




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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ADJOURNMENT

Mercury Theatre Wynnum

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (7.28 pm): I do not know about you, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I love a good night out, enjoying a little glass of something cool and refreshing whilst being entertained by our local thespians. I am delighted that tonight in the gallery I have some of those very talented locals from the fabulous Mercury Theatre Wynnum.

The Mercury Theatre is celebrating 70 years of, in the words of its founder, Miss Win O'Neil, sharing the love and fostering an appreciation of the great art which is the whole of human life, with its laughter and tears, sorrow and tragedy. I am thrilled that I can participate in a small way in this significant anniversary. Since 1949 this dynamic theatre company has been entertaining baysiders because of Miss O'Neil's vision to fill the needs of a rapidly growing district which she stated, while slightly remote from city opportunities, is rich in latent talent—and this is evident today.

Castings for the productions were held at Miss O'Neil's home at 93 Esplanade, Wynnum Central. The productions were initially held at various locations, including: the Albert Theatre, Brisbane; the Greenslopes Military Hospital; and the beautiful Star Theatre in Wynnum. The Mercury Theatre has been going strong since that time. This community based amateur theatre company is managed and run completely by volunteers. Mercury, which was named after the London Theatre Company of the same name and the Orson Welles New York Mercury Players, performs three productions a year at the lovely Lota Manly RSL hall. Auditions or castings are also conducted at the hall. Mercury has an impressive array of equipment and costumes and a strong following across all of Brisbane.

The productions are eagerly awaited. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the most recent production, but I have heard all about it. It sounded like great fun and I am very sorry I missed it. It is always a great night out. The Mercury Theatre has touched the lives of so many in the bayside, including my own family. My sister auditioned and had a part in one of their productions, as did my cousin. My two children auditioned for the part of the donkey in the production of *Puss in Boots*. They were exciting times in my household during that era because my son very proudly was the 'arse of the ass'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Pause the clock. I will ask you to withdraw the unparliamentary language.

Ms PEASE: I withdraw. I think that Miss O'Neil would be delighted with the impact of her vision to bring the arts to Wynnum. What a significant legacy and how lovely that we can celebrate with my friends from the Mercury Theatre here tonight. Thank you so much for coming in. Most importantly, thank you for entertaining baysiders!