



Speech by

Hon. Robert Swarten

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard Thursday, 19 April 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Anzac Square, Refurbishment

Hon. RE SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works, Housing and Information and Communication Technology) (10.05 am): The Shrine of Remembrance holds a special place in the hearts of all Queenslanders. The shrine was dedicated on Remembrance Day in November 1930 on land provided by the Australian and state governments to establish Anzac Square. It remains a place where people can gather together to remember those who fought and died for our country.

In 2002 a report identified that the memorial was deteriorating. Through a combination of state and Australian government funding, the shrine was partially restored in April 2004. I am proud to say that an election commitment by our government has seen \$2.4 million allocated over a three-year period to complete the restoration of the shrine.

This project was approved under the state government's 2003 Smart State Building Fund. I can inform the House that the Anzac Square memorial has undergone an extensive restoration of the stonework and ironwork and, through the skill and expertise of QBuild's stonemasons, has been dramatically restored. At this year's Anzac Day ceremony, the Shrine of Remembrance will display a gleaming and rejuvenated face.

Q-Build's stonemasons have achieved a tremendous result in restoring the striking colours of the sandstone. I am proud to say that the Queensland branch of the RSL who operate the shrine is very pleased with the result. All major work is now complete and the Anzac Square memorial is once again open to the public.

The only work still to be done is the replacement of glass mosaic tiles around the eternal flame. A great deal of research and effort has gone into finding authentic replacements for the tiles. I am pleased to report that the search was successful and work is scheduled to start in the week following Anzac Day 2007. The high-quality restoration of this important link to our past is something all Queenslanders can be proud of.

At the same time, the restoration of the Anzac Square Shrine of Remembrance has provided a great opportunity for apprentice stonemasons to work on a unique project. A new generation is learning an ancient craft thanks to Q-Build and the Department of Public Works which trains the only stonemasons in Australia.