



# RGSQ Bulletin

June 2019

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Patron: [H.E. Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland](#)  
President: Dr Iraphne Childs

## From the President

Dear Members, thank you to all who attended the special members' meeting on Tuesday 7 May. It was fitting that this meeting, which dealt with a new legal platform for the Society, was considered at the first general meeting of members held in the Society's new home, *Gregory Place*.

**Transfer of the Society to a Company Limited by Guarantee:** The formal notice convening the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May and setting out the specific matters to be considered was distributed prior to the meeting to all members in accordance with the provisions of the current constitution. This meeting was the culmination of much effort that has been underway since the Council initiated, almost two years ago, the upgrade of the incorporation status of the Society from Letters Patent to a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), including adoption of a new constitution. Two previous meetings in mid-2017 and 2018 were particularly useful in obtaining members' views on the overall proposal and on the new constitution. The meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May passed all resolutions relating to the transfer of the Society to a CLG and the adoption of the new constitution. On behalf of the Council, I'd like to thank Roger Grimley, Lilia Darii and Chris Spriggs who have worked tirelessly to bring this process to completion and also all those members who have contributed to the deliberations on the matter.

As a CLG we retain the status of "Royal", so our name continues to be *The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland* – the only change being from "Inc" to "Ltd". We also retain our status as a not-for-profit charitable organisation. The process now is to submit various applications to implement the resolutions passed, including an application for registration to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC). The aim is to have everything completed so that the 2019 AGM can be held under the new regime and constitution.

**First lecture at Fortescue Street:** Following the formal special meeting, Vice-President Dr. Peter Griggs presented a very interesting and entertaining lecture on "*Taking the Waters*" - *mineral springs, artesian bores and health tourism*. The lecture was followed and much appreciated, as usual, by delicious refreshments organised by our supper team. I hope this is the first of many successful lecture evenings at Gregory Place.

**Official opening of premises:** His Excellency, the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland, has agreed to officially open our new premises on **Thursday July 18<sup>th</sup> 5.00-6.00pm**. We are now making arrangements for this important event and drawing up a guest list to include some local dignitaries. More information on this will be forwarded to members later.

**Map library:** Thanks go to Doreen Worth and Ralph Carlisle who have volunteered to work with Peter Nunan in sorting and cataloguing our collection in the Map Library. Your assistance is much appreciated.

I look forward to welcoming more members to Gregory Place in the near future.

**Dr. Iraphne Childs, President**



Over 40 RGSQ members attended the special general meeting and monthly lecture at RGSQ's new premises on May 7.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. Bhishna Bajracharya, Iraphne Childs, John Connell  
Nicole Garofano, Audrey Johnston, Ian Francis, Peter  
Griggs, Wayne Mackenzie, Chris Spriggs, Ian Stehbins

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Dr. Bhishna Bajracharya, Iraphne Childs, John Connell, Ian  
Francis, Nicole Garofano, Kay Rees

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## JUNE 2019 MONTHLY LECTURE

### THE THOMSON ORATION

#### 'THE PACIFIC ISLANDS: SINKING ISLANDS AND SINKING GEOGRAPHIES?'

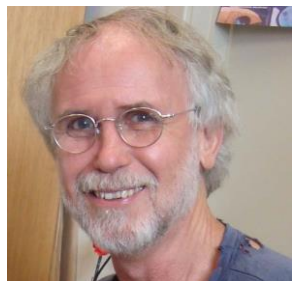
*Presentation by John Connell, the 2019 Thomson  
Medal Awardee*

**Date:** Tuesday, June 4, 2019

**Time:** 7.30pm-9pm

**Venue:** [Gregory Place, Level 1, 28 Fortescue St, Spring  
Hill](#)

**RSVP:** <http://rgsq.org.au/whatson>



*The Pacific islands have  
recently emerged into a new  
geopolitical era – waystations in  
China's new Belt and Road  
initiative – and Australia has  
consequently rediscovered our  
neighbours.*

Pacific politics is shifting fast. Meanwhile Pacific nations concentrate on shaping their own destinies as part of a Blue Pacific: not small island states but large ocean states. In the midst of this intriguing turmoil, what do we really know about these countries – beyond occasional tourist destinations or perhaps renewed penal colonies? Are the atoll states really sinking and are their economies facing frustrating times? What might their disappearance mean? What of our former only colony Papua New Guinea?

Examples from PNG (Bougainville and Manam), Kiribati and Tuvalu, illustrate the extraordinary diversity of change and the new structures of mobility, with evolving cultures of migration that are about to transform rural and regional Australia, and especially Queensland. Fascinating and complex changes are happening in the economies and societies of the Pacific – from struggles for independence in New Caledonia to the rise of the Kingdom of Papa'ia in Bougainville, from 'disappearing' Melanesian islands to 'appearing' islands in Tonga – yet, all too often, we have lost sight of this region and condemned our neighbours to irrelevance.

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## THOMSON MEDAL

*by Peter Griggs*

In early June, the RGSQ will award its Thomson Medal for 2019. This medal honours the achievements of the Society's founder, James Park Thomson (1854 -1941). The awarding of such a medal commenced in 1900. Up until then, the RGSQ had recognised contributions to geographical science and/or the Society only via Fellowships. However, the Council in 1900 decided to recognize its founding Secretary/Treasurer by the annual awarding of a medal, with Thomson himself being given

the first. The initial idea was that the medal should be awarded for substantial contributions to geographical literature or eminent services to the RGSQ. Gold, silver and bronze impressions of the medal have been awarded over the decades, but recently successive Councils have only awarded gold impressions of the medal. Since the late 1980s, recipients of the medal have also been expected to deliver an address as part of the Society's annual lecture program.

On the obverse side of the Thomson Medal is a bust of a middle-aged and bearded Thomson. On the reverse side there is a wreath composed of wattle, bottlebrush and Sturt's desert pea, all Australian plants. Allan Wyon, Chief Engraver to Queen Victoria, engraved the first Thomson Medal. His bill of £84 has been preserved in the Society's archives.



*The two  
sides of  
the  
Thomson  
Medal*

Past recipients of the medal fall into a number of categories. Some have included noted geographers such as Thomas Griffith Taylor (Australia's first Professor of Geography) and John Oliver (climatologist and foundation Professor of Geography at James Cook University). Other medallists have provided excellent and sustained service to the RGSQ and include Sir Matthew Nathan (President 1920-1926 and instigator of The Queensland Place Names Committee and Great Barrier Reef Committee) and Mrs Henry Robertson (the Society's first woman President from 1945 to 1951). Well-known individuals who advanced geographical knowledge such as Sir Douglas Mawson (for Antarctic exploration) and Bert Hinkler (for services to aviation) have also received a Thomson Medal.

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## RGSQ LECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SUNSHINE COAST

**Ancient Memories, Disappearing Knowledge:  
Indigenous Stories that Remember Events More  
Than 7000 Years Ago**  
*presentation by Prof Patrick Nunn*

**Date:** Tuesday, June 18, 7.15pm-9pm

**Where:** University of the Sunshine Coast, Lecture Theatre  
2 (K Block)

**RSVP:** <http://rgsq.org.au/whatson>

*The lecture is organised in association with the USC*

Among Indigenous Australian societies, as in some long-enduring societies elsewhere in the world, there are stories preserved that likely recall memorable (or catastrophic) events that occurred many millennia ago. Such events include volcanic activity, meteorite impacts and – from at least 23 places all along the Australian coast – the progressive and relentless rise of the ocean surface after the end of the last great ice age. Geology now allows us to know precisely how many years ago such events occurred and – by extension – how many years these memories have been preserved. The ability of oral societies to preserve memories so long has many implications for understanding our world, present and future.

## BIOGRAPHY

Patrick Nunn is Professor of Geography in the School of Social Sciences at the University of the Sunshine Coast and was in 2018 awarded the RGSQ Thomson Medal for contributions to the study of geography. This talk is based on Patrick's research over several decades into ancient stories and their meanings, research that was published in 2018 in his popular book *The Edge of Memory* (Bloomsbury).

## UPCOMING EVENTS



TAAC had a very successful trip to Lowood. A trip report is included further in the Bulletin. By the time this is published there will have been a visit to O'Reilly's with a bushwalk.

The next visit on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June promises to be a very interesting visit to Cobb and Co Museum in Toowoomba.

Details of this and future events are shown below and are updated continually on the website. All members and guests are very welcome at all events, but those of over one day's duration do require membership.

Please register and pay through the website <https://rgsq.org.au/eventscalendar> or alternatively with the office on 3368 2066.

Future programs can be found at [www.rgsq.org.au](http://www.rgsq.org.au), under What's On/Events List.

### JUNE 5: Visit to Cobb+Co Museum 2019

**Come spend a day with us exploring the wonders of the Cobb & Co Museum in Toowoomba**

**Where:** 27 Lindsay St, Toowoomba

**When:** 10:00am Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019

**Cost:** Members \$30.00; Non-members \$35.00 (includes concessional entry and sandwich platter lunch, excluding drinks)

**Transport:** Own transport

**Parking:** Free Parking is available behind the museum, off Lindsay Street.

**Register online:** <http://rgsq.org.au/whatson>

Cobb & Co Museum is part of the Queensland Museum and houses the National Carriage Collection and focuses on horse-drawn vehicles and heritage trades. The museum conducts courses in many of the disappearing arts and trades and mounts exhibits on a wide array of topics as well as holding The Lost Trades Fair.

The day visit will start with members and guests arriving at the museum by their own means to enjoy morning tea (own cost) at the Cobb's Coffee Shop, located in the Museum building.

At 10:30am a guided tour of the Museum will be conducted by the Curator, Mr Geoff Powell (subject to his availability), or an experienced volunteer guide, followed by lunch in the café at 12:30pm.

Following lunch, members and guests are welcome to explore the many exhibits and displays on their own until 2:00pm, when the Curator or his guest speaker will present the monthly Curator Conversations on a topic which, at this stage, remains a secret. Following the Curator Conversation, members and guests are welcome to explore more of the beautiful city of Toowoomba or make their own way home.

**Coordinator:** Wayne Mackenzie.

### JULY 11: NAIDOC Week at Redcliffe 2019

**Help celebrate NAIDOC week with a talk and demonstration about growing and using bush foods**

**WHERE:** Redcliffe Library, corner Oxley Ave and Downs Street (street parking or under the building)

**TIME:** Arrive by 9.45am for a 10.00am start

**COST:** Members \$15.00, Non-members \$18

**BOOK:** Preferably online at <http://rgsq.org.au/whatson> or with the office at 3368 2066

It is known that aborigines inhabited Australia from between 50,000 & 55,000 years ago, probably around Darwin and Lake Mungo, NSW. Between 1940 & 1955, a Day of Mourning or Aborigines' Day was held as a celebration of aboriginal culture. Now NAIDOC WEEK is held not only by indigenous people, but by people from all walks of life. It celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. Our guest speaker, Veronica Cougar, owns a bush foods nursery at Obi Obi. She is a very knowledgeable and enthusiastic speaker. We will learn how to propagate, grow and use bush foods. We will taste a variety of foods and even have the opportunity to buy some plants.

Bring or buy lunch to enjoy by the Bayside, then we can explore the Redcliffe Botanical Gardens only a short drive away. It contains a wide variety of plants, some of local origin.

Look forward to your company and bring your friends.

**Coordinator:** Audrey Johnston

## UPPER YABBA VALLEY

### WEEKEND TREKS

**TREK A July 20-21, 2019: Baiyambora Gorge, Gates of Yabba & Yabba Falls**

**TREK B August 9-11, 2019: Two Gorges: Yabba Falls & Kingaham Gorge**

*These trek weekends are an activity of The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland.*

*Please register at <https://rgsq.org.au/whatson>.*

**TREK A July 20-21: YABBA FALLS Baiyambora Gorge, Gates of Yabba & Fishermans Spur (return Day Hike) & Yabba Falls (Field Day)**

**SATURDAY 20<sup>th</sup> - RETURN DAY HIKE:** *Good fitness required*  
To enter into the Baiyambora Gorge is to enter into majesty! It is a 9km day hike. The descent is 300m down a spur then following the creek and gorge upstream into Gates of Yabba with access to the foot of Yabba Falls and the Primaeval Forest.

**SATURDAY 20<sup>th</sup> - ADVENTURE OPTION THROUGH HIKE** including abseiling descents: the experience of standing beside Top Pool looking up at the plunging falls is unforgettable. To explore The Showerroom is a must. To do science down there measuring gbh of towering hoop pines, or recording fungi, is important research. *Maximum for 5 people.*

**Abseiling** will be provided by qualified abseiling guides (Climbing Guides Australia). There will be two descents each between 40 and 60 metres. Those doing abseiling must be prepared to walk out from the base of the falls along a creek bed. This is about a 4km walk, ascending 300m, although alternative steeper ascents are possible.

**Abseiling Cost:** \$180 each (GST Incl), includes insurance for *this activity.*

**Pre-booking and prior payment essential for this option.**

*The group of abseilers will meet up with the hikers and leave the gorge together.*



**SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup> - YABBA FALLS:** Described by the custodians of Conondale Conservation as "Boooloomba on steroids!". It will be a gentler day than the previous one. The falls will be viewed from the plateau, looking down into the gorge from different vantage points above Top Plunge, through Eye of the Needle, from Superb Corner Lookout and Weaner Rock.

**TREK B August 9-11, 2019: Two Gorges**

**SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup> - BAIYAMBORA GORGE & YABBA FALLS**

There is much to discover and wonderful landscapes to assess. The main hike is challenging, but safe. It is a 9km day hike. The descent is 300m down a spur then following the creek and gorge upstream into Gates of Yabba with access to the foot of Yabba Falls, and the Primaeval Forest.

**SUNDAY 11<sup>th</sup> - KINGAHAM GORGE FIELD DAY**

Today the bushwalking will take us into another environment with different geology and landforms including a series of waterfalls, pools and puzzles: Two Step Falls, The Ballroom Pool, Ochre Falls, Broken Mirror Falls, Masons Quarry, Broken Femur Falls, The Greenstone Crater. Opportunities abound for landscape aesthetics assessment, landform recording, vegetation identification, photography and drone imaging (if you bring your own drone).

Only moderate fitness required for this day, which can be tailored for your level of agility.

**FITNESS:** The weekend is appropriate for people with good bushwalking fitness and endurance, though a range of fitness levels can be catered for by some tailoring of the program:

1. easy but rough walk to top of Yabba Falls and Weaner Rock;
2. moderate challenge due to length of slopes gives access into Upper Yabba country and into Gates of Yabba and Baiyambora Gorge;
3. challenging hike (9km return with 300m descent and return ascent) into Gates of Yabba with access to the foot of Yabba Falls, and the Primaeval Forest.

Walking will be on unformed tracks through open grazing country including grasses and timbered country, and over rock surfaces. There is no current infrastructure (e.g. paths, safety fences), so caution must be exercised especially in rock locations and cliff areas. Comfortable and sturdy shoes should be worn while walking, a hat, sunscreen and water are imperative.

**LOCATION:** People need to assemble at Borumba Deer Park, Yabba Creek Road, Imbil by 7.30am on the Saturday morning and again on the Sunday morning. This trek will involve two days, returning to Imbil on both days. Access to the field site from Imbil requires a 4WD vehicle, so we will be carpooling for those who do not have a 4WD. Please advise if you have a 4WD and are prepared to help transport participants from Borumba Deer Park and back on each day.

**ASSEMBLY POINT:** Borumba Deer Park, 1133 Yabba Creek Road, Imbil

**COST: TREK A or TREK B**

**Registration** <https://rgsq.org.au/whatson>: \$25 per person includes a BBQ (food and non-alcoholic drinks) on Friday 'Meet and Greet', and Saturday evening. Paid registration by Wednesday 10 July 2019.

**OPTIONAL ABSEILING COST: 'TREK A' Only**

Abseiling Cost: \$180 each (GST Incl), includes insurance for this activity. **Pre-booking and prior payment essential for abseiling.** If you are interested in abseiling with highly qualified guides, please call the RGSQ Office 3368 2066 or email [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au) by 1 July 2019.

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



### KEN SUTTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY GROUP

The group will meet on Monday, 24 June, from 9.30am to 12 noon.

**Venue: 'Gregory Place', Level 1, 28 Fortescue St, Spring Hill, 4000**



### EVENTS CALENDAR

**New and existing members welcome**

For a full view of the Map Group year refer to the RGSQ website [www.rgsq.org.au](http://www.rgsq.org.au)

**Mon, 03 June 2019, 10:00am - 12:00 noon**

Map Group Presentation & Gathering

**Presenter: Keith Treschman (Map Group Member)**

**Topic: Areography (The scientific study of the planet Mars' geographical features)**

**Website link:** <https://www.rgsq.org.au/event-3216743>

#### Details

**Presenter Background:** Keith Treschman is a Science Teacher and has taught Science in secondary schools for over 40 years. He has a passion for Astronomy and has written curriculum materials on this topic for teachers. His PhD is on "Astronomical Tests of General Relativity". He is responsible for the installation of an observatory at Brisbane Girls Grammar School - this is at its outdoor centre near Gympie. In this facility are 4 telescopes, 3 of which are operated by the students robotically from their computers.

#### Topic Overview:

Earth has latitude defined from the equator, longitude based on Greenwich and height referred to sea level. How is this done on Mars? What are the features on this planet?

**Location:** RGSQ, 28 Fortescue Street Spring Hill Brisbane

**Transport:** Members to make own arrangements

**Cost:** \$2.00 towards the cost of tea and coffee

Co-ordinator: Ian Francis (07) 3266-2285 0457-628-033  
[brisfran@gmail.com](mailto:brisfran@gmail.com)

**Wed, 17 July 2019, 10:00am - 12:00 noon**

Map Group Event

**Map Group visits RGSQ libraries, lunch at the International Hotel Spring Hill**

**Website link:** <https://www.rgsq.org.au/event-3216759>

#### Details

**Aim of tour/visit:** Map Group visits own library at RGSQ headquarters - exploration and explanations by Map Group Members Peter Nunan, Peter Lloyd and Jim Graham. The presenters will delve into the unusual, rare and bizarre maps and books in our collection.

**Lunch:** Lunch at the International Hotel, 525 Boundary Street Spring Hill

**Location:** RGSQ, 28 Fortescue Street Spring Hill Brisbane

**Transport:** Members to make own arrangements

**Cost:** Nil

Co-ordinator: Peter Nunan (07) 3161-1745;  
[peternunan@optusnet.com.au](mailto:peternunan@optusnet.com.au)

**Mon, 05 August 2019, 10:00am - 12:00 noon**

Map Group Presentation & Gathering

**Neil Simson (Guest Speaker) Topic: Mapping and Town Planning**

Website link: <https://www.rgsq.org.au/event-3216967>

### Details

**Presenter Background:** Neil Simson is a Town Planner. He started his career as a consulting Town Planner in the mid-1990s, before working as the Town Planner for Beaudesert Shire until the late 2000s, then moving onto a far larger local government area (population and urbanisation wise) in Logan City and worked there until 2017. Neil was the chief drafter of Beaudesert Shire's planning scheme (2007) and he was heavily involved in the drafting of Logan City's planning scheme (2015).

**Topic Overview:** history of town planning in Logan City; issues in modern mapping for town planners; what mapping tools are displayed to the public

Location: RGSQ, 28 Fortescue Street Spring Hill Brisbane

Transport: Members to make own arrangements

Cost: \$2.00 towards the cost of tea and coffee

Co-ordinator: Ian Francis (07) 3266-2285; 0457-628-033  
[brisfran@gmail.com](mailto:brisfran@gmail.com)

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## **REPORT: Visit to Stradbroke Island**

By Ian Francis

Members and guests of Map Group, a special interest group within the Society recently enjoyed an excursion to Stradbroke Island. The focus of the visit was to investigate the map collection held by the Stradbroke Island Historical Museum located at Dunwich.



*RGSQ members at the Stradbroke museum, during the 7 May visit to the museum. Photo courtesy of Ian Francis.*

Prior to the map viewing we enjoyed an informative lecture covering the historical and geographical events that shaped Stradbroke Island's history. The Museum's map library is not extensive but contains some rare and curious examples. Discussions flourished during the inspection and many members used mobile phones to photograph interesting items for later research.

Prior to the museum visit, Neville McManimm conducted a guided walk through the Dunwich cemetery highlighting historical points of interest. Following the museum tour, the group enjoyed a pleasant lunch at the Island Fruit Barn.

The museum has offered members the option of guided walking tours on North Stradbroke Island. On offer are tailored walking tours around any topics that the Society may wish to explore. I am sure we will take up that offer soon.

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## **'Pete's Hobby Nursery' Trip Report**

*By Chris Spriggs*



*RGSQ members at the Lowood nursery. Courtesy of Kay Rees*

We had 19 members assemble outside Peter Bevan's house and nursery in Lowood on a nice mostly sunny day.

Pete gave us morning tea and a good rundown on the history of his nursery. His very successful native plant nursery led to planting of many natives on the nearby Brisbane Valley Rail Trail. The Somerset Council were, initially, not impressed but when they realised the attractiveness and tourist potential of this, they gave a go ahead. There is now more than a kilometre of lovely native shrubs along both sides of the trail including many different and exotic types of grevilleas, hibiscus, eremophila and many others. We were able to purchase some pots for ourselves.

Most of us then walked down the old railway track to Lowood. The whole Brisbane Valley Rail Trail is now a bike and walkway covering 161kms from Yarraman to Ipswich. We had lunch in the Club Hotel Motel (formerly the Railway Hotel), established 1884, now the only pub in town.

After lunch we were joined by Sue, the local librarian, who gave us a very enthusiastic tour of the small town. It was established as a terminus for the Brisbane Valley Branch line in 1884, but later became an important area for local produce and livestock and the Brisbane markets. Sue took us around the many old buildings of the town, including the long defunct cinema, the boat donated by the Queensland Government in 1895 for use in the Brisbane River floods and the newly created magnificent library. We ended up on the preserved Lowood Station platform. The line was finally closed in 1988.

It is really important to see and appreciate small towns in Queensland which are often struggling but retain the atmosphere of former times. We hope to do similar treks in the future.



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## Focus on Geographical Research

By Dr. Bishna Bajracharya

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### The SEQ Regional Plan



Dr Bishna Bajracharya is an Associate Professor of Urban Planning in the Faculty of Society and Design, Bond University. He completed his PhD in Geography and Master's in Urban Planning from the University of Hawaii and has previously worked at the Queensland University of Technology and Australian National University. His major research interests are in urban governance, master planned communities, smart cities and disaster management.

Dr. Bajracharya's recent work, funded by the Bond University Faculty Grant, reviews the regional planning process in rapidly growing South East Queensland (SEQ) over the last twenty-five years. In the 1990s, strategic regional land-use planning was initiated in response to growing concerns about the rate of growth and the potential loss of environmental, agricultural and cultural landscapes in SEQ. A cooperative exercise between state and local governments resulted in the first "Regional Framework for Growth Management" in 1995, known as the "SEQ 2001". In 2005 an updated regional framework became a statutory planning instrument. Periodic reviews of the plan have augmented its sophistication and detail, but the overall planning vision and spatial planning approach to contain and guide growth have remained relatively consistent.

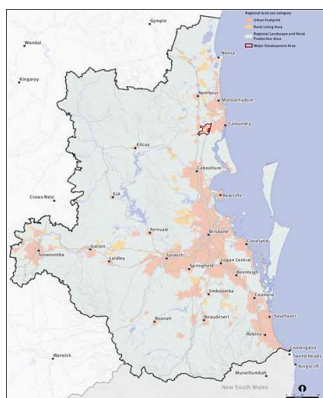
Framed within the urban containment paradigm, the latest SEQ Regional Plan (2017) establishes specific principles and statutory planning controls to direct the spatial distribution of growth while attempting to preserve natural, cultural and productive landscapes and overall liveability. Identification of desired regional growth patterns, coordinated governance, economic and infrastructure development and Plan monitoring are key attributes of the framework. Major challenges remain for maintaining regional resilience amidst continuing growth pressures in the region. They include greater recognition and delineation of peri-urban areas, integration of regional planning and disaster management and growth management of peri-urban master-planned communities.

#### References

Bajracharya, B. and Hastings, P. (2018) *A Regional, Strategic Growth-Management Approach to Urban and Peri-Urban Development in South East Queensland, Australia*. *Journal of Regional and City Planning*, V.29 (3) pp.210-233

The State of Queensland. Shaping SEQ: South East Queensland Regional Plan (August 2017). Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, Brisbane.

Figure 1. The SEQ Urban Footprint (Source: The State of Queensland, 2017)



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## Geographers in the Spotlight

### Nicole Garofano, UQ Candidate Development Award recipient



Ms Nicole Garofano, PhD Candidate at the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Queensland, has received a very competitive University of Queensland Graduate School's Candidate Development Award. The award focusses on skills which will enhance employment opportunities after the degree and

supports travel costs associated with the candidate's research. Nicole will use her award to travel to London to present a paper at the prestigious *Royal Geographical Society (RGS-IBG) Annual International Conference 27-30 August 2019*. Congratulations to Nicole! Her itinerary also includes meetings with sustainability consultants in Manchester and London, 2 weeks with the Asian Development Bank Pacific Division and a return visit to Barbados and St Vincent to present her research findings to fieldwork stakeholders.

Nicole's research focusses on *Managing plastics waste in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific, the Caribbean and the Indian Oceans*. Such states have small land area, limited human, financial and technical resources and few options to effectively manage plastics in both land and marine ecosystems. The plastic used for packaging foods and beverages is manufactured in distant and more developed economies, either as finished products (e.g. packaged rice or biscuits) or raw materials (e.g. plastic to make bags or bottles locally). Nicole is documenting a 'Plastics System' - the "flows of plastics" to and through geographically remote SIDS markets. In 2018, she did field work in Vanuatu, Barbados, St Vincent and the Grenadines and the Seychelles, conducting interviews, organising focus groups, packaging audits and field observation to generate *flow maps* of plastic materials from manufacturers to disposal or recycling.

Early findings identify opportunities for local innovative entrepreneurship for managing plastics which could generate livelihood benefits for SIDS communities. For example, on Union Island (in the St Vincent and Grenadines archipelago) a school-based collection programme for beverage containers uses the inter-island shipping service to send bottles to St Vincent for reprocessing and sale to secondary plastic markets. In Barbados, plastic beverage containers have been collected for in-country recycling into plastic roof tiles. In Vanuatu local entrepreneurs with trucks have adapted pre-paid waste collection systems, including plastics, removing material from remote villages for disposal at a regulated landfill.

**References:** Garofano, N 2019 (forthcoming), '*Geography, islands and plastic: how documenting the flows can contribute to change*', presentation to the Royal Geographical Society RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2019, London, 27-30 August 2019.

Garofano, N 2018, '*Community-Based Recycling in a Small Island Developing State: A Case Study from Barbados*', paper presented to the International Solid Waste Association World Congress, Kuala Lumpur, 22-24 October 2018.

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## Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre in flood, May 2019

By Iraphne Childs based on ABC News and TV 7.30 Report, 9 May 2019



Lake Eyre Basin. Source: Dominique Schwartz, ABC News

The Lake Eyre Basin, Australia's lowest topographical point, is one of the world's largest and most untouched desert river systems. Unlike the Murray-Darling, the Lake Eyre basin currently has no major irrigation diversions or flood-plain developments. The Basin covers one-sixth of Australia and is fed by three major rivers - the Georgina and Diamantina and Cooper Creek. Most of the rain which falls in the north of Australia never finishes the 1,000-kilometre journey to Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre, making the event of its filling amazing. Floodwaters from the north drain towards the basin spilling across the floodplains, filling waterholes and wetlands.



Floodwaters on their way down the Warburton Creek towards Lake Eyre. Photo: Brad Leue, ABC

The water's journey south can take up to 10 months, but this year it was much faster arriving in only two months. The torrential downpour in Queensland at the end of January followed by the flooding created by tropical cyclone Trevor in March 2019 meant water started arriving at Lake Eyre in late March.

While communities in north-west Qld were devastated, and an estimated 500,000 cattle were killed, pastoralists and wildlife in outback SA are reaping the benefits from the floodwaters from Queensland.



Pelicans on the shore of Lake Eyre. Photo: Brendan Esposito, ABC.

Instead of being forced to destock their cattle due to drought, some properties are taking on new stock. The Australian Wildlife Conservancy's Kalamurina Wildlife Sanctuary, located just before Warburton Creek empties into Lake Eyre, is alive with insects, frogs, birds and native mammals. The waters also draw pest species such as wild camels, foxes and cats, prompting extra precautions with trapping. Threats to the Basin do also exist from proposals to release land for oil and gas mining. Lake Eyre communities continue to fight to allow the rivers, which feed this globally unique ecosystem, to run free. Across the entire basin, this flood is just a moment in a boom and bust cycle. In a few months' time the water will disappear, seep into the ground and evaporate into the air - gone, but living on in the people, plants and animals that rely upon its life-giving waters, and in the stories and memories made each time these unique desert rivers run their course.

### References

Forbes, Lucas, ABC (9 May 2019). "Lake Eyre floodwaters bring life and drought relief to South Australia's outback" <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-09/lake-eyre-is-a-wild-river-system-left-to-run-its-course/11035506>

Schwartz, Dominique ABC News and ABCTV 7.30 (9 May 2019) *Wild Abandon. Lake Eyre is a Wild River system left to run its course.* <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-09/lake-eyre-is-a-wild-river-system-left-to-run-its-course/11035506>

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**To register for upcoming RGSQ trips and events  
visit the RGSQ website**

<https://rgsq.org.au/whatson>

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## What lectures would you like to see in 2020 at RGSQ?

Dear members, we are developing the 2020 RGSQ lecture program and would welcome your input in relation to the topics or issues you would like to see lectures and presentations on next year. To submit your suggestions, please email [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au). Thank you.

## Australian Geography Competition

Thank you to all members who have helped with the 2019 Australian Geography Competition (AGC) so far this year: mailings, scanning and other assistance.

The interim numbers for the 2019 AGC is 791 schools with 73,606 entries. The final numbers will be known by the end of June when the prizes, certificates and results have been sent out.

There is one more mailout for the 2019 AGC which is the mailout of prizes, certificates and results. Members' assistance would be greatly appreciated. The mailout will occur at "Gregory Place" on Wednesday 12, Thursday 13, and Friday 14 June 2019. Please register online or contact Bernard to register your assistance.

# RGSQ Bulletin

June 2019

### Lecture/Meeting: Tuesday 4 June

**Thomson Oration** *'The Pacific Islands: Sinking Islands and Sinking Geographies?'* presentation by John Connell, the 2019 Thomson Medal Awardee

### Activity: Wednesday 5 June

Visit to Cobb & Co Museum, Toowoomba

*International Tour: Geography, Game Parks and Gorillas 22 June - 18 July*

### Map Group: Monday 3 June, 10 am – 12 noon

Presentation by Keith Treschman (Map Group Member) on Areography (The scientific study of the planet Mars' geographical features)

### Ken Sutton Memorial Library: Monday 24 June

9:30am – 12:00 noon, 'Gregory Place', Level 1, 28 Fortescue St, QLD 4000.

The June Council will meet on the third Tuesday of the month

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