




Speech by

Tim Mulherin

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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RUGBY LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS; MACKAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

 **Mr MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.35 pm): My electorate of Mackay recently hosted the best under 12-rugby league players in the country. Virgin Australia Stadium held the School Sport Australia 12 Years and Under Rugby League Championships between 4 and 11 August. Teams from across Australia flocked to Mackay for a long, hard week of football. The courage, strength and dignity the children showed, representing not only their families, but their schools and, most significantly, their state, was faultless. I was lucky enough to attend both the opening and closing ceremonies and enjoy the tremendous talent, sportsmanship and mateship on display. There was little doubt of Queensland losing the crown as national champions in the grand final and, as predicted, Queensland won a close battle with the Queensland Invitational.

Many thanks must go to Laurie Shepherd and his organising committee for showcasing the beautiful city of Mackay. I would also like to thank Frank Leonard and the dedicated group of referees he supported throughout the week. Carnivals of such calibre do not go ahead without generous financial contributions from business in the local community and I would like to thank the major sponsors of the carnival, Souths Leagues Club, Central Queensland University, Beltec Services, Mastermyne, ARL Development and Virgin Australia Stadium.

On 4 August the South Mackay Sports and Entertainment Precinct was at capacity to mark the 40th Anniversary of the foundation of the Mackay Historical Society. The historical society is a small but dedicated team whose members put on a grand event to celebrate the occasion. The formation of the Mackay Historical Society came from the foresight of Mr John Renton of Walkerston, who decided to convene a meeting of interested people with a view to creating a historical society to preserve and promote the wealth of history in the Mackay district. In 1974 the society, led by Mrs Bernice Wright, was instrumental in helping to save the old Mackay town hall from destruction and to be kept for the community. In 1981 the society's patron, Mr Thomas Cook, passed away. Following his death his widow, Dorothy Cook, arranged to bequeath Greenmount Homestead to the community of Mackay as a homestead museum.

Since the society moved from Greenmount Homestead in 2001, the society's archives and collections have been stored at a new site in Casey Avenue in South Mackay. The old single men's quarters originally from Marian Mill was moved from the grounds of Greenmount Homestead to the present address in Casey Avenue for the society to use as a museum. The museum is packed to the rafters with local history. I thank Glen Hall, who is the research officer at the society. I also thank Phil and Helen Martin for their many years of service to the society and the dedication they have shown to such an important community organisation. Special recognition must be made of Mrs Bernice Wright for her continual service to the society over the past 40 years. Bernice is a well-known local historian and no-one in Mackay is game to engage in a historical debate with her, myself included. Anyone visiting Mackay should take the time to visit the museum.