



Speech by

Andrew Cripps

MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK

Hansard Thursday, 9 October 2008

ST TERESA'S COLLEGE, ABERGOWRIE; HALIFAX STATE SCHOOL

Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (6.53 pm): I rise to mark the recent celebrations held at St Teresa's College, Abergowrie on the occasion of its 75th anniversary on 13 and 14 September 2008 and the recent celebrations at Halifax State School on the occasion of its 125th anniversary on 20 and 21 September 2008. I was very pleased to attend the official ceremonies at both Abergowrie College and Halifax State School to mark the occasion and share in the celebration of these significant milestones.

At Abergowrie College, hundreds of old boys attended a family day on Saturday, 13 September, while there were also hundreds of visitors to the college on Sunday, 14 September for a formal ceremony and a mass presided over by the Bishop of Townsville, the Most Reverend Michael Putney. Bishop Putney blessed approximately \$8 million worth of renovations to existing and new facilities at Abergowrie College from a variety of funding sources.

Abergowrie College is a Catholic boys college situated in the Herbert River valley, west of Ingham. The college has been in operation since 1933, when it began as St Teresa's Agricultural College. The current enrolment is approximately 240 boys who come from all over Queensland and other Australian states as well as from Papua New Guinea and other countries. In more recent times, the college has developed a great reputation for the delivery of secondary education to Indigenous students.

Former students of Abergowrie College include Australian Rugby League greats Lionel Williamson and Matty Bowen. While the Christian Brothers, who founded the college, have made way for lay staff, faith remains central to the education of students at 'Gowrie.

Halifax State School is the oldest school in the Herbert River district. Over 100 former students and staff converged on Halifax State School on Saturday, 20 September and Sunday, 21 September 2008 to remember their time at Halifax State School. The dates of the celebrations coincided exactly with the opening of Halifax State School, which has been educating children in the lower Herbert area since 1883, when the school opened its doors with an initial enrolment of 17 students.

The official opening of a resurfaced tennis court, the upgrade of Halifax State School's computer facilities and the installation of a new fitness area for senior students to the value of \$114,574 was timed to coincide with the celebrations. These events complemented the opportunity for past and present students and teachers to appreciate the rich history of Halifax State School and the important role it has played in the history of the township of Halifax. That significant history was recollected by former students from classes as far back as the 1930s, right up to the students who are currently enrolled.

The celebrations at St Teresa's College, Abergowrie and Halifax State School were both very well organised by the respective committees charged with those responsibilities. Schools are really important parts of the local community. There are more than 40 schools in my electorate of Hinchinbrook. Each of them has a unique learning environment and provides excellent learning opportunities for the students who are enrolled. This is certainly true for Halifax State School and Abergowrie College, and both schools should be proud of their achievements on the occasion of these significant anniversaries.