




Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.12 pm): I congratulate everybody in Toowoomba for the energy and effort that went into the 74th Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers. When it comes to September in Queensland, Toowoomba is really the only place to visit. Just under 200,000 people visited Queen's Park Botanic Gardens. We were 162 people short of 200,000. That was a great attendance for just one garden. Over 105,000 people visited Laurel Bank Park. The number of blooms planted by the parks and gardens groups in Toowoomba is amazing. It looks spectacular. I am ashamed to say that I have not put my garden in the competition.

Mrs Gerber: You know why.

Mr WATTS: Yes, I do know why. I should acknowledge Leisa and Serge Rossignol who were crowned the grand champions of the 2023 *Chronicle* Garden Competition. It was well deserved for their very spectacular garden display. Thousands of people open up their gardens so visitors to Toowoomba can look at private gardens as well as the public displays. We really appreciate people getting behind the whole event because it makes it very special. It means that people stay much longer than they would if only the public parks were open. People who are interested in gardening can have a really good look around.

These days a lot more than gardening goes on at the Carnival of Flowers. This year was a celebration of flowers, culture and community. There is the Food and Wine Festival and a big music concert is attended by several thousand people who come along over a couple of nights. I think they get 10,000 or 12,000 people attending over a couple of nights. That is always good fun. There is plenty of wine and food that is produced locally and from around the downs. It is always good to see people from Stanthorpe coming to present.

I encourage everybody to come next year for the 75th year when we celebrate the carnival's diamond jubilee. The floral parade is great fun. If you have primary school kids it is well worth the drive up the hill to let them participate in the floral parade. Everybody did a great job. This year at the Ekka I bumped into the Mary MacKillop Catholic College marching band. They were also in the parade and did a great job.

Our Turf Club does a fantastic job putting on the Weetwood race day. They run a couple of class 1 races with the Toowoomba Cup and the Pat O'Shea Plate. That is always real good fun as well.

All I can say is well done to all the small businesses and the volunteers as well as the council for putting on this event. It is a fantastic opportunity to come and see Toowoomba at its best.