

**RECEPTION TO MARK THE OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY OF
HIS MAJESTY THE KING
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, TUESDAY 2 JUNE 2026**

VICE-REGAL SALUTE

Good evening. I warmly welcome you all to mark the official birthday of His Majesty The King.

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.

King Charles was born on the 14th November 1948. Across the Commonwealth, though, and in keeping with a tradition, we celebrate his official birthday in June. That June tradition dates to 1748. During the reign of King George II, his late-autumn birthday made large outdoor celebrations impractical. So, he tied his birthday festivities to an existing June summer military parade. This connects us to the past.¹

In Australia, the official birthday has been celebrated every year since the First Fleet arrived in 1788, making it one of the longest-running civic traditions in the country. The occasion is also marked by the announcement of the King's Birthday Honours List. This list recognises those who have made outstanding contributions to their communities. It is a celebration not only of the sovereign, but also of service.

This year, we mark His Majesty's birthday with reflection and warmth. In February 2024, Buckingham Palace confirmed that His Majesty had been diagnosed with a form of cancer.² The news was met with an outpouring of concern across the Commonwealth and around the world. In December 2025, in a message supporting the Stand Up to Cancer Campaign, His Majesty announced that, with effective

¹ <https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/tradition/a44189146/why-does-king-charles-have-two-birthdays/>
accessed 20 May 26

² <https://www.royal.uk/a-statement-from-buckingham-palace-5Feb24> accessed 20 May 26

intervention and adherence to doctors' orders, his treatment schedule would be scaled back. The King faced this significant personal trial with dignity and openness.

In October 2024, His Majesty's six-day visit to Australia was his first to an overseas realm as sovereign and his first major trip overseas since his cancer diagnosis.³ I was privileged to meet with Their Majesties at a reception in Canberra hosted by the Prime Minister.

As we know, the King has been an advocate for sustainability all his life. He established *The King's Foundation* in 1990, inspired by his philosophy of harmony, to build communities where people, places, and the planet can coexist sustainably.⁴ *The King's Trust*, founded by His Majesty as Prince of Wales in 1976, has helped more than a million young people across the United Kingdom build better futures for themselves through employment, education, and enterprise.⁵

His Majesty's speech to the United States Congress last month highlighted his commitment to the environment. He emphasised the importance of its protection. His Majesty said, I quote, "We ignore at our peril the fact that these natural systems – in other words, Nature's own economy – provide the foundation for our prosperity and our national security." One commentator noted that His Majesty had couched this in, I quote, "Trumpian language of profit and loss."⁶

So, tonight, may we celebrate a monarch who has brought to his role a genuine and longstanding commitment to the welfare of people and the planet. In the words of his own Foundation, His Majesty has sought to demonstrate that practical wisdom and care for one another can create a more sustainable and just world.

May I now invite you to rise and join me in a toast.

To His Majesty King Charles III — long may he reign. **The King.**

³ <https://www.pmc.gov.au/government/protocol-and-international-visits/royal-visits/2024-royal-visit> accessed 20 May 26

⁴ <https://kings-foundation.org/> accessed 20 May 26

⁵ <https://www.kingstrust.org.uk/about-us/history> accessed 20 May 26

⁶ *The Conversation*, Kylie Cooper, "How King Charles charmed the US while taking digs at Trump," <https://theconversation.com/how-king-charles-charmed-the-us-while-taking-digs-at-trump-281766>, accessed 20 May 2026.