

**23<sup>RD</sup> AUSTRALIAN TREFOIL GUILD GATHERING**  
**SPEECH BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA, HOBART, SATURDAY 19 MAY 2018**

Thank you for inviting me to address the 23<sup>rd</sup> Australian Trefoil Guild Gathering, on this the second day of your 3-day program in Hobart.

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.

I would like to acknowledge among you:

- Rosemary Derwin, Chief Commissioner Girl Guides Australia;
- Joanna Folder, State Commissioner Girl Guides Tasmania.

And as both Governor of Tasmania and the Patron of Girl Guides Tasmania, I particularly welcome interstate and overseas attendees.

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts have as your symbol the Trefoil and this symbol gives the Trefoil Guild its name. Many years ago I was a brownie and then a guide and I have many good memories of those days. As patron I have had the opportunity to update my knowledge of guiding, remind myself of the Guide and Brownie promise I made so many years ago and the Guide law.

I have learnt about Olaves and the Trefoil Guild and that the latter is ‘the adult section of guiding’ and despite the fact that the underlying theme for the activities of the Trefoil Guild is ‘fun, food, flexibility and freedom’, I know that ‘adult section’ means something different from the ‘adult section’ of a newsagency!

In fact I understand that the purpose of a Trefoil Guild is to keep alive the spirit of the Guide Promise and Law; to carry that spirit into the community and to support guiding. This of course means that serving the community and helping others is central.

Instead I would like to say something about your logo for the weekend, namely: "Have a devil of a time in Tassie." It's highly appropriate then that this afternoon you have a speaker from ZooDoo on the Tasmanian devil.

I am sure you will hear about the Save the Devil Program and the work that is being done to combat the devil facial tumour disease which has afflicted this unique animal, the largest marsupial carnivore (largest since the Tasmanian Tiger became extinct) and threatened it with extinction.

Knowing that one of the activities of the Trefoil Guilds is to be informed about topics by having guest speakers, I feel justified in complementing what you will hear this afternoon.

The Tasmanian Devil is Tasmania's official animal emblem, something that has occurred during my term as Governor, when in the Executive Council I exercised the Royal Prerogative to declare, by proclamation, that *Sarcophilus harissii*, the Tasmanian Devil, be adopted as the Animal Emblem of Tasmania. When explaining the role of Governor, and the Executive Council, it is a useful example, but I must say is not typical of business of that Council!

Their plight, as dreadful as it is, is also a story of literally thousands of individuals, all over the world, unselfishly working together to try to save our unique little carnivore.

There has been a great deal of money spent in trying to understand and combat the facial tumour disease, which is a rare transmissible cancer. But in laboratories and zoos all over the world people are working to save the devil. Primarily the scientific work is being done at the University of Sydney and Cambridge University in the UK and at our own University of Tasmania but many other institutions are also involved.

And here in Tasmania the dedicated staff and volunteers of the Save the Devil Programme have spent countless hours looking after their welfare – from caring for orphans, to tracking released disease-free devils raised in captivity, to staring into laboratory microscopes.

I have to say I have fallen in love with the Tasmanian devil. This started at a reception we had in 2015 for the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program. That was particularly memorable because, Dr David Pemberton, who leads the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program, brought along some orphaned devil imps he was bottle-feeding and I had the wonderful experience of holding them.

And last year during our municipal visit to Dorset on the NE Coast, Dick and I went to Wukalina/Mt William National Park to be briefed about the Wild Devil Recovery Project in which disease-free captive-bred devils are released into the wild.

There we learnt much more about the devil, including their mating habits — mating is a violent affair in which the male bites the female by the scruff of the neck and drags her back to his den where she is forced to stay for up to a week until she is no longer in estrus (on heat). We saw a maternity den and a devil latrine, and two of captive-bred devils who had been recaptured being examined to see how well they were faring.

Just last Thursday we had a wonderful morning with a STDP team on a field trip in the bush in the Derwent Valley near Fentonbury, which is about an hour or so from Hobart. Included in our group was the President and CEO of Toledo Zoo in Ohio, Jeffrey Sailer, whose organisation is contributing \$700,000 to the STDP and whose zoo has three Tasmanian Devils as an exhibit to raise the profile of the devil and inspire others to help save it.

We observed as Dr Billie Lazenby, a young scientist with the STDP and a volunteer, checked the Devils traps they had set the day before. The traps had captured three devils, all young 12-month-old devils. The reaction of the devils to being trapped is amazing to see. Once they are tipped from the trap into a sack they remain almost immobile, as if in a freeze response.

Billie carefully stroked the devil through the sack before gently opening it to examine the devil for evidence of devil facial tumour disease, to microchip the animal, weigh it, and take samples. She was able to open each devil's mouth to count its teeth and examine its gums for any evidence of disease. All of this is recorded by the volunteer and the samples are placed in little tubes to be later analysed.

And then I was able to take the sack and release two devils. We were relieved that the three devils we saw were free of disease. The previous day two of the captured devils were badly affected by the facial tumour disease and had to be euthanised.

It is wonderful that there has been such interest in trying to save the devil from extinction and that places such as the Toledo Zoo are providing funds that can employ scientists on the programme.

Enough for now about devils!

In conclusion, then, may I reiterate my welcome to you all.

I am proud to be associated with Girl Guides. I am Patron of many organisations, but not many of those date back well over one hundred years, when girl guide groups began forming here and in the UK from 1909.

Thank you.