




Speech By
David Kempton

MEMBER FOR COOK

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ADJOURNMENT

Cooktown, Community Cabinet

 **Mr KEMPTON** (Cook—LNP) (11.26 pm): I am proud to report that the 14th community cabinet, held in Cooktown two weeks ago, was an outstanding success. I thank the Premier, the cabinet, the assistant ministers and the department heads who took the time to visit the most popular electorate in Queensland. Given the recent severe weather event in the form of Cyclone Ita, holding this community cabinet in Cooktown was all the more important. The Premier said that he would return to Cooktown, and he did.

The community cabinet is not just a token event. It represents a real opportunity for constituents in regional areas to access ministers and department heads on a one-to-one basis. This often results in the early resolution of issues and, importantly, gives ministers a greater insight into the make-up of communities in the distant corners of our great state.

Very topical to the weekend's event was Cooktown's historical connection to Captain Cook, our intrepid founder. There is wonderful reference material compiled by Loretta Sullivan and the Cooktown re-enactment committee titled *The Endeavour River/Waalumbaal Birri: where Australia's history began in 1770*. This booklet provides a home-grown insight into the 48 days that Cook and his crew spent on the shores of the Endeavour River. The booklet records the following—

A skirmish occurred between the Bama and Endeavour's crew over turtles that were taken on board but due to a combination of reasons and a mutual acceptance between both parties, the conflict was resolved and it was here that we believe the first recorded reconciliation took place in Australia.

An extract from Joseph Banks' journal records the following—

We followed for nearly half a mile, then meeting with some rocks from whence we might observe these motions we sat down and they did so too about 100 yards from us. The little old man now came forward to us carrying a lance without a point. He halted several times and as he stood employed himself collecting moisture from under his armpit with his finger which every time he drew through his mouth.

This is said to be a customary act of peace.

As is also customary, during the community cabinet there were some announcements made, including \$3.5 million for the waterfront upgrade and \$1.5 million for the dredging of the harbour. But most important was the announcement that our government will reintroduce a birthing centre to Cooktown and its district following its closure a generation ago. We will spend \$3.8 million to ensure that not only are families able to have their babies closer to home but also the service will be continued well into the future.

If we are to arrest the flow of families from regional areas, it is important that we understand what is important in attracting and holding young families in regional areas. This issue was not lost on the Premier, who visited the hospital and talked to doctors, nurses and families. This is a government that gets regional Queensland.

(Time expired)