

**AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE HONOURABLE PETER  
UNDERWOOD AC, GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA AT A RECEPTION FOR  
SUPPORTERS OF THE MAWSON'S HUTS REPLICA MUSEUM PROJECT  
WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2013**

It is a great pleasure for me and my wife to welcome you all here to Government House to celebrate the completion of the Mawson's Huts Replica Museum Project and to thank and pay tribute to those who so generously have contributed to it.

One hundred and two years and one day ago the great Australian explorer, Douglas Mawson and his team left Hobart headed for a scientific expedition in Antarctica. Yesterday, just 200 metres from the wharf from which Mawson and his expeditioners set sail, the Lord Mayor and David Jensen AM, officially opened a replica of one of Mawson's huts that is still standing at Cape Denison.

The Mawson's Huts Replica Museum Project would not have happened without David Jensen's single-minded driving force and imagination. David believed that there needed to be something tangible to enable the remarkable story of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition to reach the general public and so he set about the Replica Project beginning with instructions to Pete McCabe and Matt Tucker given during their time at Cape Denison with the 2010-11 Foundation conservation field party. These two heritage builders have been with the Project from start to finish, notwithstanding the arrival last month of Ned, Pete's first child.

Funding for the Project was secured through a special heritage grant of \$350,000 approved by the former Minister for the Environment, the Honourable Tony Burke, after extensive lobbying from Senator Carol Brown. For providing the land on which the Replica Museum has been built, the Foundation thanks the Lord Mayor, Councillors and staff of the Hobart City Council.

David Jensen quickly secured the services of some of Tasmania's finest consultants in the construction industry, with Circa's Robert Morris-Nunn and Martin Schmidt as architects, and Jim Gandy as engineer, all of whom offered their services at dramatically reduced costs or totally free of charge.

Critical also was the support of Will Clennett and Simon Cornelius of Clennett's Mitre 10 at Kingston. Although neither of them knew the Mawson story, they could see the potential of the project as a vital asset for Hobart, and pledged their support to provide all building materials and equipment needed at a substantially reduced cost. So, Clennett's became the project's principal sponsor and additionally both Simon and Will donated their labour.

Congratulations go to TasPorts that made available, free of charge, one of its huge waterfront buildings with sufficient room for the structures to be assembled as three components. In this building, fairly bristling with time-lapse cameras installed by Dr Chris Henderson, Josh Laws - Vos Construction's work and health safety expert - became a vital ally and mentor. Following in the footsteps of Mawson's men, the original team was joined by experienced designer and builder, Alan Davis, and component all-rounder, Tony Spandler.

The original huts in the Antarctic were built for snow to slide off, but in Hobart the roof had to cope with rain, not snow. The solution was to create a hidden plywood sub roof, sheathed in a waterproof membrane. The expense of doing this would have crippled the project but it was saved by the generous offer from Ardex to fully donate the waterproof membrane for the roof, and by Zaganite, the waterproofing specialists, who provided and fitted the membrane at minimal cost.

The project was greatly assisted by volunteers like Matt Tucker, Ted Bugg, Chris Henderson and Christian Gallagher, who got stuck into it during breaks from their regular jobs. In addition, Julian Bamping, Dan Tucker, and Ben Tucker threw their carpentry and welding skills into the ring, often at short notice and with little thought for recompense. Soon, more of the Tucker family became involved with Barbara Tucker becoming a familiar part of the team, treating the Baltic pine exterior cladding against rot and mould.

The Mawson's Huts Replica Project has been assisted by very many individuals and by very many businesses, and the Foundation says thank you to every one of them.

Alan Hansson's approach to solving technical problems earned him the title of the most under-stated "Sparkie" in Tasmania. We probably need him here at Government House.

Stuart Hamilton of Southern Lighting embraced the project enthusiastically, Sean de Freitas of Saunders Signs agreed to provide a sign for the Replica, Ian Loney became the mechanical engineer, and Telstra undertook to provide communications. Meanwhile, Christopher Crack had agreed to become the electrical engineer and Michael Small

gave his services as disability access consultant. Many others such as Dorma, Zane Wilson of Southern Glass, and Manfred Franks in New Zealand contributed to make the Project a reality.

Congratulations also go to Tasmania's media that played an important part in spreading enthusiasm for the project.

Under the watchful eye and guidance of archaeologist, Parry Kostaglou, Darryn Smith from Vos Construction, and surveyors Terry Cromer and Sam Walters ensured that the site was ready for the arrival of the Huts. Pre-cast footing pads for the Huts were supplied for free by "The Precasters". They had to be in place before the structures could be transported to site by Elliott's Crane Hire whose business manager Greg Smith had agreed to lift, transport and position the Huts on site at no cost.

One of Hobart's largest plumbing companies, Howrah Plumbers, brought its knowledge and expertise to ensure that the site was stable and conformed with all necessary water and drainage requirements. They were joined by Tony Spandler - the team's jack-of-all-trades – and by Tristan Barnett, a competent Bruny Island backhoe operator.

As you can see, the Project has been a wonderful and generous collaboration by so many people that it makes one feel proud to be Tasmanian.

Dan Tucker and his girlfriend, Edith, spent hours cutting holes in the module roofs, and fixing the wire-rope strops in place ready for the cranes to transport the Huts. Peter Harris, an internationally recognised veteran of many film sets and museum fit-outs, took up the task of

transforming the blond new timbers into something resembling Huts that had endured a smoke-filled interior that had endured a severe winter in Antarctica.

Meanwhile, at their premises on the eastern side of the Derwent, Tim William's Red Arrow team of Julie Hawker and Chris Vinny, interpretive specialists, put the finishing touches to their static and audio-visual displays, destined for the verandah corridors.

-----

David Jensen's vision is now a reality. Mawson's Huts Replica will serve as a reminder of the leadership, bravery and determination of the Mawson expedition more than 100 years ago. It will also provide those who visit it with a glimpse of what life was like for Mawson and his expeditioners. All this has only been possible by the generosity and support of so many. I say well done and congratulations to you all.

And now to help the celebration along we will have a little music. My wife is the Chair of the State Government's Tasmania Antarctic Gateway Working Party and she is also a musician so I thought that tonight it would be appropriate that she provide the music by accompanying Constantine Lavroff, a member of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra until he came to Tasmania to lead the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. Since his retirement Mr Lavroff has been the concert master of a number of Tasmanian amateur orchestras.

So, for just 5 minutes may I claim your complete attention for some beautiful music played in this beautiful Ballroom with its brilliant acoustic.