

# National Rock Garden

*Celebrating the Geological  
Heritage of Australia*

**Newsletter No. 2**

**July 2011**



National Rock Garden site from the summit of Black Mountain. Scrivener Dam is in the background.

## ***Editor's comment***

We are now in the middle of the year 2011 and the development of the National Rock Garden is still moving ahead. Not as fast as I would like but then I was rather naive about the business associated with such project. I feel more like a lawyer and accountant these days than an earth scientist.

However, it's all very necessary when you are doing anything connected with construction on Commonwealth lands in the middle of Canberra.

Read on!

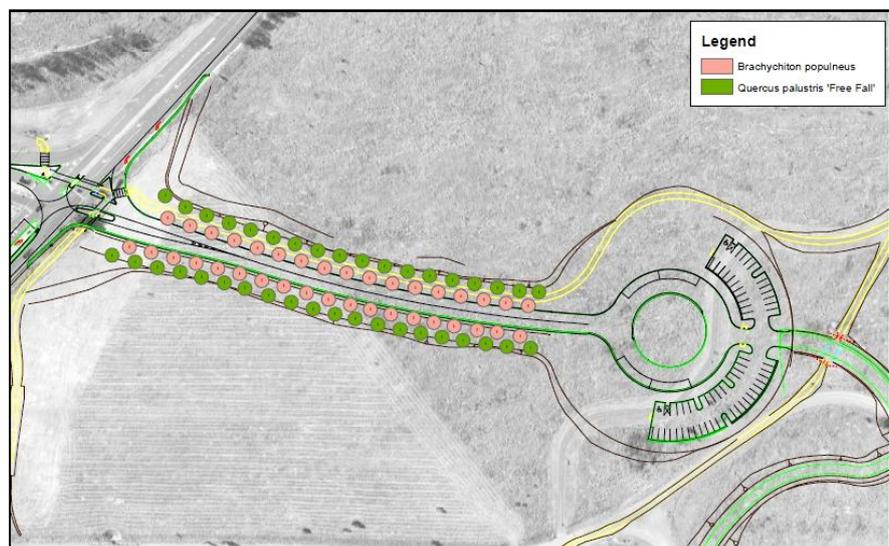
## ***From the GSA President, Brad Pillans***

On behalf of the GSA, I would like to thank the many individuals and groups who have contacted us to offer support and suggestions for the NRG. I have been particularly gratified by the enthusiastic responses of members of the general public to the idea of celebrating our geological heritage through the establishment of a National Rock Garden. My view, right from the start, has been that this is not just a garden for geologists, but a garden for all Australians.

I would like to make special mention of one person, among many, who contacted us soon after the project was launched last year - Graham Todd. Graham and his wife, Barbara, run a family-owned business called China Trading Company (CTC), specialising in bilateral trade with the People's Republic of China for almost 50 years. With extensive experience in the areas of horticulture, agriculture and the nursery industry, CTC was responsible for transport, by ocean-going tug and barge, of 90 huge fig trees from Tweed Heads to Sydney to form the 2000 Sydney Olympic main boulevard. Since contacting us last year, Graham has been tireless in promoting the NRG everywhere he goes. Particularly valuable publicity for the NRG has come from interviews that Graham has done on the Sunday ABC radio program, "Australia All Over" – Graham knows the presenter, Ian McNamara (Macca), which helps explain why he is a "regular" interviewee on the program.

As you will see, in the rest of this newsletter, the NRG project is moving forward on all fronts, though at a somewhat slower pace than initially anticipated. So, those of you who have made suggestions for rock specimens to be included in the NRG, don't be disheartened – all your suggestions will be fully considered by our selection committee over the coming months.

***Trees for the public road  
entrance drive – Kurrajongs  
and Pin Oaks.***



## ***The name – Commonwealth Gazette Notice***

On the 1st April 2011 the name of the rock garden was officially gazetted by the Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, Hon. Simon Crean MP.

# *National Rock Garden*

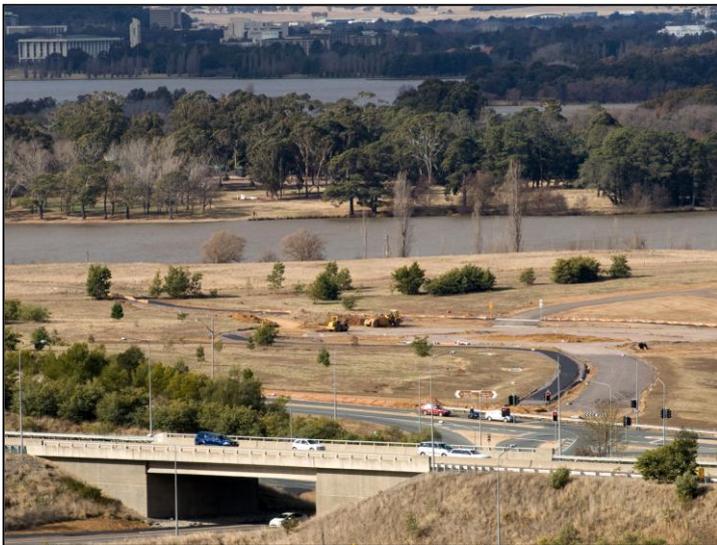
## ***Celebrating the Geological Heritage of Australia***

As with all proposals for national monuments and facilities in the Australian Capital Territory there is an administrative process that must be followed. In the earlier half of 2011 the National Capital Authority (NCA) guided the Geological Society through the paper maze that resulted in the gazettal of the site and name for the national Rock Garden at the western end of Lake Burley Griffin. “Thank you NCA”.

## ***Site work***

The National Rock Garden is being developed in parallel with the neighbouring Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum managed by the National Capital Authority (NCA). NCA manages all lands on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin on behalf of the Commonwealth Government.

The ACT Government is contributing significantly towards the redevelopment of the whole area by constructing an access road from Lady Denman Drive and the car/bus parking for both the Lindsay Pryor



National Arboretum and the National Rock Garden. Construction work is well advanced. The network of cycle paths and roads is rapidly taking shape with bitumen being laid on the new cycle path network as this Newsletter is distributed. It is estimated that the access road bitumen will be laid by the end of August. The construction crew can't dig up the old cycle path until the put in a new one. The cycle route round Lake Burley Griffin is very busy every day with energetic commuters.

## ***National Rock Garden Trust***

The Geological Society of Australia (GSA) is in the process of establishing the National Rock Garden Trust, an administrative instrument that will be used to help fund the construction and ongoing management of the garden. To enable funds contributed by individuals, institutions or corporate Australia to be tax deductible the Geological Society has to be entered on the Register of Environmental Organisations of the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage. This is not as straight forward as you might think. It's taken longer than at first thought. The Australian Taxation Office has to endorse the GSA as a Deductible Gift Recipient. The final approval and administrative steps are now being processed.

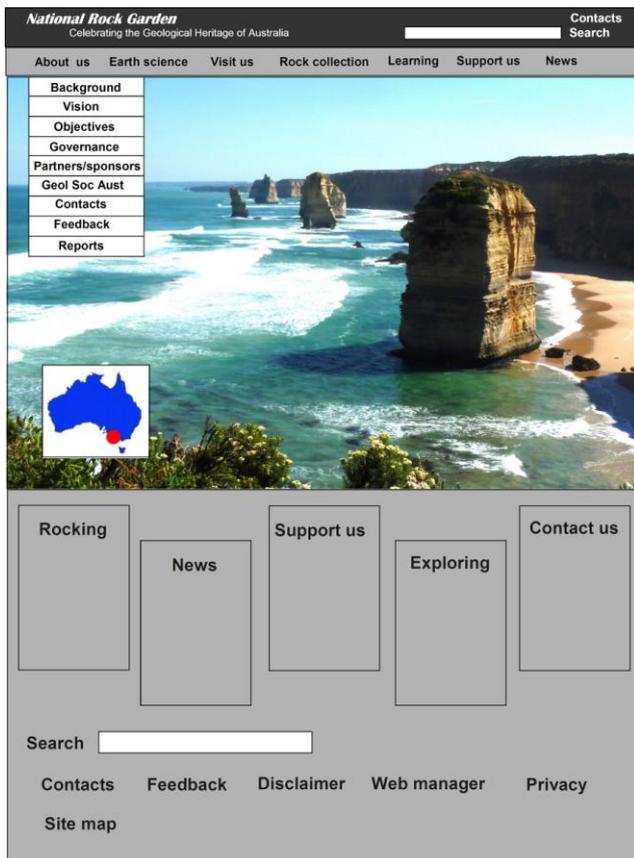
One has to get all the buzz words correct. For this the GSA engaged its legal advisors, Babingtons Law Pty Ltd. to ensure that all the administrative boxes are “ticked”. Hopefully the whole process will be completed by August.

## ***Friends of the National Rock Garden***

If you do not wish to be included in this support group and receive further Newsletters by email, please send a request to -

[rockgarden@gsa.org.au](mailto:rockgarden@gsa.org.au)

Anyone is welcome to join the support group, whether or not they are an earth scientist. Clubs and institutions may also wish to join us. GSA encourages input and support from the public at large, academia, commerce, and the educational, tourist and resource industries.



### ***National Rock Garden web site***

For the immediate future, news and information on the National Rock Garden etc. is located on the Geological Society of Australia web site

<http://www.gsa.org.au>

However, by the end of the year we hope that the National Rock Garden will have its own web site. Who knows, it may look something like this.

### ***From the Curator of Rock Specimens, John Bain***

Committees comprising representatives from geological surveys, universities, industry, and geoscience associations are being established in each State and Territory so that a broader, more representative cross section of the geoscience community and industry are able to have

meaningful input into the selection of the most appropriate rocks to represent their State, region, industry, or scientific discipline. The information and advice provided by these committees will assist the Steering Committee to acquire the most appropriate rocks to represent the geology of the continent and its principal resource industries in the National Rock Garden.

The following, with the support of the heads of all State/Territory geological surveys, have agreed to assist us in selecting and accessing the best rocks to represent their State/Territory:

**Queensland**: Ian Withnall (GSQ Brisbane), Geoff Derrick (GSA Brisbane), Warwick Willmott (GSA Brisbane), Ces Murray (GSA Brisbane), Simon Beams (TerraSearch Townsville)

**NSW**: Ian Percival (GS Londonderry)

**Victoria**: Vince Morand (DPI Melbourne), Fons VandenBerg, Bill Birch (VicMus Melbourne)

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**Tasmania:** Ralph Bottrill (MRT Hobart)(Ch), Garry Davidson (UTas Hobart), Kim Denwer (Bass Metals Burnie), Mike Vicary (MRT Hobart), Nick Turner(GSA), Ken Morrison (GSA), Andrew MacNeil (UTas Hobart)

**South Australia:** Wolfgang Preiss (PIRSA Adelaide), Barry Cooper (UniSA Adelaide), Tony Belperio (Minotaur Expl Adelaide)

**Western Australia:** Mike Fetherston (GSWA Perth)

**Northern Territory:** Christine Edgoose (NTGS Alice Springs)

**ACT:** Michelle Cooper (GATimeWalk), Jan Knutson (Cenozoic volcanism), Des Strusz (Fossils), (GSA)

If you would like to join one of these groups or can offer any assistance to them please contact John Bain at [rockgarden@gsa.org.au](mailto:rockgarden@gsa.org.au) or any of those listed above.

If you would like to suggest a rock for the garden please give us the maximum amount of information including the geological age, official formation name, location, and reason for the selection, reference information and photos.

### ***Landscape architecture – University of Canberra***

During the 1<sup>st</sup> Semester 2011 at the University of Canberra, twenty seven final year landscape architecture students, as part of their course work, completed a design project with a focus on the National Rock Garden site. The students included four scholarship students from Canada. The students were given a GSA design brief, and GSA also offered prizes for the top three designs.

On 24 February Doug Finlayson led a field excursion around four sites in Canberra; 1) Geoscience Australia, 2) Acton Peninsula at National Museum of Australia, 3) Australian National Botanical Gardens, and 4) National Rock Garden site.

On two days in early May, Doug Finlayson and John Bain, with UC Staff, viewed twenty seven student poster presentations. The standard of presentations was most impressive. Students had injected a considerable effort into their projects. The poster preparation and construction was made through an impressive set of state-of-the-art design software and drafting tools available at UC.

The student award winners were: 1<sup>st</sup> - Renae Palmer, joint 2<sup>nd</sup> – Jared Phillips and Mandy Sullivan, highly commended David Duham and Marina Signer.



GSA and the University of Canberra are planning a “show-and-tell” for students to present their designs to a wider audience of GSA members and guests.

In the not too distant future the GSA will call for expressions of interest from professional landscape architects for the preparation of a design that can be passed on to a project manager for construction.

## ***Support***

The Geological Society of Australia welcomes the letter of encouragement and support recently received from the Australia Society of Exploration Geophysicists for the National Rock Garden project. “Thank you ASEG.”

## ***Feedback and further information***

The Geological Society welcomes feedback and suggestions on the development of the National Rock Garden. Correspondence may be sent to the GSA Office in Sydney at -

[rockgarden@gsa.org.au](mailto:rockgarden@gsa.org.au)

## ***Newsletter – compiled and edited by:***

*Doug Finlayson*

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The newsletter will be circulated twice a year, Dec/Jan and June/Jul. New “Friends” are welcome and can be added to the email circulation list by contacting the editor.

Newsletters are also posted on the GSA website at [www.gsa.org.au](http://www.gsa.org.au)

*National Rock Garden*

*Celebrating the Geological Heritage of Australia*

*To recognise, acknowledge and celebrate Australia’s rich geological heritage in a parkland setting within the nation’s capital, and demonstrate to present and future generations of Australians the diversity of the rocks and minerals that contribute so significantly to the nation’s landscapes, heritage and prosperity.*