



Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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ADJOURNMENT

Wynnum Fringe Festival

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (7.26 pm): Madam Acting Speaker, may I congratulate you on your elevation to this important role in the parliament. The first time I met Tom Oliver was as a student at a performance of *High School Musical* at Iona College. I knew then that he would go far, and he has. Tom has had a successful career as a performer, both domestically and internationally. However, COVID has had a huge impact on the entire arts sector across the world.

Tom came to see me with a great idea, the Wynnum Fringe Festival. From our first meeting I saw that if anyone, Tom could pull this off—the very first fringe festival to play in front of a live audience during a global pandemic. Tom knocked on doors and worked with local businesses seeking sponsorship and support. Good on Margaret Vote from Raine and Horne, who came to the party as a major sponsor. Likewise, BMD, Michael Jullian and many other local organisations and businesses supported the festival. I was particularly delighted that Arts Queensland were able to support Tom and the fringe with an \$80,000 grant. This made it all possible.

With the 6,600 tickets sold online and 22 sold-out ticketed shows, nearly 10,000 people came through Wynnum CBD in a COVID-safe environment across three days. Three local businesses—that we know of; there may well be more—reported that the weekend's trade made up for most of their losses during the COVID lockdown. An opening smoking ceremony in collaboration with the Quandamooka elders was held. There were 21 local sponsors and 150 artists, and 43 creative staff were employed over the weekend in November. There were also 61 wonderful volunteers, and my husband, Peter, was one of them who worked from the beginning on Friday afternoon right through to the end on Sunday afternoon. Good on you Pete. The online broadcast played to 10,000 people across the world, there were 23 food truck vendors across Edith Street and 15 community groups played music. Thousands of Queenslanders visited Wynnum for the first time and local iconic buildings were repurposed: the Wynnum Opera House, Winston Churchill Hall and Mrs Quinn's car park. The buzz in Wynnum said it all. Baysiders and visitors alike embraced the fringe festival. My favourite event was *Sizzle* on Pandanus Beach and Samba dancing at Kellehers Dance Academy with Annalee.

The festival grew from a bold idea to opening night in two months. I think the community would agree that the inaugural Wynnum Fringe Festival was a raging success. I say congratulations to all involved: to the sponsors who supported Tom, and also to Tom and his family and the entire Wynnum community for supporting this. That is what baysiders are really great at. We support local initiatives. I cannot wait till the 2021 Wynnum Fringe Festival.