

**Thursday 2 June 2022**

**Platinum Jubilee of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II**

**Dedication of Government House Rose Garden**

**Remarks**

I would firstly like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet – the Whadjuk Noongar people – and pay my respects to their elders past and present.

Seventy years ago our sovereign, Queen Elizabeth the Second, was crowned as head of a dominion so vast that it was said the sun never set upon it.

Fifty years ago, our then Prime Minister confirmed upon her the special title of Queen of Australia.

And just a few months ago I spoke as her representative to Western Australia, congratulating her upon the historic milestone of 70 years since her ascension to the throne.

Her Platinum Jubilee records seven decades of strong leadership – the longest by any English monarch in history.

She has presided with wisdom and grace over a period of peace but also of tumultuous change, both in her home country and around the world.

During her reign, she has consulted 14 Prime Ministers of England and 15 of Australia, and is in contact with our latest one, making 16 in all. Far from a detached sovereign, she meets weekly with the British Prime Minister and is deeply involved and well informed in matters of State.

During her reign, she has kept a watchful eye on Australia. She has expressed interest in and concern for us as we have faced our share of troubles, including our involvement in conflicts in our region in Korea, Malaya and Vietnam. Our troops more recently have served overseas in Bougainville, Timor Leste, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Middle East and in peacekeeping operations globally. These are moments where we, as a nation, were tested.

For Britain, they have faced the great challenge of the dismantling of empire. Sometimes a transition full of peaceful intent. Sometimes involving the most terrible trauma. The globe in which Britain plays a role has seen its status change, with the diplomacy marked for a lot of it by hostility and some related struggle.

Even in this year, we see one of the conclusions of the Cold War play out in a harsh struggle between Russia and Ukraine, which was once part of the Soviet Union.

Social change has been enormous, with the spread of mass education and its attendant opportunities, and through it all, a relentless uptake of new technologies, most of which are enormously of benefit to humankind.

Throughout these trials, and other conflicts and calamities in our world, her wise counsel has provided a sense of security and stability.

Guided by her steady hand, our Commonwealth has changed greatly in that time too. It now includes 54 nations and 2.5 billion people – close to one-third of all people on Earth.

We have seen its member nations and peoples come together through a range of activities, including at the Commonwealth Games 17 times. Six of these were hosted in Australia, including in Perth in 1962. Another is about to begin in Birmingham this month, with the next headed to back Australia once more in 2026.

It says much that while some member nations declared their independence from the crown – such as India – most have chosen to remain members of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth even admits member nations who have no historic ties to England, including new members Mozambique and Rwanda, with Rwanda hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in a few weeks.

With fondness, we recall Her Majesty chaired this same meeting here in Perth in 2011, during what may – sadly – have been her last visit to Australia.

Having reflected on all that has happened since her coronation, we think back to the day when our young Queen was crowned in 1953.

Her poet laureate, John Masefield, wrote these lines for her.

This lady whom we crown was born,  
When buds were green upon the thorn,  
Now that we crown her as our Queen,  
May love keep all her pathways green,  
May sunlight bless her days;  
May the fair spring of her beginning,  
Ripen to all things worth the winning.  
May this old land revive and be  
Again a star set in the sea,  
A kingdom fit for such as she,  
With glories yet undreamt.

Her glories are no longer undreamt. They have taken life, here in Western Australia and around the world.

It is, as she said at 21, 'the great imperial family to which we all belong.' In that speech, she pledged her whole life – whether it be long or short - to our service.

In 1977, during her Silver Jubilee year, she said: "Although that vow was made in my salad days, when I was green in judgement, I do not regret nor retract one word of it."

During her golden jubilee year, she reaffirmed her commitment as our sovereign with one of many tours she would make of Australia, and in her diamond jubilee year, she gave a nod to the future by deputising the Prince of Wales to visit here in her stead.

Thankfully for us, her subjects, her life has been long, and she continues to fulfil that pledge which she reaffirmed this year, signing off her message humbly with the words “your servant”.

Through her role as Royal Patron she has advocated for more than 600 charities, and through her representatives around the world, hundreds more.

We give thanks for Her Majesty, for her life of continued and dedicated service and her constant care for Australia, a place she visited many times and that we know remains close to her heart.

We wish her continued good health. Long may her reign continue to bless us.

Today we mark the Platinum Jubilee of her coronation and add our voices of congratulations to those expressed throughout the Commonwealth around the globe.

We dedicate this garden to her in the Noongar season of Makuru – a time when the winds shift direction and the rains come... an ideal time for planting and new growth.

We remember that these lands were once well-traversed and used by the early Noongar peoples - a fertile place close to the life-giving Derbarl Yerrigan.

On this land, may these roses flourish as a living tribute...

- Beautiful as she is,
- Bold like her adventurous nature, and
- Hardy like her resilient spirit.

Long may they thrive here at Government House, a place Her Majesty visited often, and of which she was so fond.

I thank our horticultural team for their hard work creating this garden and fulfilling our promise to her. I invite all of you to visit this garden often during our open days, and when you do, to remember our gracious and noble Queen.