



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

**PETER MAC'S 70th ANNIVERSARY
AFTERNOON TEA**

Thursday 25th July 2019

The Honourable Maxine Morand, Chair, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Board of Directors

Ms Lisa Dunlop, Interim Chief Executive, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

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 with us this afternoon.

Tony and I are delighted that you could join us here at Government House to mark the important milestone of Peter Mac's 70th anniversary.

I feel not only the connection with you as a proud patron, but also as someone with a particularly close person to me who shares your birth year. I know that 1949 was a vintage year!

Most importantly, like almost every other Victorian, I feel the connection with Peter Mac, having family and friends treated there - in the past, as well as today.

And like every single Victorian, I am grateful, knowing that you are there if and when the need arises.

Although neither your achievements to date, nor your aspirations for the future, can in any way be described as humble, that is certainly an apt description of your beginning.

In 1949, the Cancer Institute was established with a budget of just £30,000, and in just one room at the former Queen Victoria Hospital.

Your growth was phenomenally fast, with the establishment soon of a Visiting Nursing Service - to enable cancer patients to receive care at home. Services then extended to country Victoria, the rapid growth of treatment options, and new technologies and a permanent home in St Andrews Place.

And of course, since 2016, Peter Mac has resided in the magnificent purpose-built Comprehensive Cancer Centre.

It is a landmark building - beautifully designed to be as comfortable as possible to stay in or visit, and as efficient as possible to work in.

The attractive building, however, is just a shell for what really matters – what happens inside. And although it is ‘state of the art’ in the most contemporary way, it houses an ethos that dates back a full 70 years.

It continues to uphold Sir Peter MacCallum’s vision to be a cancer centre ‘*unsurpassed in the world*’. A centre ‘*where humanity, caring service and relentless research share equal value.*’ It is a centre which upholds Sir Peter’s vision that ‘*Nothing but the best is good enough in the treatment of cancer.*’

If Sir Peter MacCallum were alive today, he would see that his vision is fully supported by what is now more than 2,500 staff including some 580 research staff, providing equity of access in Australia’s only public hospital solely dedicated to caring for people affected by cancer.

He would see a building specifically designed to ensure that care, research and teaching can come together.

He would see this Centre as the gateway to, and as one of the flagship centres in, Melbourne’s world-renowned bio-medical precinct.

And he would see cancer treatments that he could never have imagined when he died 45 years ago now: robot-assisted surgery, CAR T-cell therapy and a personalised approach to treatment – and so much more than that too - thanks to many of you in this room.

Above all, he would be proud to see the organisation's unaltered commitment to putting the patient at the heart of everything that you do.

As the Governor of Victoria, I have accepted many compliments on behalf of Peter Mac, both here and when representing the State overseas.

We can all feel proud that it is referred to with such respect in so many different jurisdictions, as an acknowledged world leader in cancer treatment and cancer research.

You will recall that when the U.S. Vice-President, Joe Biden, visited in 2016, he was keen to include a visit to Peter Mac as a central part of his short stay in Victoria. (I note that, in a perfect tribute to Victoria, he managed in the one day to visit Peter Mac and a footy game at the MCG!)

It is often said that there are few subspecialties in medicine, or perhaps in any field at all, where developments are followed as eagerly - or with as much hope - by the wider community, as they are in cancer treatment.

What needs to be said as well is just how much the community appreciates all those who contribute to the field.

Thank you to every person who works at the Centre: the medical and allied clinical staff, the researchers, the educators, the Executive Team and all those who work in administration, as well as those who look after the building.

Thank you to the generous philanthropists and donors, without whom our State could never have been the leader in health and medical research ...or for that matter, in many and various fields.

And a warm thank you to your army of caring volunteers.

Congratulations to Maxine Morand, the Board Chair and the Board of Directors for their stewardship of all of the above, and in maintaining and building on the Peter Mac vision.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the strength and the courage of the patients, and the tireless dedication and support of their families.

That leaves me only to say, as your proud Patron, and on behalf of the people of Victoria, 'Thank you Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and Happy 70th Birthday'.