

ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA

Annual Report for the year 1991

The Council has the honour to present to members the following report on the activities of the Society during the year.

Council and Office Bearers

Patron
Her Majesty the Queen

President
His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania
General Sir Phillip Bennett, AC, KBE, DSO

Vice-Presidents
Professor D.M. Stoddart
Dr A.V. Brown

Council

Mr J.T.W. Hayton	Dr E.V.R. Ratcliffe
Mr R. Kerrison	Dr J.S. Rogers
Mrs G. Lord	Mr P.C. Stevenson
Mr A.T. Orr	Mr C.B. Tassell
Dr P.G. Quilty	Dr V. von Witt

Honorary Secretary
Mr D.R. Gregg

Honorary Treasurer
Mr T.A.H. Knight

Honorary Auditor
Mr T.O. Bayley FCA

Honorary Editor
Dr M.R. Banks AM

Assistant Honorary Editor
Dr S.J. Smith

President

His Excellency General Sir Phillip Bennet took the chair as President of the Society at the Annual General Meeting. He also launched *Aspects of Tasmanian Botany — a Tribute to Winifred Curtis* at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery on 16 April. In August he addressed a joint meeting of the Northern Branch and the Launceston Historical society.

Deaths

The deaths of the following members are recorded with regret:

Mr G. Anderson
Mr P.A. Canning
Mr R.M. Gunn
Mr M.C.B. Hills
Dr J.H.B. Walch

Professor David Headley Green FRS

The Council congratulates Professor D.H. Green, PhD, DSc, FAA, Hon FGSA, FRS, of the Department of Geology, University of Tasmania, on his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society (London). In 1991 he was appointed Chief Science Adviser to the Minister for Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories. Professor Green has been a member of the Royal Society of Tasmania since 1956.

G. Hawley Stancombe OAM

Mr G. Hawley Stancombe was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day honours list. He has been a member of the Society since 1948.

Honorary Life member

Mr T.A.H. Knight was elected an Honorary Life Member of the Society at the General Meeting on 1 October. This was in recognition of his services as Honorary Treasurer since 1978. Mr Knight joins six other Honorary Life Members:

Dr William Bryden, CBE
Mr Frank Ellis, OBE
Mr Gordon Hale
Dr Maxwell Banks, AM
Mr Don Gregg
Mr Peter Webb

Annual Meeting

At the Annual Meeting on 5 March, Dr J.S. Rogers retired as Vice-President and Mr P.M. Bennison and Professor D.M. Stoddart as Members of the Council. The following were elected:

Vice Presidents	Prof D.M. Stoddart, Dr A.V. Brown
Members of Council	Mr J.T.W. Hayton, Mr P.C. Stevenson
Honorary Secretary	Mr D.R. Gregg
Honorary Treasurer	Mr T.A.H. Knight
Honorary Auditor	Mr R.J. Dwyer

Membership

The membership is 422, a decrease of 31, and is made up as follows:

	Northern Branch	Total
Honorary Life Members	2	8
Life Members	11	35
Ordinary Members receiving <i>Papers and Proceedings</i>	58	257
Ordinary Members not receiving <i>Papers and Proceedings</i>	46	103
Associate Members	<u>11</u>	<u>19</u>
	128	422

Council Meetings

The Council met four times during the year.

Royal Society Lecture Series

At the initiative of Dr J.S. Rogers a series of public lectures was proposed to start in July. There was an excellent response from potential lecturers but there were problems with the promotion of the lectures through the media.

The proposed lectures were cancelled due to lack of response from the public.

Sesquicentennial of the Society

The Society will be 150 years old in 1993 and the sesquicentennial will be marked by the publication of an 1887 manuscript from the Society's archives by James Backhouse Walker describing an expedition to the West Coast of Tasmania.

Future Directions for Australian Science: A Tasmanian Perspective

A symposium was organised by the Tasmanian Division of ANZAAS and the Royal Society of Tasmania at the CSIRO Marine Laboratories, Hobart, on 6–7 September. The symposium was supported by CSIRO and the Menzies Centre for Population Health Research, University of Tasmania.

The symposium, attended by 64 people, was opened by the Premier of Tasmania, the Hon. Michael Field, MHA, and keynote speakers were Professor Ralph Slatyer, Chief Scientist, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Dr John Stocker, Chief Executive, CSIRO.

The papers and proceedings of the symposium were published in November.

Grants to Society

The Council regretted that no general grant was received from the Tasmanian Government in the 1990–91 budget. However, a grant of \$2000 has been received through Arts Tasmania in 1991–92. This is welcome although less than the \$2500 grant in 1989–90. The \$3000 grant towards the printing of the *Papers and Proceedings* has continued at the same level.

The University of Tasmania has provided an annual subvention of \$3000 towards the *Papers and Proceedings*.

Library

The year was marked by staffing changes with the transfer of Mrs Beth Chalmers to another position within the University Library and the appointment of Mr Graeme Rayner to the previously vacant position of Special Collections Librarian of which the activities of the Royal Society Librarian form a substantial part. The level of clerical assistance was effectively maintained throughout the year with Mrs Carol Freeman working part time within the Royal Society Library area.

During the year 287 copies of the Society's *Papers and Proceedings* (Vol. 124) were sent out to exchange partners, together with a flyer giving details of 'Aspects of Tasmanian Botany' which is available for purchase. During the year 142 serial volumes were bound.

A weeding project designed to identify outdated and superseded monographs was begun during the year and a large number of such titles has been collected for consideration. Separate reports are being prepared on the eventual disposal of such items. It is hoped that a similar review of the serial titles will identify those of a similar status, and thus candidates for disposal.

Improvements were made to the storage conditions in both the closed access and Rare Books room with the installation of black-out holland blinds. These blinds provide a dark and cooler atmosphere for the storage of the valuable materials held in these areas.

During the year arrangements were made for the removal of excess stock of Royal Society publications formerly held in the University Library basement. The volumes were either transferred to the care of the Society, or in the case of the Wedge diaries, sold for the benefit of the Society.

The small monograph cataloguing backlog was reviewed during the year and arrangements are in hand to produce card sets from the University Library database for those titles also held within the Library's collection; almost a third of the titles awaiting cataloguing fall into this category. Integration of the Royal Society Library's holdings into the University Library's database remains a possibility and is still awaiting further costing and consideration.

The maintenance of statistics for use of the Library remains something of a problem; there is no assurance that visitors actually sign the record books provided. Two books are maintained, one providing details of visitors and the other a record of items consulted (but not borrowed). Statistics of recorded information for 1991 is provided, but actual usage may be higher.

Visitors	354
Serial Loans	69
Inter-Library Loans	40
In-house consultations	84

Publications

Two volumes were published in 1991, *Aspects of Tasmanian Botany — a tribute to Winifred Curtis* on 8 April, and *Papers and Proceedings*, Volume 125, on 20 December.

Aspects of Tasmanian Botany, consisting of a biography and 27 other papers by 36 authors, totalled 247 pages. It was launched by the President, His Excellency General Sir Phillip Bennett on 16 April. The volume has been well received and is selling satisfactorily. It had been planned to issue *Aspects* as Volume 124, Part 2 of the *Papers and Proceedings*. However, the response to invitations to publish in *Aspects* exceeded expectations. In view of this response and uncertainty as to available funds it was published as a special publication thus meeting the need originally intended to be met

by Part 2 of Volume 124. Under these circumstances it was decided to publish the next volume of *Papers and Proceedings* in the standard system and number it Volume 125.

Volume 125 contained, in addition to the Annual Report for 1990, twelve papers and two brief errata; papers and errata totalling 79 pages. For financial reasons, Volume 125 was published in a double column A4 format and it is planned to use this format into the foreseeable future. Towards the end of the year, Council instituted a system of page charges for papers of length greater than ten printed pages.

Work has continued on editing of papers delivered at the World Heritage Area Symposium in November 1990 but was slower than hoped because of the absence overseas on a Churchill Fellowship of the volume editor, Dr S. J. Smith. Publication in the first half of 1992 is planned.

Publication of *Aspects* was aided considerably by generous donations from many individuals and institutions. Publication of Volume 125 was assisted greatly by grants from the Tasmanian Government and the University of Tasmania. The publications owe much of their quality to the sub-editing of Mrs Alison Jones and the type-setting and formatting by Mrs June Pongratz.

The Society is once more indebted to Dr Banks and Dr Smith for their dedicated editorial work.

Lectures

The following lectures were given at General Meetings during the year:

March — "Delivering medical care in the Pacific Basin" Dr J.S. Rogers, retiring Vice-President.

April — "High energy particles from the Sun" Dr Hilary Cane, University of Tasmania and NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center.

May — "Value added library collections" (and an inspection of the University of Tasmania Library and the Royal Society Library) Mrs Christine Crocker, Librarian, University of Tasmania.

June — "The story of sharks as told by their teeth — true or false?" Mr N.R. Kemp, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

July — "Antarctic krill — from whale food to fishburgers" Dr Stephen Nicol, Antarctic Division.

August — "The genesis of Tasmanian mineral deposits" Dr Ross Large, Key Centre for Ore Deposit and Exploration Studies, University of Tasmania.

September — "A new look at some of Hobart's buildings" Mr Martin Davies, Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage.

October — "The role and future of the Society" Prof. D.M. Stoddart, Dr J.S. Rogers, Dr M.R. Banks, Mr D.R. Gregg, and Dr A.V. Brown.

November — "Micronutrients and antioxidants and the aging process" Dr Ivor Dreosti, Division of Human Nutrition, CSIRO, Adelaide.

The May meeting was held at the University of Tasmania Library.

Northern Branch

Branch Council:

Chairman	Mr A. T. Orr
Vice-Chairman	Dr E. V. R. Ratcliff
Honorary Secretary	Mr C. B. Tassell
Honorary Treasurer	Mr B. A. Pike
Honorary Members	Mr B. Chamberlain, Mr J. Kolkert Mr W. H. Stephens, Mrs M. Cameron

The Branch Council met four times during the year.

The following lectures were given at General Meetings:

March — Special meeting on the future of the Royal Society of Tasmania Northern Branch.

April — "Education of civilised adults" Mr R. Walden

June — "The effects of the ultra violet rays on the skin" Dr D. Tilsley.

August — "Government Houses" (combined meeting with Launceston Historical Society) His Excellency, General Sir Phillip Bennett, Governor of Tasmania.

October — "Antarctic and global warming" Dr P.G. Quilty.

November — "The dinosaurs of darkness" (combined meeting with the Friends of the Queen Victoria Museum) Dr P. Vickers-Rich.

December — Members Night

"Origin of the names of elements" Mr W.H. Stephens

"Tasmanian Main Line Railway" Mr B. Chamberlain.

At the special meeting held in March it was resolved by the Northern Branch that meetings would not be held every month but rather for eight months of the year.

Excursion:

16 June Excursion to the 'Mountford' bush block re-afforestation

Nominees to Other Bodies

The Council elected Dr P.G. Quilty and Professor D.M. Stoddart to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. They report on the year's activities:

1991 was a year of major re-organisation and transition for the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Mr Don Gregg retired on 15 October after almost 20 years as Director. His replacement is to be Ms Patricia Sabine, who will take up her position on 3 February 1992. In the intervening period Dr Tony Orchard was appointed as Acting Director. Another staff member of long standing, Miss Alison Green, Curator of Invertebrate Zoology, also retired in October after 23 years of service.

The change of Director has coincided with plans to review the staff structure and directions of the Museum and Art Gallery, and this review will proceed during 1992. Coincidentally a buildings audit of the Macquarie/Davey Street site is being carried out by the Department of Construction for the Department of Education and the Arts.

The 1991 State Budget provided a grant for recurrent services of \$1 686 000 an increase of about 8.6% over the allocation in the 1990 budget. Of this 73% will be spent on salaries and related costs.

Only one change occurred in the composition of the Board of Trustees during the year. Mr A. R. Neilson retired as Royal Society of Tasmania nominee to the Board on 31 January 1991. He had been a Trustee since 1981 and served as Chairman from 1984 to 1987 and from mid-1990 until his retirement. Mr A. M. Blow was elected Chairman at the February meeting.

The Australian Biological Resources Study through its Environmental Resources Information Network (ERIN) approved a grant of \$47 294 to facilitate the entry of Herbarium label information into a computer data base. Dr Orchard received a grant of \$11 319 from the Australian Biological Resources Study for his continuing investigation of the genus *Cassinia*. Dr Kanrivas received a further National Estate grant (\$7250) towards his study of Tasmanian rainforest lichens.

The Visual Arts/Crafts Board of the Australia Council provided a grant to assist with sending the exhibition *Profiles* to Brisbane.

The Hobart City Council provided a grant of \$12 000 for the year.

The Trustees and senior staff met for the day on Saturday 13 April 1991 to discuss the future of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. As a result of the meeting five standing committees, made up of staff and Trustees, have been set up to consider publications, public relations, funding and finance, exhibition display and education, and buildings and gardens.

During 1991, a total of 99 517 people visited the Museum and Art Gallery compared with 110 486 in 1990.

The number of visitors to the West Coast Pioneers Memorial Museum remains static at about 98 000 for 1990–91.

A very successful exhibition, *Dinosaurs Alive*, was shown in the City Hall from 23 August to 29 September, attracting an attendance of 60 000 people.

Other temporary exhibitions shown included *Early 20th Century Images of Hobart and Tasmania* (January–February), *Reformers, Redeemers and Royal* (February–March), *John Coburn: The Seasons Tapestry Collection* (February–April), *The Art of Colonial Women* (March–April), *Profiles* (April–May), *Thomas Bock: Convict Engraver/Society Portraitist* (April–June), *Witnesses in the Anteroom to Hell* (June–July), *Roger Kemp: Etchings* (June–August), *Aboriginal Watercolours of Albert Namatjira and his Followers* (June–August), *Ellis Rowan 1848–1922: A Flower-Hunter in Queensland* (July–August), *Swiss Origins of Australian Art 1777–1991* (August–September), *Colonial Cabinetmakers* (September–October), *Moet and Chandon 1991* (October–November), *Propositions: from the Centre for Furniture Design* (November–December), *Printmakers in Tasmania* (November–January), *Animal Weeds* (December–May).

Mr J. E. Tomlinson A.O., was elected by the Council to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens. Mr Tomlinson reports on the Year's activities:

Despite budgetary problems common to all authorities, progress has been made during the year.

The Technical Support Centre has been completed and was opened by the Hon Harry Holgate, MHA, on 12 June. The new facilities are proving adequate and a vast improvement in working conditions.

A staff exchange program has been commenced with other Botanical Gardens and will be an ongoing part of the Gardens' activities. This has a double benefit — firstly the experience for the person going away, secondly, the contribution of the visiting exchange.

The Senses Garden, attached to the Easy Access Garden to enable visually impaired people to experience the fragrance and texture of

plants, has now been completed. Over 1000 people attended Horticultural Therapy classes.

The W.A.G. Walker Rhododendron Reserve was handed over to the Gardens on 29 November. This establishes a northern annexe to the Gardens and a very worthwhile addition to its activities. It is already a tourist attraction in the area and funds are being made available to further develop it over a period.

The Tulip Festival was held again on 29 September and was a great success, being attended by approximately 18 000 people. Plans are already being made for an even bigger event in 1992, when the 350th anniversary of Abel Tasman's first sighting of Tasmania will be celebrated.

The new irrigation system is being installed — much of the old piping being almost corroded through. A new fence to the lower car park has been commenced and will be a worthy addition.

The Tasmanian Native Plant Garden has been completed and is developing well. The Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) did not survive despite intensive efforts, and has now been removed.

Various activities have continued including:

The Education Officer has had groups of school children, Skill-share, gardening clubs, Probus, Rotary, etc. for talks, lectures and visits.

January in the Gardens which had garden walks, bird walks, slide shows, bus tours, craft classes and propagation classes for about 550 people.

Bus trips for over 1400 people from hospitals and nursing homes.

Friends of the Gardens has grown to over 150 members and would welcome further additions at \$30 for a family membership.

Early morning and evening plant and bird walks have been very popular.

During the calendar year 1991, 320 000 people visited the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens.

Acknowledgements

The Council is grateful for help generously given by many individuals and organisations. In particular, the lecturers, the Government of Tasmania, the University of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, and the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery are specially thanked for their help and co-operation.

We are grateful for the dedicated help given by members of the Council during the year.

D.M. Stoddart
Senior Vice-President

D.R. Gregg
Honorary Secretary

11 February 1992

