

**Welcome by Dr Donald Markwell, Warden of Rhodes House, Oxford,  
to Their Excellencies Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor-General of Australia, and Mr Michael  
Bryce AM AE,**

**Rhodes House, Oxford, 28 April 2011**

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

It is an immense privilege for all your fellow Australians here today to welcome Your Excellencies to Oxford, which has educated and is educating so many Australians, and specifically to welcome you to Rhodes House, the home of the Rhodes Scholarships. I am delighted that you have had the chance today to talk with so many outstanding Australian students and academics who will contribute, indeed in many cases are contributing, to the future of our country and the wider world, in diverse fields, as Australian Oxonians have been doing for generations.

Australian Oxonians who have done so – and indeed who have met, talked, partied, and dined, in this very Hall - in years past include Nobel Laureates Howard Florey and Sir John Eccles, public figures such as Sir Zelman Cowen – a dear friend of yours and of mine - and Bob Hawke, and countless others. Sir Zelman Cowen famously said that the role of the Governor-General is to represent the nation to itself, and, Your Excellency, your experience as law teacher and as a leader in collegiate education, as an advocate for women and for children, for human rights and equal opportunity, and as Governor of Queensland, have equipped you to play this role superbly.

To welcome you here is a particular personal pleasure for me. Governor-General, not only do you and I both hail from tiny towns in western or central western Queensland; but who would have imagined over thirty years ago, when you were my long-suffering tutor in administrative law at the University of Queensland, that I would one day welcome you here today? It is a great privilege and pleasure to do so, and all of us here in this Hall are delighted to welcome you and Mr Bryce. I am also glad to have this opportunity, as Warden of Rhodes House, to thank you for your much-valued contribution to the Rhodes Scholarships, as Governor of Queensland and as Governor-General.

You have today signed the Visitors Book of Rhodes House, where you join diverse figures from Mahatma Gandhi to the elderly woman who as a little girl had been the inspiration for Alice in Wonderful, from Eleanor Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Charles de Gaulle to Nelson Mandela, Bill and Hillary Clinton, and the Dalai Lama; and amongst Australians, from Sir John Latham to H V Evatt to your predecessors as Governor-General, Lord Casey and Michael Jeffrey.

We all greatly appreciate that you have come to Oxford to be with us today, and are grateful to you also for your exceptional service to our country.

The warmest of welcomes and the heartiest of thanks from all of us to you both.