



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## **AUSTRALIA DAY RECEPTION**

**Wednesday 23 January 2019**

**Mr Ken Lay AO APM**, Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria and **Mrs Chris Lay**

**The Rt Revd the Hon Dr Peter Hollingworth AC OBE**, Former Governor-General of Australia  
and **Mrs Ann Hollingworth**

**Lady Cowen AM**

**The Honourable Ted Baillieu**, Former Premier of Victoria and **Mrs Robyn Baillieu**

**The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor Sally Capp**, City of Melbourne and **Mr Andrew  
Sutherland**

**Dr Susan Alberti AC**, Chair, Australia Day Committee (Victoria) and **Mr Colin North OAM**

**Distinguished guests**

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.

This is the fourth year now that Tony and I have had the pleasure to welcome to Government House Victorians from all different regions, backgrounds and fields of endeavour, for our Australia Day reception.

It gives us a wonderful opportunity to celebrate what it means to be Australian.

And we certainly see plenty to celebrate as we travel across our State, or as welcome guests here to a multitude of events throughout the year.

We see the energy of our young Victorians who contribute in clever ways to all that we achieve in our State: whether in farming, business, innovation, trades, professions, the arts or sports or in community organisations.

We see the wisdom and the ceaseless commitment of our senior Victorians who use their experience to show us that age is no barrier in any one of those or other endeavours.

We see a diversity of people who in that diversity enrich our community, contributing their different faiths, cultures, skills and perspectives to all that we do.... and all that we are.

And we see kindness, and generosity in philanthropy, volunteering, brilliant scientific research, and amongst all - those who so often stretch out a helping hand to those in need.

Australia Day gives us the opportunity to count all those blessings.

It gives us the opportunity too to reflect upon some of the complex issues that inevitably confront us, and how we can each contribute to an even better and stronger nation.

We know, for example, of the sensitivities that surround Australia Day for our First Australians. We know of the need for open and respectful discussions between us: discussions held in a genuine spirit of reconciliation.

May I thank the many community leaders – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – who model to us how that is done.

Indeed, they remind us that respectful and reasoned discussion on any topic where opinions differ will always provide the best way forward.

And, I thank the millions of Victorians who, through their words and their actions, remind us that we can all work together successfully, to ensure that the ignorance of hate and intolerance never have a place here.

And so, our blessings and our aspirations are definitely to the forefront of our thinking on Australia Day.

But so too is our sense of fun.

It is a day when we gather together. When, alongside flags being raised and anthems being sung, we enjoy watching energetic street parades, music and dance.

We participate in a huge variety of familial, cultural and community traditions. We cluster around barbecues, picnic tables, on beaches, in our homes and in the serenity of the bush.

For our parts, after the traditional Flag-Raising Ceremony at the Town Hall on Saturday, Tony and I will be welcoming many thousands of people to an Open Day here at Government House.

We find great joy in seeing more and more Victorians enjoying this magnificent House.

On Australia Day, they will have the opportunity to tour the State Apartments and gardens, picnic on the lawn, be entertained by performers, or participate in a huge range of activities, including petting farm animals, trying their hand at tennis on the grass court or enjoying some interactive science installations with the kids.

Everyone is invited!

That leaves me only to thank you for joining us this evening and to wish you all a safe and happy Australia Day and 2019.