National Park was truly a day to remember. Arches is a very colourful rusty landscape of natural stone arches, towering pinnacles and balanced rocks, while Canyonlands which, I had not previously visited, was every

bit as colourful and spectacular as the Grand Canyon further south.

From our overnight stay in Cedar City, we travelled to Bryce Canyon to see a remarkable series of bizarre shapes and spires called 'hoodoos'. Here we were most fortunate to visit Bryce on a fine, clear day with maximum light conditions which did reveal some exceptional colour and formation. This afternoon I introduced our trekkers to the famous Paiute ATV Trail. I expect all enjoyed a very pleasant afternoon excursion driving their own ATV to an old mining camp situated in the foothills of the nearby mountains. Our evening stop and final destination was Salt Lake City, Utah.

Our last full day was spent firstly crossing the causeway and exploring Antelope Island State Park situated in the Great Salt Lake, and later in the day taking in a guided tour of Temple Square and the Mormon Temple in SL City. I'm sure all would have come away with some appreciation of what Mormonism was all about and the influence the Mormans have had in the development of this part of the United States. Finally, in the late afternoon, we travelled the Wasatch Cableway to the top of the Wasatch Mountains. In the evening we had a very pleasant final meal to wind up the tour at the Garden Café at the Grand American Hotel. The service was superb and the hotel exceptional and testament to some surplus oil money in this part of the world.

For those of you who haven't travelled with RGSQ before, I'm sure you found this trek an extremely physical exercise in endurance and sheer determination. While I'm not sure of the exact mileage, suffice to say we covered an approximate 6000 miles and covered a vast area of the North Western United States. I'm sure, when you take a deep breath, you will long remember many of the highlights covered in Washington, Oregon, Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, Colorado, and Utah.

Our guide on tour was a lady from Georgia, Janet Poss. To Janet I must offer a very big thank you. Janet was a wealth of information, great fun and easy to deal with when suggesting or seeking alternatives. In conclusion, on behalf of Sharyn and myself I

would like to thank Jude and Wal Anderson, Hans and Ruth Aeberli, Noel and Beverley Bowley, Graham and Ailsa Grieve, Roger and Glenda Grimley, Beres and Lorraine Johnson, Mike and Liz McInnes, Gerald and Annette O'Sullivan, and Graham and Kay Rees for your company and your overall enthusiastic spirit during the course of this trek.

At the conclusion of our Trek Jude and Wal Anderson left for Canada, the Bowley's, the Aberli's, The Grimley's, and The Johnson's flew back to Australia, Graham and Ailsa Grieve stayed on in Los Angeles, Graham and Kay Rees and Gerald and Annette O'Sullivan took a car from Salt Lake to travel further in the South West corner of the United States while Mike and Liz McInnes and ourselves also travelled parts of Arizona, Nevada and California.

Leo Scanlan

2015 Membership Renewals

Society members who need to renew their subscription for 2015 will find a renewal form enclosed with this Bulletin. We hope that all of you will decide to renew to support the work of the Society and/or take advantage of our interesting programme of lectures and treks.

Members who already receive the *Bulletin* by email and who are due to renew will be sent a renewal form in the post.

Members Database Update

The Society is updating its membership database and would like to ensure that member's contact details we have are correct. A form will be sent with renewal notices. Additional information will be requested. This information will help to assist the Society to better understand the demographics of our members and provide input for future planning of member services and activities.

Can You Help?

As many members would be aware, our Society organises the Australian Geography Competition. Over 70,000 secondary school students from 761 schools entered the 2014 Competition. We need to call on our generous members again for their help. We will be packing the initial mail-out to schools on Thursday 15 January, and maybe finishing off the last bits on Friday 16 January.

In this mailing, all schools get the same information so it is relatively straight-forward – no matching codes nor counting large numbers involved! If you cannot help on those dates but can fit in some time earlier in January, you could help prepare the mailing envelopes. Other jobs come up in March (10th to 13th), April and May.

If you can help give a few hours of your time, please ring or email me in the office and let me know you can help in January, or later in the year.

Your help is greatly appreciated.

Bernard Fitzpatrick

Farewell to Hayley

Hayley Freemantle has decided to explore new career directions and will be finishing up with the Society on the 9th December. She has been with the Society for nearly 8 years, originally as Project Officer and more recently providing clerical support for the office.

We would like to thank her for her friendly support of the Society over years, and we wish her all the best for the future.

My Local Geography

Is there something of geographic interest where you live? Is there a place in Queensland you would like to share? We would like to hear about it.

Articles are welcome for the Society's Bulletin. Email your article to info@rgsq.org.au.

Upcoming Bulletin deadlines:

February – Friday 2nd Jan 2015

March – Friday 13th

Council Minute Secretary

Calling for a volunteer to be the Minute Secretary at the Society's Council meetings? Meetings are held every second Tuesday from 6pm to 8:30pm at "Gregory House."

If you would like to help the Society please call Bernard in the Office: 3368 2066.

Hong Kong Trek, Nov 2014

Travelling via Qantas from Brisbane we had a very smooth flight to and from Hong Kong. Our first glimpse of a very densely populated city was from the bus, transporting us from the airport via Kowloon to Hong Kong Island where we stayed at Harbour Plaza, North Point. Being evening, we were dazzled by walls of lights as we travelled some 40 kilometres from the airport on Lantau Island into the dense high rise area of the inner city. On the ride in the coach captain gave us our first geography lesson by pointing out that Australia's population density is about 2 people per square mile and Hong Kong's was 17,900 per square mile.

It was not easily recognised until we travelled within the city precincts and into the outlying areas during our stay that we appreciated the dense forested mountains looming over the city. About 80% of Hong Kong is forested and 20% urban high density living and business activities. With a population of approx. 7 million people occupying 20% of the land mass the buildings have gone upwards. Being such a vibrant and business centred city, the transport system is important to move people.

The transport system is efficient, fast and very well coordinated. We travelled by the main rail service MTR, buses and ferries. Trains were approximately every 2 minutes and matched up with the buses and ferries. Tunnels crisscross the city, under Victoria Harbour and deep underground, whilst many bridges span water and are built high above the ground with elevated walkways for pedestrians. Seniors are treated very well and we travelled many lines on the rail system for long distances for \$2hk (A\$0.33) a trip using our elders Octopus card. Likewise the ferries were cheap, some free to elders. The buses were the dearest

but again about HK\$4(A\$0.66) for a trip. The layout of the underground is clear to read and understand, somewhat like the London underground (good old Brits). What stood out was the cleanliness of the platforms, the helpfulness and courtesy of the people.

We spent a full day at Macau Island travelling by turbojet. This was a Portuguese colony and handed over to the Chinese in 1999. Being outside Hong Kong, we needed our passports and travel documents and were in and out of customs checks. A hop on and hop off bus was a starting point for most of us, getting an orientation of the area, we thought. However there was no map to follow indicating the route the bus took and when we got off, it was difficult to retrace steps to hop on. There were only 2 buses circulating taking 45 minutes to go around. If you missed the bus, waiting around for another 45 minutes took up time. The route did pass through the old high rise apartment blocks and the living conditions were very poor. A walk through the Old Portuguese churches and ruins was the focus of the trip. One of the delicacies was to taste the famous Portuguese 'custard tarts' which were delicious. Travelling to the casinos was made easy and encouraged using free shuttle buses. The opulence of the buildings and the enormous display of riches highlighted the great disparity between the rich and poor. Being the gambling capital it is, much of the money would be injected from outside Macau.

The highlight of our trip was to the AIS (Australian International School) Hong Kong.

We travelled to Kowloon Tong by rail and were met by Don Somerville (Head of Years 7-12). We were introduced to the head prefects who took us to an arranged visit of a classroom during a geography lesson. This was followed by Grade 9 students presenting us with questions on Climate Change. A good exchange of questions and answers followed. Morning tea was served and during this time, a presentation of our Society's 100th anniversary book "A Dream in Trust: a centenary history of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, Queensland, Incorporated" 1985 by P.D. Griggs B.A. (Hons) was

presented to the Head of School by Brian McGrath. A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Don Somerville by Frank Birchall for the school's continued participation in the Australian Geography Competition which is organised by the RGSQ as a joint initiative with the Australian Geography Teachers' Association. Wendy, from the RGSHK accompanied us and enjoyed the contact with the school. An invitation was offered for the RGSHK to have closer ties with the School.

Some of us attended the RGSHK annual dinner which was a major event for the society held at the Sports Hall of the Hong Kong Football Club. It was an interesting night to get an understanding of the interests and activities of their society. The speaker Paul Theroux (an American travel author of "Riding the Iron Rooster") gave the lecture.

During the 10 days we explored, visited and met many interesting people, places and sites.

We started off on an orientation site tour of Hong Kong Island visiting a Temple; The Peak for a great view of the city, going up by the Peak tram and coming down by bus; across to the southern tip of the island where expatriates live; a sampan cruise weaving amongst the fishing boats with their catch hung up to dry; lunch at the Jumbo Kingdom floating restaurant; Dynasty jewellery and Stanley Markets for a shopping spree. The evening was spent at the Royal Geographical Society of Hong Kong's meeting and lecture "The first ascent of the Angel Falls: the World's highest waterfall" in the heart of Venezuelan jungle, a 21 day climb, given by Ben Heason.

A trip to Lantau Island for the day was enjoyed, travelling by rail, bus and ferry to visit the Monastery and the big Buddha, climbing all 296 steps to the top. A vegetarian lunch was served at Po-lin monastery followed by an interesting walk through the village to the bus station. A bus trip to Tai-O, a fishing village, was very interesting, walking through the village with such a variety of dried seafood of all types, fruit and vegetables on sale. Some went on the boat ride and saw the "pink dolphins" (Chinese white dolphins) and others walked through and around a part of the village. Housing

close together had exterior walls of aluminium, steel or stainless steel to protect them from fire and rust. It was a mix of simple and more sophisticated housing. We passed quite a large medical clinic and a school. Our trip home was by bus to a ferry at Silver Mine Bay which took us to Central Station and a train trip back to Quarry Bay, our stop.

We visited the New Territories heading out towards the Chinese boarder to Fanling and enjoyed a heritage walk. Buildings like the Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall built in 1525 stands amidst high rise apartments popping up to house the growing population. Slowly the walled villages are being torn down to be replaced by modern buildings.

We also followed the first heritage trail in Hong Kong at Yuen Long. We viewed a temple to worship the fisherman; the Yeung Hau Temple housing 3 statues of Hau Wong; Kam Fa (Patron Saint of Expectant Mothers) and To Tei (God of the earth). The Tang clan Ancestral Hall, first constructed in 1273 is a magnificent three-hall structure. The cultural heritage is being well maintained in this area and school children were there obviously have a class outing. There are 9 structures in all.

We spent a day at Lamma Island travelling by MTR and ferry. We arrived at Yung Shue Wan ferry and walked a good undulating (read steep) track across the island to Sok Kwu Wan where we had a seafood lunch at the 'Lamma Hilton'!! (tongue in cheek). Fish farms are the main industry here. This island also has a large coal fired power station. Three high stacks stand out with no apparent particulate matter escaping into the atmosphere. It looked very clean.

The atmosphere over Hong Kong was heavy with smog most of the time of our visit but on our final day we had a sunny day. Most of the smog comes from the factories in China, but it was pointed out to us at the AIS that most of these factories are owned by Hong Kong interests. They also indicated that there are 5 nuclear power stations over the border in China.

A night at the Happy Valley night races was enjoyed by all. This is a must in Hong Kong. We had dinner

at the members club on the 6th floor of the complex overlooking the track. We also were taken to the paddock to see the finish line and see the winning horse and jockey of a race. It was a great night some winning some losing but all good fun.

Visiting markets was very popular at night and during the day. The Ladies Market was popular as was Stanley (a return trip to this market) and the Temple Street night markets.

We tasted a variety of local foods and visited a number of restaurants. We did return to the Peak at night for dinner, there being many types of eating places. This enabled us to get a good understanding of people and place, their eating habits, and culinary tastes. It was all a great experience.

It was a very enjoyable trip, we had many memorable moments and linked geographical, cultural aspects of the ancient and modern Hong Kong.

Myrl Allison



RGSQ Office Christmas Close

The Society's office will be closed for Christmas from close of business Friday 19 December 2014, reopening on Monday 5 January 2015.

Please note that the Society does not publish a January *Bulletin*. The 2015 lecture and trip programme will be sent out with the February *Bulletin* in late January 2015

Kath, Hayley and Bernard have enjoyed assisting members in 2014 and we wish you and your families a safe and joyous Christmas and look forward to a vibrant year for the Society in 2015.



There once was a creek

<http://www.oncewasacreek.org/gallery/historical/1946-aerial-imagery/>

This website explores the existence of a creek that once flowed through Rainworth, Rosalie and Milton. It refers to historic maps and aerial photographs available from PDOnline.

Brisbane City Council's PDOnline provides an online mapping application that can display aerial photography over Brisbane from 1946, 2007 and 2009. http://or13.brisbane.qld.gov.au/website/MN_CP/bcc_user_agreement.htm

Behind the Scenes at the Archives

On Tuesday 18th November, a group of 30 met at Qld State Archives at Runcorn for a 'behind the scenes' tour. We were split into two groups with a guide each. Firstly, we were taken into the public area to be given an idea of the process of accessing the vast amount of material that is stored here. Many of us now plan to revisit to do our own research. We then proceeded into the main storage area visiting two large rooms, one basically storing maps and the other huge tomes containing Rates & Valuations, Prisoner Records etc. The staff kindly had on show various maps and books for us to view.

We then enjoyed our BYO lunch in an on-site kitchen and garden area before driving to the BCC Archives in Moorooka. Here we were met by a long-standing, very passionate Annabel who gave us a comprehensive informative talk while we were gathered around a large, historic Qld maple boardroom table. We were also given a quick rundown on how to access documents & photos online at the BCC website. 'Behind the scenes' were old maps, books & paintings which proved fascinating in particular the blueprint for the Walter Taylor Bridge.

A very successful end of year activity for 2014.

Kay Rees

Administration Officer Position Vacant

The Council would like to invite applications for the Administration Officer position with the Society. This position is permanent part-time (16 hours per week over 4 days).

Among other duties and responsibilities this position will include:

- Secretarial/executive support to the Executive Officer and Society Council.
- Using MYOB to record accounts receivable/payable, balancing of cash and credit card sales, tax invoice preparation, and end of month bank reconciliation.

- Ensure smooth running of the reception area and carry out office administration including answering enquiries, greeting clients, records management and filing.
- Assist with preparation of monthly and end of financial year reports, financial/tax schedules.
- Maintenance of Society's contact management databases.
- Assist with updating of Society and Australian Geography Competition websites.

"Gregory House" is close to public transport (across from Milton Railway Station) and a car park is available.

A full Position Description can be obtained by sending an email to execofficer@rgsq.org.au or calling the office and speaking to Bernard Fitzpatrick.

Applications are to be received at the Society office by Friday 5th of December.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in this position would you please have them contact the Society office.

RGSQ Bulletin

December 2014

Social , Tues 2 December 7:30pm
What: *Christmas Party*

Christmas Close:
When: 19 December 2014 to 5 January 2015

Farewell to Hayley Freemantle

Volunteer Days, Thurs and Fri January 2015

Trek Reports: Northwest USA (cont), Hong Kong

Position Vacant: Administration Officer, part-time

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

POSTAGE
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AUSTRALIA