




Speech by

Jason Costigan

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

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MACKAY, 150TH ANNIVERSARY

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (9.17 pm): I wish to advise the House that this year marks the 150th anniversary of Mackay—once a sleepy, tiny settlement on the banks of the Pioneer River but nowadays one of the shining lights of the state and national economy. The 150th anniversary celebrates the establishment of Captain John Mackay's camp at Greenmount in January 1862—Greenmount being a landmark and historic local property 20 minutes by car south-west of Mackay in the state electorate of Mirani.

Mackay is home to a huge proportion of my constituents in the seat of Whitsunday. I can advise the House that the Mackay Regional Council has organised celebrations throughout the year, giving everyone in the Mackay region an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on what it means to live in this great North Queensland community—a community that has certainly come a long way since Captain John entered what is now the Pioneer Valley.

I for one could not help thinking of those pioneering days only last Sunday when I had the opportunity to return to Greenmount for the first time in 24 years—on this occasion for a heritage fair as part of the M150 celebrations being organised by the Mackay Regional Council in conjunction with community groups. The fair was extremely well supported, with plenty of familiar faces from Whitsunday coming along and a lot of them taking the opportunity to view the 97-year-old homestead that showcases the past.

To further celebrate Mackay's 150th anniversary, the Mackay Regional Council has called on two local historians to identify 10 unsung heroes and pay tribute to their contributions on Queensland Day, Wednesday, 5 June at a free community BBQ at the city's Bluewater Quay overlooking the magnificent blue Pioneer River.

I commend the Mackay Regional Council on its good work and leadership in promoting M150 and delivering these activities in relation to the anniversary, activities that are part and parcel of community engagement in a special community marking a special milestone. I might add also that the council has launched a program to commemorate our city's fallen soldiers with new street blades to be erected as part of Mackay's 150th anniversary celebrations.

While we look to the future, it is important that we reflect on the past and trailblazers such as Captain John Mackay and his party who left Uralla in the New England of New South Wales way back in 1860 in search of new country in the north. I encourage the good people of Mackay, in particular my constituents from the Pioneer to the O'Connell, to embrace the M150 celebrations during the course of 2012, a year in which Mackay should stand tall and proud.