

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF SANDY BAY REGATTA HISTORIC EXHIBITION
ADDRESS DELIVERED BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
SANDY BAY REGATTA, LONG POINT, SANDY BAY
THURSDAY 26 JANUARY 2023**

Good morning everyone. I am delighted to be here with you today. It is an honour to be involved in such a significant and long-standing community event.

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 continued connection to land, sea, and waters. I acknowledge the impacts of colonisation upon our First People and commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

On this Australia Day, it is important the views of our First People, that this day is a source of pain and mourning, are respected, and that collectively we have constructive conversations about our history. This can inform how we can move forward as a united community. We aspire to Australia Day, whatever the date, evolving into an inclusive celebration.

May I acknowledge among us here today:

- The Right Honourable Lord Mayor, Anna Reynolds
- Adrian Granger, President of the Sandy Bay Regatta Association
- Peter Douglas, Chairman of the Sandy Bay Regatta Association

I would also like to acknowledge the long-term sponsors of the Sandy Bay Regatta, without whom the Regatta would not be possible, and the assistance provided by the Multicultural Council of Tasmania in making this an inclusive and multicultural event.

Today marks the 175th Sandy Bay Regatta, one of the longest running regattas in Australia, an historic achievement. Especially so, given many community events and traditions have not survived the consequences of the pandemic over the last couple of years.

At the first Regatta held on Dunkley's Point, now Wrest Point, a crowd of some two thousand people gathered to watch the water-based races and to enjoy the festivities and amusements on land. Patrons enjoyed food and drink, a camera obscura, swings, and a round-a-bout. By all accounts, it was a most excellent day.¹

By 1854, the Regatta had grown to become attended by ten thousand patrons.

The Regatta has of course evolved and changed with the times. By the time it reached its centenary, it included speedboat racing by craft of the Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania, an aerobatic display by aircraft of the Aero Club of Southern Tasmania, and a Beach Girl Competition.

Whilst rough conditions caused boats to capsize and rowing races to be cancelled, the general sentiment of the crowd was that the Regatta was a great success. Ambulance officials reported a quiet day, and the only casualties were children with sand in their eyes. Police reported an incident free day among the good humoured crowd.²

Today's Regatta, a further 75 years on, boasts the traditional water races, including swimming, dragon boat races and stand-up paddle board races. In addition, you have a diverse range of entertainment and activities that reflect the multicultural Tasmanian community that we live in.³

My role here today is to officially open this historic exhibition, recording the journey of the Sandy Bay Regatta from inception to today, with 175 years of archival photographs, footage, newspaper articles, and awarded trophies. This gives us the opportunity to learn about the history of the Regatta and also about our community.

Importantly, the Sandy Bay Regatta is an entirely volunteer-based organisation that has sustained the Regatta since its start. The Regatta would not be possible

¹ The Hobart Mercury, 2 December 1954 Pg. 2

² The Mercury, 24 Jan 1949, Pg. 7

³ sandybayregatta.com.au

today without these dedicated and hardworking volunteers. They are all committed to providing a wonderful day for the whole community.

On behalf of all the people here today to enjoy the entertainment and celebrations, I thank you sincerely for your tireless efforts and commitment to making it possible for us all.

It is now my great honour to open this very special historic exhibition showcasing the 175-year history of the Sandy Bay Regatta.

Thank you and enjoy the exhibition and the Regatta.