

**TASMANIAN CONSERVATION TRUST REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA, TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2018**

Good evening and welcome to this reception to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Tasmanian Conservation Trust.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land— the Mouheneener 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:

- Michael Lynch, President;
- Peter McGlone, Director;
- Current and former Councillors and staff;
- Vica Bayley, The Wilderness Society;
- Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania.

And this is also the time to thank thank all members, supporters and current and past staff and councillors, including those who may have been unable to attend this celebration.

I think it's fair to say at the outset that despite the well-known clashes and attendant publicity which have characterised so much of Tasmania's conservation story, the greater reality is that managing and protecting our island's wilderness and resources is something most Tasmanians care about – be that a farmer managing his or her land in a sustainable way, an urban resident cleaning up the local beach, a council improving recycling practice; or a Governor walking in seeking to promote enjoyment of our national parks and reserves and support of conservation projects such as the Save the Tasmanian Devil Project.

And the Tasmanian Conservation Trust is emblematic of that care, with, now, your 50-year track record to prove it. Indeed as your own website states:

“As a non-political organisation, [the TCT] can engage with government, industry and the wider community in a non-confrontationist manner to achieve genuine, on-ground conservation outcomes.”¹

These have been many, including Precipitous Bluff; Wellington Park; the Tamar Valley Pulp Mill; supertrawler bans; federal and state environment legislation; the Reservation of Crown Land Program and the Tas Tyre Clean-up program. In addition there is the behind the scenes work participating in committees and making submissions to government in relation to such issues as container deposit legislation.

The range of these issues is considerable and is further testament to the ability of the TCT to be influential at the highest levels of political and corporate decision-making.

In thinking of this reception, I recalled some research documents we have here relating to Government House and the Domain and what might be a relatively early instance of conservation-aware civic-mindedness. It came from an editorial in the Hobart *Mercury* in 1875. I will quote briefly from it:

“Now that His Excellency the governor [Sir Frederick Weld] has manifested an active interest in the improvement of the Queen's Domain there appears to be substantial ground for hoping that this long neglected park will be brought to a degree of perfection which will reflect credit on the city ... the fact being fully recognised that [this] indispensable reserve [is] in reality the lungs of the city.”²

What struck me with that phrase was the understanding back then of the importance of trees within the urban environment, as a clearinghouse for pollution.

Governor Weld actually exerted a lot of influence in the rehabilitation of both the Domain and the Government House grounds, including our beautiful Quarry Pond, which previously had been little more than an abandoned old quarry filled with water, before he had the lovely pathways and stone walls erected and also trees and ferns planted.

In conclusion, those of you who haven't been here are most welcome if you wish to have a look at our State Rooms in this area. In terms of interior design and furnishings they are a living representation of our island as it was in the mid-Nineteenth Century, and so their cultural importance is very evident. As the current custodians of this building and Estate we take our responsibilities seriously.

On that note, then, congratulations again on achieving the milestone 50th anniversary. And as enjoyable background music this evening we have a Taroona High School Flute Ensemble and Jazz ensemble. Perhaps we can give both groups a round of applause.

Please now do enjoy the reception. Thank you.

¹ <http://www.tct.org.au/legacy/>, accessed 26 November 2018.

² *Mercury*, Tuesday 27 July 1875, page 2.