

WHEATBELT MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE BROCHURE — LAUNCH

Statement

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Max Trenorden): I will give preference to my colleague. I have been sitting here since early evening so I will break the rules. Hon Mia Davies.

HON MIA DAVIES (Agricultural) [9.46 pm]: I am speechless! I rise tonight to talk about the launch of the Wheatbelt museums and heritage brochure.

Hon Ken Travers: Oh, it's about Max!

Hon MIA DAVIES: It is not about Hon Max Trenorden. On Friday, I was lucky enough to be invited to the launch of the brochure at Cunderdin. I have a couple of brochures here. It was a fantastic launch. That was about the third time that I have been to the Cunderdin Municipal Museum and it was well worth the trip. It is on Great Eastern Highway in one of the old pumping stations on the C.Y. O'Connor pipeline. The Cunderdin Municipal Museum received wonderful support from the museums and heritage department to do it up. It has some fantastic displays about the Wheatbelt and the surrounding area. Museums Australia WA has developed the brochure, which was designed to raise awareness of museums, galleries and collecting places throughout the Wheatbelt. I congratulate Museums Australia WA for that initiative. It is a great asset to visitors and locals and provides them with a better understanding of the region and its history.

The museums' brochure project started in 2003. It has been quite a long project in the making. The Wheatbelt brochure is just one in a series of brochures. It is designed to raise awareness for communities of the historical collections held throughout the state. I have had the privilege of visiting many of the places in the Wheatbelt's brochure. Some of the places listed in the brochure include the Cunderdin Municipal Museum, where the launch was held; a toy soldier collection and the Lace Place at Wave Rock; the Mangowine Homestead, which I visited as a child and which has fantastic displays about early pioneering families and their way of life; the Connor's Mill museum in Toodyay; and the Wyalkatchem CBH Agricultural Museum. They are just a few of the fantastic resources we have throughout the Wheatbelt. I was very surprised to see what a rich history we have. Sometimes we do not celebrate that. This is a fantastic way for tourists and locals to educate themselves. All the establishments are unique. They add to the social and cultural fabric of the region.

I think in the Wheatbelt we have a tendency to downplay some of our cultural and social achievements. There is a sense that perhaps history happens somewhere else. Members will know from my inaugural speech that I am quite passionate about the history of the place I am from, which is Yorkrakine. At the launch of the brochure I related a story about our own little piece of history in our backyard at Yorkrakine. A couple of weeks ago I went back to Yorkrakine for my cousin's twenty-first birthday. Yorkrakine Town Hall is the only thing left standing in Yorkrakine. We used to have a school, a footy oval and all the rest of it, but unfortunately the town hall is all that is left. It is a fantastic building. The community has put some money into it and kept it up. The kitchen is not that flash. Washing up the next morning after a greasy sausage sizzle was not the best feeling, but we had several generations of our family out there and the party that night was fantastic. It is a place where not only my father, but also my grandfather and his family and my grandmother's family had many wonderful nights. It was a little piece of history. I am very passionate about the Wheatbelt and what it has to offer.

Going back to Cunderdin, which is where the brochure was launched, Cunderdin again has done remarkably well at preserving its local history. Probably the Meckering earthquake back in 1968 helped to draw the town's attention to its own history. The last time I visited the museum was to launch the Meckering earthquake house. They have a house there that actually tells the story of what happened on the day the earthquake hit. The house shakes and a lot of film footage was captured on the day, and also of subsequent reunions and town people's memories of the day. That is just one of the displays at the museum. It is also part of the Golden Pipeline project with the National Trust. As I said before, they jointly manage the pump station out there in this fantastic museum precinct.

Like most aspects of country life, it is heavily reliant on volunteer groups. Every time I have been out there, there has been a fantastic group of volunteers that are associated with the historical society and the museum. They have been vital in pushing these projects along and seeing them through to fruition. I really commend those community volunteers who turn up at all these events and appreciate all the things that people do not get pats on the back for, such as making the curtains that go in the Meckering earthquake house, painting, and cataloguing a lot of the displays that are out there. They are all working very well. It is also a great way to get the community together. Although the display alone would be enough to make me stop, it is actually also the community spirit in and around the people who are part of these great projects.

I cannot let the opportunity go by without mentioning that royalties for regions did actually contribute to some of the funding through the regional grants scheme and the Wheatbelt Development Commission. About \$9 000 went into that in addition to funding from the Heritage Council of WA. It is exactly the sort of project that we had in mind when we were thinking about royalties for regions. It has all the hallmarks of a fantastic community project. I just offer my congratulations and encourage members to pick up a brochure and go to see what the Wheatbelt has to offer. There are some fantastic places out there.