

**COMBINED COMMONWEALTH SOCIETIES OF TASMANIA
LUNCHEON TO MARK THE BIRTHDAY OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
LENAH VALLEY RSL, TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2024**

Good afternoon, everyone. Don and I thank you for this opportunity to celebrate the 75th Birthday of His Majesty The King with you all.

I pay my respects to Muwinnina people on whose country we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community as ongoing custodians of country and recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea and waters.

Our Combined Commonwealth Royal and Loyal Societies represent a cross section of our community that is committed to the continued support and celebration of our Monarchy and its roots in the institutions of the Commonwealth. I thank you all for your commitment.

I am delighted to be here with you all for lunch to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty King Charles III, King of Australia. The King's birthday was first celebrated in Australia in 1788 when Governor Arthur Phillip declared a holiday to mark King George III's birthday. Originally the holiday fell on a monarch's actual birthday. However, after the death of His Majesty's great grandfather, King George V in 1936, the celebration is held on the second Monday in June, close to his actual birthday.¹

King Charles III was born on the 14 November 1948. He was christened Charles Philip Arthur George in the Music Room at Buckingham Palace by the Archbishop of Canterbury on 15 December. This is His Majesty's 76th birthday.

We all know that this past year has been a difficult one for His Majesty and for the Royal Family. On 5 February, a statement was issued from Buckingham Palace advising that diagnostic tests had identified a form of cancer. That diagnosis and subsequent treatment meant that His Majesty stepped back from public duties until his return was announced on 26 April.

¹ [https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/Australian/King's birthday](https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/Australian/King's_birthday), accessed 11/6/2024.

On 17 January, a statement was released from Kensington Palace that Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales was admitted to hospital for planned surgery. That surgery was successful. It was later revealed that Catherine, too, had been diagnosed with cancer. A month ago, Prince William confirmed during a hospital visit that his wife is “doing well...”².

Our thoughts and best wishes remain with His Majesty and Her Royal Highness.

Despite these health issues, there is much to celebrate today. The Monarchy remains an aspect of our system of Government. Under His Majesty’s leadership, the Commonwealth continues apace and many of you were at Government House on 13 March, when we celebrated Commonwealth Day 2024.

We know that His Majesty is continuing with plans to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa in October. The theme of that meeting concentrates on resilience: resilience of our democratic institutions, resilience in the face of climate change, resilient economies and resilient societies.

We are aware of plans for His Majesty to include a short visit to Australia around the time of CHOGM. Although we have no advice about a Royal visit to Tasmania, we remain hopeful.

There is much for us to reflect upon, and much to look forward to. It is fitting in this second year of His Majesty’s reign, that we celebrate all The King has done, and will continue to do, in our service. Long may he reign.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, please stand for the Loyal Toast”

[Pause. The first verse of God Save The King is played.]

“The King”

² <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-05-11/princess-catherine-cancer-health-doing-well-prince-william-says/103834558> accessed 20 May 24