



Speech by

Hon. Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Wednesday, 22 April 2009

IPSWICH FESTIVAL

Hon. RG NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (9.47 pm): The Ipswich Festival is now on and, as you would know better than most, Mr Deputy Speaker Wendt, it is a fantastic event of which to be a part. Festivities started last Friday night with the Mayor's Ball, which other people might hold in some boring function room or convention centre but in Ipswich we hold in the more than 100-year-old paint shop at the old railway workshops. So it is a tremendous event to be a part of this glamorous occasion in the old historic railway workshops in the central part of town. The festivities continued on the Saturday with a street party in the CBD with some fantastic entertainers and the opening of the Ipswich Art Awards, which include a range of art from the most amateur to the most professional of artists. I always buy something at the Ipswich Art Awards because there is always this tremendous diversity of talent—from little pieces for 50 bucks to the highest standard of quality work from some really tremendous artists.

On the Sunday, the Ipswich Global Fiesta was held. This event celebrates Ipswich's multiculturalism. There are people from around 153 countries who live in Ipswich, and the Global Fiesta celebrates that diversity. There were morris dancers, and people from the Greek islands and some of Ipswich's South Sea Islander groups performed. There was tremendous cultural richness and diversity on display. The state government puts about \$10,000 each year into this celebration of Ipswich multiculturalism and I think that is money very well spent.

The Ipswich International Tattoo forms part of the Ipswich Art Awards. It is run by the Ipswich Thistle Pipe Band. This is a tremendous celebration of our Scottish heritage in the city of Ipswich. Events have continued through this week but, sadly, the member for Ipswich West and I have not been able to be a part of things. They will continue through to next weekend, when there will be jazz performances in central Ipswich in d'Arcy Doyle Place, including a performance from one of Australia's great jazz icons, Renee Geyer.

The Ipswich Festival is a tremendous celebration of the spirit of our city. Ipswich is a place that is growing rapidly but maintaining its strong sense of community and its strong sense of place. It is happening in the Ipswich CBD, which is a place that is changing. After being quite run down for a number of years, there is now a new vibrancy starting to happen in town, largely as a result of some work that the council and the state government are doing. I encourage members to be involved in the Ipswich Festival should they get a chance because it is a wonderful celebration of our community life.