



Wellington's Way August /September 2011

Keeping the electorate of Nicklin up to date on local and State issues.

Back to School

Jenny and I joined many locals and past students of Nambour State High School for the 75th Anniversary celebrations on August 6th. The event was a great opportunity for past students to catch up with people they had not seen for many years and in some cases for past students to catch up with their old teachers and say thank you. You don't realise what a great place school is until you enter the big wide world. Nambour High has certainly changed over the past 75 years.

On the subject of schools, I had the opportunity to talk with the grade 6 students from Nambour Christian College before they headed off for a tour of Parliament House. The students at Nambour Christian College had taken on the role of a Member of Parliament and I was represented by young Riley Morden, who described the chamber where members sit to debate laws as "the BEST". I enjoy talking to young people about Parliament and law making, they often come up with some good ideas.

The Yandina Community Forum, held at the Yandina Bowls Club had a good turn out and I was able to follow up on the dilemma facing the local Riding for the Disabled. Unfortunately no matter how great the cause there is not always a simple solution to funding problems, especially when community groups are looking at wanting to acquire a large parcel of freehold land. Nevertheless we will keep trying.

I met with a constituent who had sold a vehicle unregistered but allowed the new owner to drive the vehicle home on the promise that the plates would be returned the next day. You guessed it, the new owner did not return the plates and the original owner has now received penalties for unpaid tolls. If you are selling an unregistered vehicle, you must remove the plates.

I was back to Yandina to open the Yandina Street Fair on Sunday August 14, and although the organisers believed numbers were down on last year, there were still a lot of people out and about, having a great time. If you have not been to the Yandina Street Fair before, it is worth pencilling in the Diary for 2012. Congratulations to the organisers.

The AGM for Helping Children Smile was held on Monday August 15 and I had the pleasure of Chairing the meeting. Helping Children Smile is a Sunshine Coast based charity that assists children with reconstructive cleft lip and cleft palate surgery. A wonderful group of people.

Where in the world is Peter Wellington?

Find me on

Telephone: 07 5441 6933

E-Mail:

nicklin@parliament.qld.gov.au

My Home Page:

www.peterwellingtonmp.com

Twitter:

[@pwellingtonmp](https://twitter.com/pwellingtonmp)

Woodies Open Day



Member for Glasshouse, Andrew Powell MP and I joined with Members of the Blackall Range Woodcrafters Guild (The Woodies) for their annual open day on Saturday August 13.

The arrest of a man charged with the alleged murder of Daniel Morcombe was welcome news over the weekend of 13 August 2011. Unfortunately the news raises a lot of questions about Queensland law and how we are keeping pace with other states and the implications of social media in relation to these laws.

I am working on a Bill to address the issue of sentencing of serious child sexual offenders and I have now broadened the parameters of my research to look into whether a person's past history should be revealed to a jury during a trial for a similar offence. I am not sure that this will be incorporated into the Bill, but it is worth thinking about. Should a jury know everything about the accused or should we maintain the presumption of innocence. What do you think.

The issue of 'at risk' youth was covered extensively at a workshop held at the Sunshine Coast Police Citizens Youth Club on Wednesday 17th of August. It was great to see that the various State Departments are still working on the best ways to address youth problems in the region, and not simply sweeping the matter under the carpet.

The rain fell on the Vietnam Veterans Day Service at Caloundra, but it did not dampen the spirits of the Vets and their supporters. It was great to see that finally, 45 years after the Battle of Long Tan, the 6RAR Delta company veterans have been honoured with a unit citation.

The Northern Pipeline Interconnector is reaching completion and with 80% of the work finished, I had a timely get together with NNA representative Shane Goodwin to help sort out ongoing unresolved issues.

I was recently criticised through a number of letters to the Editor about asking the alternative Premier, Campbell Newman if he would guarantee the removal of the Mary River Traveston Dam site and the Mary River Kenilworth Dam site from Government maps. The fact that we have this huge pipeline to Lake McDonald and these two sites are still listed as restricted sites on our state maps justifies the questions being asked. I have let both the Government and the alternative Government know that I will not give up on this until the sites are removed from the maps. If they don't like my questions fix it or give the job to someone who will.

Saturday 20 August we joined the Toomey family in celebrating the marriage of daughter Melinda to Matt. All the best to M&M.

*Back
to
Parliament*

Parliament resumed on Tuesday, 23 August 2011 and I let the Government know that I, along with many on the Coast, am fed up with the current Sunbus situation. During the last sitting of state parliament I met with the Minister for Transport in the chamber and we spoke about this debacle occurring on the Sunshine Coast. Unfortunately, I was informed by the Minister that the legislation does not allow her to intervene. The excuse being that the matter fell under the federal government's Fair Work Act. This to me is buck passing. Quite frankly, the state government is providing money through TransLink, a state government entity, to a company to meet a community service obligation to provide bus services on the Sunshine Coast. The reality is that the bus services are not operating and as far as I am concerned the bus company has breached its community service obligation.

I obtained leave from attending a Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee meeting in order to attend a Transport Committee meeting where I was able to question the CEO of Translink about the failure of the bus service and the terms of the contract Translink has with the bus company. He is to come back to the Committee with answers to my questions, in writing.

As a result of the Yandina Community Forum I had a meeting with representative from Riding for the Disabled and followed up on their concerns while in Parliament. I met with Minister Curtis Pitt's Senior Advisor and he has agreed to look into whether there is State owned land available for RDA to use and if not to see what financial assistance can be provided to the group. He did however, make it very clear that money was tight.

I also had a follow up meeting with Deputy Premier Paul Lucas over extra services for the Nambour Court House. Unfortunately he was not able to give me answers to my questions, but has agreed to "look into it".

*Farewell
Neil*

On Thursday morning the first item on the agenda was a Condolence Motion for the Late Neil Turner. Many Members reminisced about their memories of Neil and it was obvious that he was held in high regard and will be remembered as a true gentleman, with a great sense of humour. The cleanest campaign I have experienced was the first, with Neil as the sitting Member. He was indeed a gentleman.

*Uncertainty in
retirement*

During the sitting the Deputy Premier also announced the release of a discussion paper in relation to a review of the Retirement Villages Legislation and what happens when a Village is sold. I believe that this is an issue that needs to be considered by all Village residents and I have delivered a copy of the discussion paper to the local Retirement Village Residents Committees to have a look at and let me know what they think. Personally I think there is a problem that needs to be fixed and instead of talking about it the Government should be fixing it now. The discussion paper consists of 22 pages of bureaucratic jargon, that will frighten the daylights out elderly people wanting a safe and secure retirement. Simply not good enough.

We have 89 elected Members of Parliament who should be able to fix the problem without the need for a 22 page discussion paper, followed by further discussions.

*In the swim
at Nambour
Special
School*

Saturday 27th August 2011, I opened the Nambour Anglican Church Flower Show and was very impressed by the talented green thumbs we have in our region. A wonderful display.

That evening Jenny and I attended a function to celebrate the demise of the Powerlink Woolooga to West Cooroy project. Approximately 50 people gathered together at the Belli Hall to celebrate the decision.

I joined Nambour Special School Captains Krystal and Lachlan, the Hon Alex Somlyay MP and Senator Claire Moore at the official opening the school's new heated, under-cover pool.

The pool was provided under the much criticised Federal Government BER program. While the need for many other BER projects has been questionable, it is obvious that the Special School pool has already proven to be an enormous benefit to students, some of whom have been unable to access pools in the past.

I met with Unity Water representatives for a briefing on projects planned for the area and to also discuss issues that have been raised with me by constituents who cannot get answers elsewhere. The Unitywater situation amazes me. Council takes their share of profit with no questions asked but will not help residents with problems, as they are not responsible for Unitywater. There is an Ombudsman but many people are sick of being fobbed off and just want someone to take responsibility.

I had another meeting with the Department of Communities and the Department of Employment Economic Development and Innovation to discuss what is planned for the youth at risk projects in Nambour.

The Tallangatta Street Bat problem continues and when I heard that the bats were back I wrote to the residents inviting them to meet with me to discuss some options. As a result of the meeting we decided to hold a street party. Unfortunately this requires Council permission for us to use the park at the end of the street. What should have been a simple task, has turned into a bureaucratic mine field. Council refused permission, as the residents did not have Public Liability insurance. We decided to go under the banner of one of our community groups. This option was derailed when we were advised that the group's \$10 million liability insurance was not sufficient, they needed \$20 million. \$20 million Public Liability insurance to hold a party in a park? We are not giving up just yet.

On a lighter note, I officially opened Stage 3 of Sanctuary Park Retirement Village and it was great to see so many familiar faces. Must be a great spot with so many of our friends making Sanctuary Park home. It was also a great opportunity to have a chat to residents and management about the recently released discussion paper.

On Sunday 4 September Jenny and I joined with members of the Mapleton community to farewell Valerie and Gerry Zwart. Val and Gerry are moving into Sanctuary Park. They will be missed on the range but I am sure they will take no time settling in. They will probably find that they already know many of the residents.

*Which is more
batty, the flying
foxes or the
Government?*

Back to Parliament

Tuesday 6 September 2011, saw the resumption of Parliament and I started the day by following up on funding for Teralba. The Teralba Association at Mapleton has been caring for intellectually disabled men for many years. Recently they discovered that their State Government funding had expired and there were no plans for it to be renewed. Simply not good enough! I had raised this matter with the Minister's office but had not received a satisfactory result. I was happy to hear that by 10.30am, Teralba had been advised that they had been granted funding for 6 months. The issue has not been completely resolved but at least there is some security for residents and staff.

I received an answer to a Question I had asked on Notice back in early August. The question was in relation to whether some of the land resumed in Price Street, for the future rail upgrade, could be used for additional parking. Unfortunately, the Minister has advised that many of the properties that had been sold to the Department were continuing to be used for commercial purposes and there are no vacant Departmental properties suitable for car parking purposes.

I also asked a question of the Premier in relation to whether she would set the date for the next state election to coincide with the Council elections in March 2012. The Council elections are now administered by the Electoral Commission of Queensland and I believe this may be a sensible, cost effective option, as the State election is also due in March. The Premier said she would not have the election at the same time as the Council elections but would not indicate when the election would be.

I asked the Minister for Transport a Question On Notice, in relation to truck licenses. A long time transport operator on the Coast had contacted me with concerns that it was far too easy for people to get a truck licence. I have asked for the Department of Transport to audit the training providers and to investigate if there is any linkage between recent truck accidents and driver training.

On Thursday, I spoke on the need for one rule for all in rental accommodation, whether public or private rental. Earlier this year I worked with the local office of the Department of Housing to assist a group of residents who had had their lives turned upside down by a house full of unruly tenants. The Court ruled that the Department needed to provide alternative accommodation, before these tenants could be moved on. Needless to say, the problem continues and good law-abiding citizens are continuing to experience unnecessary noise and abuse from tenants who know they can get away with whatever they choose as the Department can not evict them. I called upon the Attorney General to meet with Magistrates and make it very clear that there is one law for all in Queensland, and if Public Housing tenants decide to be bad tenants, that is their choice and they should be evicted.

Last week in State Parliament the Government introduced new legislation to ratify its \$10,000 New Home Owner Grant criteria. The grant is available for contracts entered into from 1/8/2011 to 1/1/2012, for the purchase or construction of a new home in Queensland, valued at less than \$600,000 including land. First home owners can also access other grants and concessions. For more information contact my office.