



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 19 May 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Janette Turner Hospital

Hon. P.D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.44 a.m.): I am also delighted to announce to the House that at an official function at lunch time in Parliament House I will have the honour of appointing Janette Turner Hospital as an honorary ambassador for Queensland. This will be a great pleasure, especially since the expatriate author has now received due recognition in Australia. She is wonderful human being. I seek to incorporate details of her career and the rest of my ministerial statement in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

In fact, when Janette won the Queensland Premier's Literary Award for Best Fiction Book in October 2003—for *Due Preparations for the Plague*—it was her first major Australian literary prize.

I am delighted that since winning that award she has gone on to win the Patrick White Award for lifetime literary achievement.

The honorary ambassadorship will represent recognition from the people of Queensland for Janette's contribution to literature as an acclaimed and prolific writer.

The presence of her parents, Adrian and Elsie Turner, her brother David and sister-in-law Nancy will make the occasion all the more special.

Writers and other creative people are essential in our Smart State—they have the power to challenge the status quo and help keep democracy ticking.

And Members familiar with Janette's novels will know Queensland has played a big part in her work and her life.

She was born in Melbourne but her family moved to Brisbane when she was seven, and she spent her formative years living in Newmarket Road.

She attended Wilston State School and Mitchelton State High School—where she was dux.

(And I am delighted that the current principals of both these schools have accepted invitations to this afternoon's function.)

After studying at the University of Queensland and Kelvin Grove Teachers College, she was posted to teach at Mossman High.

There she taught English for a year before being transferred back to home turf, to the newly-opened Newmarket State High School.

On a Methodist Youth Camp she met her future husband, Clifford Hospital.

Cliff's studies took them overseas—first to the United States, where Janette began writing.

She has also lived in India and Canada and now resides in Queensland's sister state in the United States: South Carolina (which also has a Smart State strategy).

Janette is Professor of English and Distinguished Writer in Residence at the University of South Carolina.

Her work—including the internationally acclaimed *The Ivory Swing*, *Borderline*, *Charades*, *The Last Magician*, *Oyster* and *Due Preparations for the Plague*—has been translated into twelve languages.

As an Honorary Ambassador for Queensland, she will be in the distinguished company of Mariko Bando, Arthur Beetson, Steven Bradbury, Richard Branson, Peter Carey, Michael Doohan, John Durst, Allan Langer, Dick Johnson, Patrick Rafter and Vicki Wilson.

I am confident the House will join me in wishing Janette Turner Hospital good fortune as she represents Queensland as an honorary ambassador.