



Speech by

STUART COPELAND

MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

Hansard 1 April 2003

CLIFTON SHIRE COUNCIL

Mr COPELAND (Cunningham—NPA) (7.13 p.m.): On 30 March, like many local councils around Queensland, the Clifton Shire Council celebrated its centenary. The Clifton shire was created following the abolition of the Clifton Divisional Board by the Governor in Council in 1903. The shire of Clifton was originally constituted a divisional board by proclamation dated 11 November 1879 under the Divisional Boards Act of that year. The Clifton Shire Council celebrated its centenary on Saturday night with a shire ball which I was lucky enough to attend and which proved to be a fantastic night. There were three past mayors and shire chairmen present—Emmett Lyons, Ian Jones, Reg Murphy—and of course current Mayor Ann Collins, as well as local councillors and a number of past councillors.

The Clifton shire has experienced some fairly difficult economic times of late. It was one of the first areas declared exceptional circumstances in Queensland and it was certainly a great chance for the community to come together and celebrate, particularly in light of recent rains which have gone some way to providing some hope for the summer and winter crops of this year. The first council meeting held in Clifton shire was held on 30 March 1903. If one looks through the list of names of those present, there are surnames like Gillam, Logan, Clare, O'Sullivan, Keleher, Black, McGovern and Clark. They are a list of names that are still well known in the area. If one looks through the list of past shire chairmen and mayors of the Clifton shire, there are very many names that are still well recognised around the area. Of course there a lot of new families that have come and taken their places as leaders within that community.

The first woman councillor was elected in Clifton in May 1964. Mrs Phyllis Linnett served two terms on the Clifton Shire Council and did not seek re-election. The year 1964 was actually a very early time for a woman to be elected to a shire council. In 1997 Ann Collins was elected as the first mayor and in 2002 Councillor Anne Glasheen was elected as deputy mayor. So it has the distinction of having a full executive of women on that council. In the minutes of that first meeting was a Department of Agriculture tender for the destruction of noxious weeds for Pratten portion 18. That just goes to prove that even 100 years later many of the issues do remain the same.

In 1896 Mr Denham, the then Minister for Lands, introduced into parliament a bill later known as the Closer Lands Settlement Act. After it became law, the government immediately proceeded to resume the Headington Hill estate, a major holding of 45,000 acres in the Clifton area. The land was then thrown open to ballot in January 1898 and attracted applicants from every state in Australia and New Zealand. The opening of this estate brought a great increase in the population to the district and great prosperity. I am certainly confident that the prosperity will continue to be enjoyed in Clifton. I also want to congratulate the Taroom Shire Council which also celebrated its centenary on the weekend.

Time expired.