

TASMANIAN RACING CLUB INC — HOBART CUP CARNIVAL 2023
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2023

[Vice-Regal Salute is played]

Good evening and I warmly welcome you all to this reception to mark the Tasmanian Racing Club's 2023 Hobart Cup Carnival.

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
- the Honourable Madeleine Ogilvie MP, Minister for Racing
- the Honourable Luke Edmunds MLC
- David O'Byrne MP
- Dean Young MP
- Andrew Scanlon, Tasmanian Racing Club Chair, and Committee members
- Brendan Blomeley, CEO, and Mayor of the City of Clarence
- Aldo Antolli, Kingborough Councillor
- Former Senator the Honourable Eric Abetz
- May I also acknowledge the many corporate partners and sponsors here with us this evening.

Many of you will probably know that Tasmania's Governors have been Patrons of this Tasmanian Racing Club since its inception in 1874. Your first Patron was Governor Sir Charles Du Cane, whose crest is over there [HE gestures to Lion's Court wall]. The last crest and nearest to the doors.

Your Tasmanian Governors now have 149 years of continual patronage. This is a remarkable record of association between Government House and our horse racing fraternity in Tasmania. I look forward to our 150th next year.

May I take this opportunity to let you know about a significant development taking place here at Government House. This is one with a direct equine connection.

Behind us and across the courtyard are our large Stables Building and an adjacent Coach House. Both were built in the mid-1850s at the same time as this main house. At the turn of the 20th century, “three sets of stables were capable of housing about 20 horses, loose boxes, coach houses, harness rooms and a cowshed.” These stables continued to be used for horses for recreational and agricultural use until the middle of the century.¹

The Stables still have their original stabling compartments, some with horses’ names, Marlo and Nauto, saddles, a mounting stool, as well as the original cobblestone surface for Governors’ coaches and buggies. They are in a state of what we might call “benign neglect”.

A Government House committee, chaired by my husband Don, has been working with architects, and liaising with Treasury, to “adaptively re-use” these historic buildings.

The plan is to transform them, while retaining their original features, into a reception area with an educational and interpretation centre, a museum, café and shop. The educational centre will focus on introducing school students to my role as Governor, as a key part of our democratic form of government.

This development will bring new opportunities for my important community engagement role as Governor.

The shop will offer our Kitchen Garden products, wines, gin and publications.

¹ *Government House Tasmania A Remarkable Story*, David Owen and Kate Warner 2021 at page 223.

All our income supplements our State Governments funding, and is used to support the expenses associated with maintaining these grand buildings and gardens.

But I should be talking about horse racing! Last year at this event, I mentioned two horses running in an 1866 Hobart race, “Stuffed Judge”, which was described in *Punch* magazine as an aged animal of very sour temper and scarcely to be trusted upon his pins; and “Landshark”, sailor’s slang for a lawyer, described as being looked upon as one of the best ladies’ hacks in the colony.² These descriptions appealed to my legal sense of humour. So, I looked for some interesting names in other years, but could only find a very grand and noble field at an 1896 TRC summer meeting, including Lord Arsenal, Lord Byron, Dame Trot and Captain Swift. Confusion and Whalebone also raced.

However, this year’s race has a far less noble sounding field, with Swoop Dog, Travelling Gigolo and I’m So Cool, amongst others.

I am sure it will be a fine race and all the very best for the Carnival and now please enjoy the reception.

Thank you.

² *Tasmanian Punch* (Hobart), Saturday 29 September 1866 page 5.