



# THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA

THE ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

## NEWSLETTER

February – March 2026

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# President's Message



Dear Members,

I hope you have had a good start to the New Year, now not so new.

The 2026 AGM is now behind us and membership of the [RST Council](#) is settled.

I offer sincere thanks to Julie Rimes for her two years of leadership as President, a role she filled with unlimited generosity, goodwill and diplomacy. Julie will continue on the RST Council as Past President.

**Right:** Retiring RST President Assoc Prof Julie Rimes receiving a thank-you gift from 2026 RST President Prof Jocelyn McPhie.



We also owe thanks to

Richard Coleman who stepped down as Vice President at the AGM. Richard has been instrumental in the re-invention of the RST website and helped the President in countless ways during his tenure (see p. 12). The term of RST Student Councillor Evelyn Lambeth has now finished. Evelyn's contributions to the Society as a Councillor and through the Events Committee are gratefully acknowledged (see p. 12).

At the AGM, we welcomed three new RST Councillors: Vice President Michael Rowan, Council member Rob Valentine and Student Councillor, Greg Cooke (see pp. 10–11). I have no doubt that their skills, experience, interests and talents will contribute positively to the Council's deliberations. We also welcomed several new RST members since our last newsletter: E/Prof David Badcock FASSA, FAPS, FAPS (USA), Prof Johanna Badcock, Greg Cooke, Jordana Lory, Maureen Martin, Prof Katrina Schlunke, Benjamin Singline, Sebastian Verbeeten, Dr Danielle Wood.

The Society is blessed with individuals whose work is largely behind the scenes but central to successful operations: Newsletter Editor Bernard Pryor, Website Editors Eddy Steenbergen and John Anderson, Office Manager Nicky Foxlee and AV expert David Wilson.

The Northern Branch is due to settle its leadership later this month and, in the meantime, began the year with an address by Her Excellency, the Hon Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania, on Sunday 22 February in Launceston (see p.20). The [programs of lectures and events](#) for both Launceston and Hobart promise depth, diversity and frequency, there being roughly two lectures/events every month throughout the year.

The RST committees for 2026 will be approved at the April Council meeting. The committees are the means by which the RST achieves the goal of advancing knowledge and are therefore a critical part of the Society. The committee chairs and members graciously volunteer their time and expertise. If you have an interest in serving on any of the committees and the time to spare, please contact me or the committee chair.

Looking at the year ahead, it is obvious that the Society will continue to advance knowledge through invited lectures and other events, offering medals and awards, sponsoring bursaries, publishing the *Papers and Proceedings of the RST* and other scholarly books, and engaging with organisations that have similar or overlapping missions. The Art Catalogue is on track for publication later this year; and the joint project *pumili nayri* with TMAG to commemorate the 2021 Apologies to Tasmanian Aboriginal People will move forward.

For the past few years, management of the RST collections – the RST Art Collection on loan to TMAG and the RST Library Collections housed at UTAS – has demanded a great deal of the RST Council's attention. That is unlikely to change this year. Some measure of those demands is entirely consistent with advancing knowledge, notably, the conservation and promotion of the RST Art Collection led by Mary Koolhof, Ross Large and Marley Large. However, there have been highly distracting and unprecedented challenges related to the RST collections in the past six months. The Loan Agreement with TMAG that relates to the RST Art Collection and the agreement between UTAS and the RST that relates to the RST Library Collections are both overdue for renewal. The renewal process has stalled because TMAG and UTAS have each proposed significant changes to the respective agreements that will result in significant extra costs to the RST. The Society is dependent on the generosity of RST Honorary Solicitor James Crotty who provides the legal expertise required to navigate the terms of these agreements. Settling these agreements is a priority, given that they underpin the care and maintenance of the collections, and the Society's connections with TMAG and UTAS.

Hence, I expect that RST collection management will necessarily command centre stage for the foreseeable future.

Best regards,

**Jocelyn McPhie**, President

# Retiring President's Message



Dear RST members,

As President of the Royal Society of Tasmania 2024–2026, it has been a profound honour to serve this remarkable institution at such an important moment in its long history. As I conclude my tenure, I do so with sincere gratitude to our members, Council, volunteers, speakers, partners, and supporters — all of whom give the Society its vitality and purpose.

Our shared commitment to advancing knowledge in Tasmania has remained constant, even as we have navigated both opportunities and challenges. We have delivered stimulating lecture programs, strengthened partnerships, broadened community engagement, supported research and publications, and continued to care for and share our significant collections. At the same time, we have faced the realities common to learned societies everywhere: the need to remain relevant in a rapidly changing world, to steward our resources wisely, and to balance tradition with thoughtful renewal.

Since our December newsletter, work has continued at many levels, some of which you will read about in these pages. Members will have received *Papers and Proceedings No. 159*, the *Annual Report 2025*, and invitations to an unusually full program of summer events. Not least among these was the Travelling Art Show, held over two months at Woolmers Estate, Longford. Masterminded by Distinguished Professor Ross Large AO, this ambitious undertaking has been an outstanding success. You will find coverage in this newsletter, on our Facebook page, through member emails, and indeed in both local and national media. Ross (pictured right opening the Woolmers exhibition), together with a dedicated team of volunteers from north and south, created an engaging and revealing glimpse into the workings of the RST and its Art Collection. And there is more to come — the Walk to the West, and exhibitions in Queenstown and Zeehan, lie ahead.



I express my particular gratitude to Council members who contributed to the Woolmers exhibition in so many and varied ways, and to Dr Sally Bryant AM for her tireless and highly skilled work as Honorary Editor in producing all of the *Annual Reports* and *Papers and Proceedings*.

As I write, the AGM lies ahead, along with several substantial and significant projects. Among them is the *pumili nayri* permanent artwork, which will mark the two Formal Apologies to the Aboriginal People of Tasmania made by the RST and TMAG in February 2021. I have spoken and written previously about this important initiative to commission a jointly funded RST and TMAG installation as a lasting expression of those Apologies. The project, titled *pumili nayri* — meaning “to make or do good” — is being guided by a joint working group that met monthly throughout 2025 and will continue its careful work through to completion.

I also look forward to the publication of a comprehensive Art Catalogue of the RST Art Collection. We have not produced a major publication of this scale for some years, and it represents an important milestone in our publishing history. I warmly encourage members to support the project by pre-ordering via the form available on the RST website.

There is also important work ahead in resolving the dispute concerning ownership of elements of the historic RST Art Collection — a matter that requires diligence, clarity, and patience.

Throughout my term as President, I have been inspired by the generosity of expertise, goodwill, and quiet dedication that characterises this Society. The Royal Society of Tasmania is, above all, a community of inquiry — one that honours its past while embracing its future. Thank you for the trust you placed in me. It has been a privilege to serve.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Rimes'.

**Julie Rimes**

RST Past President (March 2024 – March 2026)

# Upcoming Events

## Celebrating Tasmanian Art, History and Heritage

Over 2,500 visitors enjoyed the inaugural Hidden Treasures Exhibition in Oatlands, discovering rarely seen colonial artworks that tell the story of Tasmania's people and places. The feedback was overwhelming:

**"Beauty to behold. Tasmanian history of the past — keep for future generations, please!"**

**"Fantastic! Hidden no longer — a pleasure to see!"**

**"Wonderful! A fabulous insight into the collection."**

### Why Your Support Matters

Your contribution helps us keep these free, educational exhibitions travelling across regional Tasmania — sharing our cultural heritage with every community.

We aim to:

- preserve and restore rare 19th-century Tasmanian artworks
- showcase pioneering male and female Tasmanian artists
- bring history to life through storyboards and local themes
- keep entry free for everyone.



**Above:** Warwick Oakman, Commonwealth Government Approved valuer for Tasmanian art with RST Council member Tony Sprent, President Julie Rimes and exhibition organiser Em Prof Ross Large AO.

**Below left:** Example of an Exhibition storyboard.

### Whaling in Wineglass (1820 – 1850)



**William Duke (1815-1853): *The Flurry.***



**Simpkinson de Wesselow (1819 – 1906): *Whaling Station, Wine Glass Bay, Freycinet Peninsula, VDL***

A shore-based whaling station was established at Parsons Cove near Wineglass Bay in 1824 by early Swansea settler **George Meredith**.

Multiple whaling stations operated across the peninsula in the 1820s–1830s—including at **Wineglass Bay, Sleepy Bay, Parson's Cove, and Bryans Beach**.

Whalers targeted species such as **Southern Right, Humpback, and Sperm Whales**, as well as **Australian fur seals**, processing them onshore for oil and baleen

By the 1840s–1850s, whale populations were severely depleted, and shore-based stations like the one at Wineglass Bay ceased operations. **Pelagic whaling** (deep-sea hunting) took over and eventually ended the local onshore industry by the **late 1800s**

### What's Next for the Exhibition Series:

- **Queenstown** (Mar 2026) — Western Highlands & wilderness paintings by William Charles Piguenit.
- **East Coast** (early 2027) — The Schoutens to the Hazards: Louisa Anne Meredith and coastal art of the 1800s.
- **Port Arthur** (date not set) — Colonial art of the convict settlement and coal mines.

### Please Help Us Reach Our Goal

We aim to raise \$10,000 to keep Hidden Treasures travelling and thriving. Every contribution makes a real difference. Whether it's:  
\$10 \$50 \$100 \$200 \$1000 Any amount

### Direct deposit to:

The Royal Society of Tasmania  
BSB: 067000 Account: 00800763 (Insert your name in the reference space)

For a receipt, send an email to: [treasurer@rst.org.au](mailto:treasurer@rst.org.au)

Or [donate online via the RST website](#).

Thank you for supporting the Royal Society of Tasmania Hidden Treasures Exhibition Series.

**Preserving Tasmania's heritage through art, science and history.**



## RST Exhibitions 2026

**1. Royal Society “Walk to the West” Exhibition**  
**6 March to 10 April 2026 at Soggy Broolly Gallery & Galley Museum, 20 Orr St, Queenstown.**

Book at <https://www.trybooking.com/DJWWU>

**2. “Walk to the West” Excursion and the Art of William C Piguenit**

**6 March (10 am to 4 pm) –** followed by the opening of the Exhibition in Queenstown.



A full day road trip from Ouse to Queenstown in the footsteps of artist William Piguenit who was one of the six-person party who followed the Linda Track in 1887 to Queenstown. You will learn about some pioneers and convicts of the time from John Carswell, a member of the RST, experienced bushman, geologist and history lover.

Stops will be made at sites where Piguenit sketched the rugged west coast landscapes for some of his iconic paintings.

Please contact John Carswell (0457 337 746) or Ross Large (0418 352 501) if you wish to attend the excursion (maximum 20 persons).

## RST Southern Lectures and Events

### WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL - M.R. Banks Medal and Doctoral Award Presentations

**Venue:** Hosted by Her Excellency Barbara Baker AC, the Governor of Tasmania at Government House, Hobart.

**Time:** to be advised



### SUNDAY 3 May – Lecture

**Speaker:** Associate Professor Clair Andersen

**Title:** *Celebrating Indigenous knowledges and excellence at UTAS*

**Venue:** UTAS Geology Lecture Theatre, Sandy Bay Campus.

**Time:** 4:00 pm.



### SUNDAY 7 June – Lecture

**Speaker:** Clinical Associate Professor Roland McCallum

**Title:** *The Biology of Weight: Rethinking fat, hormones and metabolism in the modern age*

**Venue:** UTAS Geology Lecture Theatre, Sandy Bay Campus.

**Time:** 4:00 pm.



### WEDNESDAY 1 July – Lecture

**Speaker:** Thomas Rimes

**Title:** *The Art and Science of Conducting*

**Venue:** St David’s Cathedral, 23 Murray St, Hobart.

**Time:** to be advised



**SUNDAY 2 August – Panel Discussion**

**Speakers:** Fr Jarrod Hodgson, Dr Julie McInnes (pictured right), Dr Hannah Dawson

**Title:** Panel Discussion on Heard Island 2025–26.

**Venue:** UTAS Geology Lecture Theatre, Sandy Bay Campus.

**Time:** 4:00 pm.



**SUNDAY 6 September – Lecture by 2025 Doctoral Award winner**

**Speaker:** Dr Katie Marx

**Title:** *Distant, Yet Entangled: Society’s relationship with Antarctica*

**Venue:** UTAS Geology Lecture Theatre, Sandy Bay Campus.

**Time:** 4:00 pm.



**SATURDAY 3 & SUNDAY 4 October – Louisa Anne Meredith Weekend Lecture Series**

**Speakers:** to be advised

**Title:** *Celebrating Louisa Anne Meredith.*

**Venue:** Saturday: tour of Louisa Anne Meredith’s houses and areas of interest on the east coast of Tasmania. Sunday: lectures and panel discussions.

**Time:** to be advised



**SUNDAY 1 November – Lecture**

**Speakers:** Bob Cotton with Tom Cotton

**Title:** *New Perspectives on the Geological Origins of the Tamar Valley and the Cataract Gorge*

**Venue:** UTAS Geology Lecture Theatre, Sandy Bay Campus.

**Time:** 4:00 pm.



**WEDNESDAY 18 November – Lecture**

**Speaker:** Emeritus Professor Stephen Hill

**Title:** *Peace ... Basic Humanity Principles - Lessons from United Nations International Diplomacy*

**Venue:** UTAS Geology Lecture Theatre, Sandy Bay Campus.

**Time:** to be advised



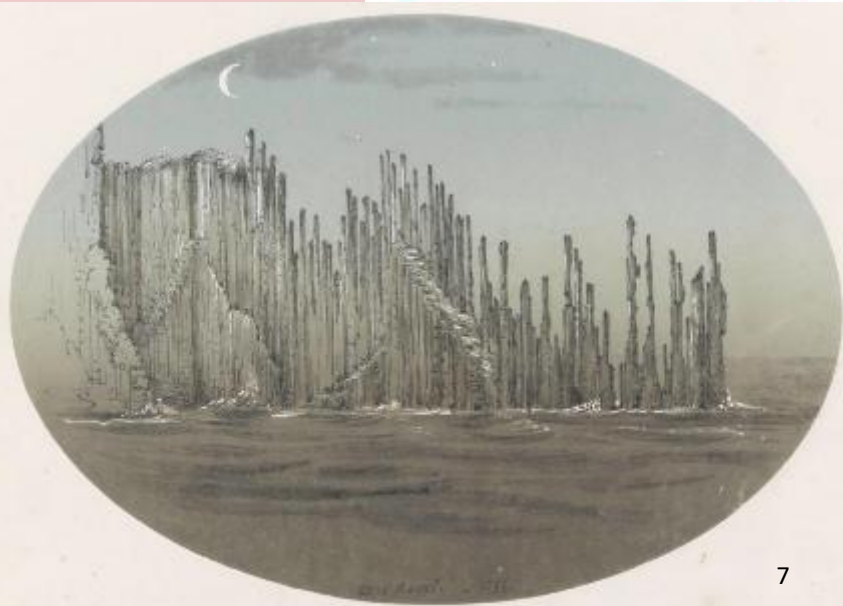
**THURSDAY 3 December – Christmas Dinner**

**Speaker:** John Williamson

**Title:** *Science and Mount Everest.*

**Venue:** Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania.

**Time:** to be advised



**Left:** Pencil drawing 'Cape Raoul' by Louisa Anne Meredith, 1884.



**Right:** Watercolour painting 'Tasmanian Laurel' by Louisa Anne Meredith.

# Upcoming Events – RST Northern Branch

## 2026 Launceston Lecture Series Lectures commence at 1:30\* pm – at QVMAG @ Inveresk

\* Start time varies for the AGM as shown below.

\*\* ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1:15 pm, 22 March \*\*

<b>March 22</b>	Kate Davies Assistant Curator, Visual Arts and Design, QVMAG	<i>Island to Island: Japanese art and craft at QVMAG</i>
<b>April 26</b>	Anne Clifton	<i>Glass Manifesto: Method and madness</i>
<b>May 24</b>	Dr Rebecca Bradfield	<i>Tasmanian Law Reform Institute's role and activities</i>
<b>June 28</b>	Dr Vaughan Cruickshank and Dr Scott Pedersen	<i>The Importance of Movement: How are Australians active and what else could we do?</i>
<b>July 26</b>	Professor David Adams	<i>What Counts as Valuable Knowledge Nowadays, and Who Counts It?</i>



Generously supported by



Left: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston entrance. Image: the mewsmotel.com.au



Right: Have you visited the wonderful displays at Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston? Image: qvmag.tas.gov.au

## Recent Donations to Society Collections

The Royal Society has in November 2025 been very fortunate to have received two separate and generous donations to our Library and Art Collections.

**Jane Giblin**, an artist and PhD student has asked to donate to the Society's Special and Rare Library Collection, her completed and toured *Mitchell Women: Unknown Stories Scrapbook*. Jane utilised a 19th century scrapbook from our library collection which contains Kate Mitchell's drawings. The scrapbook is augmented with small copies of her touring works, as photographed by Simon Olding of Full Gamut, and also the work produced by communities who participated in the tour workshops.



**Above:** Kate stepping across, ink and watercolour by Jane Giblin. Image: [discover.events.com](https://discover.events.com)

It contains a written and visual historical record of the life of the two middleclass Mitchell sisters of the 19th century and how they spent their time with their friends and family. This is a very hardy tome intended for handling by researchers and other interested people. This donation presents a great opportunity to save the original work in our Library Collection from further wear and tear.

Our second donation of five engravings and a print contains a great deal of information to accompany the rest of our collection of images of Tasmania's First Nations People. The five French engravings include the very first known images of the male and female representatives of the Palawa People. Another is the image of a large group of Palawa People in their natural state and environment, engaging with French citizens and sailors in a relaxed manner. It is unusual because it features aged members of the cohesive indigenous group along with all the ages in between down to very young children. There are also two magnificent images of mothers accompanied by their babies.

The more modern print is of a Dutch seaman who came ashore during the 1642 expedition of Abel Janzen Tasman. He plants his country's flag as he examines deep notches in the trees around him that appear very high up on the exterior of the trees, leading him to believe that the local people may have been giants. He failed to consider that notches were helpful for the locals to climb the trees for their own purposes.

All of the images have been presented to Council; however, the necessary arrangements are yet to be completed. Also, the person who made the donation of images is not available at the moment to provide permission for his name to be made available publicly. When all the arrangements have been made there will be more information available as well as photographs.

**Marley Large**, RST Art Coordinator



## Incoming RST Council Member Dr Michael Rowan

I settled in Tasmania in 2009, a climate refugee from South Australia kept here rather than sailing on by the wonders of Tasmania's natural environment, our beautiful cruising grounds, and by the people. I found Tasmanians more interested in learning and doing rather than having, which made me feel immediately at home.

Before setting sail from South Australia, I was Pro Vice Chancellor of the Division of Education Arts and Social Sciences at UniSA – now part of the exciting new Adelaide University. I have a PhD in philosophy from the University of Adelaide, the other half of the new university, which followed a BA (hons) and Dip Ed from Flinders University.

My principal concerns in philosophy have been informal logic/critical thinking and philosophy of science, which I put to use as the foundations for a career in university senior management, and doing what I could as a public intellectual to promote the importance of education for all citizens, defending science and all scholarship from ideological attack and generally upholding the values on which a free, democratic and prosperous society must rest.

## 2 March 2026 RST AGM Report

I have not done the research to establish how many annual general meetings the RST has had since it was established in October 1843, but assuming there has been one each year, this would likely be the 176<sup>th</sup>. As we often point out, RST is the oldest Royal Society outside the UK.

The 2025/26 AGM was held at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania, Sandy Bay, with about 60 members present.

President Julie Rimes thanked all the volunteers who keep RST operating so smoothly and successfully, and congratulated the MR Banks Medal winner, Jacqueline Halpin, and Doctoral award winners Katie Marx and Laura Dalman. In presenting the Annual Report, she spoke highly of the work on the RST Art Collection by Em Prof Ross Large AO, Mary Koolhof OAM, Marley Large and Dr Anita Hansen.

There are big moves at the top of RST, with both the President and Vice President having completed their period of appointment. One of the most notable features of the evening was that we farewelled Assoc Prof Julie Rimes as President after two years of outstanding contribution to the organisation in a difficult time. She will continue to contribute to the Society as Past President and has already undertaken to continue various activities.

We warmly welcomed back as President, Prof Jocelyn McPhie, who stood down only two years ago but has generously agreed to retake the responsibility. Her return is timely as RST works its way through issues on which Jocelyn has a firm handle.

Em Prof Richard Coleman has left the vice-presidency to concentrate on his academic career and frequent overseas travel. We thank him and wish him well. As incoming Vice President, we were fortunate to see the election of philosopher Dr Michael Rowan.

Most members of Council continued in their roles, as listed elsewhere, but we noted with appreciation the work that Roxanne Steenbergen has done as a Councillor and Membership Secretary. Her Council term has expired but we plan to co-opt Roxanne onto Council for 2026 in view of the importance of her role as Membership Secretary. Filling her position on Council is Rob Valentine, former MLC and former Hobart Lord Mayor, a public figure well-known to Tasmanians.

Another new Councillor is Greg Cooke who is taking over from Evelyn Lambeth as Student Councillor.

A highlight of the evening was the election of Dr Sally Bryant AM as Honorary Life Member, an appropriate recognition of the magnificent work that she has undertaken for the RST, but most notably as Editor of the *Papers & Proceedings* for many years. (See p. 13 for more information.)

John Hardie AM, FRSN, President of the Royal Societies of Australia, spoke to the meeting about the work of that body, which RST agreed to join a year or so ago. The RSA is an umbrella body for the Royal Societies across Australia. It will be holding its AGM in Hobart in November, 2026.

The evening was completed with a lecture by Prof Anya Reading (see p.13). The recording of Prof Reading's lecture will shortly be posted on the RST YouTube channel.

**Assoc Prof Don Garden OAM**  
Honorary Secretary

## 2026 RST Council Members

**President:** Jocelyn McPhie

**Vice President:** Michael Rowan\*

**Honorary Secretary:** Don Garden

**Honorary Treasurer:** Sonia Shimeld

Past President: Julie Rimes

Early Career Researcher: Hannah Dawson

Student Councillor: Greg Cooke\* (see below)

RST Northern Branch representative: Neil MacKinnon

RST Northern Branch representative: Liza Snow

Councillor: Paul Haddad

Councillor: Victoria Jayde

Councillor: Mary Koolhof

Councillor: Lorraine Polglase

Councillor: Tony Sprent

Councillor: Rob Valentine\*

Ex Officio, RST Honorary Editor: Sally Bryant

Ex Officio, UTAS Librarian: Caine Chennatt

Ex Officio, RST Honorary Solicitor: James Crotty

Ex Officio, RST Art Coordinator: Marley Large

\* Members who are joining the Council for the first time.

### Greg Cooke – Student Councillor



Greg Cooke is a PhD candidate in History at the University of Tasmania, where he previously completed a Bachelor of Arts with First Class Honours.

A University Medallist and Class Valedictorian for 2025, Greg brings both academic distinction and real-world experience to his work. His current research explores how processed foods came to be regarded as health foods in Australia — a topic that sits at the intersection of culture, industry, and public perception.

Before entering academia, Greg worked as a professional chef for more than two decades, nurturing a lifelong fascination with food and its stories. He is passionate about food history and its power to, in his words, “make history fun again”.

### Rob Valentine Incoming RST Council Member



We are delighted to welcome Robert (Rob) Valentine MACS (Snr), Hon. Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia, to the RST Council, bringing with him more than four decades of distinguished service across the Tasmanian Public Service, local government — including 13 years as Lord Mayor of Hobart — and the Legislative Council, together with a deep commitment to scientific rigour and its vital role in sound public policy. Rob has generously written the following introduction to outline his background and the particular interests he hopes to bring to the work of Council:

Rob has a significant breadth of life experience having worked in the Tasmanian Public Service for a period of 42 years, mainly in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) disciplines of software development, systems analysis and design, IT strategic planning and contract management, covering public infrastructure development, public transport, community welfare and public health.

He served for 20 years as an elected member in Local Government, with nearly 13 of those as Lord Mayor of Hobart, being twice Chair of the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors. His strong involvement with town planning earned him an Honorary Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia during this time.

On retirement from the State Service in 2012, not being a person to let the grass grow under his feet, Rob was elected for a total of 12 years to the Legislative Council as the Independent Member for Hobart, undertaking a number of important inquiries and chairing the Parliamentary Standing Committees on Public Works and also Integrity for a number of years.

Through these experiences, Rob has developed a keen interest in scientific endeavour and its importance to society in general. He has concluded that scientific rigour should be indispensable in many fields of endeavour, but sadly is often a casualty at the policy formulation level.

When approached to gauge his interest in being nominated for a position on the Royal Society’s Council, he considered it an honour and is eager to further discover the breadth and depth of the Society’s activities. He certainly thanks those who believe that he has something to offer the Society, and looks forward to serving the Membership in the capacity of Council Member.



## Dr John Thorne AM – Foundation

At the Foundation Committee meeting on 3 February 2026, longstanding RST Committee member and Life Member of the RST Dr John Thorne AM advised that he would be resigning at the conclusion of the meeting.

The Chairman, Neil MacKinnon, accepted John’s resignation, acknowledged his many years of dedicated service, and expressed sincere thanks for his significant contribution to the Foundation’s success.

John has served the RST in numerous roles across both Council and Foundation.

Together with his late wife, Shirley, he has been a valued and generous member of the Society, contributing greatly to its welfare and strength.

While he is stepping down from the Foundation Committee, John will continue to be a valued member and contributor to the life and work of the Society.

**For his many years of commitment and service,  
we warmly salute Dr John Thorne AM.**



## Em Prof Richard Coleman

At the completion of their terms on Council, we extend our sincere thanks to Emeritus Professor Richard Coleman for service to Royal Society of Tasmania, including his most recent tenure as Vice President.

Richard has been a wise counsellor, a generous colleague, and, on a personal note, a wonderful friend and ally to me throughout my Presidency. He brought both intellectual rigour and practical resolve to the task of completing the Society’s *Strategic Plan*. He also oversaw the development and launch of the Society’s new website, a significant undertaking that will serve members and the wider community well into the future. His calm judgement, clarity of thought and deep commitment to the Society’s mission have left a lasting mark.

Richard will continue as Chair of the Honours and Awards Committee.

**Julie Rimes**

## Evelyn Lambeth – Student Councillor

We also acknowledge with warm appreciation the contribution of our Student Councillor, Evelyn Lambeth, who concludes three years of service on the RST Council.

Evelyn has been a member of the Events Committee, contributing to the delivery of our programs, and she has brought a thoughtful, measured perspective to Council deliberations. Her presence has strengthened the connection between the Society and its student members.

During her term, Evelyn has coordinated the PhD speaker program and assisted with the recording of monthly meetings in the South. We thank Evelyn most sincerely and look forward to seeing her continued involvement in the life of the Society.



**Above:** Retiring RST Student Councill Evelyn Lambeth with outgoing Past President Assoc Prof Julie Rimes.



## Dr Sally Bryant AM – RST Hon. Life Member

At the Annual General Meeting of the RST 2026, it was announced that Dr Sally Bryant AM had been awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Society. The Retiring President of the Society, Assoc Prof Julie Rimes, provided the following citation for the award:

Honorary Life Membership is awarded in recognition of Sally's outstanding and long-standing contributions to the Society through her roles as Honorary Editor, ex-officio Council Member, Chair of the Publications Committee, member of the Aboriginal Engagement Committee, and as a lecturer.

In all of these capacities, Sally has dedicated her skills, knowledge, and passion to advancing the aims and work of the RST. In particular, as Honorary Editor of the *Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania*, she has worked unstintingly to elevate the quality and standing of the Society's journal, an achievement of enduring importance to the RST.

Congratulations, Sally.



**Above:** In receiving her Life Membership award, Dr Sally Bryant AM also received some flowers from retiring RST President Assoc Prof Julie Rimes.



**Above:** RSA Hon Secretary Bruce Ramage with Assoc Prof Julie Rimes and RSA President John Hardie AM, FRSN.

## The Royal Societies of Australia

President John Hardie AM, FRSN spoke at the RST AGM about the RSA. The members of the RSA are Australia's Royal Societies. It was created in 2007 to support and advocate for them at a national and international level. Like the RST, the RSA promotes the importance of evidence-based knowledge and scholarship across disciplines. It complements the work of the Australian Academies and research organisations.

The RST has three members on the RSA Council. The RST is an active participant in the Steering Groups of the RSA's two major projects, and contributes to the annual meetings of Australia's Royal Societies. In future, the RSA aims to: explore professional accreditation for Australian scientists; develop engagement strategies for young scientists; increase international linkages and presence; improve communication and knowledge sharing among Australia's Royal Societies; and develop greater awareness of Royal Societies among parliamentarians and the public service.

## Dr Anya Reading Lecture

Some 60 RST members and guests attended the AGM at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania in Hobart on Monday 2 March and heard a fascinating talk by Dr Anya Reading about her team's work in the Antarctic.

Most working days, Dr Reading spends time listening to the 'Seismic Symphony', a cacophony of sounds generated by the seismometers implanted in ice at strategic points around the continent. These devices act like stethoscopes, relaying the sounds of ice cracking, calving and moving in rivers below the solid surface.

The frequency of the sounds create a picture of the ice shelf, the unlithified sediment beneath it, the sedimentary rock beneath that, and the crust below. The symphony shows how glaciers are changing over time and enables scientists to predict the likely periods of acceleration, to help governments plan for and manage sea level rises.

Dr Reading's work is to design deployable kit for this work; to train early career researchers; and to generate open access datasets as a resource for the nation – and she clearly loves it. Her talk was an inspiring mix of science and 'poetry': the low rumble of the ocean, the symphony of the ice and the varying resonance with the changing of the seasons.

Dr Reading was heartily thanked on behalf of the audience by outgoing Vice President and former colleague Em Prof Richard Coleman.

**Sue McKerracher**



## RST Membership Renewal

Thank you to everyone who has renewed their Royal Society of Tasmania membership for 2026.

If you are unsure if you have renewed your membership for 2026 you can check your membership card. The expiry date appears at the bottom of the card (see sample at right).

To vote at the AGM on 2 March, your membership must be current. If it isn't, then you need to renew your membership. You can do that by [clicking here](#).

Take note: Regardless of the method you use to renew, *by renewing your membership and paying the required membership fees, you acknowledge that you have read and agree to abide by the [RST Code of Conduct](#) and accept the [RST Privacy Policy](#).*

When you let us know that you have paid your membership, please indicate if any of your personal details have changed (e.g., address, phone number, email address) so that we can update our database.

**Roxanne Steenbergen**  
Membership Officer

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RST Apology to Tasmanian Aboriginal people 2021



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# Reports on Recent Events

## RST Hidden Art Treasures Exhibition at Woolmers Estate, Longford

This exceptionally successful exhibition of artworks from the RST Art Collection that featured artworks often depicting images of midland Tasmania and the Longford surroundings was conducted over January–February 2026. The Society is deeply grateful to Em Prof Ross Large and Marley Large for their commitment to this valuable project and to the volunteers (both north and south) who assisted with the set-up, daily hosting and pull-down.

The following statistics have been summarised from feedback sheets:

- ◆ Number of exhibition days - 35
- ◆ Artworks exhibited - 42
- ◆ Number of RST volunteers - 14
- ◆ Number of people attending - conservatively 950
- ◆ Number attending the Art and Antique Roadshow - 58
- ◆ Takings from sale of art merchandise - in excess of \$5000 (All figures not yet accounted)
- ◆ Number of art demonstrations by recognised artists - 2
- ◆ Number of lectures by art historians - 4
- ◆ Number of positive written comments from attendees - 65
- ◆ Number who commented that the exhibition was educational - 28 out of 31



**Above:** Neil MacKinnon, RST Northern Branch President, opening the RST exhibition at Woolmers Estate.



- ◆ Number who used the words *excellent* or *wonderful* or *fabulous* or *amazing* or *fantastic* in their response about the exhibition - 21 out of 34
- ◆ NOTE: The feedback form changed halfway through the exhibition. There were 31 responses on the first form and 34 on the second form. We encourage you to visit the coming month-long exhibition in Queens-town which will, among others, feature WC Piquenit's paintings which portray nature in terms of its infinite mystery combined with a topographical essence of its features.

**Ross Large**, Art Exhibitions organiser

**Left:** Northern Branch Hon Secretary, Pippa Cotton at the exhibition.

**Right:** RST Art Exhibitions organiser at Woolmers Estate, Em Prof Ross Large AO speaking at the opening.



## RST Travelling Art Show – The Hidden Treasures

### Sunday Talk: Louisa Anne Meredith

As part of *The Hidden Treasures* travelling art show, members and guests enjoyed a richly engaging Sunday talk devoted to the life, art and enduring legacy of Louisa Anne Meredith—one of Tasmania’s most important colonial artists and chroniclers.



**Above:** Exhibition visitor Shirley Linnell views the Louisa Anne Meredith section.

life, landscapes, and social conditions in the colony.

- **Science, Art and the Marine World:** Mary Koolhof OAM delivered a fascinating presentation on Meredith’s detailed depictions of marine shells and fish. She explained why these works continue to hold significant scientific as well as cultural value, demonstrating Meredith’s remarkable contribution to early natural history illustration in Tasmania.

### Key highlights of the presentation included:

- **Louisa Anne Meredith: Life in Tasmania:** Dr Malcolm Ward, social historian (pictured below right), provided a vivid account of Louisa Anne Meredith’s life, with particular focus on her years in Tasmania. Illustrated with images from Meredith’s own work alongside contemporary photographs, Dr Ward traced her residences—especially those on Tasmania’s East Coast—bringing to life the places and circumstances that shaped her creative output.

- **Artistic Technique and Historical Significance:** Dr Anita Hansen, an expert in colonial art, examined Meredith’s artistic techniques and her importance as a visual recorder of colonial Tasmanian life. Her talk highlighted Meredith’s skill, observational precision, and her unique role in documenting everyday



**Above:** Dr Malcolm Ward.

Together, the three presentations offered members a layered and insightful appreciation of Louisa Anne Meredith— as artist, observer, and chronicler —reinforcing her enduring relevance across art, history and science, and perfectly complementing the aims of *The Hidden Treasures* exhibition.

**Julie Rimes,**  
RST President

**Right:** An example of Louisa Anne Meredith’s paintings.

**Left:** A poster about Louisa Anne Meredith at the exhibition.



### Louisa Anne Meredith (1812–1895)



Louisa Anne Meredith was a remarkable woman; a prolific artist, writer, conservationist and social commentator. The Society has a large number of her sketches and watercolours in its art collection. Louisa came to Tasmania with her husband Charles Meredith in 1840. Already a published illustrator and author in England, she continued to be a prolific artist and author in Van Diemen’s Land. Her wildflower drawings won medals in exhibitions in Australia and overseas. The Tasmanian government granted her a pension of £100 in 1884 for ‘distinguished literary and artistic services’ to the colony.

## Learning from Master Creators



**Above:** The entry foyer at Woolmers Estate, Longford.

Two outstanding Sunday live art sessions were held as part of *The Hidden Treasures* roadshow at Woolmers Estate, Longford, offering members and visitors the rare pleasure of learning directly from master practitioners.

Launceston-based landscape artist Darren Meader delighted his audience on 18 January with a two-hour demonstration on creating a landscape painting.

Drawing on his deep affection for Tasmania's diverse environments—from farmland and rivers to mountains, coastal scenes, urban streetscapes and World Heritage landscapes—Darren guided participants step by step through his process.

Feedback from the session praised an “excellent demonstration”, the clarity of



**Above:** Darren Meader delighted participants with his practical approach to landscape painting – producing a finished work within the two-hour session.

information about techniques and materials, and the generosity with which Darren shared his working methods. All 20 participants remained fully engaged throughout, with one attendee even travelling back from the south of the state to attend the second session a fortnight later.

On Sunday 1 February, the gallery was transformed into the working studio of Lynne Uptin (see left). Paintings, books, easels, materials and detailed handouts filled the space, creating an immersive environment for the 25 participants. Lynne, who is widely regarded as Australia's pre-eminent botanical artist, spoke about her techniques, materials, inspirations and her own botanical art heroes. Her international standing was underscored by her recent achievements at the Royal Horticultural Society's Botanical Art and Photography Exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery in London in 2024, where she was awarded both the Gold Medal and Best Botanical Art Exhibit. Participants then



observed closely as Lynne began work on a new piece, an experience described by one attendee as “something that really made my school holidays”.

We are deeply grateful to all our guest speakers and demonstrators for their generosity, insight and willingness to share their creative practice. Their contributions enriched *The Hidden Treasures* program and offered an inspiring reminder of the value of learning directly from accomplished artists. **Julie Rimes**

**Above:** A reproduction of a section of Lynne Uptin's work.





**Above:** Janene Hancock, Program Coordinator with Clarence U3A beside RST Hon. Secretary Assoc Prof Don Garden OAM.

## The Royal Society of Tasmania and U3A Clarence

One of our strategic priorities is to ensure that The Royal Society of Tasmania is not only respected as Australia’s oldest scientific and knowledge centric Society, but recognised as a living, contemporary institution—active, relevant, and deeply engaged with the intellectual and cultural life of Tasmania today.

With that aim in mind, February and March 2025 saw a lively collaboration with U3A Clarence, where four RST representatives were invited to share the Society’s story with an audience known for its curiosity and thoughtful engagement.

On 23 February, Julie Rimes opened the series with *The Royal Society of Tasmania: A Living Institution* and its role in advancing knowledge in Tasmania, exploring how the Society has evolved from its nineteenth-century origins into a dynamic organisation supporting scholarship, publications, public lectures, research, collections, and informed debate.

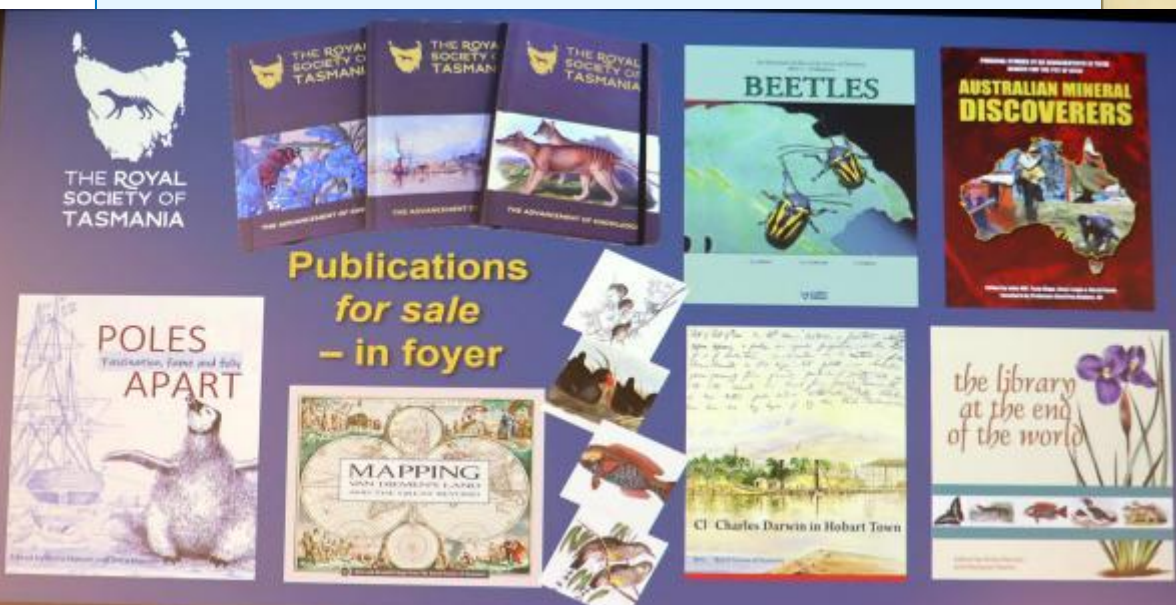
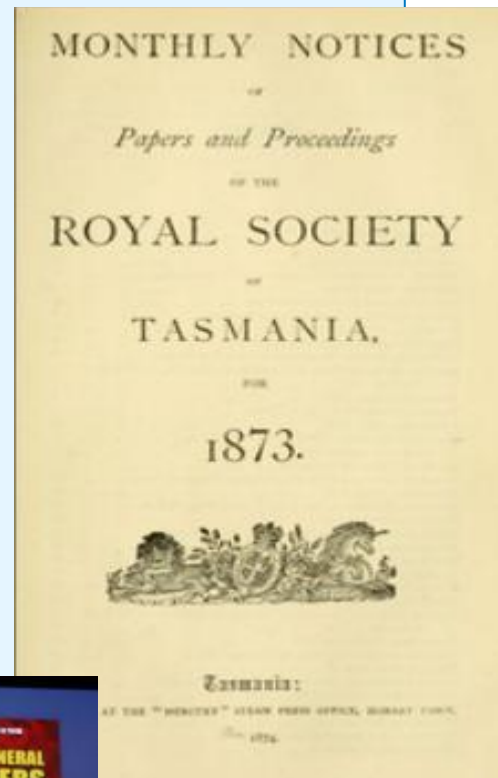
On 2 March, historian Assoc Prof Don Garden OAM (see left) presented *Shaping Tasmania’s Intellectual Landscape: A Brief History of The Royal Society of Tasmania*, tracing the Society’s formative role in fostering scientific inquiry and intellectual exchange in the colony and beyond. The session continued with Mary Koolhof OAM speaking on *Revealing the Record: Women’s Contributions to The Royal Society of Tasmania*, drawing attention to the often-overlooked women whose scholarship, advocacy, and quiet determination helped shape the Society’s legacy.

The third session, held on 16 March, brought Mary together with RST Art Curator Marley Large for *The Forgotten Creators: Women Who Shaped Tasmania’s Early Art Scene*, highlighting artists whose work not only documented Tasmania’s natural history and colonial life, but also contributed significantly to its cultural identity.

Across the series, participants were intrigued by the “behind-the-scenes” insights into the Society’s collections, governance, publications, and evolving role in contemporary Tasmania. The sessions prompted lively discussion and many thoughtful follow-up questions—clear evidence that the Society’s story continues to resonate.

Engagements such as these not only strengthen connections with the wider community but also affirm that the Royal Society’s work—past and present—remains relevant, compelling, and very much alive.

**Julie Rimes,**  
RST President



## RST 2025 Doctoral (PhD) Award

The RST Honours and Awards Committee recently assessed nominations for the 2025 Doctoral (PhD) Award. This award is intended to recognise recent PhD graduates who have made significant advances during their doctoral research. The value of the award is \$1,000 (AUD).

The two winners of the 2025 RST Doctoral (PhD) Award were **Dr Laura Dalman** and **Dr Katie Marx**.

**Right:** Dr Laura Dalman.

**Dr Laura Dalman's PhD project** was undertaken at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, University of Tasmania. Her thesis was titled "**Physical controls of Southern Ocean ice-associated primary production**". The thesis investigated the distribution and community structure of sea-ice algae, providing an updated estimate of Antarctic ice algal net community production, and examined the physical drivers of autumn under-ice phytoplankton, using in-situ measurements, satellite observations, and animal-borne sensors.

Dr Dalman is now a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium investigating, via controlled ice-growth experiments, how microbial communities colonise sea ice and how their physiological adaptations influence brine rejection and carbon fluxes.

For more information, visit:

<https://discover.utas.edu.au/Laura.Dalman/about>



**Above:** Dr Katie Marx.

**Dr Katie Marx's PhD project** was undertaken at the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Tasmania. Her thesis was titled "**Understanding attachment to remote places: Insights from a study of Hobart citizens' relationships with Antarctica**".

Her doctoral research focused on the concept of place attachment in Hobart, an Antarctic gateway city. From this, she has built an interest in exploring how we can support members of the public to form a meaningful relationship with remote places (such as Antarctica) that they themselves may never visit.

Dr Marx is now a postdoctoral researcher within the University of Tasmania's Antarctic Tourism Research Program. She is the current co-lead of the Public Engagement with Antarctic Research Action Group within the international Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (see below). She has tutored in a range of subjects, including environmental communication and marine and Antarctic governance, and she tends to spend her summers working as an historian and guide with tour operators on the Antarctic peninsula.

For more information, visit: <https://discover.utas.edu.au/Katie.Marx>

**The Public Engagement with Antarctic Research Action Group** is an initiative aimed at fostering the academic study of public engagement with Antarctica and Antarctic research. The group's members engage with various publics and assess the effectiveness of communication activities. They also explore the unique challenges and opportunities in engaging different publics and decision-makers with science conducted in or about the Antarctic region. The group's work complements Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research's practical activities by providing insights into public engagement strategies and the role of citizen science in fostering public interest in Antarctic issues. (Source: <https://scar.org/science/hass/pear>)

# Reports on Recent Events

## Art Fundraising News

A silent auction, live auction of premium pieces, and raffle were held at the 2025 RST Christmas dinner on 4 December 2025. These were very successful and raised \$4,280 for the RST Art Fund.

Warm thanks go to all the members and friends who supported these activities in various ways.

**Mary Koolhof OAM**  
Chair, Art Fundraising Committee

**Right:** Mary and Grady Koolhof at the 2025 Christmas Dinner and Auction.  
Photo by Tim Blumfield.



## Lecture by Her Excellency, the Hon. Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania



The first of the RST Northern Branch's 2026 lectures was delivered on Sunday 23 February by the Governor of Tasmania and the Society's Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC. The Governor spoke of the community engagement, ceremonial and constitutional aspects of the role of Governor.



The Northern Branch were honoured that Her Excellency and Professor Chalmers found time to visit the Northern Branch. Her Excellency gave her address as one of some 560 engagements, and counting, of her four-and-a-half-year term as Governor.

Her address was informative and amusing, delivered to an attentive and engaged audience in a convivial and relaxed atmosphere, followed by questions from the floor.

After the lecture, Branch Committee member, historian and author Lynette Ross presented the Governor (see left) with a copy of her book, *The Story of Launceston's Government Cottage*. The book recounts Northern Tasmania's early efforts to accommodate vice-regal representatives — from Lieutenant-Governor William Paterson's prefabricated buildings at Outer Cove and York Town to the more modest Government Cottage in Launceston. Situated on land now occupied by City Park, the cottage served its purpose until its demolition in 1885.



The Governor was then invited to afternoon tea and to cut a cake bearing an image of the Government Cottage.

The Northern Branch sincerely thanks Her Excellency for her patronage and her address, and wishes her well as the end of her term of office as Governor nears.

**RST Northern Branch Committee**



**Above:** Northern Branch President Neil MacKinnon watches as Her Excellency cuts the special cake.

**Below:** Her Excellency in discussion with John and Beryl Osborne.



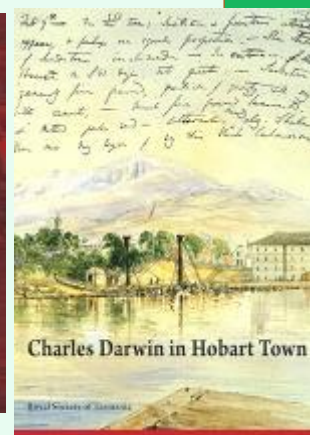
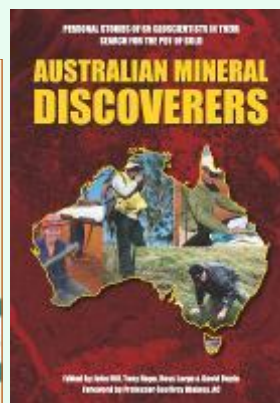
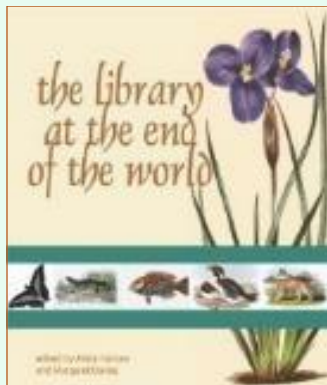
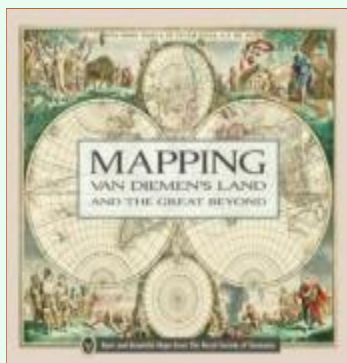
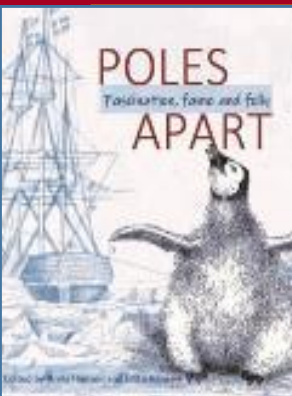
**Left:** Prof Chalmers in deep discussion with Martin Renilson.

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## The Society's Library

The RST Library Collections are held at UTAS in the Special and Rare Reading Room, Level 5, Morris Miller Library, Sandy Bay Campus.

The Reading Room is open by appointment on Mondays and Wednesdays only between 10:00 am and 5:00 pm; closed for lunch from 12:30 – 1:30 pm.

Please email [RSTLibrary.collections@utas.edu.au](mailto:RSTLibrary.collections@utas.edu.au) for appointments and enquiries about the collection.

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

Our Office location is:  
19 Davey Street  
Hobart TAS 7000

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

Our mailing address is:  
PO Box 11, Franklin TAS 7113