

**AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS, TASMANIAN DIVISION  
2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND RECEPTION  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
DRAWING ROOM, TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER 2022**

Good evening and welcome to this reception for attendees of this year's AGM of Australian Red Cross Tasmanian Division.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and culture. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

And may I acknowledge among us:

- Charles Burkitt, Deputy President
- Rita Richards, Board Chair
- Dr Steven Phipps, Divisional Advisory Board Member.

I shall be brief in my remarks, as you have been hard at work this afternoon and no doubt are looking forward to socialising.

Given the longstanding association of Australian Red Cross in Tasmania with this Vice-Regal office, I thought it appropriate to say a few words of reflection about late Queen Elizabeth the Second.

As many of you may know, on Sunday 11 September at Government House, a wreath laying ceremony to honour her long reign was held in these grounds. The wreaths were laid at the foot of the first tree planted in her honour in the outgoing drive in 1954. That was followed by the formal proclamation reading in the Ball Room of King Charles the Third.

On Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> I attended the National Memorial Service for Her Majesty The Queen in the Great Hall of Parliament in Canberra. I joined the other Governors and Administrator of the Northern Territory in each reading a eulogy to Her Majesty.

The Queen made her first visit to Tasmania in February 1954. She and Prince Philip stayed at Government House – upstairs in the Royal Suite. In the Ball Room where you have been this afternoon, she invested some 40 Tasmanians with honours. May I quote briefly from the Hobart *Mercury's* account of that ceremony:

“Through a central aisle of curtsying guests Her Majesty walked to the dais, bareheaded and attired in a frock of golden silk with a cream stole.

“Her Majesty's personality caused the investiture, attended with such importance for every recipient, to become an occasion of delightful informality. With everyone concerned that the approach to the dais should be correct, the Queen immediately put each at ease with a question or a comment on the circumstances that had merited the award.

“Government House Ball Room, with its glittering chandeliers and its northern wall of mirrors, was a regal setting for the occasion.

“The investiture was disturbed once, when in the press of people a large porcelain vase crashed near the Ball Room entrance, and distributed its contents over the floor. It caused only a momentary interruption in the official proceedings, and Her Majesty waited for a few seconds before making the next award.”

End of quote.

Awards bestowed included a K.B.; and C.B.E.; D.S.O.; O.B.E.; M.B.E.s; and a British Empire Medal. You may be particularly interested to know that that was an award of “Associate, Royal Red Cross” to Lieutenant-Colonel Gwendolyn Merle Taylor, for services to Army nursing.<sup>1</sup>

I expect we may look forward to Government House hosting King Charles The Third and Queen Consort Camilla in due course.

Thank you and please do enjoy this AGM reception.

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<sup>1</sup> *Mercury*, Tuesday 23 February 1954, page 6.