

ADDRESS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY MS QUENTIN BRYCE AC  
**GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**  
ON THE OCCASION OF  
**RECEPTION IN THE MEMBERS' HALL**  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA  
5 SEPTEMBER 2008

*Prime Minister*  
*Leader of the Opposition*  
*My friends*

Thank you Prime Minister and Dr Nelson for your words of support and inspiration.

Thank you Mrs Agnes Shea for welcoming me to this land that you and your ancestors have guarded and cherished for so many thousands of years.

Thank you Aunty Delmae Barton for a voice that sings of those millennia and hails a hopeful future for our nation.

And thank you, my colleagues, friends, and family for sharing this special day with me.

I spoke in the Chamber:

. of what is important to me and, I believe, to all Australians;  
. and of my undertaking as I commence my role as Australia's 25th Governor-General, and first woman to have ever held the office.

I speak now of the people who have brought me to this day.

They stand before me and elsewhere;

Some were the authors of the thousands of letters I received upon the announcement of my appointment.

People from all walks of Australian life - the prominent and powerful, our sung and unsung, our most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

People with messages of tenderness, grief, jubilation, and instruction.

About things that matter to them, and that ought to matter to the rest of us.

The parents who shared their desperation in caring for a son with mental illness.

The GP who spoke of compassion in practice.

The mother who gave her daughter an education she could never have dreamt of for herself.

Our war veterans, proud, resilient, and sometimes cheeky.

They are among the people for whom I feel a deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness for the support and wisdom they have given me.

Today, I stand on their shoulders.

And, always, I remain in the safe and loving embrace of my husband, Michael, our children and grandchildren, my sisters and our family, my dear friends.

They are the heart and soul of me.

Ladies and gentlemen, I will carry all of these things with me as I do my best to serve the Australian people.

Thank you, thank you, please have a wonderful morning.