



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

**RSL 101st ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMISTICE AND 100th ANNIVERSARY OF
REMEMBRANCE DAY RECEPTION**

Wednesday 6th November 2019

Dr Robert Webster OAM, State President, Returned and Services League of Australia, Victorian Branch, and our host this evening.

The Honourable Robin Scott MP, Assistant Treasurer & Minister for Veterans, Representing the Premier

The Honourable Ted Baillieu, former Victorian of Premier

The Honourable, Michael O'Brien MP, Leader of the Victorian Opposition

The Honourable Shayne Neumann MP, Commonwealth Shadow Minister for Veterans & Defence Personnel

Commodore Greg Yorke, CSC RANR, Senior Naval Officer Victoria, Royal Australian Navy

Major General Andrew Bottrell CSC and Bar, DSM, Head of Land Systems Division, Australian Army

Group Captain Greg Donaldson, Representing Senior Air Force Officer, Victoria, Royal Australian Air Force

Consuls-General

Mr Roger Clifton, Chair, Victorian Veterans Council

Veterans

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.

Next Monday, at 11am, it will be the 100th time in Australia and the allied countries that we have stopped – in silence – to recognise the lives lost in World War 1, and in other wars, conflicts and missions across the decades since.

I have the privilege of following a long line of Governors to place a wreath on behalf of the people of Victoria at precisely 11am – as the sun shines onto the poignant words ‘Greater Love Hath No Man’ – etched in the Stone of Remembrance within the marble floor of the Sanctuary.

Each time that I have done that, I have been conscious that so many around me have served, but that I have not.

It makes me more determined to fulfil the responsibility of this role, to do all that I can do to ensure that our community – such a changed and still rapidly changing community – will reflect and remember all those who have served and sacrificed to make our lives peaceful, safe, fair and prosperous.

We Australians and Victorians are diverse. We are comprised of first peoples who have lived on this land for many thousands of years, of those whose families have been here for around 200 years, and of very many from different countries and backgrounds who have arrived since then. As veterans are no longer with us, or as they age, we need newer generations to fully understand what our Australian Defence Force has done and continues to do on our behalves.

That is not new news to you in this room.

So many of you have served and/or are the close supporters of those who served. You are the advocates. The leaders who lend a hand, drive a vet to an appointment or run yoga classes for the inner peace that, for some, can be elusive after deployment. You are the ones who gather vets together. You are the custodians of many of the stories. You are often the ones who help younger generations to understand what those stories mean and why they matter.

This evening gives us the opportunity to say 'Thank you'.

Tony and I appreciate what you do.

We appreciate the open conversations with the people that we meet at RSLs, memorials and in mess rooms around our State. We appreciate your warm hospitality in many settings, including here this evening at ANZAC House.

May I take this opportunity too to note how we are always honoured by the wonderful service of our Military Aides. And that we are grateful to – and impressed by – the young servicemen and women who volunteer to help us on big Open Days at Government House.

Most importantly of all, as we gather in such warm and engaging circumstances this evening, may I also say just how much we think of all those on active duty, and wish for the safe return home of every one of them.