

*The Royal Society of Tasmania*  
*November 2017 newsletter*

**RST Doctoral Awards 2017**

**Nominations are kindly invited for the RST Doctoral Awards 2017.**

**Calling all researchers under 35 who have finished their PhD in the previous three years!**

**If you know someone who would be right for this award, please pass on.**

**Nominations close 30 Nov 2017 midnight.**

**Doctoral Awards nomination form**

**[2018 membership renewal](#) is now open!**



# Launceston Lecture Series

[Meeting Room, QVMAG at Inveresk](#)

RSVP by Thu Nov 23: [bookings@qvmag.tas.gov.au](mailto:bookings@qvmag.tas.gov.au)

Small fee for non-members

1.30 pm Sun Nov 26

**Mr Martin George**

**Planet, Planets Everywhere: Our search for other Solar Systems**

Astronomers had long assumed that there were planets orbiting stars other than our Sun, but it is only since the 1990s that we obtained evidence that this was true. Now we know of thousands of these planets, making it clear to us that planetary systems are common. However, except in a few special cases, we have never seen any of them. The speaker will explain the various methods that are used to *detect* them and to discover a good deal of information about their orbits and characteristics.

**Martin George** is Manager of the Launceston Planetarium at QVMAG. He is a well-known communicator of astronomy to the public, with several regular radio interviews and a weekly space article in *The Mercury* newspaper. He is also a contributing editor of the US magazine *Astronomy*.

Martin is a fellow and former president of the International Planetarium Society and is its Chair of International Relations. He has been awarded the David Allen Prize for astronomy communication by the Astronomical Society of Australia, and the Winifred Curtis Medal for Science Communication in Tasmania.

This lecture is presented with the generous support of

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 T 03 6323 3777  
[www.qvmag.tas.gov.au](http://www.qvmag.tas.gov.au)



## Free lecture, all welcome

[Royal Society Room, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery](#)

8 pm Tue Nov 7: drinks 7.30 pm

**Assoc Prof Tracey Dickson**

**Cortical Inhibitory Dysfunction in Motor Neuron Disease:  
How can we get the balance back ?**

There are no treatments or cures for Motor Neuron Disease, and most people with the illness die three to five years after diagnosis. For the past 10 years Associate Professor Dickson's group at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research has been investigating the fundamental mechanisms of this devastating disease, trying to unravel the causes and determine where it begins. In the next three years they will be using this knowledge to perform critical research to determine whether they can repurpose an existing drug for the treatment of MND. This work takes them one more step along the translation pipeline from the bench to the bedside – in this case from the laboratory to the clinic. A/Prof Dickson's presentation will reflect on her research journey, the unexpected findings, the challenges and the rewards.

Associate Professor Dickson (BSc, PhD) is a neuroscientist with a national and international reputation in determining the pathological basis underlying Motor

Neuron Disease, Parkinson's disease and the neuronal response to trauma. She is the Deputy Director and Associate Director for Research at the Menzies Institute for Medical Research and Leader of the Neurodegenerative disease and Trauma Theme. She leads an ambitious and productive research team at Menzies consisting of three post-docs, six PhD students, one research assistant and one honours student. Associate Professor Dickson was previously an National Health and Medical Research Council Career Development Fellow (2008-2012), and Early Career Postdoctoral Fellow (2001-2004), where she spent two years at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. A/Prof Dickson's work has resulted in 70 original research papers and she has secured competitive funding for her research of over \$7.5 million. A/Prof Dickson has an excellent record in supervising RHD students, with 13 PhD completions.

<http://www.utas.edu.au/profiles/staff/menzies/tracey-dickson>



## **BOOK NOW for the 2017 Christmas lecture and Dinner Free lecture, all welcome**

Lecture (free) only, please advise [royal.society@tmag.tas.gov.au](mailto:royal.society@tmag.tas.gov.au)

Dinner \$45, tickets available from [trybooking](#)

Vegetarian meal is available, please advise [royal.society@tmag.tas.gov.au](mailto:royal.society@tmag.tas.gov.au)

[CSIRO Battery Point Auditorium](#)

6 pm Tue Dec 5

## Prof John Simons Queen Victoria's Hippopotamus

In 1850 the Zoological Society of London acquired a hippopotamus called Obaysch. He was the first hippopotamus to have been seen in Europe since Roman times and caused a sensation. This lecture will look at his life and at the various ways in which Victorians constructed the experience of seeing a hippopotamus in London.

Emeritus Professor John Simons lives in Taroona. He has worked in universities in the U.K., the USA and Australia and most recently was Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) at Macquarie University. He is the editor or author of some twenty academic books on a range of topics from medieval chivalric romance to the history of cricket via Andy Warhol. Over the last twenty years he has concentrated on the history of human-animal relationships and, especially, on exotic animals in Victorian England. He is also a published poet and has recently completed his first novel.



### **Ghost Ships of the Arctic: The exploration of Sir John Franklin's HMS *Erebus* and HMS *Terror***

Mr Marc-Andre Bernier presented the 'Ghost Ships' talk to 300 guests on Wed Oct 11 at UTAS's Stanley Burbury Theatre. This talk was a huge success promoting closer links between collaborators Canadian High Commission, the Society, UTAS and TMAG - whom we thank for their support. We look forward to hearing more of Mr Bernier's insights as his research

continues.

The talk is available on UTAS livestream site: [Ghost Ships of the Arctic](#)



*Presented in partnership with the Canadian High Commission, The Royal Society of Tasmania, and the Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery.*







### **Congratulations Prof Trevor McDougall!**

One of our Royal Society of Tasmania members, Prof. Trevor McDougall, has just been awarded the NSW Premier's Award for Excellence in Mathematics, Earth Sciences, Chemistry and Physics.

Prof. McDougall won the award for his discoveries that have influenced understanding of ocean dynamics and their key role in the climate.

The award was presented by Premier Gladys Berejiklian at a ceremony at Government House in Sydney on Monday 23 October.

More information:

<http://www.science.unsw.edu.au/news/award-premiers-prize-oceanographer>

### **What's on at TMAG**

A special note from Hon Sec Dr John Thorne AM regarding a great treatise by Dr John Paull on the diaries of William Russ Pugh with illustrations, now available: <http://www.jdpaul.com.au/>

## Friends of the Allport

In 2015, the year of the 50th anniversary of the Allport Bequest, a steering committee set about establishing a Friends of the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts (FOTA) in order to: better inform the public about Allport, and to generate more interest in the collection; to advocate the value of this heritage as widely as possible; and to present events and activities for members to encourage information sharing and knowledge of the collection and relevant heritage.

FOTA Committee:

- Richard Flanagan (Patron)
- Amanda Wojtowicz (President)
- Tony Marshall (Vice-President)
- Rachael Rose (Secretary/Treasurer)
- Committee members: Annick Ansselin, Rosanna Cameron, Anita Hansen, Dallas Honnery, Janine Tan.

**Join The Friends of Allport!**



**Christmas gift suggestion:  
2018 RST Calendar**

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Order by post for \$24.00 per copy (including handling and postage within Australia) — complete the form below and send to:

The Royal Society of Tasmania, GPO Box 1166, Hobart TAS 7001

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