

**RECEPTION TO MARK THE
66TH AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL SQUARE DANCE CONVENTION
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONDAY 4 MAY 2026**

Good evening. I warmly welcome you to Government House and to Tasmania for the 66th Australian National Square Dance Convention. A special welcome to everyone who has travelled from across Australia and around the world, including New Zealand, Canada, England and the USA.

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.

As well as being the 66th edition, this year's event marks another milestone: 50 years since the first Australian National Square Dance Convention was held in Tasmania, in Hobart in 1976.¹

I understand that close to 500 have registered to take part in the 2026 event.² We are delighted to welcome you all here to our beautiful State.

During your visit, I hope you had some time away from the dancefloor to enjoy all that Tasmania has to offer. We have a vibrant arts and cultural scene, renowned museums, talented performers and lively clubs and festivals.

Our State has also long had a love of square dancing and is home to Australia's oldest continuously run club, the Launceston Square Dance Club, which has been operating for 75 years.³

¹ [66th Australian National Square Dance Convention website](#), accessed 21 April 2026

² [News: 66th Australian National Square Dance Convention website](#), accessed 21 April 2026

³ [News: 66th Australian National Square Dance Convention website](#), accessed 21 April 2026

This magnificent Ballroom was built for dancing, and since its completion in 1857, it has hosted many balls and special events.

We are very proud of the uniquely Tasmanian floor, the largest Huon pine floor in the world. However, Huon pine is a very soft wood. If you look closely, you will notice the marks left behind by the stilettos of countless women who have danced in this room over the years.

I understand that this would not be a problem caused by square dancers, thanks to your conditions of entry related to footwear!⁴

Please take the opportunity to see our other State Rooms. My husband, Don, is your enthusiastic tour guide and will be pleased to tell you more about this remarkable House.

Finally, may I wish you the best for your final dance of the Convention later this evening at our City Hall.

Now, please enjoy your reception.

Thank you.

⁴ [Conditions of Entry: 66th Australian National Square Dance Convention website](#), accessed 21 April 2026