

**AN ADDRESS TO OPEN THE CHRIS RAE MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING ON BEHALF
OF THE HUTCHINS SCHOOL**

BY

**HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**

SANDY BAY, TUESDAY 3 AUGUST 2021

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land—the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and who continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

I acknowledge Head Master Dr Rob McEwan, Mr Chris Rae, Mr Gene Phair, Chairman of the Hutchins School Board, members of Hutchins Middle School and the wider School community.

Today is, of course, the 175th anniversary of the founding of The Hutchins School in 1846 as a memorial to The Venerable William Hutchins, first Archdeacon of the colony of Van Diemen's Land.

From the beginning, Hutchins has always understood the value and importance of education and community as a foundation from which a student can confidently launch themselves into the rest of their lives as upstanding members of society, guided by the Hutchins motto of 'what you do matters'.

As we open this new Middle School building – the newest addition to the Sandy Bay campus – it is important to reflect on some of the history of the School.

Hutchins commenced operations under Headmaster J R Buckland at Ingle Hall in lower Macquarie Street, one of the oldest homes still standing in Hobart. In 1849, it moved a few blocks up Macquarie Street to a purpose-built schoolhouse designed by Tasmanian architect, William Archer. That building is still in use today as the headquarters of the secretariat of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Living Marine Resources.¹

From that oldest of buildings planning for this newest of education spaces began in 2019. This was in response to a growing body of literature that recognised early adolescence as commencing between 11 and 12 years of age, and global recognition of Middle Schooling commencing in Year 6.²

¹ <https://www.ccamlr.org/en/organisation/secretariat> accessed 29 Jul 21

² Magenta and Black, 2019 Sem 1AA

The move of Year 6 students from the Junior to Middle School required more space, and this new building provides just that; increased outdoor space, breakout learning spaces for collaborative learning and large spaces that allow year groups to meet. As part of this development, a new Middle School drama space and a separate dance rehearsal space have also been included.

The building provides a contemporary educational environment informed by educational research in early adolescence, specifically tailored for boys' developmental needs. The Middle School review and restructure builds on the pioneering work done at the School over the past sixty years that continues to keep Hutchins at the forefront of boys' education.

The new Middle School building is named after Chris Rae, not only to acknowledge the example, contribution and character of a man who has made a mark on the lives of generations of young Hutchins students and alumni, but equally to provide an example to generations of Hutchins students in the future.³

According to the invitation for this opening, Chris is a man who epitomises the School's values of humility, kindness, courage and respect.⁴ His teaching career at the School spans 43 years. Chris was not only a teacher, but also an all-round contributor. He was Head of Boarding, Head of School House, Head of Senior School and coach of the First XVIII football team⁵.

He was awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Hutchins School Old Boys' Association in 2008. He won Old Boys' Ivied Tower Award in 2010, which is an award to recognise an old boy who has made an outstanding contribution in his field of endeavour.⁶

A quote in a Mercury article⁷ from 2015 reflects his approach to education:

“You’ve got to be a person who can without any effort connect with young people and you’ve got to value that connection and want to help them become the best person they can be with empathy and compassion, because without it we ain’t got nothing that’s worthwhile.”

³ Magenta and Black, No. 113, Winter 2021, pp 3,4

⁴ Middle School Open Day invitation

⁵ <https://www.hutchins.tas.edu.au/hsoba-committee/>

⁶ <https://www.hutchins.tas.edu.au/ivied-tower/>

⁷ <https://www.themercury.com.au/news/tasmania/teachers-delight-in-nurturing-role/news-story/a967a909d6c2dc910d12074bca157fe6> accessed 29 Jul 21

I am very pleased to be a part of your 175th anniversary celebrations and to be here to open this important and innovative Middle School facility, the Chris Rae Building.

Thank you