



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

**AUSTRALIA DAY RECEPTION**  
**Monday 23 January 2023**

**The Hon. Jacinta Allan MP**, Acting Premier of Victoria, **Ministers Carbines and Suleyman**, and **other Members of State Parliament**  
**Professor James Angus AO**, Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria  
**The Right Reverend the Hon Dr Peter Hollingworth AC OBE**, former Governor-General of Australia  
**The Hon. Ted Ballieu AO**, and **The Hon. Jeffrey Kennett AC**, former Premiers of Victoria  
**Sally Capp**, The Right Hon. The Lord Mayor of Melbourne  
**Victorian Senior Officers of the Australian Defence Force**  
**Ziad Itani**, Dean of the Consular Corps, and **Members of the Consular Corps**  
**Distinguished guests**

And I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather – the Wurundjeri and Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Elders of other communities who may be with us.

Unfortunately, Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, who was keen to be with us this evening, is no longer able to attend.

Tony and I welcome each one of you here this evening to this Reception, which continues a long-held tradition of welcoming the new year and marking our national day.

We know that, within our community, there is discussion about the date on which we celebrate our nation. Some argue for change. Some do not. And it's not hard to understand why feelings run deeply on the topic.

I believe that we should welcome the opportunity this discussion represents to reflect honestly on our past, where we are as a nation now, and where we want to be as our nation continues to evolve.

The opportunity too to realise and appreciate the freedom we have to safely express opposing points of view.

And that it is the perfect moment to emphasise our commitment to respectful discourse on this and other topics.

Let's celebrate these things as amongst the most precious hallmarks of our nation.

Thinking back on the eight Receptions that we have had the privilege to host at this time of year, I see a reflection of the life of our State across that time.

We have gathered here sometimes in the midst of sadness.

We have gathered, literally as well as figuratively, under the cloud of devastating bushfires.

We have had to come together in smaller than usual numbers, due to a global pandemic.

This year, we know that, as we gather, many Victorians are still grappling with the effect of severe floods.

One of the great privileges of hosting Victorians in the magnificent setting of our State House, is that we can bring people together for comfort at the hardest of times, and also as a means to thank all those who work hard to protect and support them.

Of course, across these past years, we have also gathered with much to celebrate in our vibrant State.

Look around you this evening.

You will see the brightest of our young school graduates, and all the promise that they hold for our future. And the parents and teachers who guide them.

You will see doctors, nurses, police, ADF and a wide range of emergency service workers, without whom we simply couldn't manage.

You will see the Consuls from many countries who promote essential global connections for our country and our State.

And you will see members of the judiciary, community workers, sportspeople, industry leaders and innovators - from the city and our regions.

We are proud to celebrate our people. Clever, hard-working, kind and generous people.

We are proud to celebrate our heritage. To celebrate our First Peoples who have nurtured the land through millennia.

To celebrate those who built a strong and democratic modern nation.

And to celebrate all those who've created new lives here, enriching us with their diverse skills and cultures.

Thank you to each one of our guests for joining with us this evening to recognise and respect our people and their achievements.

I now invite the Acting Premier to address us.