




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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ADJOURNMENT

Algester Electorate, Events; North Queensland, Indigenous Housing

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (12.05 am): I rise to acknowledge some of the many individuals and groups who work tirelessly to serve their communities, particularly in my electorate of Algester. Last month, I had the pleasure of taking part in school celebrations at St Stephen's Primary School in Algester and Grand Avenue State School in Forest Lake.

At the St Stephen's spring fair, I had the honour of officially opening the fair and dedicating the Taylor Oval, named after the school's foundation principal, Steve Taylor. The fair was a wonderful community event and a huge fundraising success for the school. It was a true tribute to the principal, Phil Manitta, his amazing school staff and the dedicated P&F, led by Kathryn O'Toole.

Earlier in August, I joined Grand Avenue State School for its EKKA Day fete, sponsoring the barbeque and working throughout the day on the stall serving our wonderful community. I would like to congratulate Gavin Rook and Donna Clark from Grand Avenue State School P&C, the school's principal, Mick Quinn—

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Minister. Pause the clock. Members, would you please leave the chamber quietly so that we can hear the speakers speak. I call the minister.

Ms ENOCH:—and his hardworking staff who, through their combined efforts, raised nearly \$30,000 to help build new tennis and handball courts.

I was also pleased to host earlier this year the Greenbank RSL Photography club in this place. Nearly 20 members of the club, including the organiser, Glen Barton, attended a tour of parliament, taking great photos and sharing a meal together. I am looking forward to the upcoming exhibition where their wonderful photos of this beautiful building will be displayed. These are just some of the many incredible community groups that I have had the opportunity to work with since being elected the member for Algester.

I would also like to inform the House of my visit to Far North Queensland last week. As the Minister for Housing I had the pleasure of visiting the many public housing properties that are being built in the communities of Lockhart River, Hope Vale, Wujal Wujal and Yarrabah as part of the Palaszczuk government's remote indigenous housing program. I enjoyed an incredibly warm welcome and spent much of my time listening to and discussing with councils and community groups how we can work together into the future. Whilst I was in Hope Vale Aunty Shirley Costello delivered a moving welcome—something that I would to share with the House. I seek leave to incorporate Aunty Shirley's message into *Hansard*. I confirm that this document has been shown to Mr Speaker.

Leave granted.

Minister, good morning to you from our own piece of paradise on a truly tropical Spring morning. Just a very brief account of our history to share with you, Minister.

James Cook and his team wrote down a lot of the Guugu Yimithirr language which then became the first Aboriginal language to be written in this country.

One of the most popular words written was the word 'gangurru' which famously became known as the kangaroo and of course the kangaroo is one of our nation's national emblem on the Coat of Arms. In this room are descendants of those ancestors.

The Guugu Yimithirr people and its historical owners were forcibly evacuated to the Aboriginal community of Woorabinda during World War II. My own parents were both 10 years old at that time. So I grew up with the many stories of this piece of history of our people.

Our ancestors, the Guugu Yimithirr Tribe engaged with the early explorer James Cook who was then a Lieutenant when his good ship the Endeavour ran into difficulties on a reef outside of Cooktown. For seven years they lived in exile until finally given permission to return and create a new community. There is a documentary titled 'War of Hope' that is often screened on NITV telling of our story. In 1949 the first group of men arrives. This year our town is 66 years old.

One of the longest serving missionary George Schwarz lived and worked with this tribe coming at the age of 19 years old and dying at 91 years. This coming Sunday we commemorate his arrival with a church service at the beach, marking the 128 year of Missionary Schwarz arrival.

We have seen many changes that started with being called an Aboriginal reserve, then it was called a mission, then under the Community Services Act we were known as a community. Now under the Local Government Act, we are a town.

We proudly still have our language the Guugu Yimithirr language which is also part of our school's curriculum.

Our people enjoy our children performing the corroboree and children as young as 1 year old can shake a leg. Our NAIDOC celebration is celebrated by a huge crowd, where the Aboriginal colours of black, yellow and red is worn and shown with pride.

With your presence today no doubt there may be more changes, but we have the intelligence, the enthusiasm, the knowledge for improvement to make way for changes that can better our future for the coming generations to embrace.

We learnt to enjoy our two worlds, like going hunting and gathering using Toyotas and Yamaha boats and outboard motors. Minister today you have met with people who have gone through category 5 Cyclone In and category 4 Cyclone Nathan, our people took the leading role and we were all safe.

I thank you for being here and I hope through this summary you are in the midst of caring, trusty and capable people.

Thank you.