



## President's Report 2015-16

I am pleased to report on the Society's activities for the year. The committee has organised a varied and interesting program of events, attracting a wide variety of participants. Unfortunately, not all of these have been fully funded, and the Branch has recorded a deficit for the year. While our balance-sheet position is sound, the incoming committee will need to carefully monitor financial arrangements for its program of events.

### *Activities*

The objective of the annual policy forum is to provide a focus on current policy issues. This year's event, which attracted eminent speakers and discussants on the sustainability of Tasmania's health system, was poorly attended. The incoming committee is committed to re-thinking the role of the forum with a view to making it more attractive to a wider audience.

A number of our events involved partnership with other organisations – the TSBE at the University of Tasmania, and the Institute for the Study of Social Change. We are also grateful to sponsors for a number of events, including HESTA, the Department of State Growth, and the Australasian College of Health Services Management. The committee hopes to build on these partnerships, and to explore ways in which the range of partnerships and sponsorships can be expanded.

Date	Event
12 July	AGM Dr Richard Denniss, Australia Institute
30 September	Dr Nils-Axel Braathen, OECD: 'The Use of Economic Instruments for Environmental Policy in OECD Countries'
16 October	Tasmanian Economic Forum: 'Tasmania's Health System – Healthy or Headache' Dr Roscoe Taylor, formerly Director of Public Health, Tasmania Dr Amanda Neil, Menzies Institute, UTAS Dr Stephen Duckett, Health Program Director, Grattan Institute Martyn Goddard, Policy analyst John Kirwan, formerly COE of Tasmanian Health Organisation – North Dr Rob Grenfell, National Medical Director, BUPA Prof Haydn Walters, formerly Clinical Chief of Medicine, Royal Hobart Hospital
13 November	Dr Andrew Leigh MP: Book Launch - The Luck of Politics
3 December	Giblin Lecture: Professor Jacob Goeree, University of Technology Sydney: 'Market Design – Creating Better Institutions'
10 December	Christmas wine tasting quiz
23 February	Tom Rosewall, Reserve Bank of Australia: 'Overview of Current Conditions'
31 March	Phillip Harrington, Pitt and Sherry: 'Optimal Responses to Tasmania's Energy Shortage'
6 April	Dr Chris Kent, Reserve Bank of Australia: 'Forecasting at the Reserve Bank'
15 April	ESA Eminent Speaker, Professor Mary Morgan, London School of Economics: 'The Role of Numbers in Re-Shaping Economies'
18 May	AGM Martin Wallace, formerly Secretary, Department of Treasury and Finance: 'Reflections on Tasmanian Economic Policy and Other Matters'

Consistent with its mandate to promote economics in the wider community, the Society continues to sponsor prizes at the University and senior colleges. I would like to thank Alison Watt for supporting the organisation of prizes. The prize winners for 2015 were:

Hutchins School:	Harshvardhan Makaria
Elizabeth College:	Gabrielle Fracalossi, Llewellyn Ross, Yizhen Wang
First-year Economics, UTAS:	Connie Beswick
Second-year Economics, UTAS:	Rose Mackie
Third-year Economics, UTAS:	Ashlee Jensen
Jenny Milne Prize, UTAS:	Kate Fernandez

The Economic Society of Australia is a federation of state branches, with Central Council playing a leading role at the national level. This year Central Council has introduced a number of initiatives designed to promote the Society's role in public debate. The first is the National Economic Panel comprising around 50 leading Australian economists whose views are polled on economic or policy-related propositions each month.

The Tasmanian branch nominated six of our local members to the Panel:

Mardi Dungey  
Saul Eslake  
Rana Roy  
Hugh Sibly  
John Tisdell  
Joaquin Vespignani

Results for each of the polls, together with a summary article, can be found at <http://esacentral.org.au/>

Central Council has also worked to promote the standing of its two journals – the *Economic Record* and *Economic Papers* – and to increase their contribution to Australian applied work. To this end, it will offer a \$10,000 prize every two years, known as the Trevor Swan prize, for the most significant contribution to Australian economic policy. This year my role on Central Council was to re-negotiate the journals contract with Wiley publishers, and they have also committed to implement initiatives which will enhance the profile of the Society's two journals.

### *Committee*

The activities of the Society would not be possible without the hard work of the volunteers on your committee. I am especially appreciative of their efforts throughout the year. The executive (Alexis Wadsley, Alecia Hawkes, Laura Searle) have been exceptionally supportive in what has been a very busy year and they have my special thanks. Todd Newett battled with complexities of the ESA membership system – well done. The site <http://esatas.org.au/> is now the contact point for membership, registration for events, and online journals access for branch members and subscribers. Several members of the committee have served for a number of years providing a valuable degree of continuity. I hope it continues! We are also grateful to the Department of

Treasury and Finance for their generosity in providing the Murray Room for committee meetings and monthly events.

The committee, which met regularly, comprised Graeme Wells (President), Alexis Wadsley (Vice President), Alecia Hawkes (Secretary), Laura Searle (Treasurer), Paul Blacklow, Mardi Dungey, Michael Jayalitaka, Kyle Lowe, Todd Newett, Dugald Tinch, Joaquin Vespignani, and Alison Watt.

Graeme Wells

**President**