



Speech by

Andrew Cripps

MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK

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QUEENSLAND CANCER COUNCIL RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (9.40 pm): Last weekend, on 18 and 19 August, the Queensland Cancer Council Relay for Life was held at the Tully Showgrounds. This was the first time that a Relay for Life had been held outside of a major city. I am pleased to say that the event was an outstanding success.

The relay began at 3 pm on Saturday, the 18th with the first lap of the relay around the Tully Showgrounds being undertaken by 57 cancer survivors who had turned up to support the event. Indeed, many of these survivors participated throughout the relay, which ran continuously for 18 hours, finishing the next day at 9 am on Sunday, 19 August. A total of 33 teams, comprising over 400 people, officially registered to participate in the relay. However, the event raised significant interest in the local community and many people drove down or walked in off the street, made a donation and walked around the track for a short period in support of the Queensland Cancer Council. The local organisers have made some guesses that up to 800 people participated in the Relay for Life and that as many as 1,000 people may have come through the gate.

I was thrilled to be invited to welcome the participants at the opening ceremony of the Relay for Life at the Tully Showgrounds, to give some encouragement to the relay teams and to acknowledge the bravery of the survivors and the impact that cancer has had on so many families in Queensland. I was also pleased to be asked to be part of the Cardwell Shire Council team that participated in the relay. Community teams included Tully Lions and Lionesses, Tully Bowhunters, Tully Post Office, Tully Fire and Rescue Service, local schools, the local banana industry, the parents of children who attend the local day care centre just to name a few. The local Catholic women's organisation entered a team called the Sisters of the Perpetual Indulgence.

The most marvellous aspect of the Relay for Life at the Tully Showgrounds was that a relatively small country town raised over \$57,000 last weekend for the Queensland Cancer Council. There are more donations to be lodged and further monies to be collected from sponsors, so the organisers expect the total to exceed \$60,000. The relay team that raised the highest individual amount was Fred's Floozies, after the late Freddy Lizzio, a local canefarmer and professional fisherman who died of cancer several years ago. The Lizzio family is a big family and along with sons and daughters-in-law, grandchildren and girlfriends they honoured Freddy's memory, led by their matriarch, Veronica Lizzio. One of Freddy and Veronica's sons, Gerard, is a good mate of mine, he and I having gone to school and played Rugby League together as young men growing up in Tully.

In the course of the evening the relay stopped for a short time for a ceremony during which candles were lit in memory of all those family members and friends of relay participants who have lost the battle against cancer. The candles lined the relay track and were a powerful symbol throughout the event. During the candle-lighting ceremony a lone piper played and then led the first lap to recommence the relay. Understandably, emotions ran high as memories of and favourite stories about loved ones were recalled. Tully being Tully, of course it rained all night and drenched the relay participants and extinguished some of the candles, but not the spirits of the relay participants.

The organising committee of Relay for Life at the Tully Showgrounds on 18 and 19 August 2007 is to be sincerely congratulated on its outstanding efforts, as is the Tully community, which showed tremendous community pride and generosity.