



# THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA



## NEWSLETTER

### A Message from the President

Dear Members,

As I write this, plans are in full swing for our Christmas dinner and lecture. It will be wonderful to be able to meet with members in person and to welcome new members.

Looking back on this year, we have made remarkable progress as a Society despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have welcomed 19 new members; attracted record numbers of very high quality nominations for the Peter Smith Medal and Doctoral Awards; offered a program of excellent lectures via webinar; established a dedicated YouTube channel to share these lectures more widely; implemented a Code of Conduct for members; updated our website and made progress in developing a style guide for the Society's documents, including a refreshed logo. Our annual *Papers and Proceedings* will be mailed to subscribers very soon, and it is an excellent edition.

Our online presence has allowed the Society to extend our reach. Each month we have had people in other countries viewing our lectures live, and our November speaker joined us live from New Zealand. Quite a number of YouTube viewers are also from overseas, as well as across Tasmania and Australia.

The Council and Aboriginal Engagement Committee members have devoted a great deal of time and thought to preparing for our Apology to Tasmanian Aboriginal people regarding past deeds of the Society. This event is planned for 15 February 2021, and further details will be shared with you as they become available.

All of these achievements have been possible due to the many hours of hard work by our dedicated volunteers. To all who have contributed their skills and talents to the work of the Society in advancing knowledge this year – thank you. Very special thanks go to our newsletter editor, Bernard Pryor OAM, who has been responsible for so many wonderful editions of our newsletter, increasing readership and interest. Bernard is stepping down from this role, leaving very big shoes to fill. If you know of anyone who may have the required skills, please contact me.

Best wishes for a peaceful and enjoyable festive season. We look forward to seeing you at our Annual General Meeting on Sunday 7 March 2021.

Warm regards,

Mary Koolhof, President  
The Royal Society of Tasmania

## December 2020

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# Royal Society books make great Christmas presents

## Royal Society Office

The Royal Society office is open on Wednesday mornings 9:00 am to midday. Enter the Custom House building from the **Davey Street entrance and register at the Visitors' desk**. TMAG's Safety Plan requires all visitors' details to be recorded.

A phone call prior to your visit will help with more speedy arrangements.

Please phone between the hours of 9:00am – 12 noon on a Wednesday morning on 03 6165 7014.

**Main contact:**  
GPO Box 1166  
Hobart TAS 7001  
Email: [admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au)

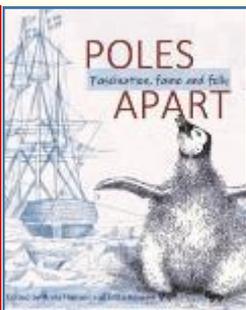
**Northern Branch contact:**  
Christine Beswick, Secretary:  
0417 330 118  
PO Box 47 Perth TAS 7300

Membership forms and renewals can either be posted to the Post Box (see above) clearly marked 'Royal Society of Tasmania' or completed and emailed to the address above.

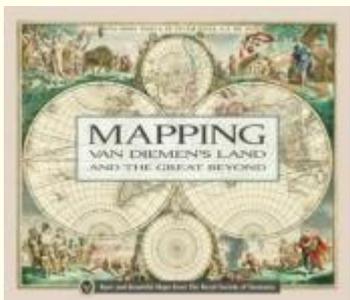
Book and calendar sales are available either through the RST shop, on our website, by email or by phone through the office.

**10% discount for Members on these books for great Christmas presents.**

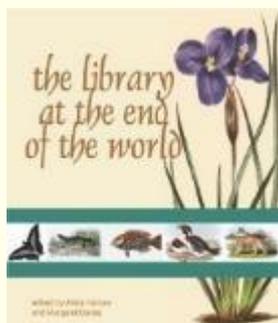
**Discounted prices are shown beside each book:**



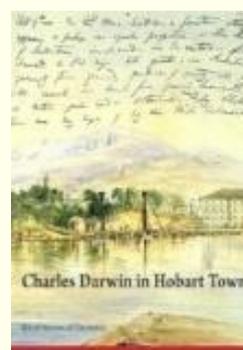
**Poles Apart: Fascination, Fame and Folly**  
Hardcover (\$22) and Softcover (\$18)



**Mapping Van Diemen's Land and the Great Beyond**  
Hardcover (\$54) and Softcover (\$36)



**The Library at the End of the World**  
Hardcover (\$54) and Softcover (\$36)



**Charles Darwin in Hobart**  
Softcover (\$27)



### **Papers and Proceedings**

Since 1849 the Society has published annual volumes of refereed scholarly papers. *Papers and Proceedings* of The Royal Society of Tasmania publishes research that focuses on Tasmania or is particularly relevant to Tasmanians.

Personal subscription to the *Papers and Proceedings* are made through membership of the Royal Society of Tasmania.

Prices for back editions of *Papers and Proceedings* range from \$10 – \$40 per volume. Members of the Royal Society are eligible for a **10% discount**, please contact the **Honorary Editor** at [editor@rst.org.au](mailto:editor@rst.org.au)

PERSONAL STORIES OF 65 GEOSCIENTISTS IN THEIR  
SEARCH FOR THE POT OF GOLD

# AUSTRALIAN MINERAL DISCOVERERS

Edited by John Hill, Tony Hope, Ross Large & David Royle  
Foreword by Professor Geoffrey Blainey, AC



## Australian Mineral Discoverers

Edited by John Hill, Tony Hope, Ross Large  
& David Royle

The Royal Society of Tasmania is proud to announce the planned publication of a book about Australian mineral explorers. The Society has historically maintained a strong connection with exploration and discovery across a broad spectrum of natural sciences, including medical, biological and geological sciences. Geologists have played an important role in the Society, beginning with RM Johnston, a highly active and influential member, who authored the first book on the *Geology of Tasmania* which was commissioned by the Tasmania Government in 1884 to promote exploration and mining in Tasmania. His contributions were recognised by the Society with the production of the R M Johnston Medal.

Mineral discoveries in the 1950 to 2010 period have been the backbone of wealth creation for all Australians and helped to maintain Australia's economic position as the "Lucky Country". However, as you will read in these 65 biographies of Australian explorers and educators, the discovery of buried minerals is an extremely complex science that requires knowledge, innovation, disciplined application of geological principles, teamwork, persistence and an ounce of luck.

**WOW!**  
**What a splendid  
idea for a  
Christmas  
gift!**

"Outstanding geoscientists resemble a first-class poet, painter, architect, mechanical inventor, medical scientist; all have creative minds and are all explorers. They have to explore, with their mind, a subterranean world that was slowly taking shape long before human beings existed. They have to work out how fire and water, land and sea created or altered huge mineral deposits. They guide the expensive task of drilling deep holes to test whether their hypotheses are correct: often they are not. Failure is a memorable teacher."

**Prof Geoffrey Blainey AC**



The stories told in these pages include the discovery of 150 mineral deposits, from the very largest (Olympic Dam of over 6 billion tonnes of copper gold and uranium ore) to the smallest (the gold rich Juno deposit in Tennant Creek). Collectively, these mineral discoveries amount to many 100's of billions of dollars in ground value that have supported many mines, towns and communities in outback Australia for 50 years and beyond.

**Price: \$50 members of The Royal Society of Tasmania**

**\$60 + postage for non-members**

**[Order now from The Royal Society of Tasmania](#)**

### **Launch of the Royal Society Book *Australian Mineral Discoverers***

This new publication will be launched by Professor Geoffrey Blainey AC  
**on 15 December at 5:00 pm** at The University Club, Sandy Bay Campus, Dobson Street.

All RST members are invited to attend. A small number of places are available to join in-person at the venue, and it is also possible to attend by Zoom. You must register below if you plan to attend.

**In-Person** (limited to 10 RST members):

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/130631302743>

**Online Only** (currently set at up to 400 people):

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/130633336827>



## RST Webinars

Missed one of the RST webinars or would like to view one again? [Click here to view the full range in YouTube.](#)

## Results of the RST Membership Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey. The responses were thoughtful and will help inform Council when making decisions about the future. Below is a summary of responses. If you would like the full report, you can request it by email at

[admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au)

One in seven members responded to the survey. Of those respondents 75% were aged over 65 and 25% were 41–65 years of age. About 70% have been members for over five years.

The Royal Society of Tasmania values the opinions of all its members. If you didn't take part in the survey you can still share your thoughts using the Royal Society of Tasmania email.

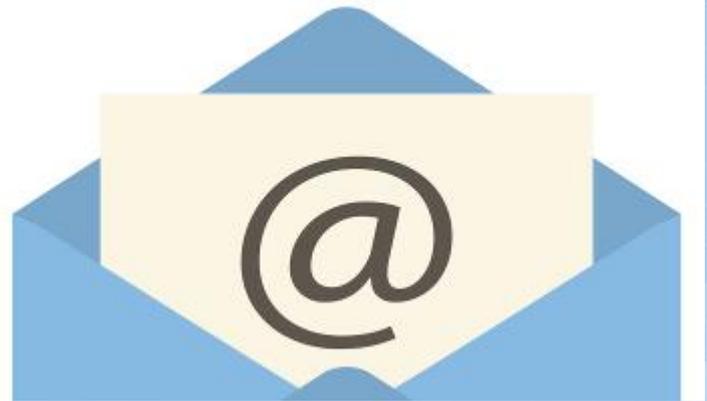
Most respondents found out about the Society through friends, acquaintances or UTAS. Most people found it easy to join and fifty per cent indicated that they would like to see automatic renewal for membership. An option to use automatic renewal appears on the 2021 membership renewal form.

The newsletter is always read by 63% of respondents and another 24% read it often. Over half (66% of respondents) request *Papers and Proceedings*. A hard copy of the *Papers and Proceedings* was the most popular.

Members use emails from The Royal Society of Tasmania and the newsletter to become informed about The Royal Society of Tasmania events. The speaker series was enjoyed because of its variety and diversity. The Royal Society of Tasmania was complimented on overcoming the COVID-19 problem by going online. The most popular method of delivery was face-to-face with the recorded lecture on YouTube. Sunday during the day was the most popular time for lecture meetings. One third of respondents felt non-members should be charged for attending face-to-face lecture meetings while another half were unsure.

General feedback gave praise to the RST.

Membership Committee  
The Royal Society of Tasmania



## We are moving!

Well, not moving our location but we will now be using a new email address for the Royal Society. From this month forward, our email address will be aligned with our web address.

[admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au)

We will be monitoring our old email address for some time to come but please address all general RST correspondence to the new address.

You can also reach the Secretary at:

[secretary@rst.org.au](mailto:secretary@rst.org.au)

and our Editor, Sally Bryant, at:

[editor@rst.org.au](mailto:editor@rst.org.au)





## Membership Renewal

It is that time of year again – time to renew your Royal Society of Tasmania membership for 2021. The RST membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. If you're unsure about your status, check your membership card for the membership expiry year. [Click here](#) to open the renewal form on our website which can be downloaded as a pdf for filling in electronically.

Also consider giving someone you admire or love a gift of membership to the Society for Christmas or birthday or as a gesture of thanks.

Take note: Regardless of the method you use to renew, *by renewing your membership and paying the required membership dues, you acknowledge that you have read and agree to abide by the [RST Code of Conduct](#) as displayed on the RST website.*

A copy of the *RST Code of Conduct* is available on request by [emailing the Society](#).

### Royal Society 2021 Calendar

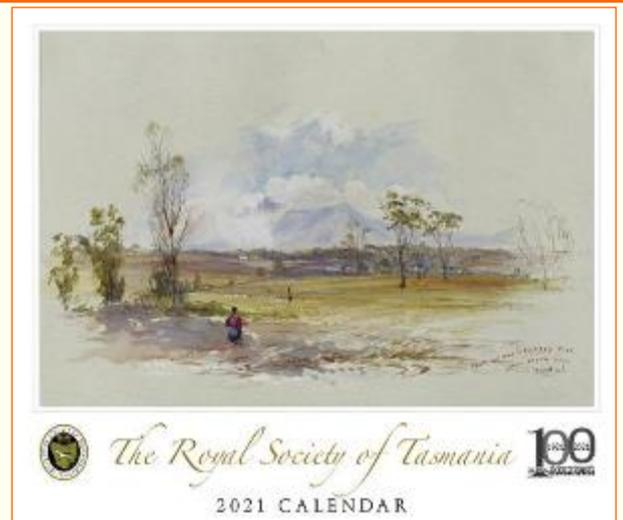
Featuring 13 watercolours  
by Francis Guillemard Simpkinson de Wesselow

Retail price: \$19.95 plus postage and handling as applicable. Order from our [website](#).

Members of the Royal Society can also order from the website or RST office at the discounted price of \$18.00.

For orders of 10 or more: \$15.00 per copy (plus postage and handling if applicable).

Purchase direct from the Royal Society Office on Wednesday mornings 9:00 to 12:00 noon or email [admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au) or phone Wednesday mornings on 03 6165 7014.



# 2021

## Sneaking a Peek at Proposed 2021 RST Events

At present, the following dates and information have not been confirmed, so perhaps you might **pencil** them into your diary rather than use pen, but they should whet your appetite for more intellectual pursuits with the RST.

Date	Event
7 March	AGM, Tasmanian Australian of the Year for 2020, Jessica Melbourne-Thomas
16 March	2019 Medal award presentation by Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania at Government House
4 April	Peter Smith Medal Lecture, Frances Susmilch
2 May	Susannah Fullerton OAM, FRSN (TBC)
6 June	ATSE Joint Lecture (TBC)
4 July	TMAG Curator (TBC)
8 August	(TBC)
27 August	Joint Beer Aquatic Event for National Science Week at Hobart Brewing Company
5 September	Doctoral Award Winner/s (TBC)
Mid-September	Herbarium Guided Tour
3 October	Maybe a history lecture (TBC)
7 November	Maybe a medical sciences/Menzies lecture (TBC)
7 December	Christmas lecture (TBC)



### RST Logo Refresh and Style Guide Update

At a Council meeting some time ago it was decided that the long-standing logo of the Society needed a refresh for the following

reasons:

- ◆ The current logo is not suitable for reduction and use on publications and RST merchandise.
- ◆ It is not of suitable quality.
- ◆ The RST does not have the original artwork for the logo.
- ◆ The current logo is not easily used on digital platforms.

A committee was established, chaired by Professor Ross Large AO, to investigate logo designs and to identify the appropriate colour palette to accompany the logo. Organising a Style Guide update is also part of the brief and several consultations have taken place where significant progress has been made.

A graphic designer has been engaged and is in the process of refining designs for selection. There will be further updates as the process continues.



**Right:** Tasmanian Christmas bell (*Blandfordia punicea*) was first formally described in 1805 by Jacques Labillardière who named it *Aletris punicea* and published the description in *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen*. The specific epithet (*punicea*) is Latin for "reddish" or "purplish-red". Robert Sweet changed the name to *Blandfordia punicea* in 1830.



## RST Northern Branch 2021 Launceston Lecture Series

Lectures commence at **1:30\* pm**

– online or at QVMAG @ Inveresk (to be advised)

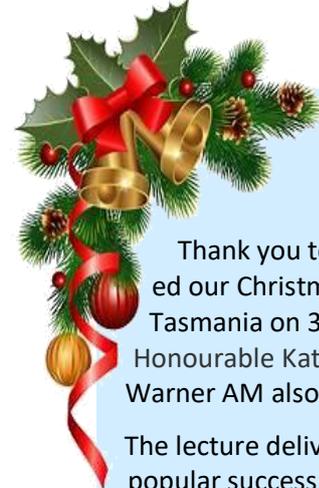
\* Start time varies as shown below

Preliminary Program (– an update will be issued later)		
Date	Presenter/Event	Topic
28 February	Dr Jennifer Lavers	<b>'Impact of Plastics on Marine Wildlife'</b> – previously unknown sub-lethal and largely invisible consequences for aquatic and even terrestrial species.
28 March	<b>Annual General Meeting**</b>	Starting at <b>1:15pm</b>
28 March	Dr Katie Flanagan	<b>'Global and Australian Perspectives for COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout'</b> – hear from our local infectious disease physician, leader of the group advising the government on the Australian COVID-19 vaccine program.
25 April	<b>Annual QVMAG Staff Lecture**</b> Dr Christine Hansen	<b>'Telling the stories of kanamaluka'</b> – the fascinating kanamaluka/Tamar estuary will be the first subject of QVMAG's new gallery of environmental history.
23 May	Prof David Bowman	<b>'Pyrogeographic thinking'</b> – the key to tackling the global fire crisis.
27 June	<b>Northern Branch Centenary Lecture**</b> Mr Ralph Bottrill	<b>'What made Tasmania?'</b> – 140 years of geological mapping and research – what have we done and what is left to do?
25 July	<b>Prof John Whittington</b>	<b>'Growing Australia's Blue Economy'</b> – meeting the challenges of operating in high energy offshore marine environments provides enormous potential to increase seafood and renewable energy production.
22 August	<b>2021 Science Week Forum**</b> UTAS PhD Candidates: Kate Edwards plus two others TBA	<b>'Breaking New Ground':</b>  <i>Exercise induced gut damage and the estrobolome: does periodisation matter?</i> (plus two others TBA)
12 September	<b>Joint Meeting with the Geological Society of Australia**</b> A/Prof Sebastien Meffre	<b>'East Meets West'</b> – the geological development of northern Tasmania.
26 September	TBA	TBA
24 October	TBA	TBA
28 November	TBA	TBA

\*\* Joint meeting with the Geological Society of Australia


**City of LAUNCESTON**  
**QUEEN VICTORIA**  
**MUSEUM & ART GALLERY**  
 proudly supports the Launceston Lecture Series





## The Royal Society of Tasmania 2020 Christmas Dinner

Thank you to all the members and friends of the Society who attended our Christmas lecture and dinner at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania on 30 November. **Our patron**, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania and Mr Richard Warner AM also attended.

The lecture delivered by **Mr John Williamson** (pictured right) was a popular success and provided great insight into many issues regarding polar exploration. The human aspects of the character and thinking of Roald Amundsen and the conditions surrounding his historic journey to the South Pole proved fascinating.



**Above left:** Roald Amundsen, Norwegian explorer. **Above centre:** The Amundsen expedition. **Above right:** Amundsen reaches the South Pole 14 December 1911.

The positive feedback we have received since the lecture is indicative of the excellent research that informed the speaker and also suggests the great interest our members have in the subject.

If you were unable to attend in person or if you would like to hear it again, the recording of the RST 2020 Christmas lecture is now available on YouTube [at this link](#).

An important part of the proceedings of the evening was that **David Wilson**, a past Honorary Secretary and the current Treasurer of The Royal Society of Tasmania was conferred with Life Membership of the Society by the President, Mary Koolhof—see right. David was awarded this honour with our grateful thanks in recognition of his outstanding service to the Society.

New members who joined the Society throughout 2020 were warmly welcomed and had their membership ratified by members at the event. We were also fortunate to welcome some members from the north to the dinner.

Next year, the Northern Branch will be celebrating its Centenary Year and bookmarks featuring the art of Simpkinson de Wesselow from the Society's colonial art collection were distributed to guests to mark the occasion.



## The Society's Library is Open



UNIVERSITY of  
TASMANIA

Special & Rare Collections (5th floor, Morris Miller Library at UTAS Sandy Bay campus) including TRST Library is open and asks that all visitors and researchers comply with the following COVID-safe practices:

- Please make appointments via [special.collections@utas.edu.au](mailto:special.collections@utas.edu.au) to assist with managing maximum occupancy requirements.
- Opening hours are 10:00am to 5pm, Monday to Wednesday, closed for lunch 12:30 – 1:30 pm.
- Maximum occupancy of two visitors at any one time and must be adhered to.
- You are required to maintain the recommended 1.5m physical distance.
- Make sure you have had your temperature checked before entering the Library.
- Temperature checks will be undertaken at the entrance to Morris Miller Library.
- If you are not a staff member or student at UTAS, you will need to sign in on entry to Morris Miller Library to enable contact tracing.
- The Library is providing hand sanitiser, cleaning wipes and carrying out additional cleaning.
- If you are feeling unwell, please do **not** come to the Library.

Library staff will continue answering all email enquiries and can scan and email requests as needed, so if you don't wish to visit the Library in person, there is no need. We will also be quarantining material handled by researchers and other visitors for 72 hours, in line with UTAS Libraries' COVID-safe practice.

Any queries please contact [special.collections@utas.edu.au](mailto:special.collections@utas.edu.au)

**Juliet Beale**, Senior Librarian, Collections  
Library Services | Academic Division  
University of Tasmania

### The Colony's Official Photographer: John Watt Beattie

John Watt Beattie (1859–1930) photographer and antiquarian, was born in Aberdeen. His father, John Beattie Senior, was a house painter and photographer. In 1878, the family migrated to Tasmania and settled on a farm in the Derwent Valley.

After many photographic expeditions into the bush, in 1882 Beattie became a full-time professional – initially in partnership with Anson Brothers – whose work shaped the accepted visual image of Tasmania. He became the colony's official photographer in 1896 and made a significant contribution to the emerging tourist industry through postcards, lantern slides, framed prints and albums featuring the island's beauty. His work was featured on Tasmanian pictorial stamps (1899–1912); he developed Roald Amundsen's plates taken on the first trek to the South Pole; he gave many popular illustrated lectures; and he opened a popular museum of art and artefacts in Hobart.

Although much of the Beattie collection is held at TMAG and QVMAG, he also bequeathed some personal papers, diaries, lantern slides, lecture notes and manuscripts to the Royal Society of Tasmania. One interesting item is a miniature pocket notebook (RS 29/1—see right and below) kept by Beattie when travelling from Scotland to Tasmania, written in light pencil.

Lantern slides, numbered '1-18' and stamped

'Prepared by J.W. Beattie, Hobart, (see page below) include reproductions of early world maps, globes, pictures of sailing ships and navigation aids. These slides were possibly used to illustrate a lecture on the history of the discovery of Australia.

**Above:** John Watt Beattie, by unknown photographer. (Courtesy of the National Library of Australia.)



Slides relating to other talks are held by QVMAG.

Further information on John Watt Beattie <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/beattie-john-watt-5171>

Index to RS 29 [https://eprints.utas.edu.au/11192/1/rs\\_30\\_J\\_W\\_Beattie.pdf](https://eprints.utas.edu.au/11192/1/rs_30_J_W_Beattie.pdf)

Index to RS 30 <https://sparc.utas.edu.au/index.php/index-to-rs30>

Lecture notes to accompany lantern slides for a talk on the



West Coast of Tasmania <https://eprints.utas.edu.au/17064/>

**Left:** Beattie, J.W. , The Chapel at Port Arthur, Tasmania, ca. 1900. [transparency]  
Courtesy of the National Library of Australia.



## Do you have secure, dry storage available for long-term use?

Several members mentioned in a recent survey that they would like to contribute to the Society but if they are not on Council, it is difficult to think of ways to do that. If you are one of those people, or if you have some additional space, here is a possibility.

Currently the Society is paying a hefty sum each year in storage fees for our book and stationary stock. These fees can be saved and used for other Society purposes if an appropriate space can be located.

Do you have a secure and dry area that is a suitable space for storing our boxed goods? We would need occasional access to replace sold stock, but because we already have stores of books elsewhere, that would not be often. The space required would be approximately three cubic metres.

If you think you have such a space and you are willing to allow our Society the use of it, please contact our Hon. Treasurer, David Wilson on [dwilson.tas@gmail.com](mailto:dwilson.tas@gmail.com)



# We are open!

Untimed ticket bookings now available

[www.tmag.tas.gov.au](http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au)

## Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

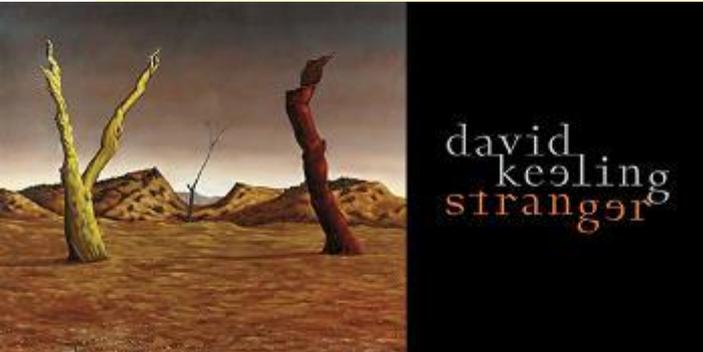
Open Tuesday to Sunday, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm.

One important change is that whilst admission to TMAG remains free, all visitors are now required to make a free online booking via the TMAG website. Visitors can book an untimed ticket that is redeemable at any time during TMAG's opening hours on the booking date, pending over-all site capacity. [For more information and to book, please click this link.](#)

The Museum Shop is open.

[TMAG from Home](#) initiative is available from the TMAG website.

### TMAG from home



Visitors will be excited to learn about a new exhibition by renowned Tasmanian artist David Keeling called **David Keeling: Stranger**, which is on show at TMAG from 20 November 2020 to 14 February 2021.

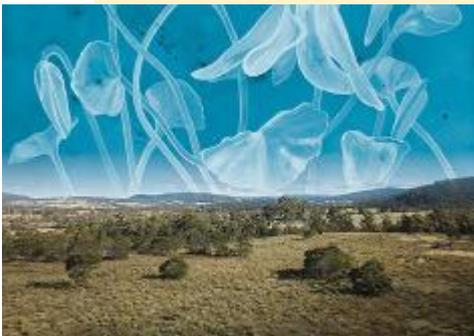
**Free tours** for small groups are available on Saturdays and Sundays, and run for approximately 40 minutes.

Tour times are subject to change and availability and can be checked by phoning (03) 6165 7000. For guided tours for clubs,

tourist groups or other organisations, please [click here](#).

**Exquisite Habits and This Too Shall Pass Exhibition Tour, 11:00 am on Saturdays and Sundays**

Come along with the TMAG Art Guides as they share their love and enthusiasm for the wonderful works in the art collection. The tour will visit the *Exquisite Habits* and *This Too Shall Pass* exhibitions.



**TMAG Highlights Tour, 1:30 pm on Saturdays and Sundays**

[Discovering the Flora of Wind Song: Botanical Art and Science](#) (- see left)

**Opening date : 4-12-2020 Closing date : 28-02-2021**

Works by artists from the group Botaniko, inspired by their time accompanying TMAG botanists on the 2017 *Expedition of Discovery* to Wind Song on Tasmania's East Coast.



Follow RST on:

Twitter



Facebook



Visit the website



Please click and scroll way down to **DONATE** to our Society. Thank you for your kind support!

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ABN 65 889 598 100

**Our mailing address is:**

GPO Box 1166  
Hobart TAS 7001

**Our Office location is:**

19 Davey Street  
Hobart TAS 7000

Office hours: Wednesdays 9:00 am – 12:00 pm  
+61 3 6165 7014