



ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

Royal Geographical Society of South Australia Inc.

 *Advancing public awareness of geography and environmental issues.*

 *Encouraging research and scholarship in geography.*

 *Recognising and rewarding achievements in geography.*

 *Commemorating past achievements of significance to geography.*

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Founded in South Australia in July 1885

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Advancing your Society	Error! Bookmark not defined.

President's Report

The past year has been one of growth, consolidation and of increasing the Society's financial security.

This is pleasing to report to members, because it demonstrates our future-focus and commitment to building the Society into the long term. Any organisation's achievements are limited by the capacity to fund and sustain initiatives and activities. The last year has demonstrated that sustained efforts across a number of years have now placed the Society in arguably its strongest financial position in our history. As detailed at last year's AGM, the realisation of a few high value assets has enabled us to establish a capital fund, with the derived income being able to sustainably support our strategic priorities. One further sale in the last year has increased that fund to a level which Council believes sets us up for the next century and beyond. This achievement is far reaching and not to be understated. As President I'm acutely aware that some members were opposed to this approach, but I'm certain that successive generations of members will appreciate and benefit from what has been done.

Many other measures are also reflective of RGSSA's progress.

Membership continues to grow and is diversified. We have increasing student membership, more professionals and more people who are attracted by our diverse activities, and the enrichment which comes from participation. This feeds a very healthy volunteer involvement, which further strengthens our offering and outreach. Our lectures, tours, excursions, Rare Books and other offerings are strongly attended. In the past year, sell-out tours to the Southeast and also to the Flinders Ranges have been reoffered to meet demand. In the year ahead, the same will be repeated for our Outback and Lake Eyre tour.

Our Society's outreach and influence is also demonstrably growing. Examples include the success of our Library Research Fellows program, our Symposia and our annual awards. The first is fully subscribed and brings researchers from interstate and overseas to make good use of our incredible Library. The second demonstrates our determination to make a positive contribution to the public discourse on important contemporary issues. Doing so illustrates RGSSA's capacity to draw together thought leaders to offer insights and solutions. Such activity builds our public and institutional standing. That in turn can help leverage our advocacy on important issues to Geography. And finally, our awards continue to grow in terms of the recognition of Geographers and the broader public appreciation of the importance of Geography as the Science of Place.

Another pleasing indicator of growth is our return to publishing. Through the Anthem/RGSSA Antipodean Perspectives on Geography series a number of books are in development, with the first set for publication next year. This provides an avenue for RGSSA to support Geography through the publishing of important work. It highlights our commitment to contemporary and future issues.

Your Society is also increasingly engaged with our fellow Societies interstate. We actively exchange information and ideas which contribute to our collective and individual success. We're also seeking pathways to ensure reciprocal arrangements for members to participate in other state's activities.

The achievements of our 'Relics group' in the past year have also been a highlight. This is another wonderful example of one of our dedicated volunteer groups which builds outreach.

Their dedication to displaying more of our relics and treasures, continues to enrich the visitor experience to our Library.

It should also be noted that we have completed the first 10 year period of our current 40 year tenancy agreement with the Libraries Board of SA. We greatly value our strong relationship with both the Board and the State Library. It's a mutually beneficial relationship and confirms RGSSA as a vital component of the State's cultural boulevard on North Terrace.

Through the efforts of our dedicated volunteers, Committee Chairs and under the visionary leadership of our Council and Director, it gives me the utmost pleasure to present this report.

Off the back of growing momentum, I'm certain the best days of the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia still lie ahead of us.

Leigh Radford OAM

President, RGSSA

Governance

Patrons Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC,
Governor of South Australia, and Mr Rod Bunten

Fellows Dr Sue Barker OAM
Mr Colin Harris PSM
Mr Rod Shearing OAM
Dr Peter Smailes
Mr Brian Ward

Office Holders 2025-2026

President	Mr Leigh Radford OAM
Director	Distinguished Emeritus Professor Iain Hay
Vice Presidents	Emeritus Professor Guy Robinson Dr Julia Short
Immediate Past President	Mr Rod Shearing OAM
Treasurer	Mr Tony Merchant
Secretary / Public Officer	Ms Melissa Gibbs

Council Members

Mrs Frances Gnodtke
Dr Philip Jones
Dr Andrew Lothian
Mr Malcolm McInerney
Mr Hugh Orr
Mr Joc Schmiechen
Mr Rob Shepherd
Dr Gerti Szili
Ms Nona Verco
Mr Richard Wilson

Committees of Council as at July 2026

The President is an *ex officio* member of all committees.

Executive and Administration

Leigh Radford (Chair), Tony Merchant (Treasurer), Guy Robinson (Vice President), Julia Short (Vice President), Iain Hay (Director), Melissa Gibbs (Secretary) and Alan Pickering (Office Manager).

Education

Malcolm McInerny (Chair), John Butler, Neil Coffee, Amber Dias, Jodie George, Alaric Maude (Minutes), Owen Nicholson, Susan Robinson, and Melanie Semmler.

Engagement and Communication

Iain Hay (Acting Chair), Melissa Gibbs (Minutes) and Joc Schmiechen.

Investment

Tony Merchant (Chair), Iain Hay, Leigh Radford, John Seaton, and Richard Wilson.

Library Management

Nona Verco (Chair), Frances Gnodtke, Iain Hay, Rosemary Hocking (Minutes), Janet Grant, Geoff Lemmey, Hugh Orr, Rod Shearing, and Gail Ward.

Program

Frances Gnodtke (Chair), Michael Burdett, Alan Deverell, Andrew Lothian (Minutes), Joc Schmiechen and Sandy Scott.

Research, Publications and Awards

Guy Robinson (Chair), Donna Ferretti, Melissa Gibbs, Huw Morgan, Moleen Nand, Rebecca Pearson, Udoy Saikia, George Tan, Rosa Teimouri and Romy Wasserman.

Council

The Society is governed by an elected Council consisting of the President, Immediate Past President, Vice President(s), Treasurer, up to 10 Councillors, as well as the appointed Secretary. The Director also takes an active part in Council matters. Much of the Society's business is managed by a series of Committees which report to Council regularly, providing informed recommendations to Council for approval. Reports from these committees form a considerable portion of this Annual Report. The 2025/2026 Officers, Councillors and Committees are listed elsewhere in this report.

Council met 10 times in 2025/2026, mostly via Zoom. It considered many matters in addition to the regular reports from the committees, President, Treasurer and Director including:

- Approval of about 60 new memberships.
- Proposed changes to the Society's Rules and the introduction of membership bylaws.
- The revised budget and amalgamation of several funds.
- Various aspects of the Society's awards including CPI increases, criteria changes and recipients.
- Proposals for marketing materials being created by Nation Creative.
- First Aid arrangements, behaviour guidelines and volunteer safety.
- Reconciliation Action Plan superseded by ongoing recognition and partnership.
- Renewal of the lease with the State Library of SA.
- Potential sale of a few further items from the non-Australiana collection.
- Funding for various activities not included in the budget.
- Proposed additional bookcases for the library.
- Updates to various committee's Terms of Reference.

Council business is recorded in minutes of meetings, an action list and a decision register. Members may request to view the minutes - except for those sections determined to be confidential. The minutes are available by contacting the Council Secretary, Melissa Gibbs, via email at admin@rgssa.org.au

Melissa Gibbs
RGSSA Council Secretary

Others with regular administrative and support roles

Librarians - Janet Grant, Carol Grantham, Rosemary Hocking, John Sloan, Nona Verco and Gail Ward

Library volunteers - Ingrid Ahmer, Peter Becker, Kate Buckley, Alison Bullock, David Craig, Tina Hunter, Norman James, Geoff Lemmey, Bev Nester, Felicity Small, Scarfe Vince.

Rare Books Group Convenor: Jill Kerby, Sally Hanley, Nona Verco.

Office: Alan Pickering, Melissa Gibbs.

GeoNews Editor: Margie Dawson assisted by Jill Kerby and Valerie Balagengadaran.

SA Geographical Journal Editors Dr George Tan and Dr Vito Hernandez. Associate Editor: Dr Romy Wasserman

Book and Paper Conservation: Frances Gnodtke, Wayne Williamson.

Map Digitisation and Cataloguing: Paul Pledger, Andrew Davies, George Willanski and Richard Barnes

Photograph cataloguing: Alison Bullock and Carol Grantham.

Relics: Dymphna Cudmore, Peter Becker, Liz and George Willanski.

Meeting Hospitality: Sally Hanley, Alan Deverell and Rob Shepherd.

Web Page Design and Maintenance: Melissa Gibbs

Social Media: Iain Hay.

Flinders Ranges Walks App: Marcus Marshall.

Geography Teachers' Liaison: Amber Dias

100 Treasures project: Hugh Orr, Melissa Gibbs, Robert Dettman.

Head of Travel: Joc Schmiechen

Annual Report: This Report was compiled by Melissa Gibbs with the assistance of many members including Sue Barker, Dymphna Cudmore, Margie Dawson, Frances Gnodtke, Iain Hay, Rosemary Hocking, Christopher Hogan, Jill Kerby, Rob Marshall, Tony Merchant, Alan Pickering, Leigh Radford, Guy Robinson, Rod Shearing, Sandra Thompson, Nona Verco and George Willanski.

Director's Report

The 2025–2026 reporting year was one of exceptional activity, institutional consolidation, and growing influence for the Society. Through contributions to national science policy, university curriculum development, digital engagement, and local community partnerships, the RGSSA continued to demonstrate geography's vital relevance across public, academic, and policy arenas.

Disciplinary Leadership & Science Policy

Throughout 2025–26, the Society maintained a strong voice in national science advocacy and international disciplinary governance. Representing the RGSSA, I completed my term as Chair of the Australian Academy of Science's (AAS) National Committee for Geographical Sciences (NCGS) on 31 December 2025. In that role, I led preparation for the discipline's 2028–2038 Decadal Plan, including a comprehensive review of the current 2018–2028 Plan to help define strategic priorities for the decade ahead.

During the year, I represented the RGSSA in several major AAS-led national initiatives, including the Canberra launch of Australian Science, Australia's Future: Science 2035 (ASAF). Although geography remains under-recognised in some settings, ASAF identified important opportunities for geographical research in agriculture, climate, data, epidemiology, and the geosciences. I also represented the Society at the Restore Science briefing, advocating for greater investment and governance reform in response to Australia's low R&D spending (1.69% of GDP, compared with the OECD average of 2.7%) and weak STEM graduate ranking (40th of 44 OECD nations). In addition, I contributed to consultations on the National Research Infrastructure roadmap and the AAS submission on Australia's possible association with the EU's Horizon Europe program.

Following my term as NCGS Chair, I am pleased to continue on the Committee as the RGSSA's ex officio representative. A key structural legacy of my tenure as Chair is that all major Australian geographical organisations now have formal representation on the Committee. This emerging national geographical confederation offers the discipline a stronger, more unified voice. I was also pleased to support the transition to incoming Chair Professor Kirsten Martinus (UWA) and to chair the panel recommending prospective new NCGS members to the AAS.

Internationally, I accepted invitations to join two International Science Council (ISC) bodies: the Working Group on Membership Engagement and Strategic Priorities, which articulates the value of ISC membership to global learned societies, and the Social Science Expert Group, which embeds social science perspectives in global sustainability policy. These appointments raise the RGSSA's international profile ahead of the October 2026 ISC Science Dialogue in Beijing, where I will represent the Society in global discussions.

In Australia, we strengthened links with kindred organisations, including Geography Victoria, for which I contributed a statement on geography as the "science of place" for *Science Victoria* during National Science Week.

Educational Advocacy & Engagement

Strengthening the pipeline of future geographers across all levels of education remains a core priority. To support secondary students making subject choices, I developed 'What is geography and what can you do with it?', now hosted on our website, supported by the Geography Teachers Association of South Australia (GTASA), and circulated through national networks including the Institute of Australian Geographers (IAG) and the Australian Geography Teachers' Association (AGTA). Building on this work, our Choose Geography

initiative—modelled on a New Zealand Geographical Society (NZGS) project and developed with RGSSA member Agung Asmoro—has become a prospective partnership with Adelaide University to produce video profiles of geography students and practitioners.

In secondary education policy, RGSSA Education Committee Chair Malcolm McInerney and I met with Acting CEO Hassan Mekawy and senior SACE Board staff to discuss geography's place in the South Australian curriculum. As a result, the Board recognised the RGSSA as a key stakeholder and invited our continuing advice. Under Malcolm's energetic leadership, the Education Committee is undertaking valuable research-informed advocacy for the discipline.

Internationally, I met with Dr Alan Marvell, Chair of the RGS-IBG Geography and Education Research Group, and Dr Susan Caldis, then Chair of AGTA, to encourage UK–Australian educational collaboration.

At the university level, institutional restructuring continues to pose challenges. Following the creation of Adelaide University, geography now sits within the School of Society and Culture, although “Geography” is regrettably absent from the headline study areas. At Flinders University, the geography program has been relocated to the new College of Business, Creative Arts, Law and Social Sciences, separated from cognate fields such as archaeology, environment and history. As an industry contributor to two Flinders Bachelor of Arts redesign workshops, I advocated for a distinctive BA that preserves geographical thinking, complex problem-solving, and field methods, while raising concerns that administrative divisions may weaken support for geography students.

Institutional Governance, Collections & Partnerships

The past year brought important progress in institutional stability and collections management.

SLSA Board Chair Bruce Linn formally confirmed a ten-year renewal of our operational Licence Agreement, securing the physical home of the Society, its library, and its operations.

SLSA's transition to a statewide Sirsi-Dynix catalogue system initially proposed including only our Rare and Restricted holdings. After representations emphasising mutual public benefit, SLSA confirmed that all 7,000+ RGSSA items currently catalogued in Sierra will migrate in early 2027, preserving public searchability, and indicated willingness to consider full inclusion of our remaining holdings.

We continue to assess possible participation in the Wiley Digital Archives Initiative (WDAI), which would digitise our unique primary source holdings, broaden global access, and create an income stream. Library Committee Chair Nona Verco and I met senior leaders at the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) in London to discuss their WDAI partnership. They confirmed its value as both a research tool and revenue source, and offered useful guidance on intellectual property and AI/LLM issues.

At a cultural leaders' gathering hosted by the Governor of South Australia to discuss 'A Place to Create', the state's 10-year cultural policy, I advocated for the RGSSA to play a catalytic role along North Terrace and sought our inclusion in monthly coordination meetings with major cultural institutions.

In line with recommendations in the '2018–26 Decadal Plan for Geography', we drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland (RGSQ) to enable reciprocal member participation in multi-day regional and outback excursions from 2027.

Public Events and Outreach

On 12 September 2025, we hosted a public symposium in the State Library's Hetzel Theatre, 'Can Higher Density Housing Reduce Adelaide's Housing Costs?' Chaired by Dr Donna Ferretti, the expert panel drew a capacity audience of planning students, industry leaders, and members of the public.

Preparations are well advanced for our 2026 symposium, 'Beyond the Car: Creating a Sustainable and Liveable Adelaide', scheduled for 20 November 2026. Sponsorship has been secured from the RAA and Green Adelaide, and the *South Australian Geographical Journal* is planning a special feature on the symposium outcomes.

Consistent with longstanding practice, the Society delivered an active public lecture program, including presentations by our Library Research Fellows, to engage audiences with historical and contemporary geographical questions. To improve accessibility, we renegotiated a cost-effective videography agreement with AD Photography for lecture recordings. Our direct community engagement also included public lectures for groups such as the Salvation Army Companion Club and broadcast interviews on local media, including Adelaide Coast FM88.7.

Special Research Projects & First Nations Recognition

Progress continued on major digital humanities research and on the Society's commitment to First Nations recognition.

The 12-year research project French Placenames Along the Australian Coastline, led by Dr Dany Bréelle and funded by the Western Australian History Foundation, is now well advanced. A standalone interactive portal mapping historical French cartography is under review.

The Society also made significant progress in its commitment to First Nations recognition. On advice from Reconciliation Australia and Reconciliation SA, which noted that a standard Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) framework does not suit our organisational structure, Council decided to pursue a tailored and more meaningful pathway for recognition and partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Councillors Joc Schmiechen and Philip Jones are leading development of the specific frameworks for this work.

Conclusion

The work outlined in this report reflects a Society moving forward with momentum, purpose, and increasing influence. Through the dedicated contributions of Council, active committees, volunteers, and strategic partners, the RGSSA is exceptionally well placed to advance geography and serve the South Australian community in the year ahead.

Iain Hay
Director, Royal Geographical Society of South Australia

Activities and Events

Awards made by the Society

The RGSSA Annual Award Ceremony for secondary and tertiary students was held in May in the Mortlock Chamber of the State Library of South Australia. Prize winners were honoured to receive their awards from our Patrons - Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, and Mr Rod Bunten. Following the ceremony prize winners, their families and Society members were delighted to chat informally with our Patrons while enjoying light refreshments. The awards presented are outlined below.

The **SA Geographers' Fieldwork Awards** is a competition run by the Geography Teachers' Association of South Australia (GTASA) in conjunction with the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia (RGSSA) to encourage students to engage with geographical issues and to reward student excellence. The competition aims to highlight outstanding success in an individual inquiry-based task which has a distinct focus on field work and data collection.

SA Geographers' Fieldwork Awardees	Project Title
Year 7 - Laura Kelly Emmaus Christian College	Mood mapping of Pleasant Avenue in Glandore
Year 8 - Sharlotte Roberts St Paul's College	How does and how will erosion impact the landforms in Hallett Cove?
Year 9 - Cyril Wong St Paul's College	How effective are the soil management strategies at the Food Forest in Gawler, at reducing land degradation?
Year 10 - Isabella Denys Wilderness School	To what extent is the suburb of Croydon in Adelaide liveable?
Year 11 - Ariana Dimovic Wilderness School	To what extent are the Mount Lofty Ranges Region prepared in the event of a bushfire and what strategies can be established to improve preparedness?
Year 12 - Evie Angus Pembroke School	To what extent do human activities impact biodiversity in Cleland National Park?

The **Alaric Maude Medal for Excellence in Secondary School Geography** is awarded to the student in South Australia obtaining the highest mark in the International Baccalaureate Program (IB) Geography (Higher Level). The Alaric Maude Medal for High School Geography was established in 2021 in recognition of the substantial contributions to secondary and tertiary geographical education of Dr Alaric Maude AM – an Honorary Life member of the Society and John Lewis Gold Medal winner.

The 2025 winner was Charlie Miller.

The **John Lewis Medal for Excellence in Secondary School Geography** is awarded to the student(s) obtaining the highest marks in SACE Stage 2 Geography. There were 3 winners in 2025;

- Evie Angus,
- Emilee Cunniff, and
- Nihaal Muhammad Tajdar.

The John Lewis Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate Geography is awarded to the top student in first-year, second-year, and third-year Geography at each of the South Australian tertiary education institutions at which an appropriate program of study is offered. The winners in 2025 were;

The John Lewis Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate Geography	2025 Winner
Flinders University Level I	Oscar Dean Johnson
Flinders University Level II	Gabrielle Louisa Birt
Flinders University Level III	Abby Louise Wheeler
University of Adelaide Level I	Alexandra Seal
University of Adelaide Level II	Charlotte Muffet
University of Adelaide Level III	Matthew Driver
University of South Australia Level I	Hannah Ratsch
University of South Australia Level II	Amber Arrizza
University of South Australia Level III	Mackinnon Cargin-Rowe

The **John Lewis Medal for Excellence in Doctoral Research in Geography** is awarded to a student, from one or more of The University of Adelaide, Flinders University, and the University of South Australia, who has made a significant theoretical or empirical contribution to geography through the completion of a PhD (or equivalent). In 2025 the medal was awarded to

Laura James at the University of Adelaide for her thesis titled - "*Housing inequality: A conceptual model for understanding and influencing social outcomes, residential dwelling, and advantage in Australia.*"

At the Annual Dinner, three awards were made for exceptional service to the Society;

The **Centenary Silver Medal**, established in 1992 to mark the 1985 centenary of the Society is awarded to a past or present member of the RGSSA to recognise their outstanding service to the Society as evidenced by long and active tenure on the Council and/or Committees of the Society or by significant contributions to the varied activities of the Society. The very deserving recipient in 2025 was Leigh Radford OAM.

In recognition of their tireless work behind the scenes for many years cataloguing new additions to the library, **Premier's Certificates of Recognition for Outstanding Volunteer Service** were presented to Rosemary Hocking and Gail Ward.

Program

The 140th Anniversary of the RGSSA – 1885-2025

The RGSSA's Program Committee has continued to provide a Program of interesting, educational and informative activities of Geographical interest to the Society's membership, and the wider community during the past reporting year 2025 – 26. The wide-ranging activities have included the popular monthly lectures, tours, assistance with the RGSSA Annual Awards Ceremony, the annual International GeoNight, the Christmas Dinner, to name but a few. It has been another busy and productive year for the Program Committee.

The Program Committee is comprised of a small, but keen group of volunteers. Each member brings enthusiasm and great ideas to the meetings, to help ensure the success of the programs offered to the membership. The Program committee has continued to advertise for new members to help grow the range of activities being offered. The RGSSA's Volunteer Co-ordinator, Dr Ingrid Ahmer offered assistance by producing an information sheet titled "*Behind the Scenes: What it really takes to make RGSSA lectures, excursions and events happen*" which was published in the GeoNews and the Society's website, with little initial response to date. The Program Committee holds monthly activity planning sessions in a meeting room within the State Library of SA.

Monthly Lecture Meetings.

The RGSSA's Lecture meetings continue to be held in the Hetzel Lecture Theatre, Ground floor of the Institute Building, State Library of South Australia (SLSA), on the 3rd Thursday evening of the month from February to November. Security is generously provided by the SLSA for the duration of the evening meetings until 7.00pm. A post-lecture dinner has continued to offer members the added opportunity to meet with the speaker in an informal setting at a local restaurant.

The lecture meetings, and other activities, continue to be advertised in the bi-monthly *GeoNews*, the State Library of SA and the RGSSA website. The attendance numbers at the meetings range from 60 to 94.

A major task of the Program Committee is to find suitably qualified experienced specialists within the geographical sciences, who are able to disseminate current and relevant information to the membership. This current reporting year attracted a diverse range of speakers. As 2025 was the 140th Anniversary of the RGSSA, the first lecture in February, 2026 was '*The Branch without a Tree*' and presented by RGSSA Fellow Colin Harris, PSM, who highlighted the Society's History, past and current achievements from 1885-2025.

Among the significant speakers in the first half of 2026 were two from interstate. Assoc Prof Sarah Hamylton, from University of Wollongong, NSW, who gave the annual Brock Lecture in July with the topic "*Plotting the Oceans: Stories of powerful maps and their makers*". Dr Hamylton sold a number of autographed copies of her latest book relating to her presentation, including the copy available in the RGSSA Library.

The second interstate speaker was Dr Michael-Shawn Fletcher, a Wiradjuri man and Professor of Biogeography at the University of Melbourne, Victoria. He spoke in May on "*Unmaking Wilderness, remaking country; Rewriting the book on Australia*", with high attendances at both sessions.

The remaining speakers spoke on a diverse range of topics.

- *“Condition Critical: The RGSSA’s Role in Australian Geography’s Revival”* - the Society’s 2025 Brock Lecture - by our distinguished Director, Emeritus Professor Iain Hay,
- *“Views from FRAM 2 over the poles”* by Eric Philips OAM – one of our most successful and inspiring lectures held on the University of South Australia’s campus to accommodate the large audience.
- *“Rock Churches of Ethiopia”* by Frances Williams,
- *“Anlaby Station”* by Samuel Doering and was followed by a fully booked day tour of Anlaby led by Joc Schmiechen,
- *“Burke & Wills”* by Kate Buckley,
- *“Silo Art in South Australia”* presented by Professor Guy Robinson,
- *“A Bump in the Ocean: First contact and settlement on the northern Australian coast”* by Joc Schmiechen (who kindly stepped in at short notice due to the scheduled speaker’s ill health, and
- *“Caves, sinkholes and volcanoes: the beauty and problems of the UNESCO Kanawinka Geopark”* by Ian Lewis.

For the second year running the RGSSA has professionally videorecorded the monthly lectures which may be viewed on the RGSSA YouTube Channel. This allows members, and other interested people, who were unable to attend the meetings the opportunity to view the recorded lecture in their own space and time. Permission to record the lectures is obtained from each speaker as per RGSSA protocol. The lectures are not live-streamed. Other significant events on the RGSSA calendar, such as the Annual Awards Ceremony and the Annual Dinner are also captured in images by our professional photographer.

Geo@12 Lunchtime Lectures

These sessions included presentations by the recipients of RGSSA Library Fellowships who spoke on their research studies. Their details were:

- Assoc Professor James L. Wilson, (Northern University, Illinois, USA) *“An Australian 19th Century Botanical Community of Practice Network”*.
- Annie Burrett (PhD student, School of Geosciences, University of Sydney) *“Australia’s history of telegraph development”*.
- Professor Michael Roche (Massey University, New Zealand) *Exploring Geographers’ networks 1888 to 1923, with particular reference to the place of the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia in the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science”*.

There were two other Geo@12 sessions presented in 2025-2026:

- *“The Many Loves of Geoffrey Dutton – A film by Rob George”*, and
- *“In the field with McDouall Stuart – a dozen ‘new’ images revealed”* by Dr Philip Jones.

Planning is underway to resume the Geo@12 sessions as they have been proven to be of interest, not only to members, but to the general public.

Book Launch November 2025.

A book launch was held in November 2025, for Dr Roger Irvine’s recently published book titled: *“Goyder’s Line in Kodachrome”*.

GeoNight – International Geography.

The 10th Anniversary of GeoNight was celebrated in this reporting period. However, due to time constraints and planning schedules, the RGSSA was not able to fully participate this year. Planning to participate in the 2027 period.

Annual Dinner in December.

The RGSSA Annual Dinner was held on 11th December 2025 in the Pavilion Restaurant, South Terrace, Adelaide. It was fully booked with guest speakers Leigh Radford, OAM, President RGSSA and Mr Keith Conlon who spoke on the 100 years of the Wayville Showgrounds. The annual Quiz was prepared by Margie Dawson using a Power Point presentation for the questions. Guy Robinson, Vice President RGSSA, acted as the MC for the evening. Awards presented to members of the RGSSA who had made an outstanding contribution to the Society and/or Geography. Their details can be found in the Awards section of this Annual Report.

The 2026 Annual Dinner in December is currently in the planning phase.

Annual RGSSA Awards Ceremony.

The annual Awards Ceremony was held on Tuesday, 12th May, in the Mortlock Chamber. Her Excellency, The Governor of SA, Frances Adamson AC, was in attendance with her husband Mr Rod Bunten, who assisted with the presentations of the awards. The evening was a great success as commented by the many guests, as well as the award recipients and their families. The role of the Program Committee is to provide catering and equipment for the ceremony and to assist the Office Administration as requested on the evening. Cargo catering provided the Canapes for the event which everyone enjoyed.

Frances Gnodtke
Program Committee Chair

Rare Books Group

Sessions are normally held in the Jervois Room, on the southern (North Terrace) end to the ground floor of the Mortlock wing in the State Library of South Australia, on the fourth Thursday of the month from 10.30am to 12 noon, unless otherwise indicated.

Bookings are made through the Society's website: <https://rgssa.org.au/activities/rare-books-group>

Rare Books Group sessions were severely restricted in the latter six months of 2025 and the first six months of 2026 by (a) refurbishment of the RGSSA Library (b) recarpeting of the State Library's Mortlock Wing, including the Jervois Room and (c) other factors outside our control. All three sessions listed below were held in the Morgan Thomas room, upstairs in the Institute Building.

Date	Presenter/s	Topic
July to November 2025	Various	Five sessions cancelled or postponed, plus March and May 2026
26th February 2026	Hugh Orr	Mutiny, murder and mayhem on the high seas in 1741 – the wreck of HMS Wager and the illustrated voyage around the world of Commodore George Anson
23th April 2026	Dymphna Cudmore and Relics Team	Relics from the Calvert Exhibition in Central and Northern WA, 1896-97
25th June 2026	Frances Williams	Discovering Africa; from Pliny to the travels of Dr Livingstone

Of the three sessions offered, attendance numbers regularly reached 30 or more. Most presentations were by members, who spent many hours in preparation. The Group is extremely grateful for the assistance provided by Melissa Gibbs for publicity and registration on the website, Nona Verco, Volunteer Librarian/Chair of the Library Committee (for a host of Library activities), Sally Hanley (multiple tasks) and others, so that the program runs smoothly. We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Patrick Bugeja from the State Library during the closures, and the contribution of Sara Stoddart and Richard Moriarty in retrieving our books from the Rare Book room.

Jill Kirby
Rare Books Group Convenor

Travel

RGSSA Travel continues to resonate with members and we have conducted a number of significant journeys in this financial year. In October/November we successfully completed the first of two Flinders Ranges and Outback Expeditions. The weather remained on our side for most with medium temperatures and rain late in the journey thwarting our attempt to travel the Borefield Track north of Maree to Andamooka forcing a last minute change of plan to return to Hawker. The special 4x4 coach had a full complement of twenty-four passengers with one from our sister society in Queensland. Highlights included the Blinman Mine Tour, the newly opened Nilpena Ediacara Fossil Reserve and Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary. Most of the group took the scenic flights over Kati Thanda – Lake Eyre from Marree with the Lake beginning to fill to near capacity.

Because of the success and demand of the first Flinders and Outback Expedition and the exceptional rainfall seasons over all the Outback we conducted a second tour in March 2026. This time the numbers were slightly down but still viable with fourteen passengers including members from the Queensland and Victorian societies, making a great across-border mix. It proved to be a compact and exhilarating journey following several extensive rain events in the Flinders and Outback Regions of the Lake Eyre Basin. We just managed to make most of the destinations on our planned route in between major road closures. Highlights included an afternoon cultural immersion with Adnyamathanha tour operator Rehanna Coulthard of Yura Tours, the world class fossil interpretive site at the new Nilpena National Park, and an extended stay at the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary. We did not make William Creek and a flight over Kati Thanda - Lake Eyre, but the amazing scenic flight with outback legend Doug Sprigg over the rugged North Flinders Ranges and the nearby booming desert and Lake Frome more than hit the mark. A great journey in stunning landscapes with fabulous local input highlighted the Australian Outback in absolute boom conditions. It does not get much better.

Two significant day trips were conducted during the year. The first in April 2025 had 33 RGSSA members visit Anlaby Station near Kapunda. considered one of the oldest and finest Merino Sheep Studs in South Australia founded by the Dutton family in 1839. We enjoyed an excellent day out with a personalised tour by the owners of this extensive pioneering homestead and fabulous garden.

In May 2026 we had the pleasure of hosting a group of twenty-four members of the Queensland Royal Geographical Society and sixteen of our own members for a day outing to Goolwa. The theme was Steam on Steam and included a ride on the Cockle Train from Victor Harbour to the wharf at Goolwa and then a three-hour outing in the Goolwa Channel on the Paddle Steamer Oscar W with its original steam engine, accompanied by lunch and wine. This was linking the historic riverport of Goolwa with the first rail line to the coast at Port Elliot and Victor Harbor to connect to the sea. The trip concluded with a short trip to the Murray Mouth viewpoint on Hindmarsh Island for some insight into the changing ecology of the Murray mouth and Coorong.

All these events helped to promote the RGSSA as well as make a handy contribution to the finances. The key feature of this year was the connection with our Queensland and Victorian Societies and plans for future invites and joint venture trips.

Joc Schmiechen
Head of Travel

Symposium

Can Higher Density Housing Reduce Adelaide's Housing Costs?

In the afternoon of Friday, 12 September 2025 the Society hosted a symposium on the subject: Can higher density housing reduce Adelaide's housing costs? It was addressed by an impressive group of professionals representing government, the private sector and academia:

- Opening address. Stephen Hains AM, Presiding Member, SA Urban Renewal Authority.
- Setting the scene. Marc Voortman, Executive Director, Department for Housing and Urban Development.
- Private industry. Bruce Djite, Executive Director, Property Council of Australia.
- Futures. Chris Rudd, Manager for Analysis and forecasting, DHUD.
- Research. Assoc Professor Damian Madigan, UniSA Creative.
- Research. Dr Amy Clair, Deputy Director, Australian Centre for Housing Research.
- Synthesis and prospect. Professor Michael Lennon, Chair in Regional Housing, UniSA Business.

The Symposium was chaired by Dr Donna Ferritti.

The appropriate style of new housing for Australia and more specifically Adelaide is a key driver that will impact the supply and affordability of housing. The balance between medium to high density housing versus infill development versus building on greenfield locations will continue to be key policy questions for our community. Housing density has financial and life-style implications and remains a controversial issue.

A record of the symposium and the papers that were presented is available on the Society's website: [Can higher density housing reduce Adelaide's housing costs? - The Royal Geographical Society of South Australia](#)

Andrew Lothian
Symposium Organisation Group

Flinders Ranges Walks Maintenance Program

The end of the group's northern work in August 2025 saw the start of a wet weather period. One day of rain closed all roads that would normally be used to check 8 walks and gave 3 days of frustration. A leaflets-check in October was enlivened by a severe thunderstorm that brought trees down and boulders across a major road.

A similar check in March 26 was wet – leaflets at 5 trailheads could not be sorted in rain. Maintenance session in May was dry with some adjustments made to a Mount Brown boundary because of referencing by a neighbour. June saw most maintenance tasks

completed, but remote showers made Bunyerroo Creek run – two days of wet feet. RGSSA members who stayed behind to check other walks got rained out.

We have all been involved for 30 years and this is the first season weather has been so problematic or wild. How should we plan our sessions?

The walks are nevertheless well used. The walk leaflets based on Explore the Flinders Ranges are much appreciated.

Sue Barker OAM and Rob Marshall OAM

Exhibitions

Thanks to the Relics and Library volunteers there are always interesting and informative displays presented in the glass cabinets within the RGSSA library, with a special exhibit arranged for SA's History Month in May. The theme for the 2026 History Month was "Flora", so a number of our beautiful rare books were placed into the display cases, such as Robert and Richard Schomburgk's illustrated book on his travels in British Guiana (1876) and Wild Flowers of South Australia by Fanny De Mole (1861). The display was described as:

"An exhibition of beautiful books and pictures from our library showcasing plants, flowers, seeds, nuts, leaves and petals. People have always depended on plants for sustenance and fibres and been fascinated with their variety and beauty. Since earliest times explorers brought back exotic plants from around the world where they were established in botanical gardens for economic reasons and for enjoyment. Developments in horticulture and agriculture have enabled the world's burgeoning population to feed itself to a degree once thought impossible. Using extensive transport connections fruit, vegetables and flowers are now taken around the world in huge quantities each day providing consumers with an amazing range of choice."

Library and Collections

The library refurbishment is still underway – the final stage involves the construction of a combination book and map storage cabinet, incorporating a work area. It is expected that the cabinet will be installed in the main library area by the end of 2026. Following this, we will have our final reshuffle of the books to put them into the best order for ongoing use.

The theme for the May 2026 History Month was “Flora”, so a number of our beautiful rare books were placed into the display cases, such as Robert and Richard Schomburgk’s illustrated book on his travels in British Guiana (1876) and Wild Flowers of South Australia by Fanny De Mole (1861). These types of exhibitions as well as other promotions by the State Library of South Australia (SLSA), have led to a welcome increase in visitors to the library, including people from Adelaide, interstate and overseas. Increased interest in the library has also resulted in tours from professional organisations, with donations from tour participants being put towards conservation needs for the repair of valuable books.

The library has also expanded its access to members, now opening for a short time before the monthly lecture on a Thursday afternoon. A review of the library’s collection policy has resulted in the identification of a number of duplicate books, as well as some books that are superfluous to our requirements. A selection of these are provided for perusal at the regular lecture series and can be purchased by members for a donation.

The Society hosted visits from three research scholars – Prof James Wilson from The University of Chicago in July 2025, who was interested in early botanists; and in June 2026, Annie Burrett, a PhD student from The University of Sydney, who was researching the Overland Telegraph line, and Prof Mike Roche from Massey University, New Zealand, who was interested in early geographers.

The Treasures Project is still ongoing, with wonderful work being done by Hugh Orr and Robert Dettman to add digital images and information on the RGSSA website. Kate Buckley continues her painstaking work with the manuscripts. The Society also greatly appreciates the work performed by all the library volunteers in all its many areas of endeavour. In addition to our regular stalwarts, we have a number of new young volunteers who have come on board to assist with a number of tasks to organize various parts of our collection. Also, we appreciate the small number of library volunteers who have been willing to learn first aid, to provide a valuable service to our members and the public in case of emergency. In addition, we are grateful to now include Chris Read as one of our volunteers, who previously worked at the SLSA and is now helping on a Wednesday with research queries. Chris has replaced Phyl Twigg, who has had to retire due to health issues – we thank Phyl for her wonderful service to the library and the Society for many years and wish her well for the future.

Nona Verco and Janet Grant
Chair and Deputy Chair Library Committee

Library Statistics

Visitors from Australia came from every state capital, and other specified places included Ballarat, Baulkham Hills, Bentleigh East, Bilambil Heights, Bohnock, Bright, Broken Hill, Burega, Cairns, Canning Vale, Coburg, Crawford, Dandenong, Darlington, Driver, DVIVIV, Everton Park, Fremantle, Geelong, Glebe, Gold Coast, Gosford, Harkaway, Hunter Valley, Irving Close, Kalbarri, Kalgoorlie, Mackay, Macksville, Maclean, Menzies Creek, Mildura, Millfield, Mission Beach, Moffat Beach, Mount Colah, Nambucca heads, Newcastle, Nhill, Old Bar, Penrith, Port Stephens, Redcliffe, Redland City, Rockhampton, Rozelle, Sale,

Sandy Beach, Shelford, Shepparton, Sunshine Coast, Tamworth, Tenterfield, Toowoomba, Townsville, Tweed Heads, Wacol, Wagga Wagga, Wallabi Point, White Cliffs, Wollongong, and Yeppoon.

Visitors from overseas included Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Caledonia, NZ, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, UK, Turkey, Ukraine, USA (incl. Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Wisconsin), and Vietnam.

We had several groups visit the library including Blackwood High School students, GeoNext, HASS (Humanities and Social Sciences) teachers, high school students, international students, Morris dancers, RGS Queensland, SA Archivists, State Library visitors; and visitors for the History Festival exhibition.

Queries included Afghan cameleers, Africa, Anlaby station, Babbage, Bible Apocrypha, Charles Darwin, Collet Barker, East India Company charts, echidnas, Elder cattle stations, Elder Expedition, example 1850s ballot paper, family history, geology, Gulden Zepaard (ship), Hallewell's Bermuda lithographs, Hamilton biography, Hindmarsh descendants, IAG minutes, John McDouall Stuart, John White's journal, Johnstone, Joseph Dobson maps, Kekwick & Hughes books, Lutheran Aboriginal vocabularies, maps, Mount Serle station, Nixon map, offers of donations, pastoral stations, Paul Foelsche glass plates, permission to use photos or images, Peutingen map, pioneers, shipwrecks, South Sea islanders, Spalding, Tarcoola, trig points in Marion, and Willunga 1880s maps.

Statistics	2025-26 *	2024-25 **	2023-24	2023 Jan-Jun
Days open	185	171	236	111
Members & volunteers	921	756	854	310
Visitors	2,975	1,597	2,362	967
Library queries	94	111	200	39

* The Library was completely closed for flooring works in the Mortlock wing from 1st July-22nd September 2025.

** The Library was completely closed for refurbishment from December 2024 to April 2025, and closed to the public for flooring works in the Mortlock chamber during June 2025. The 2024-25 figures have been updated from those in last year's annual report to include volunteers working during the partial closure of the Mortlock wing.

Rosemary Hocking
Cataloguer and Library Statistician

Relics

This year's focus has been to raise funds for a suitable display cabinet to be located on the landing by the library entrance and to explore other appropriate and safe storage options for the relics. While searching antique shops for a display cabinet Peter Stapleton of Stapleton Antiques kindly donated a pine welcome table (now inside the library by the door) in memory of his wife Ina. When Peter Stapleton won a bid online for a mahogany cabinet. Lee Philp kindly donated it, the mahogany cabinet now on the landing by the office door, in memory of her husband Marcus Lee Paltridge.

The Relics team helped Malcolm McInerny plan and deliver a teacher's workshop showcasing RGSSA Relics, Maps and Books and telling their stories. The team also researched and presented information to visitors looking for information about ancestors.

Dymphna Cudmore presented a ten-minute power point report about our use of the Jack Cross Fellowship for 2025 at the AGM of the Friends of the S.A. Archives Association.

The Society was thrilled to accept a donation of a tiny spinning top from Helen Tonkin of Sydney. Her grandfather Clive Newland was a school friend of George Jones, the geologist who died in the Great Sandy Desert on the Calvert Expedition in 1896. They had swapped mementos. George's top was returned to his family who returned it to Clive. The family treasured it and the story of two great friends. Research found a list of belongings that were found with the bodies, which Larry Wells brought back to Adelaide for the family. Including:

"POCKET HANDKERCHIEF 1 KNOTTED IN CORNER 1 SMALL TOP AND 1 NEEDLE"

The spinning top is now on display with the information about the lost men. Thanks to Sophie from ArtLab who made a little holder for it.

The team prepared for Dymphna's rare book talk about the Calvert expedition and helped Hugh Orr prepare the Flora Exhibition for the History Festival in May.

George made a plinth for displaying the Stuart table and Dymphna has been checking and marking relics from the Calvert expedition ready for a final accurate record.

Liz Willanski for the Relics team

Maps

The RGSSA has a vast collection of maps spanning much of the globe. The goal of processing and organising the map collection involves complementary tasks carried out by a range of volunteers. Key tasks for the physical map collection include filing and managing existing paper maps, accessioning new maps, and repairing damaged items. A major project to digitise the map collection has also been undertaken and is largely complete. The accumulation of associated metadata is currently ongoing, and RGSSA is also investigating ways to make the digital collection publicly searchable so that digital and/or printed versions of the maps can be made available for research or sale. A Map Task Force was created in July 2026 and will no doubt have much to report next year.

Publications

A publication to commemorate the 140th anniversary of the Society is being prepared by past Presidents Rod Shearing OAM and Colin Harris PSM, with the assistance of Roger Irvine. Sales of our 2014 publication *Explore the Flinders* continue to be strong with several outlets in the Flinders Ranges area stocking the publication.

South Australian Geographical Journal

The Society's Journal publishes peer-reviewed research papers and articles focused on the geography of South Australia and its surrounding regions. In 2018 the journal transitioned to an online format which allows us to share ground-breaking research in a more accessible way. In a world facing complex, large-scale challenges, the interdisciplinary research and perspectives that geography uniquely provides are more important than ever.

A Special Issue of South Australian Geographical Journal has been published on 'Geography Futures Past' containing five papers, [accessible at https://sagj.scholasticahq.com/](https://sagj.scholasticahq.com/).

A new Editorial team has been established, with Dr. George Tan (Adelaide University) and Dr. Vito Hernandez (Flinders University) as Co-Editors and Dr. Romy Wasserman (Adelaide University) as Associate Editor.

GeoNews

GeoNews continues to publish six editions per year. Due to the prohibitive cost of colour printing, all printed copies are in black and white. Over 2024/2025 postage costs have increased. In July 2024 we successfully changed our printer company. Currently we do 150 copies per print run and whilst there has been an uptake in new members, numbers of members who are opting for electronic copies only, have increased. Spare copies are kept in the office with some made available for distribution at Lecture events and also placed in the Mortlock Library. In case a print run of 200 would now be adequate, these numbers are being monitored prior to making any decision. Gratitude to Pam and Alan Deverell for their support with the bulk mail outs and also to proofreaders Jill Kerby and Valerie Balagengadaran.

Margie Dawson
Editor.

Book Series Editor's Report

Antipodean Perspectives on Geography Book Series (Anthem Press)

Established in 2024, our *Antipodean Perspectives on Geography* book series, in partnership with international publisher Anthem Press, remains central to the RGSSA's core mission. By offering a high-profile, scholarly platform for South Australian and regional research, the Series actively promotes geographical knowledge and advances high-quality research and scholarship.

To sustain the Series' strong initial momentum and extend its international reach, I recently completed a comprehensive refresh of our Editorial Board. The revised Board features dynamic, highly supportive members representing institutions across Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Fiji, and Samoa:

Series Editor

Iain Hay (RGSSA / Flinders University, Australia)

Editorial Board

Ash Alam (University of Melbourne,)	Catherine Phillips (University of Canterbury)
Andrew Beer (Adelaide University)	Russell Prince (Massey University)
Andrew BurrIDGE (Macquarie University)	Guy Robinson (Adelaide University)
Susan Caldis (Macquarie University)	Udoy Saikia (Flinders University)
Karen Fisher (University of Auckland)	Tim Smith (Southern Cross University)
Alison Greenaway (New Zealand Geographical Society)	Susana Taua'a (National University of Samoa)
Alaric Maude (Flinders University)	Steve Turton (Central Queensland University)
Naohiro Nakamura (The University of the South Pacific, Fiji)	Romy Wasserman (Adelaide University)

Progress on the publication pipeline has been exceptionally strong, with five volumes currently contracted and on their publication schedule:

- **Professor Andrew Beer** (Adelaide University) — *Managing Economic Transition: Place, Policy Experimentation and Governance*
- **Professor Emeritus Steve Turton** (Central Queensland University) — *Shifting Climate Zones: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly for Australia*
- **Professor Kristian Ruming** (Macquarie University) — *Campus as Asset: Planning, Finance and Property-Led University Development in Australia*
- **Professor Ilan Wiesel (Ed.)** (University of Melbourne) — *Dyadsapes: The Geographies of Young People's Relationships*
- **Dr Sita Venkateswar** (Massey University) & **Ritodhi Chakraborty** (Lincoln University) — *Reweaving Land and Water: Critical Moana Studies and Multispecies Climate Futures in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Title under review)

This list brings together leading geographers alongside emerging scholars from across Australia and New Zealand. As these initial volumes are released and marketed, I am confident they will attract further high-quality manuscript submissions, helping to position RGSSA as Australia and New Zealand's most significant regional publisher of book-length geographical research.

Iain Hay

Series Editor, Antipodean Perspectives on Geography

Research

Two RGGSA Library Fellows have visited Adelaide in 2026: Professor Michael Roche (Massey University, New Zealand) and Annie Burrett (PhD student, School of Geosciences, University of Sydney). Prof Roche spent two weeks working on “Exploring Geographers’ networks 1888 to 1923, with particular reference to the place of the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia in the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science” while Annie visited for a month to research “Australia’s history of telegraph development.” This is part of an Australian Research Council Discovery Project on ‘Wiring Australian Cities’ led by Prof Kurt Iveson.

Three Dorothy Pyatt Postgraduate Research Grants were awarded to South Australian students to assist with their studies in Australia and overseas. The students and their areas of research were:

- Rebecca Hicks - *Spiritual Relationship to Country and Place: Collaborative Mapping as a Relational Practice*
- Amna Javed - *Examining flood-risk governance and transformative pathways for climate adaptation in the Global South, with an empirical focus on Pakistan*
- Pragya Timsina - *Contested agricultures: Power dynamics, resilience and missed opportunities among smallholder rice farmers in Assam*

A research project supported by the RGSSA, led by Dr. Dany Breelle (Flinders University), has received funding (\$9,618.50) from the Western Australian History Foundation. The research is examining “French Footprints on WA’s Coastline: A digital exploration of place names & their legacy” and is part of a wider project compiling French place names around the Australian coastline, but especially within South Australia. The names refer to those bestowed by the two historic French expeditions led by Antoine Bruni d’Entrecasteaux (1791–1793) and Nicolas Baudin (1800–1804). These were landmark scientific and cartographic voyages to the Pacific and Australia. Dany Breelle is preparing a web-based resource relating to these voyages.

Guy Robinson

Research, Publications and Awards Committee

GeoNext

The end of the 2025/26 Financial Year marks one and a half years since the GeoNext committee’s inception. In that time, I have had the privilege to watch the profile of the committee flourish through the fantastic efforts of our volunteer committee members and boundless support from the wider Society.

The past twelve months has seen GeoNext successfully run a number of events and provide a platform to support South Australia’s young geographers. This includes a successful and well attended quiz night in November 2025 with a range of young professionals, both undergraduate and postgraduate students, and members of the RGSSA attending. The Quiz Night provided a great platform for people to make new connections and friends, many of whom later came together in May 2026 for a social event at the University of Adelaide.

These social events were also complemented by the committee’s July 2026 Career Event. Guest Speakers included Donna Ferretti (Planning Institute of Australia Life Fellow and RPAC Volunteer), Edoardo Rosso (Department of Veterans’ Affairs), Marnie Denlay (Adelaide University), and Emily Mansfield (URPS). The crowd who braved the wintery

weather were able to take part in a fantastic discussion on careers in geography, navigating job markets, the importance of developing a wide range of skills, among others. The success of the night was encapsulated by the committee's volunteers not managing to coax attendees to leave until more than an hour after the event's official finish!

For the remainder of the year, GeoNext is in plans to collaborate with the Adelaide University Geography and Development Society (AUGDS) to again run a quiz night in October or November. As well as this, the committee will be hosting informal social events following both the Postgraduate and Active Transport Symposia scheduled for November. While still in the distance, GeoNext may be looking to work with other committees to organise other events such as a one-day excursion in February 2027 with a welcome event for new students to follow soon after early in the 2027 university year.

I wish to give a huge thank you to the committee's current volunteers, including Jennifer Krauss, Charlotte McDonald, Rosie Newman, Maia Norhafiz. A special thank you also to past members Jared Leo (2025), Tim Pickering (2025), and Annie Nguyen (2026) for their services in the past 12 months. Finally, another big thank you to Iain Hay and Leigh Radford for making time to attend committee meetings and help shape the committee's agenda, as well as to Council and other volunteers for their ongoing advice and support

Christopher Hogan
GeoNext Committee Chair

Education Committee

The Education Committee has continued in 2025/2026 to promote and support geographical education in our schools and universities. The committee is now comprised of 8 geography educators, including early career school geography teachers, school geography teaching leaders, university lecturers in geographical education, a Department for Education officer, and retired geographers. Membership is also across Government, Catholic Education and Independent school sectors and from Flinders, Deakin and Adelaide Universities.

The committee has various professional learning and promotion projects underway. The committee conducted a teacher workshop in collaboration with the RGSSA library and Relic Committee late in 2025. Over 40 teachers from schools across South Australia attended this highly successful workshop. The committee is planning to conduct a similar workshop for teachers in the near future.

Based on maps developed by the committee, showing the teaching of senior school geography in South Australia, an article on the status of geography in our schools and ways forward for South Australia to increase the profile of school geography is being written by the committee. This article will be presented to education authorities and the Minister for Education later in 2026 through several planned meetings. In an effort to alert authorities to the decline and inequitable spatial distribution of geography in the senior years of schooling, members of the committee met with the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Board in June 2026. Ongoing conversations are planned with the SACE Board as the SACE undergoes renewal processes in 2026 and 2027.

The committee is very committed to develop achievable, relevant and impactful projects to promote geographical education in our schools and universities.

Malcolm McInerney
Chair, RGSSA Education Committee.

Engagement and Communications (including online & social media)

Recruiting members to revive the Engagement and Communications Committee (ECC) has been difficult. RGSSA Director Iain Hay has therefore stepped in to re-establish the Committee and temporarily oversee the Society's outreach activities, as outlined below.

Facebook

Facebook remains an important channel for sharing news about the Society's activities. RGSSA's Facebook audience is strong, with more than 2700 followers, up from 2671 in mid-2025. Followers are mainly located in Bangladesh (62%), Adelaide (26.6%) and India (4.6%).

The most-viewed posts over the past year were:

8 August: announcement of the Celebration of Life for Valmai Hankel AM, with 24,556 views.

10 August: advertisement for the RGSSA field trip to see the 'Great Lake Eyre Fill 2026', with 5921 views.

19 August: photographs and commentary from the Celebration of Life for Valmai Hankel AM, with 4501 views.

Please continue to promote our Facebook page and engage with its posts, as this helps raise awareness of the Society and extend its reach.

Google Maps

Ironically, RGSSA has had limited visibility on Google Maps, making it harder for visitors from North Terrace and nearby areas to find their way to our premises. We have updated our information and added high-quality photographs, but some parts of the listing remain difficult to correct. We will continue working to resolve these issues, including with organisations such as SLSA that face similar challenges. In the meantime, positive Google Maps reviews are helping draw people to the Society.

Lecture Slide Shows

To promote geography and the Society's activities, I have created looping PowerPoint presentations to be played quietly during the 30 minutes before evening lectures. They provide an effective way to share key messages about geography and the RGSSA while encouraging informal viewing and discussion.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional networking platform that RGSSA uses to share news about the Society's activities and promote related events of interest to followers. Since the site was established in mid-2021, its audience has grown steadily, from 410 followers in late 2024 to 667 in late July 2025 and 891 on 30 August 2026. We hope to pass 1000 followers within the next year. Unlike the Society's Facebook audience, which is dominated by followers in Bangladesh, RGSSA's LinkedIn followers are mainly based in Australia, including Adelaide (25.3%), Sydney (5.1%), Melbourne (4.3%) and Brisbane (2.1%). The Society also has followers in several Indian cities, including Delhi, Kolkata and Allahabad, as well as in London. The Society's LinkedIn page is: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/royal-geographical-society-of-south-australia-inc/>

Member Profiles

I have introduced Member Profiles in *GeoNews* and on the RGSSA website. Each issue now highlights one or two members, with the same profiles also published online. The profiles include a high-quality photograph and brief reflections on each member's connection with the Society and interest in geography.

Member Referral

RGSSA members are often the Society's strongest advocates. Through *GeoNews* and other channels, we have launched a Member Referral scheme encouraging members to invite friends and colleagues to join because they value the Society and its mission. The scheme offers no prizes, incentives or material rewards, and is supported by the new *Society Prospectus* and NATION resources.

NATION Creative Materials

Local marketing company NATION Creative prepared several promotional resources for the Society. These include a short video for the website, YouTube, evening lectures and other suitable events; a colour brochure in formats suitable for both commercial and domestic printing; four DocuAd pages for social media advertising, including LinkedIn and Facebook; and member and site photographs for other promotional uses.

Sister Societies

The RGSSA has informal arrangements with many like-minded organisations, sharing information about events and activities that may be of interest to our respective memberships. Tina Hunter has kindly taken the role of distilling all the incoming information into a monthly email sent to our members. Similarly, the administration team circulates information about RGSSA activities that may be of interest to other local groups.

The Society Prospectus

I have prepared a comprehensive *Society Prospectus*, partly modelled on the Royal Historical Society's members' guide. It clearly sets out the wide range of Society activities supported, directly or indirectly, by membership. The document is available on the RGSSA website at <https://rgssa.org.au/documents/RGSSA-Prospectus-2026.pdf> and has been promoted to members through email, *GeoNews*, and social media.

The *Prospectus* supports the Society's expanding member recruitment resources, including member renewal, the Gift Membership program, and the Refer a Friend initiative.

Trip Advisor

In June 2026, we launched a TripAdvisor listing to increase the visibility and credibility of the Society and Library, and to make better use of our Mortlock Wing location. This places us alongside institutions such as the Adelaide Botanic Garden, Adelaide Zoo, Art Gallery of South Australia, Migration Museum, National Wine Centre, South Australian Museum, and State Library of South Australia. The listing is available at https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-q255093-d34497093-Reviews-Royal_Geographical_Society_of_South_Australia-Adelaide_Greater_Adelaide_South_Au.html

Wayfinding

We continue to work with the State Library to improve signage and navigation within SLSA and are making progress on several new and replacement signs in the Mortlock Wing. These signs will serve as an interim measure until more permanent wayfinding arrangements are introduced after the City Library and Adelaide Visitor Information Centre are fully incorporated into the SLSA premises.

Website

The Society's website is managed by the Melissa Gibbs and is discussed separately in this Report.

Wikipedia

After a difficult and complex establishment process, the Society's Wikipedia page now provides a comprehensive and accurate overview of RGSSA's history, activities and key people. A few minor technical issues remain under review. The page is available at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Geographical_Society_of_South_Australia

YouTube

In early 2025, we appointed AD Photography to record our monthly evening and lunchtime lectures. Since then, we have posted high-quality recordings on the Society's YouTube channel, creating a valuable resource for members who cannot attend in person because of ill health, transport difficulties or distance. The channel has grown rapidly, reaching 882 subscribers, 67 videos and 78,381 total views by 30 August. The recordings can also be shared with organisations such as RGSQ. Lectures are available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCR4niBHrvB4gM6A6KoUM-JQ>

Iain Hay

Acting Chair, Engagement and Communications Committee

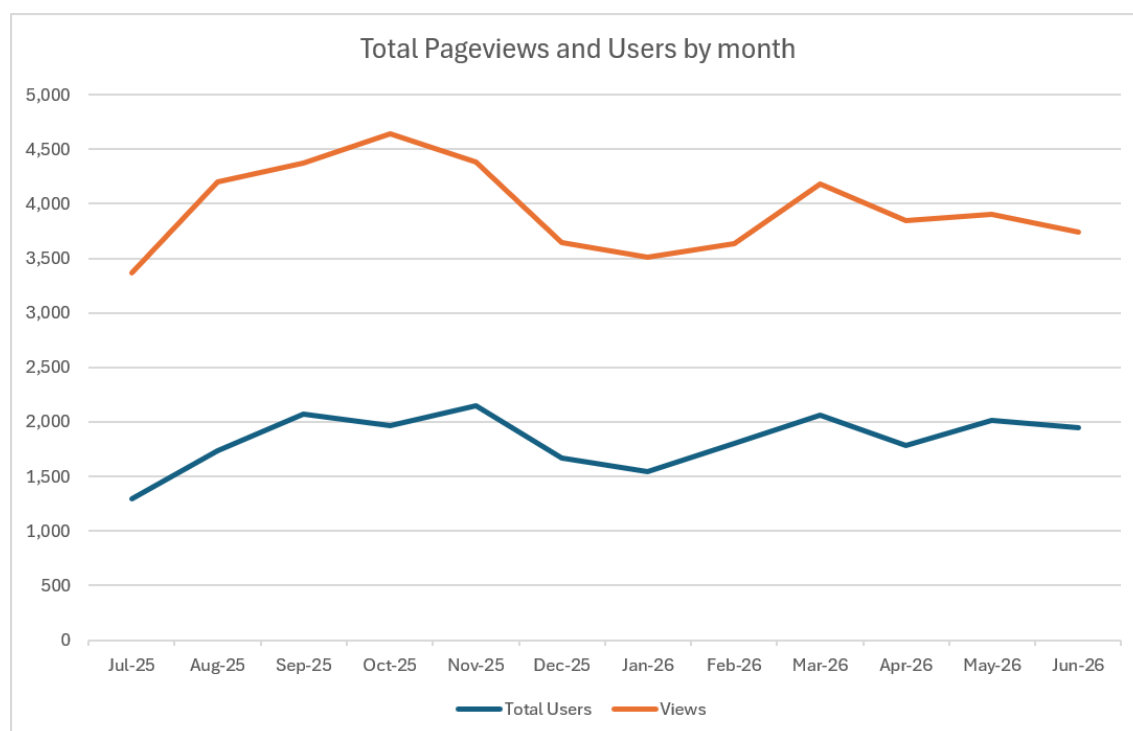
Blog

Despite nothing new being posted on the blog spot since 2022, the content of the posts appears to be trending positively. The USA has been the top location for each month over the year with a total of 4,794 pageviews which is about 1,000 more compared to last year. Vietnam registered the next highest pageview count with 759, followed by United Kingdom (673), France (645), Germany (552), Canada (521), China (429) and Australia with 417. Other countries with more than 100 pageviews included Brazil, Russia, South Korea, India, Finland, Argentina, Netherlands and Israel. Pageviews were fairly consistent across the year with a trend to increased traffic in April, May and June. Over the year, the blogspot had approximately 13,800 pageviews.

As has been the case for the past few years, the most popular post was Cartagena (1105 views), followed by Robert H Schomburgk (1093), pirates of the collection (1092), Rio (704) and the 2020 RGSSA Cook Exhibition with 604. It should be noted that the old blog site recorded 23,838 pageviews for the year. Thanks to Sandra Thompson for managing the site.

Website

The Society has continued to develop its website which provides a great look and feel with the ability to join and renew membership as well as book a wide range of Society events in-house. It includes a great deal of information about the Society's governance, activities, library, awards, treasures and much more. The website has seen a major growth in its usage over the past year with an average of just over 2,500 users and about 3,950 page views per month (compared to 1,550 users and about 3,500 page views per month in 2024-25). This is a total of 31,087 users, including about 20,000 new users, and 47,400 page views in 2025-26). Website activity fluctuated throughout the year, with November 2025 seeing the highest number of users (2,148) and October 2025 reaching the peak in views (4,639). Not surprisingly website activity was lowest in January when the Society does not organise any activities.



There has been a significant ongoing effort to ensure that information is kept up-to-date and relevant to the Society's activities incorporating a 'news' section and automatically rotating the information about upcoming activities. The continued effort being made to include more of the Society's treasures online has also increased the website's popularity.

Not surprisingly, the home page still receives the most page views - 14% of all views in 2025-26 (about 6,500 views) which was the same proportion as last year. Although the Library Catalogue is still one of the more popular pages (2.1% of page views – 996 views), it was the seventh most frequently visited page. Other more popular pages included lectures (4.2% of views), exploration, treasures, the Wallace Line, and membership. Encouragingly, many other pages were viewed a substantial number of times including contacts, trips and tours, activities, rare books group, and various of the specific treasures and lectures.

Not surprisingly, most pageviews arose from Australian locations (about 34,000), followed by the United States (5,200), China (1,500), United Kingdom (900), Singapore (880), Germany (493), New Zealand (328), India (318), Canada (315) and France (254).

Melissa Gibbs
Web Maintenance

Membership

Over the last few years, there has been steady but moderate growth in total membership numbers. While the RGSSA Council has approved between 60 and 80 new members a year, the total increase in membership numbers is considerably lower mostly due to members failing to renew. Although most categories of membership have exhibited growth, the biggest growth area is student members, which has no doubt been influenced by the success of GeoNext in engaging young geographers. Most memberships that we lose lapse due to non-payment rather than resign. It is pleasing to see that 2 institutions have rejoined.

Year	Honorary Life	Life	Family*	Ordinary	Student #	Institutional	Inter-state	Total
2015	12	26		246	1	14		301
2016	12	25		235	4	13		291
2017	11	23		248	5	15		303
2018	11	23		250	4	13		302
2019	12	20		254	3	10		300
2020	11	20	47	147	5	9		287
2021	11	19	52	164	8	7		314
2022	11	19	48	169	12	5		311
Mid 2023**	14	19	44	155	43	4		326
2024	16	20	47	153	48	4		342
2025	17	19	49	162	56	0	14	366
2026	17	18	55	168	68	2	15	396

* As family membership entitles two members to vote, it is counted as two members in the total.

Student membership includes prize winners who receive membership as part of their award. In 2026, 40 of the 68 student members were prize winners.

Volunteering

The RGSSA is a volunteer-run society, and volunteers are involved in every area of its activities. Volunteers sustain the Society's public-facing activities that include Library operations, geographical lectures and field trips, and the Society's website and social media. The Society's educational and scholarly activities include supporting research and publications, organising geographical symposia on topical issues, coordinating awards for geographical excellence in schools and universities, and supporting emerging geographers through GeoNext. Behind these activities is the range of essential work in administration, membership and fundraising that enables the Society to operate and develop.

People become involved in volunteering with the RGSSA in different ways. Some respond to opportunities promoted through the website or general appeals to members; others are introduced through friends or existing members, or approach the Society directly after attending a lecture or visiting the Library. Volunteers are often drawn to areas of particular interest, such as education, social media and communications, or opportunities to work with the Society's rare historical resources, including its collections of books, relics and early maps.

Approximately 80–90 members — almost one quarter of the Society's membership — contribute as volunteers. Their work is essential to the continued operation and development of the RGSSA, enabling the Society to maintain its activities and respond to new opportunities. Members who have not yet volunteered are encouraged to consider how their interests, knowledge and skills might contribute to the future of the Society.

Financial Reports

The Financial Reports for the Society on the following pages include;

- Treasurer's Report
- Income and Expenditure Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Trust Funds Summary
- Strategic Fund
- RW Bland Bequest Fund
- RN Brown Bequest Fund
- C Warren Bonython Bequest Fund
- Jim Faull Fund
- Library Trust Fund
- Memorials Maintenance Fund
- Dorothy Pyatt Bequest Fund
- Stephanie Schrapel Bequest Fund
- DD Shearing Bequest Fund
- GW Symes Fund
- Wheaton Bequest Fund
- Auditor's Report for RGSSA 2025-2026

Scholarship Fund Income and Expenditure

Scholarship Fund

Auditor's Report for RGSSA Scholarship Fund 2025-2026

Treasurer's Financial Report 2025-26

I am pleased to report that the Society has gained a solid result for the 2025/26 financial year.

A surplus of \$236,915 was achieved due to increased income resulting from the sale of two valuable items from our library collection the previous financial year, namely the Sir Joseph Banks Journals and 'The Holy land' by David Roberts. This has resulted in an increase of investment income of \$73,075 in this financial year.

Also, a third item, 'The Minor Voyages, in Latin' by Johann T & Johann I De Bry, was sold for \$184,000 during this financial year.

A summary of this year's results is as follows:

	July 25 to June 26	July 24 to June 25
Surplus for Combined Trust Funds	\$232,513	\$1,235,719
Add Surplus for General Funds	\$4,402	\$3,219
Overall Surplus for period	\$236,915	\$1,238,938

Amalgamation of Trust Funds

To keep the accounts manageable, it was decided to reduce the number of trust funds established from various bequests over previous years. The balances of the closed funds were transferred into the remaining four funds that are now operating for specific purposes.

In future, bequests that the Society receives that are unfettered will be directly placed into an existing fund.

Lewis Scholarship Fund

The fund made a surplus of \$146 for the period. Since the accounts were separated in 2016, the Society has made a yearly donation to the Scholarship Fund to supplement its income. Due to an increase in monetary awards by \$3,685 this year the donation made by the Society was increased to \$9,800 in comparison to \$2,500 last year.

Tony Merchant FIPA

Treasurer

Income and Expenditure Statement

Income and Expenditure Statement

Royal Geographical Society of SA Inc.

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Account	2026	2025
Income		
Investment Income	21,429	12,636
Membership Subscriptions	22,644	20,809
Program Income	10,132	9,387
Publication Sales	4,864	5,718
Tour / Excursion Income	109,805	0
Other Income	1,291	3,810
Total Income	170,165	52,360
Expenses		
Administration Expenses	5,302	4,792
Awards Expenses	520	16
Depreciation Furniture & Fittings	6,114	6,046
Donation to Lewis Scholarship Fund	9,800	2,500
GeoNews Expenses	2,875	3,429
GeoNext Expenses	403	0
Insurance	3,970	3,761
IT Expenses	2,745	2,316
Library Expenses	8,782	7,228
Program Expenses	12,285	7,624
Publication Expenses	10,755	7,528
Tour / Excursion Expenses	99,262	0
Volunteer Expenses	2,950	3,901
Total Expenses	165,763	49,140
Surplus / (Deficit)	4,402	3,219

Balance Sheet As at 30 June 2026				
	Account		30 June 2026	30 June 2025
Assets				
	Bank			
	Freedom Business Account		8,402	174,283
	Society Cheque Account		42,214	0
	Term Deposit 1		140,000	32,665
	Term Deposit 2		0	50,000
	TOTAL Bank		190,615	256,949
	Current Assets			
	Petty Cash Float		100	100
	Prepaid Expenses: Annual Dinner		1,000	0
	Property Investments: Ark Bedrock Mortgage Fund		400,000	200,000
	Receivables: Accounts Receivable		492	354
	Receivables: Franking Credits		37,772	26,640
	Share Holdings: Ampol Limited (ALD)		0	95,238
	Share Holdings: ANZ Capital Notes 9 (AN3PL)		105,649	0
	Share Holdings: ANZ Group (ANZ)		127,260	104,976
	Share Holdings: Argo Investments Limited (ARG)		0	128,100
	Share Holdings: Aust Foundation Investment Co Limited (AFI)		0	80,850
	Share Holdings: BHP Group Limited (BHP)		190,080	117,600
	Share Holdings: Djerriwarrh Investments Limited (DJW)		104,340	112,110
	Share Holdings: Fortescue (FMG)		112,985	90,152
	Share Holdings: National Australia Bank Limited (NAB)		109,794	114,144
	Share Holdings: Origin Energy (ORG)		118,584	116,532
	Share Holdings: Perth Mint Gold (PMGOLD)		92,096	0
	Share Holdings: WAM Capital (WAM)		130,680	135,960
	Share Holdings: WAM Global (WGB)		95,372	113,000
	Share Holdings: WAM Leaders Limited (WLE)		146,850	130,350
	Share Holdings: WAM Microcap (WMI)		48,216	48,720
	Share Holdings: Westpac Capital Notes 10 (WBCPM)		107,330	0
	Share Holdings: Westpac Capital Notes 5 (WBCPH)		0	100,000
	Share Holdings: Woodside Energy (WDS)		132,587	111,061
	TOTAL Current Assets		2,061,187	1,825,887
	Fixed Assets			
	Furniture & Fittings			
	Furniture & Fittings: Original Cost		230,527	138,631
	Furniture & Fittings: Less Prov Accum Depreciation		(43,400)	(57,568)
	Total Furniture & Fittings		187,127	81,063
	Library, Yorkgate, Gill, Benham: At Valuation		12,279,945	12,315,345
	Relics & Artefacts: At Valuation		127,468	127,468
	TOTAL Fixed Assets		12,594,540	12,523,876
TOTAL	Assets		14,846,342	14,606,712

Balance Sheet Continued As at 30 June 2026				
		Account	30 June 2026	30 June 2025
Liabilities				
	Current Liabilities			
		Funds: DD Shearing Bequest Fund	0	21,012
		Funds: Dorothy Pyatt Bequest Fund	217,163	172,954
		Funds: GW Symes Bequest Fund	29,622	27,418
		Funds: Junelee Wheaton Bequest Fund	0	85,741
		Funds: Memorials Maintenance Fund	0	3,258
		Funds: RGSSA Lewis Scholarship Fund	100	0
		Funds: RGSSA Library Fund	436,013	114,524
		Funds: RGSSA Library Fund Jim Faull	0	7,244
		Funds: RGSSA Strategic Fund	1,382,240	1,191,448
		Funds: RN Brown Bequest Fund	0	1,161
		Funds: RW Bland Bequest Fund	0	83,267
		Funds: Stephanie Schrapel Bequest Fund	0	56,963
		Funds: Warren Bonython Bequest Fund	0	35,416
		Payables: Accounts Payable	1,770	2,060
		Payables: GST	(8,900)	104,247
		Payables: PAYG Withholding	3,810	3,588
		Prepaid Revenue: Membership Fees	1,314	1,295
		Prepaid Revenue: Tours / Excursions	0	11,000
	TOTAL	Current Liabilities	2,063,132	1,922,598
TOTAL		Total Liabilities	2,063,132	1,922,598
		Net Assets	12,783,210	12,684,114
Equity				
		Current Year Earnings	4,402	3,219
		Retained Earnings	12,778,808	12,680,894
TOTAL		Total Equity	12,783,210	12,684,114

TRUST FUNDS SUMMARY

Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 1,800,408	\$ 564,688
Total Amounts Received		
Total Sales of Items from Library Collection	\$ 184,000	\$ 1,216,000
Total Bequests	\$ -	\$ 50,000
Total Donations	\$ 8,365	\$ 21,973
Total Investment Income	\$ 151,329	\$ 102,053
Less Total Expenses	\$ (111,181)	\$ (154,306)
Transfer to General Funds	\$ (3,312)	\$ -
Transfer to Asset Register	\$ 118,003	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ 2,147,612	\$ 1,800,408
Total Surplus	\$ 232,513	\$ 1,271,543

GSSA STRATEGIC FUND

Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 1,191,448	\$ -
Amounts Received		
Sale of Items from Library Collection	\$ 184,000	\$ 1,216,000
Investment Income	\$ 105,212	\$ 69,229
Less Expenses		
Salary & Oncosts	\$ (84,984)	\$ (78,780)
Brand Strategy Development		\$ (15,000)
Manifesto Video and Mini Prospectus	\$ (13,437)	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ 1,382,240	\$,191,448
Surplus	\$ 190,791	\$ 1,191,448

RW BLAND BEQUEST FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026**

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 83,267	\$ 78,620
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 1,368	\$ 4,647
Less Expenses		
Nil	\$ -	\$ -
Transfers		
Transfer to Library Fund	\$ (84,635.00)	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ -	\$ 83,267
Surplus	\$ 1,368	\$ 4,647

RN BROWN BEQUEST FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026**

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 1,161	\$ 1,096
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 19	\$ 65
Less Expenses		
Nil	\$ -	\$ -
Transfers		
Transfer to Library Fund	\$ (1,180)	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ -	\$ 1,161
Surplus	\$ 19	\$ 65

WARREN BONYTHON BEQUEST FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026**

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 35,416	\$ 33,440
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 582	\$ 1,976
Less Expenses		
Nil	\$ -	\$ -
Transfers		
Transfer to Library Fund	\$ (35,998)	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ -	\$ 35,416
Surplus	\$ 582	\$ 1,976

JIM FAULL FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026**

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 7,244	\$ 6,840
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 119	\$ 404
Less Expenses		
Nil	\$ -	\$ -
Transfers		
Transfer to Library Fund	\$ (7,363)	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ -	\$ 7,244
Surplus	\$ 119	\$ 404

RGSSA LIBRARY FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026**

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 114,524	\$ 113,007
Amounts Received		
Donations	\$ 7,217	\$ 6,413
Investment Income	\$ 20,311	\$ 6,197
Donations - Relics Group	\$ 1,048	\$ 250
Less Expenses		
ALS Library Services - Shelf Check of Library		\$ (8,910)
Mary Rose Bindery - Conservation Treatment 'Forest Flora Atlas'		\$ (300)
Mary Rose Bindery - Conservation Treatment of 2 x fragile		\$ (400)
Roman Design - Brass Book Bindings		\$ (1,600)
Relics Group - Materials for preserving & archiving relics		\$ (133)
Mary Rose Bindery - Conservation Treatment for Sir Joseph Banks Journals	\$ (800)	
Transfers		
Transfer from Closed Funds	\$ 208,432	
Transfer from Wheaton Bequest Fund	\$ 7,277	
Transfer to Dorothy Pyatt Fund	\$ (40,000)	
Transfer Shelving Project to Asset Register	\$ 118,003	
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ 436,013	\$ 114,524
Surplus	\$ 27,776	\$ 1,517

MEMORIALS MAINTENANCE FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026**

<i>ABN 93 978 549 002</i>	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 3,258	\$ 3,076
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 54	\$ 182
Less Expenses		
Nil	\$ -	\$ -
Transfers		
Transfer to General Funds	\$ (3,312)	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ -	\$ 3,258
Surplus	\$ 54	\$ 182

DOROTHY PYATT BEQUEST FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026***ABN 93 978 549 002*

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 172,954	\$ 174,692
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 15,909	\$ 9,842
Less Expenses		
Donald Albert - Library Research Fellowship 2024		\$ (2,800)
Zhongqi Feng - Postgraduate Research Grant 2024		\$ (1,480)
Munkhzul Chimid-Ochir - Postgraduate Research Grant 2025		\$ (3,000)
Chris Hogan - Postgraduate Research Grant 2025	\$ 1,500)	\$ (1,500)
Melina Ey - Library Research Fellowship 2025		\$ 1,400)
Serge Riviere - Library Research Fellowship 2025	\$ (700)	\$ (1,400)
James Wilson - Library Research Fellowship 2025	\$ (1,800)	
Rebecca Hicks - Postgraduate Research Grant 2025	\$ (2,400)	
Amna Javed - Postgraduate Research Grant 2026	\$ 1,525)	
Pragya Timsina - Postgraduate Research Grant 2026	\$ (1,525)	
Michael Roche - Library Research Fellowship 2026	\$ (750)	
Antonella Burrett - Library Research Fellowship 2026	\$ (1,500)	
Transfers		
Transfer from Library Fund	\$ 40,000	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ 217,163	\$ 172,954
Surplus	\$ 4,209	\$ (1,738)

STEPHANIE SCHRAPEL BEQUEST FUND

Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 56,963	\$ 53,784
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 936	\$ 3,179
Less Expenses		
Nil	\$ -	\$ -
Transfers		
Transfer to Library Fund	\$ (57,899)	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ -	\$ 56,963
Surplus	\$ 936	\$ 3,179

DD SHEARING BEQUEST FUND

Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 21,012	\$ 19,840
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 345	\$ 1,172
Less Expenses		
Nil	\$ -	\$ -
Transfers		
Transfer to Library Fund	\$ (21,357)	\$ -
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ -	\$ 21,012
Surplus	\$ 345	\$ 1,172

GW SYMES BEQUEST FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June****2026**

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 27,418	\$ 26,623
Amounts Received		
Investment Income	\$ 2,204	\$ 1,545
Less Expenses		
Yianni (John) Cartledge - GW Symes Award 2025	\$ -	\$ (750)
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ 29,622	\$ 27,418
Surplus	\$ 2,204	\$ 795

WHEATON BEQUEST FUND**Statement of Income and Expenses for the year ended 30th June 2026**

ABN 93 978 549 002

	Jul25 - Jun26	Jul24 - Jun25
Opening Balances 01/07/2025	\$ 85,741	\$ 53,669
Amounts Received		
Bequest		\$ 50,000
Donations	\$ 100	\$ 15,310
Investment Income	\$ 4,270	\$ 3,615
Less Expenses		
Arts SA - Shelving Project - Deposit		\$ (27,446)
Precious Cargo - Shelving Project		\$ (8,377)
The Engraving Crew - Wheaton Plaque		\$ (1,030)
The Engraving Crew - Plaque for other donors	\$ (260)	
Arts SA - Shelving Project - Balance	\$ (82,574)	
Less Transfers		
Transfer to Library Fund	\$ (7,277)	
Closing Balances 30/06/2026	\$ -	\$ 85,741
Surplus	\$ 4,110	\$ 67,895



CMA chartered accountants
Business Development Specialists

30 September 2026

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**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026
TO THE MEMBERS OF**

ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Royal Geographical Society of South Australia Inc (the Entity), which comprises the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2026 and Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2026.



Council's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The council is responsible for the preparation of the financial report in accordance with the basis of preparation described in the notes to the financial report, and has determined that this basis of preparation is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The council is also responsible for such internal control as the council determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being the special purpose financial report of the Entity, which comprises the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2026 and Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2026.

In our opinion, the financial report of the Entity presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2026 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the basis of preparation described in the notes to the financial report.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to the notes to the financial report, which describe the basis of preparation. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the council's financial reporting responsibilities to the members. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Yours faithfully

CMA Chartered Accountants

Con J Markou
Registered Company Auditor 5382
30 September 2026

CMA Chartered Accountants Financial & Management Accounting | Business & Tax Planning | Coaching | Business Development & Auditing | Bookkeeping Services

Ludlow Design Pty Ltd ACN 008 213 787 trading as CMA Chartered Accountants "Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation"

Scholarship Fund – Income and Expenditure

	Jul 25 - Jun 26	Jul 24 - Jun 25
Income		
Donations Received	\$9,955	\$2,550
Interest received	\$1,960	\$2,506
Other Income	\$0	\$0
Total Income	\$11,915	\$5,056
Expenses		
Administration Expenses		
Auditing	\$200	\$200
Bank Fees	\$60	\$120
GST over/under	\$1	\$1
Total Administration Expenses	\$261	\$321
Award Prizes & Expenses		
Medals and Cerificates	\$1,000	\$64
Membership RGSSA as		
Prize	\$1,486	\$1,382
Monetary Awards	\$6,510	\$2,825
Catering & Set-up for		
Awards Night	\$2,512	\$200
Total Award Prizes & Expenses	\$11,508	\$4,471
Total Expenses	\$11,769	\$4,791
Net Profit	\$146	\$264

Scholarship Fund – Balance Sheet

	30 Jun 26	30 Jun 25
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cheque/Savings		
Term Deposit	\$49,000	\$49,000
Freedom Business Account	\$1,349	\$1,532
Total Cheque/Savings	\$50,349	\$50,532
Total Current Assets	\$50,349	\$50,532
TOTAL ASSETS	\$50,349	\$50,532
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
GST Payable	-\$494	-\$164
Total Current Liabilities	-\$494	-\$164
TOTAL LIABILITIES	-\$494	-\$164
NET ASSETS	\$50,843	\$50,696
EQUITY		
Current Year Earnings	\$146	\$264
Retained Earnings	\$50,696	\$50,432
TOTAL EQUITY	\$50,843	\$50,696



CMA chartered accountants
Business Development Specialists

30 September 2026

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026
TO THE MEMBERS OF RGSSA SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

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ABN 46 008 213 787

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report of RGSSA Scholarship Fund (the Entity), which comprises the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2026 and Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2026.

Council's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The council is responsible for the preparation of the financial report in accordance with the basis of preparation described in the notes to the financial report, and has determined that this basis of preparation is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The council is also responsible for such internal control as the council determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being the special purpose financial report of the Entity, which comprises the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2026 and Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended 30 June 2026.

In our opinion, the financial report of the Entity presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2026 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the basis of preparation described in the notes to the financial report.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to the notes to the financial report, which describe the basis of preparation. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the council's financial reporting responsibilities to the members. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Yours faithfully

CMA Chartered Accountants

Con J Markou
Registered Company Auditor 5382
30 September 2026

CMA Chartered Accountants Financial & Management Accounting | Business & Tax Planning | Coaching | Business Development & Auditing | Bookkeeping Services

Ludlow Design Pty Ltd ACN 008 213 787 trading as CMA Chartered Accountants "Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation"



CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
AUSTRALIA • NEW ZEALAND

Minutes of 2025 Annual General Meeting

Held in the RGSSA Library, State Library of South Australia,

THURSDAY 9 OCTOBER 2025 at 5:15 P.M.

Apologies: Sue Barker, Matthew Blampey, Mike Burdett, Neil Coffee, Mark and Georgia Darter, Alan and Pam Deverell, Tania Hay, Carolyn Franklin, Norman and Christine James, Philip Jones, Rob Marshall, Fi Pahor, Geoffrey Paterson, Lee Philp, Tracey Radford, Guy Robinson, Rod and Pat Shearing, Julia Short, Bradley Slape, George and Liz Willanski, Richard Wilson.

Present: Peter Becker, Dymphna Cudmore, Melissa Gibbs, Frances Gnodtke, Hans Gnodtke, Dean Harris, Iain Hay, Rosemary Hocking, Yashraj Joshi, Robin Lamacraft, Andrew Lothian, Gilbert Materne, Tony Merchant, Hugh Orr, Alan Pickering, Leigh Radford, Susan Robinson, Joc Schmiechen, Neil Teague, Nona Verco and Gail Ward.

Welcome

The President, Leigh Radford, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the AGM was being held in the library without a lecture following to allow sufficient time for members to ask questions about any aspects of the Annual Report.

Minutes of Previous AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 23 October 2024 had been circulated as part of the Annual Report and were taken as read.

Motion: That the minutes of the 2024 AGM be accepted.

Proposed by Alan Pickering and seconded by Andrew Lothian. Carried.

President's Report

The President noted that this 140th anniversary year of our Society had been one of burgeoning activity and growth for the RGSSA. Five years ago, the Society updated its Strategic Plan with one of the key objectives being to increase its professionalism – to “raise the bar” on its activities. In his tenure as President, Leigh explained that he had two main ambitions – to raise the profile of the Society and open its doors to a much wider audience; and to significantly increase the Society’s funding base as a key to unlocking its further potential.

As part of our broader strategic vision, Council commissioned local company Nation Creative to help enhance the brand of RGSSA and to craft our narrative. They are in the process of producing a video and new brochure material to showcase our strengths and appeal.

In terms of professionalisation, our Director, Professor Iain Hay, has made enormous strides in overseeing our activities, providing focus and vision for RGSSA, and helping to build and expand our profile and outreach. A single, but very good example of this, has been Iain’s establishment of a dynamic new young professional cohort, that we now know as ‘GeoNext’.

The Society’s library is both its greatest asset and its biggest liability. To fully restore the collection would require many millions of dollars, however there is an increasingly urgent need to fund a library manager to ensure our library is properly preserved for future generations.

One of the greatest challenges which Council has needed to grapple with as part of our strategic ambition, has been how to fund initiatives and growth. To do this, about five years ago, Council resolved to realise a very limited number of assets to raise capital and set the Society up for long term success. There was no other viable pathway to provide the capital needed to allow us to employ a director and library manager.

Firstly, Council had to identify which items in our collection would allow us to achieve our capital raising goal. Council was determined to realise the fewest number of items possible bearing in mind that anything relating to South Australia or Australia must be retained. According to our tenancy agreement with the State Library, the RGSSA may not sell any items in its collection without Libraries Board approval. Initially one asset was identified and a year-long process commenced to seek Libraries Board permission to sell it. The Libraries Board finally agreed but stipulated that the RGSSA had to sell the item itself, and preferably to a public institution. The Society spent the next year approaching various august organisations in Australia, North America and Europe attempting to sell Joseph Banks' handwritten "Journals of a voyage to Newfoundland and Labrador, and a visit to Lisbon" without success. We then approached the Libraries Board for permission to engage expert assistance to sell the journal. The Libraries Board devolved the decision to the Director of the State Library who suggested we develop a list of items which could be professionally assessed as to their ability to be sold without affecting the integrity of the collection's Australian content. A list of about 12 items was agreed between the Society and the Director of the State Library.

After considerable effort the Banks' journals were sold for \$1.54M and David Roberts' hand-coloured lithographs of the Holy Land - Royal Subscription Edition for \$120k. It is these two sales that have led to the very large difference in the balance sheet compared to last year. The reason the value of the Society's library has increased, despite these sales, is that previous reports were based on a valuation conducted 25 years ago whereas a valuation conducted 15 years ago has been used in the recent report.

As President, Leigh has been strongly motivated to find ways for our Society to flourish, and he feels a tremendous sense of satisfaction at what has been achieved. He believes that the culmination of our ambitions in this last year, has set the RGSSA up for the strongest of futures, for the next century and beyond. Council has resolved not to sell any more items without a very compelling requirement for more funds.

The President thanked all the Society's volunteers for their wonderful efforts; all of its committees for their vital work; and the Council for their unwavering support and far-sighted decision making. Without volunteers the Society would cease to function.

Motion: That the President's Report for 2024-2025 be accepted.

Proposed by Leigh Radford and seconded by Joc Schmiechen. Carried.

Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements

Dean Harris queried why the value of the sale of 2 items from the library collection in the income and expenditure statement for the Strategic Fund was considerably less than the sale values reported by the President. TM explained that the difference was the cost of commission. Dean suggested that for such a significant event, the details of what was sold should have been included in the Annual Report. Dean also suggested that the revaluation of the library collection could have been explained in the Treasurer's report, although he agreed that any valuation of a collection such as the Society's was rather meaningless.

Nona Verco noted that when the York Gate library was acquired in 1906 it was intended that the collection not be split up and that it would be housed in the State Library of South Australia on the condition that the Society made it available to the public. The President noted that the York Gate library was a very eclectic collection reflecting Silver's many interests which included much material of no relevance to geography.

Motion: That the 2024-2025 Financial Statements, as detailed in the Annual Report be accepted.

Moved: Tony Merchant; Seconded: Dean Harris. Carried.

The President commended the Treasurer for the wonderful work he does in overseeing the Society's complex finances. The newly formed Investment Committee has provided Council with a series of investment recommendations which have ensured a diverse, but relatively secure portfolio.

Election of Office Holders

The President declared all Executive positions vacant and handed over to Alan Pickering to act as Returning Officer. Alan asked if anyone present wished to speak to the nominations. Noone did. He then asked if the meeting would be agreeable to have a single vote for all the positions. As there was no objection Alan invited all financial members to vote by a show of hands. The vote was unanimously in favour of those members who had been proposed and seconded according to the Rules;

Position	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
President	Leigh Radford OAM	Melissa Gibbs	Joc Schmiechen
Vice President	Guy Robinson	Bingjie Song	Susan Robinson
	Julia Short	Rod Shearing	Joc Schmiechen
Treasurer	Tony Merchant	Frances Gnodtke	Melissa Gibbs
Councillor			
	Frances Gnodtke	Andrew Lothian	Joc Schmiechen
	Philip Jones	Hugh Orr	Leigh Radford
	Andrew Lothian	Frances Gnodtke	Guy Robinson
	Joc Schmiechen	Leigh Radford	Frances Gnodtke
	Richard Wilson	Hugh Orr	Melissa Gibbs

Leigh reported that he was honoured to continue as President and very happy to welcome two new Councillors – Philip Jones and Dick Wilson.

Hugh Orr moved a vote of thanks for the President's ongoing efforts and commitment to the Society. Carried by acclamation.

There being no further business, the President declared the meeting closed and thanked all members for attending.

Benefits of Volunteering

- Share your knowledge, skills and experience with others.
- Develop new skills and apply existing skills in new ways.
- Work alongside people who share your interests and enthusiasm for geography.
- Pursue your interests and gain experience in areas that matter to you.
- Contribute to activities that support the Society's objectives.
- Help shape the future of the RGSSA and its contribution to geography.
- Make a meaningful contribution to the vitality and value of geography.

Advancing your Society

There are several ways that you are able to advance your Society;

- **Adopt a book**; this will leave in perpetuity an identifying book plate on one of the Society's collections of rare and valuable books, showing that your contribution was responsible for the future preservation and conservation of that book.
- **Donate or provide a legacy to the Society's Trust Funds** to support;
 - a number of library activities including repair and conservation of rare books and manuscripts, purchase of new books and the like, or,
 - the Lewis RGSSA Scholarship Fund for scholarships, bursaries or prizes that promote the discipline of geography.
- **Volunteer your time** as a gift 'in kind' to assist with our geographical conservation or interpretation or with any of the Society's various other programs.
- **Bequeath an amount of money or property** to the Society through your will.

Please contact the Society if you would like to pursue any of these ideas. In many cases donations are tax deductible, and there is training and mentoring available for any 'in kind' volunteer contribution.