



Australia's Representative  
International Cartographic Association

# MSI- Connected!

Newsletter of the Mapping Sciences Institute, Australia



DECEMBER 2013 EDITION

VISIT [www.mappingsciences.org.au](http://www.mappingsciences.org.au)

## Contents highlights

President's Report	2
Special offer to members	3
"Once were draftsmen"	5
The Mapping Habit	9

## FROM THE EDITOR

Many years ago I wrote an article that was refused by the editor of a professional magazine. The article was to inform readers of the impending brain-drain and diminishing level of skills in cartography and spatial sciences. The reason for the article being refused was that it was potentially offensive and libellous. The underlying elements of the article hold true even today. Some might say that highlighting the skills shortage in cartography as being a little alarmist; however I beg to differ. When the skills of the profession, in this case cartography, are no longer being taught by the education and training sector, with it goes the fundamentals of the ability to



create great maps or produce mapping data such as an understanding of map projections, data collection and analysis techniques and topographic interpretation abilities. Coupled with the lack of training dollars due to economic constraints, the acquiring of new 'cadets' and new skills are falling by the way side. The upside is that something can be done to fill this vacuum and professional organisations such as MSIA have a role to play in providing learning materials to members and the wider community.

This edition is jam-packed full of information, including an exclusive discount for members, and a catalogue/book review of "Mapping the World". In the President's message, Don Pearce provides an account of his service to cartography over the many decades of active involvement. There is a great member bio by Keith Smith, the National Secretary, and Les Isdale highlights a fantastic way to present your photos of your next holiday – maybe you can produce your own collage and send it in for publishing? To one and all, have a safe and enjoyable Christmas!

*Adam Ladhams*

Email: [adam.ladhams@hotmail.com](mailto:adam.ladhams@hotmail.com)

Got a story to tell, want to honour a work colleague, promote your company, or provide a product review, contact Adam Ladhams on [adam.ladhams@hotmail.com](mailto:adam.ladhams@hotmail.com) to forward contributions.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



When I was starting my working life ,I had two things impressed upon me .The first one was that when I had a job, I must always be prepared to do more than I was paid for because if I didn't, I was not worth what I was paid. The second thing was that if I had a professional job with a good salary that provided me with a good lifestyle, then I had a duty and a responsibility to give something back to that profession.

When I started work as a cadet draftsman, I was one of about 20 cadets of various ages .When work projects were tabled to be done ,most cadets refused to do jobs they didn't like whereas I was happy to do anything and everything without question, believing in my initial instruction. After qualifying in 3 years instead of the normal 4 years and promotional opportunities arose, I was given preference because I was seen to be willing to do more than colleagues at the same level.

When the Institute of Cartographers was formed in Western Australia, the second issue that I was imbued with arose and I put myself forward to be a Committee Member, which over the years extended to two terms as President and a member of the National Executive when the Institute became a National body. The International Cartographic Association was dominated by European Countries and The United States and Australia was a very small fish so it came as a great surprise when I was appointed the Secretary General and Treasurer after the International Conference in 1984. This was a wonderful opportunity for me to give something back to a profession that by now, was providing me and my family of wife and 3 daughters (all cartographers) with a very good lifestyle .

I was awarded a Gold Medal for my services to National Cartography and later, a second Gold Medal for my services to International Cartography. When I retired from the Department of Minerals and Energy as the Deputy Director of Surveys and Mapping, I think I had fulfilled the two principles that had been laid down for me when I started work. Although I started my own business in organising conventions and exhibitions and a small mapping business, I continued with the ICA, becoming a Vice President until volume of work forced me to stand down. Part of our logo was that "We go the extra mile".

The convention industry in Australia was very unprofessional and disorganised so I set about establishing The Meetings Industry Association of Australia, based on the Institute of Cartographers format and principles. It quickly grew to 1500 members and was a strong body. I was National Chairman for many years and also Chairman of the Perth Convention Bureau. The Meetings Industry now has a fulltime paid secretary and an office in the heart of Sydney. I was awarded a Gold Medal and Life Membership for my services to the industry.

I mention this record, not for any self aggrandisement but to demonstrate that, if you have a purpose and set yourself strong standards, there are wonderful opportunities awaiting you that will provide a lifestyle that can be deeply satisfying and productive as I have experienced, if you are prepared to do more than you are paid for.

*Don Pearce, MSIA President*

Email: [don.pearce@westnet.com.au](mailto:don.pearce@westnet.com.au)

## SPECIAL OFFER TO MSIA MEMBERS

For those members who will not be able to visit the **Mapping Our World: Terra Incognita to Australia** display at the National Library of Australia and have considered purchasing a copy of the catalogue from the library bookshop. The Mapping Sciences Institute, Australia management committee is making a **special offer** available to members.



The offer is available between the **1 December and the 31 December 2013** to the first **50 members** who send the required information by email to [national.treasurer@mappingsciences.org.au](mailto:national.treasurer@mappingsciences.org.au) when they purchase a catalogue. Offer closes for receipt of emails received before midnight on 31 December 2013 or when the 50th email responding to the offer is received by the national treasurer. The offer is aimed at student members and other members on lower incomes but does not exclude any members. The national treasurers decision is final as to successful offers received.

The National Library bookshop url is:  
<http://bookshop.nla.gov.au/book/mapping-our-world-terra-incognita-to-australia.do>

### The Process to follow to apply for a reimbursement.

The member purchases one copy of the catalogue on line from the National Library Australia bookshop. The catalogue is "Mapping our World: Terra Incognita to Australia" Price \$49.95

Individual MSIA members will be eligible to receive a reimbursement of **\$25.00** towards the purchase of one Catalogue by providing the following evidence. The subsidy will be limited to one per MSIA member and will be processed nationally on provision of proof of purchase being provided to the National treasurer as follows.

A member is to forward to the National treasurer by email a scanned copy of their receipted invoice demonstrating proof of payment for the purchase of the catalogue. They are also to provide banking details so that payment of the subsidy can be credited direct to their banking organisation account electronically by the National Treasurer. The banking details will be destroyed once the payment is finalised:- Bank Account name; Bank Name; BSBN; Account number. Please also provide your telephone number should you have to be contacted.

John McCormack  
National Treasurer  
Mapping Sciences institute Australia

## BOOK REVIEW: "MAPPING OUR WORLD"

*Don Pearce*

The National Library of Australia is hosting an exhibition entitled "Mapping Our World: Terra Incognita to Australia". To support the Exhibition, a superb catalogue has been published in colour and if you can't get to the exhibition, a copy of the catalogue at \$49.99 is certainly worthwhile. The book measures 300mm wide x 270mm high x 30mm thick and weighs just under 3 kg and has 256 pages. The catalogue is divided into 5 sections beginning with the very first world map and continuing to the Terra Australis Map of Matthew Flinders.

Section 1 – Ancient Conception of the World

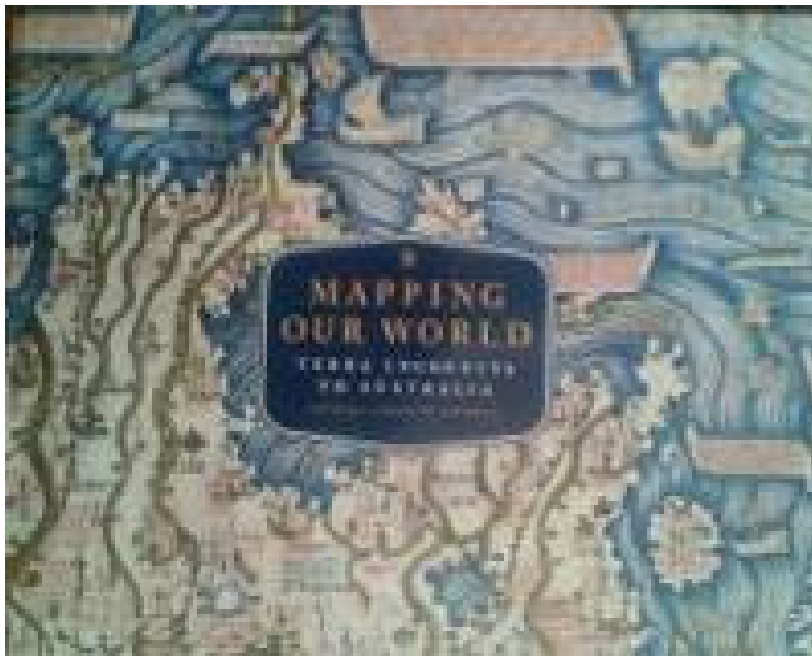
Section 2 – Medieval Religious Mapping

Section 3 – The Age of Discovery

Section 4 – The Dutch Golden Age

Section 5 – Europe and the South Pacific

The maps and charts have been reproduced in superb colour and quality and each map is supported by an excellent and easy readable description by a world historian. This is a book that will grace any library or home coffee table.



## ONCE WERE DRAFTSMEN

*Keith Smith [Illustrations kindly drawn by David Fraser]*

From the beginning, I was at war with the dual components of my chosen vocation. Embarked on a career as a survey draftsman, I grappled with the science part at night-school, painfully acquiring a superficial understanding of trigonometry, geodesy and astronomy, while practising the art component by day, armed with a brass parallel ruler, any number of recalcitrant steel nibs and a bottle of Indian ink.

Some aspects of my daily work, such as drawing survey plans and plotting road-location contour plans were tolerable, even enjoyable. In contrast, the most excruciating days I endured were those in the Cartographic Branch, where I suffered stultifying hours revising and compiling cadastral maps. O, how it bored me! Yet sadly, I wasted nearly twenty years ducking and diving trying to avoid this elitist form of drafting, before I decided that the challenge was too great. My manual dexterity had been tested and found wanting, so I decided to give my brain a workout before it was too late.



I quit the drafting world forever and found solace as the Subdivisional Designs Officer in the Surveys Branch. This coincided with an explosion in the number and scale of development projects taking place in Crown Land in south-east Queensland, and the building of several coal-mining towns in the centre of the State. Overnight I became adviser to the Government, and travelled far and wide to report on these undertakings. To lend credibility to my opinions, I completed a Graduate Diploma in Urban and Regional Planning and joined the Royal Australian Planning Institute.

All this occurred in the Survey Office, then part of the Lands Department, but in 1976, the Department of Mapping and Surveying was created to take over its functions. DMS was committed to operating in a cooperative arrangement with both the private sector and academia resulting in the establishment of a number of "industry" councils, to which I was invariably appointed secretary. I was also personal adviser on planning matters to the Minister for Urban and Regional Affairs.





In 1982 most of our upper echelon retired and I aspired to fill the vacated position of Director of Planning and Policy, but in the event I became Director of Mapping. Before settling in, I took a quick trip around the world glancing at technological developments here and there, including the British Ordnance Survey and the United States Geological Survey.

Back at work, I found that the priority was to produce maps in support of our awakening tourist industry. So I assembled a team of cartographers who were experts in this type of mapping and I entered into an agreement with a couple of energetic private-sector salesmen to distribute our products. Sales increased from a few thousand to many hundreds of thousands.

As a diversion, I was also associated with a large mapping project in the Philippines and led a team marketing another in Indonesia.

Another highlight was serving on the Technical Advisory Committee of the National Mapping Council and then on the Council itself. The TAC comprised experts in the three components of mapping; that is, cartography, photogrammetry and geodetic surveying, and I only slightly embarrassed myself when discussion turned to such things as line-weights and hill-shading. My time on the Council was thoroughly enjoyable as I saw the irony of Australia's peak mapping body being populated with nine surveyors, one hydrographer and one survey draftsman.

## New Member

Welcome to MSIA's newest member – Simone Cross (from New South Wales)

For more information about membership and other cartography matters, visit [www.mappingsciences.org.au](http://www.mappingsciences.org.au)

TIME FOR A PICTURE...



Tosua Pool, Samoa

## PRESS RELEASE: POST-GIS DAY 2013: CELEBRATE IN BRISBANE

### *“Brisbane Enjoys World’s Largest GIS Day Celebration”*

Wednesday 20th November marked this year’s International GIS Day 2013, and Brisbane celebrated in style with a massive open day showcasing the best and latest geospatial technologies.

With nearly 30 exhibitors demonstrating the real-world benefits of GIS, the event attracted over 2000 visitors, including interested members of the public, school students and local business owners.

Displays included a virtual 3D Brisbane from Brisbane City Council, disaster management mapping, unmanned aerial drones, 3D laser scanning and Queensland Government’s ground-breaking Queensland Globe, to name just a few. Some of the visiting school children were even lucky enough to have an inspirational talk by Dr Timothy Foresman, world-renowned Spatial Scientist and Event Speaker. These exhibits and talks highlight how GIS is at the forefront of a powerful new technological revolution that will change the way we all view the world.

Igor Stjepanovic, Managing Director of event organisers GIS People, says “We’re extremely pleased with the success of the event. It’s been impressive demonstration of what GIS technology can do for business, government, academia and the general public.”

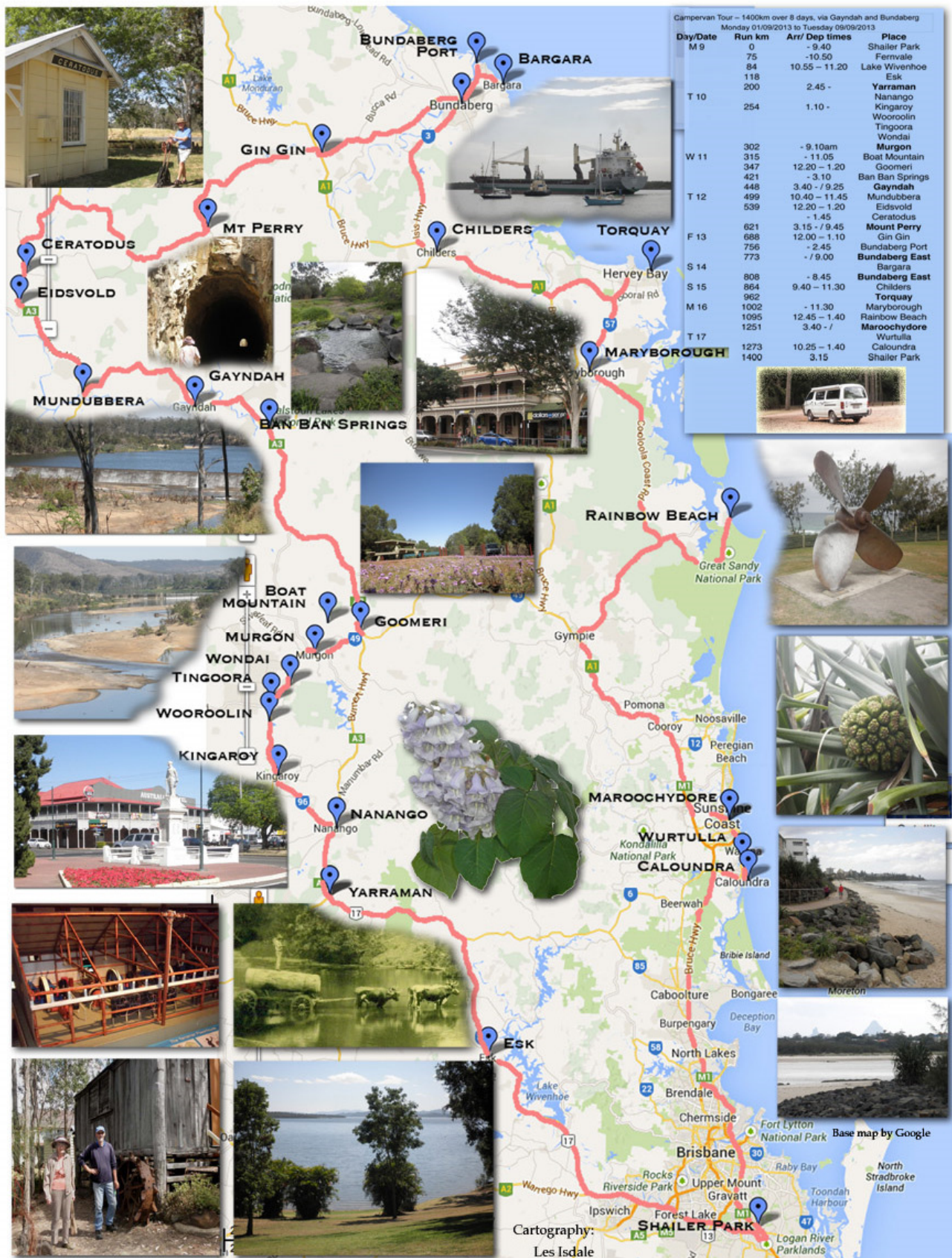
The event was sponsored by GIS People, Esri Australia, Dialog Google Enterprise and AAM, with further assistance from a large number of supporters and volunteers. Visit [www.facebook.com/gispeople](http://www.facebook.com/gispeople) and [www.gisday.com.au](http://www.gisday.com.au) for more information and photos of the event.



## THE MAPPING HABIT

*Les Isdale*

Somewhat against my better judgement, I've agreed to share with you a map I cobbled together after a recent holiday. Story follows.



A delightful tale by the American poet Robert Frost has the extraordinary title, *'How Hard Is It to Keep from Being King When It's in You and in the Situation'*. It's a good read.

There's an echo of that in the fact that mapping becomes a habit. As an incorrigible mapmaker, I'm Guilty as Charged, yer Honour. The story is never completely told until it's mapped, and several holiday route maps have resulted. It means I can 'hold it to the light', retrace my steps and savour the events in retrospect, like the aftertaste of a good wine.

This time, all the hard work was done by Google, and it is an interesting change to move from vector mapping in Macromedia Freehand etc to pixellated image manipulation in Photoshop.

This is not the new gold standard in best practice – 'quick and dirty' comes to mind. But it provided a suitable vehicle for my holiday happy snaps.

I was tempted to sign off 'del.' as an old joke. You'll find it etched in the margins of antique maps, and was still standard practice when I was a cadet in the Survey Office Queensland. It comes from 'delineator', with reference to precise drawings.

But we have a flag to fly, and be it ever so humble, this is Cartography. Use it or lose it!

The Google map of the whole track is pretty basic. To get some map detail I joined enlarged chunks of it, added some larger place names, then a selection of photos, partly to cover up some of the debris. The itinerary was created as a LibreOffice spreadsheet and plugged in.

I have a sense that this kind of illustrative map is popular as never before. Groups and individuals are employing user-friendly digital systems to produce home-grown maps of infinite thematic variety – cartography 'of the people, by the people, and for the people'. Hair-splitting accuracy is not critical (overlays have the benefit of high precision bases). It's fun, it's personal, and it's a rapidly expanding field of cartography.

Originating as ephemera, documents can prove long-lived compared to physical monuments. Shakespeare said of his sonnet, *'So long as men can breathe or eyes can see/ So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.'*

All sorts of graffiti survives for centuries, so a 'mud map' of modest intent may become a very permanent statement. This is certainly true of clay inscriptions, parchment and acid-free paper. Just how it fares in the digital age is anyone's guess. They say that nothing is ever lost from the 'cloud', but will anyone be able to read it?

If this nonsense makes its way into print, it is a sure sign that the Editor is desperate for an article – any article – from members involved in the wide world of mapping. If there is something you can say (about a better route to route maps for instance), why don't you (to coin a phrase) just say it?