



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## **Reception in honour of Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium Wednesday 25 October 2023**

### **Acknowledgments**

**Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium**, Representative of His Majesty the King

**Professor James Angus AO**, Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria

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

**His Excellency Michel Goffin**, Ambassador of Belgium to Australia

**Caroline Millar**, Australia's Ambassador to the European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Belgium and Luxembourg

**Ministers and the Business delegation from the Belgian Economic Mission**

**Distinguished guests**

I begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the lands on which this House stands – the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present.

It's a pleasure to welcome you all to Government House this evening.

The relationship between Australia and Belgium seems poised with this significant visit, to build new opportunities for trade, investment and collaboration.

In the history of Victoria's development, the Gold Rush was pivotal.

Like many others, Belgian miners flocked to the Victorian goldfields in the 1850s in search of wealth and adventure – integrating themselves within a wider, multi-cultural community.

And, in 1889, Belgian brewer and chemist, August de Bavay, created 'Melbourne No. 1,' the first truly Australian beer that also made Melbourne a leader in brewing innovation.

The contributions of Belgian-Australians continues to this day with our State's 46<sup>th</sup> Premier, the Honourable Ted Baillieu AO, being of Belgian descent.

Of course, the connections between our countries extend beyond these particular events and circumstances.

We also shared in the significant conflicts of World War I and II where Australians fought alongside Belgians and Belgian soil.

Today, our contemporary relationship is centred in our countries' scientific, technological and cultural landscapes.

This recital showcases the vital role Roland Peelman AM has played in Australia's music industry for more than 30 years. His tireless commitment to artistic perfection has made him the recipient of many awards including the New South Wales Award for "the most outstanding contribution to Australian Music by an individual" and a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to music. This evening's award is yet another example of this country's appreciation of his artistic contribution.

The development of new technology, and innovation in existing industries, offer new opportunities for us to develop our scientific and technological relationships and expand our collaborations.

Finding solutions to contemporary issues like climate change and a shifting world order, requires collaboration across nations sharing similar values. It requires our relationship to develop to ensure it benefits not only ourselves but the broader international community.

I know that in the coming days, Her Royal Highness will be meeting with representatives from a range of organisations and institutions that are expanding the relationship between our two countries.

Organisations pushing the boundaries in areas such as medical research and sustainable infrastructure.

It opens the door for collaboration and trade between Australia and Belgians in Victoria.

I have no doubt that these meetings will provide valuable insights into the work being done here in Victoria and generate ideas for new avenues to pursue.

Thank all of you for joining us this evening.

Let me extend a very warm welcome to Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid.

I hope you find your time in Melbourne insightful as well as enjoyable.

I now invite Her Royal Highness to address us.