

2026 Term 3 Smorgasbord of Talks

What	A series of interesting, stimulating talks on a wide variety of topics, with plenty of opportunity to discuss and ask questions, and a tea-break for socialising.
When	10.00 – 12.15 Wednesdays, weekly
Where	Enjoy.Church , 8 Mary St, next to the Port Hole Cafe (carpark at rear)
Leader	Elaine Reeves
Note	Please book if you are likely to attend <u>any</u> talks. You don't need to attend every week, and you don't need to tell us in advance before coming to any session.
16 Sept	Foreign affairs – Sue Morley In 1985, Susan flew into a war zone in Baghdad, Iraq to take up a job as Communicator in the Australian Embassy. Behind secure vault doors, she was responsible for all communications and their decryption. Then on to the capital of Syria, Damascus, which was everything her childhood imagination had envisaged – ancient streets teeming with life, fragrant cardamon roasted coffee, caravanserais, spice sellers and gleaming jewels. On weekends she travelled to Crusader castles, bought Persian carpets and wandered the souks. In downtime during her four-year tour of duty, she fitted in trips to Babylon, Kurdistan, Istanbul, Kenya and Tanzania.
23 Sept	Plan for when life hits home - Sophie Banagh and Ewan Blyth Most of us arrive at the big transitions without a plan – a downsize, a move into care, an estate to manage, where a property needs to be sorted and/or sold. This workshop is designed for people who know these life moments are on them or coming. You will leave with a clearer picture of what lies ahead, practical tools to start preparing now, language and frameworks to help you have the conversations that matter, and to inspire action. Families who navigate these moments well aren't the ones who had it easy. They're the ones who started thinking about it before the pressure hit.
30 Sept	Building with stone – Elizabeth Andrew, Linda and Peter Norman Faster, cheaper and more efficient building methods have mostly replaced stone, which was once the go-to building material for everything from barns to cathedrals. Ten years ago, Elizabeth Andrew decided to build her own house of stone. Linda and Peter Norman were doing the same thing at the same time, but using a different approach. We will hear of the challenges and rewards that accrue – once you have found your stones.
7 Oct	Steering clear of dementia – James Vickers There are 14 risk factors for dementia that can be modified, and thereby reduce the incidence of dementia by an estimated 45%. Professor James Vickers is the chief investigator of the ISLAND project focusing on reducing the risk of dementia. He will tell us about new approaches to detect dementia as early as possible, and what we can do to protect our ageing brains. Professor Vickers set up a free MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) for understanding dementia. He is a board member of the Dementia Expert Reference Group advising the government.
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14 Oct	Ivy Chung – Elaine Reeves Born 100 years ago in Strahan, Ivy Chung became the matriarch of the family that for more than a century nourished Hobart through their market gardens, as produce wholesalers and retailers, ships providores and owners of Hobart's first Chinese restaurant – the 160 seat Golden Dragon. Ivy's day would start at 5am at the farm cutting lettuces and cauliflower, then on to the shop, lunch at the restaurant, back to the shop, a quick check-in at home before returning to the restaurant, now wearing a slinky cheongsam, her hair lacquered up into a high "do", ready for hostess duty until late into the night. Ivy was at first a contact for Elaine, when she wrote about food, then a friend.
21 Oct	Brookfield Shed: ruin to restoration – Helen Lindsay Soon after they married in 1975, Peter and Helen Lindsay bought a house in Margate just above the Brookfield Shed, built in the 1930s as a seed-drying shed for Yates. By then it was derelict, with an asbestos roof, just about ready to fall over. But Peter loved it, and in 1994 succeeded in buying it. And then Peter, the accountant, and Helen, a former public servant, set about renovating the proverbial "great barn of a thing". What could go wrong? Helen will tell us what did and what didn't before the building was back in good use – now as Hopfields Brewery.
28 Oct	Handel's Messiah – June Cunningham There are few people who haven't heard of Handel's Messiah, or at least the Hallelujah Chorus. There are annual performances in almost every city across the western world. So why has it stayed so popular, even with people who have no connection to the Christian story? Well, it's a great tale full of emotion and drama, with wonderful and varied music. We'll watch the best bits, from a fine performance from the Sydney Opera House, with wonderful camera work by the ABC. We'll have just a little commentary – enough to follow what's happening in the story and to highlight a few of Handel's brilliant ways of making the music express the meaning of the words. This is a big work, so please arrive early, and we may go to 12.15pm.
4 Nov	Geothermal energy: from niche to necessity – John Bishop Unlike intermittent generators like wind and solar, geothermal energy provides clean electricity and heat 24/7, regardless of weather or other variables. Recent developments are rapidly expanding the areas of the Earth prospective for geothermal power generation, as well as for district heating and cooling. Tasmania, with its extensive hot granite formations, is one such region. Geophysicist Dr John Bishop will discuss the new technologies, using Tasmania as an example of why and how they can best be applied.
11 Nov	Out of Africa – John Pollard About 100,000 years ago, when Arabia was a lush green landscape, came the big exodus of Homo Sapiens from Africa. John will tell us of the evidence of this journey – of industry, such as stone tools – of archaeological clues in Arabia, India, Borneo, Wallacea and Arnhem Land, and of the of genetic record. He will examine their development skills in language, organisation, boat building, hunting, navigation and art.
18 Nov	Protecting Tasmania's underwater meadows – Kelsie Fractal Seagrass is a vital coastal habitat that many people overlook, as it's underwater. In this talk Kelsie, marine ecologist and founder of Friends of Seagrass Tasmania, will take you on an exploration of southern Tasmania's underwater seagrass meadows. You'll learn why seagrass is important, the threats it's facing and how local community members are currently working to help conserve seagrass beds in Tasmania.