

**TASMANIAN CANINE DEFENCE LEAGUE INC / DOGS' HOMES OF
TASMANIA
REMARKS BY HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE
WARNER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA, MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2019**

[Vice-Regal Salute is played]

Good evening and welcome to Government House for this reception to mark the forthcoming 70th anniversary of the Tasmanian Canine Defence League.

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.

May I acknowledge among you:

- the Honourable Elise Archer MP;
- Sarah Lovell MLC;
- David O'Byrne MP;
- Alison Standen MP;
- Beth Warren, Clarence City Council;
- Becher [*Beech-er*] Townsend, TCDL Patron;
- Carol Hughes, TCDL President, Denise Bower Vice-President and fellow Board members;
- Michael Sertori, CEO;
- Stuart Gillies, Animal Welfare League Australia National Executive Officer.

Ladies and gentlemen, insofar as this is a landmark event, namely to anticipate the 70th anniversary of the Tasmanian Canine Defence League during 2020, I thought I would say a few words about your founder, Joan Rawson, known to one and all as Gladys. And we could speculate how she might never have considered that what she began so modestly in 1950 would have become today's successful and hugely supported statewide Dogs' Homes of Tasmania.

When she was 45 years old Gladys migrated from England to Tasmania and secured work with the Tasmanian Farmers Federation as its southern secretary. In this role she travelled around Tasmania and saw the plight of stray and unwanted dogs, and the poor standard of council pounds.

So, with no funding but full of determination, energy and passion she and friends formed an organisation dedicated to dog welfare. On the 15th of November 1950 at a Hobart Town Hall public meeting, the Tasmanian Canine Defence League was formed, modelled on the English version.

Gladys and colleagues built kennels on a property in South Hobart, but the venture did not find favour with the Hobart Council and was closed down. Nonetheless she persisted in her efforts and five years later celebrated the opening of the Hobart Dogs' Home in Derwent Park, which in time became the official pound for four local councils.

She also oversaw the opening of dogs' homes in Launceston, Devonport and Burnie, so building up a statewide care system for lost and stray dogs.

In 1991 the Hobart Dogs' Home was relocated to its then brand-new site at Risdon Vale. Gladys had retired by this time but she visited the new home and, as has been written on the website of the Tasmanian Government's Honour Roll of Women, she was heard repeating: "I can't believe it."ⁱ

Joan "Gladys" Rawson was awarded a British Empire Medal in 1983 for service to animal welfare. And what a fitting award that was too.

Thank you.

[... invites Michael Sertori to the lectern; after which David invites HE with Carol Hughes, President and Denise Bower, Vice-President, to cut the anniversary cake]

ⁱ http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/csr/programs-and-services/tasmanian_honour_roll_of_women/inductees/2008/rawson,_joan_gladys_bem, accessed 16 November 2019.