



Speech By
Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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ADJOURNMENT

Coolangatta State School; Coolangatta Airport

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (6.18 pm): Over the weekend of 9 and 10 February, Coolangatta State School celebrated 100 years of educating children. The fascinating history of this school is unique—one name and three locations. It first opened on 1 February 1920 following a Spanish influenza outbreak which caused 10,000 deaths. The New South Wales border gates were closed, leaving 70 students unable to attend Tweed primary school. Finding flat land proved difficult. The new school had a great view but a restricted playground. I have spoken with countless former students who said that the call of the surf was mightier than their lessons on some days, so it is no surprise that many vividly remember time spent in the headmaster's office.

Commonly known as the school on the hill, it closed due to overcrowding in the mid-seventies and the Stapylton Street site opened on 26 November 1977. The old school was operated as a special school until a new purpose-built facility was opened in Currumbin Waters in July 2006. After an intense community campaign commencing in 2004, which I was proud to be a part of, the site on the hill was dedicated for community use for perpetuity and the school on the hill, thanks to Gold Coast City Council, is now heritage listed and home to the Coolangatta community cultural centre.

I was really impressed with the way the whole school and the wider community supported the Saturday fun day with activities for everybody. Principal Sharyn Mahoney took a plunge in the dunking machine, the classrooms displayed historic items and photos, a time capsule was embedded in the school grounds and former students signed a school honour role. On Sunday His Excellency the Governor of Queensland, Paul de Jersey QC AC, unveiled a centenary plaque at the restored school atop Kirra Hill which was of special significance as his grandfather Claude de Jersey was the headmaster who supervised the enrolment of the school's first 67 students.

On Monday, 4 February I attended the sod turning of the truly exciting and groundbreaking—pardon the pun—new \$50 million Rydges Hotel project at the Gold Coast Airport. I commend the federal government for approving this hotel development in September 2018 and look forward to seeing it grow from the ground before its opening in mid-2020. Expected to be seven storeys with 150 to 200 rooms and 60 to 70 car parks, it will be built on the southern side of the terminal connected by a plaza. It will have a restaurant, bar, resort pool, functions, conference and meeting rooms and a rooftop bar. The hotel will cater for business travellers, regional and international leisure travellers, university students and airline staff. Finally and most importantly, the airport terminal expansions will be three levels with provision for aerobridges, which will be warmly welcomed by those of us who have been lobbying for them for the past 20 years. I place on record my appreciation for the airport and all it does in our community.