



The Bulletin 377

The Royal Society of New South Wales

ABN 76 470 896 415

ISSN 1039-1843

May 2014

Future Events

Wednesday 2 July 2014

**Cocktail Party followed by
1222nd Ordinary General Meeting
What Causes MS?**

Speaker:

Professor Graeme Stewart
*Union, University & Schools Club
25 Bent St, Sydney
5:30 for 6:00 pm*

Wednesday 6 August 2014

**1222nd Ordinary General Meeting
Science education and the role of the
Australian Academy of Science**

Speaker:

Emeritus Scientia Professor
Eugenie Lumbers FAA FRSN
*Union, University & Schools Club
25 Bent St, Sydney
6:00 for 6:30 pm*

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS BRANCH

Thursday 17 July 2014

**Sustainable Iron and Steel Making
Delivered by:**

Professor Veena Sahajwalla
Centre for Sustainable Materials,
Research And Technology University
NSW
*The Performing Arts Centre,
Chevalier College, Bowral
6:30pm*

For more upcoming events see website
www.royalsoc.org.au

Patron of The Royal Society of NSW
Her Excellency Professor Marie
Bashir AC CVO Governor of NSW

Wednesday 2 July

What Causes MS?

Professor Graeme Stewart AM

**Join the Society for a special cocktail party
followed by the 122nd Ordinary General Meeting**

*Union, University & Schools Club
25 Bent St, Sydney
5:30 for 6:00 pm*



From the President

The annual dinner, held on Wednesday 7 May, was an outstanding success! We had more than one hundred guests in attendance to take part in the awards presentation and the Distinguished Fellow's Lecture. The meeting commenced with the presentation of eleven fellowship certificates to newly elected fellows. The Society's 2013 awards (the Walter Burfitt Prize, the James Cook Medal, the Edgeworth David Medal and the Clarke Medal) were presented, followed by the 2014 Distinguished Fellows lecture, to be delivered this year by Professor Barry Jones AO Dist FRSN. Four of the Society's Distinguished Fellows were in attendance and a number of notable guests attended to hear Barry Jones' lecture.

The events for the second half of the year will soon be underway – the number of the Society's named lectures will be presented and the Awards Committee will start deliberations for the 2014 awards.

The Council is intending to start planning events with a much longer future horizon. This will improve the quality of events and will give members the opportunity to plan further forward. We also anticipate that this will facilitate the engagement with other like-minded organisations in fitting in with the events that they might have planned.

As I mentioned last month, we are very pleased by the rapid uptake of the new Fellow membership category. If you meet the criteria for Fellowship (as I know many of our members do), please consider upgrading to Fellowship. (The criteria for Fellowship may be found in the Rules and By-Laws – see the membership page on the Society's website for further information.)

If there are any issues you would like to raise with me, I am easily contacted by e-mail at president@royalsoc.org.au and would like to hear from you.

Donald Hector

Photo Gallery



Clockwise from left:

Donald Hector, Peter Doherty, Dame Marie Bashir, Brynn Hibbert

Fellows of the Society with President Dr Donald Hector

Donald Hector with 2013 award winners David Wilson, Brien Holden and Michelle Simmons

Brien Jones

Barry Jones AO

Southern Highlands Branch

Report of May Meeting 2014

Baroque & the Brain Wave: can music help in dementia care?

Doctor Christian Heim

B.Med(Hons), B.Mus, MMus, PhD(Syd), FRANZCP

Doctor Christian Heim walked into the auditorium of Chevalier College Performing Arts Centre to be greeted by a large audience of 115 people. He is currently a psychiatrist in private practice in Brisbane. Previously as a lecturer in Music, he held positions at both the University of Wollongong and the University of Newcastle. He has studied music composition with Peter Sculthorpe and also in Vienna, Paris and New York.

This lecture specifically focused on Dr Heim's recently published studies exploring how Baroque music may be beneficial to the care of people suffering from dementia. What he has done is to take this music from the late 17th century through to the mid 18th century and explore its therapeutic use in dementia patients with the aim of producing more calming brainwaves. As he spoke of the characteristics of Baroque music which made it particularly suitable for these studies, he sat at the grand piano on stage, and clearly demonstrated these desirable musical features in a beautiful recital.

He played the music of Beethoven, Mahler and even Elton John to describe how these composers were able to move listener emotions, and to do that, how they moved the listener from one

emotion to another. These types of music have the listener anticipating resolutions so that tension buildup and tension relief alternate. In contrast, as he played a lovely selection of Baroque music, he was vividly able to demonstrate that a composition such as Bach's Sheep may Safely Graze strives to keep the listener in one state of mood, one state of the soul, and to keep the listener there for as long as it could.

Dr Heim emphasized that there was a difference between what his experiments did, and what music therapy is. Music therapy is a highly developed form of therapy, which uses one therapist and one patient, normally for an hour or more at a time. What he had introduced in his research studies was the modification of the whole environment for everybody there. It was not music therapy as such.

In describing his research work at a nursing home in Newcastle, Dr Heim told of his observations of patients with long-standing progressive dementia as their environment was modified by the introduction of carefully chosen music. He found that a number of the residents showed marked changes in their agitation level, their wandering behaviour, and their focusing on tasks. They had less distraction, less agitation

and often less verbalization so that verbal abuse towards staff and other patients was reduced. That particular nursing home has found it worthwhile to introduce a Baroque music regime as part of their everyday routine.

It happened that on the evening of the lecture, there was a full moon brilliant in the Southern Highland sky. Dr Heim said that many practitioners in psychiatry believe that a full moon can have an effect on a person's behavior, as demonstrated by the attendances at hospitals at these times. From a factual point of view, of all studies done on the full moon effect, 75% of studies found there was no such effect, while 25% found that it existed.

He compared findings such as these with his own findings on the effect of Baroque music on dementia patients, where there are so many variables, and much subjectivity. His conclusions are that Baroque music has a definite role to play in the care of dementia patients, even though the process by which it works might never be known. He added that it is still not known how anti-depressants work on the brain.

Anne Wood

Contact your office bearers

Dr Donald Hector President	02 9484 9007	Em. Prof Heinrich Hora Vice President	02 4627 7769
Mr John R Hardie Vice President	02 9036 5282	Em. Prof D. Brynn Hibbert Vice President	02 9398 9134
Mr Colin Bradley Hon. Secretary	0421 478 670	Prof. Michael Burton Hon. Secretary (Editorial)	02 9036 5282
Mr Shakti Ram Hon. Treasurer	02 9036 5282	Dr Frederick Osman	0418 444 477
Mr Brendon Hyde	02 9498 3520	Mr Hub Regtop (SHB rep)	02 4872 4713
Prof Richard Banati	0408 121 362	Mr David Beale	02 9036 5282
Em. Prof Roy MacLeod	02 9036 5282	Ms Margaret Cameron	
Dr Ragbir Bhathal		Dr Erik Aslaksen	
Ms Judith Wheeldon			

The Bulletin is issued monthly by the Royal Society of New South Wales

121 Darlington Rd, Building H47, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY NSW 2006 Australia

Office hours: 11:00am - 4:00pm Mon - Wed and Fridays. www.facebook.com/royalsoc

Executive Officer: Emma Dallas t: 02 9036 5282 e: royalsoc@royalsoc.org.au w: www.royalsoc.org.au