

TASMANIAN SAIL TRAINING ASSOCIATION LTD
'LADY NELSON' HARBOUR SAIL TO MARK
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2025
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
ON BOARD 'LADY NELSON', SATURDAY 8 MARCH 2025

Thank you, Astrid and Leanne, for your welcome earlier, and good afternoon, everyone.

May I acknowledge the Muwinina people upon whose waterway we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, sky, and waters.

By tradition, Tasmanian Governors have been Patrons of the Tasmanian Sail Training Association and are therefore associated with *Lady Nelson*. Governor Sir James Plimsoll began this Vice-Regal relationship in 1986 when he made the first cut in the 50-ton log that became the keel of this replica vessel.¹

As your second female Governor, I am especially delighted to be here with you all on International Women's Day. Don and I are certainly having a full program on the water today, having taken a sail past salute this morning on board the ML *Egeria* with Scouts and Girl Guides for their regatta.

Only two months ago, Hobart was bustling with our Sydney to Hobart Yacht race. The 2024 race had approximately 12% women across 62 yachts, including three double-handed crews. This is progress, but with much possibility for growth.

In December, I also met Tasmanian participants in the Melbourne to Osaka Race. A mother-and-daughter crew, a crew of two young mothers, and two other women, one of whom co-skippered with her father, are all participating in the three – eight-week race.

¹ <https://www.ladynelson.org.au/ship/todays-lady-nelson/building-replica-vessel> accessed 4 Mar 25

Sailing celebrations continued during the recent Tasmanian Wooden Boat Festival. Then, I hosted a group of women from the Women Who Sail initiative. A particular standout from this group was Jean Socrates who sailed via the Southern Ocean's Five Great Capes and is the first woman to sail solo, non-stop, and unassisted around the world from North America. Women Who Sail is a great initiative, encouraging women to connect, share and support each other on the water.²

I can see many of these positive impacts here today on the *Lady Nelson*. Today is the first time in the history of the *Lady Nelson* that you have set sail with an all-female crew³. This is outstanding. As you note in the brochures aboard, today's celebration would have been inconceivable during the era of the original *Lady Nelson*.

May I mention in particular a few women. Rebecca Round is unfortunately no longer with us⁴. She was key to making this *Lady Nelson* a reality. Rebecca had the idea that Tasmania should have a tall ship. She successfully lobbied to start construction in 1986 and complete it in 1988 for the celebrations for our Bicentenary. Rebecca enjoyed watching it sail from her home in Tranmere.

Amongst a most impressive female crew, may I acknowledge Astrid Wilson, as Master, and Clare Darling, as Engineer. Having these two talented women in these crucial roles is a noteworthy achievement.

I would also like to acknowledge that we have Irene Chauffer with us today. Irene was one of the original deckhands on the ship, pioneering the progress we are seeing today. May I also mention that she is 93 years young!

We are about to hear more from our Master, Astrid, but I shall conclude and trust that you all enjoy today's sail. I am very proud to be here with such an outstanding group of women on International Women's Day. Today is a day to celebrate our achievements. I look forward to continued progress in the years to come.

Thank you.

² <https://www.womenwhosailaustralia.com/> accessed 4 Mar 25

³ https://www.canva.com/design/DAGcOsdNF9w/6wyfJFG7ITJ1-WZI6DtdxA/view?utm_content=DAGcOsdNF9w&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=h7856246b9f#2 Brochure to be distributed onboard

⁴ [Rebecca ROUND \(NEE LUCAS\) | Death Notices | Tasmania | My Tributes](#)