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ROYAL
SOCIETY
NEW SOUTH WALES

The Bulletin 482

May 2024

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A message from the President

Dear <<First Name>> <<Last Name>>

At the Society's Annual General Meeting on 17 April held on the State Library of New South Wales, I reported the results of voting on the procedural matters and election of Council members. Thanks to all members who voted. I also thank retiring Council members Bhavin Raval, Kathy Below, Philip Gale and Pamela Griffith for their exemplary service.

The newly (re-)elected Council members are Sean Brawley, Sally Cripps, Vince di Pietro, Medy Hassan and Liz Killen.

They took office for two years immediately after the AGM, as did Robert Marks who was appointed to Council given his role as Editor of the Society's Journal and Proceedings.

On behalf of the Society, I thank them for being willing to contribute to the governance of the Society. The full list and terms of continuing and new members, including representatives of our Branches, of the 2024-2025 Council is [here](#). This Council will be responsible for the implementation of the five RSNSW Master Plan programs about which I have written previously.

We have a leader identified for each but call on members to contribute their expertise and energy to one of these plans. This is a good opportunity for you to delve into the detail of the Report and Council's responses and participate fully in the future of the Society.

1. Royal Society of New South Wales Future Fund – Susan Pond



2. Activities with Impact – Christina Slade
3. Effective Communication – Davina Jackson
4. Member Engagement – Peter Shergold
5. Operational Excellence – Lindsay Botten

If you would like to receive the full report and/or participate in one of the working groups, please get in touch.

More than ever, we need civil organisations, such as the Society, to participate strongly in the many modern transformations – climate change, social media, artificial intelligence, shifts in global trade and investments, increased risks of conflict, and diminution in trust our institutions. These transformations affect us all.

In the Open Lecture that immediately followed the AGM on 17 April, Peter Shergold AC FRSN, RSNSW Vice-President, and Kristy Muir, Professor of Social Policy at UNSW and CEO of the Paul Ramsay Foundation, framed a conversation around some of them.

The summary of their conversation reads “Democratic governance appears fragile, under the threat from authoritarianism, xenophobia and populism. Trust in political leaders is wavering, thanks to the rise of AI and the increasingly powerful role of social media as a primary news source. In Australia, as elsewhere, public discourse seems riven by increasing social divisiveness and political discord. What’s going wrong? Who or what is to blame? What can be done to restore a truly civil society?”

If you missed their conversation and the Q&A that followed, you can find a [full record](#) on the Society’s YouTube Channel. Well worth watching.

We work for the Society because we understand the need to enhance public discourse on a wide range of topics that are crucial to our future. Society members have excellent ideas to contribute. In that spirit, I look forward to hearing your ideas and suggested ways to bring them to fruition.

[Susan Pond AM FRSN FTSE FAHMS](#)
[President, Royal Society of NSW](#)

For your diary

- [1321st Ordinary General Meeting and Open Lecture](#) (Wednesday, 1 May, 6.30 – 8.00 pm AEST, Zoom webinar), *Brain Health Equity – a new frontier for healthy longevity*, Scientia Professor Kaarin Anstey FRSN FASSA FAHMS, Deputy Director, ARC Centre of Excellence for Population Ageing, Neuroscience Australia, UNSW Sydney
- [Joint RSNSW and State Library of NSW Special Event: May 2024](#) (Friday, 3 May, 3.00 – 4.00 pm AEST, Maps Room, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW, Shakespeare Place, Sydney), *On the history of Russian conflict with Ukraine*, Emeritus Professor Dennis Reinhartz, University of Texas, Arlington, in conversation with Emeritus Professor Robert Clancy AM FRSN, Royal Society of NSW
- [Southern Highlands Branch Meetings 2024-4](#) (Thursday, 16 May, 6.30 pm AEST, RSL Mittagong, Carrington Room), *Latest advances in radiation therapies for cancer*, Distinguished Professor Anatoly Rozenfeld FRSN, Director, Centre for Medical Radiation Physics, University of Wollongong

- [1322th Ordinary General Meeting and Open Lecture](#) (Wednesday, 5 June, 6.00 for 6.30–8.00 pm AEST, Metcalfe Theatre, State Library of New South Wales, Macquarie Street, Sydney), *RNA and me: from the origins of life and nanomedicine to building an RNA ecosystem*, Professor Pall Thordason FRSN, Director, UNSW RNA Institute, UNSW Sydney
- [Joint AIP, RACI, RSNSW, and ANSTO Event: June 2024](#) (Tuesday, 18 June, 7.00–8.00 pm AEST, ANSTO, New Illawarra Road, Lucas Heights), *Electrifying discoveries: using particle accelerators to research air pollution, radiobiology, and electronic chips that go into space*, Professor David Cohen FTSE, Distinguished Research Scientist, Centre for Accelerator Science, ANSTO
- [Southern Highlands Branch Meetings 2024-5](#) (Thursday, 20 June, 6.30 pm AEST, RSL Mittagong, Carrington Room), *Getting technological advances into the clinic — Things I wish I'd known 20 years ago!* Distinguished Professor Gordon Wallace AO FAA FTSE, Director, Intelligent Polymer Research Institute, University of Wollongong
- [Western NSW Branch Meeting 2024-3](#) (Wednesday, 26 June, 6.00 – 8.00 pm AEST, Orange campus (Building 1008, Room 206), Charles Sturt University and live-streaming), *Onsite molecular testing methods and devices for healthcare and agriculture*, Professor Muhammad J. A. Shiddiky, Distinguished Professor in Nanotechnology, Rural Health Research Institute, Charles Sturt University
- [1323rd Ordinary General Meeting and Open Lecture](#) (Wednesday, 3 July, 6.30–8.00 pm AEST, Zoom Webinar), *Social Justice and Health Equity*, Professor Sir Michael Marmot CH FRCP FFPHM FMedSci FBA, Professor of Epidemiology and Director, UCL Institute of Health, University College London
- [Southern Highlands Branch Meetings 2024-6](#) (Thursday, 18 July, 6.30 pm AEST, RSL Mittagong, Carrington Room), *Space Race 2.0*, Dr Brad Tucker, Astronomer/Cosmologist, Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics, University of Wollongong
- [Hunter Branch Meeting 2024-3](#) (Friday, 19 July, 5.30 pm for a 6.00 pm AEST start, University Conservatorium, Laman Street, Cooks Hill, Newcastle NSW 2302, *Are you what you eat? Discovering the science of personalised nutrition*, Laureate Professor Clare Collins AO, College of Health, Medicine, and Wellbeing, University of Newcastle

The Society's annual events program is published in the [online Events Calendar](#), and is updated regularly.

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News

Society Fellow, Johannes le Coutre, elected as a Fellow of the International Academy of Food Science & Technology

The Council of the Society was delighted to learn that **Professor Johannes le Coutre FRSN**, of the UNSW School of Chemical Engineering, was recently elected as a Fellow of the International Academy of Food Science and Technology (IAFoST) for his outstanding accomplishments and contributions to the global food industry.

At UNSW Sydney, where Professor le Coutre leads the University's food program, his team is working on cellular agriculture, involving the production of food that conventionally

comes from animals – but without those animals. He aims to develop novel technologies that produce alternative proteins that he hopes will alleviate the agricultural burden on the environment and strengthen global food security. He believes that current food systems around the globe cannot provide sustainable food security, and hence the need to change what we eat and how we grow it over the next two decades so we can diversify our sources of protein. In the case of meat, he says that while we will still be eating meat in 30 years' time, less of the meat will come from livestock. He went on to say that “there are simply not enough cows on this planet to meet the projected food production demands and we can't ignore the looming environmental challenges posed by the agriculture and the food industry.”



The IUFoST is the key international advisory body on food science and food security, with a standing invitation to make recommendations to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Prior to his arrival at UNSW in 2019, Professor le Coutre spent 19 years at Nestlé in Switzerland where he conceptualised and spearheaded the company's 'taste physiology' research program and initiated various large-scale global research projects. To read more about Professor le Coutre and his important research, please consult the [article on the UNSW Newsroom website](#).

The Council of the Society extends its sincere congratulations to Professor le Coutre on this international recognition of his international contributions to food science and technology.

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Academy of Science 2024 Honorary Awards won by Society Fellows

Professor Anthony Weiss AM FRSN FTSE, the McCaughey Chair in Biochemistry and Molecular Biotechnology of the University of Sydney, and **Professor Anita Ho Baillie FRSN**, the John Hooke Chair in Nanoscience, also at the University of Sydney, have been named as winners in the Academy of Science (AAS) Honorary Awards for 2024.

[Professor Anthony Weiss](#), the winner of the 2021 Prime Minister's Prize for Innovation, was awarded the 2024 AAS Ian Wark Medal and Lecture — one of the Academy's career-level honorary awards — for his international leadership on studies and applications of the key human elastic protein needed for resilience and recoil in skin and blood vessels.

[Professor Anita Ho-Baillie](#), the winner of the RSNSW Warren Prize in 2022, was awarded the 2024 Nancy Millis Medal for Women in Science — one of the Academy's mid-career honorary awards — for her



pioneering development of next-generation solar cells that will play a key role in the transition to a carbon-free-economy.

The links above access the AAS citations for these two outstanding researchers together with a short video on their contributions to science.

The Council of the Royal Society of NSW warmly congratulates these two outstanding scientists on this recognition of the impact of their work.

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ABC Science Show features winners of the 2023 RSNSW Jak Kelly Prize, Scholarships, and ECR Awards

The Society's 2023 Awards for Students and Early Career Researchers were presented at a ceremony held at the Whitlam Institute on the Parramatta South Campus of Western Sydney University on 13 March 2024.

Each of the award winners was introduced and interviewed by the renowned ABC science journalist and presenter of the *ABC Science Show*, Robyn Williams AM FRSN FAA, on their research.



On 6 April, *The Science Show* broadcast a 22-minute segment from this award ceremony titled "*The Jak Kelly Award goes to ...*" featuring:

- Dr Jaime Andrés Alvarado-Montes, Macquarie University, (Jak Kelly Award winner) on the topic of 'Hot Jupiters'
- Jayden Mckinnon, University of Wollongong, (Scholarship winner) on 'Chemical analysis of human cells'
- Dr Jacinta Martin, University of Newcastle, (ECR citation) on 'Tracking of PFAS — the anti-fire measure'
- Dr Abhimanu Pandey, Australian National University, (ECR Citation) on 'Better treatment of bowel cancer'
- Dr Shoujin Wang, University of Technology Sydney, (ECR Citation) on '99-percent effective identification of fake news using AI'.

For interested readers, the [podcast is available](#) from the [ABC Science Show](#) website.

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Maria McNamara MRSN appointed as CEO of Space Industries Association of Australia

Society Member, **Maria MacNamara MRSN**, has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Space Industry Association of Australia (SIAA) — the national peak body for the Australian space industry. The SIAA, formed in 1992, works closely with Australian governments, international partners, academia, and industry to advance Australia's space industry and economy.

Maria McNamara takes up her new role at the SIAA on 22 April 2024 at a turbulent time for the Australian space sector following a sequence of recent cuts from current state and federal governments to investments in space, including the axing of the \$1.2 billion National Space Mission for Earth Observation (NSMEO), announced in 2018, that would have led to the launching of four local satellites in 2028.



Maria McNamara is widely regarded as a transformational leader who has worked in membership organisations, the public sector, and the global ICT industry. Most recently, she served as Director, Government Affairs and Innovation Strategy, at the global ICT infrastructure company, Kyndryl — a recent spin-out of IBM’s infrastructure service business.

During 2012–2019, Maria worked as an advisor to former Senator Arthur Sinodinos AO FRSN who, amongst his ministerial portfolios, served as the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science. During this tenure, Senator Sinodinos initiated the review of the Australian space sector that played a crucial role in the establishment of the Australian Space Agency in 2018.

The Council of the Society warmly congratulates Maria MacNamara on her new appointment and wishes her every success in the meeting the challenges that lie ahead.

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New York Times article references JProcRSNSW paper

On 8 April, a column in the New York Times contained a live link to a 2016 paper in the *Journal & Proceedings of the RSNSW*. The linked paper was “[The Curious Economist: William Stanley Jevons in Sydney](#),” by Ian Castles. The [column](#) (which requires subscription access) was “The Economic Luminary Who Loved Solar Eclipses. Inspired by science, William Stanley Jevons strove to make economics a more rigorous field,” by Peter Coy.



Illustration from the New York Times article

The occasion was the recent solar eclipse in the eastern USA. Coy quoted a description by Jevons of the total eclipse of the Sun from Sydney on 26 March 1857 in the Castles paper, which had been the subject of a 2004 address at the opening of an exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum to celebrate Jevons’ time in Sydney in the 1850s. Robert Marks published it in his first issue as Editor of JProcRSNSW to signal that an earlier economist, one of the founders of classical microeconomics, had also been a Fellow of the Society — or at least of its antecedent, the Philosophical Society of NSW.

While Peter Coy cannot remember how he came across the Castles paper, it’s certainly the best publicity we’ve ever had.

Robert Marks

Editor, Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of NSW

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Council Elections 2024: announcement of results

At the Society's 157th Annual General Meeting, held on 17 April 2023, the results of the 2024 Council elections were announced.



The election was conducted by electronic ballot over three weeks from noon on 25 March until noon on 15 April. Some 200 ballots were submitted by 691 eligible voters, corresponding to a return rate of 29%.

Procedural Motions

- Approval of Minutes of the 156th Annual General Meeting (2023) — For: 157 votes; Against: 0 votes; Abstentions: 43
- Approval of the 2023 Annual Report and Financial Statements — For: 179 votes; Against: 2 votes; Abstentions: 19
- Confirmation of Auditors for 2024 — For: 191 votes; Against: 1 vote; Abstentions: 8
- Special Resolution to make the Editor of the Journal and Proceedings of RSNSW an appointed member of Council — For: 191 votes; Against: 3; Abstentions: 6

Accordingly, all four procedural motions were declared as having passed.

Election of Treasurer (one candidate)

- Emeritus Professor Peter Wells

With only a single candidate standing, Emeritus Professor Peter Wells was declared elected as Treasurer without the need for an election.

Election of five Ordinary Council Members (six candidates)

There were 1,000 votes tallied from 200 voters.

In alphabetical order, the results were:

- Professor Sean Brawley — 153 votes
- Professor Sally Cripps — 191 votes
- Cdre (Ret'd) Vince Di Pietro — 168 votes
- Mr Medy Hassan — 127 votes
- Dr Liz Killen — 184 votes
- Emeritus Professor Robert Marks — 177 votes

With the Special Resolution to make the Editor of the Journal an appointed member of the Council having passed, Emeritus Professor Robert Marks continues as Editor of the Journal, becomes an appointed member of the Council, and removes his candidacy from this election, thereby advancing the next candidate to fill the vacancy.

Accordingly, those elected to fill the five vacancies for Ordinary Members of Council are:

- Professor Sean Brawley
- Professor Sally Cripps
- Cdre (Ret'd) Vince Di Pietro
- Mr Medy Hassan
- Dr Liz Killen

Council 2024–2025

The incoming Council for 2024–2025 took office immediately following the 2024 Annual General Meeting. Its composition is listed in the table below.

Patron	Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales
President	Dr Susan Pond AM FRSN (until April 2025)
Vice-President	Emeritus Professor Peter Shergold AC FRSN (until April 2025)
Secretary	Dr Donald Hector AM FRSN (until April 2025)
Treasurer	Emeritus Professor Peter Wells FRSN (until April 2026)
Librarian	Emeritus Professor Stephen Garton AM FRSN (until April 2025)
Webmaster	Emeritus Professor Lindsay Botten FRSN (until April 2025)
Councillors	Professor Sean Brawley FRSN (until April 2026) Professor Sally Cripps FRSN (until April 2026) Cdre (Ret'd) Vince Di Pietro AM CSC FRSN (until April 2026) Mr Medy Hassan OAM FRSN (until April 2026) Dr Davina Jackson FRSN (until April 2025) Dr Liz Killen MRSN (until April 2026) Emeritus Professor Robert Marks FRSN (until April 2026) Emeritus Professor Christina Slade FRSN (until April 2025)
Branch Representatives	
Hunter	Adjunct Professor Robert Whittaker AM FRSN (until April 2025)
Southern	TBA (until April 2025)
Highlands	
Western NSW	Professor Mark Evans FRSN (until April 2026)

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Society Fellow, Craig Simmons, appointed as the new SA Chief Scientist

Professor Craig Simmons FRSN FAA FTSE, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Engineering, Science, and the Environment at the University of Newcastle has recently been announced as the new Chief Scientist of South Australia. He will take on a three-year term in this part-time role while continuing as Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of Newcastle.



Professor Simmons is an expert in groundwater science, working in both the public and private sectors. Originally from South Australia, Professor Simmons was the 2015 SA Scientist of the Year while working at Flinders University, at which he established the National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training.

In extending his congratulations to Professor Simmons, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Newcastle, Professor Alex Zelinsky AO FRSN FAA FTSE, said his appointment was a testament to his outstanding expertise.

The Council of the Royal Society of NSW warmly congratulates Professor Simmons on this further recognition of his outstanding contributions to research and wishes him every success in this new role.

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Events

1321st Ordinary General Meeting and Open Lecture

Brain Health Equity – a new frontier for healthy longevity

**Scientia Professor Kaarin Anstey FRSN FASSA
FAHMS**

**Deputy Director, ARC Centre of Excellence
for Population Ageing
Neuroscience Australia, UNSW Sydney**



Date: Wednesday, 1 May 2024, 6.30 pm AEST

Venue: [Zoom Webinar](#)

Entry: No charge

All are welcome

**Please click here to join the
Zoom webinar on 1 May at 6.30 pm**

Business of the Meeting

The [Agenda](#) for the Ordinary General Meeting will be available on the [Meetings page](#) of the website.

Summary of the Presentation

In the past 20 years, evidence has accumulated on the importance of modifiable lifestyle factors, and chronic disease which impact brain health and increase the risk of late-life neurodegenerative conditions. In the past 5 to 10 years, the evidence on environmental risk factors for neurodegenerative conditions has strengthened. However, implementing strategies to reduce risk has typically focused on individual behaviour change. In this talk, Professor Anstey will provide an overview of this evidence on dementia risk reduction and brain health promotion and outline what individuals can do to reduce their own risk of dementia. She will then discuss the socio-demographic and socio-economic factors that enable or prevent brain healthy lifestyle and go on to present an argument that brain health inequity is one of the largest challenges to society and governments' aspirations for healthy ageing.

Scientia Professor Kaarin Anstey is an ARC Laureate Fellow in the School of Psychology at the University of New South Wales (UNSW). She is also Director of the UNSW Ageing Futures Institute, and Co-Deputy Director of the ARC Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing as well as a conjoint Senior Principal Research Scientist at

Neuroscience Research Australia. Anstey's research programs focus on cognitive resilience in ageing as well as the prevention of dementia. She has developed risk assessment tools and interventions for people at risk of dementia. A second focus of her work is on older driver safety and, in this field, Anstey has also developed and validated risk assessment tools and interventions. Anstey is a member of the World Dementia Council. Professor Anstey is also the winner of the 2023 Royal Society of NSW Award in the Social and Behavioural Sciences.

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Joint RSNSW and State Library of NSW Special Event: May 2024

On the history of Russian conflict with Ukraine

Emeritus Professor Dennis Reinhartz
University of Texas, Arlington

in conversation with

Emeritus Professor Robert Clancy AM FRSN
Royal Society of NSW and
University of Newcastle



Date: Friday, 3 May 2024, 3.00 pm AEST

Venue: Maps Room, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW, Shakespeare Place, Sydney

Entry: No charge

Registration: [Registration through Membes](#) is required (max. 40 places)

All are welcome

[Please click here to register](#)

This event is jointly presented by the Royal Society of New South Wales and the State Library of New South Wales.

Dennis Reinhartz received his BA and MA degrees in history from Rutgers University and his PhD from New York University. After a university career of over forty years, and having retired in 2008, he is an Emeritus Professor of history and Russian at the University of Texas at Arlington. He also has taught at Rutgers, New Jersey Institute of Technology, James Madison University, Bridgewater College, University of London, and Oxford University and holds several teaching awards. He has offered courses in world history, modern European history, Russian and East European history, modern Chinese history, transatlantic discovery and exploration, the history of cartography, and historical methodology and theory. He is the author or editor of fourteen books and numerous book

chapters and scholarly articles related to his fields of interest. He is past president of The Society for the History of Discoveries, the Arid Lands Studies Association, the Western Social Science Association, the Historical Society of New Mexico, and the Texas Map Society.

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Southern Highlands Branch Meeting 2024-4

Latest advances in radiation therapies for cancer

Distinguished Professor Anatoly Rozenfeld FRSN

**Director, Centre for Medical Radiation
Physics, University of Wollongong**



Date: Thursday, 16 May, 6.30 pm AEDT

Venue: RSL Mittagong, Carrington Room

All are welcome

Summary: To be provided.

Anatoly Rozenfeld is the Director and founder of the Centre for Medical Radiation Physics (CMRP) and is world-renowned for his research work on semiconductor radiation detectors and their application for mini- and micro-dosimetry in radiation therapy, radiation protection, nuclear medicine and space sciences.

The Medical Radiation Physics research and educational programs developed by Professor Rozenfeld at CMRP were recently recognised as being above world standard. He is a member of numerous editorial boards and international advisory committees including the Australian National Hadron Therapy Steering Committee, Prostate Cancer Institute, and the Australian HEP Executive Board, and is currently a member of the Space Medicine Committee of the Australian Space Agency. Moreover, Professor Rozenfeld has published more than 500 articles, some 5 chapters in books, holds 19 granted patents, has attracted more than \$17M in competitive grants, and has also delivered many keynote speeches, invited talks and seminars around the world.

Anatoly Rozenfeld obtained his MSc with distinction from St Petersburg Polytechnic University, Russia and Phis hD from the Institute for Nuclear Research, Kiev, Ukraine. For his pioneering work on the improvement of cancer radiation techniques, using advanced radiation monitoring, Professor Rozenfeld has received numerous prestigious awards.

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1322nd Ordinary General Meeting and Open Lecture

**RNA and me: from the origins of life and nanomedicine to building an
RNA ecosystem**

Professor Pall Thordarson FRSN

Director, UNSW RNA Institute UNSW Sydney



Date: Wednesday, 5 June 2024, 6.00 pm for 6.30 pm AEST

Venue: Metcalfe Theatre, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney

Entry: Members, \$10; Non-members, \$20; Students, \$0

Registration: [Registration through Membes](#) is required before 2.00 pm on 4 June 2024

All are welcome

[Please click here to register](#)

Summary: In this talk, Pall Thordason will discuss his quest for broadening our understanding of how life originated and the RNA world theory, and then his work within the burgeoning nanomedicine sector, and how these conspired to throw him into the deep end of the rapid development of a RNA ecosystem in Australia.

The RNA world idea, within the "origin of life" field, centres around the observation that the RNA molecule can do both: carry information (e.g., mRNA) and perform catalytic reactions (e.g., the ribosome – the protein synthesis factory in our cells). For the RNA world hypothesis to be true, there must have been some “intermediate” complex assemblies between simple RNA building blocks and fully functional RNA catalytic/self-replicating systems. Having worked on peptide gels for over a decade, he and his team noted that recent studies in biology suggested that peptides and RNA readily form gel-like structures under certain conditions. They have therefore been investigating if gel formation from short RNA and peptide molecules could form gel-like aggregates and ultimately, if these could provide a pre-biotic chemistry-relevant path for a proto-ribosome to chemically evolve from the pre-biotic soup of chemicals.

Indirectly leading on from the above, Pall entered the field of nanomedicine over a decade ago with an initial focus on targeted delivery with nanoparticles. The potential importance of understanding better how peptides could also aid in the delivery of RNA therapeutics was not lost on his team and therefore, some time ago, he started to argue the case for more investment in RNA therapeutic development. Having first approached our State Government in 2019, the recent pandemic and the successful deployment of mRNA vaccines then enabled us to rally scientists for universities and medical research organisations from across the state, and work with like-minded groups in other states, to advance the vision of making Australia a powerhouse in the emerging RNA ecosystem.

Pall (Palli) Thordason obtained his BSc from the University of Iceland in 1996 and a PhD in Organic Chemistry from The University of Sydney in 2001. Following a Marie Curie Fellowship in the Netherlands, he returned to Australia in 2003 and was then appointed at UNSW Sydney in 2007 as a Senior Lecturer where he became a full Professor in 2017. He is the Director of the UNSW RNA Institute and the President of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI). He is also a program leader for the NSW RNA Production and Research Network and leads the NSW RNA Bioscience Alliance on behalf of the NSW Vice-Chancellor’s Committee.

Palli has published over 140 referred papers, including in prestigious journals such as Nature and Nature Nanotechnology. His research interest ranges from Nanomedicine,

RNA, and peptides to Supramolecular and Systems Chemistry. He is focused on advancing our understanding of how molecules interact with one other and 'self-assemble', and how self-assembly can then be harnessed to create novel functional materials and systems. He has received a number of awards including the 2012 Le Fèvre Memorial Prize from the Australian Academy of Science for outstanding basic research in Chemistry by a Scientist under the age of 40.

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Joint AIP, RACI, RSNSW, and ANSTO Event: June 2024

Electrifying discoveries: using particle accelerators to research air pollution, radiobiology, and electronic chips that go into space

Professor David Cohen FTSE FAIP

**Distinguished Research Scientist
Centre for Accelerator Science, ANSTO**



Date: Tuesday, 18 June 2024, 7.00–8.00 pm AEST

Venue: Hybrid—Australian Institute of Nuclear Science and Engineering (AINSE) at ANSTO, New Illawarra Road, Lucas Heights NSW, and live streaming

Registration: [Registration through Eventbrite](#) is required

Entry: No charge

Enquiries: By email to tours@ansto.gov.au or by phone to 02 9717 3090 charge

All are welcome

Registration options for this event include:

- An optional tour of ANSTO's Centre for Accelerator Science(5.30–6.30 pm)
- Post-event dinner (\$60 pp at the Rock Salt, Menai from 8.30 pm) — RSVP for dinner bookings is required by 14 June 2024.

Please click here to register

A joint presentation by the Australian Institute of Physics (AIP), the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI), the Royal Society of NSW (RSNSW), and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation(ANSTO).

Summary: Get up to speed with the amazing technology and research at the Centre for Accelerator Science (CAS) at ANSTO. With four powerful accelerators, this world-class facility can accelerate ions from hydrogen to uranium at speeds up to 30,000 km per second. The interactions of these ions with a range of different samples allow for studies in accelerator mass spectrometry and ion beam analysis to be performed, allowing for impactful applications in areas such as fine particle air pollution, microdosimetry of biological cells, and the irradiation of electron chips bound for space.

Professor David Cohen has over 260 refereed journal publications, and over 500 conference and report presentations. He is recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in the accelerator science field with a strong research background in materials

science, environmental studies and life sciences. He has been an international expert in ion beam analysis and accelerator systems for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a UN body based in Vienna, since 1991.



Professor Cohen is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Physics and the Clean Air Society of Australia and New Zealand, and an Honorary Professor in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Wollongong. In 2009 he was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (FTSE) for his sustained contributions to Australian research.

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Southern Highlands Branch Meeting 2024-5

**Getting technological advances into the clinic –
Things I wish I'd known 20 years ago!**

**Distinguished Professor Gordon Wallace
AO FAA FTSE FRSN**

**Director, Intelligent Polymer Research
Institute, University of Wollongong**



Date: Thursday, 20 June, 6.30 pm AEDT

Venue: RSL Mittagong, Carrington Room

All are welcome

Summary: More than three decades ago we embarked on a number of bioengineering explorations using the most advanced materials and fabrication methods. In every area we ventured into, it was our intention to ensure fundamental discoveries were deployed into the clinic to benefit patients. When we embarked on this journey we did so without a road map, not even a compass, and so the path was arduous and sometimes tedious. Now we can see the doorway to deployment on the near horizon. We now appreciate that overcoming the challenges has made this a rewarding and exciting journey.

But maybe we could have been here a lot sooner, and so maybe the lessons we have learnt will benefit others and accelerate progress. Through a number of case studies including neural regeneration, cartilage regeneration, skin regeneration, 3D printing of capsules for islet cell transplantation and the bioengineered cornea let's retrace our steps. We will summarise the journey to date and the obstacles encountered. Then we will provide a framework for project design with clinical deployment of bioengineered products as the goal.

Gordon Wallace is involved in the design and discovery of new materials as well as the development of innovative fabrication and characterization methods. Gordon is committed to the use of fundamental breakthroughs in these areas to drive new technologies in Health.

He has published more than 1,200 refereed journal publications that have attracted more than 72,000 citations with an H-index of 123 (Scopus). He is listed as a co-inventor on more than 60 patents and was acknowledged in 2017, by patent attorney Nicola L Maxwell, as one of Australia's most influential inventors.

Prof Wallace has a long-standing track record in research training. Since joining UOW, he has successfully supervised more than 130 PhD students from over 20 different countries who have gone on to highly successful careers around the world. He has also mentored over 40 ECR Fellows.

He was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia on 26 January 2017 and received Wollongong's Award for Innovation in 2017 as well as serving as Wollongong's Australia Day Ambassador. Gordon was named NSW Scientist of the Year in 2017. He received the Eureka Prize for Leadership in Science and Innovation in 2016 and was appointed to the Prime Minister's Knowledge Nation 100 in 2015. Gordon is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE), Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI) and the Royal Society NSW. He is a corresponding member of the Academy of Science in Bologna. He was elected to the Royal Irish Academy in 2023.

He is currently [Director, IPRI](#).

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Western NSW Branch Meeting 2024-3

Onsite and POC Testing: Improving biomedical and agricultural diagnostics and analysis

Professor Muhammad J. A. Shiddiky

**Distinguished Professor in Nanotechnology
Rural Health Research Institute
Charles Sturt University**



Date: Wednesday, 26 June 2024, 5.30 pm for a 6.00 pm start (AEST)

Venue: Orange campus (Building 1008, Room 206), Charles Sturt University and live-streaming

Entry: No charge

Registration: [Registration through Humanitix](#) is required for in-person and online attendance

All are welcome

Please register now

This meeting is a joint presentation of Charles Sturt University and the Western NSW Branch of the Royal Society of NSW.

Summary: The availability of simple, fast, and affordable molecular testing methods and devices for detecting and treating diseases early on-site has the potential to change the way we approach healthcare and agriculture. This shift would move us towards a more personalised, predictive, and preventive model, focusing on early detection and effective management of diseases. Onsite or point-of-care (POC) testing, especially in remote areas like rural communities, ports, farms, and fields, would be extremely valuable.

Currently, diagnostic methods for healthcare and agriculture often require expensive materials, time-consuming procedures, and well-equipped centralised facilities, making them inaccessible in low-income countries and resource-poor settings. However, advancements in nanomaterials, nanofabrication technology, bioelectronics, and molecular testing methodologies have led to the development of more affordable on-site or POC molecular testing methods and devices.

In recent years, our team has used these advancements to create several molecular testing methods and devices for detecting various cancer biomarkers, such as circulating tumour cells (CTCs), extracellular vesicles (exosomes), miRNA, mRNA, long non-coding RNA (lncRNA), cell-free DNA (cf-DNA), circulating tumour DNA (ct-DNA), agricultural biomarkers, including plant disease-causing pathogens and their corresponding nucleic acid sequences, and global water-related disease biomarkers like cryptosporidiosis and giardiasis. In this presentation, I shall discuss some of these developments and highlight the applications of new methods and devices in these areas.

Muhammad J. A. Shiddiky is a Distinguished Professor in Nanotechnology at Charles Sturt University and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC). He specialises in analytical chemistry, biosensor technology, nanotechnology, and microfluidic devices, focusing on developing biosensing methods and portable diagnostic devices for various biomedical, agricultural, and environmental uses.

Before joining Charles Sturt University, he worked as an Associate Professor and Senior Lecturer at Griffith University from 2015 to 2023. Before that, he completed Research Fellowships at UQ from 2010 to 2012 and Monash University from 2007 to 2010. He obtained his PhD from Pusan National University (Busan, South Korea) before joining Monash University in September 2007.

Currently, Professor Shiddiky leads a research team that utilises advanced biosensing and nanotechnology tools, alongside proteomics, genomics, and microbiology knowledge, to develop fully integrated on-site/on-farm devices. These devices enable 'plug and play' analysis of disease biomarkers for biomedical, agricultural, and environmental applications. The team also specialises in electrochemistry, nanomaterial synthesis, and characterization, including superparamagnetic ferric oxide nanozymes, to create innovative biosensing devices and methods.

Professor Shiddiky's biosensing research has secured over \$10 million in funding since 2011, including seven Australian Research Council (ARC) projects and two prestigious fellowships from ARC and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). He has received numerous internal grants and awards, including the Griffith University VC Award in 2019. Additionally, he serves as a member of the ARC College of Experts (2023-2025).

He has published extensively in top international journals and actively pursues patent applications to translate his research into practical applications. He has a total career

output of 190 publications, including 2 books, 8 chapters, 170 journal papers, 8 conference proceedings, and 2 patents.

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1323rd Ordinary General Meeting and Open Lecture

Social Justice and Health Equity

Professor Sir Michael Marmot
CH FRCP FFPHM FMedSci FBA

**Professor of Epidemiology and
Director, UCL Institute of Health Equity
University College London**



Date: Wednesday, 3 July 2024, 6.30 pm AEST

Venue: [Zoom Webinar](#)

Entry: No charge

All are welcome

[Please click here to join the
Zoom webinar on 3 July at 6.30 pm](#)

Summary: Taking action to reduce health inequalities is a matter of social justice. In developing strategies for tackling health inequalities we need to confront the social gradient in health not just the difference between the worst off and everybody else. There is clear evidence when we look across countries that national policies make a difference and that much can be done in cities, towns, and local areas. But policies and interventions must not be confined to the health care system; they need to address the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age. The evidence shows that economic circumstances are important but are not the only drivers of health inequalities. Tackling the health gap will take action, based on sound evidence, across the whole of society.

Sir Michael Marmot has been Professor of Epidemiology at University College London since 1985 and is Director of the UCL Institute of Health Equity. He is the author of *The Health Gap: The Challenge of an Unequal World* (Bloomsbury: 2015), and *Status Syndrome* (Bloomsbury: 2004). He is a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (2019–), and co-Director of the of the CUHK Institute of Health Equity. He is the recipient of 20 honorary doctorates. Marmot has led research groups on health inequalities for nearly 50 years. He chaired the WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health, WHO Regional Commissions, and reviews on tackling health inequality for UK governments. He is former President of the British Medical Association (2010–2011), and former President of the World Medical Association (2015). He is a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences. In 2000 he was knighted by Her Majesty The Queen for services to epidemiology and the understanding of health inequalities. He was appointed a Companion of Honour for services to public health in the 2023 New Year Honours.

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Southern Highlands Branch Meeting 2024-6

Space Race 2.0

Dr Brad Tucker

**Astronomer/Cosmologist
Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics
Australian National University**



Date: Thursday, 18 July, 6.30 pm AEDT

Venue: RSL Mittagong, Carrington Room

All are welcome

Summary: Space exploration is happening at a rapid pace. Missions, projects, and events that are now happening were not even on the radar a few years ago. From private space travel and Hollywood movies, to building satellites to detect fires and searching for life in the Solar System, we'll see what is happening in space. There are huge changes occurring with wide-ranging implications in law, policy, international relations, economics, and even the way we live. We'll see what role Australia is playing and what it means for us over the next decade.

Brad Tucker is an Astrophysicist/Cosmologist at the Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Mt. Stromlo Observatory and the National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science, at the Australian National University.

Brad received Bachelor's degrees in Physics, Philosophy, and Theology from the University of Notre Dame and a PhD in Astrophysics and Cosmology from Mt. Stromlo Observatory at the ANU. He's leading programs using NASA's Kepler Space Telescope and TESS to understand why and how stars blow up. He's also building a network of ultraviolet telescopes in the upper atmosphere, and a search to find Planet 9.

Brad frequently gives talks to school groups and the public about Astronomy and has regular segments on various radio and TV stations. He has also developed a series of Astronomy coins with the Royal Australian Mint, consulted on science fiction movies, and has been featured in TV specials. He is currently in the process of writing his first popular book and has developed an online Astronomy course.

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Hunter Branch Meeting 2024-3

**Are you what you eat?
Discovering the science of
personalised nutrition**

Laureate Professor Clare Collins AO

College of Health, Medicine, and Wellbeing University of Newcastle



Date: Friday, 19 July 2024, 5.30 pm (AEST) for a 6.00 pm Lecture start

Venue: University Conservatorium, Laman Street, Cooks Hills, Newcastle, NSW 2302

Registration: [Registration through Membes](#) is required by 5.00 pm on Thursday 18 July 2024. Max: 250 people

Entry: Society members, \$15; Non-members, \$25; Students, \$5

Enquiries: [Via email](#) to RSNSW Hunter Branch Secretary (Adj. Prof. Robert Whittaker)

Society Members, Fellows, and members of the public are welcome

Please register now

Summary: In this Royal Society of New South Wales Lecture, with the support of the University of Newcastle, Laureate Professor Clare Collins will bust common nutrition and diet myths about what to eat, to feel better and get better.

Rapid developments in nutrition research mean the ability to tailor individual dietary advice to a person's specific nutrient needs and individual genetics, is now on the horizon. Nutrition needs to change over time based on age, life stage, and health status. A greater understanding of the variation between people in terms of digestion and metabolism is central to developing this field of personalised nutrition. Against the backdrop of cutting-edge food and nutrition science, individuals make conscious and unconscious food choices multiple times a day. This has implications for their own and their family's health and wellbeing. External factors like advertising, marketing, time, money, and convenience all influence what people do, or do not, choose to put in their supermarket trolley.

We will finish with an "Ask Me Anything" about nutrition to give attendees a chance to have their questions answered.

Clare Collins AO is the Laureate Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics, at the University of Newcastle (UON), and Co-Director of the Food and Nutrition Research Program at the Hunter Medical Research Institute. As an internationally distinguished leader in nutrition and dietetics, her research performance places her in the top one per cent of most cited scientists globally.

Professor Collins was appointed Officer of the Order of Australia in 2023 for distinguished service to health research in nutrition and dietetics, scientific organisations, and science communication. In 2024 she was awarded the UON Alumni Medal for outstanding professional excellence. Her research has been supported by more than \$33 million in research funding, generating career outputs of more than 550 journal articles, and the supervision of more than 50 Research Higher Degree candidates. A trailblazer in her field, Professor Collins was ranked the highest female Investigator Grant in 2021 for her research in Personalised Nutrition and was awarded the National Health and Medical Research Council's Elizabeth Blackburn Award for Leadership in Clinical Medicine and Science.

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Branch and Committee Reports

Program Committee Report

The Society provides an active program of events through its Hunter, Southern Highlands, and Western NSW branches, and in Sydney. The full program for the year can be found in the [website event calendar](#).

With events held recently by the branches reported on separately in this Bulletin, this section focuses on recent events held in Sydney.



Report on the presentation at the 1320th Ordinary General Meeting, 17 April

On Wednesday 17 May, the Society held its 157th AGM at the State Library of NSW, followed by the 1320th OGM and a discussion between the Vice-President of the Society, Emeritus Professor Peter Shergold AC FRSN FASSA and Professor Kristy Muir, Chief Executive of the Paul Ramsay Foundation. The topic, [“Putting the 'Civil' Back in Civil Society.”](#)



The topic proved timely, following a week in which civil society in NSW was very much under pressure and incivility moved to violence. From the egregious details of Bruce Lehrmann’s legal case, through apparently unmotivated violence in a public space, to attacks in a religious ceremony, the civic space has been far from civil. Our vision of an Australian community, of a civic space, of an ideal public sphere, is in question. If we look to the wider global arena, civility is even more troubled.

Peter Shergold and Kirsty Muir represent those who are committed to, and have worked for civil society. As a senior civil servant and more recently in a range of roles, Peter Shergold has been extraordinarily effective in creating the civil society. Kirsty Muir represents the Ramsay Foundation, a Foundation set up by a private entrepreneur precisely to support social good. They brought different perspectives to the question. In his introduction, Peter Shergold cited research about the loss of faith in our democracy and in political parties in Australia, and more broadly across the democratic world. This is clear, particularly among the young who no longer read mainstream news directly but take their news feed through social media. Kristy Muir brought a different perspective to the question, arguing that the young use different modes of communication and that the democratic structures needed to adjust to these new modes. The audience was very much engaged. What was striking was the highly civil form disagreement took. All agreed that a polarised society was the major challenge for a civil society.

If you missed the presentation, a recording is now [available on our YouTube channel](#).

Following the election of the new Council at the AGM, and the strategic imperatives of the Master Plan, we shall move ahead with a slightly different structure to bring together our activities. We look forward to a more varied and engaging set of events in future. I would

like to thank all those who have served so well on the Program Committee this year. I thank Professor Elizabeth Deane, secretary of the committee, Webmaster Emeritus Professor Lindsay Botten, Zoommasters Guy Loucks and Kate Carruthers, Regional Representatives, Dr Philip Bailey, Professor Lewis Bizo, and Dr David Nash, Mr Quang Ly, Associate Professor Alice Motion, and Emeritus Professor Roy Green. I also thank the President and Secretary for their support.

Christina Slade FRSN
Chair, Program Committee

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Hunter Branch Report

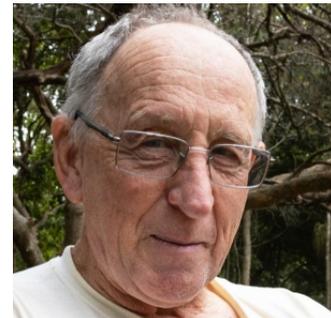
Presentation Report— 11 April 2024

Conservation, Frogs, and Citizen Science

**Honorary Professor Michael Mahony AM
School of Environmental and Life Sciences
University of Newcastle**



Honorary Professor Michael Mahony spoke about *Conservation, Frogs, and Citizen Science* at the second Hunter Branch Public Lecture for 2024, held on Thursday, April 11th, at the Newcastle Exhibition Centre (NEX). During his career Professor Mahony has discovered and described over 20 species of Australian frogs. He explained that, due its long isolation, Australia's frogs are unique but that, due to the country's aridity, the number of 260 Australian frog species is small compared with other continents, and even islands such as New Guinea. Our frog species are diverse in their adaptations to the Australian environment though, and Professor Mahony talked about some of these remarkable adaptations.



Australia's frogs face threats from disease and from habitat loss caused by climate change and human development. Professor Mahony gave an account of the discovery of a fungus causing the decline of a South Australian frog species, subsequently found to be a factor in frog declines worldwide, and of his role in this discovery. We have lost 9 species and a further 50 are threatened with extinction. It is not only the loss of species that is a problem, the loss of genetic diversity within species as numbers decline is just as significant.

Monitoring frog populations and their habitats is essential for conserving them. Many more observers than just professional biologists are needed to do that, and citizen scientists play a vital part. Organisations such as Earthwatch have supported volunteers working in the field alongside scientists since the 1980s. The internet and smart phones have transformed citizen science by allowing anyone to contribute at any time. Using the app 'FrogID', recordings of frogs may be submitted and a reply the next day will identify the frog. The information on the species of frog, and when and where it was recorded, will then be added to the Atlas of Living Australia, in which there are currently over one million entries on Australian frogs. This information was used, for example, to gauge the damage done to

frog populations by the east coast bushfires of 2019. The app 'eBird' does a similar thing for birds but uses an international database, and AI identifies the bird in a shorter time.

A lively question and answer session from the audience of about 30 followed Professor Mahony's lecture. About half the audience stayed on to join Professor Mahony for dinner at the NEX restaurant. The success of the lecture and dinner at NEX encourage the Hunter Branch to hold future events there.

A video recording of Professor Mahony's presentation is [available on our YouTube channel](#), as is a YouTube 'short' titled [Extinction isn't just an environmental issue, but a moral one](#), extracted from the long-form video and which after only a few days has received also 5,000 viewings.

George Willis FRSN FAA
Chair, Hunter Branch

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Southern Highlands Branch Report

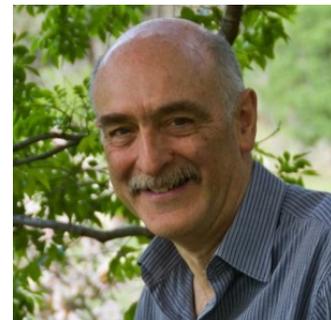
Presentation Report— 18 April 2024

Webb's wondrous window on the Universe

**Professor Fred Watson AM
Astronomer-at-Large
Australian Government**

ROYAL SOCIETY
NEW SOUTH WALES
Southern
Highlands

As may be expected of Australia's first Astronomer-at-Large, Professor Fred Watson arrived in the Southern Highlands to deliver this lecture three days after touching down from leading a scientific tour to the northern lights in Canada, the eclipse in Texas, and a space launch in Florida. He looked extremely fit and well, and eager to address the huge audience which awaited him.



Fred began by describing how the study of astronomy has changed radically since his early years in the field. There is now an almost infinite amount of computing power available. In addition, access is readily available to an enormous number of telescopes and the facilities that accompany them, making examination of a very wide range of wavelengths in the electromagnetic spectrum possible.

Taking the planet of Jupiter, the giant planet of our solar system, as an example of why astronomers need a wide range of wavelengths available to them, he showed that by using the wavelength of visible light, 3 features of the planet were immediately visible. Jupiter's cloud belt, its great red spot, a storm that has been going for at least 300 years, and the shadow of one of its moons on the cloud layers are clearly identified.

These findings can be compared with the picture of Jupiter that results when infrared light is used. The cloud belts are then seen to be silhouetted against something brighter behind

them, which is infrared radiation from the heat being emitted by nuclear reactions inside the planet. Jupiter emits 1.8 times as much radiation as it receives from the sun.

At even longer wavelengths, the radio spectrum analysis shows clearly what looks like a two-headed gecko. This image is indicative of the radiation belts resulting from extremely strong magnetic fields, thousands of times stronger than the Earth's magnetic field.

Professor Watson then went on to paint a picture of the cosmic detail available to astronomers now that such a range of wavelengths is open to them. In this copiously illustrated talk, he showed the extraordinary quality of the images from NASA's James Webb Space Telescope and how they now challenge our understanding of the Universe's deepest mysteries.

An unforgettable lecture.

An interesting and unusual coincidence

An extraordinary coincidence occurred at the Southern Highlands lecture on 18 April. Our speaker, Professor Fred Watson, was seen on arrival talking animatedly to a friend at the front of the auditorium as the huge audience was moving in to be seated. The friend was Professor Ken McCracken, a resident of the Southern Highlands.

It is now clear what these two extraordinary scientists have in common. Among many other factors, both have an asteroid named after them. They are 8258McCracken and 5691FredWatson. Both asteroids are in the top one per cent of asteroids in size, 8258McCracken being comparable in size to the island of Manhattan, while 5691FredWatson is comparable in size to the San Francisco Bay. Thankfully, both asteroids are tracing orbits with an extremely wide berth from Earth. 5691Fred Watson was last officially observed on 10 Feb 2023 and 8258McCracken on 9 June 2023.

Anne Wood FRSN
Chair, Southern Highlands Branch

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Western NSW Branch Report

Event Report

In conjunction with the Western NSW Branch of the Royal Society of New South Wales, Charles Sturt University is conducting its Provocations Public Lecture series that showcases and celebrates research at the University.



Recent Event

On Wednesday, 10 April, **Alan Cooper**, Professor of Evolution and Environmental Change at the CSU Gulbali Institute, presented the second lecture in the Charles Sturt 2024 Provocations Public Lecture series at Port Macquarie. In his lecture, titled *The Original 'Dune': How Ancient Human History in Arabia Gave Us Modern Lifestyle Diseases*, Professor Cooper discussed his recent research and the new field of evolutionary medicine. He explained how our genomes record a hidden but prolonged period of harsh

genetic selection and adaptation as modern humans were trapped in Arabia for 30,000 years before spreading around the world about 55,000 years ago. The genetic systems we developed to survive the challenging cold, dry desert conditions now set us up for a range of modern lifestyle diseases and disorders, including obesity, autism and cardiovascular diseases. Professor Cooper led the recently published study '[The role of genetic selection and climatic factors in the dispersal of anatomically modern humans out of Africa](#)' (Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, USA, Tobler et al, March 2023).

Forthcoming Events

The next event in the Provocations Public Lecture series, titled [Onsite and POC testing: Improving biomedical and agricultural diagnostics and analysis](#), will be delivered by **Professor Muhammad J.A. Shiddiky** on Wednesday, 26 June at the Charles Sturt University Orange Campus and will also be live streamed. Information about the presentation and the speaker are available from the preceding link and event notice in this issues of *The Bulletin*.



The remaining events for the year are:

- Adapting to change — Invasive plants and pests take up the challenge, Professor Leslie Weston, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga Campus, Wednesday, 28 August 2024, 6.00–8.00 pm AEST
- Topic: TBA, Professor Sarah O'Shea, Charles Sturt University, Dubbo Campus, Wednesday, 23 October 2024, 6.00–8.00 pm AEDT
- Rural and regional health, Professor Allen Ross, Charles Sturt University, Orange Campus, Wednesday, 5 November 2024, 6.00–8.00 pm AEDT

After the Voice

On 25 March, Yindyamarra Nguluway, in conjunction with the Western NSW Branch of the Royal Society of New South Wales, hosted a launch of Dr Bede Harris's book *Indigenous Peoples and Constitutional Reform in Australia — Beyond Mere Recognition*, followed by a panel discussion with Michelle Grattan, Professor Stan Grant Jr, Professor Dominic O'Sullivan, and Dr Bede Harris, facilitated by Professor Mark Evans. The panel discussed a variety of themes—political, philosophical, and ethical that arose in the context of First Nations reform following the defeat of the Voice Referendum. These included:

- The political context and the possibilities for constitutional and other means of democratic reform on First Nations issues, moving forward
- Ethical responsibility and obligation and the potential for grass-roots communities, other forms of political organisations and ideas-sharing entities to play a role in democratic reform
- The international context in which Australia currently falls short of its responsibilities to First Nations peoples
- The relationship between faith, religion, ethics and spiritual humanism in rooting Australian nationhood and community in deeper moral foundations for participating in politics.

A recording of this event is available on the [CSU YouTube Channel](#).

Nilima Mathai
Treasurer, Western NSW Branch

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The Society and Social Media

The Society's presence on social media platforms is growing strongly, particularly following the appointment of the Society's part-time Communications Officer. Our [Facebook page](#), [LinkedIn channel](#), [X/Twitter feed](#), and [YouTube channel](#) are engaging an increased following, and we continue to build our repository of events on YouTube. Our YouTube channel now has 940 subscribers, while the 151 online videos (which now include seven well-received 'Shorts') have received almost 118,000 views.

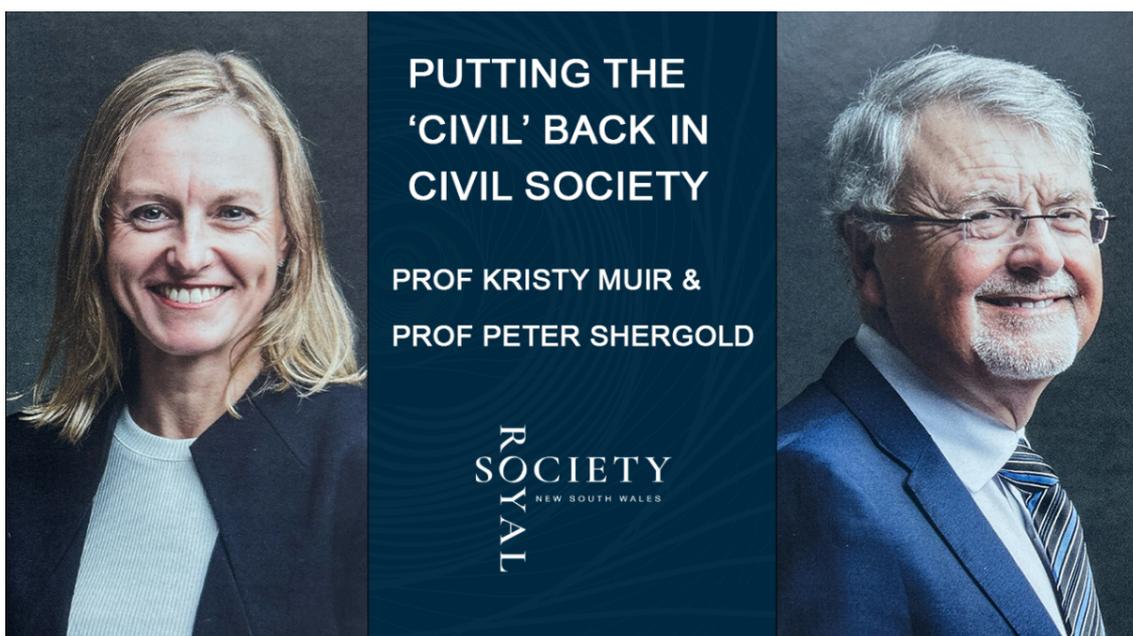
The social media icons at the end of this newsletter will take the reader to our pages on these platforms, from where you can follow, subscribe, and be notified of new content.

As a Society member, please consider subscribing to our social media channels to support the Society's outreach, and also please encourage your friends and colleagues to do so.

YouTube recordings of recent events

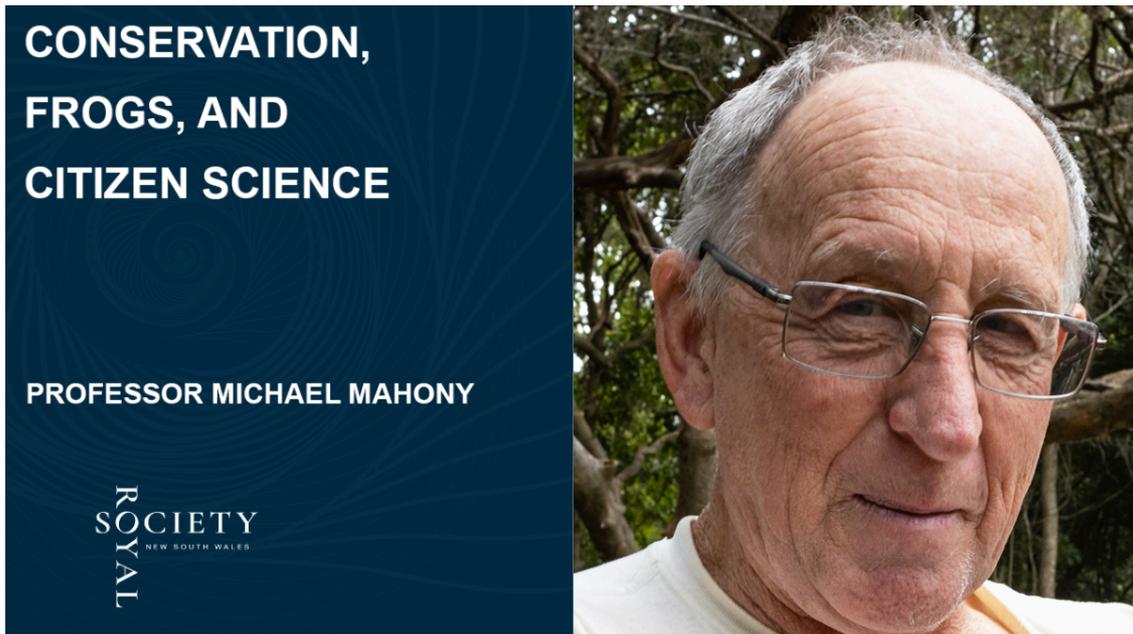
All online presentations and all face-to-face presentations held in Sydney and by the Hunter (since April 2024) and Western NSW Branch are recorded and uploaded to the Society's YouTube channel. These can be accessed directly from [YouTube](#) or from the [Presentations](#) page of the RSNSW website.

For convenience, the video links below provide access to recordings from the most recent three months. We hope that these will be of interest to members.



YouTube recording of the presentation from the 1320th Ordinary General Meeting Branch Lecture 2024-2 (17 April 2024) on *Putting the 'Civil' back in Civil Society* delivered by Emeritus Professor Peter Shergold, Vice-President of the Royal

Society of NSW, and Professor Kristy Muir, CEO of the Paul Ramsay Foundation. A summary of the lecture, and a brief biography of the presenter, are available from the [online event notice](#).



**CONSERVATION,
FROGS, AND
CITIZEN SCIENCE**

PROFESSOR MICHAEL MAHONY

ROYAL
SOCIETY
NEW SOUTH WALES

YouTube recording of the presentation from the Hunter Branch Lecture 2024-2 (11 April 2024) on the subject of *Conservation, Frogs, and Citizen Science* by Honorary Professor Michael Mahony AM of the University of Newcastle. A summary of the lecture, and a brief biography of the presenter, are available from the [online event notice](#).



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**SHAKESPEARE ON
POLITICS — WHAT
CAN WE LEARN?**

JOHN BELL

Ideas@theHouse

YouTube recording of the Ideas@theHouse lecture delivered at Government House Sydney on 6 March 2024 by renowned actor and director, John Bell AO OBE, Founder and former Artistic Director of Bell Shakespeare, on the topic of *Shakespeare on politics — what can we learn?* A summary of his presentation, and a brief biography of Dr Bell, are available from the [website event notice](#).



YouTube recording of the presentation from the Western NSW Branch Lecture 2024-1 (28 February 2024) on the subject of Parasites, Australia's silent threat: coincidence, nature's hand, or policy complacency by Professor Shokoofeh Shamsi, Professor of Veterinary Parasitology at Charles Sturt University. A summary of the lecture, and a brief biography of the presenter, are available from the [online event notice](#)



YouTube recording of the presentation at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Four Societies (21 February 2024) on the subject of *Resilience before Readiness — "... for the want of a horseshoe nail"* by Vince Di Pietro AM CSC FRSN. A summary of the lecture, and a brief biography of the presenter, are available from the [online event notice](#).

PRODUCTIVITY: WHAT IS IT, AND WHY IT MATTERS

EMERITUS PROFESSOR ROY GREEN AM FRSN

ROYAL
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YouTube recording of the presentation at the 1319th Ordinary General Meeting (7 February 2024) on the subject of *Productivity: what is it, and why it matters* by Emeritus Professor Roy Green AM FRSN, University of Technology Sydney. A summary of the lecture, and a brief biography of the presenter, are available from the [online event notice](#).

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Edited by: [Lindsay Botten](#) FRSN, Webmaster, Royal Society of New South Wales

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