

**RECEPTION TO MARK THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE (TASMANIAN BRANCH)
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
DRAWING ROOM, TUESDAY 11 JULY 2023**

Good evening. I warmly welcome you all to this reception to mark the significant 75th anniversary of the Royal Over-Seas League (Tasmanian Branch).

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 and continued connection to land, sea and waters.

It has been a very busy period for our Royal and Loyal societies, here in Tasmania and throughout the Commonwealth. In September last year, some of you would have been at Government House when I read the proclamation of His Majesty King Charles III's accession.

In May, I represented our State at the Coronation of Their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla. I also had a full program that included meetings with Government Officials, a reception at Buckingham Palace and, of course, attending the Coronation itself.

The Coronation was conducted by the Church of England, but the service was altered from past coronations. There were significant differences: multiple faiths, cultures and communities across the UK were represented; the procession into the Abbey was led by leaders and representatives from non-Christian religions. Religious leaders other than the Church of England delivered greetings of unison at the end of the service. So, it was a very inclusive service.

A few days later I was granted an audience with His Majesty. We spoke about topics of mutual interest and some of the work being done here at Government House to repurpose our stables to visitor facilities, including a museum, education centre, a café and gift shop.

We also spoke about our community garden, our garden produce and our shop. I also mentioned our extensive tree plantings at Government House and His Majesty's personal plantings in 1974 and 1994. At the end of the audience, we viewed the gifts of organic gin from Highgrove (noting our Government House gin gift!) and a photograph of His Majesty and Queen Camilla.

While in London, we were pleased to stay at the Royal Over-Seas League accommodation. It is centrally located as many of you know, with stunning views across London's iconic skyline and Green Park's emerald-green lawns.¹

The reciprocal rights to stay at Over-Seas League accommodation is certainly one of the benefits of the League. When founded, the League was dedicated to championing international friendship and understanding throughout the Commonwealth and beyond. That continues to be the primary aim of the League in the UK and throughout the Commonwealth.

The Over-Seas League launched in 1910 with the noble aim to promote an enduring multi-racial fellowship pledged to the support of the Commonwealth and to the service of others and humanity at large. While there is some evidence of Royal Over-Seas League clubs in Tasmania in 1930 and perhaps before², it was the visit of Commander David Kinloch from the League in London in 1948 that led to the establishment of clubs in Hobart and Launceston. He said at the time that League Branches "would welcome and assist British migrants and help to spread British ideals among the youth of the Commonwealth"³.

Tasmanian Governors have been invited to accept Patronage of the Royal Over-Seas League. This is in keeping with its purpose and in recognition of the Royal Charter granted to the League.

It is significant for any organisation to achieve 75 years of operation. It is even more significant when office holders and members are volunteers. May I thank your Chair Stephen Jones and your committee for continuing the tradition of service of the Royal Over-Seas League.

¹ <https://www.rosi.org.uk/accommodation> accessed 26 June 23

² <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/51668732> accessed 26 June 23

³ <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/69115624> accessed 26 June 23

May I also congratulate all involved with our Royal Over-Seas League (Tasmanian Branch). May I wish you every success for the future years and I now invite you to enjoy refreshments and to look around the beautiful State Rooms of Government House.

Thank you.