



NORTHERN TERRITORY
***of* AUSTRALIA**

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Member for Fong Lim

HANSARD EXTRACT

MUSICAL INSTITUTIONS &
CONTRIBUTORS

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I acknowledge the volunteer playgroups and community services that help parents, from the creche in the West Daly region to the FaFT groups in Pine Creek and Belyuen to the newly formed playgroup in Southport. I know often you are a small group of dedicated people who go above and beyond to ensure parents of newborn babies have access to health professionals and a friendly welcoming space to visit. I thoroughly enjoy visiting and listening to the FaFT groups and the playgroups in the region, so thank you for always making me feel welcome. I wish you all a merry Christmas.

Thank you to all the staff, parents and councils of the 12 schools in the Daly electorate. I will not name them all tonight. They know who they are, and I visit them on a regular basis. I will visit them over the coming weeks leading into Christmas to thank the staff, principals and groundskeepers of the schools who do all the hard work. Thank you, and I look forward to seeing you in the next couple of weeks.

I acknowledge all the Aboriginal corporations and the hardworking ranger groups in the Daly region. A lot of work goes into protecting country and managing our environment, be it on the land or in the water. Thank you for all the work you do. I and the three other bush members on this side and the Members for Barkly and Namatjira appreciate the work that rangers do in our electorates. We know how hard and tough it can be out there, especially at this time of year with the Build-Up when it can be hot and sticky.

To all the businesses, community stores, art galleries, cafes, restaurants and tourism operators, thank you for your service to our communities and the many tourists who visit our beautiful region.

To our frontline workers—the police, fire, emergency service workers and remote clinic staff—thank you for all your work over the past year and in the upcoming holiday season. Many of you give up time with your families and loved ones to serve the community. Let us hope for an incident-free Christmas holiday period.

To my family, my partner, friends, electorate staff, the Leader of the Opposition and her staff and my colleagues in the Chamber, I wish you all a merry Christmas, a safe holiday period and a happy new year.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, and merry Christmas to you. The role can be difficult, getting your head around all the standing orders, but you have done a wonderful job over the last two sittings. I will see you tomorrow, but merry Christmas.

Dr RAHMAN (Fong Lim): Madam Speaker, I pay tribute to some musical institutions of the Northern Territory and the people who contribute to them. These people are often unrecognised; they are largely volunteers who operate in the background. They are all the people who spend so much time at the events we take for granted, making them possible, with tireless hours of rehearsals, work and practice.

I have relatively few schools in my electorate of Fong Lim, but I am fortunate that one of them is Haileybury Rendall School. I had the good fortune to attend its production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, the Willy Wonka production. I went along to it for a bit of a laugh and because I thought I should show my face, but I have to be honest with you; it was amazing. I sat there thinking that things have changed a lot since I was at school. It was a high-quality, high-calibre production.

Hats off to everyone who was involved. Specifically, I note the production team was: Ilona Martin; Felicity Pearson; Weike Li; Emma McDonald; Rebecca Thomas; Chloe Warthold; Elissa Unwin; Tineale Browne; Rebecca Adams; John Robbins; Robert Barker; Rhett Jennings; Marianne Foster; Anne McMaster; Karen Archibald; Christian Kundig; Nick Eddy; Matt McKenna; Lisa Cadd; Eva Susanto; Arabella Free; and Vicki Tilbrook.

A lot of people were involved in this production, and I would not dare try to name everybody in the cast, company and backstage crew. To the young man who played Grandpa Joe, just quietly, you stole the show. It was fantastic.

Nine young student musicians played in the pit orchestra with a bunch of professional musicians. That is seriously heavy lifting. It was quality stuff. To the nine young members of the pit orchestra, I thought you were superb and I enjoyed the music.

On a larger scale I had the opportunity to attend the BEAT Festival in September. I have a weak spot for these things; I was involved in about 10 of them when I was a kid. I would name all the schools that were involved but for the fact that I would be naming every public school in the Northern Territory—all the schools that all of you will name on this fine evening.

So much work goes into school productions. I make note of the production team: Bill Grose; Wanita McNeill; Jillian Sommerville; Angelina Tam; Jade Tiedeman; Natalie Chin; Matthew Sutton; Lyndsay Sealey; Megan Atfield; Elspeth Carnegie; Todd Williams; Bryn Wackett; Josh Grant; Rod Balaam; Samuel Gulliver; Helene Sweatman; Ben Salandan; Keefir Lewis; Brian Cullen; Dan Davies; Josh Batten; Iona Francis; Tomm Lydiard; Peter Colautti; Brian West; Niko Wajont; Neil Macknight; Tiffany Jansen; Julianne Osbourne; Nicholas Yates; Jack Tinapple; David Stephens; Sue Auld; Alisha Chen; and Jessie Aguilando.

There are so many people involved in these productions. There were four amazing hosts and a great number of phenomenal soloists. Simply shouting out to the choreography teams would take up most of my time, to say nothing of naming every school.

It is worth reflecting that the BEAT Festival has run for 45 years, and now is running also in Alice Springs and Katherine. That is amazing, and it is worth supporting, acknowledging and recognising.

The choral teachers who teach the kids all that music never get a shout-out, and they spend a billion hours getting everybody up to speed. Thank you to those choral teachers: Jennifer Putland; Peta Bartley; Martha Tozer; Sharna Crocket; Kayti Denham; Alex Bowers; Kylie Flanders; Rebecca Clarke; Nicolle Gadd; Darroch Robinson; Natalie Jacobs; Amelia Barling; Sarah Mckeiver; Leila Beale; Jordana Jack; Kris Wahlqvist; Catherine Gray; Laren Hofmeyer; Francesca Massey; Alisa Guo; Bridget Donnell; Petrina Doyle; Cecily Gregory; Sian Edeson; Leta Smith; Liz Latimer; Rachel Birkin; Matthew Lotherington; Andrew King; Michelle Allnut; Jonathan Graham; Judy Morgan; Caoimhe Dorrian; Sarah Behan; Xanthe Fowler; Kylie Worthy; Roula Thomas; Fiona Wulf; Rhiannon Horne; Yvette Aralar; Trisha Gilbert; Penthea Carmichael; Nicole Robson; and Megan Atfield.

That is just the teachers. Think about how many kids were taught to sing those songs. I am grateful to all the people who put on the BEAT production and continue to give it all the time in the day. The original choral teacher for all of them was Nora Lewis AM, whom I mention because she is such a dear mentor to me.

I thank all the people in the Darwin Chorale without whom we would have no national anthems on Remembrance Day and no carols at Carols by Candlelight at the end of this week. These are the people in the background who do a lot of the heavy lifting. To Angelina Aquino, Debbie Barnett, Kate Bedard, Trish Chin, Kelly Carne, Andrew Edwards, Pam Hibberd, David Hibbert, Michelle Jarrett, Vivienne Kleeman, Nora Lewis AM, Robin McGillivray, Chris Obst, Michael Quyn, Kathy Stoll, Caroline Thompson and Kill Williams, thank you for making that possible for us on Remembrance Day.

I will duly run out of time trying to cover all of what I wanted to cover tonight, but I point out that the Darwin Symphony Orchestra worked with the Darwin Chorale in the not-too-recent past on the Heroes concert, doing a whole lot of film score music. They are taking the music to the people. Imagine what our Northern Territory would be without the orchestra. Next year it will be on the road touring throughout—Darwin, Alice, Katherine and Tennant—as it did for years in the past. I would love to shout out to the entire orchestra, but I will not get the opportunity today and stay within time.

I point out that Jethro Llewellyn, who is an example of a young man in the Darwin Symphony Orchestra, is still at school but recently made it into the Australian Youth Orchestra. That is a real achievement; it does not happen often. The Darwin Symphony Orchestra gives people the opportunity to cut their teeth at a high level when they are young. Those opportunities are invaluable.

Another person from the Darwin Symphony Orchestra in the past and who now runs the Arafura Music Collective is Claire Kilgariff, who recently took what is ostensibly real art music to the people, playing in the Gray Community Hall and the NT Supreme Court.

It is amazing that we have these musicians who are willing to put in their time to provide the backdrop to all the events we attend.

It would be remiss of me not to mention Martin Jarvis, Darwin's original maestro who set up the Darwin Symphony Orchestra and under whose auspices I played a long time ago. I congratulate him on his screening of *Mozart's Sister*, the documentary built on his research regarding the work of Mozart's sister.

I had the good fortune of being on the Territory Muster Tour with the Darwin Symphony Orchestra back in 1994 when Martin Jarvis was conducting. One of the other people on that tour was a guy called Mark Smith who is a phenomenal percussionist and drummer whom you see around town. He was my roommate on that tour, and all these years later he is the head of Music NT.

I mention that because no speech of mine goes without mentioning something economic. I encourage you all to look at the work Music NT commissioned through the University of Tasmania which looks at the economic and cultural value of live music in the Northern Territory. It is phenomenal. We get an enormous amount of economic return on our investment for having live music to support all our festivals and programs.

The Northern Territory Music School, under the auspices of Bill Grose, does phenomenal work. From the fledgling days of the Darwin Combined Schools Concert Band, it now runs multiple orchestras. Last week I had the good fortune to watch the end-of-year concerts for the Da Capo, Con Moto and Apogee ensembles. I cannot overstate the value of public music education to create not just musicians but also people who perform better academically. It was one of the real jewels in the crown of the Northern Territory education system. I hope with time that we can polish that jewel to be what it should be.

I will probably have the highlight of my week tomorrow when at lunchtime I get to join in the Stuart Park Primary School Band and do what I can in the trombone section under the baton of Natalie Chin and Genevieve Meehan and under the auspices of Sylvia Siskamanis and Principal Leisha Crompton, who bizarrely enough I also went to a music camp with about a billion years ago.

There are so many musical institutions that I would love to shout out to if I could that provide life and vitality to our city year-round. The Hot and Cold Big Band plays every week at the Darwin Railway Club with all the dancers.

I could pick from a million quotes, but in the words of Plato:

Music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the Universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, gaiety and life to everything.

I thank all the hardworking musicians and musical institutions of the Northern Territory that provide life, colour, gaiety and the backdrop to all the events that we can participate in.

Ms UIBO (Arnhem): Madam Speaker, I have wonderful news of a Northern Territory award winner from the Arnhem electorate; the 2025 Northern Territory Australian of the Year, Grant Ngulmiya Nundhirribala. I was proud to see Grant win that award just a few weeks ago. I spoke about him in the October sittings, and I must fully declare that Grant is my cousin.

I am proud that Grant will go to Canberra on 25 January to be part of the national Australian of the Year Awards as the Northern Territory's Australian of the Year candidate, with three other amazing Territorians who will represent the Northern Territory at those prestigious awards.

I am proud of the work that Grant has done, doing amazing tours of his solo album and in his career as a musician, but he also gives so much of his personal time to be one of our cultural songmen and leaders not just in the Numbulwar south-east Arnhem pocket but also across East Arnhem. It is a huge commitment to have a musical career and be touring from a very remote part of Australia, going Territory-wide, Australia-wide and international. He has been to amazing countries recently, touring and working with international orchestras and producing amazing and unique sounds that a lot of Australians and international audiences are captivated by when they hear Grant's music.

We were fortunate to hear Grant sing here when he and other family members from the Nundhirribala Red Flag Clan, my mum's clan of Numbulwar, sung me into the Chamber for this seat here at the opening of parliament for the 15th Legislative Assembly.

Congratulations, Grant, on being the category winner. All the best for January, but I am sure I will see you before then. I place that on the formal record not just on behalf of the electorate as a proud local member but also as a proud family member.

There are many people to thank towards the end of this year. I was fortunate in the redistribution of electorate boundaries to pick up new areas, which I am learning about and look forward to being a dedicated and present local member for. I am learning about their needs and concerns and getting ideas of how to make the different areas I now represent in the Arnhem electorate even better. I retained some amazing parts of the Territory that I am fortunate and honoured to represent in this place.

I give a big shout-out to the whole of the Arnhem electorate, which has expanded: Manyallaluk community; Barunga; Wugularr; Bulman; Weemol; Gapuwiyak; Tindal RAAF base; Mataranka; Mulgan town camp; Jilkminggan; Minyerri; Urapunga; Ngukurr; Numbulwar; Milyakburra on Bickerton Island; the Groote Eylandt