



# RGSQ Bulletin

October 2021

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

President: Dr Iraphne Childs

## From the President

Dear Members, I hope this finds you in good health and enjoying the start of our spring weather, awaiting the arrival of the purple jacaranda haze adorning our city - opportunities for some colourful shots to submit to our **2021 photographic competition - City and Townscapes of Queensland**. Some excellent prizes are on offer including a "Members' Choice" prize.

As President of RGSQ I have served in this role for the past four years (2017-2021). Under our Constitution no member shall serve more than four consecutive one-year terms as President and so I shall be stepping down at the forthcoming AGM, passing the baton onto the next President. If elected I will continue to serve as a Councillor for the coming year to assist in the transition. I am humbly and continually grateful to the Society's membership for the opportunity to be President for two terms (my previous term was 2003-2005). It has been a tremendous privilege, honour, and pleasure. Over the past four years RGSQ has achieved some momentous milestones. I am so pleased to have participated in and, in some ways, helped to shape these achievements. So, if I may reflect on my term of office, here are some of the highlights.

### The search for a new Society home and move from Milton:

In November 2017 I signed the sale of contract of our Milton premises. Over the next nine months Council investigated 28 premises across a range of suburbs.



Nowhere was perfect, but we settled on Fortescue Street Spring Hill in August 2018 based largely on the advantages of a central location. After the process of refitting Gregory Place for our purposes, we invited members to the Open Day on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 and had the official opening by the Governor, his Excellency Paul de Jersey AC on 18 July 2019.

### Changing our legal status from Letters Patent to a Company Limited by Guarantee:

Our Society was set up under Letters Patent from Queen Victoria in 1885. Uncertainty surrounding governing and liability provisions applying to Councillors, employees and membership under this regime suggested that it was

no longer an optimal legal structure. Bringing us into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, changing to a CLG provided an appropriate platform for the Society's future. After a lengthy legal process, development of a new Constitution and By-laws and wide



consultation with members this change was approved at the September 2018 AGM. Importantly, we retained our status as a Royal Society and a not-for-profit charitable entity.

**Safeguarding Collections:** The Society has been accumulating artefacts, the library and map collections and our own archives since 1885. Extensive on-going work by Collections committee members with funding from the National Library of Australia's Community Heritage Grants has enabled Significance Assessment and Preservation Needs Analysis for this important component of RGSQ.

**Reviving Committees:** I have enjoyed chairing the revival of two committees which had been inactive for a few years: **Scientific Studies** developing a project on Stradbroke Island and **Publications** organising photographic competitions and publishing an inaugural RGSQ calendar.

For the future, the Society's finances are in the good hands of a dedicated and capable finance committee; there is much positive energy in the Treks & Activities Committee, Map Group and Young Geographers special interest groups. The AGC is powering ahead with a new coordinator and an enthusiastic committee moving the Competition into the digital age. Our capacity to present monthly lectures both via zoom and in-person at RGSQ premises, record and display on the RGSQ YouTube channel, now has the potential to increase RGSQ's profile more widely. While over the past 18 months the challenges of COVID-19 have had major impacts on RGSQ, I have observed that the Society has prevailed with flexibility, adaptation, strength and the dedicated work of Council, members, and staff.

I sincerely thank all who have assisted me over the years on Council, member volunteers and office staff through some difficult times and some great achievements. I wish the incoming President every success in leading the Society with a collegiate and wise Council, supportive office staff and a wonderful membership.

With best wishes, *Iraphne Childs, President*



## WHAT'S ON

For all upcoming RGSQ events, please visit the Society's website [www.rgsq.org.au](http://www.rgsq.org.au) under 'What's On'.

### 2021 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, 19 October – 7:30 pm

This year's AGM will be held via teleconferencing utilising the ZOOM platform and on premises (COVID permitting). All documents for the upcoming AGM will be distributed to members in due course.

Register for the meeting on the RGSQ website at:  
[www.rgsq.org.au](http://www.rgsq.org.au)

If you are having trouble registering or have any questions about the AGM, please do not hesitate to contact us on 07 3368 2066 or email [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au).

### Monthly Lecture/Meeting

Tuesday 5 October | 7.30pm-9pm

#### Bushfire - an Intensifying Risk for Queensland

by Lee Johnson AFSM FIFireE  
Commissioner (Ret) QFES

**Location:** RGSQ premises (Level 1, 28 Fortescue St, Spring Hill, Qld) and via Zoom

**Registration essential:** <https://rgsq.org.au/event-4343673>



The presentation will cover the Climate Science factors influencing changes to the level of risk that Natural Hazards present to Queensland with a focus on why Bushfire is becoming more concerning. Lee will also discuss the history of and the current preparedness levels in Queensland, as well as what can be done to better prepare the Queensland community with a focus on the role that mitigation plays in keeping us safe; how better co-ordination between Fire Services, Government land agencies such as QPWS (Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service), private land holders and the use of practices used by First Nations people contribute to better land management.

**Bio:** Lee Johnson AFSM FIFireE served as Commissioner of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services for 13 years (2002 – 2015). Having joined the fire service in Townsville in 1975 where he worked for 10 years as a firefighter before transferring to the Gold Coast as a Station Officer, Lee was promoted to Rockhampton in 1988 as the Deputy Chief Officer and 1990 District Commander. In 1997 he was appointed as an Assistant Commissioner for the then Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority in Central Region and later, in 2001, Brisbane South Region. During his time as Commissioner, Lee played a key role in the development of Urban Search and Rescue capability within QFES and nationally, working closely with Emergency Management Australia (EMA). Lee currently works as an advisor to Locatrix a fire safety and indoor mapping company.

**Please note:** The lecture may be recorded. If you have any questions, please email us at [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au).



**Treks and Activities**  
"Brisbane River – Cultural Landscapes – Past and Future Tour"  
Wednesday 24 November



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**Participant numbers are limited to 20**

**Cost: \$7/member, \$12/non-member**

**Register:** <https://rgsq.org.au/event-4499599>

Riverside landscape in Brisbane City continues to be reshaped substantially, with the Queen's Wharf precinct development at the eastern end of George Street well underway, providing a glimpse of the future.

But, at the same time, just a stone's throw away in the grounds of the QUT, the beautifully restored Old Government House, with its host of stories about the early geographical and historical development of Queensland, keeps us connected with our origins.

*Join fellow members, on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021, in an event that touches on the PAST and the FUTURE.*

**The day starts** (10.15am assembly) with a guided tour of Old Government House hosted by its Curator, Dr. Katie McConnel. An opportunity to explore and delve deeper into aspects of interest revealed during the tour will follow, including the William Robinson Gallery. The formal tour takes about one (1) hour and involves some stairs. There is also a lift.

An optional group (light) lunch (wraps, frittatas, lasagne etc-\$7-\$10) at The Pantry Café (adjacent to Old Government House) will follow this tour. There are multiple lunch venues in the QUT precinct, including The Gardens Club café in the Botanical Gardens (5 minutes' walk), where more substantial meals are available. This may be of interest to participants wishing to include a botanical element to the day. Lunches are at participants cost.

The group re-assembles at 1.15 pm at the Visitors Centre, cnr George and Alice Streets, for a glimpse of the FUTURE. Graham Witherspoon, Communications Manager for Destination Brisbane Consortium (the developers) will conduct a 'walk through' the impressive (one level) Visitor's Centre with its models, displays and videos. Graham has been involved in the project for many years and is able to offer comprehensive insight into the development as a whole. The formal 'tour' takes about 45 minutes, but participants are free to continue at the Visitors Centre. The formal overall outing will conclude by 2.30 pm.

The most convenient access to the Old Government House precinct is via City Cat, de-catting at the QUT ferry terminal, and following the signage.

## **REPORT: VISIT TO MILNE BAY MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE**

This activity was organized some months ago and, fortunately, was able to proceed as planned even though some restrictions on public gatherings remain under Health Regulations in place because of COVID-19.

Some 23 members and a guest gathered at the Milne Bay Memorial Library and Research Centre, part of the Chermside Historical Precinct at 61 Kittyhawk Drive Chermside, at about 10 am for morning tea. This was followed by a very thorough presentation on the Battle of Milne Bay by the Curator of the Library and Research Centre, Frank Meoni. Frank was assisted by Brad Shillig.

Frank tool us through the strategic importance of the bay, at the eastern end of what is now New Guinea, and the way an Allied base was established there in June, July, and early August 1942.

The Japanese saw the strategic importance of the location as well.

Japanese forces from Rabaul landed on the northern shore of the bay to the east of the base on the night of 25/26 August 1942 with orders to take the base. Other Japanese forces that were to have been deployed in the attack on Milne Bay were dispatched by barge from Buna, but the barges were destroyed by RAAF Kittyhawks while the troops were ashore on Goodenough Island resting.

Though the ground was heavily contested, the Japanese, with some reinforcements from Rabaul, advanced to within striking distance of the base at the head of the bay. They mounted an attack on the main Allied defensive position across the cleared but not completed No3 Airstrip commencing at 3 am, on 31 August, charging across the strip on three occasions. They were repulsed on each occasion by heavy fire, particularly from strategically placed machine guns, suffering horrendous loses. No 3 Airstrip stretched from the sea to the jungle-clad foothills of the ranges and there was an attempt to outflank the defenses inland, but this was repulsed as well.

Australian forces counterattacked and, despite very fierce Japanese resistance at several locations, drove the enemy back to the east along the northern side of the bay. The Japanese realized that they would not be able to hold ground until reinforcements arrived and the troops were withdrawn by sea on the evening of 5 September. This represented the first defeat of the Japanese on land in the Pacific and served as a welcome morale booster for Allied troops across the theatre.

The RAAF, particularly the Kittyhawks based at Milne Bay No 1 Airstrip were a key factor in the battle because they were able to prevent any significant movement of Japanese during the day and give some support to Australian troops as they advanced. Nevertheless, they were unable to fly at night and the Japanese took advantage of this.

Frank's presentation was followed by an excellent video on the battle lasting about 15 minutes, then some discussion and inspection of the displays and books.

Hinderances to the Allies were the extremely high rainfall, the difficulties in moving about and landing aircraft caused by the mud, malaria, and to some extent, a lack of

appreciation of the conditions on the ground by senior commanders in Australia.

We were honored by the presence of Herb Butler (Q121237), originally from Warwick. Herb served at Milne Bay for some months and was involved in the defense of No 3 Airstrip on 31 August. Herb came as a guest of John Ladbrook and was able to share some of his experiences at Milne Bay during the discussion. Herb turned 100 on 16 August 2021 and several people saw his letter from the Queen.

A number of those attending had relatives or knew of men who had served at Milne Bay, not necessarily during the battle.

All adjourned to the Kedron-Wavell Services Club for lunch, a welcome social occasion in these times.

I believe that all those who attended would recommend a visit to the Centre. Opening Hours can be found on the internet.

*Contributed by Bob Reid, visit coordinator and member of the Treks and Activities Committee*

## **REPORT: RAAF AMBERLEY AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE and THE WORKSHOPS RAIL MUSEUM**



*RGSQ Group at RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre; courtesy of Ron Owen.*

By coach, 19 members drove first to Amberley on this fine winter day arriving early enough to get up close and personal with a F111 aircraft under cover located beside the roundabout just short of the Base front gate. Group photos were taken there. Members were then ushered to the nearby main Pass Office where ID security checks took place. After reboarding the coach, direct entry to the Heritage Centre was not possible due to road reconstruction works. The long way via the back gate, while time consuming, was enlightening in that a better understanding of the extensive size of the Air Force Base was provided.

A self-catered morning tea was taken on arrival at the Heritage Centre where we met Warren, our volunteer guide for the visit. Exhibits are housed in four Bellman Hangars which were part of a group of 14 identical hangars built on 1942. These exhibits tell the history of the RAAF, history of aviation at RAAF Amberley, and the RAAF in South East Queensland in war and peace time. These displays include aeroplanes, helicopters, vehicles, military weapons, training equipment, photographs and written

explanations including a World War II Boston Bomber, courtesy of the Papua New Guinea Government, a Vietnam-era Canberra bomber, Caribou airlifter (on tarmac between the hangars), Sabre and Mirage fighter jets, F-111s, a Pilatus Porter, Sioux, and Iroquois helicopters, and even an immaculate WWII Jeep. The Centre is managed and supported by dedicated Reservists and local volunteers and many artefacts and display aircraft have been restored by rebuilding to their original state from wrecks. In fact, Amberley does more restoration work than any other state in Australia. Some of these could actually still fly if required while others do fly if for example being on loan from private individuals, states, or governments of other countries.



*The Workshop Rail Museum, courtesy of Ron Owen*

Next stop after Amberley was The Workshops Rail Museum at Ipswich (part of the Queensland Museum network) where after checking in with the 'Check in Queensland' App, the group made way to the Trackside Café for a generous lunch of roast beef and vegetables, dessert of apple crumble, and tea or coffee. Members then were free to look around at will to investigate displays, locomotives and rolling stock of years gone by, videos, and hands-on interactive displays. Some of the latter is educational designed for children of all ages; to many this is the home of Thomas the Tank Engine. There is also an extensive model railway set in the middle of the complex. At days end, by the time of returning home, dark clouds had appeared but did not matter.



*Caribou aircraft at RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre; courtesy of Ron Owen*

A number of participants, but not all, had never been to at least one of these venues in the past and were quite surprised at just how educational and interesting they turned out to be. It was obvious that at both venues a lot of money and volunteer hours have been spent to make

the displays great. A number of comments suggests that a great day was experienced by all. That everyone was punctual on a day with a tight schedule was a significant reason for a very successful activity.

*Contributed by Ron Owen, Coordinator for the day*

### **Membership fees increase**

The last time RGSQ increased membership fees was January 2016.

In May 2021 Council resolved that a fee increase was warranted to take effect from the 2021 AGM, details as follows:

- Ordinary membership from \$55 to \$60
- Household bundle from \$75 to \$80
- Members opting to receive a paper Bulletin rather than an electronic emailed version pay an additional \$10 per year (per membership) to cover part of the postage and printing costs

Thank you for your continued support of RGSQ.

Iraphne Childs, President, on behalf of Council.

### **Member Suggestion**

*from Ken Granger*

Members may be interested in following the website of the NASA Earth Observatory:

<https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/>

This site produces weekly images derived from various space systems including the International Space Station and provide these images with very readable texts that explain the scene of a geographic process that they illustrate.

Judy and I have been following this site for several years and find it both informative and inspiring. It makes an adequate substitute for actual travel in this time of COVID.

Some of the images are absolutely spectacular – they are real works of (natural) art, especially those from the Space Station.

The following link is to a typical example: <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/148822/fossil-fjords-in-namibia>. It is to an article that describes the geomorphology of some unique "fossil fjords" in Namibia that date from at least 300 million years ago.

This shows real climate change!

## 2021 International Geography Olympiad (iGeo)

The 2021 iGeo was scheduled to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 10 to 16 August. At a Zoom meeting of representatives of the participating countries, it was decided that this year's iGeo would be held virtually, rather than cancelled as the 2020 iGeo had been because of COVID-19. Teams from 46 countries took part in 2021.

With the 2020 Geography's Big Week Out also a casualty of the pandemic, Australia's iGeo team had been chosen from the students who scored highly in the Year 11 level of the Australian Geography Competition, via a written exam:

Nikki Ballinger – Walford Anglican School for Girls, SA  
Imogen Cooper – Wesley College, Vic  
Rhea Sankar – Canberra Grammar School, ACT  
Gemma Snyman – Roseville College, NSW

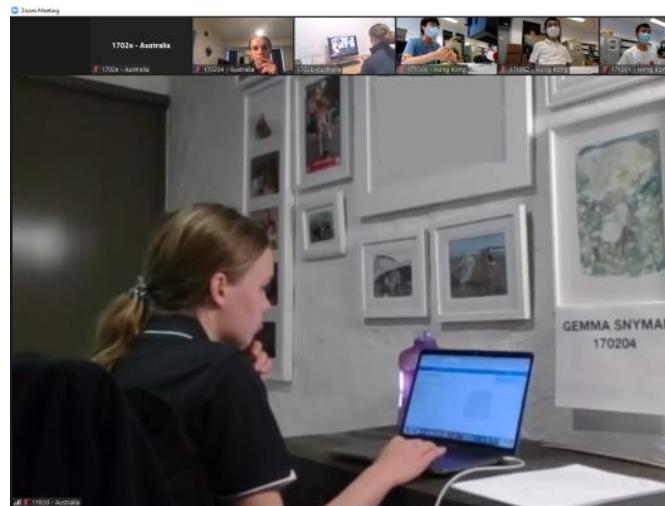
The recommended scenario was for all students from one country to sit the tests in the same place. Accommodation and flights had been booked for our students to gather in Brisbane. However, sporadic cases in Queensland led to South Australia and Victoria closing their borders to us in July. Gemma looked almost certain to still be in lockdown in Sydney, and the Northern Territory was the only place possible for the rest of us to get together without quarantining. So, we booked accommodation in Darwin, but held off on the flights. Then NT closed its border to Queensland, and although they reopened the day that we were due to fly, by then Simon Roos-Freeman (a previous Olympiad leader from SA) had replaced RGSQ Councillors Kath Berg and John Tasker as the team leader. Six days before the team was due to fly, we booked the flights, but that still wasn't the end. Melbourne locked down, leaving Imogen stuck at home and only Nikki, Rhea and Simon made it to Darwin (see photo).



All students were observed and recorded by international monitors during the tests, both through the computer on which they were working, and through a second observing camera, via Zoom.

The photo below gives the view from the observing camera of Gemma sitting a test at home. Other small Zoom images across the top show Gemma (the front-on view), Imogen and three of the Hong Kong students. The students sat

three tests: Written Response Test, Multimedia Test, and an adapted Fieldwork Exercise.



*"I found the fieldwork test to be quite enjoyable. I think I have built a lot of confidence in answering geographical questions that I can bring back to apply to my studies"* – Rhea.

Although in lockdown in Melbourne, Imogen (photo) kept up her Aussie spirits.



*"For me, the 2021 iGeo was a little challenging, but mostly lots of fun. It was bizarre to do the tests online and from home, especially since there were people all over the world sitting the same tests, despite time differences and covid"* – Imogen.

The Australian team, including the leaders – dispersed over Melbourne, Sydney, Darwin, Brisbane, and the Gold Coast – regularly connected together on Zoom, and by chatting on What's App to share our reactions to what was happening during events such as the virtual Opening and Closing Ceremonies, and the 'fieldwork' briefing.

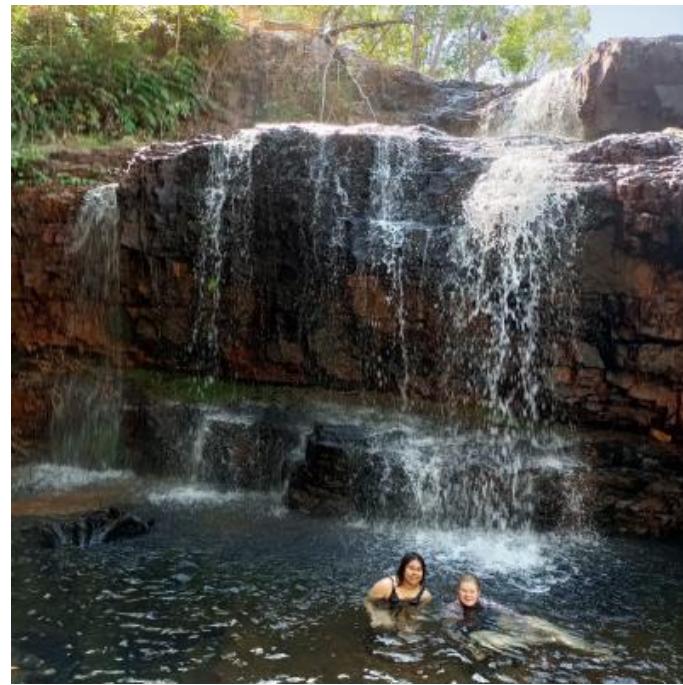
Before an iGeo, teams prepare a poster discussing how a set theme applies in their country. This year the theme was climate change. Although having the opportunity to view and comment on all posters in a virtual exhibition (photo),

teams were split into smaller Zoom groups so the students could ask questions of each other. I am glad to have had the chance to chat with people from other teams. We were grouped with Singapore and Japan, two of the top-performing teams, for the poster presentation, and I loved hearing them talk about climate change and innovation in their countries - Rhea.



iGeo 2021 POSTER EXHIBITION

It wasn't Istanbul, but Rhea and Nikki did get to explore Darwin and its environs, including the local markets, a boat trip on the Adelaide River to check out the crocodiles and a visit to Litchfield National Park.



"My personal highlight in our trip was going to Litchfield National Park and being able to swim in the plunge pools under waterfalls!" – Rhea.

Usually, the best experience of an iGeo is the contact with other students from all around the world. However, our students still appreciated the iGeo they were able to have. I thought it was awesome how, even though, we all came from different cultures and backgrounds we were able to come together (virtually) because of a shared passion: geography. I loved that the Olympiad gave me the opportunity to learn about other countries and cultures and

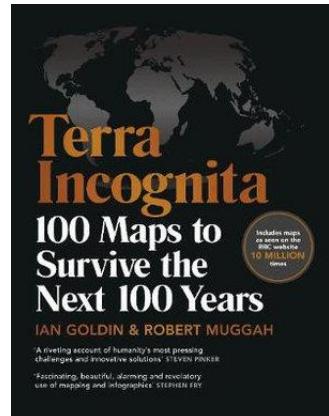
make new friends. It's a shame we couldn't all meet in person, but it was still a fantastic experience – Imogen.

Congratulations to the four Australian students who all won bronze medals.

## Australian Geography Competition Prize Books Continued from September issue

Year 12 – *Terra Incognita: 100 Maps to Survive the next 100 Years* by Ian Goldin & Robert Muggah, Random House, 2020

*Terra Incognita* is based on decades of research, and combines mesmerising, state-of-the-art satellite maps with passionately argued analysis. The authors chart humanity's impact on the planet, and the ways in which we can make a real impact to save it, and to thrive.



Learn about: fires in the Arctic; the impact of sea level rise on cities around the world; the truth about immigration; the counter-intuitive future of population rise; the miracles of health and education, and the reality about inequality, and how we end it. It includes coverage of the 2019/20 Australian bushfires and the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. The book traces the paths of peoples, cities, wars, climates, and technologies, all on a global scale.

Contributed by Kath Berg

## What's happening on Council?

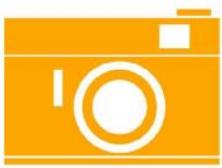
On 21 September six Councillors met in-person at the RGSQ in Fortescue Street with two Councillors attending the meeting via Teams online i.e. a quorum of 8. Collections Chair, Rob Cook, attended as a guest. Reports were received from Iraphne Childs (President), Annie Lau (Treasurer), Rachel Honey, Kath Berg & John Tasker (AGC), Rob Cook (Collections), Pamela Tonkin (Property), Iraphne Childs (Publications), Jeanette Lamont (TAAC) and Lilia Darii (Business Manager). Matters discussed included:

- Arrangements and review of documents for the AGM on 19 October
- Collections: progress on digitizing catalogues, data storage; on-going work & issues
- Property matters: improved lighting and presentation facilities work completed; access to parking at the rear of the building (ongoing investigations); replacement of lift
- Draft lecture program for 2022
- University sponsorships for the AGC 2022
- Marketing RGSQ poster for display in Binna-Burra Lodge
- One new member was confirmed

**RGSQ**  
**2021**  
**CITY AND**  
**TOWNSCAPES**  
**OF QUEENSLAND**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
**COMPETITION**



Entries will be judged by the RGSQ publications committee



*Submission due date:  
Friday 29th October 2021*

**1ST PRIZE**

1 NIGHT ACCOMMODATION  
AT BINNA BURRA  
SKY LODGE

**2ND PRIZE**

FRAMED WILDLIFE  
ILLUSTRATION BY  
LOCAL BRISBANE ARTIST

**3RD PRIZE**

ONE YEAR FREE RGSQ  
MEMBERSHIP

RGSQ invites members  
to submit excellent  
photos of city and  
townscapes of  
Queensland for a  
photography  
competition. The  
competition is  
open to RGSQ members  
only and for new  
unpublished photos.

Entry fee \$5 per participant  
Pay via [rgsq.org.au](http://rgsq.org.au)

Max 3 entries per participant  
Submit photos to [info@rgsq.org.au](mailto:info@rgsq.org.au)

\* For sending in your images please follow these steps: a maximum of 3 images submitted per participant; minimum 1800 pixels x 2400 pixels stored as a high quality jpg. Landscape or 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 2021 City and Townscapes of Queensland 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.

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LAMINGTON NATIONAL PARK | QUEENSLAND | AUSTRALIA



Inquiries to  
[i.childs@uq.edu.au](mailto:i.childs@uq.edu.au) or  
[kayrees@gmail.com](mailto:kayrees@gmail.com)

Some RGSQ members may be interested in the presentations below given by RGSQ member Kerry Raymond to the Queensland Family History Society:

On Sunday 14 November, 'Where's Wallace? Finding lost places in Queensland?

On Sunday 28 November, Hands-on workshop on Queensland Globe.

Details here: <https://www.qfhs.org.au/events/weekends-qfhs/>

# RGSQ Bulletin

October 2021

## Lecture/Meeting: Tuesday, 5 October

*Bushfire - an Intensifying Risk for Queensland*  
by Lee Johnson AFSM FIFireE Commissioner  
(Ret) QFES

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## Activities/Events:

**7-8 October:** Map Group event - Upper Brisbane Valley Road Trip  
**13 October:** Scenic Rim Visit to Boonah and Mt. French

## RGSQ AGM: Tuesday 19 October

Please register at [www.rgsq.org.au](http://www.rgsq.org.au)

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