



Speech by

STUART COPELAND

MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

Hansard 27 November 2001

TOOWOOMBA GARDENS

Mr COPELAND (Cunningham—NPA) (1.14 a.m.): Toowoomba is well known throughout Queensland, Australia and even internationally as the Garden City, and this week it took a step towards enhancing that reputation with the opening of the State Rose Garden in Newtown Park, which I was very happy to be able to attend. The gardens throughout the city of Toowoomba are absolutely fantastic, and the Carnival of Flowers, which is one of the nation's most well-known and successful festivals, and Queensland's longest-running continuous festival, has certainly built on that reputation. The Toowoomba City Council has done a fantastic job and the Toowoomba City Council gardeners are unbelievable in the work that they undertake to make sure that not only the gardens but also the streetscapes in Toowoomba are beautiful throughout the year, and especially so in September, when the Carnival of Flowers is on.

The State Rose Garden has been the culmination of a long-held dream of a number of people who have pushed very hard for its construction; most importantly, John and Glenda Orford, who have put a mountain of their own time, effort and money into creating it, including going overseas to get ideas and concepts to bring back and introduce. The other couple who have been significant drivers behind the project are Councillor Regina Albion and her husband, John. Councillor Albion was given the task by the Toowoomba City Council of managing the project, and she has done a fantastic job of coordinating it. Tribute should also be paid to the current Toowoomba City Council and Mayor Dianne Thorley as well as the previous Toowoomba City Council and Mayor Tony Bourke, who initiated the project.

The project has been assisted by a grant of \$17,500 from the Queensland Heritage Trails Network Cultural Tourism Project. The Toowoomba City Council contributed \$100,000, and citizens generously donated their time, money, machinery and in-kind materials, which were used to create the infrastructure at Newtown Park, which is a very historic park in Toowoomba on the western suburbs of town. The entry pavilion was built by Downs Group Training with two major donations. There will be continual yearly improvements that will enhance this park and Toowoomba's Garden City image.

I must mention that the Quarry Gardens project also saw a significant step along the path to its creation. It is a visionary project in an old quarry overlooking the Lockyer Valley. The Minister for State Development handed over the deeds to that land to the Toowoomba City Council, and that is the first step in what will be an absolutely first-class tourist destination not only for Queensland and Australia but also internationally. It will rival the Butchart Gardens in Canada, which are internationally renowned. The location of the Quarry Gardens is unsurpassed, and it will really be a major tourist destination for everyone, not just those who are interested in gardening.
