

NEW TOWN CRICKET CLUB CENTENARY AND BOOK LAUNCH
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
BALL ROOM, FRIDAY 27 OCTOBER 2023

[Vice-Regal Salute is played]

Good evening and a very warm welcome to this reception to mark the centenary of your New Town Cricket Club, together with a book launch and presentation of Life Membership badges.

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.

As Patron of Cricket Tasmania, I am delighted to join you this evening, in this auspicious year for your Club.

Supporting sports in Tasmania has always been a key role of Governors. As examples, I am also the Patron of Veterans Cricket Tasmania; Athletics Tasmania; Royal Hobart Golf Club; Royal Hobart Regatta Association; Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania (Commodore-in-Chief); Tasmania JackJumpers; Tasmanian Racing Club; and, the Tasmanian Turf Club.

Launching books is also an aspect of my community role which I enjoy.

So, being both a book club member myself, and a former sportsperson, having played lawn tennis, hockey, real tennis and squash, this evening is something of a double treat!

Townies to Bucks: the First 100 Years of The New Town Cricket Club is an impressive work, thoroughly researched, well designed with solid perfect binding, and plenty of imagery. So, first up I congratulate the compilers, Myree Williams, Ken Williams, Peter Fyfe, Shane Hogue and book designer Dean Smith.

The book is dedicated to the late Keith Bradshaw, who passed away in late 2021. He was a favourite son of the Club and beyond. As one dedication put it, and I quote:

“Bradshaw crammed more into his 58 years of cricket playing and officialdom than many in his field of endeavour managed in a full lifetime, yet he was always too focused on the next project to bask in achievement.”¹
End of quote.

Also noted in the book, is one of the Club’s founding Committee members in 1923, E. A. Brooke. He certainly did his job on behalf of the Club, and cricket in general. It is recorded that in February 1925, in his capacity as a New Town District Cricket Club official, he wrote a stern letter to *The Mercury* and other newspapers complaining about the Hobart City Council’s poor sporting facilities management. His letter stated in part, and I quote:

“The conveniences provided at the Clare Street ground are a disgrace to civilisation. The building set apart for that purpose is absolutely unapproachable; consequently the dressing-shed is used for objectionable practices ... On the suburban sports ground there is an increasing crop of briars overlooking the caretaker’s residence, which result in many lost balls ... Trusting these matters may have attention in the immediate present, not in the far-off future.”² End of quote.

His request for “immediate” action might have been wishful thinking on his part, because compiler Ken Williams, in his brief memoir in the book, writes: “Prior to 1963 the Club’s change room was under the old timber grandstand. It was a filthy spider-ridden place with very poor lighting.”³

The book documents the many outstanding male and female players and terrific individual performances. But, of course, this is a team game, as this book delightfully shows on page after page, both on the field and behind the scenes.

¹ <https://www.cricket.com.au/news/3310262>, accessed 24 October 2023.

² *The News* (Hobart), Tuesday 17 February 1925, page 4.

³ *Townies to Bucks* page 216.

Win, draw or lose, the game itself, they say, is the winner. As the legendary English player W G Grace once remarked: "A cricketer's life is a life of splendid freedom, healthy effort, endless variety, and delightful, good fellowship."⁴

Now, I shall hand over to David [Hughes] and I shall return to the stage shortly to present Life memberships and formally launch the book.

[HE and ADC move to Ball Room floor; David Hughes invites New Town Club Vice President David Wright to respond.]

⁴ https://www.azquotes.com/author/48970-W_G_Grace, accessed 24 October 2023.