

**MORNING TEA AND TOURS FOR DELEGATES ATTENDING THE
2024 AUSTRALASIAN STUDENT ARCHITECTURE CONGRESS,
GROUND MATTERS
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FRIDAY 28 JUNE 2024**

Good morning, everyone. I warmly welcome you all to Government House and also a special welcome to all those from interstate for your 2024 Australasian Student Architecture Congress.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose Country we gather. I acknowledge 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 sustainability is a key theme of your deliberations for your Congress. As we look to the future of architectural design in the public and private domains, we shall continue to see significant movements towards more sustainability in buildings and landscape.

We all know that there is a large carbon footprint associated with the use of concrete. If older buildings can be reused and repurposed, there are myriad benefits.

Here in Tasmania, we have many examples of this. Older buildings are being restored and repurposed at an increasing rate. We have a plan here at Government House to develop and reuse our old stables buildings. This will help us to open the estate and buildings to a greater number of visitors.

The architectural style of this House is neo-Gothic, also known as Victorian Gothic, taking its name from Queen Victoria, whose image recurs throughout the building, in sculptures and framed images.

Convicts and free settlers were employed in the building's construction, which began in 1853 and took about four years.

The House was built with sandstone from the quarry on the left side of the drive as you entered Government House. Local timbers were used throughout. This ball room boasts the largest Huon pine floor in the world.¹ Welsh slate was used for the roof, which is now more than 170 years old. The Conservatory was added in 1991 to match the original design.

Outside, there are also many original accommodation and work buildings.

I understand that your Congress will undertake a review of the early French visits to Tasmania, especially those around Recherche Bay, in the context of architectural designs.

On one of these early French visits, a garden was planted at Recherche Bay in 1792. This followed the arrival of a maritime expedition led by Rear Admiral Bruni D'Entrecasteaux in the French frigates, *Recherche* and *Esperance*.

His expedition had two purposes: searching for French explorer, La Perouse, and recording and documenting the environment and the people of the new lands they encountered.

The gardener on the expedition, Felix Lahaye, planted a garden at Recherche Bay to provide food for later maritime explorers. It was also a gift to the local Indigenous people, with whom there were several cordial encounters.²

This French Garden has been replicated here at Government House and which you will soon see.

May I wish you all the best for the rest of your Congress. Please now join us for morning tea before your tours.

Thank you.

¹ Government House Tasmania A Remarkable Story David Owen and Kate Warner 2021 page 94.

² <https://www.dceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage/places/national/recherche> accessed 22 June 24