

**FREEMASONS TASMANIA  
GRAND INSTALLATION AFTERNOON TEA  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
BALL ROOM, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2023**

Good afternoon. I warmly welcome you all to this afternoon tea. We are here to mark the 2023 Grand Installation of the Grand Master Elect of the Grand Lodge of Tasmania, the Right Worshipful Brother Luke Wood.

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 enduring 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.

May I acknowledge among you:

- Most Worshipful Grand Master Phillip Oddie;
- Right Worshipful Brother Luke Wood;
- and Grand Masters of jurisdictions of every State of Australia, as well as of New Zealand and of Noumea.

It is a great pleasure for me and my husband Don to extend a special welcome to interstate and international delegates. You are visiting with Brothers from around Tasmania as part of the installation ceremony that will occur tomorrow evening at Wrest Point. I shall be brief in my remarks, so that you can socialise and take the opportunity to look around the State Rooms of our Government House, which we have opened for you.

Fremasonry has a long history in Tasmania. Records indicate that the first Tasmanian Operative Lodge was established on 26 February 1834. The first Lodge had been preceded by Ambulatory Lodges introduced to the state by Officers of the British Garrisons stationed in what was then Van Diemen's Land.

The inauguration and installation of the first Grand Lodge occurred on 26 June 1890, when the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Tasmania was established.<sup>1</sup> There are now, I understand, thirty-three Lodges operating throughout Tasmania with some 1000 members.

May I acknowledge the significant philanthropic work of Freemasons in Tasmania. Through your Masonic Medical Research Foundation you have provided grants in excess of \$1 million in the past decade to fund neurological research at our Menzies Institute for Medical Research (MIMR).

I also note from your recent edition of 'Freemasonry Tasmania' in which you mention providing scholarships for students at our University of Tasmania. Being aware of the benefits of education, I especially support this initiative. UTAS partners with the community FREEMATES program, which operates in concert with the Dryden Trust, to provide education scholarships to family members of Masons and deceased Masons in Tasmania.<sup>2</sup>

For the past 50 years, Freemasons have operated homes for the aged in both the north and south of the state. As Governor, I am patron of your Masonic Care Tasmania (formerly Freemasons' Homes of Southern Tasmania, Inc). In fact, there is a long historical link between the Office of Governor and Freemasonry in Tasmania.

Some notable links include then Governor, The Right Honourable Sir William Grey Ellison-Macartney, who as a past Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of England was installed Grand Master in Tasmania in February 1914<sup>3</sup>.

Sir Ernest Clark, the 15<sup>th</sup> Governor of Tasmania, was also appointed Worshipful Master of the Operative Lodge, and later as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge in 1935 during the Centenary celebrations. Sir Ernest said in his address of welcome:

“Amid all these changes Masonry has made very little change, not only because it is naturally conservative, but as I believe in my heart because it is founded on

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<sup>1</sup> Kowe, A.C., 1936. History of Tasmanian Operative Lodge No.1 T.C 1834-1984. H.T.Whitting Pty Ltd Hobart, p62

<sup>2</sup> <https://freemasonrytasmania.org/about/philanthropic-roles/> accessed 16 Feb 23

<sup>3</sup> Mercury, Friday 20 February 1914, 'Masonic Grand Lodge', p5

those virtues of honour, truth and charity, which are permanent, and because it is the fulfilment of a spiritual need in mankind which is unchangeable.”<sup>4</sup>

Freemasonry in Tasmania remains true to these original precepts of the fraternal organisation and consistent with the sentiments of Sir Ernest.

I congratulate Brother Wood on his impending installation and wish you all the best for your celebrations in Hobart over the coming days.

Now, please enjoy the refreshments and take some time to look around the State Rooms.

Thank you.

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<sup>4</sup> Kowe, *op cit*, p77