



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

**RECEPTION FOR THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY**

Wednesday 11 April, 2018

Your Excellency Dr Anna Prinz, Ambassador of the Republic of Germany

Mr Graham Goldsmith, Chancellor, Swinburne University of Technology

Professor Linda Kristjanson AO, Vice-Chancellor and President, Swinburne University of Technology

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

First, I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their elders past and present and to any elders here with us this evening.

I am delighted to welcome you all to Government House to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Swinburne University.

In celebrating this important milestone, I note that Swinburne is able to do just what many of us would like to do for ourselves. It is legitimately celebrating a 25th birthday when it is, in fact, miles older!

One hundred and ten years old, to be precise. That is, 110 years since George and Ethel Swinburne established the Eastern Suburbs Technical College in Hawthorn.

What would they think, I wonder, if they stood with us today to celebrate the 25 years since this technical college became a university?

Full of pride for a start, no doubt, that what was created in order to serve those without access to further education, had not only survived, but thrived. And proud that it was being recognised in this beautiful Government House – a place George Swinburne must have visited many times as a Minister in our State parliament, or as a Board member or trustee of the University of Melbourne, the Library, the museums and the NGV.

If he were able to join us in this room, I expect that he would be surprised by how things had changed for the technical college to which he and Ethel generously contributed £15,000.

They could not have foreseen that a student body of 80 young Victorian men would become 50,000 men and women – from 100 countries around the world.

They could not have anticipated that core subjects of carpentry, blacksmithing, plumbing and gas fitting would evolve into engineering, aviation, ICT, business, film and television, design and bio-research, amongst many others.

And they would never have expected that ‘the Tech’ would become a fully-fledged university, ranked among the world’s top 400 universities by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. Or that it would be placed in the top 60 young universities, holding particularly high rankings in art and design, engineering and science.

Having said all that, I expect that there is much that would not seem at all strange to George and Ethel Swinburne if they were bearing witness to this 25th anniversary celebration.

Despite all that has changed, what has remained consistent to their original vision, and central to the University today, is the commitment to social inclusion and industry engagement: the capacity of this institution to keep its metaphoric finger on the economic pulse of our state, to meet current and emerging trends and needs.

That was patently clear when I visited the Hawthorn campus a few months ago.

I toured the fully immersed Industry 4.0 facility, which, through strategic partnerships with industry, supports the training of a skilled workforce to help transition the Australian economy

to the fourth industrial revolution of digitisation, robotics, industrial automation, design and advanced manufacturing. I know that you, Your Excellency, are here this evening because of your interest in and support for this particular area.

I visited the new Swinburne Smart Cities Research Institute.

Nothing could be dearer to Melbourne's heart, or more important for us on the world stage, than the expertise of creating liveable cities: how to design, build and maintain them, how to make them sustainable, and how to ensure they best meet human needs as they grow in size and scale.

And I visited the Swinburne Design Centre, developed in collaboration with the world's first Design Factory at Aalto University in Helsinki.

The Design Factory Global Network now includes centres in China, Chile, Portugal and the Netherlands. It joins students, research leaders, industry partners and entrepreneurs to solve complex problems and generate innovative design solutions.

There cannot be a better example of international and industrial collaboration and hands on experience. The practical ways to prepare students for work, just as George and Ethel Swinburne had aspired – only framed in contemporary terms.

Congratulations belong to many people.

May I mention Mr Graham Goldsmith, Chancellor and his Council. And of course Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Linda Kristjanson AO, whose leadership over the last seven years, has shown vision, innovative thinking and the successful furthering of international links and industry partnerships that will see Swinburne University flourish for the next 25 years and for generations of students beyond that.

That leaves me only to say, Happy 25th Anniversary Swinburne University.