

**ROYAL HOBART HOSPITAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION**  
**REMARKS BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**  
**DRAWING ROOM, 10.30 AM WEDNESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2020**

Please be seated.

Dick and I warmly welcome you to this Morning Tea to acknowledge and thank Royal Hobart Hospital Research Foundation donors and volunteers.

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 continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

This year's Covid-19 restrictions necessarily dictate that we not only restrict numbers of attendees, but that, as you have been briefed, we are required to do away with the standard social mingling once the formalities are completed.

While this is a pity, I know that you will enjoy the musical performance after the speeches – as well as the Kitchen's nibbles! And the fact that we are able to gather at all is perhaps a reminder that we're more fortunate than many other countries in combating this pernicious disease.

We're also all very thankful that our health professionals and all of the other officials contributing to the Government response to the Coronavirus disease continue to do exceptional work on our behalf.

Dick and I have enjoyed hosting this event annually since my first year as Governor back in 2015 and so this is the last occasion on which we'll have the pleasure of acknowledging the generosity of the donors and volunteers to this most important Tasmanian medical research effort.

Looking back at some of the work that has been done is a reminder of the great range of achievements of the Research Foundation. I do recall mentioning once that one of the first areas of your research, back in the late 1990s, was into allergy to and treatment of jack jumper stings! I have to say, to now have a State basketball team named after our pugnacious little endemic is quite endearing, really.

I notice also from a listing of research areas that back in 1999 – soon after you had been established – Dr Greg Woods and a team used laboratory mice to study in the area of auto immune conditions such as diabetes, MS and lupus. And Dr Woods of course has subsequently played a major role in working towards a cure for DFTD Devil Facial Tumour Disease.

I mention Greg also because last year he contributed a significant chapter to the book *Saving the Tasmanian Devil: Recovery through Science-based Management* – a major CSIRO publication gathering twenty years of scientific medical research into combating Devil Facial Tumour Disease, and to which I was privileged to write the Foreword.

Clearly, this not human medical research. But it is international cutting-edge Tasmanian clinical research and, as with the work of your Foundation, underscores the importance of what our academic researchers and medical practitioners continue to achieve, in our population of just 500,000 Australians.

In fact I was interested to read in your official magazine *Quest*, in last Summer's edition, that you awarded a research grant to Dr Andy Files and others, researching treatment by which immune system antibodies target and block the action of cancer-causing proteins.

It is ground-breaking work and here is a quote relevant to the point I am making: "Dr Files has come full circle from researching human medicine, to Tasmanian devils, and now back to humans, highlighting the value of considering reaching across traditional research boundaries to benefit the Tasmanian community now and into the future."<sup>i</sup> End quote.

And just this morning, I read of the work Dr Dino Premilovac and his team are doing on using microbubbles to deliver drugs to the brain in treating brain cancer and stroke.

And so for me as Patron of the Foundation, this annual event, no matter how modest it may seem, is a heartfelt thanks to each individual who contributes so positively and quietly. And indeed the Foundation's investment of well over half a million dollars annually into local health and medical research is, in its own way, priceless.

Thank you.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://www.rhhresearchfoundation.org/sites/default/files/publications//rhhrf-quest-nl\\_summer-2019.pdf](https://www.rhhresearchfoundation.org/sites/default/files/publications//rhhrf-quest-nl_summer-2019.pdf), accessed 13 October 2020.