

ROTARY DISTRICT 9830 (TASMANIA) RECEPTION
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
BALL ROOM, FRIDAY 1 MARCH 2024

[Vice-Regal Salute is played]

Good evening and a very warm welcome to Government House to this reception for Target Group Rotarians and partners ahead of your Expo and Conference.

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.

I note that your theme for this year's Conference is: "How can Rotary assist to address the issues of Domestic Violence and Homelessness." These are critical and challenging issues to which I shall refer in opening your Conference tomorrow.

May I warmly acknowledge:

- District Governor Mike Patten OAM and Margot.
- Past Rotary International Director, Dr John Thorne AM and Shirley.
- Past District Governors, both District 9830 and from other Districts, and their partners.
- District Governor Elect Pam Scott OAM.
- Members of the Exchange Team to New York.
- And all Rotarians and your guests and partners.

It is also fitting at a function of this nature to acknowledge the many Paul Harris Fellows in this room. May I also acknowledge the inspiring work of The Rotary Foundation funding global humanitarian projects including: End Polio Now; Rotarians Against Malaria; and Food Plant Solutions.

My congratulations also to our Tasmanian clubs supporting overseas projects as diverse as:

- mental health in Uganda;
- water bores in Tanzania;
- sky hydrants and water purifiers in Bhutan and Thailand;
- support for schools and orphanages in Timor-Leste, Thailand and Nepal;
and
- the eye camps in Nepal.

I understand that, as part of the celebration of 100 years of Rotary in Tasmania, this year's Tasmanian projects will focus on:

- domestic violence awareness;
- gynaecological cancer;
- and 100 Peace Poles.

The remarkable diversity of your programs and your dedication to them are very consistent with the theme of your current World President, Gordon McNally, of the Rotary Club of South Queensferry, West Lothian, Scotland. His theme is: "Create Hope in the World."

And he outlined his principal goals in this theme at the Rotary International Assembly in Florida, including: mental health; building international peace; and empowering girls and women around the world.

As you may know, a Governor's community role is substantial. I meet with many groups and individuals, not least during official municipal visits, taking me right across the State. I have been able to build networks and keep well-informed about issues in Tasmania.

As Governor, I have a focus in my community role in promoting and encouraging women's issues. As an example – tomorrow at the Conference I shall mention a major International Women's Day event here at Government House next week.

We also have a strong focus on young people. For example, last August I opened the Government House Community Garden, in one of our paddocks, and which we operate in conjunction with Eat Well Tasmania, Loaves and Fishes Tasmania, and School Food Matters. We produce vegetables and herbs for the hot lunch School Food Matters Program. As well, school students, generally from lower socio-economic areas, learn how to grow and harvest vegetables and herbs in this Community Garden.

We also have a Learning Room near our Kitchen, in which these students can prepare the products for eating. This is educational, health-promoting, and, I hope, good fun too.

May I also mention our school art project, with the Peter Underwood Centre. Primary school students are sent high quality photographs of Government House, objects in the House, and the gardens, together with art materials and canvas boards. Their marvellous painted works are then framed by us and exhibited here in the Ball Room, for them to see with their parents.

May I conclude and thank you all for your significant contributions to projects in Tasmania and overseas, which all make a huge difference to the lives of many. I wish you all the best for tomorrow, and I look forward to joining you at PW1 tomorrow afternoon. Thank you.