

**INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS**  
**REMARKS BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**  
**GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONDAY 11 DECEMBER 2023**

Good evening and a very warm welcome to you all to Government House.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose Country we gather, who flourished on Country as part of the South-East Nation of Aboriginal people. We honour them, and today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

Don and I are very pleased to host this reception to mark your centenary in Tasmania of the Institute of Public Accountants. You have certainly come a long way since the formation of your earliest predecessor, the Institute of Factory and Cost Accountants, in Melbourne so far back in 1923.<sup>1</sup>

From our research I believe that a Tasmanian Institute of Accountants was formed, in Hobart as long ago as 1897. However, I do not know whether that body ever became part of the future IPA.<sup>2</sup>

Your founding year in 1923 was a most intriguing one, here at Government House. May I explain why. Many of you may know that Tasmanian Governors were all British in those times. They were paid a fixed salary which was relatively modest. They began to complain that their fixed salaries were insufficient for them to carry out their full duties during their tenure of five or so years.

As a result, British Governors were obliged to dip into their personal resources. Well, that is what they said! Matters came to head when in January 1922 Governor Sir William Allardyce cut short his tenure and returned to England.

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<sup>1</sup> [Our Past, Present and Future \(publicaccountants.org.au\)](https://publicaccountants.org.au), accessed 8 December 2023.

<sup>2</sup> *Tasmanian News* (Hobart), Saturday 4 December 1897 page 2.

Throughout the rest of 1922 and all of 1923 and well into 1924, there was no Governor in Tasmania.

Constitutionally, that didn't matter too much because the Chief Justice, Sir Herbert Nicholls, acted as Administrator. He had all the rights and responsibilities of the Governor. This is the case today.

However, the prolonged absences of other British Governors led to calls for a Tasmanian Governor to be appointed, rather than what was sarcastically referred to as an "imported" Governor.

There were also some calls for the Governorship to cease altogether.

During the Allardyce three years' absence, the Administrator, Sir Herbert Nicholls, hosted functions here, but didn't live here. The result was the buildings and grounds falling into a state of considerable disrepair. Because they are so large, stately and beautiful, serious consideration was given to changing their function.

A formal delegation of Parliamentarians made visits here, with a view to turning Government House into a new Parliament. That didn't eventuate. Nor did another proposal to turn Government House into a hospital for recovering war veterans.

And there were many suggestions from members of the public – including one to turn the house into a huge jazz palais!

May I mention some references to money, given that you are public accountants and finance is central to your business. You will see many thousands of artefacts here – furnishings, artworks, clocks, silverware and so on. All is required to be valued, and these professional valuations are carried out every five years.

As an example, the lovely French inlaid satinwood and kingwood octagonal central table [HE gestures] is currently valued at 30 thousand dollars.

The portraits behind me of King George the Fifth and Queen Mary are each valued at 75 thousand dollars. Interestingly, they are described as painted by an

“Unknown Artist”. This is because they are copies of the originals by Sir Luke Fildes in the Royal Collection in the UK. They are, in fact, hand-painted, in a form known as autotype. Quite a few were done, by students at the Royal Academy in London, so do not be surprised if you see them in other Government Houses.

May I conclude by inviting you to take the opportunity to look at our other State Rooms during your reception.

I’ll hand over now to David. Thank you.

*[David invites Andrew Conway, national CEO to respond briefly]*