

**RECEPTION TO MARK 40 YEARS OF VICE-REGAL PATRONAGE
OF THE CANCER COUNCIL TASMANIA
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE BALL ROOM, MONDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2023**

[VICE-REGAL SALUTE]

Good evening, everyone. I warmly welcome you all to Government House for this reception marking 40 years of Vice-Regal Patronage of the Cancer Council Tasmania.

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.

We all know that our Cancer Council is an important and valued part of our community in Tasmania. It has a proven record of providing services to support people with cancer, survivors of cancer and also their families and friends.

Last year, there were nearly 12,000 calls and emails to the information and support lines. More than 6,700 SunSmart schools and childcare facilities were supported with sunscreen. Nearly \$20 million was invested in cancer research. We know, too, that all the funds raised by the Council are expended here in Tasmania.

This is important, as approximately 90% of the funding for our Cancer Council of Tasmania comes from fundraising activities. The Council supports our entire community, but especially those ten Tasmanians who are diagnosed with cancer every day.

Our Government House records show that 40 years ago, the then Chairman of the Tasmanian Cancer Committee, Mr BW Griffiths, wrote to the Official Secretary to Governor Sir James Plimsoll. He requested that

His Excellency consent to be Patron of the Committee. He received a response a week later advising that “the Governor would be delighted to do so. He is aware of the ideals of the organisation and is keen to be involved.”¹

It is a great privilege to continue Vice-Regal Patronage of our Tasmanian Council during my term.

I acknowledge and recognise the crucial role of our Council in bringing comfort, advice and support to cancer sufferers at every stage of their journey with the different forms of the disease.

A major fundraising activity for our Cancer Council is the Relay for Life. Across Australia, hundreds of volunteers host Relay for Life events to raise funds for their Cancer Council. In doing so, communities celebrate survivors, remember loved ones, and fight back against cancer.

But our Cancer Council community and charity is about people. Two of these people we recognize tonight with awards of Life Membership.

When speaking about the Relay for Life, the name Meredith Hepburn is often mentioned. She started volunteering with the Cancer Council in 2009 and remains an active volunteer. She has said: “Cancer Council causes are very close to my heart and I’ve been involved for many years as a participant, team captain and committee member. I have been largely responsible for the organising and coordinating of the entertainment and children’s activities at Hobart Relay for Life.”

She and the rest of the team have done extremely well, with our Hobart 2023 Relay listed as fifth highest in the national ranking of fundraising amounts, with \$225,609 raised.²

So, that deserves a big round of applause for Meredith.

[applause]

¹ Letter Mr E.E. O’Farrell to Mr B. W. Griffiths of 7 April 1983

² <https://www.relayforlife.org.au/> accessed 13 Sep 23

Unfortunately, Meredith is interstate so she will be presented with her Life Membership later in the year.

The second Life Membership is awarded to Penny Egan.

Penny is retiring shortly after 10 years of exceptional service as the CEO of Cancer Council Tasmania. Penny has been an outstanding leader and manager of the organisation. She has provided strategic excellence. She has recruited and mentored many dedicated staff members, and carefully guided the organisation through financially challenging times.

Penny has been an outstanding ambassador for Cancer Council Tasmania and custodian of its reputation. Her contribution certainly meets the definition of “Exceptional Service” in our Life Membership Policy.

That certainly deserves a round of applause.

[applause]

May I now invite Penny to the stage to receive her award and to say a few words.

[Penny moves to stage, receives award (photo) and speaks briefly before returning to the Ball Room floor; on conclusion...]

HE hands over to Official Secretary...

David introduces CCT Chair Professor Greg Peterson, to speak briefly.

HE invites guests to enjoy refreshments.