

**REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE PETER UNDERWOOD  
AC, GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA TO OPEN THE ALL-BREEDS  
CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW HELD TO CELEBRATE THE  
SESQUICENTENARY OF THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN DOG  
SHOW, HOBART SATURDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2012**

Good morning everybody and welcome to this important event that is being held to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Australian Dog Show which was held right here in Hobart in 1862 - only 58 years after Lieutenant David Collins founded Hobart as a penal colony. This morning it is a pleasure to extend a special welcome to the exhibitors and judges who have travelled from interstate to be here today and take part in this event.

The forerunner of the Canine Society was called the *Society for the improvement in the breed of dogs* and its President was John Woodcock Graves. He was a Barrister and Solicitor in what was then Hobart Town. As a matter of passing interest his father (same name) was the author of the well-known English hunting song "D'ye ken John Peel." It was written about his friend John Peel a Cumberland farmer who was famous for his addiction to hunting and his extravagant spending which exhausted his comfortable income and ultimately forced his sons to become servants!!

Ninety dogs were entered in the first ever Australian dog show 150 years ago. That show was held in Mr Joshua Moore's Livery Stable yard (also known as Moore's Horse Bazaar) located behind the Royal Hobart Hospital. I don't know what the entry fees are to today's Dog Exhibition, but entry into the 1862 Show was one shilling

for adults and sixpence for children. You might think that it was a bit on the high side when you learn that at that time the cost of beef was three pence per pound.

That first Show was quite a success for the Society's first President, John Woodcock Graves because he took out four first prizes for his dogs which included an Irish Red Setter, a Lemon and White Pointer, a Liver and White Pointer Dog and a Spaniel bitch. A report on this first Dog Show in Australia disclosed that the Judges for the show were Messrs. Elwin, Eddington and Ridge. The Report also discloses that Messr. Elwin and Ridge went home with some of the first prizes which makes you think that it all might have been a bit sus!! How things have change in the intervening 150 years.

In the quaint language of the day the Mercury Newspaper for the 13<sup>th</sup> November 1862 wrote this as an introduction to its report on that first Australian Dog Show:

*"The dog is proverbially the companion and friend of man in all climes. He is marked amongst what is called the brute creation, for his desertion of his own species to attach himself to man. He is domesticated in our homes, the courageous sharer in our dangers and the faithful comrade in our sports. Yet the family of dogs has its disreputable members as well as the family of men. And the lovers of this noble animal would be glad to see the breed free from the perpetuation of the useless non-descript curs, that are to be met with at every corner, and in every gutter; not only thoroughly*

*useless, but in many cases mischievous pests; and even tending sometimes to cause loss of valuable life, as in the case occurring not so many months back in Melbourne, where a worthless cur sallying out from some hole or the other at the heels of the horse of a gentleman of high military rank was the cause of death to that gallant officer."*

The newspaper article then went onto to praise the newly formed *Society for the improvement in the breed of dogs* for having as one of its objectives "the improvement of the breed of dogs," and to that end for initiating what the newspaper described as "an exhibition of a somewhat novel character (at least in these parts) in an attempt to check the multiplication of the aforesaid mongrels."

Well I don't suppose that any exhibitor at this sesquicentenary Exhibition of that first Dog Show sees themselves just in the business of "attempting to check the multiplication of mongrels!!" And conversely, I don't suppose that anyone who attended that first Australian Dog Show 150 years ago would have dreamt for a moment that 150 years on there would be an organisation administering all pure-bred canine activities in each State and Territory not to mention a national coordinating body in the shape of the Australian National Kennel Council. It has been a quantum leap.

Well, there is much to see and do at this All Breeds Championship Show with a special interest in the competition for the Best Australian Bred Exhibit in the Show the trophy for which has

kindly been donated by the Kennel Club. I congratulate Dogs Tasmania for organising this event and thank all the clubs, the judges and the exhibitors for supporting it, and without further ado I have much pleasure in declaring this sesquicentenary Exhibition of the first Dog Show in Australia open.