



Speech by

CHRIS CUMMINS

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

Mr CUMMINS (Kawana—ALP) (11.26 p.m.): I have proudly stated in this House before that in 1978 at the age of 15 I began an apprenticeship as an electrical fitter/mechanic in the North Ipswich railway workshops. Only a few years earlier my grandfather, Tom Cummins, had also worked along with thousands of others in the same workshops as a crane driver in the carriage wagon and erecting shops. My grandfather, Thomas Cummins, like many of that era, worked on the land prior to going into the industrial work force. I think that it is no coincidence that a strong Labor ideology comes from a fundamental working class ideology that you hope that the following generation has access to improved health, education and other normal necessities. Many hope that their children or the next generation are better educated—as I have often said, possibly to work smarter but not necessarily harder.

Last Sunday—Father's Day, 7 September—I like many other former North Ipswich railway workers returned to the workers reunion at the workshop's railway museum. I table the railway daily shop's notice flyer. While my grandfather has been dead for around 30 years, I believe along with hundreds of others who have passed on, such as Harry and Fred Langer and Gerard Lennihan, whom we buried last Friday—all former employees of the railway workshops—that there is a marvellous spirit that lives on in this memorial known as the workshop's rail museum. My father, Kevin, and my uncle Warren Cummins, who also completed apprenticeships in the North Ipswich railway workshops, joined my son, Daniel, and I at the workshops reunion last Sunday for Father's Day. My father was a turner, Warren was a fitter and Max, the eldest son, was a carriage builder.

As a third generation railway worker, I must commend the government and the minister, who is in the House tonight, along with all the volunteers involved in the North Ipswich railway workshops museum. I believe the museum is an interactive tourist attraction that all Queenslanders should visit and pay homage to. It is a marvellous facility. Ipswich was known as an area for woollen mills, for coalmines and the railway workshops. Obviously over the years many of those industries have closed, but this tourist facility will long live on. It is a marvellous memorial that the Beattie and Goss governments have ensured will remain a great part of Ipswich's history.