

ADDRESS BY
HER EXCELLENCY MS QUENTIN BRYCE AC CVO
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
ON THE OCCASION OF
**PRESENTATION OF THE 2012 GENERAL SIR JOHN MONASH FOUNDATION
SCHOLARSHIPS**
SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE, MELBOURNE
14 FEBRUARY 2012

My friends, I want you to know how delighted I am to join you for the presentation of the 2012 Sir John Monash Scholarships.

It is my first visit as Governor-General to this magnificent place of reverence and remembrance, though I have walked through these beautiful grounds often in the soft light of early morning, and paused to reflect, to honour the men and women for whom it stands, an enduring memorial to the finest values and principles of commitment to service, dedication to duty.

The inspiring words of Ambrose Pratt on its completion in 1934 come to mind: "*a temple rising heavenwards, visible from all quarters of the compass, the last object to fade from the sight of every citizen who leaves the capital and the first to greet his return, ever reminding him of the valour of his countrymen, and the glory of his country.*"

Though high rise Melbourne has reduced its visual impact the sight line remains protected and the location remains as striking as ever it was, powerful, evocative, and so loved.

The man whose life and contribution we recall with pride today played a key role in its development from the public appeal for funds the Chairing the Committee, select the design, to supervising construction and rewriting the words for the west wall.

Monash gave much needed leadership to the project which was the subject of public debate, and took seven years to build.

A sacred place, at its heart the inscription "Greater love hath no man."

Friends, what a pleasure to be among such an impressive group of young Australians, Scholars at your best brimming with intellect and enthusiasm.

About to embark on unexpected and thrilling ventures - experiences that will live with you forever.

General Monash believed that along with the privilege of education came the parallel responsibilities of good citizenship and leadership 'in all fields to make Australia great'.

Monash himself lived this credo.

Championing academic excellence and the need for universities, he also encouraged men and women to expand their horizons.

To take the lead wherever possible - and to shine.

The scholarships we award today are a living legacy to the ingenuity, inspiration and determination of an extraordinary General.

As recipients of the General Sir John Monash Foundation Awards, you have already shown your exceptional talent and capacity for hard work.

You are ready to take your place among some of the finest thinkers, researchers and scholars around the world.

You will broaden your intellectual and professional horizons in as yet unknown ways.

Interacting with international peers in the great learning centres: Oxford, Cambridge and Columbia Universities, MIT and the LSE.

Absorbing the cultures of campuses in Paris, Geneva, Edinburgh and Copenhagen.

This year, for the first time, the Foundation has elected nine Scholars.

Six of you are enrolling for Masters Degrees and three for Doctorates.

Your fields of study covering sustainability, climate policy, aeronautical engineering and taxonomy through public health, immigration, economic history and justice.

For the first time, too, we have a Tasmanian Scholar, Anita George, our first teacher Iwan Walters, and the first military officer serving overseas Flight Lieutenant Chris Lowe.

My friends, you will join a select group of 72 Australian men and women - ranging in age from 20 to mid-40s who have shared this Scholarship.

They are a loyal, motivated and committed alumni - offering enduring friendships and networks.

Relationships you build now will sustain you in the years ahead.

Your spheres of influence will play a critical role in determining your professional and personal capacity to galvanise knowledge into action.

Education comes full circle when those, enriched and empowered by it, give back the wealth of their learning to their communities.

When knowledge makes them keen and conscious citizens.

When, as T.S. Eliot wrote, they arrive where they started from, and know the place for the first time.

Scholars, as you take up your awards, and imbibe the history and heroism of their namesake, I hope your endeavours will be nurtured by all they represent, and shaped by the ideals they commemorate.

I warmly congratulate you, and I look forward to following your futures and observing each one of you flourish in your fields in coming years.

May your lives be filled with personal and professional enrichment, reward and contentment.

My friends - thank you.