



Speech by

**Andrew Cripps**

**MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK**

Hansard Tuesday, 12 February 2008

---

## **CARDWELL SHIRE COUNCIL**

**Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—NPA) (9.50 pm): At midnight on 15 March 2008 the Cardwell Shire Council will cease to exist following the decision by the Beattie-Bligh Labor government to impose a forced amalgamation on the people of the Cardwell shire and the Johnstone shire to form the Cassowary Coast Regional Council. Tonight, I would like to place on the record a brief history of the Cardwell shire to ensure that its existence is recorded in the same parliament controlled by the Australian Labor Party that voted to abolish it.

The township of Cardwell was the first point of European settlement north of Bowen, established in 1864 and initially the main seaport for north Queensland. In the fledgling colony of Queensland, Cardwell was the most northern seaport on the east coast and was closely associated with most of the expansion and settlement of far-north Queensland during that time.

In 1866 the province of Cardwell was proclaimed and five councillors appointed, although no records of meetings exist. Cardwell was the original focus of the local government authority from 1884 when the Cardwell Divisional Board was proclaimed. The board had six members in two divisions which increased to three in 1887. James Thorn Sr was the first chairman of the Cardwell Divisional Board in 1884, while Peter Smith was the divisional boards' last chairman in 1902.

The operations of the local authority were based in the township of Cardwell until 1902 when the divisional board became the Cardwell Shire Council. Council meetings continued to occur in Cardwell until 1929 when council relocated to Tully following the growth in the population of that township as a result of the establishment of the Tully sugar mill in 1924. The first Cardwell Shire Council meeting held in Tully occurred on 27 June 1929.

In 1930 a new office building in Tully was occupied by the Cardwell Shire Council. This is now the Tully library. In 1978 the present council chambers were opened. Currently, there are 10 councillors, three councillors elected from three divisions and a mayor elected at large.

Many distinguished citizens of the district have served as councillors on the Cardwell Shire Council. The first chairman of the Cardwell Shire Council was Johann Hubinger, who served as chairman between 1903 and 1904. The last mayor of the Cardwell Shire Council will be Giuseppe Galeano, known as Joe, who has served as mayor since 2004 and will complete his term on 15 March 2008.

The first ever woman elected to the Cardwell Shire Council was Mrs Gladys Henry, who served as a councillor from 1976 to 1982. The first and only woman elected as chairman of the Cardwell Shire Council, before they became known as mayors, was Mrs Atte Raccanello, who served between 1985 and 1991.

The Cardwell Shire Council has a tremendously proud history of achievement over its 106 years as a shire council, in addition to its 18 years as a divisional board and 18 years as a provincial entity. In all, 142 years of local government will come to an end on 15 March 2008, I believe to the great regret of the vast majority of local residents and ratepayers who strongly believe that a referendum should have been held about the question of amalgamation.