

ADDRESS BY
HER EXCELLENCY MS QUENTIN BRYCE AC
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
ON THE OCCASION OF
PRESENTATION OF THE ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY 2009 CLARKE GOLD MEDAL TO
MR SYB MUNDY
VICTORIA BARRACKS CLUB, PETRIE TERRACE, BRISBANE
6 AUGUST 2010

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your warm welcome to me today.

I want you to know how delighted I am to join you here for this very special ceremony:

the award of the Royal Humane Society's prestigious Clarke Medal.

This medal recognises the year's most outstanding act of bravery.

It honours:

singular courage and resource,

exercised in the face of danger,

without thought of self-preservation or congratulation,

responding in a heartbeat to the need of another human life.

The Society's Bravery Decorations were established to recognise

acts of bravery

and give public recognition to those acts of bravery,

by bestowing awards on those who risk their own lives

in saving, or attempting to save, the lives of others.

This mission has a long history, originating in the Chapter Coffee House in St Paul's churchyard in London in 1774 as a means of acknowledging those who had saved another from drowning.

A century later, on the other side of the world, the Victorian Humane Society was inaugurated at a public meeting in Melbourne in September 1874.

In 1882, The Royal Humane Society of Australasia came into being.

Today, as Senior Patron of the Society, I feel so proud, and so grateful for the opportunity it affords me:

to meet individuals of remarkable valour,

to grasp hands that have reached out across peril;

to observe the warmth and spirit of humanity.

Mr Mundy: I can never know the deep and generous store you drew upon that day in January last year at Binalong Bay.

The inner strength and voice that drove you through dangerous waters to save another life while yours too was at risk.

That memory is yours to hold onto, to forever remind you of what you are capable of, and the courage that resides in you always.

We can only wonder where your inspiration came from, and hope that we may learn from your actions.

You reassure me that the connections between us are not easily torn, that in the moments when it counts, courage rises in us and shines through.

I praise your magnificent efforts, and thank you for showing us the finest way of living.

Mr Mundy: I am honoured to share this occasion with you.

I salute you.