

Reception for the Queen's Birthday  
SPEECH by His Honour Mr Tom Pauling AO QC  
Administrator of the Northern Territory  
Alice Springs – 5 June 2009

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Firstly, I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the area, Lhere Artpe Aboriginal Corporation.

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 fifty-seven 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 sixty years ago on 26 April 1949. And all around this unique association of fifty-three independent states people stop and mark her official birthday.

Nearly two billion people now live in the Commonwealth and half of these 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. Here in Alice Springs, I especially commend those involved with the Alice Springs Youth Action Plan, the performing arts and music centre; the work at Anzac Hill campus to establish a Youth Hub.

Earlier this year, I wrote to Warwick Thornton congratulating him on the success of his film, the bittersweet journey entitled *Samson and Delilah*. It has gone on to win the Camera d'Or prize for the best first feature at the international Cannes Film Festival which is an outstanding accolade.

There is an immense amount of work being undertaken to increase the value of Indigenous knowledge, language and culture. For example, Desert Knowledge Australia is working to develop 'thriving desert knowledge economies', in association with other desert regions worldwide.

There is investment in infrastructure in Central Australia, including Alice Springs Hospital and investments by mineral resource companies in the region. The dedication of those working in health, education and the Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services is all good news. The vibrancy in Alice Springs is coming from all those within the community who are committed to the future and I wish you all well.

Finally, please charge your glasses and join me  
in the loyal toast:

TO THE QUEEN AND THE PEOPLE OF  
AUSTRALIA .....

TO THE QUEEN.