

**ROYAL LAUNCESTON SHOW
OPENING SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
LAUNCESTON SHOWGROUNDS, THURSDAY 10 OCTOBER 2019**

Good morning. Dick and I are very happy indeed to join you at this official opening of the 2019 Royal Launceston Show. As Governor and Patron of the Royal National Agricultural and Pastoral Society of Tasmania, I was as pleased as anyone else to read on the home page of your website the words:

“The Royal Launceston Show has been saved!”

The fact that the Show is again a one-day event is immaterial, in my opinion. What counts is that the organising committee, the exhibitors and stallholders, the judges and entertainers – and of course all of you who have bought tickets to attend – have decided that the show must go on!

So may I congratulate everyone here in Launceston and surrounds, in ensuring that the Launceston Show, first held in 1873, continues to be a significant showcase of Tasmanian agricultural excellence.

As a child, the local show (The Royal Hobart Show) was a highlight of the year, something that we looked forward to for months. But the last few years have been a very challenging time for agricultural shows, with declining attendances and rising costs. This has required organisers to move with times and adapt, to reimagine what these events should offer.

There are two recent things that promise a revival of our agricultural shows. The first is the Federal Government’s announcement of a \$20 million grants scheme to help keep shows alive. This will provide up to \$500,000 per grant to upgrade, maintain, build or buy new showground infrastructure. The second promising thing is the success of the recent Burnie Show at its new venue which attracted big crowds delighting its organisers.

There will be ten more agricultural shows in Tasmania from now until the end of November, and it's vital that each of them continues. As Launceston Show Society president Jock Gibson has said recently, the future of this show is tied to the future of the Tasmanian show circuit as a whole.¹

Agricultural shows bring communities together and keep them together. This is particularly true of the smaller country shows where you will find almost all families in the area volunteering, exhibiting and showing or at the very least attending. And agricultural shows are important because they encourage people from the cities and large towns to better understand where their food and fibre comes from.

In closing, then, I again offer my congratulations to the Royal National Agricultural and Pastoral Society of Tasmania for keeping alive the tradition of the Launceston Show. And well done to everyone who is supporting this day. As you will have seen from the program, there is a great deal to enjoy. My Governor's challenge to all the kids who are here today: see if you can visit every single animal and bird exhibit and then choose your favourite. And a piece of advice: don't eat too much from your Show Bag before you go on one of those thrill-seeker rides.

Thank you.

¹ <https://www.examiner.com.au/story/6362732/royal-launceston-show-to-go-on-in-2019/>, accessed 6 October 2019.