



Speech by

Dr LESLEY CLARK

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Hansard 22 October 1998

KURANDA STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Dr CLARK (Barron River—ALP) (7.11 p.m.): The Kuranda region was included in the Barron River electorate following the 1992 redistribution. The lack of services in that area, which had been part of the Tablelands electorate held by the National Party member, Tom Gilmore, was immediately apparent to me. The lack of a high school and an ambulance station was of particular concern. Subsequently, I made it my top priority to remedy this appalling situation, which was largely the result of a past failure to identify and purchase land that had the support of the community. I put a lot of time and energy into addressing these problems, working very closely with the community and the Mareeba Shire Council.

In August 1995, those efforts paid off and the Kuranda Ambulance Station opened, which is providing an excellent service to the community. Providing a high school took a little longer, but I am pleased to inform the House that last week I joined the Minister for Education, the Honourable Dean Wells, at the official opening of the Kuranda State High School, which enrolled its first students in February of this year. This architect-designed school is built on a magnificent, elevated site bordered by the Barron River in harmony with its stunning rainforest backdrop. This 40-acre site was purchased by the Labor Government. However, I wish to commend the former Minister, Bob Quinn, and member for Barron River, Lyn Warwick, for following through on the Labor commitment. I acknowledge their strong support for that school.

Mr Johnson: And the roadworks.

Dr CLARK: Also the roadworks. Although it is true that the official opening of the Kuranda State High School was a long time in coming, it was well worth the wait. The dance and musical items showed clearly both the talents of the students and the cultural diversity which is a unique feature and strength of the school. I congratulate Principal Jenny Jensen and her staff on their innovative program that values each and every one of the students and helps them to achieve their individual potential.

I would also like to recognise the commitment of those members of the community who have worked so hard since 1978 to make their dream of a high school in Kuranda a reality. I feel privileged to have played a role in obtaining the land and so helping to realise that dream.

Time expired.
