



BELLERIVE YACHT CLUB CENTENARY CELEBRATION
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE CAROLINE WELLS
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
BELLERIVE, FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2026

Good evening, everyone. I am delighted to be here with you all tonight to celebrate the centenary of the Bellerive Yacht Club.

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Palawa people as the First Peoples of lutruwita/Tasmania and the Traditional Custodians of the land we're gathered on today.

I pay my respects to Elders past and present, and to any Aboriginal people with us today. Your continuing contribution to the cultural, social and spiritual life of our State is deeply valued.

Exactly one hundred years ago today, the newly formed Bellerive Yacht Club was officially opened before a crowd of members, friends and 'representatives of practically all aquatic bodies in Southern Tasmania'.¹ At the time, *The Mercury* described it as a 'fine clubhouse', located on the foreshore halfway between the Ferry Pier and the Sorell Railway Jetty.²

While the Sorell Railway may be long gone, the Bellerive Yacht Club continues to thrive. For a century now, your Club has played a key role in shaping the story of sailing in Tasmania. It has fostered generations of sailors here on the Eastern Shore while helping to strengthen our State's reputation as a place where life and community are deeply connected to the water.

¹ John Sargent and Penny Stewart, *Under the Yardarm: The History of the Bellerive Yacht Club*, 2026, p. 16.17.

² Ibid.

Surrounded by oceans and blessed with magnificent rivers, estuaries and coastlines, Tasmanian communities have long held a special connection to the water.

Last weekend, Rob and I had the great pleasure of reviewing the fleet during the opening of the 2026-27 sailing season. I love our beautiful river and being surrounded by boats on the Derwent, it was impossible not to feel the weight of Tasmania's maritime history and know that it has long been woven into the fabric of our community life.

From the 1830s onwards, regattas were popular social occasions drawing competitors and spectators alike, and yacht racing flourished on our waterways.³ By the early twentieth century, sailing clubs had become centres of recreation, reflecting Tasmanians' enduring connection to the water.

It was into this rich maritime tradition that the Bellerive Yacht Club emerged in 1926. From its earliest days, your Club has made an important contribution to both yachting and to the Tasmanian community through your inclusive, collegiate approach.

As described in *Under the Yardarm*, and thank you for the copy, this comprehensive history of your Club which was launched yesterday, noted that you enjoy an 'aquatic paradise' here in Bellerive with the internationally renowned River Derwent on your doorstep.⁴

Over the decades, countless sailors have learnt their craft here, tested themselves in competition, and developed a lifelong respect for the skills, discipline and camaraderie involved in yachting and boating.

³ [Companion to Tasmanian History: Yachting](#), accessed 2 October 2026

⁴ John Sargent and Penny Stewart, *Under the Yardarm: The History of the Bellerive Yacht Club*, 2026, p. 16.17.

For the past 21 years your Club has run the Crown Series, the largest sailing regatta in Tasmania, bringing together sailors from other clubs and the broader community for a three-day celebration.

Importantly, you are also committed to ensuring participation at every level. From junior sailors starting out on the water in the Tackers program, to experienced competitors racing throughout the year, your Club provides opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy and excel in the sport.

It is also wonderful that your newly expanded marina facilities will feature a specially designed lifting device to ensure sailors with a disability also have the opportunity to participate.

For those who prefer to remain on dry land, you have also provided a place to belong, through regular family-friendly social events here at your clubhouse, as well as opening your doors for other community clubs to enjoy your facilities. In fact, I fondly recall a ceremony being held here when I was CEO of Diabetes Tasmania, and where previous Governor Peter Underwood presented some certificates. I still remembering him saying that how nice the clubhouse was but that Diabetes Tas must come to his house next time!

I commend you on the important contribution you have made, not only to the sport of yachting itself, but also to the culture of volunteerism, mentorship and community service that is so vital to Tasmania's sporting life. Equally important has been your role as a community hub, fostering social cohesion in the Kangaroo Bay area as Bellerive, Rosny Park and the surrounding shoreline has grown and evolved over the past century.

I acknowledge all those who have played a part in the Bellerive Yacht Club story over the past 100 years. From your valued Life Members to Flag Officers, members and volunteers, past and present, you have all helped to ensure that the Club remains a welcoming place, fostering a love of yachting on the water while strengthening the bonds of community on shore.

As you celebrate your centenary, it is also fitting to recognise that your Club's story is also part of the broader Tasmanian story that is shaped by our rich maritime heritage.

From those early nineteenth century regattas to today's busy sailing calendar, Tasmanians have embraced the opportunities and challenges that our waterways provide. For 100 years, the Bellerive Yacht Club has been a custodian of that tradition, helping to ensure that the spirit of sailing continues to thrive for future generations.

Fittingly, next month you will celebrate your proud legacy through a reenactment of the inaugural Bellerive Regatta, first held in 1926. It will be a wonderful opportunity to connect past and present, with a display of historic boats that includes, remarkably, five vessels that sailed in that first race a century ago.

Finally, may I offer you my warmest congratulations on your centenary. As we look forward to another exciting summer on the water, I wish you fair winds for the coming season and another buoyant century ahead.

Thank you.