

# THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA

## NEWSLETTER



March 2021

### A Message from the President

Dear Members,

The **Society's Apology to Tasmanian Aboriginal people** was delivered on 15 February 2021, in person at the Courtyard, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart and via livestream. This was an important step for The Royal Society of Tasmania as we took responsibility for our past actions and committed to building a strong and respectful relationship with Tasmanian Aboriginal people. A detailed report of the event is on page 3. The RST 2021 *Papers and Proceedings* will contain a full account of actions for which the Society is responsible. We hope that our Apology marks a step towards healing and the beginning of a new phase of respect and productive collaboration.

As I write this, plans are in full swing for our **Annual General Meeting** on 7 March at which the Annual Report for 2020 will be presented. I do hope that you have all had a chance to read the copy emailed to you on 24 February. The Report reflects a very busy and productive year for the Society. Major achievements included an excellent online lecture program; establishment of a dedicated YouTube Channel; record numbers of high quality nominations for research awards; development of a strategic plan for the next five years; introduction of a Code of Conduct; update of the website; publication of *Australian Mineral Discoverers*; and support for the Tasmanian Science Talent Search.

**Warm thanks** go to our office bearers, committee members and other volunteers for all their work for the Society. On behalf of the Society, I would like to express thanks to retiring Council members Dr Niamh Chapman, Prof Greg Lehman and Dr Adele Wilson, and retiring Chair of the Aboriginal Engagement Committee, Prof Matt King.

We have an exciting **program of events** planned for you in 2021, so do keep an eye on your emails and our website for updates. On 28 March, the Northern Branch will hold its AGM and a lecture by Prof Katie Flanagan, *Global and Australian Perspectives for COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout* – more on page 4.

On 11 April, we are looking forward to the **Peter Smith Lecture** in Hobart to be delivered by 2020 Peter Smith Medal winner Dr Frances Sussmilch. RST members are welcome to attend all Northern and Southern events, and to bring friends and colleagues along unless the event is designated 'members only'.

On behalf of the RST, I would like to offer a warm **welcome to new members** Dr Frances Sussmilch, Dr Jessica Ericson, John Williamson, Rebecca Mitchell,

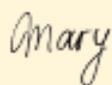
### Contents:

- 2 [RST Events for 2021](#)
- 3 [RST and TMAG Apology to Tasmanian Aboriginal People report](#)
- 4 [Northern Branch Lecture: Global and Australian Perspectives for COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout](#)  
[Viewing previous RST webinars on YouTube](#)
- 5 [RST membership renewal information](#)  
[RST 2020 Doctoral Awards](#)
- 6 [RST Annual General Meeting](#)
- 7 [RST books and papers with member discounts](#)
- 8 [Prime Minister's Literary Awards 2021](#)  
[RST Library information](#)
- 9 [Autographs](#)
- 10 [TMAG links and information](#)  
[Links to RST social media](#)  
[Donate to our Society](#)  
[General Society contact information](#)



David Dyson, Jill Cassidy, Brett Maryniak, Suzanne Skira, Blake Riley and Penny Garnsworthy. We hope that you enjoy your involvement with the Society.

Warm regards,



Mary Koolhof, President  
The Royal Society of Tasmania

## The Royal Society of Tasmania Events for 2021

Date	Event
Tuesday 16 March	Medal Presentation by Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania, at Government House
Sunday 11 April	2020 Peter Smith Medal Lecture by Dr Frances Sussmilch (- see below)
Sunday 2 May	Susannah Fullerton OAM, FRSN (TBC)
Sunday 6 June	ATSE Joint Lecture (TBC)
Sunday 4 July	TMAG Curator (TBC)
Sunday 8 August	(TBC)
Thursday 26 August	Joint Beer Aquatic Event for National Science Week at Hobart Brewing Company
Sunday 5 September	2020 Doctoral Award Winner/s (TBC)
Sunday 3 October	History lecture (TBC)
Sunday 7 November	Medical sciences/Menzies lecture (TBC)
Thursday 9 December	Christmas Dinner and Lecture at RYCT



### Save the Date:

Dear Members,

The Royal Society of Tasmania Peter Smith Lecture will be delivered by **Dr Frances Sussmilch**, Peter Smith Medal winner for 2020, in the Royal Society Lecture Room at TMAG on **Sunday 11 April at 3:00 pm**.

We do hope you will be able to join us for this event.

Further details will be emailed to you soon.



## The Royal Society of Tasmania Apology to the Aboriginal People of Tasmania

On Monday 15 February 2021, The Royal Society of Tasmania (RST) and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) delivered paired apologies to the Aboriginal people of Tasmania. The event was held in the Courtyard of TMAG, Hobart, and witnessed by almost one hundred invited guests including members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, members of the Council of the RST and members of the Board of Trustees of TMAG.

**Above:** RST President, Mrs Mary Koolhof, delivering RST's Apology. (Photograph courtesy of Jillian Mundy)

A large number of invited guests witnessed the event by livestream. Matt King, Chair of RST's Aboriginal Engagement Committee, and Janet Carding, Director of TMAG, welcomed guests, presented the Acknowledgment of Country on

behalf of each of the two organisations, and introduced the speakers.

For both the RST and TMAG, offering an Apology was a means of publicly acknowledging past actions and practices that have caused immense hurt and suffering to Tasmanian Aboriginal people. The Apologies signify the commitment of the two organisations to building strong and respectful relationships with Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

The RST and TMAG apologies were paired in recognition of the shared history of the two organisations. That shared history began with the creation of the RST in 1843 and was explained in the [Preamble](#) presented by Her Excellency, the Honourable Professor Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania. The Governor is Patron of both RST and TMAG.

The President of RST, Mrs Mary Koolhof, delivered RST's Apology to Tasmanian Aboriginal people. [Click to view the Society's Apology.](#)

The Chair of the Board of Trustees of TMAG, Ms Brett Torossi, delivered TMAG's Apology to Tasmanian Aboriginal people. [Click to view the TMAG Apology.](#)

Rodney Gibbins, the first Chair of TMAG's Aboriginal Advisory Council, and Michael Mansell, Chair of the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania, responded on behalf of Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

The formalities closed with a smoking ceremony, presided over by Jamie Graham-Blair and Auntie Wendal Pitchford. All attendees had the opportunity to be marked by ochre as a sign of belonging, and to be enveloped by the healing and cleansing smoke of the peppermint gum.

The recording of the RST and TMAG Apologies can be viewed on [RST's YouTube channel.](#)



**Above:** Director of TMAG, Janet Carding (left) and Chair of TMAG Board of Trustees, Ms Brett Torossi (right), following the delivery of the TMAG Apology. (Photograph courtesy of David Reilly)



**Above:** During the smoking ceremony, Auntie Wendal Pitchford (left) applied ochre to Her Excellency, the Honourable Professor Kate Warner AC, Governor of Tasmania with Mr Richard Warner AM looking on. (Photograph courtesy of Jillian Mundy)



**Left:** In the audience, left to right foreground, Chair of TMAG Board of Trustees, Ms Brett Torossi, Nala Mansell, Rodney Gibbins and Michael Mansell. In the background are members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community holding historical photographs of Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Rodney Gibbins and Michael Mansell responded to the Apologies on behalf of Tasmanian Aboriginal people. (Photo courtesy of Jillian Mundy)



**RST Northern Branch**  
invites you to  
a public lecture:

**Global and Australian Perspectives  
for COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout**  
by **Professor Katie Flanagan**

Where: **Meeting Room, QVMAG at Inveresk**

When: **1.15 pm Sunday 28 March 2021**

Note: *The lecture will commence at 1.30 pm following the Annual General Meeting.*

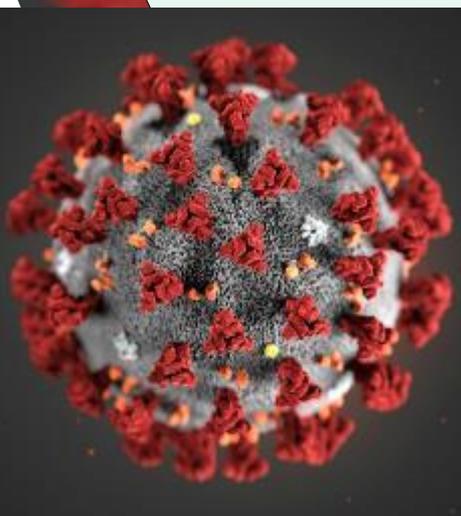
Due to COVID-19 restrictions, registration will be required for QVMAG lectures. Please phone **0417 330 118** or email [apcachris@gmail.com](mailto:apcachris@gmail.com)

For the Zoom webinar, register from 7 March at [rst.org.au](http://rst.org.au)

Katie is a world-renowned clinician scientist, Head of Infectious Diseases at LGH and a Professor at UTAS, RMIT and Monash Universities. She is Honorary Secretary of the Australian Society for Infectious Diseases, Chairs their Vaccination Special Interest Group, is a member of the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation, and Chairs their COVID-19 Vaccine Utilisation and Prioritisation Subgroup.

Her talk will discuss the platform technologies being used to design COVID-19 vaccines, candidates in pre-clinical and clinical trials and Phase 3 trial efficacy results. Katie will then discuss the progress globally with COVID-19 vaccine rollout and the Australian COVID-19 strategy and program in more detail. It will conclude with discussing next-generation vaccines including those against emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants.

Generously supported by



**RST Webinars**

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

## 2021 Membership Renewal



Not sure if you are a current financial member of The Royal Society of Tasmania?

An easy way to find out is to look at your membership card. It shows the year of expiry in the bottom right-hand corner.

If you find that you are not a current member, [you can renew here.](#)



## The Royal Society of Tasmania 2020 Doctoral Awards

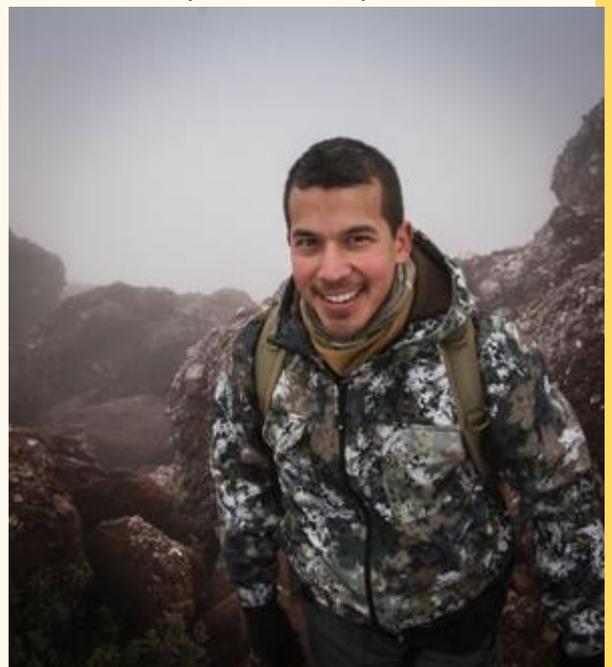
The RST Doctoral Awards recognise two doctoral (PhD) graduates who have made significant advances in the course of their doctoral research in any field within the purview of the Society. The research should have been largely carried out in Tasmania or under the aegis of a Tasmanian-based organisation and within the Society's purview.

The call for nominations for the 2020 round closed on 15 November 2020. Twenty nominations were received. The nominee cohort was exceptionally strong and covered diverse fields of research (science, medicine, engineering, business, social sciences). The successful nominees were **Dr Alessandro Silvano** and **Dr Adam Abersteiner**, both PhD graduates from the University of Tasmania.



Dr Silvano (pictured left) is an oceanographer and currently holds a research fellowship at the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton, United Kingdom. Dr Silvano's PhD thesis made significant advances in understanding interactions between the Southern Ocean, the Antarctic Ice Sheet and an unusual climate anomaly.

Dr Abersteiner (pictured below) is a geologist who holds a post-doctoral research position at the University of Helsinki, Finland. His PhD research focussed on kimberlite (see below left) which is a kind of igneous rock that originates very deep within the Earth and is the primary source of diamonds. His thesis included ground-breaking results that greatly



improve our understanding of the Earth's deep interior.

Dr Silvano and Dr Abersteiner will be invited to deliver lectures in the RST 2021 lecture program.

Jocelyn McPhie  
Chair, RST Honours Committee



## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting for the Society was held on 7 March in the Stanley Burbury lecture theatre at the University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay. The President, Mary Koolhof, opened and conducted the meeting and remarked that successfully overcoming the previous 12 months' challenges and being able to achieve some very good outcomes, in spite of COVID-19 is a result of the steadfast support from the membership and the volunteers from the ranks.

The **Minutes** of the Annual General Meeting of Sunday 1 March 2020 were adopted by the meeting without amendment. As there was no Business Arising, the President led the meeting in congratulating Dr Adam Abersteiner and Dr Alessandro Silvano for receiving The Royal Society's Doctoral Awards for 2020.

The **Peter Smith Medal** winner, Dr Frances Sussmilch, was also warmly congratulated.

The **2020 Annual Report** was presented and adopted by the meeting. The only comment came from a member who congratulated the Society on the historic occasion of the delivery of the Apology to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people.

A **Special Resolution** to change RST Rule 50 was presented by the Hon Secretary Marley Large. It was explained to the meeting that the changes to Rule 50 were recommended by our Hon Solicitor to align with current legislation. The changes were subsequently adopted by the meeting.

The President warmly thanked the retiring **2020 Council members**, Dr Niamh Chapman, Prof Greg Lehman and Dr Adele Wilson, for their valuable contributions. The same appreciation was expressed to Prof Matt King who is stepping down as Chair of the Aboriginal Engagement Committee.

The Returning Officer, Prof Ross Large AO, conducted the proceedings for the **election of new members** to the Council, and the Executive. As there was only one nomination for each of the vacancies, the following office bearers and Council members were declared elected:

**President:** Mrs Mary Koolhof

**Vice-President:** Prof Jocelyn McPhie

**Secretary:** Ms Marley Large

**Treasurer:** Mr David Wilson

**Council positions:**

Ms Chel Bardell

Dr Anita Hansen

Dr Julie Rimes

The appointment of the **Society's auditor**, Mr Richard James, was proposed by the Treasurer David Wilson and was adopted by the meeting.

**Congratulations** to all those elected and an especially warm welcome to the newly-elected members of Council, Ms Chel Bardell, Dr Anita Hansen and Dr Julie Rimes. Your time and expertise are very much appreciated by the membership of the Society and the rest of the Council is very much looking forward to working with you. The President expressed the Society's gratitude to those members whose hard work is generally unattributed for maintaining and furthering the Society's aim of the advancement of knowledge.

The Annual General Meeting's **attendance** was down on last year's but still there was a good number of members present overall; and those who attended were very impressed with our guest speaker's lecture. After the meeting concluded, Dr Jess Melbourne-Thomas delivered a very fine lecture titled *Engagement, diversity and inter-disciplinarity to tackle future challenges*. This provided much food for thought about ways in which various branches of research can benefit if the normal barriers to linking research disciplines can be overcome and some of the ways in which that can be achieved. Prof Jocelyn McPhie gave the vote of thanks and presented Dr Melbourne-Thomas with one of the Society's publications.

Members and visitors were thanked by the President for their attendance and the meeting was closed.



## 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:**

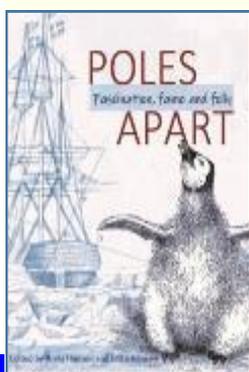
Christine Beswick, Secretary:  
0417 330 118  
PO Box 47 Perth TAS 7300

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.**

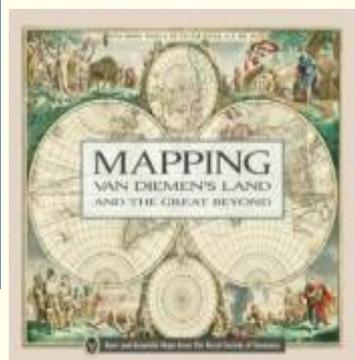
**10% discount for Members on these books.**

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



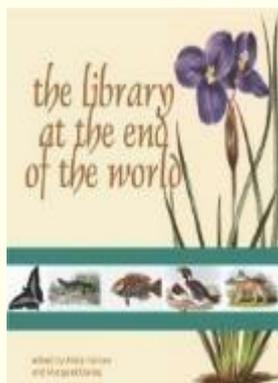
***Poles Apart: Fascination, Fame and Folly***

Hardcover (\$22.50) and Softcover (\$13.50)



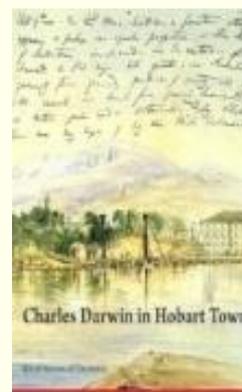
***Mapping Van Diemen's Land and the Great Beyond***

Hardcover (\$54) and Softcover (\$36)



***The Library at the End of the World***

Hardcover (\$54) and Softcover (\$36)



***Charles Darwin in Hobart***

Softcover (\$32)



***Papers and Proceedings***

Since 1849, the Society has published annual volumes of refereed scholarly papers. The *Papers and Proceedings* 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 Society are eligible for a

**10% discount**, please contact the **Honorary Editor** at [editor@rst.org.au](mailto:editor@rst.org.au)

***Royal Society 2021 Calendar***

Features 13 lovely watercolours by Francis Guillemard Simpkinson de Wesselow. Retail price: \$8.00 plus postage and handling as applicable.

**Members of the Royal Society can also order calendars from the [website](#) or the RST office at the newly discounted price of \$7.00.**

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.



The Royal Society of Tasmania



2021 CALENDAR



## PRIME MINISTER'S LITERARY AWARDS

### Entries are now open for the 2021 Prime Minister's Literary Awards

The Literary Awards provide Australia's authors, illustrators, historians and poets with the opportunity to receive national recognition for their talent.

Each year the Awards acknowledge the significant contribution literature, history and poetry have in connecting us to Australian voices and our story as a nation.

Literature provides us with knowledge, entertainment and creativity, offers an escape for readers, and encourages critical thinking, which is why it is important that the contribution of talented Australian writers is celebrated.

If you have published work during 2020, you may be eligible to enter the 2021 Awards in one of the six categories: children's literature, young adult literature, fiction, poetry, non-fiction, and Australian history.

To enter, visit [GrantsConnect](#).

A total prize pool of \$600,000 is available for shortlisted and winning books.

Entries close on 26 March 2021.

Find out more:

- ◆ Visit [www.arts.gov.au/pmla](http://www.arts.gov.au/pmla)
- ◆ Read the [media release](#)

## The Society's Library

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



UNIVERSITY of  
TASMANIA

# Autographs

The origin of the word *autograph* is the Greek 'autographon' meaning 'written in one's own hand'. Unfortunately, no signature from any ancient Greek or Roman ruler has survived, but autographs became fashionable with the rise of the Renaissance (1300–1600) as the rate of literacy increased across Europe.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, signatures from great historical figures were in high demand among the European intelligentsia and auction houses were trading in autographs. Today, there are dedicated auction houses and the industry is worth billions of dollars. For example, Tommy Scullion, an Irish grocery driver, built up one of the world's finest collections of 40,000 autographs (of popes, dictators, murderers, spies, artists and Nobel prize-winners) which was anticipated to sell for over £50,000.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/signing-off-the-world-s-greatest-autograph-hunter-855419.html>

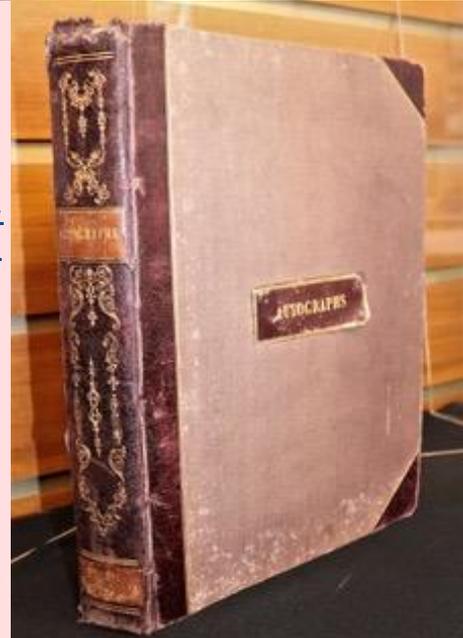
One of the items held in the Special & Rare Collections is *Autographs of royal, noble, learned, and remarkable personages conspicuous in English history, from the reign of Richard the Second to that of Charles the Second; with some illustrious foreigners; containing many passages from important letters. Engraved under the direction of Charles John Smith. Accompanied by concise biographical memoirs, and interesting extracts from the original documents* by John Gough Nichols (Morris Miller-Rare-Folio Z 42.N63 1829). It is a dossier of over 600 letters with the autographs of most of the 'royal, noble, learned, and remarkable personages' from the Plantagenet dynasty to the reign of King Charles II.

Dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Royal Society holds an autograph album and scrapbook (RS43) presented by **Sir James Wilson Agnew** (1815–1901—pictured below left) who was secretary of The Royal Society of Tasmania 1861–1881 and 1884–1894, and chairman of the Board of Management of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

1886–1901. It is a collection of literary autographs, historical notes, facsimiles, and miscellaneous notes including autographs of celebrities visiting Tasmania such as SL Clements (Mark Twain) and the members of the British Antarctic Expedition 1898–1900 led by Carsten E Borchgrevink. [https://sparc.utas.edu.au/uploads/r/the-royal-society-of-tasmania-collection/8/d/b/8db96ceb425de30cf18cac1b536dbef43e461d821a545d13f1978cde6921984c/rs\\_43-J-W-Agnew\\_1 .pdf](https://sparc.utas.edu.au/uploads/r/the-royal-society-of-tasmania-collection/8/d/b/8db96ceb425de30cf18cac1b536dbef43e461d821a545d13f1978cde6921984c/rs_43-J-W-Agnew_1.pdf)

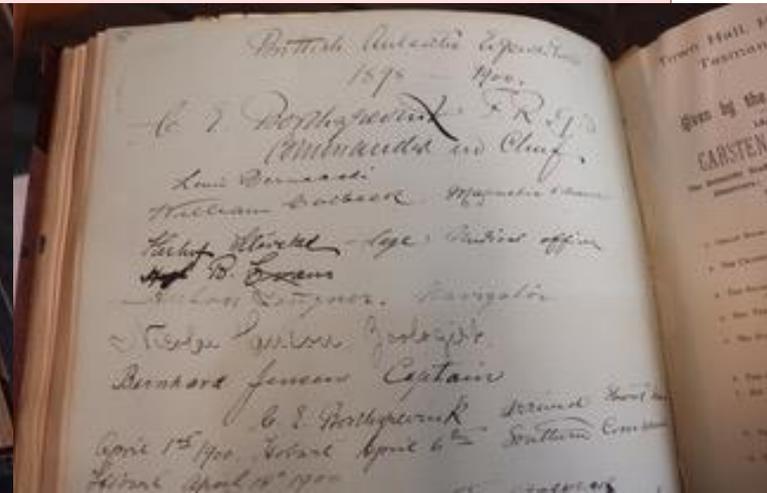
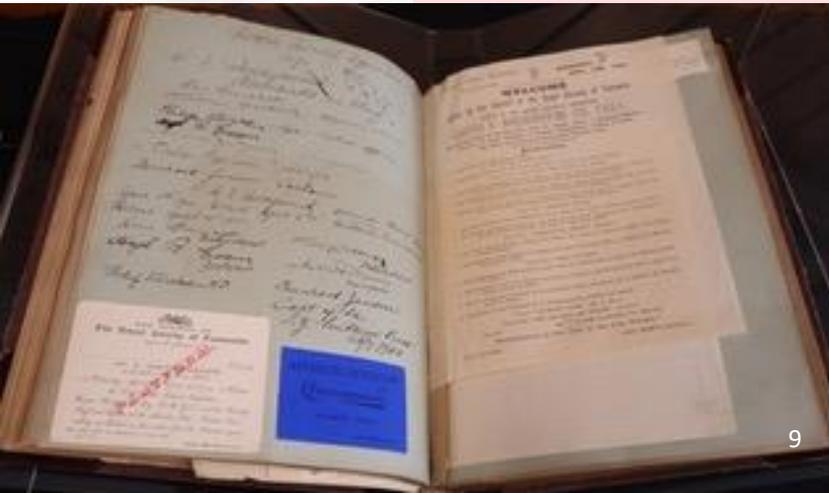
More on Agnew from *The cyclopedia of Tasmania* (illustrated): an historical and commercial review (1900) page 305 <https://stors.tas.gov.au/25841>

**Left:** Sir James Wilson Agnew (1815–1901). **Below:** Autographs of some members of the British Antarctic Expedition 1898–1900 led by Carsten E Borchgrevink.



**Above:** The cover of the collection of autographs by John Gough Nichols.

**Top:** One of the pages from the Nichols' collection.



# 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 overall 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.

**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**

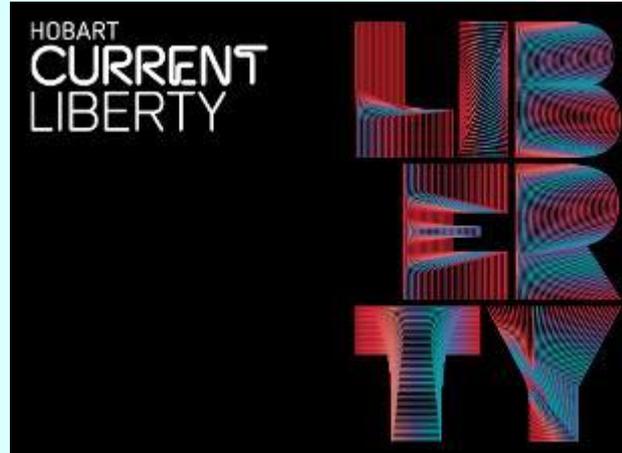
Come along with the TMAG Art Guides as they share their love and enthusiasm for the wonderful works in the art collection. The tour will visit the *Exquisite Habits* and *This Too Shall Pass* exhibitions.

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

**[Hobart Current: Liberty](#)** is a biennial contemporary art project presented by TMAG and the City of Hobart which will run from **12 March to 9 May 2021**. Ten artists were commissioned to create work for the Liberty theme, challenging notions of agency and representation, surveillance and exile.

*Who chooses freedom for whom, in what space and during what time?*

[Hobart Current](#) is a major biennial program presented in partnership between the City of Hobart and TMAG, with *Liberty* its inaugural exhibition. Complementing the exhibition, the City of Hobart will present a series of activities in public spaces across the Hobart CBD, providing further opportunities to discover and explore the notion of 'liberty'.



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!

Copyright © 2021 The Royal Society of Tasmania.

All rights reserved.

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