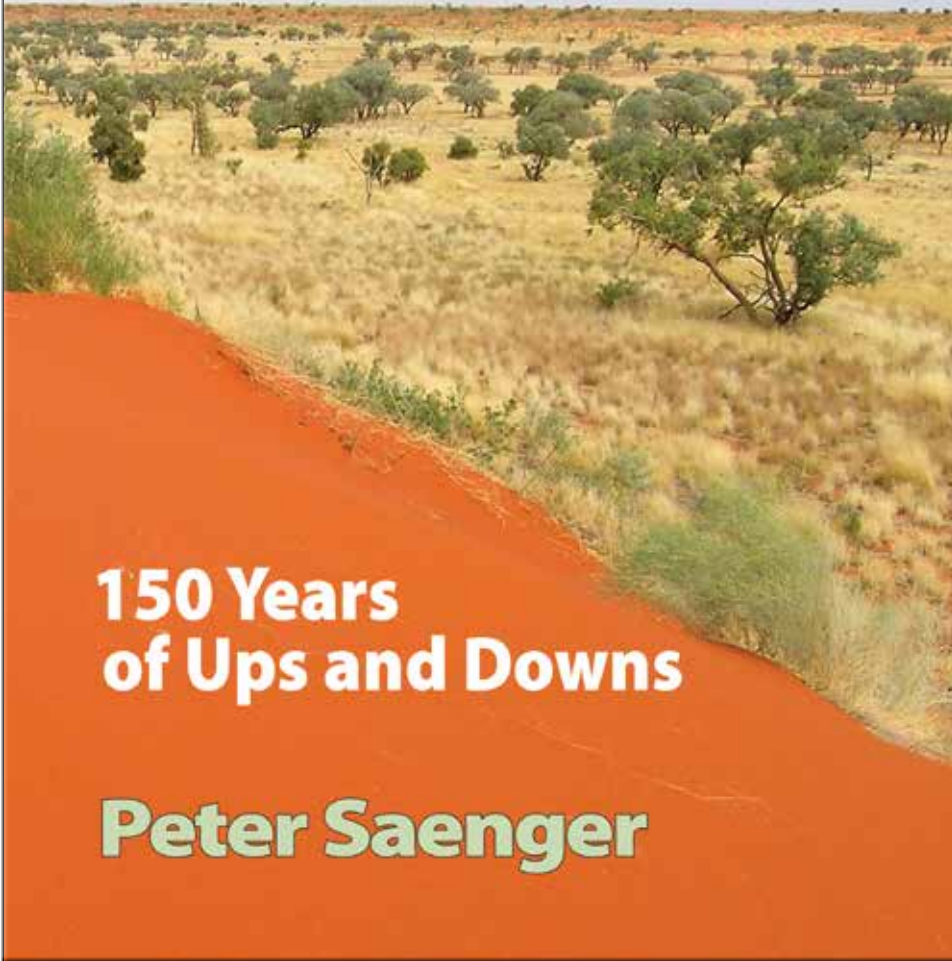


Queensland's Western Afterthought



**150 Years
of Ups and Downs**

Peter Saenger

The vast lands of western Queensland comprise a region of diversity, beauty, excitement and romance: majestic red dunes stretching as far as the eye can see under a deep blue sky, gently rolling downs bespotted with colourful wildflowers, the glaucous green saltbush plains and the dark-green foliage of the mangrove swamps, and the crags and shady gullies of the Nicholson River, with their serene waterholes that sustain a surprisingly diverse fauna and flora. And yet this region—termed here Queensland's Western Afterthought—is remote.

It is far from the populated east coast districts, far from the capital cities where decisions are made, and far from the hustle and bustle of modern life. It has thus been dominated by an 'out of sight, out of mind' attitude, resulting in a history of dashed hopes and disappointments.

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