



Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### United Fruitgrowers Co-op Association; O'Callaghan, Mr A

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.00 pm): 16 April was a significant day for the Glass House Mountains community that I represent, but one that passed with little fanfare. It represented the 100th anniversary of the Glass House Mountains United Fruitgrowers Co-op Association, now trading as Glass House Mountains Hardware Mitre 10. It is believed to be the oldest registered co-op still operating in Queensland. The fruit growing and pineapple industry has long been a mainstay of our region, with farmers initially doing all of the packing on their farm before shipping them by rail to Brisbane Markets. In 1922 the summer crop was not doing so well and growers realised something had to be done to turn the industry around. A general meeting of growers was called for 16 April 1922 in Beerburum. It was chaired by Mr Les Crook. The meeting resolved that a branch of the United Fruitgrowers be formed. A committee was appointed and three weeks later at a meeting in the Glass House Mountains School of Arts decisions were taken to lease land from the railway department and arrange for the construction of a building.

That first building was officially opened on 12 January 1924. The current building on the opposite side of the railway line was completed in 1971. I love the fact that co-ops of this nature were so intrinsically linked to the broader economy of the state that the then premier, Sir Frank Nicklin, a pineapple farmer himself from just up the line at Palmwoods, officially opened the new building on the association's Golden Jubilee in April 1972.

The co-op came at an important time for our local fruitgrowers and has been an asset to the community, owned by the community ever since. My heartiest congratulations and thanks to all who have played a role in its existence and operation. My thanks also to local historian, Mr Ron Gillinder, for pointing this anniversary out to me and providing these fantastic photos of the co-op throughout the years, which I now table.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of photographs depicting the United Fruitgrowers' co-operative [658](#).

On a sadder note, I have just learned of the passing of one of Mooloolah Valley's finest, Mr Alan O'Callaghan. I first met Alan in his capacity as the then president of the Mooloolah Valley Community Association, but Alan had been active long before that. Decades of his activism through the seventies and eighties ultimately led to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Living with a disability himself, Alan long advocated for in-home support and independent living for people with a disability. In his own words 'my main aim was to put an end to institutionalisation and segregation for people with disabilities.' He achieved that. I am simply staggered that Alan never picked up a speed fine as he raced through Mooloolah Valley in his motorised wheelchair. It was not speed that took him from us. Sadly, cancer did. Alan passed away yesterday afternoon. Anita Verwayen of the Mooloolah Valley Community Association wrote yesterday—

Bernie and I were both privileged to know Alan, as a close friend, esteemed colleague ... and all round good human being. The Mooloolah community is poorer for his passing.

It sure is, Anita. Rest in peace, Alan.