

**RECEPTION TO MARK THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF
TASCAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCERS (HOBART) INC
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
BALL ROOM, FRIDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2021**

Vice-Regal Salute played

Please be seated. I welcome you all to this reception to mark the 50th anniversary of TASCAL Scottish Dancers in Tasmania.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land— the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and who continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

I would like to acknowledge the presence of your President of TASCAL Scottish Dancers, Robert Templeton, your Secretary, Denice Walter and the 50th anniversary committee, dancers, members and supporters.

My husband, Don, and I are pleased to be hosting you this evening. This reception forms part of a full weekend of celebrations, celebrating Scottish culture and the establishment and anniversary of TASCAL. The weekend features food and dancing, including a gala ball tomorrow and a celebration of old and new at a social dancing function on Sunday.

In the years following the First World War, there was an upsurge of interest in traditional song and dance in the United Kingdom. The English Folk Dance and Song Society had been formed in 1911, publishing several books of country dances that were taken up by the Girl Guides Association, both in England and in Scotland.

The establishment of the Scottish Country Dance Society was thanks to three key individuals: Mrs Ysobel Stewart of Fasnacloch,

Mr Michael Diack of the venerable Glasgow publishers, Patersons and Miss Jean Milligan, a lecturer in Physical Education at Jordanhill College in Glasgow.¹ A public meeting was held in Glasgow on 26 November 1923 at which it was decided to form the Society. The new Society grew rapidly and soon spread abroad with the first overseas branches being formed in 1950.

Here in Tasmania, Scottish Country Dancing began in Hobart around 1957 with members of the Tasmanian Caledonian Society, whose head took the title of, I believe, "Chieftan". Jock Cornelius, newly arrived from Scotland with his family, and Aileen and David Jenkins, teachers from Sydney, started the class. Classes were originally held in the Wesley Church Hall (supper room). The first team consisted of Aileen and David Jenkins, Irene Livingstone and Ian Cornelius, Sheila Lawson and Jock Cornelius, Anne Cornelius and Iain MacDonald.

An inaugural meeting was held on the 10th September, 1970. Eleven members attended and the group decided the name would be *TASCAL Scottish Country Dance Group*. Mrs Jean Walker was the leader, Deputy Leader, Mrs June Bowling and Secretary/Treasurer, Miss Fay Nichols.

TASCAL acknowledges the links between Tasmania and the Caledonian Society. This was a previously constituted group established to foster and create a taste for the literature, music and sports of Scotland. The first Tattoo was held in Tasmania 1976. Both Jill Saunders and Karen Hay here today danced in the 1976 Tattoo. Another Tattoo followed in 1977. Dancers from TASCAL performed at both these Tattoos.

Since then, TASCAL Scottish Country Dancers have prospered and performed displays at many different events and include a regular performance at the St Andrew Society Richmond Highland Gathering

¹ <https://www.rscds.org/about/history> accessed 25 Aug 21

and many other local and historical events, including Burnie, Moonah, New Town, Launceston and Oatlands.

Later, we will be treated to a demonstration of Scottish country dancing. Members of TASCAL, accompanied by noted accordionist, Iain McKenzie, will perform the dance 'The Royal Patron'. This dance is an 8 x 32 bar reel and was specially choreographed in honour of Her Majesty The Queen's 90th birthday. I will leave the details of this dance to the experts.

You will be relieved to know that my husband, Don, will not be embarrassing me with any effort to renew his Scottish country dancing efforts. Shortly, we will hear from Denice Walter who will introduce the dance.

In conclusion, I am very pleased to be a part of your 50th anniversary celebrations of the TASCAL Scottish Dancers and to acknowledge the close links between Tasmania and the Royal Scottish Country Dancers. We are fortunate to live in a multicultural society where groups maintain links with their countries and cultures of origin, particularly by performing arts, be they song, dance and religious observances.

Performance of 'The Royal Patron'

Thank you to Iain and the dancers for that performance; I now invite you all to join me for refreshments in the Drawing Room.