



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard 9 June 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Centenary of Federation; Year of the Outback

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central— ALP) (Premier) (9.39 a.m.), by leave: In relation to the centenary of Federation and the Year of the Outback, there are important matters I want to draw to the attention of the House. In a little more than 18 months, Australia will commemorate the centenary of Federation—the birth of our nation. The Queensland Government will be marking the centenary with a number of events, celebrations and community projects. All together, we have committed \$25.83m. Of that amount, \$10.2m will be spent on the Community Assistance Program. This program will help communities around the State to commemorate the centenary in their own way by creating lasting reminders of the past and by celebrating the future.

We had a great response from community groups in the first round of funding, with 384 applications received. Forty-eight projects from around the State were approved by the director-general of my department, and a total of \$2.6m was allocated. Successful applicants will receive between \$5,000 and \$100,000. Eighty-six per cent of the first round of grants were awarded to community groups and local councils from outside Brisbane, recognising the importance of celebrations throughout the entire State. Preference was given to projects that were inclusive, imaginative and demonstrated a high level of community support. They include art exhibitions and historical displays, oral history projects, restoration of significant heritage buildings and the development of walking trails, parks and playgrounds.

One grant, of \$5,000, will ensure that memorials to four men who paved the way for Federation in 1901 will be proudly remembered a century later. The Friends of Toowong Cemetery Association will clean and restore the graves of the delegates to the 1891 Federal convention—Sir Samuel Walker Griffith, John Donaldson, Thomas Macdonald-Patterson and Sir Arthur Rutledge. Funding of \$45,000 will also go to the Saibai Island council to record oral history and pass on traditional skills to the next generation.

The Major Mitchell Trail Steering Committee will receive \$100,000 to identify the route of Major Sir Thomas Mitchell's fourth expedition in 1846—a project that encompasses 12 shires and is designed not only to encourage bush tourism from Europe, the United States and Asia but also to ensure that the heritage trails become a major input for bush tourism. I want to also thank the Centenary of Federation Committee, which is working incredibly hard at the moment, which works through these grants. The Treasurer is in fact a representative on that committee.

I am happy to announce today that the second round of funding for this exciting program is now open. Community groups can apply for grants up until 29 October, and I encourage them to do so. The successful projects will be announced early next year. The huge response to the first round of funding shows that people not only want to celebrate the anniversary of nationhood but also want to leave a legacy. Regional Queensland made an important contribution in the first round, and regional communities showed great enthusiasm for the program.

While I am talking about regional Queensland, I would like to inform the House that the Cabinet, on a submission from the Minister for Primary Industries, has endorsed a proposal to declare 2002 as Australia's Year of the Outback. The Primary Industries Minister and I have already outlined the plan to the Commonwealth, and I will be urging the Commonwealth to officially designate the year and also agree that the national launch be held here in Queensland—Australia's most decentralised State.

Outback 2002 is a great concept. It is an excellent opportunity to showcase the distinctive characteristics of the outback and strengthen links between city and country. As the Minister for Primary Industries has so aptly put it, the potential for the Year of the Outback is only limited by our imagination.

I believe that the Commonwealth and the State need to work on this and on the little things that a lot of Australians do not understand. For example, *Waltzing Matilda* was written during the shearers strike in 1891. It is one of the most emotional songs or pieces of poetry that has been recorded in this country. We need to acknowledge our history. The year 2002 is an opportunity to promote the bush to the world not just from a tourism perspective but to enhance their respect across Australia and throughout the world.
