

ROYAL HOBART REGATTA ASSOCIATION INC
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2023

[Vice-Regal Salute is played]

Good evening. I warmly welcome you all to this reception to mark the 2023 Royal Hobart Regatta.

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.

May I acknowledge among us:

- the Honourable Elise Archer MP, Attorney-General
- David Skegg, President, Royal Hobart Regatta Association
- Steve Dine, Senior Vice-President
- Vice-Presidents Sam Cooper and Ross Doddridge
- Chris Beis, Secretary
- Commander Mark Tandy, Commanding Officer Naval Headquarters Tasmania
- Wing Commander Andrew Johnson, Commanding Officer 29 Squadron
- Rear Admiral Stephen Gilmore, Defence Advocate, Department of State Growth
- RHRA Committee members, staff, volunteers
- and the many sponsors and corporate partners here this evening.

May I say that any organisation in operation for 185 years has much to celebrate.

I should also acknowledge Scott Gadd of the Royal Agricultural Society of Tasmania, and that the Royal Show dates back even further than 185 years. However, Scott, may I say that there is one of you but 94 of them. May I suggest you hold off on the bragging rights tonight!

Your official Regatta program notes the first regatta was held in 1838, after a decree from the Governor Sir John Franklin. The colonists were given free entry and free beer for adorning sprigs of silver blossom tied with British 'Navy Blue' ribbon. After many ales it was decided that the preceding Monday would be a public holiday, which continues and is one of the longest consecutively observed in the southern hemisphere.

By 1842, Lady Jane Franklin was describing the Regatta as having become "a festivity of licentiousness and immense disorder". Sir John told the committee that he would no longer continue his patronage if it did not accept stringent terms to preserve decency and propriety. It did not. The regatta was without patronage that year. Coincidentally, Sir John's commission was withdrawn and he returned to England in 1843.

This year's Governor's program is shaping up to be full of maritime events. Already this year:

- I have attended the Sandy Bay Regatta's historic 175th anniversary;
- I opened the international Temperate Reefs Symposium held in Hobart last month. Later this month I shall open the 24th International Seaweed Symposium, here in Hobart.
- I shall be opening the Australian Wooden Boat Festival this week.
- Later this year I am attending the annual Scouts Tasmania Regatta at Snug; as well as the sail past opening of the Sailing Season; and the presentation of the Sydney-to-Hobart Cup on the last day of this year.
- And next week I am taking our 5-year-old grandson to his first event of Joeys Sea Scouts at the 1st Derwent Sea Scouts.

This Royal Hobart Regatta is second to none in representing and enriching our capital city's maritime identity. Each day, you have on display your trove of historical treasures accumulated over 185 years. Your program is as fine as ever – with yachting, rowing, kayaking, the Trans Derwent Swim, pageantry for the

juniors, and the Riverside Festival with the headline performance by our Tassie's Wolfe Brothers.

So once again may I thank you, as Patron of the Royal Hobart Regatta Association, for all your efforts, hard work and creativity to ensure another wonderful and memorable Regatta long weekend. The Regatta would not be possible without your dedicated and hardworking volunteers, who are all committed to providing a wonderful weekend. I thank you sincerely for your tireless efforts and commitment to making it possible for us all.

I wish you all the very best for this weekend and now please enjoy the reception.

Thank you.