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.

Tony and I are delighted to welcome you all here. And I feel particularly privileged to have sworn you in, Your Honour, as the 12th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria.

I have made the point before that, as the 29th Governor of our State, I am conscious that not every Governor has enjoyed this particular privilege.

Chief Justice, this evening I want to say just a few brief words of congratulations. I am mindful that this is not your official Welcome, at which a great deal will be said about you. That is a joy that awaits you on this coming Thursday.

I don’t think I need explain to you further what that occasion will entail. This is, after all, the third time you have been sworn in. First, in 2010, as the 136th judge of the Trial Division of our Supreme Court. Secondly, in 2014, as the 32nd judge of the Court of Appeal. And now, this evening, as the highest ranking judicial officer in the State of Victoria.

And so, although this evening is in one sense not a first for you, you do have many firsts to your name.
You are, as has been noted, the first former solicitor appointed into the role of Chief Justice, (although I must say that has rapidly become an observation of no import at all, as we welcome judges from more and more diverse professional as well as personal backgrounds).

You also came first in your final year at school (where, I can now say that, like all the female Chief Justices in this State’s history, you were educated by the Brigidine sisters).

You have a first class honours degree in law at Monash, (which, again I can now say, is the university attended by all the female Chief Justices in this State's history), and where, again, you came first, winning both the Supreme Court and the Flos Greig Memorial prizes. And you are, so far as I know, the first Chief Justice to come to the role qualified as a Doctor of Philosophy in Law, with a thesis on Unfair Contracts.

And, finally, I know that I am on safe ground in noting that you are the first Chief Justice of the Court to be married to a brother judge! May we offer the Honourable Justice Hargrave, (with whom many times I have stood side by side in the trenches, as we have taught judgment writing), the warmest of good wishes and congratulations this evening.

Chief Justice, at your welcome, following your first of the three swearing ins (or is it swearings in?), Steve Stevens, speaking on behalf of the Law Institute, referred to ‘your calm strength and character, of your patience and compassion and of your integrity and determination never to take advantage of others.’

These are all wonderful qualities to stand you in good stead in your new role.

May I just observe, Chief Justice, that despite the long list of firsts for you, we do know that there is one second.

You are of course the second woman to lead the Supreme Court of Victoria, following your friend, your colleague and your admirer in the Honourable Marilyn Warren AC QC. And – I should add – the second female Chief Justice to barrack for Richmond.
What a gift they gave you both on 30 September last. A premiership on the former Chief Justice's last day in the role. A premiership on the eve of your first day.

It is interesting to reflect on what lies ahead for the second into a role. And how appropriate that the person who best expressed it was Flos Greig, the first woman admitted to practise as a barrister and solicitor in Australia, in whose name you won that prize at Monash.

She said that:

_The first man that finds his way into the primeval forest exhausts his strength in clearing the ground; the second continues the work and sows the seeds and erects the buildings; the third … comes along and reaps the profits of the others' labour._

We know that you have the capacity to sow the seeds of contemporary justice. But, when it comes to the 'erection of buildings' - to avoid stepping into areas that are dear to the heart of a new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court but not the domain of Governors - I choose to remain allegorical, and to say that we also know that you shall continue to build a strong and healthy legal system.

I know that in our respective roles our paths will often cross. I do look forward to that, except perhaps in May each year when your Tigers meet my Bombers in the 'DREAMTIME AT THE G' game.

But in every other regard, Tony and I wish you well. We congratulate you, and on behalf of the people of Victoria we wish you a long, successful and happy time as our 12th Chief Justice.