

REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE PETER UNDERWOOD AC,  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA UPON THE OPENING OF AN  
INTERPRETATION SITE AT THE 42<sup>ND</sup> PARALLEL, ROSS  
TUESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2012.

It is a great pleasure for me to have been asked to join in this wonderful project, "Drawing the Line." I congratulate the University of Tasmania and the Surveying & Spatial Sciences Institute for their initiative. "Drawing the Line" is a community project. It not only commemorates a significant piece of Tasmanian history but it also contributes to the State's public art works with a magnificent roadside sculpture by Tasmanian artist Rebecca Coote. In addition to that installation Rebecca Coote has created six double sided interpretation panels that record the history and significance of this spot. This project has brought together a volunteer group of surveyors, historians, educators and others who researched the history of the 42<sup>nd</sup> parallel and why it is of importance to Tasmanians. Last, but by no means least this project involved High School students who helped to install survey pegs wherever the 42 parallel intersected with boundary fences over an area of 30 kilometres around the Ross/Midlands area. The students were trained in the use of civilian and commercial Global Positioning Systems, and had the opportunity to meet and collaborate with surveyors, understand their role, and look at career opportunities in the profession as well as participate in an activity of historical significance. Can't get much better than that can you? Of course, projects like this need money as well as effort and in that respect I express the community's thanks for the support given to "Drawing the Line" by the Winifred Booth

Trust, the Tasmanian Community Fund, UTAS, PDA Surveyors, Boom Sherrin, the Institute of Surveyors Tasmania, the Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute, Northern Midlands Council, Fairbrother Pty Ltd, Spatial Education.com, as well as local businesses and many volunteers.

Now, I am sure that even in his wildest dreams the sometimes fiery Scot, Lieutenant Governor William Paterson would ever have imagined that his petulance over Lieutenant Governor David Collins' claim to be Lieutenant Governor of the whole island would eventually lead to us holding this commemoration 208 years after the fledgling colony of Van Diemen's Land was divided into two. The principal actors in the 1804 division were Governor King in New South Wales, Lieutenant Governor Collins in Hobart and Lieutenant Governor Paterson at Port Dalrymple.

On this auspicious occasion I cannot do better than read you a few words written by the first Director of the Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau E.T. Emmett in his 1952 book *"Tasmania by Road and Track."* He wrote:

"While these arguments were in progress concerning the site of the chief northern settlement a feud was going on between north and south which has endured to this day. Who originated this old feud, which has endured in the annual North versus South athletic contest: has on occasions prevented Tasmania's participation in interstate

events because we could not agree which city was to provide the management: which has often ruled out roads and other public works and delayed state progress because we could not speak with one voice to the powers above local government? I think the crown should go to Philip Gidley King, Governor of New South Wales, for he seems to have inspired the original rivalry. It was on King's instruction that the expedition of David Collins was dispatched. Collins abandoned Port Phillip, established himself on the Derwent and founded Hobart. King later sent Paterson to Port Dalrymple. When Collins claimed to control the whole island, Paterson objected and argued that King had appointed him Lieutenant-Governor of Port Dalrymple at a time when Collins was supposed to be at Port Phillip. In an attempt to settle the dispute, King divided the island along the forty-second parallel of latitude, making two governments, both Collins and Paterson being subordinate to himself."

Mr Emmett concluded, "This continued until 1812, when Hobart became the seat of government for the whole island. The political division was thus removed, but it will take more than an Act of Parliament to sponge away the imaginary line that constitutes in the minds of the people of Tasmania the division of the island into North and South."

However, I express the sincere hope that the opening of this marker on the two hundredth anniversary of the abolition of a dividing line across the middle of our beautiful State will inspire local

governments and communities on both sides of the 42<sup>nd</sup> parallel to put rivalry to one side and work together collaboratively to the benefit of the whole of this magnificent island State. Perhaps the signing yesterday of a memorandum of understanding and collaboration between the cities of Hobart and Launceston will show the way. I hope so.

---

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.km.com.au/tasmania/ch4.htm> Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> August 2012