




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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ADJOURNMENT

Queensland Multicultural Awards

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (10.27 pm): Last Sunday I attended the Queensland Multicultural Awards at the Logan Entertainment Centre. The Queensland Multicultural Awards recognise the valuable contributions of Queenslanders who support and promote a united, harmonious and inclusive Queensland community. This year the theme recognised creating welcome, building opportunity and celebrating diversity. The Mackay Mesh & Knots MASSI MATSI group nominated for the local club or community group. They were finalists in this division.

The Mackay Mesh & Knots group describe themselves as an Australian South Sea Islander and Mackay Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's group. They are passionate about meeting the needs of their community and informing the broader community of their history, who they are today and how they plan to be part of the future of their community. The Mesh & Knots MASSI MATSI Women's Group are elders of the Australian South Sea Islander community who are very passionate advocates for the Australian South Sea Islander community in Mackay. They raise awareness of their heritage by promoting their culture through community projects, education and sport. Some of the Mesh & Knots projects include: the cemetery project, which is the identification of 114 unmarked graves; development and delivery of an historical component for inclusion in the education curriculum at Mackay State High School; the inaugural Kanaka Proud Cup; and the Greg Fatnowna Memorial Shield.

The group is also working on strengthening ties between the Mackay and Rockhampton South Sea Islander communities. It has contributed to the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first South Sea Islanders in Mackay. While Mesh & Knots consider themselves to be Australian, with a deeply rooted history in Queensland, they are committed to contributing their stories to the Mackay conversation and promoting the township as their home town and the home of their ancestors—a place where all people are welcome. This group did not win their division, but they took out the minister's cultural award. Congratulations to Marion Healy, Aunty Maud Corowa and their team on a job well done.