



From the President

Dear members, with all the depressing statistics about COVID-19 here's some joyful news from our amazing humpback whales who are back in our coastal waters.

As they move north along Australia's eastern coastline on their annual migration from Antarctica, their numbers, now thought to be approximately 30,000, have increased again this year. Humpback whales feed in summer in the polar waters of Antarctica, and migrate to tropical and subtropical waters of Australia to breed and give birth in winter. This results in thousands of humpbacks swimming past Australia's east coast between May and early November each year. The peak months are usually September and October when it is not unusual to see a mother whale travelling with her calf. Point Lookout on North Stradbroke Island is the closest place to Brisbane where you can enjoy land-based whale watching. Hervey Bay around Fraser Island is widely regarded as one of the best destinations to see whales because they stay there for an extended period with mothers and calves resting and playing in the calm waters.

There are also many whale-watching boat tours available from Southeast Queensland coastal centres. I hope you may have an opportunity to view these spectacular visitors during the current migration, either from a land-based vantage point or on a whale watching boat trip.



A major concern being monitored by conservation groups and the Queensland Government Fisheries Department is that, with the increasing numbers of whales swimming by our shores and the year-round positioning of drumlines and shark nets off popular swimming beaches, there is an increased risk of entanglement for the whales.

This August saw the fifth whale entanglement in only three months of the 2020 whale migration season along Queensland's coast. A humpback whale calf was caught on a drumline's hook, positioned off Main Beach, Stradbroke Island. Fortunately, the calf was freed and returned to its waiting mother after an intense five-hour rescue operation by Queensland Fisheries. Earlier this year, four humpbacks were entangled in Gold Coast shark nets in the space of just one month.

The Australian Marine Conservation Society (AMCS) has called for a transition away from shark nets and lethal drumlines toward solutions such as drones, boosted lifeguard presence, and removal of these devices during the whale migration season (AMCS August 17, 2020).

An announcement from the Minister based on scientifically monitored trials is expected soon.

AGM and Council nominations

The RGSQ annual general meeting is on 20 October. If any member would like to nominate for the 2020-2021 Council, please email the Office at info@rgsq.org.au for a nomination form or to discuss a role on the Council please feel free to contact me at 0419 756 936.

References:

[Matilda Boseley](#) *The Guardian* June 19 2020 *Whales are moving up Australia's east coast*

<https://www.theguardian.com/2020/jun/19/the-whales-are-moving-up-australias-east-coast-tell-us-about-your-best-spot>

Australian Marine Conservation Society 17 August 2020. *Humpback calf caught on Stradbroke Island drumline*

<https://www.marineconservation.org.au/humpback-calf-caught-on-stradbroke-island-drumline>

[ABC News](#) 28 June 2020 *Humpback whale census record set to be smashed along Australia's east coast*

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-06-28/humpback-whale-record-set-to-be-smashed-on-australia-east-coast/12393334>

Photo source: ABC News, 28 June 2020

Dr Iraphne Childs
President

UPCOMING EVENTS

www.rgsq.org.au

22 September – Student Forum

7:30pm

'Gregory Place', Level 1, 28 Fortescue St, Spring Hill Qld, 4000.

The forum is organised by RGSQ's Young Geographers Group and will feature presentations by young geography students and professionals.

Because of current restrictions on gatherings, places will be limited to 25.

For further details and to register, visit the event link at: <https://rgsq.org.au/event-3669846>



Treks and Activities

There are four activities that the Committee have organised for the rest of this year.

For details and to book see <https://rgsq.org.au/whatson>.

SEPTEMBER 2. Spicers Gap, near Aratula

This was postponed in February and those 10 people who have already booked and paid will be transferred to this new event. Another five spaces are available. Bob Reid has done a lot of work on the history of this very interesting area and will be issuing trek notes.

OCTOBER 22. Binna Burra Walk

The road will be open and there will be an opportunity to see how the area is recovering from the bush fires. We will be accompanied by a geologist. 12 people.

NOVEMBER 10. South Bank, Brisbane and Land Use Changes

Promises to be an interesting trip with history and geology covered by local guides; 16 people.

The **Christmas party** this year will be on 1 December at Fortescue Street.

We have already planned most of next year with all the treks postponed this year being organised again next year, with some additional ones. Details to follow. Those who have paid already will automatically be included on their trip.

CONTRIBUTORS

Ralph Carlisle, David Carstens, Iraphne Childs, Bernard Fitzpatrick, Patrick Moss, Peter Nunan, Chris Spriggs

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We have much pleasure in welcoming *Charles Naylor* and *Nathanael Gregory Ford* as new members of The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland. We hope your association with your new Society is long and mutually enjoyable.

Farewell to Bernard



Official opening of Gregory Place, Spring Hill. L-R: Bernard Fitzpatrick, Kath Berg, Keith Treschman. July 2019.

We will shortly be saying farewell to Bernard. He has tended his resignation from his position at RGSQ as the AGC Coordinator, to take effect on 18th September 2020. Bernard joined the RGSQ staff in January 2014 as Executive Officer, and subsequently accepted the position of AGC Coordinator in March 2019. We thank Bernard for his very significant contributions to RGSQ and the AGC both as a Society member and employee. I'm sure you would join me in wishing Bernard all the best for his future.

Australian Geography Competition Update



A BIG THANK YOU to RGSQ members who have assisted with the opening of parcels and scanning of the returned 2020 Competition answer sheets: Kath Berg, Mary Comer, Roger Grimley, Laurelle and Len Lowry, Neville McManimm, Mary and John Nowill, and Kay and Graham Rees.

John Tasker, RGSQ Young Geographer, Council member and Australian Geography Competition Committee member is currently finalising software he has developed which provides great time savings in post processing of the scanned Competition data. In a matter of minutes, the software runs data quality checks which allows RGSQ staff to identify and fix data issues. Once scanning is completed and issues are corrected the software will be rerun and the students' answers will be marked and graded, and data reports produced ready to be sent for printing of certificates and results.

The assistance of RGSQ members with the various aspects of the Australian Geography Competition provides greatly appreciated support to school-based geography across Australia.

Members help is again called for to assist with the 2020 Competition certificate and result sheet mail out happening at 'Gregory Place' from Wednesday 7th to Friday 8th October. If you are able to assist with this mailout, please register on our website at <https://rgsq.org.au/event-3725316>.

Get to know your Councillor

Patrick Moss

I am one of the new RGSQ Councillors who was elected in 2019 and here is a little bit about my adventures in Geography.



Miller Landing, Wilson Promontory National Park, Victoria at the most southerly (highest latitude) mangroves in the world at Corner Inlet. Courtesy of Patrick Moss.

I am Melbourne born and bred and a child of the 1970s, my family had a long history (for Australia) with the bayside suburbs of Hampton and Sandringham and I remember my grandmother's stories of when the area was dominated by market gardens and at the edge of Melbourne. Now, the suburbs are very much part of the ever-expanding Melbourne sprawl. I was also very fortunate to spend a significant amount of my childhood holidaying close to Wilsons Promontory National Park, which certainly helped develop my interest in geography through the various walking trails and visiting the coastal landscapes, including Waratah Beach, which is the inspiration for Alison Lester's book *Magic Beach*.

My journey in academic geography did not begin until arriving at the University of Melbourne in 1989 for a Bachelor of Science degree. I came across an elective subject called *Famine in the Modern World* and this resulted in me adding a Bachelor of Arts degree so that I could have a major in geography. This then led to my undertaking an honours thesis in 1994, which focused on biogeography and palaeoecology through utilising fossil pollen and charcoal (still my main research focus) to reconstruct environmental change at Den Plain, Tasmania over the last 3000 years. This is a highly significant Tasmanian Aboriginal site situated near Mole Creek in the north of the state. This study provided a springboard to a PhD at Monash University, which I commenced in 1995 and with my first week being based on a research vessel off the coast of northeast Queensland collecting sediment cores. My PhD project focussed on reconstructing past environments in the region for the last 250,000 years based on the Ocean Drilling Program (ODP) 820 marine core. Key findings were increased aridity during this period and evidence of human arrival around 45,000 years ago in the region. In addition, I taught introductory geography and biogeography at Monash University, University of Melbourne, Deakin University and Victoria University.

After I graduated in March 2000, I obtained my first academic job in the Department of Geography, University of Iowa teaching landscape ecology, climatology and introductory physical geography. Highlights were living in an American college town, experiencing my first really cold winter (-20°C

was not uncommon) and being fortunate enough to teach field courses at Yellowstone National Park. I then moved to Department of Geography at the University of Wisconsin Madison in July 2002, which further enhanced my geographical experience in the Midwest of the US. My time in the US also exposed me to American Football and I am now following the University of Iowa Hawkeyes college football side from afar.

I moved back to Australia in July 2004 when I secured a continuing position in the School of Geography, Planning and Architecture, University of Queensland. I have been in this position since then, as well as the various iterations of the school – to the School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Management in 2008 and finally the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences in 2017. I have taught across a broad range of geography and environmental management courses in my time at UQ, including landscape ecology, biogeography, research design, fire ecology, palaeoecology and natural resource management. In terms of research, I have active projects across eastern Australia, with a particular focus on the giant sand masses of South East Queensland and the landscapes of northern and eastern Tasmania. I also have projects in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, New Zealand, South East Asia and research that is currently developing in the Amazon Basin of South America. I also operate over a number of different time scales, ranging from undertaking research in modern biogeographical patterns, examining environmental change over the last two million years, as well as looking at the relative impacts of people and natural climate change over the last 60,000 years (my key area of research). I also dabble in Eocene environmental change in South East Australia and British Columbia, Canada and supervising PhD projects in Cretaceous and Permian environments in western Queensland.

Over the last 16 years at UQ, I have moved through the various academic levels, making Senior Lecturer in 2010, Associate Professor in 2015 and Professor this year, as well as holding a variety of service roles, including postgraduate research student coordinator and Deputy Head of School (the role I currently hold). I also collected a Graduate Certificate in Education (Higher Education) in 2008 with my journey at UQ and very much enjoy teaching future geographers, particularly advancing research in palaeoecology, biogeography, archaeology and fire ecology. Furthermore, I am engaging with Queensland and Tasmania government agencies, particularly making my research accessible to managers to improve outcomes. I have had a lot of success in improving understanding of the unique Patterned Fens of K'Garri (Fraser Island), which resulted in my appointment to the Fraser Island World Heritage Scientific Advisory Committee from 2016 to 2019 (and seeking reappointment with the future committee).

I live close to the Brisbane River at Morningside, with my partner Belinda and our 11-year-old daughter Milly, who is already showing a strong interest in geography, especially, through our walks around the local neighbourhood. With the Covid-19 situation, we have been exploring Balmoral Cemetery, the Gateway Bridge area and the coastline around Manly Wynnum. I am also an avid North Melbourne Kangaroos (AFL) supporter, which can be traced back to my grandfather who played in their reserves team in the 1930s and had the unique experience of taking my daughter to the Gabba to see a recent match with a traditional rival Carlton (although don't ask me about the result). I am hoping to take her to a match next year to the MCG once we are through Covid-19 and she has very much become a fourth-generation Kangaroos supporter.

RAVENSBOURNE – a gem of a country retreat for Geographers

An article sponsored by Ravensbourne Escape

Contributed by Iraphne Childs



Ravensbourne is a really special area of high country located on a plateau of basalt capping a sandstone ridge off the eastern face of the Great Dividing Range. Part of the Toowoomba Regional Council, accessed along the Esk-Hampton Road, the Ravensbourne district includes remnant rainforest with the tallest Piccabeen palms and wet eucalypt forest found in nearby Ravensbourne, Crows Nest and Palms-Cooyar National Parks. Bushwalking and birdwatching is popular in the National Parks and great photography opportunities at the Gus Beutel Lookout with views across to Flinders Pk, Mt Barney and even as far south as Mt Warning. In Crows Nest National Park, the walking track takes in the impressively deep granite gorge. Local Aboriginal people passing through this country on their way to bunya nut festivals at the Bunya mountains camped and gathered food in the Ravensbourne area for generations. From the 1860s and 1870s, timber-getters logged the Ravensbourne forests for the plentiful red cedar. Members may be surprised to find the preserved steam locomotive from the Munro Tramway, a timber-getting line which ran from Bunkers Hill to Hampton, now stationed at Ravensbourne sports ground on the main road. Lakes Cressbrook and Perseverance provide water for the Toowoomba area. Avocado farming is big here with stalls along the roadside. The nearby hamlets of Hampton and Crows Nest offer delights of good cafes, arts and crafts, local produce and even the iconic Crows Nest soft drink factory (established 1903).

In July this year, Ralph and I found a great place for a long weekend family stay in **Ravensbourne Escape**, 3143 Esk-Hampton Rd, bordering the Ravensbourne National Park. This gated community of rental cabins, chalets, holiday homes and luxury studios is nestled on the eastern escarpment among peaceful forest gardens. All accommodation options have wonderful views of the Scenic Rim mountains. Some cabins have spas and log fires. We stayed in Cedar Lodge, a cosy 3-bedroom cabin with a log fire. There are also options to buy real estate within the community and facilities to hire for a conference, function or wedding. Well worth considering for your next getaway!

Ravensbourne Escape manager, Rob, has offered a 5% discount on accommodation for RGSQ members.

Contact Rob on 07 4697 8092 or via email info@ravensbournescape.com.au to book.

Photos and map courtesy of Ravensbourne Escape.

References

<https://ravensbournescape.com.au/>

<https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/parks/ravensbourne/about>

<https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/parks/crows-nest>

<https://munrotramway.wixsite.com/mthg>



Cedar Lodge



What's happening with the Map Collection?

The Map Collection has been boosted by donations, not only from members but also from the University of Queensland Alumni Book Fair Group (courtesy of Dr Col Lynam) – namely two large sets of several hundred maps and a map cabinet. Of particular interest were a number of photographic quality satellite images of Queensland regions. The maps have been sorted and assessed, with duplicates identified and donated to the Creche and Kindergarten Association for children to use the blank reverse sides for drawing and painting and some to the Geography Teachers' Association of Queensland (GTAQ). Both the existing map cabinet and the second cabinet have been stabilised by placing steel plates in their bases as counterweights (organised by Neal O'Connor). Larger maps on wooden rollers have been hung in one corridor; it is planned to extend this to amplify the 'geography feel' of Gregory Place.

Ways to make the Map Collection and the Library 'findable' on the web are being explored with the Library Coordinator, Jim Graham.

Contributed by Ralph Carlisle and Peter Nunan



RGSQ
2020
GEOGRAPHIC
LANDSCAPES
PHOTOGRAPHY
COMPETITION

1ST PRIZE
2-NIGHTS' ACCOMMODATION
AT O'REILLY'S
RAINFORREST RETREAT

2ND PRIZE
ONE-YEAR FREE RGSQ
MEMBERSHIP

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO
INFO@RGSQ.ORG.AU

RGSQ invites members to submit their excellent landscape photos* of Queensland locations for a photography competition. The Competition is open to RGSQ members only and for new unpublished work

Submission due date:
Monday August 31st

The 12 best entries could be included on an RGSQ calendar which may be produced later this year for sale in time for Christmas.**

** For sending in your images please follow these steps: a maximum of 3 images submitted per member; minimum 1800 pixels x 2400 pixels stored as a high quality jpg. Landscape orientation not portrait orientation. Include a caption (<20 words) for each image you submit. Please include your name, the location of your image and the year it was taken.*

*** By submitting your photos to the RGSQ 2020 Geographic Landscapes Photography Competition, you agree to share the photos with RGSQ for future use. All photos will be copyrighted under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license, which means that each photo is owned by the creator (you as the photographer), and it can be shared and adapted freely when appropriate credit is given.*

  **Inquiries to**
i.childs@uq.edu.au or kayrees@gmail.com

Submissions will be judged by the RGSQ Publications committee

What's happening on Council?

On 18 August Council met at the RGSQ Fortescue street. This was our first meeting back at the premises since the lockdown in March, so it was very pleasing to be able to relate to everyone in-person again. Unless the virus situation in Queensland changes drastically for the worse again, we will continue to meet at RGSQ going forward. Reports were received from Iraphne Childs (President & Publications), Chris Spriggs (Treasurer and TAAC Chair), John Tasker and Kath Berg (AGC), Pamela Tonkin (Property), Young Geographers (John Tasker) and Lilia Darii (Business Manager). Matters discussed included:

- RGSQ continues to receive Job Keeper support for Lilia and Bernard and are following closely the Government's latest proposal to extend this support beyond September.
- Plans and procedures for the 2020 AGM on 20 October. Members will be advised of the arrangements in due course.
- We are planning to hold the September lecture presentation from the Young Geographers at RGSQ premises following social distancing guidelines.
- Only a few submissions have come in so far for our photographic competition, so members are encouraged to send in their images of Queensland (see details in this Bulletin).
- The Publications Committee has been designing the covers for the 2021 RGSQ calendar displaying the best entries from the photo competition.

Letters from our members

GEOFACT: Australia is not quite where you think it is

By David Carstens

I write to draw attention to the relationship between the "GEOFACT: Australia is not quite where you think it is" article in Issue 5 of Member Connect and the Lambert Centre established by RGSQ in 1988. Information on the RGSQ website (www.rgsq.org.au) records the significant achievement of establishing the Lambert Centre, an Australian iconic landmark, and the findings of the GPS survey work based on the Society's visit in 2013. Movement of the monumented centre, north easterly is calculated as 28 degrees 25 minutes for 1.312 metres in the 25 years between visits.

This, it can be seen, is consistent with the Sydney Morning Herald source in Member Connect #5 "GEOFACT" which is based on 26 years. i.e. 53 mm per year at Lambert Centre compared with the 70 mm averaged over the whole continent. As spelt out on the RGSQ website, extensive information on the topic of measuring the plate movements is recorded on Australia's Geoscience website. The complex mathematics which apply, and the choices for Australia and the dedicated monitoring stations which have existed for many years are all available for more detailed understanding of this topic.

The Geoscience Australia Stations are monitored constantly and are based on high precision, modern GPS now more commonly identified as GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System), and are strategically located as per the diagram in Member Connect #5, plus at the three Antarctic Stations on mainland Antarctica and on Macquarie island.

One Geoscience station is quite close to Lambert Centre. The position observations for Lambert Centre in 1988 were using GPS systems available at that time; in 2013 the measurements used GNSS equipment. Many people have contributed to the RGSQ Lambert Centre story and the next visit by the Society in 2021 will also be memorable.

2021 Lecture Program

If you would like to find out more about a topic or know someone who could deliver a great presentation to our members, please let us know by emailing info@rgsq.org.au. Thank you.

RGSQ Bulletin

September 2020

Lecture/Meeting: Tuesday 22 September

Student Forum - event organised by RGSQ's Young Geographers Group

Activity:

2 September - Spicers Gap Day Walk

16 September - Scenic Rim visit to Boonah and Mt. French

W: www.rgsq.org.au

E: info@rgsq.org.au

P: 07 3368 2066

The September Council will meet on the third Tuesday of the month.

The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland Ltd
PO Box 625, Spring Hill QLD 4004

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