



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

**SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY INSTALLATION OF
CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR JOHN POLLAERS OAM**

Thursday 23rd May 2019

Professor John Pollaers OAM, Chancellor, Swinburne University of Technology

Mr Graham Goldsmith, Dr Doug Mitchell, Professor Iain Wallace, Former Chancellors,
Swinburne University of Technology

Mr Ziggy Switkowski AO, Chancellor of RMIT University

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

The Honourable Ted Baillieu, Former Premier of Victoria

Mr John Kennedy MP, Member for Hawthorn

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 afternoon. And I thank Aunty Georgina Nicholson for her warm welcome to country.

It is a pleasure to join you today, in my role as 'Visitor', to install Professor John Pollaers OAM as the fifth Chancellor of Swinburne University of Technology.

The 'Visitor' is an ancient title and an ancient role. Its exact meaning has been somewhat lost in time.

In the early days, the Visitor's primary role was to settle high-level disputes within the university. Today, the role of the Visitor is largely ceremonial.

And so, although I am here today in that formal role of 'visitor', I certainly do not feel like just a visitor at all.

Having toured the University, celebrated the University's 25th Anniversary with the Swinburne family last year at Government House and met with so many clever Swinburne initiatives and collaborations both here and across a number of official visits on behalf of our State overseas, I feel more like a genuine friend.

In fact, I am proud of all our Victorian universities. And I can assure you that is not just the bias of the Governor of Victoria.

Our State is renowned as the Knowledge State. We are highly ranked in university tables and in many particular disciplines. And it is not by chance that education is our largest export service.

To our advantage is that, amongst our universities, we see different emphases and strengths. Different personalities, as it were.

Swinburne's personality is quite distinct.

First, this University is old, but it is young. It has a rich history upon which it has built. Although in no way shackled by history, and contemporary in all that it now does, it has not forgotten its founders' vision.

Just over 110 years have passed since George and Ethel Swinburne established the Eastern Suburbs Technical College in Hawthorn. Their vision: to create a Technical College to serve those without access to further education.

It is a vision that remains central to the University today. It retains the Swinburnes' commitment to social inclusion, coupled with a sophisticated understanding of how education is transformed through industry engagement.

The University's roots still lie in technology, but today that translates to innovation in all that it does and all that it teaches.

When it comes to a defining personality, I believe that it is this commitment to industry engagement and innovation that helps to define this University.

I have seen it first-hand.

I have toured the Industry 4.0 facility and seen how, through strategic partnerships with industry, the University 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 have visited the new Swinburne Smart Cities Research Institute, and can say that nothing could be dearer to Melbourne's heart, or more important for us on the world stage, than our expertise of designing and maintaining attractive, well scaled, sustainable and welcoming cities.

And I have 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 could not be a better example of international and industrial collaboration and hands on experience. And what a feather in the cap of Swinburne that it is included in that alliance.

It is not surprising that this university has grown to a student body of more than 58,000 higher education and vocational students, from 100 countries around the world.

Or that it ranks highly in the world Young University Rankings, and particularly in art and design, engineering and science.

I know the regard in which your Vice-Chancellor, Professor Linda Kristjanson AO is held. And I know that the former Chancellor, Mr Graham Goldsmith, can feel proud of his own contributions to these successes.

And now the baton is passed to Professor Pollaers.

He is the perfect fit for the next phase in the life of this University.

Professor Pollaers has had a distinguished international career in the consumer products sector, including with Pacific Brands and Foster's Group Limited, and in advanced manufacturing industries. He is the founding Chairman of the Australian Advanced Manufacturing Council, Chairman of the Australian Industry and Skills Committee, and was a member of the Prime Minister's Industry 4.0 Taskforce.

He has expertise in entrepreneurship, aged care, global industry and skills development.

In the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours List, Professor Pollaers was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his service to the manufacturing sector, to education, and to business.

We wish him well in this new role, and will enjoy watching Swinburne University continue to successfully support its students, link to industry and undertake productive international collaborations in accordance with its motto 'Achievement through Learning'.

Congratulations to you Chancellor, and congratulations to Swinburne as well, as it embarks on its next promising phase.