

HOBART HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY INC
OPENING OF THE 185TH ANNIVERSARY ANNUAL ROSE, IRIS
AND FLORAL ART SHOW
REMARKS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE ALAN BLOW AO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
HOBART TOWN HALL, FRIDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2023

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the Official Opening of the Hobart Horticultural Society's Annual Rose, Iris and Floral Art Show.

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 enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

Many of you will have been at Government House on Wednesday when our Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker, hosted a reception to mark the 185th anniversary of the Hobart Horticultural Society. I am here in her place at this opening, fulfilling one of my roles as Lieutenant Governor while she is away.

This event in the Hobart Town Hall also marks the 185th anniversary of the Hobart Horticultural Society. The Society has been an integral part of the history of Hobart, and you would know that Tasmanian Governors have been involved with the Society for many years as Patrons.

I am told that, for the first exhibition of fruits, flowers and vegetables in 1839, the Society erected an Exhibition Booth at Pavilion Point as part of the Regatta that year. We know that Sir John and Lady Franklin attended that Regatta and, although there is no record, it is highly likely that they would have included an inspection of the horticultural display in addition to their tour of the other attractions.

According to the Mercury of 16 November 1893¹, the then Governor, Lord Gormanston, was accompanied by his Official Secretary on a visit to the exhibition that year, where he made a tour of the entire exhibition, and "carefully

¹ Mercury 16 Nov 1893 p3 <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/13268601> accessed 23 Oct 23

examined the collection, with which he expressed unqualified delight...He personally congratulated exhibitors on their displays.”

This year there are a large range of categories open to competitors. There are special classes, as well as the open, intermediate and novice classes for roses, and special, open and novice classes for irises. There are also sections for cut flowers, fruits and vegetables, horticultural displays and a junior section.

Floral Art is also divided into open, intermediate and novice sections, with such interesting titles as ‘Your choice in an Urn’, ‘Two flowers Plus’ and ‘Beauty in a basket’. I very much look forward to viewing all of these exhibits.

I was very interested to learn that among the fruits entered at the first exhibition in 1839 there were pineapples! I can’t imagine what would have prompted the growth of pineapples in these latitudes, but there seems to have been a group of men who were intent on growing them here. I will be on the lookout as I tour the venue to see if the display of that choice of fruit has been replicated.

Winning a prize is always an exhibitor’s aim. But the satisfaction of sharing one's work with others and the provision of a focus for social activities also drive the show organisers and exhibitors.

Gardeners are very willing to share their knowledge, both with experienced and novice gardeners, with the aim of connecting members of the community and encouraging others to propagate exhibited species.

I congratulate all members of the Hobart Horticultural Society for maintaining the long tradition of horticultural excellence and exhibition, in keeping with the original objects of the Society.

185 years is a very significant time for an organisation to be in operation, especially when run by and for volunteers. I have great pleasure in formally declaring open the 185th anniversary annual Rose, Iris and Floral Art Show of the Hobart Horticultural Society.

Thank you.