

ASSOCIATION OF UKRAINIANS IN TASMANIA
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FRIDAY 13 JANUARY 2023

Good evening and welcome to this reception for members of the Association of Ukrainians 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 and recognise their continued connection to land, sea, and waters. I acknowledge the impacts of colonisation upon our First People and commit to a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

May I acknowledge among us:

- Senator Catryna Bilyk and Robert Bilyk
- Tania Tkachuk, Association President and Oleksandr Tkachuk
- Vice-President Ivan Shevchenko and Oksana Shevchenko.

May I also, on behalf of all Tasmanians, acknowledge that we all hope for an end to hostilities in Ukraine and express our support for those impacted by the war. And we acknowledge the support from ordinary Australians, including many Tasmanians.

Don and I and our team here at Government House are honoured to have you with us for this reception.

Next week we look forward to hosting the Ambassador of Ukraine to Australia, His Excellency Mr Vasyl Myroshnychenko and Mrs Liana Myroshnychenko, and their young son, Yurii. This is a formal state visit to Tasmania.

Over a number of days, numerous meetings will be held with Tasmanian officials and organisations.

So, tonight's reception is essentially the start at Government House, of a wonderfully Ukrainian week!

I understand that the formal element of this evening is to mark and celebrate the Ukrainian New Year, Malanka, which falls on this day. Its observation as you all know is ancient, deriving from a Christianised folk tale of pagan origin, which symbolises the onset of spring.¹ (in the northern hemisphere of course)

Of course, it is an irony that here in Australia we are just about at the halfway point of summer!

Don and I are embarking on a two- day walk this weekend, with the temperature set to climb above thirty degrees – I think we'll probably be wanting a bit of northern Malanka weather at some stage!

Last year, Robert Bilyk and I discussed the possibility of holding a function to recognise Ukrainians displaced by this devastating war. I understand that there are currently about 40 Ukrainians who have arrived in Tasmania since February. I understand many of you are here and we warmly welcome you.

Our Ukrainian community in Tasmania is diverse. Some arrived after the Second World War, as displaced persons, and started families. There have also been arrivals from Ukraine, in the last 70 years, who have chosen to make Australia their home. As a migrant community, Ukrainians have integrated with the broader Australian community.²

Your Ukrainian Association was established in 1954. You currently support members across our State, in our urban centres and in regional Tasmania. Robert informs me that your Association welcomes new members of Ukrainian descent, as well as associate members from our broader community.

May I conclude my remarks by wishing you all a joyous and memorable Malanka.

May I also wish for peace for President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and all the people of Ukraine. We all hope for peace.

Please enjoy your reception. Thank you.

¹ [Ukrainian New Year – Malanka! - Ukrainian people](#), accessed 11 January 2023.

² This paragraph and paragraph following are from Robert Bilyk 28 October 2022 email to David Owen.