

**ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA – NORTHERN BRANCH
SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY
SUNDAY 27 JUNE 2021**

Good afternoon.

I wish 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.

In respect of our First peoples, may I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the importance of the recent paired apologies offered by the Royal Society of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery to the Aboriginal people of Tasmania – at which event I know that my predecessor Kate Warner was present, having been associated the apology and now formulating a response for consideration by Government.

In my role as Governor, I intend to be fully committed to continuing the complex but ultimately uplifting work of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Tasmanians.

Ladies and gentlemen, to be able to mark a centenary of continuous active operation in any form is cause for celebration.

Don and I are honoured to be here. On a personal note, Don was co-author of a book on trust law with the current Executive Director of the Royal Society in London, Julie Maxton. Both also share equally broad Scots accents. Also, Don and I attended here some years ago when he spoke to you about the ethical issues in personalised medicine.

Governor Sir William Allardyce, as President presided over your first meeting in June 1921, He was Tasmania's 14th Governor. I am the 29th, and the 9th Australian-born Governor.

And as you will no doubt hear from Lynette and Mary, the relationship between the Vice-Regal office – through presidency or patronage – and the Society has been virtually indivisible since your inception in the early 1840s. This is another reason why we look forward to regular interactions with the Society, both externally and at Government House. We had the pleasure already of attending last week a very interesting event on “Climate Challenges” organised by the Royal Society of Tasmania with the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering, Tasmanian Division, with Mary of course present.

Insofar as the mission of the Society is promoting and advancing knowledge through public engagement, through the support of academic excellence and through objective policy advice, you are the pre-eminent such body in Tasmania and all Tasmanians are fortunate that your robust and diverse membership ensures a continuing high standard of output, as expressed in the Papers and Proceedings, in other published works and in public activities such as lectures.

There have been six Fellows of the Royal Society with connections to Tasmania but only two native born. Professor Barber founded our Department of Botany at UTAS and Emeritus Professor David Green born here in Launceston is a preeminent geologist on magmas of moon and earth interiors,

So here in Launceston, we do look forward to Ralph Bottrill’s lecture, which by its title is as Tasmanian as you can get and that seems most fitting to mark the Centenary of the Northern Branch.

Thank you.