



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

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STORIES OF THE REDLANDS EXHIBITION

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (9.07 pm): Last Wednesday evening I had the privilege of attending the Redland Museum for the official opening of the new exhibit, *Stories of the Redlands*, by the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley. *Stories of the Redlands* was jointly funded by the Redland Museum, Redland City Council and the Queensland government. The Q150 Community Funding Program provided \$10,000 towards the cost of the project.

The project's purpose was to celebrate the sesquicentenary of Queensland by the development of a high quality permanent exhibition in the Redland Museum to showcase the development of the Redlands area from the very early colonial period to the present. The exhibit is presented as a series of story panels that describe key events and milestones in the history of the Redlands. I will share some of those stories with the House tonight. The display begins with artwork depicting the creation stories of the original inhabitants of Stradbroke Island, the Quandamooka people. One such painting is the original work of Minjerribah native and Aboriginal activist, Oodjeroo Noonuccal, known locally as Aunty Kath Walker.

For the period immediately following colonisation of Queensland and the establishment of Brisbane in 1824, the Redlands was a loose collection of farms and tracks nestled between the low scrub and thick bushland. In 1865 the Queensland government established the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum on North Stradbroke Island as a halfway house for the destitute and infirm. As Dunwich developed so did the mainland facilities to support it, causing considerable immigration from Brisbane to the Redland Bay area. The Redlands gained a reputation as prime agricultural land right outside the capital city.

The most popular crop in the Redlands in the early stages of farming was sugar cane, with the rich red soil proving incredibly fertile. The exhibit tells the story of Captain Louis Hope who built the first commercial sugar mill in 1868 to crush his own cane. Captain Hope is described as the father of the sugarcane industry in the Redlands. By the late 1880s sugar was being replaced by fruit and vegetables, especially pineapples, passionfruit, bananas, custard apples and citrus as well as potatoes, lettuce, tomatoes and strawberries. Up until the late nineties, the Redlands was still referred to as the salad bowl of Brisbane.

The rail line to Cleveland was completed in 1889, and with it tourism, residential subdivisions and farming further grew in the area. The rail line continued further than it does today, terminating at Cleveland Point. Today, there are strong calls for the rail line to Cleveland to be duplicated.

The display also tracks the development of water reticulation in the Redlands, from the initial construction of the Leslie Harrison Dam to the extremely well-engineered supply from North Stradbroke Island. It has taken the team thousands of volunteer man hours to make this display possible. The president, Mr Ross Bower, and the vice-president, Mr Paul Field, are to be congratulated.