



RGSQ Bulletin

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Patron: H.E. Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland
President: Dr Iraphne Childs

From the President

Dear Members, welcome to the 2021 RGSQ year. I hope that you have enjoyed the Christmas-New Year season and have been able to spend some good times with your family and friends.

Welcome night: We had planned to welcome you back to the Society's premises on February 2nd, but given the current Qld Government limitations for indoor gatherings, the RGSQ Council Executive has decided to postpone the Welcome Night. Even though at this writing the latest case of the new strain of the virus seems to have been controlled in Brisbane, and advice may change by the end of January, we thought it prudent to avoid in-person gatherings at RGSQ for a while longer. We hope to resume meetings at Gregory Place as soon as possible. In light of latest COVID health advice, the Society has implemented a QR code check-in and check-out system for visitors to RGSQ premises. See details later in this Bulletin.

Lecture presentations: We are working on a presentation via zoom some time in February to replace the Welcome night activity, see details later on or on the website under "What's On". The March lecture, **Mapping Pest Animals – Identifying and Managing impacts** by Mathew Ryan, Principal Biosecurity Officer with the Invasive Plants and Animals Program of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, will go ahead via zoom on **Tuesday 2nd March, 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM**. Find more details and register on the RGSQ website at <https://rgsq.org.au/event-3669844>.

RGSQ's wider profile: While the RGSQ is a Qld-based organisation, we do engage with Geographical organisations in other states (Royal Geographical Society of South Australia RGSSA; Geographical Society of NSW), at the national level (Institute of Australian Geographers IAG; National Committee for Geographical Sciences NCGS within the Australian Academy of Sciences) and internationally (International Geographical Union IGU; International Geography Olympiad (iGeo)).

These connections assist in raising the profile of our Society widely, networking with geographers across Australia and internationally and keeping up to date with current geographical knowledge and activities elsewhere.

The International Geographical Union (IGU) is the international, non-governmental, professional organisation devoted to the development of the discipline of Geography.

The purposes of the IGU align closely to those of the RGSQ, namely, to promote Geography, initiate and assist geographical teaching and research in all countries of the world. The IGU facilitates the participation of geographers in the global community of scientists e.g., the role of geography as a major science in global debates on climate change. The work of the IGU is conducted through the instruments of its National Committees, Commissions and Task Forces. The IGU hosts the International Geographical Congress every four years and also promotes regional conferences and other meetings that further the objectives of the Union. Australia is strongly represented at the IGU by Professor Iain Hay, Matthew Flinders Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Geography in the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at Flinders University in South Australia and currently First Vice-President of the IGU. Wherever possible the RGSQ participates in initiatives of the IGU.



In 2021 the RGSQ will be involved via the NCGS and the IGU in three ways:

- **Geonight – in April 2021**
- **Future Earth Australia**
- **RGSQ Support for the 2028 International Geographical Congress in Melbourne**

Stay tuned for more information on these events in future Bulletins and on the website.

Stay safe and well in the coming weeks and months and I hope to meet you again in person as soon as this is possible.

With best wishes

Dr. Iraphne Childs, President

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We have much pleasure in welcoming Elizabeth Hindson, Emma Kennedy, and Stephen Noakes as new members of The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland. We hope your association with your new Society is long and mutually enjoyable.

WHAT'S ON

For all upcoming RGSQ events, please visit the Society's website www.rgsq.org.au under 'What's On'.

Cancelled – 'Welcome to 2021'

Unfortunately, the traditional Welcome to the new year event has been canceled due to current Qld Government limitations for indoor gatherings. We have organised an online lecture/presentation instead - scheduled for Wednesday 10th of February. Details below.

February Lecture

Wednesday February 10 | 7.30pm-9pm

Why city policy to 'protect the Brisbane backyard' is failing

by Ms. Rachel Gallagher, PhD candidate, UQ SEES

Register: <https://rgsq.org.au/event-4133932>



Housing and apartments in West End; courtesy of Rachel Gallagher.

Urban consolidation policies to contain development within existing urban areas are creating poor development outcomes in Australian cities. In Brisbane, [our research](#) shows that the low-density housing character of the city is being retained at the expense of backyards. Our results indicate that current consolidation policies run counter to their intended aims of protecting green space. Current land development regimes place urban planning outcomes in the hands of property owners and developers whose motives are tied to their financial interests rather than good planning. In doing so, the system works counter to its intended aims, in that it favours "bad density" over meaningful place-making characterised by well-designed medium-density townhouses or low-rise apartments. The market-based approach to urban consolidation leaves individuals seeking financial gain to determine the most important decision about our cities – their urban form. If this continues, the lack of focus on high-quality infill will be a significant missed opportunity for our cities.

References

[The Conversation](#) 10 December 2020 *Why city policy to 'protect the Brisbane backyard' is failing*

<https://theconversation.com/why-city-policy-to-protect-the-brisbane-backyard-is-failing-150173>

Gallagher, Rachel, Sigler, Thomas, and Liu, Yan (2020). 'Protect the Brisbane backyard!' (Except from subdivision for additional house construction) *Australian Planner* 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07293682.2020.1854800>

Bio: Rachel Gallagher is a PhD Candidate in the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, UQ. Her research interests include how cities adapt their urban form to changing conditions, using GIS to track changes to urban layouts over time, including city blocks, streets and property parcels, and how urban policy influences (or fails to influence) desired settlement patterns.

Please note: This will be a virtual lecture delivered online via Zoom. The lecture link will be emailed to all registrants closer to the lecture date. If you have any questions, please email us at info@rgsq.org.au.

March 2021 Monthly Lecture

Tuesday March 2 | 7.30pm-9pm

Mapping Pest Animals – Identifying and Managing Impacts

presented by Matthew Ryan, Principal Biosecurity Officer with the Invasive Plants and Animals Program of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Register: <https://rgsq.org.au/event-3669844>



Pest animals (invasive animals) have a significant impact on the environment, the economy, human health, or social amenity.

The diversity of Queensland's climate and environment provides favourable conditions for the establishment of many invasive species whether

accidentally or through deliberate introduction. Invasive animals can compound issues with control as they can be transient, cryptic in nature and move across multiple land tenures.

Although eradication of invasive animals is desirable, it is recognised as unachievable in most cases. It is therefore more strategic to prevent entry and establishment of new pests and focus management of established pests to reduce their impacts in a cost-effective manner.

Mapping provides a useful tool to process information about invasive animals and assist land managers and property owners through better application of resources and determining appropriate control methods.

Matthew Ryan is a Principal Biosecurity Officer with the Invasive Plants and Animals Program of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. He has over 15 years' experience managing pest plants and animals, born from interests when growing up on a family farm, and working within specialised fields across local and state government. Matthew's current role has a focus on new and emerging plant and animal threats to Queensland and methods to both detect and prevent establishment.

Please note: This lecture will be delivered online via Zoom. The lecture link will be emailed to all registrants closer to the lecture date. If you have any questions, please email us at info@rgsq.org.au.

The Royal Geographical Society of Queensland wins Community Heritage Grant

Late last year, the RGSQ was awarded a \$4,500 Preservation Needs Assessment (PNA) grant to assess the preservation needs of its entire collection. This grant represents the second stage of the Community Heritage Grants offered by the National Library of Australia. In 2020, 61 Community Heritage Grants were awarded, totalling \$395,150.

PNA funds will be used to hire an external consultant to assess the preservation needs of the RGSQ collection and make recommendations for the development of a conservation program.

You may recall that RGSQ secured a significance assessment grant in 2016, the outcome of which was the National Significance Assessment report that can be accessed on our website at:

https://rgsq.org.au/resources/Documents/Reports/2017_CHG_NationalSignificanceAssessment_RGSQ.pdf.

We are grateful for the support offered by all volunteers of the Collections Committee during the application process and for their unwavering commitment to capturing, documenting and preserving the Society's collection.

A new way to check-in at Society's premises



In the light of latest COVID health advice, the Society has implemented a QR code check-in and check-out system for all those visiting RGSQ premises.

The Society is using the GuestTrack application which you can find more about on their webpage <https://guesttrack.com.au/home.html>. Next time you visit the Society premises please check-in with your phone by scanning the QR code displayed at the reception. When leaving, you can check-out either using your phone from the confirmation screen, from the confirmation email sent to you or scan the check-out QR code. *If you do not have a device, we can easily check you in and out on our devices or online.* Obviously, all current COVID advice must be observed as well.

The **RGSQ Collection Committee** is **seeking member volunteers** to work in the Society's document archives, and the image and artefacts collections. The Society is currently looking to update its collection systems, including the library and map collections, to interface with web-based delivery to its members and the public so some knowledge and skills in basic IT would also help. If you are interested, please contact Lilia at the office at info@rgsq.org.au or 07 33682066.

REPORT: Map Group End of Year 'Show and Tell'

Contributed by Len Lowry

The Map Group members were able to meet at Gregory Place for our end of year Show'n'Tell event. The Coronavirus cannot dampen the banter and camaraderie when members get-together. A slide presentation of the year's activities opened the program and it was evident that we had an active program of events with face-to-face gatherings and webinars. Not wanting to deviate from a successful formula, we continued with the Show'n'Tell format. Presentations were varied: from a pocket atlas that had travelled around the world, very early framed maps of England, an explanation of Queensland's astronomical and trigonometrical stations forming the base for the early sheet mapping systems, Pacific Islander seafaring maps made from palm leaves, the earliest Bundaberg Port engineering mapping, Queensland's Coat of Arms explained, the hidden dramas in a survey plan, a prized African wood cabinet, the illegal trade in historical maps, Fraser Island mapping, and a Google Earth mystery solved as early mining activity.

As in previous years, the presentations were both entertaining and often humorous. No doubt we will continue with this successful formula for next year's end of year activity.



Chris Spriggs with sextant.



A big 'thank you' you to Neville, Kay and Len – the Map Group Coordinators – for their great work and wonderful Map Group events throughout the year.

Photo credit: Les Isdale

Report: South Bank Land Use Changes and Kangaroo Point

Contributed by Mary Comer

It was fortunate that we were able to go ahead with this day outing on Tuesday November 10th, 2020 despite all the changes due to COVID-19 that have happened during the year. It was a perfect day weather wise, cloudy, and not too hot.

After meeting near the outside cafe at QPAC, Peter Nunan from RGSQ took us on a most informative walk through South Bank telling us of so many changes to the waterfront: from being the main port of Brisbane to a popular recreation area nowadays. There are still remains of wharves, some with wonderful artwork made from metal, and the former dry dock that is now part of the Maritime Museum. Many of the old buildings are currently used for very different purposes than the original. When we reached the Kangaroo Point cliff area Ken Armstrong, a geologist, was able to tell us much about the rocks and how they matched up with the rocks on the north side of the river. There were no climbers during our time there but many in the group were very interested in how the bolts remained stable in the cliff. Ken had the answers! After walking further along the riverside, we went in the tunnel under Main Street to the other side of the Point. Peter pointed out where ship building/repairs, along with the building of trains, took place and where a railway, along with the necessary tunnel, used to be.

We had lunch at the Story Bridge Hotel whilst construction work of the bridge was taking place overhead. The noise really was not too bad and did not deter us from enjoying a delicious meal. Then we travelled on the City Cat back to South Bank.

Special thanks to Peter and Ken for sharing their wonderful knowledge and for the company of Ken L., John, Mary, Chris, Robin, Helen, Ron, Richard, Bob, Maureen, Leigh and Sue.

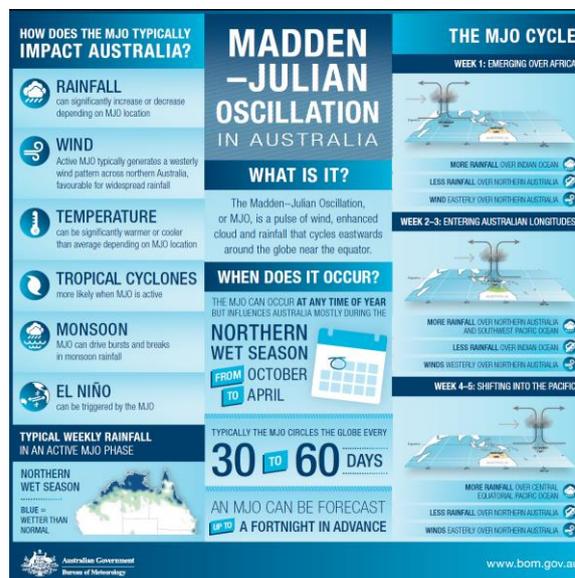
Why was *La Niña* late arriving this year? – the MJO was the culprit

By Iraphne Childs

In late September 2020, the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) declared that conditions were right for a *La Niña* event, signalling a wet spring and summer for northern and eastern Australia, including for Southeast Queensland. So, we waited in joyful anticipation for the rain but November and December ended up being relatively dry in many locations across the north, east and southeast. What was going on?

The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) was most likely the reason for the delay. This is a global-scale feature of the tropical atmosphere affecting the intensity and duration of rainfall. It is associated with weekly to monthly periods of *both* enhanced *and* suppressed rainfall especially over tropical Australia during summer. The MJO is characterised as an eastward moving 'pulse' of cloud and rainfall near the equator that typically recurs every 30 to 60 days. Its effects are most evident over the Indian Ocean and western equatorial Pacific, influencing the timing,

development, and strength of the Indian and Australian monsoons. Although the MJO brings rainfall in its active phase, it suppresses rain before and after its arrival, when large-scale downward motion in the atmosphere prevents lift, keeping things hot and dry. In late 2020 the MJO appears to have blocked the lift and suppressed rainfall we would usually expect with *La Niña* conditions for northern and eastern Australia.



Source: BOM 2020

On 12 January 2021, BOM reported that the MJO had strengthened over the Indian Ocean and climate models indicated eastward movement. The northern Australian monsoon trough is now well established and active. BOM predicts that the MJO is likely to contribute to an increase in tropical rainfall and an above-average tropical cyclone risk around northern Australia in late January. BOM's outlook for this summer suggests there is a high likelihood of above-average rainfall for much of the country. So now, after a long wait the rain is finally falling, thanks to the MJO.



<https://youtu.be/M1YBRSTdfnI>

Source: BOM 2020

References:

BOM (2020) *The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO)*

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/mjo/>

BOM (2021) *Weekly Tropical Climate Note*, 12 January

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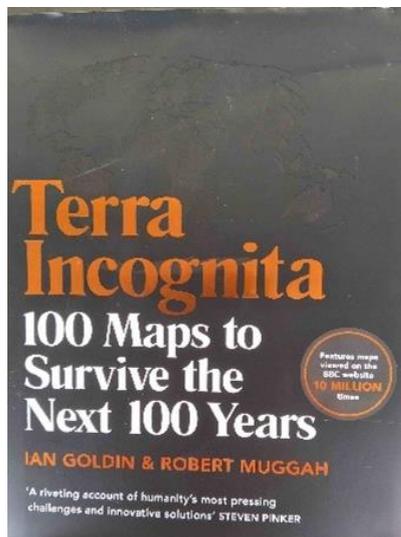
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-12-11/madden-julian-oscillation-mjo-the-bearer-of-tropical-rain/12961346>

Book Review

'Terra Incognita: 100 Maps to Survive the Next 100 Years'

by Ian Goldin and Robert Muggah

Contributed by Ralph Carlisle, RGSSQ member



This book uses "maps to explain some of the world's gravest existential challenges and a few of the most inspiring solutions".

"At nearly 500 pages, the book is a mine of information about the world."

There are maps comparing the state of the world in 2020 for a range of issues against that of several decades ago which highlight how much the world has changed in the last few decades. Published in 2020, the book provides maps on a great array of topics, including Globalisation, Climate, Urbanisation, Technology, Inequality, Geopolitics, Violence, Demography, Migration, Food, Health, Education and Culture accompanied by satellite images, graphs and text. The authors are based at Oxford University in the UK and the Igarape Institute in Brazil.

From a cartography point of view, a most interesting figure is a comparison of the world's land masses using the Mercator and Gall-Peters projections in one map. As would be expected, all high-latitude countries appear much smaller in the G-P projection than in the Mercator. Australia is noticeably smaller while the USA; Canada and Russia shrink greatly. Greenland is much reduced, and Ellesmere Island almost disappears. However, throughout the book, a number of different projections are used.

Data and maps have been drawn from dozens of sources – national and international, governmental and non-governmental. For example, major headings in the Climate chapter include melting glaciers and sea ice, temperature anomalies, forest fires and gas flares, deforestation and degradation, rising seas and sinking cities. Maps of global temperature anomalies in 1900 and 2018 against an 1850 baseline show how much the world has warmed since the turn of the 20th century. Satellite images show how the melting of glacier ice in Greenland and the Himalayas in the last three to four decades has revealed the underlying bedrock and, in Tibet, has resulted in the formation of lakes. Australia's bushfires from the 2019-2020 summer and the impacts of the first five months of the COVID-19 pandemic (up to June 2020) are also included.

The book is published by Random House Penguin and is available in the BCC Library (though in great demand!).

Why Study Geography?

Contributed by Rod Shearing, RGSSA

A book review - author Alan Parkinson, from Hobbs The Printer Ltd, UK 2020, 224 pages, A5, with a comprehensive bibliography, many references online, approx. \$27 plus pp.

(available online)

This book recently donated to the RGSSA library is targeted at students, parents/carers, and teachers from year 9 to around year 11 and for year 12 students thinking of tertiary subject selections.

The book is structured into easy to read chapters such as What is geography? Why should you study geography? Where can your geographic studies take you? to Why geography matters now more than ever.

The book uses some interesting statistics such as in UK geography has increased 3.5%, and for the eighth year this subject has been continually increasing – it is now the sixth most popular after English, Math and Science. This is based on Royal Geographical Society of London analyses.

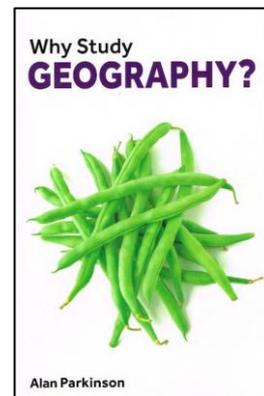
COVID-19 and Climate Change are possibly motivating factors as "Everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than the distant things". Students may like to know that Prince William majored in geography though an Arts course, Michael Jordan NBL, UK TV presenters Hugh Dennis, Elkie Harrison and Matthew Pinset were tertiary geography students. PM Theresa May was a geography graduate. These notables in geography, it is explained, just show that a graduate is possibly versatile enough to cope with a working life's challenges.¹

Alan Parkinson says that *Geography is concerned to provide accurate, orderly, and rational description and interpretation of the variable character of the earth's surface* he was told by Richard Hartshorne in 1959.

Current students may be studying geopolitical tension in the Arctic; rapid melting of glaciers in the mountain regions; concern over the clearance of tropical rainforests; the terrifying scales of the 2019-20 bushfires in Australia; the rapid changes taking place in urban central London; impacts of tourism in countries such as Iceland where tourists outnumber the resident population; and the changing nature of travel and commuting because of COVID-19.

The book goes on to mention the strategic importance of field work in the development of the discipline of geography, and how good rigorous early student work can encourage a much more dynamic pursuit at tertiary levels. Insurance analysts, oil exploration, flooding and coastal engineering, public servants, foreign policy makers, cartographers and consultants are all better serviced through geographical interpretation.

The publication suggests students start up their own or join their local geographical society or club; find out what environmental projects their school may be involved with; ask their school to ascertain the availability of 'geographical type' work placements; keep their eyes out on talks by noted geographers, the book suggests Simon Reeve, Levison Wood, Ranulph Fiennes, Felicity Aston, Benedict Allen, who have all featured in Australia in recently run SBS or ABC documentaries. Getting involved with the Duke of Edinburgh's



Award scheme, which operates in Australia, and liaising with their local Geographical Society, are all ways that will make students' courses and that of the students' supporting parents/carers a lot easier.

This book provides some cogent reasons for embarking on a course of geographical study and will be an important reference today, but a very important benchmark for researchers of the future as they grapple with the evolution of the subject that has been around since Eratosthenes coined the term geography 2,200 years ago, but you will have to read the book to find out more and why there are beans on the cover! Enquiries: <http://londonpublishingpartnership.co.uk>

1. *Parliament of Australia Graduate Program – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)* Australian Government has a graduate recruitment program.

RGSQ's 2021 Geographic Landscapes calendar now selling at a special price of \$10

The Calendar features the twelve images from the inaugural [2020 photo Competition](#).

Buy your copy at <https://rgsq.org.au/shop>.



CONTRIBUTORS

Ralph Carlisle, Iraphne Childs, Mary Comer, Rachel Gallagher, Les Isdale, Len Lowry, Peter Lloyd, Matthew Ryan, Rod Shearing.

RGSQ Bulletin

February 2021

Lecture/Meeting: Wednesday, February 10

Why city policy to 'protect the Brisbane backyard' is failing? by Ms. Rachel Gallagher, PhD candidate, UQ SEES

Order RGSQ's inaugural 2021 Geographic Landscapes Calendar at <https://rgsq.org.au/shop>

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

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