

Parliament of Tasmania
Legislative Council
Hansard

Tuesday 8 April 2025

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Honourable members, I would like to welcome to the Chamber today the Year 11/12 legal studies students from Rosny College. We have a couple of groups coming up to see us through the day. Currently, we are on private members' time - Tuesdays are private members' time - and usually on Wednesdays and Thursdays we do government business. Today is an opportunity for members of the Legislative Council to bring forward reports on various committees or anything that is important to them for debate in this Chamber, and we always start Tuesdays with special interest matters. This is a session where members have five minutes - believe it or not, sometimes it seems a bit longer - to discuss issues that are happening in their electorates that are of interest to different people.

I believe we are also welcoming the Howrah Men's Shed to join us today as they are the subject of one of the special interest matters, and the Sandy Bay Regatta Association. I welcome the people from those areas as well.

Our first special interest today is the honourable member for Nelson.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATTERS

Sandy Bay Regatta Association

[11.04 a.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Thank you, Mr President. It is with great delight that I rise today to pay tribute to the considerable and ongoing contribution made to the local community by the Sandy Bay Regatta Association.

Honourable members, I invite you to take a few minutes and indulge in revisiting in your minds our summer months, which can be such a vibrant, entertaining and enjoyable time for locals and visitors alike.

For many, our summer months highlight and are intrinsically linked to our island culture, connected on a daily basis to coast and river. For many locals, they have grown up with the January Sandy Bay Regatta on the River Derwent and consider it to be a staple event of our summer program.

Yet what many people may not realise is that this constant in our summer calendar is only possible due to the commitment and the drive of the Sandy Bay Regatta Association, which is comprised solely of volunteers.

Since the inaugural Sandy Bay Regatta held in 1849, it could be argued that the association has had plenty of time to perfect the regatta and the smooth sailing - if you will

pardon of the pun - of the event. It has been 177 years worth of practice, in fact.

However, it is quite a remarkable achievement for a community, volunteer-based organisation to continue for 177 years, to still be going strong, and to have its main event become part of Hobart's living, breathing cultural fabric.

It is the living cultural legacy forged by the early association's volunteers of over 100 years ago, as well as the ongoing and future vision of the current association members, which I wish to recognise and celebrate here today.

The regatta's origins were based - I will not say grounded, that might be unlucky - in the time-honoured tradition of local working seafarers of the day testing their sailing and rowing skills against those of their mates. These water races and challenges, held on 3 January 1849 for the first time, were a huge success with over 2000 people flocking to the banks of Dunkleys Point, as it was then known. By 1854, the annual event was attended by an estimated 10,000 people.

Since then the regatta has gone from strength to strength, with the auspicious 175th anniversary celebrated in 2023.

It is such a special element of our modern regatta, that it holds those traditions and honours those water workers of yesteryear, weaving it into our cultural memory, our fabric, as a continual thread, linking through to our current water sports and activities.

One might say the regatta has both an oar in the outgoing tide and an oar in the incoming tide. It flows with the times.

While we still have the rowing and sail ability races, which our forebears would find familiar, I do wonder what they'd make of innovations such as the stand- up paddleboarding events.

Similarly, the regatta has expanded to include land-based activities - again I wonder what our forebears would make of the highly popular and enjoyable modern Blundstone boot throwing competition.

Ms Rattray - I think they would love it.

Ms WEBB - I think they might.

The Sandy Bay Regatta has a brand. It is a day of low-cost or no-cost fun for the whole family.

I know the association takes this brand very seriously, and takes pains to check in with event patrons to ensure they are delivering on that brand.

I am confident that patrons of the 2025 regatta would have endorsed the success of the brand of the day.

I particularly wish to highlight the effort made at this year's regatta driven by the ingenuity of the newest committee member, Lenka Jankocova. Lenka took to her new role with passion and brought a multitude of great ideas. She provided a wealth of fun and stimulating activities for children that revitalised the kids' corner element of the event - from

face painting to crazy bikes, creative cartooning open workshops, the BBBeetles circus performers, and a range of other family-friendly games and activities, all for a gold coin donation.

Lenka has been a wonderful addition to the committee. I know that the association is always on the lookout for new committee members who can bring that kind of enthusiasm and skill to the mix in putting on this wonderful event. Delivering the fabulous creative and fun day of water and land-based activities, such as I enjoyed this year on 25 January, would be a considerable achievement on its own. However, for a volunteer-reliant organisation to do so on a yearly basis, year-in, year-out, to the extent that the annual Sandy Bay Regatta is considered a constant of our summer social calendar, particularly for southern Tasmanians, is a remarkable testament to the association and its team of volunteers.

I wish to acknowledge the Sandy Bay Regatta Association President, Adrian Granger, who unfortunately could not be here today, and also association Chair, Mr Peter Douglas, who is here with us today in the Chamber. I also recognise the other committee members who contribute to this. They are a small but earnest committee, and they are always looking to the future and inviting new people to become involved. I congratulate not just the other committee members, but also all those who sponsor and support the event in other ways.

The River Derwent and our coasts are integral aspects of our sense of place as Tasmanians. Thank you to the Sandy Bay Regatta Association and the team of hardworking members and volunteers who provide such a memorable way for our community to celebrate our waterborne history and affirm our connections now and into the future.

[excerpt ends]