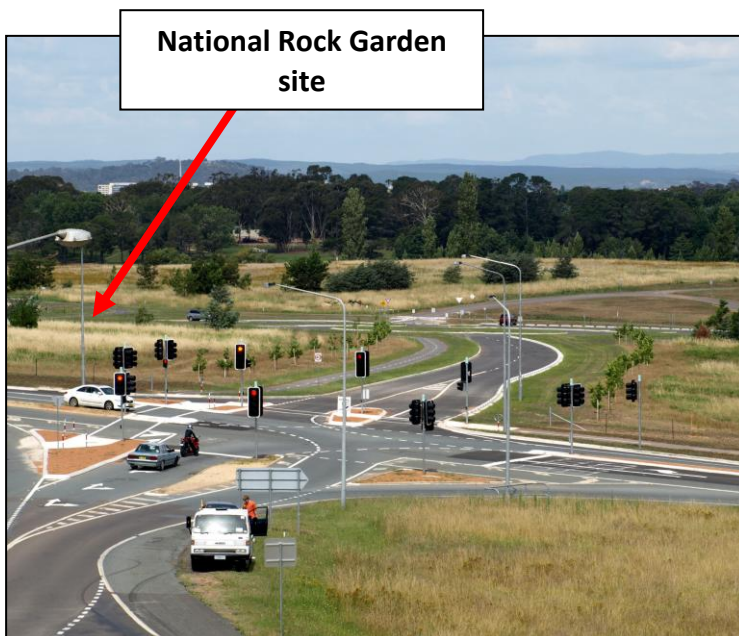


National Rock Garden

*Celebrating the Geological
Heritage of Australia*

Newsletter No. 3

January 2012



Entrance roadway into the National Rock Garden site from traffic lights on Lady Denman Drive recently completed by the ACT Government.

From the GSA President, Brad Pillans

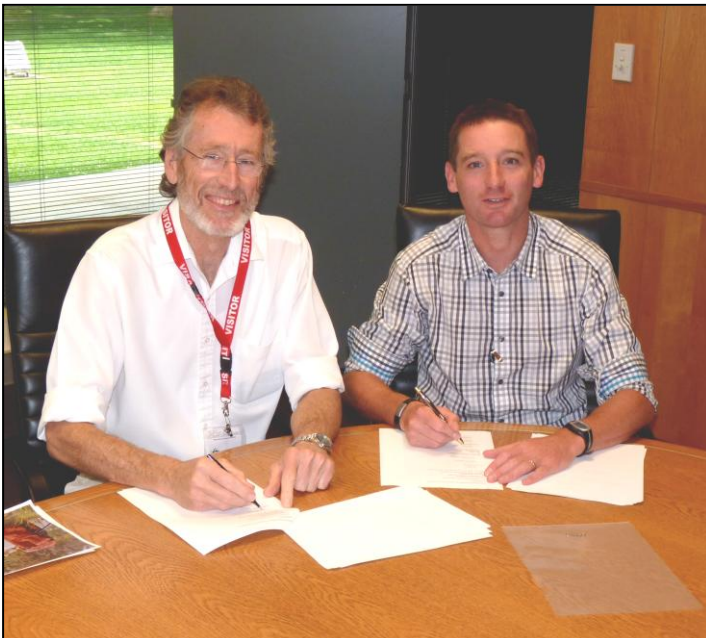
Welcome to Newsletter No. 3 of the NRG. As you will read, below, a lot has happened since the last Newsletter in mid 2011. The entrance road has been completed, we signed an MOU with the National Capital Authority and construction of the NRG web site is well underway.

We have also made significant progress towards identifying potential rock specimens for inclusion in the NRG. For example, in September I met with Rio Tinto's Trisha Comerford (Manager - Community Investment) and Alvin D'Almada (Senior Resource Analyst), in Perth, to discuss Rio Tinto support for acquiring rock specimens from their Pilbara iron ore and Argyle diamond mines. Rio Tinto has recently sponsored a new area of Kings Park in Perth, called "Naturescape", which features a number of handsome specimens of Banded Iron Formation from Rio Tinto's Mt Tom Price mine. Displayed in a bushland setting, the Naturescape rocks (some around 20 tonnes in weight) are exactly the kind of feature rocks we hope to incorporate in the National Rock Garden. Fingers crossed that, with Rio Tinto support, some of these iconic rocks can make their way to Canberra!

Looking to the future, we are mindful that 2013 is the centenary of Canberra, with the ACT government keen to encourage special events to mark the occasion. The NRG Steering Committee is exploring ways in which we can stage a special rock garden event in 2013. If you have any suggestions, please let us know!

GSA/National Capital Authority site development agreement

On 11 November, 2011, the Geological Society of Australia (GSA) and the National Capital Authority (NCA) signed an agreement for the construction and future management of the National Rock Garden. The document sets out guidelines for cooperative work to be done by GSA and NCA across the site. NCA, on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, has the statutory authority to approve all development work on the site and will ultimately be responsible for the ongoing management, maintenance and development of the National Rock Garden in cooperation with the National Rock Garden Trust. The agreement is not intended to be a legally binding document, more of a memorandum of understanding.



Prof. Brad Pillans, GSA President (left), and Gary Rake, CEO NCA (right), sign the agreement for the National Rock Garden construction and long term development.

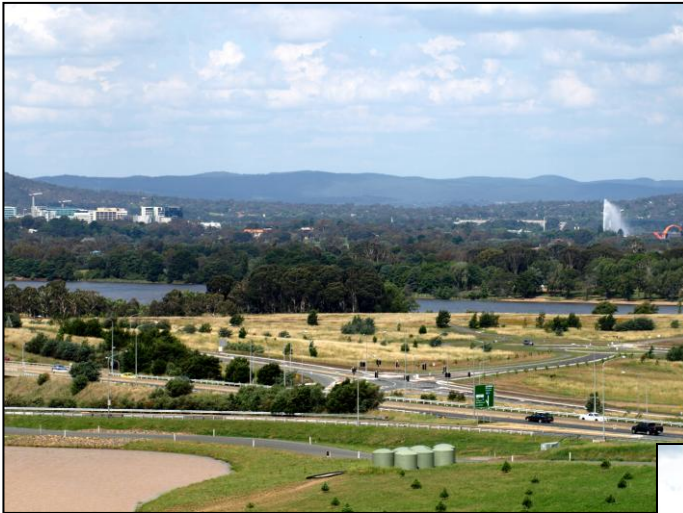
Site work

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

During November 2011 ACT Government contractors completed the construction of the entrance driveway into a car and bus parking area to be used by both the National Rock Garden and the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum.

An avenue of trees has been planted. The construction work also included drains and storm water channels leading from the National Rock Garden site and a sealed cycle pathway to the National Arboretum

Canberra from the main sealed cycle route around Lake Burley Griffin.



The National Rock Garden viewed from the National Arboretum Canberra, and the entrance roadway, cycle path and tree planting.



National Rock Garden Trust

Despite the submission of the relevant documents for the establishment of the National Rock Garden Trust to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities over six months ago, there is still no approval of the trust fund establishment from the Department and Minister Tony Burke. It must have fallen out of the IN-tray when the Government increased the efficiency dividend for 2011-12. Let's hope that someone in the Department picks it up off the floor soon. Apart from anything else, this lack of a trust fund is hampering our ability to seek sponsorship funding from industry and institutions.

The ghost of Sir Humphrey Appleby must haunt the corridors of power in Canberra as well as London. "Obfuscate" is a word that springs to mind.

National Rock Garden web site - photos needed from around Australia

The web site for the National Rock Garden is now being developed professionally by a company in Sydney. We had hoped to get the Stage 1 site up and running before the end of 2011 but we ran out of time. However, the web site will move ahead once things get back to normal after the summer break.

The web site will highlight significant geological features from around Australia. A library of photo images is being compiled but we need more. Hence we are asking Friends of the National Rock Garden to submit outstanding images for use on the web site. They should all have that “Wow” factor. Images should be in JPEG format and generally be 1 Mb and larger in file size. Landscape orientation is preferred but portrait orientation images can also be used. Every image should have information on the location, geology, cultural or industrial significance, and photographer.



Spectacular geology and landscapes are always a tourist attraction. The Three Sisters, Blue Mountains National Park, Katoomba.

Submitted images may well be of popular tourist destinations that the general public can relate to, onshore and offshore. The idea is to put the many magnificent landscapes around Australia in their geological context.

From the Curator of Rock Specimens, John Bain

Since the last newsletter we have encountered delays in establishing the tax deductibility of donations through Australian Government departments and obtaining the support of other geoscience associations, both essential for the success of this ambitious national project to promote geoscience and the resource industries. Consequently progress towards acquiring the funds to collect specimens and establish the garden has slowed.

Never-the-less, with the help of many people, especially the various State and Territory subcommittees, we have been building the list of possible rocks for inclusion in the NRG, and in some cases e.g. Queensland, actually getting into the field to check out possibilities. Already the list includes some 200 suggestions (request a current version from rockgarden@gsa.org.au) and much work is needed to gather essential information, especially photos, to help us prioritize the list and eventually begin rock specimen acquisition.

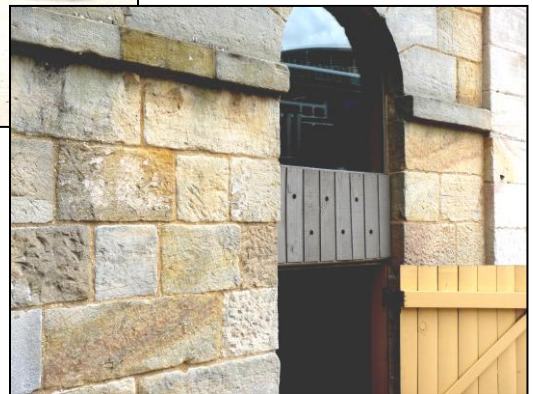
Although various rock specimens have been offered we are not yet in a position to take delivery until on-site construction begins and infrastructure is in place. If you have already made suggestions, but did not

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provide photos and specific information addressing the selection criteria and essential information parameters, we would be most appreciative of your help in acquiring that information –in particular, good photographs. Especially important is your knowledge of particular issues such as land tenure, access issues, best outcrops, suggestions for acquisition and local community contacts. Progress may be depressingly slow but stick with us – nothing really worth achieving is ever easy.

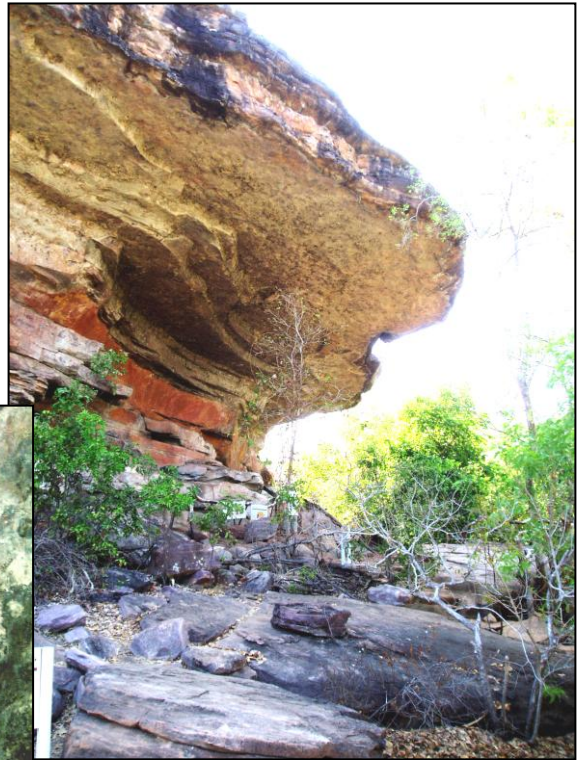
Building stone – geology that we all often take for granted

There would not be a town or city in Australia that does not use stone from around the country in its buildings and infrastructure. The National Rock Garden will include examples of building stones. Indigenous and later communities around Australia have all used locally available rock outcrops as shelters and quarried stone for building blocks, brick making, landscaping, concrete making, road making, sculptures and monuments.



Cadman's Cottage in The Rocks area of Sydney Cove is one of Australia's oldest surviving residential buildings. It was constructed from the local Middle Triassic Hawkesbury Sandstone in 1815-16 to accommodate the Government Coxswain, the officer responsible for government boats, their operations and crews. John Cadman, the 3rd Government Coxswain, lived there from 1827 to 1845.

The 1750 m.y. old Kombolgie sandstones and conglomerates in the Kakadu area of Northern Territory have provided shelter for aboriginal communities for 20,000 – 50,000 years. The rock art in shelters of the Ubirr area is outstanding.



Landscape architecture

During 2011 the GSA and the University of Canberra ran a landscape design competition for final year landscape architecture students. Below are some of the prize-winning concept designs put forward during 2011 by landscape architect student David Duhan from Canada.





Friends of the National Rock Garden

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 education, tourism and resource industries.

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

Newsletter – compiled and edited by:

Doug Finlayson

doug.finlayson@netspeed.com.au

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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.qsa.org.au

*N*ational 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.