



Speech by

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QUEENSLAND FESTIVAL OF THE HORSE

Mr COPELAND (Cunningham—NPA) (7.28 p.m.): This past weekend the Queensland Festival of the Horse concluded in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. It is the third year of the Queensland Festival of the Horse and joins the very busy calendar of events and festivals that occur in Toowoomba. I was proud to be on the first board and the organising committee of the festival three years ago. During the elapsed time I have seen it grow into a much bigger and much more successful event. It has a very positive future and I am sure it will be a very important part of the Queensland horse industry right around the state.

The horse industry is a huge industry for Queensland but, more importantly, it is a huge industry for Toowoomba and the downs. It comprises not only the racing industry, which is well known to all of us, but also the recreational industry, the harness racing industry and the associated services that go along with them: the veterinary services, the farriers, the educational facilities that are at Gatton campus—a whole range of things is associated with the horse industry. It is something that we should nurture and continue to grow.

A range of events is held over the 10-day period. One of the major events this year was the Centenary of Federation Equine Parade, which went from the Toowoomba Turf Club to the Toowoomba Royal Showgrounds. It also included a re-enactment of the riders of the Light Horse Brigade. Lieutenant General Peter Cosgrove was in attendance to take the march past. It was a very successful event with all sorts of people participating from recreational riders, sporting groups, breed groups, carriages, horse drawn vehicles and, of course, the Light Horse Brigade.

A number of race meetings were held and not only in Toowoomba. There were also picnic races, which were held at Dalby. There was a very successful trail ride. That event started out three years ago and was organised by my Rotary Club, the Rotary Club of Toowoomba, which has grown into a trail ride that includes over 200 riders. It had a hugely successful country music concert at night.

The Equine Hall of Fame has been established, and Gunsynd was one of the five inductees this year. The Energex \$6,000 Equine Art Competition is one of the pre-eminent art competitions in Australia at this stage. There were two stud tours, including famous names like Wattle Brae and Eureka studs and new studs like Highgrove, and many other studs were obviously included in those tours. There were polo and polocrosse demonstrations, and the Barastoc Horse of the Year competition was held at the Toowoomba Showgrounds and run by the EFAQ, the Equine Federation of Australia (Queensland). This year the competition had over 1,700 entries. That is a huge competition by anyone's standards in terms of horse competitions. A charity ball was held at the start of the event at the historic Gabbinbar Homestead where, as has become custom now, the painting by Brian Malt—

Time expired.
