



Speech By  
**Barbara O'Shea**


**MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **West End State School, 150th Anniversary**

 **Dr O'SHEA** (South Brisbane—ALP) (11.37 pm): This month I had the privilege of attending West End State School's fiesta in celebration of the school's 150th anniversary. The day commenced with Pop Goonts giving a beautiful and heartfelt welcome to country. Later, I had the great honour of ringing the school bell at the same time and on the same day the school was opened in 1875 by the then premier of Queensland, the Hon. Arthur Macalister.

The 150th anniversary of the West End State School is an important landmark. Schools are the bedrock of our community, and a good education can be life changing. Education opens up new worlds to us, and the breadth of opportunities ahead for all the amazing students at the school now would have been unimaginable 150 years ago.

In my speech that day, I shared the experience of Natalie Funnell who, at 92, would be one of the school's oldest living former students. Natalie loved her time at West End State School in the late 1930s, describing it as a 'magic school'. She remembers writing on a slate with a slate pencil and using a wet sponge to erase her work, hearing the air raid siren going off during the Second World War and running to hide in trenches dug behind the school, and her Friday treat of the beautiful ham rolls from the general store across from the school where Mick's Nuts now stands.

Over the years the school has cultivated a range of incredible talent including Natalie's brother, Air Marshall Ray Funnell AC, who became chief of the Royal Australian Air Force, as well as the internationally acclaimed poet and author, Mr David Malouf, and composer Joff Bush, who famously writes the music for *Bluey*. I would like to thank all the teachers and principals, supported by an incredibly hardworking P&C, who have worked so hard over the years to bring the school's vision to life by empowering every student to achieve their personal best to make the world a better place.

The school also serves as a centre for our vibrant multicultural community, with its 1,450 students representing over 60 nationalities. Those children and their parents have built a common bond of friendship across language and cultural barriers. We would not have the special close-knit community we have in West End if we did not have West End State School, the values of which are summed up by the school motto: 'We all smile in the same language'.