



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard Thursday, 8 June 2006

SURFERS PARADISE, GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (12.31 am): On Sunday, 7 May, the Greek orthodox community of St Anna celebrated its 30-year anniversary of the erection of the original church and hall. The day began with a divine liturgy in the church celebrated by His Eminence, Archbishop Stylianos, and co-celebrated by Father Dimitri Tsakas, Father Constantine Lentakis, and parish priest Father Romanos Stergiou. At the end of the liturgy, His Eminence awarded Mr Jim Raptis with the Gold Cross of St Andrew—the highest award given by the church to a lay person.

Celebrations continued in the hall with a luncheon that was attended by His Eminence, clergy, political representatives from all levels of government and other dignitaries. Speeches were delivered by the President of St Anna, Mr George Hippocrates; the Honorary Consul-General of Greece in Queensland, Mr Jim Raptis; federal member for McPherson, Mrs Margaret May; and the representative for Premier Peter Beattie and member for Burleigh, Mrs Christine Smith. They were then followed by speeches made by founding president, Mr Peter Vaggelas; Mrs Betty Vaggelas; Ladies Auxiliary President, Mrs Sandra Voukelatos; and Helen Raptis, who highlighted 30 years of hard work by volunteers—some of whom have passed on.

Following the speeches, the pioneers of St Anna were honoured by receiving a commemorative medallion of the 30-year anniversary. These people were honoured for their tireless voluntary efforts in establishing the church and community between the early years—the late 1950s—and 1978, when the original church and hall was fully completed. Other volunteers and benefactors of St Anna will be honoured at subsequent functions in the future.

The Greek community represent an important part of Gold Coast diversity. They always have a very successful Greek festival at the Gold Coast council grounds that my wife Stacey and I have been proud to attend. They are a community who emphasise being part of the Gold Coast and Australian community but who want their children to maintain language, cultural and religious connections with their Greek heritage.

I was going to seek leave to have the list of pioneers incorporated in *Hansard* but, because of your Greek heritage, Mr Speaker, I am going to read them out and I would like an assessment of my reading and my Greek ability. They are: Peter Vaggelas, Angelo Niotakis, Harry Demetriades, Betty Vaggelas, Peter Paul, Jim Panousis, Peter Panousis, Maria Cominos, Androula Vassiliou, Andrew Gregory, Savvas Costi, Georgia Kalas, Mary Demetriades, John Trimas, Fred Hewitt, Sonia Hewitt, Tsambika Mandrakas, Kathy Gregory, Harry Gregory, Tola Marendy, Jim Raptis, Peter Vassiliou, Athena Karos, George Ioannides, John Symeonides, Niki Ioannides, Fifi Hippocrates, George Hippocrates, John Marendy and Sandra Voukelatos.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Not bad, member for Surfers Paradise. From a Greek speaker, I think you did very well.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you.