

**REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE PETER UNDERWOOD,
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA AC, AT A CELEBRATION TO MARK
THE APPLE IPAD PROGRAMME, A COLLABORATION BETWEEN
THE RESIDENTS OF THE FREEMASONS' HOME & UNITS,
LINDISFARNE AND YEAR NINE STUDENTS AT MACKILLOP
COLLEGE, WEDNESDAY, 4TH SEPTEMBER 2013**

It is a real pleasure for me and my wife to be back here at the invitation of the Aged Care Foundation of the Freemasons Homes of Southern Tasmania. I see that the Foundation has been busy since I launched it on 31st March four years ago. I said at the launch that the money raised by the Foundation "will be spent on 'things' as opposed to services for necessarily, all too often 'things' take second place to services in aged care homes, but things are often essential to improving the quality of the life of residents. [I said that I was] ... talking about additional outdoor furniture, bus hire for those important outings, equipment for music therapy, up-graded wheelchairs and so on." Well, the Foundation has done just that. The bus has been bought and is used for outings. Large screen TV's have been bought. Assistance has been given to the funding of Audrey's Bar, a DVD has been made and the website has been updated.

But we are here this afternoon to celebrate a development that I think is more exciting than anything that has gone before it. It involves the installation of technology - Wi-Fi - and the use of human resources in the shape of Year 9 students at MacKillop College. For the residents, it is a project that can open windows on the world far away from Lindisfarne. It is a project that can stimulate the brain, increase knowledge and provide access to people and programmes from all over the world. For the students, it is a project that will stimulate their teaching skills, improve their technical skills and provide them with

increased confidence, satisfaction and self-esteem as they broaden the horizons of people from an earlier generation.

When you and I were the same age as these wonderful students there was no TV and radio broadcasting was pretty rudimentary. If you wanted to go to England you went on a ship and it took about four weeks and if you wanted to make a 3 - minute phone call outside of Australia you had to book it in advance and the operator listened into the call to make sure the connection held up.

Since those days the changes that have occurred have been monumental. We have lived through the greatest period of change that society has ever seen - greater than the industrial revolution - following the development of the silicon chip and the computer. Right now, I can use my Ipad not only to speak to my daughter and the grandchildren who live in England, but also to see them on what is called *FaceTime* - I can see them and what they are doing now and they can see me here talking to you. Although I'm not going to utilise that technology because it is about 5 or 6 in the morning over there and I would not be too popular if I woke them all up, but that's just one example of the many technological advances that can now be utilised with access to the Internet.

The young are custodians of this technology. It's not that they were born any smarter than us. It's just that they grew up with this technology and are therefore lucky to be able to embrace it without seeing it as something new and therefore presumed to be difficult to learn. I remember boarding a plane not so long ago with my new phone and was struggling to find out how to turn it off. The Cabin Attendant

said, "Please turn your phone off, sir" and I snapped at him "I am trying to do just that" and quick as a flash he retorted, "I'll find a young person to do it for you"!!

For the residents, I urge you to embrace this technology and use the internet for it will improve the quality of your life. You will learn so much by using this technology to explore the world. As my wife, who is giving several addresses on the importance of engaging in life-long learning will tell you: "Life-long learning is critical to surviving, to thriving and, most importantly at our age, to flourishing as a human being. Life-long learning is critical to the maintenance of a fulfilling and stimulating life. It is essential to the maintenance of warm and interesting relationships with others. It is essential to a feeling of well-being and optimism and it is even essential to the maintenance of good health and at the least, very helpful to good relations with members of your family many of whom may be, or soon will be, younger than you."

"In our day, education was something you had to do between the ages of 6 and 16. But the landscape has changed and is continuously changing as we move through it. These days, life is seen as a continuum rather than divided into blocks of time, and learning is seen as lifelong, from first breath to last, and the key to a satisfying life at any age. By all accounts the over 65's these days are smarter than the last generation at the same age, use the internet more than any other age group, exercise more, engage in continuous learning, live longer and enjoy better health because of a greater awareness of how to protect and maintain good health. The aim of lifelong learning is for those involved in it "not to arrive anywhere but to travel with a wider, richer and more elevated

perspective”¹. In 2008, one hundred American centenarians were asked to give their most important tips for healthy aging and 89% of those polled said the most important thing was to keep your mind active.²

But here at the Freemasons’ Home, learning is not all one way. The other side of the equation is the young tutors from the MacKillop College. I expect that you have found out since the programme started that to be a good teacher you have to be a good learner, a good listener and be able to put yourself in the shoes of the learner. As you tutors use your knowledge and skills to encourage and enable your students to access and explore what the Internet can offer them, remember that you can learn from them as well. Ask your student what sort of thing he or she would like to learn, explore together rather than pushing the things that you enjoy. Don’t forget that Facebook and Twitter may be of critical importance to you when you are in Year 9, but maybe not too many of the residents here would feel the same way about it. However, FaceTime and Skype might be another matter altogether. Your job is to patiently inspire your students with possibilities. And I know that when the moment arrives – and it will arrive – when you can see that you have successfully shared your knowledge with another – transferred what’s in your head to another head - you will get a real buzz and experience that sense of satisfaction that is every successful teacher’s precious reward.

So it is indeed a celebration this afternoon. My wife joins with me in saying congratulations to the Foundation for setting the infrastructure

¹ “**Lifelong learning: concepts, theories and values**” by David Aspin, Monash University, Australia & Judith Chapman, Australian Catholic University.
Paper presented at SCUTREA, 31st Annual Conference, 3-5 July 2001, University of East London

² http://www.cbsnews.com/2100-500368_162-4304394.html accessed 2nd September 2013.

up; well done to the tutors from MacKillop College for giving their time and skills to this programme and well done to the residents who embrace the programme and thereby improve the quality of their lives.