



### A Message from the President

Dear Members,

The past month included the presentation of The Royal Society of Tasmania Medal to Dr Eric Ratcliff OAM at a members-only reception hosted by the Governor, the Honourable Barbara Baker AC and Emeritus Professor Don Chalmers AO. This Medal is awarded to distinguished scholars who have also been active members of the Society. Dr Ratcliff fulfills both criteria admirably, being highly productive in the fields of psychiatry, medical history, architecture, building conservation, art and history, and being actively involved in the Northern Branch of the RST for 56 years, including four periods serving as the President of the branch.

**Left:** Her Excellency the Hon. Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania presents Dr Eric Ratcliff OAM FRANZCP with The Royal Society of Tasmania Medal at Government House, Hobart.

Dr Ratcliff drew on his decades of scholarship in the lecture that followed, "The peril of naming things: nosology, taxonomy and the identification of style". The evening proved unique in that two previous winners of The Royal Society of Tasmania Medal, Professor Jim Reid and Professor Ross Large AO,

were also present. So, with Eric, we had three winners together.

**Right:** Trio of The Royal Society of Tasmania Medal winners (from left) Dist. Prof Ross Large AO, Dr Eric Ratcliff OAM with Prof Jim Reid.

Council has been busy over the past month putting in place the Committees entrusted to carry out RST activities for the year ahead. I would like to thank all the individuals who have volunteered to serve as Committee Members or Chairs – without you, very little of the RST's core business could proceed. The list of committees ratified at the April Council meeting is provided in this Newsletter. In support of the RST's Artwork Collection, a new committee has been created with the task of fundraising, given the need for restoration of many items in the collection. If you have an interest in contributing your expertise to one of the committees, please contact me.

Welcome to new RST members: Mr Anthony Boden, Mrs Christine Gleeson, Mrs Gloria Pullen, Dr Tony Sprent and Mr Markus Staubmann. I hope you are able to join us for upcoming lectures and other events.

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Please read on to learn about RST lectures and other RST activities planned for the month ahead.

Best regards,



Prof Jocelyn McPhie, President

## RST Committees April 2022

Council ratified the RST Committees as follows for 2022 at the April Council meeting.

### **Aboriginal Engagement Committee**

**Chair:** Prof Jocelyn McPhie

Dr Sally Bryant

Mary Koolhof

Prof Greg Lehman

David Morris

David Wilson

### **Artworks Committee**

**Chair:** Prof Ross Large AO

Honorary Curator: Dr Anita Hansen

Marley Large

### **Artwork Fundraising Committee**

**Chair:** Mary Koolhof

Prof Ross Large AO

Prof Jocelyn McPhie

Julie Rimes

Lynne Uptin OAM

### **Bursaries Committee**

**Acting Chair:** Prof Jocelyn McPhie

Shasta Henry

Dr Adele Wilson

### **Events and Publicity Committee**

**Co-Chairs:** Dr Julie Rimes (Events) and Chel Bardell (Publicity)

Shasta Henry

Dr Rob Johnson

Dr Tony Webster

Dr Imogen Wegman

John Williamson

### **Honours and Awards Committee**

**Chair:** Prof Jocelyn McPhie

Dr Margaret Davies OAM

Dr Eva Meidl

Prof Jim Reid

Dr Steve Rintoul

Prof Jonathan Sprent (Medical Sciences Consultant)

### **Membership Committee**

**Chair:** Roxanne Steenbergen

Chel Bardell

Shasta Henry

Peter Manchester

Dr John Thorne AM

### **Publications Committee**

**Chair:** Dr Sally Bryant

Chel Bardell

Dr Margaret Davies OAM

Dr Tony Webster

### **The RST Foundation Committee**

**Chair:** Neil Mackinnon

Tony Culberg

Marley Large – Secretary to the Foundation

Dr John Thorne AM

David Wilson – RST Treasurer

## Joint lecture of the Royal Society of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Division of the Geological Society of Australia

The Royal Society of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Division of the Geological Society of Australia invite all members and supporters to a lecture on **Sunday 15 May 2022**, at 3:00 pm by **Dr Anthony Webster**.

### Geology, landscape and European settlement: small things meant a lot



**Above:** Dr Anthony Webster.

The lecture will be presented at the Geology Lecture Theatre (Geo.211.LT), Earth Sciences – Geography, Planning and Spatial Sciences Building, University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay (entrance off Earl Street, Hobart) and as a Zoom webinar.

**If you wish to attend in person:** [Register using Eventbrite](#) before 4 pm Saturday 14 May.

The password is RST.

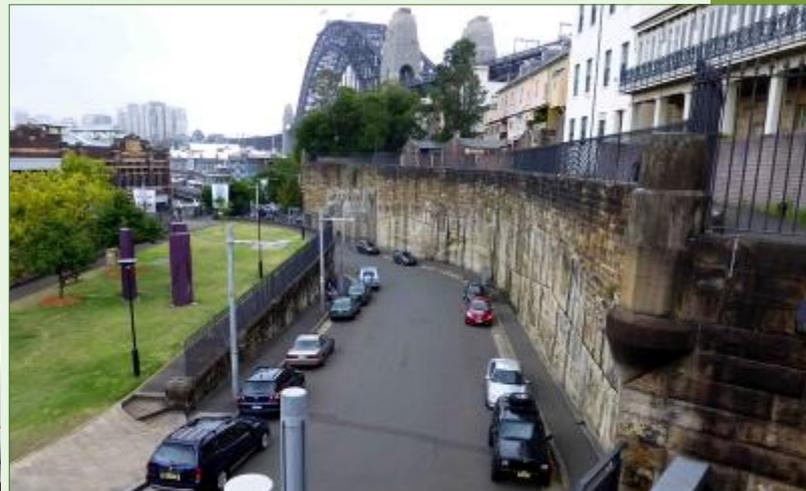
Attendance at this joint event is free.

**If you wish to attend via ZOOM:** [Please register for the Zoom webinar](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

#### Abstract

Historical accounts of the first European responses to Australian landscapes rarely mention the ways that their decisions were influenced by the terrain. This talk is about the role that geology and landscape played in the places chosen for permanent European settlements in Australia, and in the earliest land-use choices made as they adapted to their new environments. The most historically significant sites of first European settlement are now occupied by the modern central business districts of Australia's largest cities and are now intensely urbanised and modified landscapes.

Using examples from Hobart, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, it will be shown that despite the intensity of two centuries of urban development and landscape modification, the geology and pre-European landscapes of these places had a profound influence on their early development. It will also be shown that the effects of the original landforms remain deeply embedded in the modern urban landscapes.



#### Biography: Dr Anthony (Tony) Webster

Tony is a Hobart-based consulting geologist working with GeoDiscovery Group Ltd. He has spent over 30 years in the mining industry, academia and government, working in and around several historically significant base metal and gold mines, including Broken Hill and Kalgoorlie, Zeehan, Mount Farrell, and Rosebery (Hercules).

Tony started his career as an underground mine geologist on the Golden Mile (Fimiston) but has since worked in a variety of roles, including mining heritage, environmental

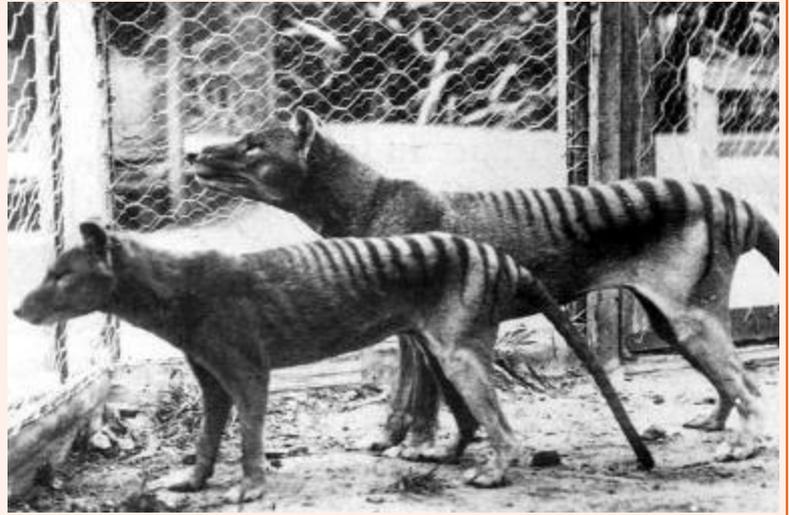
regulation and research roles in Tasmania and Queensland. Tony has particular skills in structural geology, historic data compilation and analysis, and the geological interpretation of complex mineralised systems.

Tony is currently Vice-President of The Royal Society of Tasmania. He also an Honorary Senior Fellow of both the University of Tasmania and the University of Queensland. He was formerly Chair of the Queensland Division, Geological Society of Australia and an Associate Editor of the Australian Journal of Earth Sciences.

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

## **The Lost Thylacines**

presented by  
**Kathryn Medlock**



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

**When:** 1:30 pm Sunday 24 April 2022.

Full COVID vaccination and the wearing of face masks are highly desirable.

**Admission:** Free for RST members, \$6 general admission, \$4 students, QVMAG or TMAG Friends and members of Launceston Historical Society.

Register for Zoom webinar at [rst.org.au/](http://rst.org.au/)

### **Abstract:**

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery has a large and significant collection of thylacine specimens, however, many more came into the museum than currently exist in the collection. This presentation will explain the fate of some of the 'missing' specimens and review the display history of thylacines at TMAG.

### **Biography:**

Kathryn Medlock worked in vertebrate zoology at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery for 35 years. Her many tasks included specimen preparation, collection management, research, education and exhibition curation. An exhibition on the thylacine in 1998 sparked her interest in the multiple facets of museum thylacine specimens and how the specimens themselves can reveal aspects of human culture, history and science.

Generously supported by



Lisa-ann Gershwin

## **RST April Lecture: Jellyfish Blooms and the Future of the Ocean by Dr Lisa-ann Gershwin**

Dr Lisa-ann Gershwin provided The Royal Society of Tasmania April lecture in the Society rooms in Hobart on Sunday 3 April 2022. With a broad background in marine ecology and scientific communication, Lisa led the audience on a fascinating and somewhat horrifying journey into how our oceans are becoming increasingly inhospitable to life.

Drawing on her research into pelagic invertebrates and her particular focus on jellyfish and jellyfish bloom dynamics, Lisa's presentation focused on the current state of the world's ocean waters. Growing toxicity and rising temperatures coupled with overfishing have dramatically reduced many marine species while providing an environment where jellyfish species are able to thrive.

Accompanied by a brilliant set of illustrative slides, the audience was fully engaged in learning about jellyfish, the oldest multi-organelled life form on the planet, and in seeing how they now are vastly increasing in number and spread around the world. These population blooms are an ominous indicator of the state of our planet.

**Dr Julie Rimes**



## RST Northern Branch invites you to a public lecture

**Andrew Bishop**

### A Brave New Plant Security System

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

**When:** 1:30 pm Sunday 22 May 2022.

Full COVID vaccination and the wearing of face masks are highly desirable.

**Admission:** Free for RST members, \$6 general admission, \$4 students, QVMAG or TMAG Friends and members of Launceston Historical Society.

**Register** for Zoom webinar at [rst.org.au/](http://rst.org.au/)

#### **Abstract:**

Technology and innovation are revolutionising how we manage the rapidly increasing threats from exotic pests and diseases to our agriculture, environment, and amenity. This ranges from powerful data gathering and big data analysis that generates advance warnings of impending threats, through to molecular and GPS based tracking systems and electronically connected smart surveillance systems.

#### **Biography:**

Andrew (pictured above) is Tasmania's Chief Plant Protection Officer with Biosecurity Tasmania, having responsibility for decision making in the development and maintenance of the Tasmanian plant biosecurity system, including emergency responses and responsibility for representation (state and national). He has 33 years' experience working in government in Tasmania and Victoria.



**Above:** Andrew Bishop in 2018 when a fruit fly larva was detected in imported nectarines. (Photo courtesy 'The Advocate' newspaper.)



**Above:** Queensland fruit fly. (Photo courtesy [www.bhg.com.au](http://www.bhg.com.au))

**Below:** Mediterranean fruit fly larvae. (Photo courtesy [www.agric.wa.gov.au](http://www.agric.wa.gov.au))





**Above:** Her Excellency the Hon Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania with Dr Eric Ratcliff OAM and his daughter, Delia Ratcliff of Launceston.

recipient having taught, lectured, written and published on psychiatry and medical history, and taught, lectured, written, published, illustrated, exhibited and designed on architecture, building conservation, art and history as well as being a member of the Society for 56 years. A deserving recipient of such a prestigious award.

## The Royal Society of Tasmania Medal Lecture

On Wednesday 30 March at Government House, our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania presented the 2021 The Royal Society of Tasmania Medal to Dr Eric Ratcliff OAM FRANZCP. The medal is awarded to acknowledge outstanding scholarship and contribution to The Royal Society of Tasmania.

In introducing Dr Ratcliff, The Royal Society of Tasmania President, Prof Jocelyn McPhie (- see right), noted that the winner was an eminently qualified



**Above:** Dr Eric Ratcliff OAM with Sir Guy Green.  
**Below:** Prof Jocelyn McPhie, President of the Royal Society of Tasmania, with Her Excellency the Hon Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania.

Several colleagues and friends from the Northern Branch travelled to Hobart for the event in support of Dr Ratcliff as well as his daughter, Delia. Other guests at Government House to offer their congratulations included Sir Guy Green AC, KBE (- see left) and two past winners of the same award, Prof Jim Reid and Prof Ross Large AO (- see photo on p. 1).

Dr Ratcliff then delivered The Royal Society of Tasmania Medal lecture entitled "The perils of naming things nosology, taxonomy and the identification of style". Dr Ratcliff informed and entertained the audience with acute and often humorous observations highlighting the anomalous, misleading, contradictory, sometimes ridiculous, even damaging results of attempts to categorise and name things, especially in the medical and architectural fields.

**Nosology** 1727

**Taxonomie** 1813, **taxonomy** 1828

François Boissier de Sauvages de Lacroix (1706-1767), *Nosologia methodica* 1763

*International Classification of Causes of Death* 1890

WHO founded 1948

*International Classification of Diseases* 1948

**Neil MacKinnon**

Did you know that FLOCCINAUCINIHIPIIPLICATION is the longest word in the *Oxford English Dictionary*?

**REIFICATION** – establishment of a mental concept as a thing

**FOSSILISATION** – unreasoning defence of a thing, once established

**UNDERINCLUSION** – e.g., Papworth's 'diagnostic greed', exclusion criteria that prevent research

**OVERINCLUSION** – the 'halo' phenomenon



**Left:** Guests at the lecture were George Cresswell of Derwent Park with Virginia Vaughan-Williams of Sandy Bay.



Other guests at the lecture. **Above left:** Bruce and Suzanne Cameron of Sandy Bay. **Above right:** Heather and David Tremayne of Lindisfarne cheerily sample the fare provided by the chefs at Government House, Hobart.



**Above left:** Patricia Reid with Prof Mike Coffin. **Above right:** (from left) Melanie Morris of Norwood with RST Northern Branch Secretary Christine Beswick of Perth.



**Above left:** (from left) Mary Beadle of Battery Point with Dianne Bye of Sandy Bay. **Above right:** Paul Pielage of St. Leonards is deep in conversation with Her Excellency. **Left:** (from left) Jacqui Nicolson of Evandale with Anne and Paul Donaghue of Kingston Beach.



## Notes for the Review: Pat Quilty, *The Dawning of Antarctica*

Patrick G. Quilty, 2021 *The Dawning of Antarctica: Through Exploration to Occupation*, Hobart: Dr Eva Meidl, pp. 474

This splendid, comprehensive, compendium of every aspect of Antarctic history is a very welcome addition for all scholars of the southern continent. Professor Patrick Quilty AM was Chief Scientist for the Australian Antarctic Division for 18 years and devoted much of his later years to writing this vast and authoritative book on the human history of the Antarctic continent.

Quilty states that his aim for the book is to “*summarise ... the human history of the exploration of the Antarctic prior to the International Geophysical Year (IGY) of 1957–1958*”, and indeed he is able to accomplish this in minute, complex detail. He explains for us the early perceptions of what and where Antarctica was. He examines the role of James Cook through a thorough and authoritative assessment of his second voyage and the circumnavigation of Antarctica. The author is at pains to explain the various claims and counter claims of early Antarctic explorers and his in-depth analysis of logs and journals is impressive as he places those claims as accurately as is possible onto modern maps. For example, the way Quilty analyses von Bellingshausen’s interpretations of the coast, and compares them with a modern map of the South Sandwich Islands, clarifies, for modern readers

and researchers, how early explorers charted the coastline they saw – or thought they saw – and to which parts of Antarctica these actually refer. This requires very good understanding of the original logs and journals of 19<sup>th</sup> century explorers. Sir Guy Green, in his fine Foreword to this book, notes how thoroughly and successfully Professor Quilty locates, interprets and utilises these primary sources.

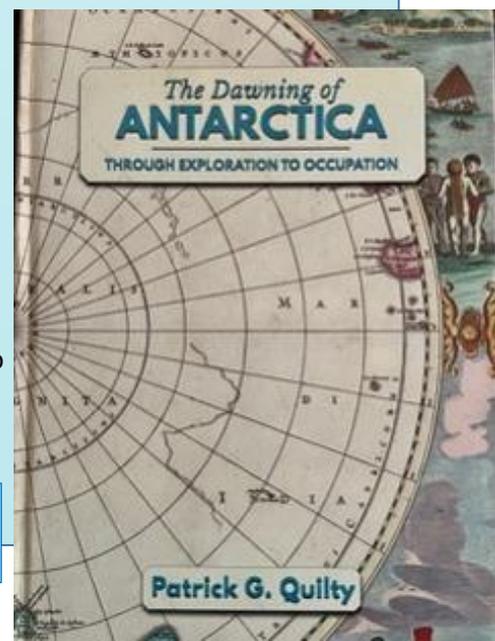
Quilty deals in a balanced way with a wide range of issues: the quality and immensity of Thaddeus von Bellingshausen’s voyage in the Southern Ocean; the “Hollow Earth” theories of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and the realities of islands and land that were thought (incorrectly) to exist. His writing on the three major national expeditions during the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (US, French and British), is clear about the challenges they faced and the success they nevertheless achieved. Quilty’s maps of the journeys of these three significant expeditions, are immensely satisfying as they are clear, accurate and they point out locational problem areas and suggest solutions to geographical issues that have arisen. This is analytical history at its best and it is a reflection of Quilty’s vast store of knowledge gleaned over many decades of research.

The organisation of this book signposts themes with appropriate headings, with images and maps set in the text to which they refer. His decision to divide the so-called “heroic era” into sub-sections is well advised. This allows Quilty to provide correct weighting not only to the much-referenced expeditions of Scott, Shackleton, Amundsen and Mawson, but also to those whose journeys are often ignored: Charcot, Bruce, Nordenskjöld and Wilkins. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century years of exploration are the key moments of this volume. Told with verve and rigour, these voyages become even more fascinating as Quilty examines the complexity of the individuals involved as well as providing an assessment of their scientific and geographical achievements. While managing to avoid controversy over issues such as Scott’s management in a crisis or Amundsen’s actions in going south instead of to the north, Quilty nonetheless makes his views clear and is not afraid of examining the behaviour and leadership of these explorers. His summation of the differing styles of leadership (pp. 234–235) is masterly.

There are, throughout the book, excellent biographies of principal characters such as Scott, Shackleton, Wilkins, Byrd et al. and these are generous and fair but show that the author is not blind to the flaws in each personality. These chapters are supported by accurate maps, diagrams and reproductions of paintings which add to the intellectual complexity of this substantial monograph.

The concluding chapters, which discuss the years of World War II and the decades leading up to, and including, the 1957–1958 Internation-

**Right:** *The Dawning of Antarctica: Through Exploration to Occupation*, Patrick G. Quilty, 2021.



al Geophysical Year (IGY), are particularly thoughtful, because this is the era with which Quilty had the closest association. He refines our focus on the major scientific drivers of change of that period examining the great importance of the IGY and this provides a strong basis for his general discussion of internationally coordinated research in Antarctica. Of course, Professor Quilty's own research endeavours on the southern continent provide substance to his analysis. It would be hasty to say that it is a pity the book does not develop the story past 1958; but that is merely disappointment on our part that we do not have Professor Quilty's version of recent events.

Twelve years in the making, this book has been a labour of love, necessity and great scholarship by Professor Quilty. His passion for Antarctic history is obvious. It is also appropriate that we offer our sincere thanks to those who so carefully edited, after the author's death, his vast array of text and maps – Margaret Davies, June Pongratz and Eva Meidl. Professor Quilty has left us a fitting legacy and, as Hobart continues to develop its reputation as a major global hub for Antarctic Science, this volume will take its place as one of the most important set of readings on human activity on the ice. Professor Quilty was a world class scientist, and the publication of this book will confirm, in addition, his reputation as an historian of significance.

**John Williamson**

April 2022

**Below:** Prof Pat Quilty is seen on the right in a mid-blue jacket standing in front of *Aurora Australis*. (Photo: Jane Goddard)



## Appointment of New RST Office Manager

A new Office Manager has been appointed to the Royal Society team. Her name is Bronwyn Beechey and I know that our Royal Society members will join me in wishing her a very warm welcome. Bronwyn has fitted in beautifully and has already tidied us up considerably.

Bronwyn will be available in the office every Thursday morning between 9:00 am and 12:00 pm to answer your calls and to assist you with enquiries and book sales.

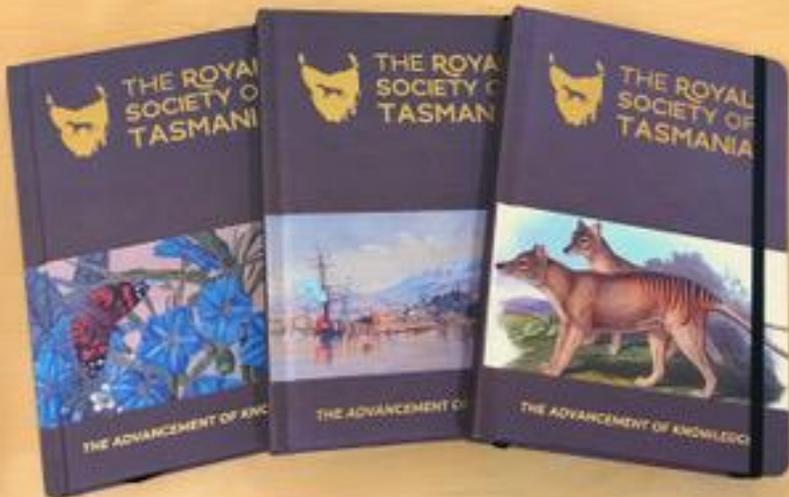
Bronwyn can be contacted on the email address: [admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au)



## Recent RST Publications

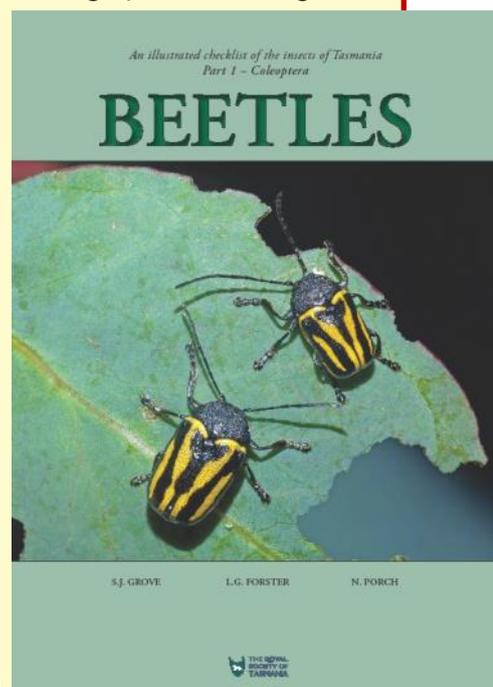
Three new publications are available to add to your reading list:

All items below are available for purchase online via the [RST Shop with some offering a membership discount](#).



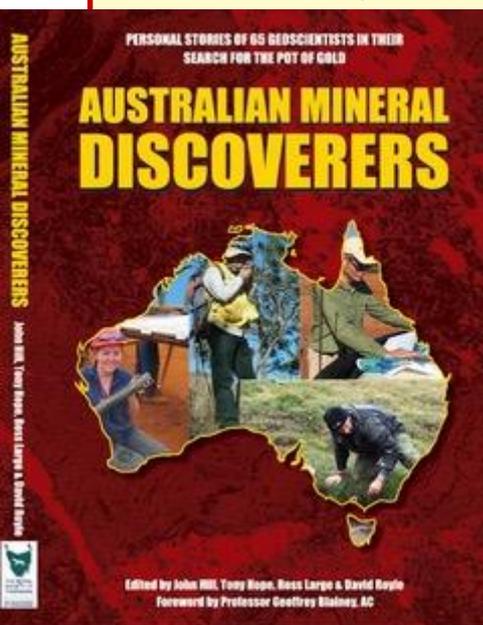
**RST Notebooks** featuring a choice of three cover images from the Society's Art Collection and the Special and Rare Book Collection are available (- see left). Beautifully bound and presented, these prestigious notebooks are ideal for meeting notes or creative writing, so why not buy yourself a couple or as gifts for others? \$28 each or \$25 member discount. **Purchase now.**

**An Illustrated Checklist of Tasmanian Beetles**, prepared by experts Simon Grove, Lynne Forster and Nick Porch (- see cover at right), is an exciting new taxonomic guide to Tasmanian beetles with diagnostic information on



nearly 3000 species, including over 600 endemics and seven species found only on Macquarie Island. Featuring thumbnail images of every group and 16 full colour plates, this fantastic new resource will help you identify and learn more about Tasmania's enigmatic beetle fauna. \$46 **Purchase now.**

Following Volume 155(1) celebrating the RST Northern Branch centenary in June 2021, the RST Journal **Papers and Proceedings Volume 155(2)** features the transcripts of speakers at the historic *Apology to Tasmanian Aboriginal people*, as well as a diverse range of scientific and review papers of wide interest. Contact the Office to purchase a copy [admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au)



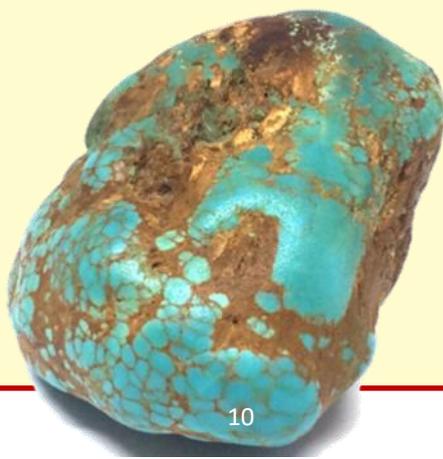
### **Australian Mineral Discoverers: 1950-2010**

first published in December 2020 has now been reprinted. Edited by John Hill, Tony Hope, Ross Large and David Royle, this book features the biographies of 65 Australian mineral explorers and educators. Their stories show that the discovery of buried minerals is an extremely complex science, requiring knowledge, innovation, disciplined application of geological principles, teamwork, persistence and luck. **\$60.00 full price**

**RST members' discount on this item @ \$50.00**

**For overseas orders, please contact the Society directly to calculate postage and place the order: [admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au)**

For orders of more than one copy, please contact the Society direct: [admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au)



## Royal Society Office

The Royal Society office is open on Thursday mornings 9:00 am to midday. Enter the Custom House building from the **Davey Street entrance and register at the Visitors' Desk.**

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 **THURSDAY** morning on **03 6165 7014.**

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

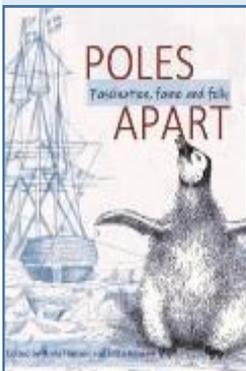
**Northern Branch contact:** Christine Beswick, Secretary:  
0417 330 118  
PO Box 47 Perth TAS 7300

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.

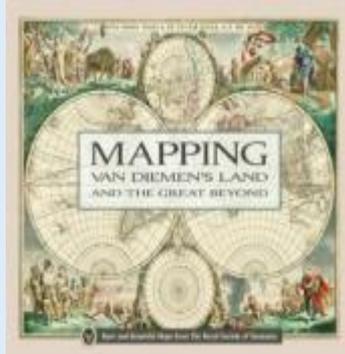
Publications sales are available through the RST shop, on our [website](#), by email or by phone through the office.

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

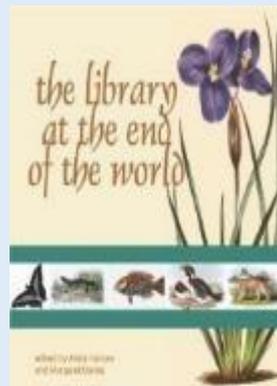
**Discounted prices for members are shown beside each book:**



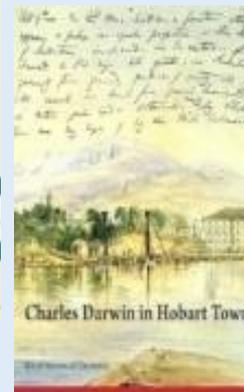
**Poles Apart: Fascination, Fame and Folly**  
Hardcover (\$22.50) and Softcover (\$13.50)



**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 Town**  
Softcover (\$32)

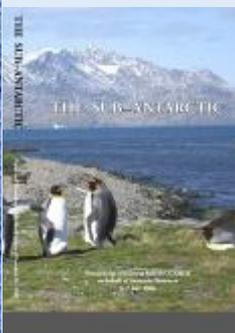


### **Papers and Proceedings**

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)



**Special publications still available:** *The Sub-Antarctic* (21 papers on various aspects of the Sub-Antarctic islands); *Aspects of Tasmanian Botany* – a collection of botanical papers given at a symposium honouring the work of Dr Winifred Curtis AM); *Tasmanian Wilderness – World Heritage Values*.

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

## The Royal Society of Tasmania's Art Collection

The Royal Society of Tasmania's Art collection is housed at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart. Any queries please contact the Honorary Curator, Dr Anita Hansen: [anita.hansen@utas.edu.au](mailto:anita.hansen@utas.edu.au)



### A Curious Note

Back in 2014, when Margaret Davies and I were considering images and books for the Society's *Library at the End of the World* at the Society's library, we found a curious note in the unbound copy of John Gould's *The Mammals of Australia*, Vol 1. It revealed, 'Certain plates from this spare placed on loan to Tas Museum 1924. Mounted and on exhibition in Museum 1925.' (See left)

Among the missing images in the book were those of the Tasmanian Tiger, Tasmanian Devil and quolls.

A few years later, when Marley Large and I were researching the Society's Art Collection, we noticed that there was a set of prints from Gould's *The Mammals of Australia* – Tasmanian Tiger, Tasmanian Devil and quolls at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. I recalled that 'curious note' from the library all those years ago, and we were able to confirm that they were indeed the same prints mentioned in the note and were part of the Society's collection.

**Above:** Note in *The Mammals of Australia*, Vol 1. John Gould 1863.

Very exciting! That image of the Thylacine is after all one of the most – if not the most – iconic images of the Tasmanian Tiger! Happily, the images came from an unbound book, and the plates can be returned to complete the volume. But it made me begin to contemplate a few fascinating topics:

- the links between libraries and art galleries
- the links between science and art
- natural history art and how we view it.

### Libraries and Art

Libraries often contain large collections of 'works on paper' as well as books and other ephemera. The Society's library for example, also contains among other things: maps, journals, photographs, and official records. When the Society's library was housed at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, the artworks on paper were considered part of the library.

So the question is: What is art?

The Tasmanian Tiger print (a hand-coloured lithograph) is a wonderful example of this dilemma. When the image is part of a book, it is an illustration – on a library bookshelf; but the very same image outside the book becomes an artwork – framed and hung in an art gallery.

### The Links between Science and Art

The illustrations in John Gould's *The Mammals of Australia*, while created to appeal to the lay viewer, were there primarily to describe the species in a quasi-scientific way.

Illustrations were often used to help readers imagine the new, unique fauna and flora of the antipodes – plants and animals that defied a purely written description or interpretation.

As the British botanist and collector Sir James Smith (1759–1828) pointed out in 1793, 'When a botanist first enters ... so remote a country as New Holland he finds himself in a new world. He can scarcely meet with any fixed points from whence to draw his analogies. Whole tribes of plants which first seem familiar ... prove on nearer examination, total strangers, with other configurations, other economies, and other qualities; not only are the species that present themselves new, but most of the genera, and even the natural orders.'

This lack of suitable analogies Smith laments can be further demonstrated by the following written descriptions of a kangaroo given by Francois Pelsaert (believed to be the first description), Joseph Banks and James Cook.

Pelsaert wrote, 'Besides we found in these islands large numbers of a species of cat, which are very strange creatures; they are about the size of a hare, their head resembling that of a civet cat; the forepaws are very short, about the length of a finger, on which the animal has five small nails or fingers, resembling those of a monkey's



**Above:** *Thylacinus cynocephalus* (Tasmanian tiger) from John Gould's *The Mammals of Australia*, Vol 1. 1863.

forepaw. Its two hind legs, on the contrary, are upwards of half an ell in length [about half a metre], and it walks on these only, on the flat of the heavy part of the leg’.

Banks described the kangaroo thus, ‘To compare it to any European animal would be impossible as it has not the least resemblance of any one I have seen. Its fore legs are extremely short and of no use to it in walking, its hind again as disproportionately long; with these it hops 7 or 8 feet at each hop’.

And on 24 June 1770, James Cook recorded in his journal aboard the *Endeavour*, ‘I saw myself this morning, a little way from the ship, one of the Animals before spoke off [sic]: it was of a light mouse Colour and the full size of a Grey Hound, and shaped in every respect like one, with a long tail, which it carried like a Grey Hound; in short, I should have taken it for a wild dog but for its walking or running, in which it jump'd like a Hare or Deer. ... In form, it is most like the gerbua’.

I doubt that anyone who has never seen a kangaroo (or image of one) could ever picture it from these descriptions. These metaphors demonstrate the value of images to introduce the newly-discovered Tasmanian fauna and flora to the European scientists and public.

### Natural History Art and How We View It

While the illustrations here are nearly always referred to as Gould’s, he was not the artist! The images were drawn by Henry Constantine Richter (1821–1907). Richter, a zoological illustrator and lithographer, came from a family of renowned artists and artisans.

After the death of John Gould’s wife Elizabeth in 1841, (she had previously illustrated Gould’s books), Richter was employed by Gould to work on *The Birds of Australia*, for which he produced the majority of the lithographs. Richter was responsible for all the plates in Gould’s *A Monograph of the Macropodidae or Family of Kangaroos* (1841–1842) and *The Mammals of Australia* (1863). Richter produced about 3000 lithographic plates and watercolours for Gould. When we see an illustration like this, we believe it to be a true depiction of the scene in front of us – two thylacines in the Tasmanian landscape. However, Gould notes in his description of the Thylacine, ‘The circumstances of a fine pair, male and female, of the *Thylacinus cynocephalus* being now living in the Gardens of the Zoological Society Gardens in the Regent’s Park, enables me to give the best figure of the animal that has yet appeared ...’

So while we have an image of these two Tigers surveying their natural surroundings, Richter actually drew two creatures caged at the zoo far from their home in Tasmania.

This superb illustration does, nevertheless, show one of the few images drawn from life of a creature that is now tragically gone forever (?). Others in this set show more of Tasmania’s wildlife that are in danger of disappearing forever as well.



**Above:** *Dasyurus viverrinus* (*Dasyurus viverrinus*,) Eastern Quoll.

### Aside

There is a lithograph in the Society’s art collection by an artist identified only as KWN (- see right). I have not been able to identify this artist from any records I have access to. I’ve even tried going through the passenger lists of arrivals from around the time to no avail. Does anyone have any information that could help me identify KWN?



**Above:** *Sarcophilus ursinus* (*Sarcophilus harrisi*) Tasmanian Devil.



## RST Office Contact Information

Please send relevant emails for attention of the Office Manager, Bronwyn Beechey to: [office@rst.org.au](mailto:office@rst.org.au)

Emails for The Royal Society of Tasmania, in general, should still be sent to: [admin@rst.org.au](mailto:admin@rst.org.au)

Matters relating to RST correspondence should be sent to: [secretary@rst.org.au](mailto:secretary@rst.org.au)



## 2022 Membership Renewal

It is that time of year again: time to renew your Royal Society of Tasmania membership for 2022. The RST membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. Click [here](#) to open the renewal form on our website which can be downloaded as a pdf for filling in electronically.

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](#).*

## The Society's Library

Special & Rare Collections (5th floor, Morris Miller Library at UTAS Sandy Bay campus) including TRST Library 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 10:00 am 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.
- 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)

Collections,  
Library Services | Academic Division, University of Tasmania



# Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

Open Tuesday to Sunday, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm 1 April to 24 December 2022.



**Visiting TMAG:** It is no longer essential to book your visits to TMAG in advance.

**TMAG from Home** initiative is available from the TMAG website to go on some exciting virtual tours, hear more from our curators and find out what happens behind the scenes.



**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](#).

**TMAG Art Tour – 11:00 am on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays** Join the TMAG Art Guides for a tour of our current art exhibitions.

**TMAG Highlights Tour – 1:30 pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays** Join the TMAG guides for a highlights tour of the treasures of the Central and Henry Hunter galleries and the historic Commissariat Complex and the Bond Store exhibitions.

**Talks at TMAG:** The Talks at TMAG program is currently on hold.

**For further information** about TMAG events, follow our social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). For more great arts experiences in and around Hobart, visit the [Tasmanian Arts Guide](#).



Do think about revisiting some of TMAG's permanent displays. When was the last time that you strolled among them? Here is a taster:

**Dispossessions and Possessions:** Explore treasures of our Colonial and Arts and Crafts collections, including works by notable artists such as John Glover, Benjamin Duterreau and WC Piguenit.

**Shaping Tasmania:** an **online** exhibition of 100 objects selected from those on display throughout TMAG. You can find these objects on a trail through the galleries, allowing you to explore significant events and movements that have helped create the

Tasmania we know today. The first 99 have been drawn from Tasmania's State Collection and the 100th has been chosen by the public.



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