ROYAL SOCIETY NEW SOUTH WALES

The Bulletin 504
May 2026

In this newsletter:

A message from the President

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

A new Council is now in place and met for the first time on 22 April. I welcome Erin Gao, the Treasurer, and Associate Professor Holly Randell-Moon of Charles Sturt University, both of whom are new to the Council. Professor Vicki Bitsika is rejoining us as chair of the New England and North East Branch. Professor Lewis Bizo continues to represent the Western Branch, Emeritus Professor George Willis, the Hunter Branch, and Ann Fieldhouse, the Southern Highlands Branch. Council agreed to make two appointments under Rule 16(c)(xi), nominating Dr Michael Taylor to chair a new Finance, Risk, and Governance Committee and Zile Yu to lead the Annual Dinner Working Group.

At the annual General Meeting on 8 April, held at the State Library of NSW, the results of the Council elections, conducted by electronic ballot, were announced. This was followed by the 1339th Ordinary General Meeting at which we were addressed by Dr Catherine Ball, futurist, and by Simon Masters of InnovateUK, whose contribution had been pre-recorded, on the topic of 'A drone by any other name.' Catherine described the early and very successful days of innovation with drone technology in Australia, bemoaning the lack of subsequent support for innovative work. In contrast, Simon laid out the initiative he led for the British Government, bringing together industry, government and universities with significant five-year funding for ‘Future Flight’. While not all projects succeeded, he cited a range of very successful start-ups that benefited from InnovateUK funding. The debate was particularly timely given the recent release of the ’Ambitious Australia’ report, in which the chair, Robyn Denholm, chair of Tesla Inc., the former

chief scientist, Emeritus Professor Ian Chubb, Professor Fiona Wood and Dr Kate Carnick analysed why Australia has not been successful in commercialising our excellent scientific research.

Our focus over the past year has been on implementing our Master Plan through five working groups. For the 2026 Council, I am proposing a return to a more traditional committee structure. The current arrangements for the Executive and Council, the Fellows and Members Assessment Committee under Professor Sean Brawley's leadership, and the Awards Committee under Professor Merlin Crossley remain in place. The Library Committee, led by Emeritus Professor Stephen Garton, will be finalising its role over this year as disposal of the library is completed.

We propose to reestablish the Sydney Program Committee and the Publishing Committee. With the work for the Sydney events program for 2026 now largely complete, we agreed that Susi Steigler-Peters take over as chair later this year, under new terms of reference. Dr Davina Jackson has kindly agreed to lead a revised Publishing Committee, with the difficult task of finding a replacement for the Editor of the Journal when Emeritus Professor Robert Marks steps down at the end of 2026 after ten years in the role. The new Finance, Risk, and Governance Committee will support the work of our new Treasurer, Erin Gao, and also consider our risk profile and the effectiveness of our governance. We also propose to formalise three working groups: a Forum Working Group, which I shall lead this year; the Annual Dinner Working Group led by Zile Yu, and the Future Fund Working Group led by Médy Hassan. The operations portfolio, led by the Vice-President, Emeritus Professor Lindsay Botten, also continues.

The Royal Societies of Australia (RSA) is an umbrella body for Australia's Royal Societies, which presently brings together the Victorian, South Australian, Western Australian, Tasmanian, and Queensland Royal Societies. The Royal Society of NSW was previously a member of the RSA, but withdrew over a lack of clarity about the incoming Governor-General's continuing role as its Patron. A former President of this Society, John Hardie, is the President of the RSA, and he has confirmed that the new Governor-General will serve as its Patron, who intends to be an active supporter of the RSA. The new Council, at its first meeting, voted to rejoin the RSA. An initiative that John Hardie has been discussing with the Governor-General relates to increasing engagement with young people. The Governor-General is keen to encourage the young to look to careers in science and technology and to meet entrepreneurs, business people, and leading scientists to discuss possible directions and career pathways. We have opened our associate membership category for younger members, including high school students, and hope to find ways to increase our engagement with them, university students, and early-career researchers during the coming year.

Christina Slade FRSN
President
Royal Society of New South Wales

For your diary

The Society's annual events program is published in the online Events Calendar, which is updated regularly.

- 1340th Ordinary General Meeting and Open Lecture (Wednesday, 6 May 2026, 6.00–7.30 pm AEST, Zoom webinar) *Household Electricity Use and Investment*, Professor Jeffrey Reimers FRSN FAA FRACI, Director, International Centre for Quantum and Molecular

Structures, Department of Physics, Shanghai University, Shanghai, China and Honorary Associate, School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, University of Technology Sydney

- Lunchtime series: Provocations and Inspirations—May 2026 (Tuesday, 19 May 2026, 12.15 for 12.30 – 2.00 pm AEST, Union University and Schools Club, 25 Bent Street, Sydney) *Energy: Cost and Enabling Technologies*, Tim Buckley, Founder of the public interest think tank, Climate Energy Finance
- Southern Highlands Branch Meeting 2026-4 (Thursday, 21 May 2026, 6.30–7.30 pm AEST, Moss Vale Services Club, Cnr Argyle and Yarrawa Streets, Moss Vale NSW 2577) *Literary France: Susannah's Top Ten Places*, Susannah Fullerton OAM FRSN, Author, Literary Lecturer, and Tour Leader
- Western NSW Branch Meeting 2026-1 (Wednesday, 27 May 2026, 12.30–1.30 pm, Zoom webinar) *Staying ahead of viral threats — host interactions shape pandemic preparedness*, Distinguished Professor Jade Forwood, Biosecurity Program Lead, Gulbali Institute, Charles Sturt University
- New England North West Branch Meeting 2026-1 (Wednesday, 27 May 2026, 5.00–7.30 pm AEST, NOVA, 122 Faulkner Street, Armidale NSW 2350) *One Health for a Changing World: Forests, Farms and Families,* Professor David Durrheim, Director of Health Protection, Hunter New England Health, NSW and a panel comprising Associate Professor Lorina Barker, Professor Susan Wilson, Associate Professor Gal Winter, Associate Professor Jacqueline Epps, and Professor Natkunam Ketheesan (Moderator) from the University of New England
- 1341st Ordinary General Meeting and Open Lecture (Wednesday, 10 June 2026, 6.00–7.30 pm AEST, Dixson Room, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW, Shakespeare Place, Sydney) *The Circular Economy: A pathway to environmental sustainability?* Professor Sami Kara FRSN FFCIRP FACATECH, School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, UNSW Sydney and Professor Michael Hauschild, Department of Environmental and Resource Engineering, Technical University of Denmark
- Ideas@theHouse: June 2026 (Tuesday, 16 June 2026, 6.30 8.00 pm AEST, Face-to-face (by invitation for Society members) at Government House Sydney, and live streaming) *City Futures: from challenge to opportunity – by design*, Leone Lorrimer LFRAIA
- Southern Highlands Branch Meeting 2026-5 (Thursday, 19 June 2026, 6.30–7.30 pm AEST, RSL Mittagong Carrington Room) *Roaming Reptile of the Eocene*, Dr Michael Stein, Dr Michael Stein, Palaeoscientist, Archer Palaeontology Laboratory, UNSW Sydney

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News

Society Fellows acknowledged by Academy of Science 2026 Honorific Awards

Professor Philip Gale FRSN of the University of Technology Sydney and the University of Groningen, and **Professor Hala Zreiqat AM FRSN FAA FTSE FAHMS** of the University of Sydney have been named as winners in the Academy of Science (AAS) Career Honorific Awards for 2026.

Professor Gale was awarded the David Craig Medal and lecture—one of the Academy's career-level honorific awards—which recognises outstanding contributions to research of any branch of chemistry by active researchers.

Professor Zreiqat was awarded the Sunanne Cory Medal, another of the Academy's career-level honorific awards, which recognises outstanding research in all of the biological sciences, being awarded in alternate years in the biomedical sciences and in all of the biological sciences excluding biomedical sciences. For 2026, the award was in the field of niomedical sciences.

Philip Gale FRSN | Hala Zreiqat AM FRSN FAA FTSE FAHMS

The Academy citation for **Professor Philip Gale** refers to his pioneering work on small molecules that transport anions across membranes, enabling potential treatments for cancer and cystic fibrosis. Membranes in cells consist of a bilayer formed from lipid molecules. The interior of this bilayer is 'oily', and ions and molecules that are charged, including species with a negative charge (known as anions), are only able to pass through special channel molecules present in the membrane. Professor Gale is developing small molecules that wrap around anions, giving them an 'oily' coat and allowing them to pass through the membrane.

These molecules have potential future applications treating diseases where the channel molecules in the membrane are faulty (such as in cystic fibrosis) or where perturbing the anion concentrations within the cell triggers cell death (which is useful in compounds designed to treat cancer). Professor Gale is developing ways to switch on the transport properties of these molecules in the environments found within cancer cells, allowing them to be targeted to tissue requiring treatment so providing a potential new approach to the treatment of disease.

The Academy citation for **Professor Hala Zreiqat** states that she is an internationally recognised biomedical scientist whose pioneering research is transforming bone regeneration therapies. Her team developed the world's first strong, bioactive synthetic ceramic scaffold that mimics natural bone, enabling the body to regrow tissue and restoring function after injury or disease. The team's innovations, including patented materials now moving towards clinical use, offer new hope for millions affected by bone loss. Professor Zreiqat's team also pioneered 3D-printed, patient-specific ceramic implants and novel surface treatments to enhance implant integration.

Her research spans cutting-edge areas such as anti-senescence biomaterials for ageing tissues and nanoengineered coatings for medical devices. Through extensive industry partnerships, her lab's discoveries are progressing towards global clinical application. A distinguished leader and mentor, she has advanced interdisciplinary collaboration and championed diversity in STEM worldwide. Her research holds the promise of revolutionising musculoskeletal repair and improving the quality of life for patients around the world.

The Council of the Royal Society of NSW warmly congratulates Fellows Philip Gale and Hala Zreiqat on this latest recognition of the career impact of their research.

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Council Elections 2026: announcement of results

At the Society's 159th Annual General Meeting, held on 8 April 2026 in the Michael Crouch Room of the State Library of NSW, the results of the 2026 Council elections were announced.

The election was conducted by electronic ballot over three weeks from noon on 16 March until noon on 6 April 2026.

Some 217 ballots were submitted by 739 eligible voters, corresponding to a return rate of 29.4% — identical to the rate in recent years.

Procedural Motions

- Approval of Minutes of the 158th Annual General Meeting (2025) — For: 168 votes; Against: 1 vote; Abstentions: 48
- Receipt of the Annual Report and the Financial Report for 2025 — For: 196 votes; Against: 0 votes; Abstentions: 21
- Confirmation of Auditors for 2026 — For: 201 votes; Against: 0 votes; Abstentions: 16
- Resolution to update Rule 8: Admission of Members and Fellows of the Society — For: 207 votes; Against: 3 votes; Abstentions: 7 votes

Election of Office-Bearers

For the position of Treasurer, there was only a single nomination received. Accordingly, the nominee listed below was declared as having been elected unopposed at the Annual General Meeting.

Office/Role	Candidate
Treasurer	Erin Gao MRSN

Election of four Ordinary Council Members (from six candidates)

There were 868 votes tallied from 217 voters.

In alphabetical order, the results were:

- Honorary Professor Sean Brawley FRSN — 160 votes
- Mr Medy Hassan OAM FRSN — 153 votes
- Dr Liz KIllen MRSN — 197 votes
- Associate Professor Holly Randell-Moon MRSN— 126 votes
- Dr Michael Taylor FRSN — 120 votes
- Zile Yu MRSN — 112 votes

Accordingly, those elected to fill the four vacancies for Ordinary Members of Council are, in alphabetical order:

- Honorary Professor Sean Brawley FRSN
- Mr Medy Hassan OAM FRSN

- Dr Liz Killen MRSN
- Associate Professor Holly Randell-Moon MRSN

The newly elected Officer-Bearer and Council Members shall remain in office for two years from the close of the Annual General Meeting on 8 April 2026 until the Annual General Meeting in April 2028.

Council 2026–2027

The incoming Council for 2026–2027 took office immediately following the 2026 Annual General Meeting. Its composition is listed in the table below.

Role	**Occupant(s)**
Patron	Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of NSW
President	Emeritus Professor Christina Slade FRSN (until April 2027)
Vice-President	Emeritus Professor Lindsay Botten FRSN (until April 2027)
Secretary	Emeritus Professor Trevor Brown FRSN (until April 2027)
Treasurer	Erin Gao MRSN (until April 2028)
Editor (JProc)	Emeritus Professor Robert Marks FRSN (until December 2026)
Librarian	Emeritus Professor Stephen Garton AM FRSN (until April 2027)
Webmaster	Emeritus Professor Graham Town FRSN (until April 2027)
Councillors	Professor Sean Brawley FRSN (until April 2028)
	Emeritus Professor Rosalind Croucher FRSN (until April 2027)
	Mr Medy Hassan OAM FRSN (until April 2028)
	Dr Davina Jackson FRSN (until April 2027)
	Dr Liz Killen MRSN (until April 2028)
	Associate Professor Holly Randell-Moon MRSN (until April 2028)
Appointed Members (2)	
	Dr Michael Taylor FRSN (until April 2028—appointed by Council, 22 April)
	Mr Zile Yu MRSN (until April 2027—appointed by Council, 22 April)
Branch Representatives	
Hunter Branch	Emeritus Professor George Willis FRSN (until April 2028)
New England North West Branch	Professor Vicki Bitsika AM FRSN (until April 2027)
Southern Highlands Branch	Ms Ann Fieldhouse MRSN (until April 2027)
Western NSW Branch	To be advised (until April 2028)

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Honorary Doctorate awarded to Society Fellow Maria Kavallaris

The Society extends its warm congratulations to **Professor Maria Kavallaris AM FRSN FAHMS** on the award of an Honorary Doctorate from Aix-Marseille University.

Professor Kavallaris is the Founding Director of the Australian Centre for NanoMedicine at UNSW Sydney and Head of the Translational Cancer Nanomedicine Theme at the Children's

Cancer Institute.

Her honorary doctorate recognises her ground-breaking research and outstanding leadership in the field of cancer therapeutics.

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Society welcomes new Members and Fellows: April 2026

The Royal Society of New South Wales warmly welcomes 31 new members to the Society's ranks, with effect from 8 April 2025.

Fellows
Professor Marian Baird
Professor Jill Bennett
Judge Sharon Burchell
Professor Anthony Burke
Professor Dennis Del Favero
Professor Chreyl Jones
Professor Bradley Moggridge
Professor Timothy Stephens
Professor Martijn de Sterke

Biographical information about the new Fellows will be available on the Fellows pages of the website early in 2026.

Members
Ms Jane Cotter
Mr Alexander Dowthwaite
Mr Daniel Hart
Mr Paul Jeffery
Ms Yvonne I-Chen Hsu
Mr Noel Lambert
Dr Quentin Meyer
MS Renne Rimington O'Kane
Ms Arlene Tansey
Dr Hannah Schunker
Professor Lina Yao

Associate Members
Ms Melody Cork
Ms Chloe Kwan

Dr Adrian Lee
Dr Jiayan Liao
Ms Eilish McMaster
Dr Brandon Munn
Ms Isabelle Nicolas
Dr Yun Long Qiang
Mr Amir Tourani
Dr Christopher Whyte

The Society hopes that all new Members and Fellows will greatly benefit from their membership and looks forward to their active participation in the Society's activities and work.

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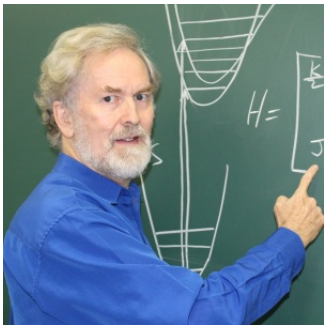
Events

1340th OGM and Open Lecture — 6 May 2026

Household Electricity Use and Investment



Professor Jeffrey Reimers FRSN FAA FRACI
Director, International Centre for Quantum and Molecular Structures, Department of Physics, Shanghai University
and
Honorary Associate, School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, University of Technology Sydney

Date: Wednesday, 6 May 2026, 6.00–7.30 pm AEST
Entry: No charge
Zoom webinar: Please click this link to join the webinar
All are welcome

LIVE STREAM

Please click here to join the Zoom webinar
at 6.00 pm AEST on Wed., 6 May

Business of the Meeting

The Agenda for the Ordinary General Meeting will be available on the Meetings page of the website.

Summary: Electricity production, transmission, use, and pricing in eastern states is very complex, with consumer reports indicating very poor community understanding of the basic features. In this presentation, a broad, holistic view is presented. The focus is on how users can save money and be environmentally friendly in their energy use, how to understand and optimise retailer plans and distributor tariffs, and how to optimise investment in household solar power, solar batteries, and electrical-vehicle technologies. Indeed, a strong connection is made between saving money and being environmentally friendly. A central aspect is understanding of the "spot price" and how that is used to stabilise the grid and hence provide the means by which energy

production can be transformed from coal/gas to renewables, as well its role in setting consumer costs and investment returns. Bring an electricity bill to discuss.

Jeff Reimers studied organic spectroscopy under Ian Ross and Gad Fischer before doing a PhD with Bob Watts on the structure, thermodynamics, and spectroscopy of water and ice. He then studied semiclassical quantum mechanics in the USA under Kent Wilson and Rick Heller, before returning to Australia to be an ARC Research Fellow from 1985 to 2010 at the University of Sydney and there as a professor until 2013. There, he collaborated extensively with Noel Hush and Max Crossley on problems involving electron transfer, molecular electronics, porphyrin chemistry, self-assembly, electronic-structure theory, and photosynthesis. In 2014, he moved to a joint appointment at the University of Technology Sydney and Shanghai University to set up a multi-disciplinary quantum research centre, himself focusing mostly on quantum chemistry, spectroscopy, nanophotonics, and molecular electronics. His work spans a wide range of applications, from solar energy conversion to electronic devices to the origins of consciousness. He has received the RACI Physical Chemistry Division Medal and the H.G. Smith Medal, the David Craig Medal of the Australian Academy of Science, and the 2025 Shanghai Gold Magnolia Medal; he is a Fellow of the RACI, the Royal Society of NSW, and the Australian Academy of Science.

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Pint of Science Festival — 18–20 May 2026

The mission of Pint of Science Australia is to elevate engagement with Australian research in a fun and inclusive way by providing a platform (primarily through a national festival and other science-engagement activities) that builds the public's appreciation of research and fosters high-quality science communication.

The Pint of Science Australia Festival is an annual event which, this year, runs from 18–20 May 2026 in 17 Australian cities, including Sydney, Newcastle and the Hunter Valley, the Central Coast, and the Blue Mountains in NSW. Tickets are $15.

Blue Mountains Events
In the Blue Mountains, there are events in Glenbrook and Katoomba:

- Cafe 2773, 19 Ross St, Glenbrook
    - 19 May: Pint @ Glenbrook
- Metropole Katoomba, 11-15 Gang Gang St, Katoomba

    - 20 May: Pint @ Katoomba

Hunter and Central Coast events
In Newcastle, the Hunter Valley and the Central Coast, there are events at:

- The Happy Wombat, 575 Hunter St, Newcastle
    - 18 May: Power to the People: Sparking Post-Coal Conversations
    - 19 May: The Good, the Drought, and the Ugly: Farming the Future
    - 20 May: Illuminating Health: Breakthroughs in Breast Cancer & Male Fertility
- Restaurant 2317, Marina, Level 1/2 Sunset Blvd, Soldiers Point
    - 19 May: Port Stephens: Water, Health and Our Sustainable Future
- Grainfed, 1/52 Young Street, Lambton
    - Small Things, Big Applications

Follow the links above for the location of the venues, times, and how to buy tickets.

Sydney events
In Sydney and nearby, there are events at:

- Botany View Hotel, 597 King St, Newtown
    - 18 May: Pint of Science @ Botany View Hotel, Newtown | 18 May
    - 19 May: Pint of Science @ Botany View Hotel, Newtown | 19 May
    - 20 May: Pint of Science @ Botany View Hotel, Newtown | 20 May
- The Commercial Hotel, 2 Hassall Street, Parramatta
    - 18 May: Pint of Science @ The Commercial Hotel, Parramatta | 18 May
- The Balmain Hotel, 72–76 Mullens Street, Balmain
    - 19 May: Pint of Science @ The Balmain Hotel, Balmain | 19 May
    - 20 May: Pint of Science @ The Balmain Hotel, Balmain | 20 May
- The Orchard Hotel, 455 Victoria Ave, Chatswood
    - 18 May: Pint of Science @ The Orchard Hotel, Chatswood | 18 May
    - 19 May: Pint of Science @ The Orchard Hotel, Chatswood | 19 May
    - 20 May: Pint of Science @ The Orchard Hotel, Chatswood | 20 May
- Hermann's Bar, Wentworth Building, cnr Butlin Ave and City Road, University of Sydney
    - 18 May: Pint of Science @ Hermann's Bar, University of Sydney | 18 May
    - 19 May: Pint of Science @ Hermann's Bar, University of Sydney | 19 May
    - 20 May: Pint of Science @ Hermann's Bar, University of Sydney | 20 May
- Coach and Horses Hotel, 147 Avoca Street, Randwick
    - 18 May: Pint of Science @ Coach & Horses Hotel, Randwick | 18 May
    - 19 May: Pint of Science @ Coach & Horses Hotel, Randwick | 19 May
    - 20 May: Pint of Science @ Coach & Horses Hotel, Randwick | 20 May

Follow the links above for the location of the venues, times, and how to buy tickets.

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Lunchtime series: Provocations & Inspirations—19 May 2026

Energy: Cost and Enabling Technologies

Tim Buckley
Founder of the public interest think tank, Climate Energy Finance

Date: Tuesday, 19 May 2026, 12.15 for 12.30 – 2.00 pm AEST
Venue: Union University and Schools Club, 25 Bent Street, Sydney (corner of Bent and Philip Streets)
Enquiries: by email to RSNSW Events
Registration: Registration is required before 2.00 pm AEDT on Thursday, 14 May 2026
Cost: $75 (RSNSW or UUSC members); $85 (non-members/guests). A warm meal and wine will be served.
Dress: Business Dress. To avoid embarrassment, please note that a jacket and tie are required. Denim, trainers and shoes with white soles are not permitted. Attendees not dressed appropriately may be refused entry by the Club.
Flyer: Downloadable from this link

REGISTER NOW

Please register before
200 pm AEST on Thursday, 14 May 2026

A Future Made in Australia (FMiA) is a major federal government program (announced in the 2024-25 Federal budget) that establishes a policy framework called the National Interest Framework (NIF) that imposes rigour on government decision-making on public investments, particularly those that need to attract large-scale private investment. The program will see investment of $22.7 billion over the next decade, focused on two major streams:

- Net zero transformation; and
- Economic security and resilience.

At the heart of this challenge is the availability and cost of energy, a challenge brought into particularly sharp focus recently by the war being waged in the Middle East.

Tim Buckley will talk to the accelerating global energy system transformation, with a focus on China's growing leadership role, particularly in light of the energy security and trade headwinds caused by the Trump administration, which has doubled down on climate science denialism, trade wars and fossil fuels. China leads the world in terms of research and development, manufacturing, domestic deployments and exports of all zero-emissions growth industries of the future. Climate Energy Finance (CEF) has also tracked China's growth in outbound foreign direct investment in cleantech, both in terms of renewables infrastructure and foreign manufacturing capacities, as a new geopolitical bridge to build China's international standing, even as the US undermines its own standing. China is also investing aggressively in upstream critical minerals and strategic metals mining, and upstream value-adding, creating a growing pressure on Australia's world-leading mining sector. Australia has made some strong progress under the current Federal government's embrace of electrification and decarbonisation, as it tries to reverse the decades-long deindustrialisation of our economy with its FMiA. But even as Australia seeks to pivot from our petrostate past to embrace the investment, employment and export opportunities for Australia as an electrostate, there are headwinds. The old fossil fuel incumbents will not go quietly! And even as Australia's two-way trade with China reached a record high of A$300bn in 2025, there are headwinds. Chinese investment into Australia over the

last 3 years is at a two-decade low. If Australia does not want to work with our #1 trade partner, we should not be surprised when China goes elsewhere, at our economic and trade cost.

Tim Buckley is the founder of Climate Energy Finance, an independent, non-partisan, and philanthropically funded Australian think tank established in 2022 that works *pro bono* in the public interest to accelerate the transition in Australia to net zero in line with the climate science.

CEF conducts research and analyses on the current strategic, financial and geopolitical issues that are shaping the global energy transition and their implications for the Australian economy, with a focus on the challenges and opportunities for Australian investments, industry and exports. This involves tracking and providing independent commentary on developments in China and other key trading partners in the Asia Pacific region, as well as advocating for stronger mutually beneficial collaboration with these partners. CEF also examines the convergence of global technology trends in power, transport, mining and industry in accelerating decarbonisation.

Tim has 35 years of financial market experience covering the Australian, Asian and global equity markets and is a highly influential energy finance commentator. He has written more than 100 reports on the global energy transition and the roles of finance and policy in accelerating critical decarbonisation trends.

Tim was previously the Australasian Director of the global Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, 2013–2021. Prior to this, he was a top-rated equity research analyst, including Head of Equity Research in Singapore at Deutsche Bank, Managing Director, Head of Equity Research at Citigroup for 17 years, Head of Institutional Equities at Shaw & Partners and co-Managing Director of Arkx Investment Management Pty Ltd, a global, listed clean energy investment start-up, jointly owned with Westpac.

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Southern Highlands Branch Meeting 2026-4 — 21 May 2026

Literary France: Susannah's Top Ten Places

Susannah Fullerton OAM FRSN
Author, Literary Lecturer, and Tour Leader

Date: Thursday, 21 May 2025, 6.30–7.30 pm AEST
Venue: Moss Vale Services Club, Cnr Argyle and Yarrawa Streets, Moss Vale NSW 2577
Entry: Members, $5; Non-members, $10 (Credit card payments only)
All are welcome

ENQUIRIES

by email to the
Southern Highlands Branch Chair

Summary: There's just so much to love about France – magnificent Paris, French wine and food, French style, superb art, and the glorious French countryside. But there's also its beautiful language and the works of its brilliant writers. France has had more winners of the Nobel Prize for Literature than any other nation. During the 19th century, some of its novelists changed the face of the novel, and its purpose – Balzac, Dumas, Flaubert, Hugo and Zola were amongst them. And the 20th century also produced remarkable personalities – Proust with his Madeleine, and 'enfant terrible' Arthur Rimbaud are two examples.

French writers were so often larger-than-life. They lived life to the full, with mistresses and lovers, enormous debts, lashings of French style, homes they couldn't afford, and banquets and cookbooks as accompaniments. This talk will introduce you to some of those intriguing characters, from George Sand to Marcel Proust. It will take you into their memorable residences – chateaux and manor houses, apartments, a seaside villa, and a windmill — but it will also take you to places connected with their fictional creations, such as a prison and a medical museum.

Most of us have been lucky enough to visit France. It's the most popular tourist destination in the world! This talk will hopefully bring back fabulous 'souvenirs' of your own travels, and will remind you of the glories of 'la belle France'.

Susannah Fullerton is a literary lecturer, tour leader and author. She has been President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia for 30 years and has written several books about Jane Austen. Susannah leads literary tours around the world for Australians Studying Abroad. Her most recent book, published by the Bodleian Library, Oxford, is 'Great Writers and the Cats who Owned Them'.

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Western NSW Branch Meeting 2026-2 — 27 May 2026

Staying ahead of viral threats — Host interactions shape pandemic preparedness

Distinguished Professor Jade Forwood
Biosecurity Program Lead
Gulbali Institute
Charles Sturt University

Date: Wednesday, 27 May 2026, 12.30–1.30 pm AEST
Venue: Live streaming
Registration: Please register through Humanitix
Entry: No charge
All are welcome

REGISTER NOW

Please register through Humanitix

Summary: Viruses are constantly evolving — but are we keeping pace?

Understanding how viruses interact with their hosts is central to predicting and responding to emerging infectious diseases.

Viruses are constantly evolving – and some have the capacity to evade immune defences. How we understand these processes will shape our ability to respond to future global health threats.

In this lecture, Professor Forwood explores how highly pathogenic viruses interact with and suppress the human immune system, and how these insights are informing the development of antivirals, vaccines and diagnostic tools. Drawing on advances in structural biology and virology, he will outline how researchers are working to stay ahead of emerging threats.

This is not only a scientific challenge, but one that sits at the intersection of biosecurity, preparedness and global coordination.

Jade Forwood is a structural virologist and Program Lead for Biosecurity at the Gulbali Institute at Charles Sturt University. He also directs THRIIVE, Australia's first regional innovation hub for virology and biosecurity, strengthening national capability in pandemic preparedness and workforce development.

Professor Forwood's research focuses on how viruses evade the human immune system and how this knowledge can be used to develop new antivirals and vaccines. His work has contributed to major advances in understanding viruses such as SARS, MERS, dengue and Nipah, and has led to the development of new therapeutic candidates now progressing through clinical trials.

With more than $57 million in research funding and extensive international collaborations, Professor Forwood is at the forefront of efforts to understand and respond to emerging infectious diseases – work that is increasingly critical in a world shaped by global health threats.

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New England North West Branch Meeting 2026-1 — 27 May 2026

One Health for a Changing World: Forests, Farms and Families

Professor David Durrheim
Director of Health Protection
Hunter New England Health, NSW

Panellists
Associate Professor Lorina Barker
Local, Community, and Oral History, UNE
Professor Susan Wilson
Environmental Pollution, UNE
Associate Professor Gal Winter
Biomedical Science (Nutrition), UNE
Associate Professor Jacqueline Epps
Rural Medicine, UNE
Professor Natkunam Ketheesan (Moderator)
Biomedical Science(Infection and Immunity), UNE

Date: Wednesday, 27 May 2026, 5.00–7.30 pm AEST
Venue: NOVA, 122 Faulkner Street, Armidale NSW 2350
Entry: No charge
Registration: Please register before 12.00 noon AEST on Tuesday, 26 May 2026
All are welcome

REGISTER NOW

Please click here to register before
12.00 none AEST on Tuesday, 26 May 2026

Summary: One Health recognises that human, animal, and environmental health are inseparable. Harm rarely travels in one direction — damage to a forest or a farm sets in motion a chain of consequences that ultimately reaches the family dinner table and the clinic waiting room. Disease, food security, and ecosystem resilience cannot be solved in isolation.

Breaking research silos means clinicians, ecologists, veterinarians, agriculturalists, and community voices working from a shared evidence base rather than parallel ones. For *Forests, Farms and Families*, this integration is not merely desirable — it is essential.

Drawing on real-world examples of locally important zoonotic diseases, Professor Durrheim will talk about growing a viable One Health Network in regional Australia. Panel members will further share how their own research is reshaping our understanding of One Health — not simply connecting existing dots, but redrawing the map of how we think about, and respond to, interconnected global health challenges.

Professor David Durrheim FACTM FAFPHM is Director of Health Protection at Hunter New England Health, New South Wales, Australia. His research interests span novel infectious disease surveillance, the control of zoonotic diseases, and strategies to reduce inequities in public health service delivery.

Professor Durrheim has authored over 400 peer-reviewed publications, as well as numerous scientific monographs and book chapters. His work in the One Health space has earned international recognition, particularly for his success in translating operational research into practical improvements in surveillance and service delivery for local public health programs. He has been instrumental in developing novel surveillance systems to detect and support responses to emerging infectious disease risks.

In 2021, Professor Durrheim was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his service to public health medicine and international health. In 2024, he was conferred the honour of Freeman of the City of Lake Macquarie in recognition of his outstanding contribution to public health and his dedication during the COVID-19 pandemic. He remains an outspoken advocate for equitable global access to effective public health measures.

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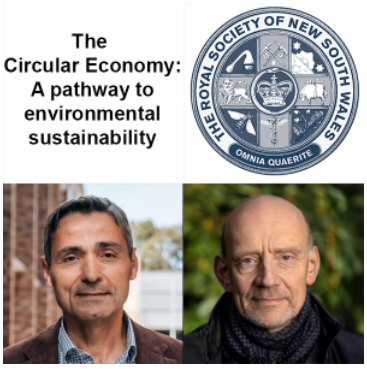
1341st OGM and Open Lecture — 10 June 2026

The Circular Economy: A pathway to environmental sustainability?



Professor Sami Kara FRSN FFCIRP FACATECH (1) and Professor Michael Hauschild (2)
(1) School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering UNSW Sydney
(2) Department of Environmental and Resource Engineering Technical University of Denmark

Date and Time: Wednesday, 10 June 2026, 6.00–7.30 pm AEST
Venue: Gallery Room, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW, Shakespeare Place, Sydney
Pre-meeting drinks: A cash bar will operate from 5.30 pm
Registration: Please register before Wednesday, 10 June at 2.00 pm AEST
Please note: credit card payments only (Visa and Mastercard)
Entry: OGM: Members, $20; Non-members, $30; Students, $0
All are welcome

REGISTER NOW

Please register before
Wednesday, 10 June at 2.00 pm AEST

OGM Agenda: The Agenda for this meeting will be available from the Meetings Page of the website.

Summary: The world's population, growing in concert with an ever-increasing average affluence, leads to accelerated rates in the consumption of resources and the production of wastes and associated environmental impact. In large measure, this situation is due to our existing industrial processes and supporting global economic system that are operated in a linear sequence: Extraction, Production, Consumption, and Disposal (or 'Take-Make-Use-Dispose'). This sequence and our global system rely on a paradigm where there is infinite resource availability. It is increasingly clear that this linear sequence is not sustainable, i.e., capable of being maintained in perpetuity. A way to address this complex issue is to aim to close material flows throughout our society through the introduction of what is commonly known as the Circular Economy (CE).

The circular economy has been widely acclaimed with the potential to disrupt the current linear economy of production, consumption, and waste generation by encouraging system innovation that designs out waste, increases resource efficiency, keeps materials in use, and decouples growth from the consumption of finite resources—thereby achieving a healthier balance between the economy, the environment, and society. In these discussions, 'sustainability' has often been used synonymously with CE. Although there is a relationship between sustainability and CE, these are different concepts, and the assumption that circularity is inherently sustainable has yet to be successfully demonstrated.

In this panel discussion, presenters and panel members will discuss the questions of:

- What does it mean to be environmentally sustainable in absolute terms?
- How far is it possible for us as a society to minimise resource and energy consumption while still meeting the needs of today and the future generations?

- At the same time, is it possible for us to minimise our environmental footprint, limit our global temperature rise to 1.5 °C, and reach net zero emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050?

Sami Kara is a professor of sustainable manufacturing and life cycle engineering at UNSW Sydney. He has a professional background of more than 30 years in industry, research, and tertiary education, including several engineering and management positions in manufacturing companies in Australia and around the world. His research interests are in developing technology solutions with a life cycle view by using circular economy strategies to decarbonise and reduce the environmental impact of manufacturing industries while helping them to create value. He has authored more than 300 peer-reviewed scientific publications.

Professor Kara is an elected fellow of the International Academy of Production Engineering (CIRP), the Royal Society of New South Wales, the UNSW Scientia Education Academy, the International Academy of Engineering and Technology (AET), and the German National Academy of Science and Engineering (ACATECH).

Michael Z. Hauschild is a professor in quantitative assessment of sustainability at the Technical University of Denmark (DTU), where he leads the DTU Centre on Absolute Sustainability. He has worked on the development of methods for sustainability assessment of products and technologies for 30 years and has served as chair on working groups under UNEP, developing the scientific consensus model USEtox for assessment of chemical impacts on health and environment. He has acted as a consultant to the European Commission, creating the groundwork for the Commission's standard methodology for life cycle assessment (LCA) of products and systems. In 2018, he received the SETAC Europe Lifetime Achievement in LCA Award. He has authored or co-authored more than 260 peer-reviewed scientific publications and a leading textbook on Life Cycle Assessment: Theory and Practice, with more than 150,000 downloads.

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Ideas@theHouse: 16 June 2026

Ideas@theHouse

presented by

Her Excellency the Honourable
Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of NSW

City Futures: from challenge to opportunity – by design

Leone Lorrimer LFRAIA
Architect

Date: Tuesday, 16 June 2026, 6.30 – 8.00 pm AEST
Venue: Face-to-face (by invitation for Society members) and live streaming from Government House, Sydney
Entry: No charge
Registration: Information to follow

Summary: ‘Unprecedented’ and ‘crisis’ are so frequently used that the challenges appear overwhelming.

The challenges are well known. There are crises in housing, cost of living, mental health, healthcare and aged care, not to mention climate change, technology and AI. There is an ever-widening gap in wealth, education and standards of living.

What roles do city planning, urban design and architecture play in delivering solutions?

Although the scale of the challenge is huge, state government, local government and the private sector working together can deliver successful solutions.

Certainty, resulting from long-term, visionary city planning, supplemented by urban design guidelines, is the responsibility of government. Many of the initial city-scale steps have been taken by government, but reliance on the private sector and variable market forces is not enough to close the housing gap.

History shows us that in crises, governments have delivered housing at large scale, but we cannot afford to sprawl and crawl model of the past. A large-scale program is required to build new affordable housing near hospitals, emergency services, schools and aged care, in locations that are not economically viable for the private sector. The high land value requires greater density, supported by quality urban design and placemaking.

Affordable housing needs to be near new jobs that support future industries, with good public transport, schools and green space. This requires visionary city-scale master planning, combined with economic incentives and a partnership between state and local government.

To deliver such a huge volume of housing, with labour and material shortages limiting capacity and driving up costs, innovative construction methods, such as prefabrication, are required. Smaller, less expensive homes that meet all the householders’ needs can result from good design. The construction of energy-efficient homes reduces ongoing energy bills.

Good design also improves the quality of city living in walkable, mixed-use neighbourhoods. Every detail is considered, from the light, air and views, circulation, proximity of green space, water reticulation, playground design, materials and public art. Good design supports physical and mental health and underpins the ultimate goal of delivering social and economic equity.

Leone Lorrimer is a distinguished Australian architect and executive leader whose four-decade career has shaped major design practices and city-scale projects across Australia, the UK and the Middle East. Born in Sydney, she studied architecture in Sydney and London, graduating with Honours in 1983.

Returning to Australia, she held Directorships at Stephenson & Turner, then Woods Bagot, where she co-founded the Sydney studio and became a defining force in its global expansion over the

next two decades. Her international portfolio includes leadership roles on major developments such as the Qatar Science and Technology Park, and the Louvre, Guggenheim and Zayed National Museums in Abu Dhabi.

Lorrimer later served as National Practice Leader at GHD Design and has been recognised as a Life Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects, an Indesign Luminary and one of Australia's 100 Women of Influence. She continues to contribute as a design awards juror, reviewer, specialist advisor and advocate for design excellence and gender equity in the profession. She is also a keen sailor and Board Member of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club.

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Southern Highlands Branch Meeting 2026-5 — 19 June 2026

Roaming Reptiles of the Eocene

Dr Michael Stein
Palaeoscientist
Archer Palaeontology Laboratory
UNSW Sydney

Date: Thursday, 19 June 2026, 6.30–7.30 pm AEST
Venue: RSL Mittagong, Carrington Room
Entry: Members, $5; Non-members, $10 (please note: cashless payments only)
All are welcome

ENQUIRIES

by email to the Southern Highlands Branch Chair

Summary: What does it take to leave behind a lucrative position and chance new possibilities—Time? Opportunity? Desperation? Consider crocodiles, cited often as classic 'living fossils' in popular science media. But Australian–New Zealand palaeontology is beginning to reveal the labyrinthine extent of crocodile evolution in the Southern hemisphere post K–Pg, along with our region's role in key global interchanges. In the middle of this, Australia's unique branch began to make a seemingly un-crocodilian push back onto the land. Curious investigators must contend, however, with our continent's notorious bias against complete body fossils, encouraging a multi-disciplinary approach.

Dr Michael Stein is a palaeoscientist with the Archer Palaeontology Laboratory at the University of New South Wales. Both his PhD (2019) and current research with UNSW focus on the remarkable crocodile fauna preserved at the Riversleigh World Heritage Area, along with crocodile paleo-communities across northern to central Australia. This research incorporates studies of locomotory evolution, biomechanics, geometric morphometrics and histology in pursuit of a better understanding of ecomorphological plasticity, particularly niche diversification among predatory hunting ecologies and the capacity of lineages to reposition in trophic webs.

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Branch and Program Reports

Report from the Activities with Impact Program

The Society provides an active program of events in Sydney and through its Hunter, New England North West, Southern Highlands, and Western NSW branches. With events planned and held recently by the branches reported separately in this Bulletin, this section focuses on the Master Plan's *Activities with Impact* program and events held in Sydney.

ROYAL SOCIETY NEW SOUTH WALES

Activities with Impact

Presentation Report: Provocations & Inspirations—24 March 2026

Mr Alex Dronoff, Chair of the Hunter Hydrogen Taskforce and former Chief Executive Officer of Fichtner Australia, delivered the sixth in the Society's lunchtime series of Provocations and Inspirations on the topic of 'The Renewable Hydrogen Journey 2015–2026 and Opportunities Beyond' to an audience of approximately 40 members of the Society and the Union, University and Schools Club (UUSC) at the UUSC on Tuesday, 24 March 2026. This session was the first in this year's lunchtime talk on the theme of 'A Future made in Australia.'

Alex Dronoff's presentation on renewable hydrogen in Australia was framed as a personal 'journey'. Alex referred to his background with Shell, BOC and Linde and argued the case for 'why renewable hydrogen and why Australia', linking it to COP21 commitments and Australia's resource advantages (sun, wind), a stable political system, plus decarbonisation opportunities in steel, fertiliser/ammonia and other industries.

His talk reviewed milestones, including the CSIRO 2018 hydrogen roadmap and subsequent national strategy work, and then shifted to what has happened since the 2021 hydrogen 'euphoria.' Alex discussed the contraction in project numbers and credibility, citing major companies (e.g., Shell and BP) stepping back, policy shifts affecting momentum, and the influence of incentives such as the US Inflation Reduction Act and Australia's subsequent response.

A major focus of current activity is Australia's Hydrogen Headstart program (about $2B), which Alex described as providing operational support to bridge the cost gap between current production costs (around $6/kg) and customers' willingness to pay (around $2/kg). The speaker highlighted a few more credible projects moving forward (including large-scale export proposals), while emphasising that high electricity and electrolyser costs remain key barriers to scaling for the industry. A lively Q&A session followed.

A gallery of images from the occasion is available for viewing and downloading, and a recording of this presentation is available on our YouTube channel.

Lindsay Botten Bulletin Editor

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Visits Program Report — 9 April 2026

Sydney Observatory

Members of the Society, together with family and friends, were warmly welcomed to the Sydney Observatory by Daniel Suricic, Visitor Experience Manager, and four specialist guides. The guides shared a wealth of knowledge, offering insights into the Observatory's history, operations, and their broader work within the Powerhouse group. Fellows of the Society, Robert Clancy and Toner Stevenson, also contributed valuable commentary drawn from their long-standing interest in the Observatory and its people.

Before the tour commenced, participants were able to appreciate the setting of Observatory Hill. Despite the flanking CBD high-rise, the site remains elevated enough to provide striking views of the city and harbour. The evening outlook prompted reflection on how the same vistas might have appeared to the Observatory's early builders and staff through the decades.

The visit highlighted the long and close relationship between the Sydney Observatory and the Royal Society of NSW, including their shared origins. Attention was given to Henry Chamberlain Russell, Government Astronomer and four-time President of the Society, whose leadership shaped the Observatory's involvement in major international scientific endeavours. These included observations of the 1874 Transit of Venus, participation in the Carte du Ciel and the achievements of the Astrographic Catalogue project.

Participants explored the Observatory's multiple roles over time, including its function as both a scientific workplace and the residence of the Government Astronomer and his family. The group also learned about Governor King's early plans to construct a substantial hexagonal military fort on the site, including a bombardment shelter. The Signal Master's Cottage provided insight into early harbour communications, including a demonstration of the plague flag and the procedures used to direct ships to quarantine.

The tour included a visit to the meteorite display, featuring material from the Henbury crater field, alongside a discussion of a First Nations oral account describing a 'fire devil' impact approximately 4,200 years ago. Telescope viewing followed and included observations of the Jewel Box star cluster, Jupiter's belts and moons, and the Balmain Clocktower, all of which were keenly enjoyed.

The evening concluded with an examination of the East Dome and the Observatory's role in the Carte du Ciel and subsequent Astrographic Catalogue. Although the original goal of mapping stars down to 14th magnitude proved overly ambitious, the revised program was a landmark

scientific achievement. Australian observatories covered approximately 18 per cent of the sky, with Sydney responsible for a particularly dense region of the southern hemisphere, cataloguing around 750,000 stars.

The project required new telescopes and innovative working methods and marked an important entry point for women into observatory employment, although their work was often segregated. Participants learned about the scale of the undertaking, including the triple measurement of each star, the storage of approximately 22,000 glass plates, and recent improvements such as lift access enabling broader community engagement.

The Royal Society of NSW extends its sincere thanks to the Powerhouse team for generously sharing their expertise and stories, bringing the history of the Sydney Observatory vividly to life and enriching the experience for all who attended.

DEbra Perik
Co-organiser, RSNSW Visits Program

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Presentation Report: 1339th OGM & Open Lecture—8 April 2026

An audience of over 45 people who attended the Society's 1339th Ordinary General Meeting at the State Library of NSW on 8 April 2026 enjoyed a enlightening and controversial presentation, '[A drone by any other name]', from **Dr Catherine Ball**, scientific futurist, tech influencer, and robotics expert, and **Simon Masters**, who is the Deputy Director of InnovateUK's Future Flight program, on the uptake of drone technology in Australia and the UK. Simon Masters was unable to attend in person due to flight difficulties associated with the war in the Middle East. Accordingly, Catherine Ball led the presentation and the Q&A, with Simon Masters contributing his experiences through a recording made prior to the event.

In the talk, they discussed how 'drones' are best understood as a broad set of robotic, often autonomous systems ("physical AI") that can operate in air, sea, or on land, spanning consumer photography,scommercial servicss, and defence-linked technologies. Catherine Ball described how labels and politics have shaped funding and attention, with the term robotics 'AI' opening doors that the word 'drones' did not.

Catherine Ball began by recounting her 2012 work consulting for offshore oil and gas operations in Western Australia, where conventional surveying methods (boats, low-level planes, helicopters, satellites) were unsafe, expensive, or ineffective due to extreme heat, wind, and persistent cloud cover. She helped deploy long-range Aerosonde uncrewed aircraft using

satellite communications to capture high-resolution environmental data for mangroves, coastal erosion, infrastructure, and marine wildlife, including turtle nesting patterns (with species identification) and invasive species detection. Early operational lessons included basic but costly mistakes (e.g., learning not to trust autofocus) and the heavy computing burden of early photogrammetry workflows. Despite world-first outcomes and awards, confidentiality restrictions limited publication and broader impact. She argued that Australia often develops innovations but fails to sustain them, citing Aerosonde's sale to a US defence company.

Simon Masters followed up, outlining the UK's Future Flight Challenge (launched in 2019), a £300m program designed to enable a 'third revolution in aviation' across drones, advanced air mobility, and low-emission propulsion. He emphasised ecosystem-building—regulation, public acceptance, skills, and partnerships—so that technology wasn't just 'shiny toys' that nobody can use. Although the UK has made progress and backed projects like medical logistics and Antarctic research, large-scale commercial drone operations remain limited due to regulatory pace, investment hesitation, and the need for launch customers.

Catherine Ball then closed their presentation by contrasting Australia's early lead with fragmented strategy, underused test sites, uneven funding, and missed opportunities, while noting successes (e.g., Google Wing deliveries, CASA's sub-2kg deregulation) and the growing importance of counter-drone systems and emerging flying taxi/eVTOL trends. A lively Q&A session then followed.

A video recording of the presentation and Q&A session is now available on the Society's YouTube channel, while a collection of images from the occasion is also available for viewing and downloading.

Lindsay Botten
Bulletin Editor

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Southern Highlands Branch Report

Presentation Report— 16 April 2026

A tale of two sites: tale of two sites:
Excavating at Pella in Jordan and Zagora in Greece

Dr Paul Donnelly
Director, Exhibitions and Collections
Chau Chak Wing Museum
University of Sydney

Royal Society New South Wales Southern Highlands

Dr Paul Donnelly describes archaeology as a humanising discipline that emphasises the commonalities and connectiveness of human beings despite seemingly disparate origins over vast stretches of geography. This excellent lecture was a fine example of Donnelly's description as he filled the next hour with extraordinary double-screen images of his research activities with his students over many seasons at the sites of Pella in Jordan and Zagora in Greece. The audience watched in fascination as the hour ticked by.

Paul stated at the outset the strange but true situation that, in fact, destruction is the friend of archeology! For example, earthquakes at or near a study site often do extraordinary damage, which he described as much a blessing as a curse. This comes as a shock to most listeners, but is readily understood when audiences perceive that although huge damage may have been brought about by a quake, access to deeper layers is often enabled. This allows the 'dig' to uncover previously unavailable data from earlier centuries of society and culture. Paul emphasised that the processes and studies of archaeology compensate for these destructive events by their meticulous record-keeping of layer measurements. This is an extraordinarily difficult and time-consuming process in all archaeological work, but it provides a wonderful record of past times and events for all following generations.

Paul was asked the question of what life was like living in the 'dig house' during a dig. He responded with love and enthusiasm for the long dig experiences he has enjoyed over the years, and which still play a huge part in his life. He described his enjoyment of sharing the expeditionary experience with friends and colleagues over many years. Paul had only recently returned from this year's dig in time to deliver this lecture. He also spoke of his special love for Pella in Jordan, a spectacular site in close proximity to other places such as Jerash and Petra, as well as cities such as Damascus and Istanbul. Incidentally, audience members speaking to him after the lecture could not help commenting on the beautiful tie he was wearing for the lecture – it was a stunning but subtle creation from Damascus! What a lecture!

Anne Wood FRSN
Chair, RSNSW Southern Highlands Branch

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The Society and Social Media

The Society's presence on our social media channels—Facebook, LinkedIn, X/Twitter and YouTube—is engaging an increasing following, and we continue to build our repository of events on YouTube.

Our YouTube channel now has over 1,650 subscribers, while the 238 full-length videos and 'shorts' that are online have received almost 197,000 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 encourage your friends, colleagues and members of your networks to do

so.

YouTube recordings of recent events

All online presentations and all face-to-face presentations held in Sydney and by the Hunter, New England North West, and Western NSW Branches are recorded and made available on the Society's YouTube channel. These can be accessed directly from our YouTube channel or the Presentations page of the RSNSW website.

For convenience, the video links below provide access to current recordings and recent popular recordings. We hope that these will be of interest to members.

YouTube recording of the presentation from the 1339th Ordinary General Meeting (8 April 2026) on *A drone by any other name*, delivered by Dr Catherine Ball, scientific futurist, tech influencer, and robotics expert, and Simon Masters, Deputy Director of the InnovateUK Future Flight program. A summary of the lecture and a brief biography of the presenter are available from the online event notice.

YouTube recording of the presentation from the sixth meeting of the Society's Provocations and Inspirations lunchtime series held at the Union, University, and Schools Club in Sydney (24 March 2025), at which Alex Dronoff, Chair of the Hunter Hydrogen Taskforce and former CEO of Fichtner Australia, spoke on *The Renewable Hydrogen Journey 2015–2026 and Opportunities Beyond*. A summary of the presentation and a brief biography of the presenter are available from the online event notice.

YouTube recording of the presentation from the Western NSW Branch Meeting 2026-1 of the Royal Society of NSW (25 March 2026) on *The illusion of friendship: Why generative AI demands unprecedented ethical vigilance*, by Professor Zahid Islam FRSN, Professor of Computer Science and Director, AI and Cyber Futures Centre at Charles Sturt University. A summary of the presentation and brief biographies of the presenters and panellists are available from the online event notice.

YouTube recording of the presentation from the Hunter Branch Meeting 2026-1 of the Royal Society of NSW (19 March 2026) on *Observing the Faint Universe with the Legacy Survey of Space and Time*, by Professor Sarah Brough FRSN FASA, Head, School of

Physics, UNSW Sydney. A summary of the presentation and brief biographies of the presenters and panellists are available from the online event notice.

YouTube recording of the presentation from the 12 March 2026 Ideas@theHouse titled '*Navigating Strategic Uncertainty: Space, Cyber and National Support in a Fractured World*', delivered by Lieutenant General Susan Coyle AM CSC DSM, Chief of Joint Capabilities, Australian Defence Force. The online event notice provides a summary of the lecture and the presenter's biography.

A compilation of offline recordings made by the winners of the RSNSW 2025 Awards for Postgraduate Students and Early Career Researchers speaking on their research. The presentation ceremony, at which each of the award winners spoke and was interviewed by Robyn Williams AO FRSN FAA, host of the ABC Science Show, was kindly hosted by the University of Sydney on the evening of Monday, 9 March 2026. Those appearing in the video include Dr Yunlong Qian (University of Sydney), winner of the RSNSW Jak Kelly Award; Bicentennial Scholarship winners: Ms Eilish McMaster (University of Sydney), Mr Amir Tourani, (Western Sydney University), and Mr Christopher Whyte University of Sydney); and Bicentennial Early Career Research and Service Citation winners: Dr Adrian

Lee (Westmead Institute for Medical Research), Dr Jiayan Liao (niversity of Technology Sydney), and Dr Brandon Munn (University of Sydney). The online event notice provides a summary of each of the presentations and of the presenters' biographies

YouTube recording of the presentation from the 1338th Ordinary General Meeting (11 February 2026) on *How many Australians should there be?*, delivered by Dr Abul Rizvi PSM FRSN, former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Immigration and now an expert commentator on such matters. A summary of the lecture and a brief biography of the presenter are available from the online event notice.

YouTube playlist of recordings of the RSNSW and Learned Academies 2025 Forum on 'AI: The Hope and The Hype'. A brochure describing the day's program and listing biographies of the panellists and presenters is available from the preceding link.

Edited by: Lindsay Botten FRSN, Vice-President, Royal Society of New South Wales