

**RIDING FOR THE DISABLED ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA
50TH ANNIVERSARY AFTERNOON TEA
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 23 JULY 2025**

Good afternoon, everyone. I warmly welcome you all to Government House as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Riding for the Disabled Association of Tasmania, or RDA Tasmania.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land 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.

Thank you to all the RDA Tasmania volunteers, participants and Life Members who have joined us here today. As Patron, I particularly welcome those who have helped to shape this Association's history over the past 50 years.

Since RDA Tasmania began as a grassroots initiative in 1974, many Tasmanians, living with a disability or additional support needs, have benefited from your programs. Over the past five decades, you have run programs from Centres all around our State, from Burnie in the north-west to St Helens in the east to Richmond, Bagdad, Old Beach, Acton, Kingston and Cygnet in the south.¹

I understand you are still learning about your early history, and it is believed your first RDA Centre was at Mount Pleasant in Launceston.²

Today, you offer programs from your Glenorchy Centre that amalgamated RDA Kingborough and RDA Kalang.

This Centre continues to build on your association's history, with nationally accredited coaches and committed volunteers delivering equestrian activities to

¹ Information provided by RDA Tasmania to SMCO, 11 July 2025

² Ibid.

participants of all ages. These activities are designed to build confidence, independence, and physical wellbeing in a welcoming and inclusive community.

In this, your golden anniversary year, you have embarked on a community storytelling campaign, encouraging past and present volunteers, participants and supporters to share their stories.³ These stories will be a lasting history of the contributions of RDA Tasmania volunteers over the past 50 years.

I commend everyone who has worked with RDA Tasmania and for celebrating this milestone. May we also remember those who have played a vital role in establishing Centres and leading programs who are no longer with us and thank them for their dedication. We also thank those who are unable to be here today.

We thank RDA Tasmania donors for providing both financial and in-kind support and acknowledge the support of RDA Tasmania Ambassador Rachael Treasure in raising awareness.

Finally, and most importantly, we thank all volunteers who generously donate their time. You keep the Association running by caring for horses, maintaining the Centre and supporting participants every week – and even on holidays.

As Patron, may I congratulate RDA Tasmania on this significant milestone. I wish you all the best for the remainder of your anniversary celebrations in 2025.

Please enjoy your afternoon tea.

³ Information provided by RDA Tasmania to SMCO, 11 July 2025