

## YORKE PENINSULA FIELD DAYS

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (15:06): I want to tell the house about a wonderful event. The Yorke Peninsula Field Days at Paskeville occurred a few weeks ago and I had the opportunity to be in attendance for most of the three days. I want to make the house and, indeed, the public of South Australia a little more aware of the attractiveness of the Yorke Peninsula Field Days and the reasons that they should travel there when the event is next held in two years.

It is an amazing effort by the volunteers who create this opportunity. Mr Don Evans is president—and I believe he was president on the last occasion—and Mrs Elaine Bussenschutt is the full-time administrator. She did an amazing amount of work to not only coordinate the site, which has many permanent structures, but also attract some 730 exhibitors this year, including machinery operators who provide agricultural services to people on the land. A lot of other providers of general services were there. Many schools, especially boarding schools, were there trying to attract students from regional South Australia to use their services; and I am pleased that my daughter's school Loreto College was there.

Ms Fox: A fine school!

Mr GRIFFITHS: It is a fine school, as the member for Bright confirms. The field days have a long history and Yorke Peninsula is proud of it. The field days were first held in 1895. They are held every two years. I presume there was a break during the war years when it would have been impossible to hold these sorts of events, but for 114 years this biennial event has showcased the latest in agricultural machinery, rural services and information.

It was especially pleasing that the Minister for Environment and Conservation (Hon. Jay Weatherill) was there on the Wednesday. He launched the Northern and Yorke Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan for 2009-18 and had the chance to visit the field days for a few hours and to speak to some of the people. The Governor was also in attendance on the Wednesday as part of the official opening, which was done by famed cricketer Mr Merv Hughes. I found it interesting that a cricketer would open the field days. He admitted that he had never done it before, but it was part of his sponsorship with Metaland that, in turn, supports the field days by providing a lot of the infrastructure and sponsorship.

The program included fashion parades, working sheep dogs, wool and sheep, excellent guest speaker presentations, crafts and general interest products, and services and, as confirmed, the boarding schools were there. Every product one could imagine was available to inspect and purchase at the field days.

I have been lucky enough to spend time at the last three field days. It was a little hit and miss last time because I had some parliamentary responsibilities, but it is a wonderful opportunity to see people I have not seen for a while. In my stand, which became a remote electorate office for three days, we had an especially busy Tuesday. I basically talked myself rather hoarse until breaking away for lunch at about a quarter to two. However, people continually came in to talk about issues important to them, and in some cases I caught up with people from other regions, whom I had met before, who wanted to drop by, say hello and talk about what is happening in their lives. My staff were certainly kept busy. The federal member for Grey, Rowan Ramsay, was also at the stall, so we discussed federal and state issues with people. It really is a chance for people to understand what agricultural and regional areas of South Australia are especially wonderful for.

The site occupies some 30 hectares. Yes, you have the big sites where there is large machinery. After the field day, *The Stock Journal's* front page referred to the sale of a header for some \$720,000. That shows the potential scope of the machinery that is sold at the field day sites, but there are a lot of very low price opportunities to buy products and services also.

It is really hard not to focus on the people who make it work. Every day, volunteers man the canteens to raise funds for the community groups that they represent in their local areas. People ride around in a rubbish truck making sure that the bins emptied all of the time, and people clean the toilets. It is just a complete community effort by many people within the Copper Coast that goes in to ensuring that Yorke Peninsula Field Days are a success.

As a local member for that area, I have great pride in welcoming visitors to the area. Many people buy a three-day pass, and how they are not exhausted at the end of each day after looking around at so much is beyond me. It is a great challenge to visit every site. Regrettably, because I was working on my stand, as part of my remote electorate office, I did not get the chance to visit everyone, but I tried to walk around as much as I could to say hello.

Whilst generally the numbers attending was a little bit lower than in previous years, there was a real positiveness about it. I think that has come from the fact that the rains in regional areas in the last few months have been fantastic. People are optimistic about a good future. They are frustrated by the current low dollar value available for the grains that they will grow, but they believe that agriculture will be strong and positive for many years to come.

Time expired.