

2017 TASMANIAN ARCHITECTURE AWARDS
SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
ST DAVID'S CATHEDRAL, HOBART, SATURDAY 24 JUNE 2017

Good evening everyone and thank you for inviting my husband Dick and me to the 2017 Tasmanian Architecture Awards.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land – to pay respect to those that have passed before us and to acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community who are the custodians of this land.

May I acknowledge among the distinguished guests: Minister Guy Barnett MP; Leader of the Opposition Rebecca White MP; Tasmanian Chapter President Yvette Breytenbach; Tasmanian Chapter Immediate Past President Brad Wheeler.

This is the second occasion that we have had the pleasure of attending these awards; the last time in an apple shed and this time a cathedral. I wonder where next? As you all know these awards celebrate and acknowledge the finest achievements in Tasmanian architecture and they provide an opportunity for the profession to showcase exemplary Tasmanian design and to publicly acclaim and promote the excellence of our architectural achievements.ⁱ

I have thoroughly enjoyed looking at your website to examine the entries in the categories, including Commercial Architecture, Education, Heritage, Interior Architecture, Public Architecture, and Small Project Architecture. I am going to take a rather selective look at some of the entries, starting with a little background information to explain away any bias.

Before my appointment as Governor, Dick and I lived at Valleyfield, New Norfolk, a house on the river built somewhere in the years between the grant of land in 1813 and its licensing as the Kings Head Inn in 1822, which was three years before the well-known Bush Inn was licensed. As well as the farmhouse we had a number of outbuildings, a sandstone and brick granary, stables, a sandstone coach-house built in 1830 for the coach service which

ran from New Norfolk, and a round brick oast-house built in 1883. While the coach-house was added to and converted into an earlier hop kiln in 1854, the demise of the hop industry in the 1980s meant that these old buildings became redundant.

Re-use of redundant buildings is a particular interest of Dick's and of mine. For this reason the heritage category particularly caught my attention and I was particularly impressed with the conversion of the Launceston sub-station adjacent to the Gorge into a stunning house. Without this conversion the building, which had ceased to be used for its original purpose and was without a use, was falling into a state of disrepair.

The alterations to Laroon, the 1920 house in the Federation Arts and Crafts style also impressed because of the way the house has been so sympathetically adapted to modern living with increasing light in the kitchen and dining area. And I loved the new iron fence which has very much a Charles Rennie Mackintosh look.

I was also enchanted by Captain Kelly's cottage on Bruny Island, about which it is said that, 'contemporary interventions have been undertaken and inserted within the heritage structure, to make the building more responsive to today's living standard.'ⁱⁱ

At this stage of my browsing of the entries, I thought I should brush up on architect's jargon to make sure I was getting the most out of the text accompanying the entries. So I consulted everyman's architect, Kevin McCloud, to understand the architectural significance of words like 'insertion' and 'intervention' — and learnt that an intervention is merely a bit added or changed, but an insertion is a little more drastic and something that looks as though it has been inserted right inside the building without any lubrication.

So of course, with my interest in heritage buildings, I was also intrigued by the alterations and extensions all designed to make something old new again.

Looking at the small projects made me want to check out Picnic Island Lodge at Freycinet, one of my favourite places in Tasmania, and more locally Princes Park Toilets, which will give me the opportunity to applaud the Lord Mayor about her City of Hobart Public Toilet Strategy.

The six entrants in the new Residential Houses category provided me with more education about fascinating architectural terminology, such as the D'Entrecasteaux House with its stunning 'stone-walled outer skin' and 'face-fixed bespoke glazing' and Sunnybanks House with its 'elegant durable material palette'.

It is wonderful to see too the imagination that goes into educational buildings. In my role as Governor I have visited a number of child and family centres around the State and have been impressed with the design of these amazing places, which has helped make them such welcoming venues for families and children from lower socioeconomic status areas. I understand that a number of these centres have received architectural awards: Liminal Architecture receiving the Public Architecture Award for the Bridgewater Tagari lia Children and Family Centre in 2013; and an international award for Morrison & Breytenbach for the Chigwell Child and Family Centre in 2013.

For this reason I was interested to see the two entrants in the Educational Category: the Lady Gowrie Integrated Centre for Children and Families; and the Lauderdale Primary Kinder & Classroom Additions.

In closing I commend the work that you are all doing to make inspirational spaces and structures for Tasmanians and visitors to our island, to enjoy now and into the future and I congratulate you for that.

Thank you.

ⁱ <http://wp.architecture.com.au/tasawards/>

ⁱⁱ <http://wp.architecture.com.au/tasawards/2017-awards/2017-heritage/captain-kellys-cottage/>