

Reception for the Queen's Birthday, Pine Creek – 31 May 2009
SPEECH by His Honour Mr Tom Pauling AO QC
Administrator of the Northern Territory

As Administrator of the Northern Territory, I welcome you to this Reception to celebrate the Birthday of Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Australia and Head of the Commonwealth. The tradition is that on the first Saturday in June the Sovereign's birthday is officially celebrated by the ceremony of Trooping the Colour by the Foot Guards and Household Cavalry in Whitehall, London. We quite rightly celebrate it here as well.

Australia is a constitutional monarchy and The Queen's relationship to Australia is unique as she continues to play important ceremonial and symbolic roles. In the course of more than 57 years on the throne, The Queen has developed a very personal relationship with our country as she has travelled widely to meet people from all cultures and walks of life.

The Queen is also the Head of The Commonwealth, established 60 years ago on 26 April 1949. And all around this unique association of 53 independent states people stop and mark her official birthday. Nearly two billion people NOW live in the Commonwealth half of whom are under 25. That is why I enjoy the opportunity to meet as many young Territorians as possible; whether at schools that I visit, with groups that I host at Government House or as I travel for occasions such as this. Meeting representatives of our communities is an important part of my role; learning more about their stories and plans for the future.

I have a special affection for Pine Creek. I visited Mayse Young and her daughters, on many occasions. I looked after Jimmy Ah Toy before the Licensing Commission and was here for long periods on the Upper Daly Land Claim. I well remember Constable Luvvy Browning, and Lance Lawrence's father selling the best pickled onions from the front of the pub. Now, in 2009, I applaud all those of you involved in the tourism industry and rural enterprises. There is positive news coming from ongoing mineral exploration, livestock and the horticultural industries. I thank those of you working in health, education, police, fire and emergency services. The positive outlook for the region is generated by everyone within the community who is committed to the future and I wish you all well.