



Speech by

**DON LIVINGSTONE**

**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST**

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Hansard 9 October 2003

**MINDEN STATE SCHOOL, 125TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Mr LIVINGSTONE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (7.17 p.m.): On Saturday, 27 September Minden State School celebrated 125 years of history. Many thousands of students have progressed through the school since it first opened its doors in 1878. Most have gone on to enjoy success and happiness in life and work. In part, I am sure many would attribute some of their achievements to the guidance, support and encouragement they received at Minden State School. The school's beautiful surroundings and close-knit community make for students who are happy and eager to learn. This is reflected in the particularly high student attendance rate the school has enjoyed in recent times. It has also contributed to the school's impressive results in both sporting and academic arenas over the years. An occasion such as a 125-year celebration brings with it the opportunity to look back to see how far we have come and to look forward to consider what the future might hold.

Firstly, I want to talk briefly about the school's history. The original school buildings and the 104-year-old play shed are still standing and help to give us a sense of the history that makes this school so special. One cannot help but feel that the early teachers and students have left their mark. They instilled a tradition of hard work and cooperation that remains evident at the school today. We can only imagine the hardship and sacrifice the first families to settle in the area had to endure in those early years. There were no roads and no cars; many rode horses or walked. There were no computers and no TV. The only items given to them were chalk and a slate. Who would ever believe back then that many of our farming community of today would be buying and selling their product on the Internet? Those early pioneer families not only had to overcome the harsh challenges of the land but also had to ensure that their children received the best possible education. Many of Minden's first families were German migrants who aspired to a better life for themselves and their children. Education was, as it is today, an essential tool in ensuring that their children were given the best possible start in life.

Compared with the first-class facilities and resources that Minden State School students now enjoy, school life back in those early days presented many challenges. Today's students benefit from the use of computers and the World Wide Web—technologies a world away from the chalk and slate used in 1878. I am told that when the school first opened many of the German migrant children spoke only their native tongue. This obviously presented a challenge for the teacher in charge. In order to teach these children the English language, the teacher would hold up a pencil and say, 'This is a pencil. Say "pencil",' and so on with other items in the school. Minden State School has certainly come a long way from those days.

The greater Minden community has also experienced significant changes over the past 125 years and this has had a strong effect on the school. There has also been a shift in the population and make-up of the local community. Many families now work in Ipswich and Brisbane rather than on the land. Families have moved away and many other families have moved into the area. These challenges bring new opportunities but also present the Minden community with an opportunity to shape its own future.

Minden State School has enjoyed the benefits of a supportive local community and I am certain this will continue. Just think what it might be like to return in 25 years to celebrate Minden's State School's 150-year anniversary.

Time expired.