



Speech by

Margaret Keech

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

Hansard Thursday, 21 May 2009

ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATION

Mrs KEECH (Albert—ALP) (9.32 pm): Honourable members will be pleased to know that the Anzac spirit is alive and well in Albert. I was fortunate to once again be invited to a large number of Anzac Day services from across my diverse electorate. In particular, I am very proud of the increasingly large number of young people participating in Anzac Day services. I had the pleasure of attending three school services held the day before Anzac Day, allowing students to pay their special respects to our men and women of the armed forces who risked and gave their lives for Australia and those who are currently serving on the front line.

Under the outstanding educational leadership of college director Ms Lee Callum, Upper Coomera State College, which is the largest school in Australia, held a moving ceremony with a special focus on the relationship between Australia and New Zealand. The school has a large number of students and staff from New Zealand, and the school's 'Kapa Haka' group presented a moving musical tribute to our friends from across the Tasman. Special thanks go to the staff, particularly Ms Lee Callum, Michael Ogier, Bryan McGarry, Kylie Furlon and the college captains—Minnie Hannaford, Clayton Couch, Marlena Walker, Dominic Bradley, Teanna-Jade Hunt and Sam Clark—for their impressive work.

The Anzac Day commemoration at St Stephen's College on Reserve Road involved a solemn reflection of the sacrifices made by prisoners of war, with a focus on their will to survive. There I was able to personally acknowledge local veterans Jack Murphy, Humphrey Firkins, Norm Kelly and John Hambridge, who have served in various conflicts including the Second World War, Vietnam and, most recently, East Timor. Thanks to the staff for the efforts they put into organising such a moving ceremony—in particular, Principal Jamie Dorrington for his dedication to learning excellence, social science teacher Carmel Stolarchuk, college captain Gemma Milne-Soberanas and all the students involved.

In addition, I had the privilege to attend one of Queensland's newest schools, Coomera Springs State School, which only opened its doors to students last year. I thank Principal Mike Ennis for installing the spirit of the Anzacs in his students and ensuring that the Anzac legend lives on through traditions implemented in one of our newest state schools.

With every Anzac Day comes renewed hope that the memory of our diggers will be forever etched in young minds and that the legacy of the Anzacs and the quest for peace and freedom will live on through the next generation of Australians. Lest we forget.