

**BOTHWELL INTERNATIONAL HIGHLAND SPIN IN AND FIBRE FESTIVAL  
OPENING ADDRESS BY MR RICHARD WARNER, REPRESENTING  
HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
BOTHWELL DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL, FRIDAY 1 MARCH 2019**

Good morning. It is a pleasure to be here today to officially open the 40<sup>th</sup> Bothwell Spin In and Fibre Festival, on behalf of my wife, Her Excellency the Governor of Tasmania.

The Governor sends apologies for not being able to be here today. She sends you all her best wishes.

As many of you will know, the Spin In started in 1978 when the Late Mrs Barbara Fowler OAM and her committee gathered 20 friends for a spinning day in her garden to raise funds to repair the roof of the Presbyterian Church. Mrs Fowler passed away last year and in the words of your President Juliet Smith and I quote “Mrs Fowler was an inspiring, gracious and hospitable person, whose vision and creative love of fibre, spinning and friendships, brought the world's artisans to Bothwell”.

The festival has now grown to be a significant event where visitors from all over Tasmania, the rest of Australia and indeed internationally come to enjoy a host of activities, special events including the Longest Thread and Highland Challenge competitions.

The festival is a wonderful example of the creativity and innovation of the Bothwell community. Wool production has been a vital component of the district's prosperity and has seen its own share of innovative enterprise with the Late Ian Downie's Cormo sheep breed and Peter McShane's portable sheep yards and shearing table. More recently expansion of local irrigation schemes has provided more opportunities and there's even a wind farm under construction.

Spinning is an ancient art and still an important skill in traditional societies such as Nepal and Butan. In recent years, new spinners have begun innovating the craft and creating new techniques. Small-scale spinners produce yarns that are interesting and not readily available to the public. Hand spinners may also spin for self-satisfaction, a sense of connection to the area or they may take it up for meditative and friendship reasons.

Whatever the reason, the Bothwell Festival is the centre each two years where new spinning ideas and techniques are on display and discussed.

May I congratulate Juliet Smith, President and her committee colleagues for once again putting together this terrific celebration of fibre crafting. May I also thank Professor Julian Roberts from UK, Jan Dineen and Rita Summers the festivals' special guests, for sharing their knowledge with the enthusiastic visitors who will be in Bothwell this weekend.

And of course my congratulations extend to everyone involved: Bothwell District School students and staff; parents and friends; the Lions Club; CWA; Lodge members; retailers; tourism businesses; and farmers. It's a true community effort and, more than that, a wonderful instance of a rural community celebrating in harmony and utilising lots of venues in the spectacular historic town.

Impressive too is the very long list of sponsors, big and small and I offer my thanks to you for your support for this uniquely creative Tasmanian community.

One measure of a festival's worth is the variety of what it is able to offer, and this 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bothwell Spin In is remarkable for its quality and quantity of displays and activities. Just to name a few: the competitions; Spinners' Den; Presentation Marquee; market traders; workshops; designers at Ratho Farm; and from the UK, Julian Roberts's Master Class.

So this fabulous festival has come a long, long way since its inception in 1978 when Barbara Fowler and some 20 friends spent a day spinning to fundraise for an upgrade to the church roof.

A fantastic legacy is the result of that day of spinning forty years ago. And on that note I wish you all a wonderful two days and I very happily declare open the 40<sup>th</sup> Bothwell International Highland Spin In and Fibre Festival.

Thank you.