



Speech by

JAN JARRATT

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

Hansard 7 November 2002

SEAFORTH CWA'S 55TH BIRTHDAY

Ms JARRATT (Whitsunday—ALP) (12.24 a.m.): One of my earliest childhood memories is of putting on my good going-to-town clothes and travelling the 14 miles over dusty roads to our nearest town, Dulacca, so that my mother could attend the monthly CWA meeting. For her this was much more than a simple outing; like most women in the area it was one of the rare opportunities they had to come together and share tips on child raising, husband taming, essential household survival skills and any juicy gossip doing the rounds. In addition, they learned craft skills, increased their knowledge of the world and, most importantly, caught up with old friends and made new ones. For my part, I was usually content to play with my friends on the backyard swings and engage in games of hide-and-seek or hunt for gecko and lizard eggs in the woodpile until we were called for smoko. This was always the highlight of the day, for as human nature would have it the woman of the Dulacca CWA loved to vie for the honour of having created the day's most delicious home baked treat.

Last weekend I had the pleasurable experience of a walk down memory lane when I attended the Seaforth CWA 55th birthday celebrations. Members of the Seaforth branch were joined by visitors from Calen and Mackay to mark the birthday milestone and I have to say it was a most enjoyable afternoon. I enjoyed looking at and learning about the displays that were featured on the day. Of all the many and varied branch activities represented through displays, I was most impressed with the effort that had gone into making hand-knitted beanies to be distributed to cancer sufferers for use following chemotherapy treatment. The beanies have been such a hit that the range of knitted apparel has grown to include knee warmers, knee rugs and socks. This is a wonderful project and so worth while.

Another display showed evidence of the range of artistic talent present in the branch. Handmade items included crocheted coat hanger covers, embroidered tablecloths, beautiful hand painted landscapes and paper craft, including homemade Christmas cards. One of the ladies confessed that while they certainly enjoyed learning new skills during craft sessions it was the cup of tea and the chinwag that they really came for. This is a concept of which my mother would have approved.

One of the services provided by the Seaforth CWA branch is the opportunity for country people to have a holiday at the beach. The CWA building, constructed in 1956, is from time to time used to provide low-cost holiday accommodation. While the cottage is old and in need of renovation, it nevertheless offers a comfortable base from which to enjoy a week or two of fishing or to just get away from the day-to-day cares of the world. It is a great service and I have been very happy to support them in their quest to secure funding for the much-needed renovations.

All the ladies of the Seaforth CWA branch deserve praise and a pat on the back for their commitment to the community and for ensuring that the 55th birthday of the organisation did not go unheralded. In particular, I want to mention branch president Joan Bietzel, treasurer Sheila Campbell and secretary Beryl Edwards. I extend my congratulations to you and all members of the Seaforth branch of the CWA on the occasion of its 55th birthday.