



Speech by

**Mr TIM MULHERIN**

**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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Hansard 25 March 1999

### **MACKAY WEST STATE SCHOOL**

**Mr MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (7.25 p.m.): On Thursday, 11 February, I had the pleasure of addressing the 75th anniversary parade of the Mackay West State School. In 1922, Mr Ernest Couldrey, on behalf of a committee of parents, approached the then Department of Public Instruction to build a school for the estimated 109 children residing in the South Ward area, now known as West Mackay. The department decided to purchase three acres of land in Bridge Road from Mr J. Walker to build a school building. The school building was completed by the opening day of 11 February 1924. The school was known as the South Ward State School for 14 years, but in 1938 the name was changed to the Mackay West State School.

Eighty-four first-day pupils were enrolled on the day of the opening of the school. Some of the first-day pupils were children of the five old settlers living in the areas who were from the Crowley, Donald, Reidy, Hennessey and Burdon families. Staff numbers on opening day consisted of the principal, Mr John Davies, and a pupil teacher. During the first year, enrolments at the South Ward State School increased to 151. There were five grades in the school, with children who had never been to school enrolled in Grade 1. Those children with some school experience went into the other grades. In Grade 1 there was one boy who was aged five years, six months and another boy who was aged fourteen years, four months. One duty of the older boys at the end of each school day was to go out into the yard and catch the principal's horse. They then had to hitch the horse to the buggy so that the principal could drive home.

Today the school has 723 students, 29 classes from pre-school to Year 7 and 80 staff as well as the principal, Mr Don Grobe; and deputy principals, Mrs Michelle Davis and Mr Arthur Wane. First-day pupils, Mr Jack Rolleston; Mr David Francey; Mr Henry Weight; Mrs Ivy Wright, nee Winton; and Mrs Jessie O'May, nee Wilson, were in attendance at the 75th anniversary parade, along with parents and friends of the students. Mrs O'May unveiled a commemorative plaque to mark the occasion, and afterwards they were treated to afternoon tea hosted P & C President, Mr Norm Cook, and other P & C members.

Time expired.

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