

**MT BARKER COMMUNITY COLLEGE — FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY**

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**HON MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM (Agricultural)** [10.03 pm]: On Friday, 1 June it was my honour and pleasure to attend the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of what is now known as Mt Barker Community College. In 1962, the Woogenellup Road campus was known as Mt Barker High School. As numbers grew, and with much lobbying from local member of Parliament Matt Stephens and the school community, Mt Barker Senior High School was created. In recent years the local community focus has been on bringing the previous Mt Barker Primary School to the senior high school site. The result is now called Mt Barker Community College.

As a former teacher-administrator at Mt Barker Senior High School, I was actively involved in lobbying then education minister Alan Carpenter to relocate Mt Barker Primary School students to the Woogenellup site. The primary school had served the town well but needed much work and money to bring it up to an acceptable contemporary standard. The decision to move the town's K-7 pupils to the high school site was supported by the Gallop government, with funding and support continuing through the Carpenter and Barnett governments as the new community college took shape.

In 2012, the college looks magnificent. As an education centre it must be the envy of most rural communities across the state. Set on a 230-hectare farm with some 750 students, Mt Barker Community College is a credit to all involved in its development and day-to-day running. The college is fortunate to have an outstanding leadership team headed by its principal, Jonathan Hoskin. The staff is a most dedicated group focusing on the pursuit of excellence under the motto "Together We Strive". It would be remiss of me not to mention at the celebrations the presence of former principal Frank Harding, from the early to the mid-1970s, I believe; Mr Norm Hill, a former student who joined the staff in 1972 and has stayed ever since; and ex-teachers Eleanor Wright and Pat Ballantyne, to mention just a few.

Jonathan Hoskin's address focused on the many changes that the college has witnessed over its 50 years at the Woogenellup site, particularly in relation to developments in information technology. I have to inform the house that I have always been impressed with the vineyard planted on the site many years ago and note that Mt Barker Community College is one of only a few schools across the state that produces its own wine—in this case a chardonnay.

Some things, however, have not changed over the past 50 years, according to the principal. Mr Hoskin pointed out that the Mt Barker community still wanted the same outcomes for its students in 2012 as it did in 1962. He mentioned confident, independent, career-focused pupils who could speak well, develop their own opinions and contribute to their own community or society. Jonathan Hoskin thanked all who had helped in the journey to 2012 and, in no special order, he mentioned current and former members of the school, now, college council; current and former members of the farm advisory committee; past and present P&C members; local MPs, past and present, along with Shire of Plantagenet councillors and staff; community groups and commercial supporters; as well as past and present staff who worked tirelessly to make the fiftieth anniversary a success.

Mr President, as a former educator and current member for the South West Region, I am sure you will join with me in congratulating all involved in Mt Barker Community College's fiftieth anniversary and wish the school well as it embarks upon the next 50 years.