



Opening of Mackay Courthouse extension
Wednesday, 24 March 2003, 2:00pm
67 Victoria Street, Mackay

Chief Justice Paul de Jersey AC

Thank you Mr Mulherin. Mr Attorney, your Honours, Chief Judge, Chief Magistrate, Mayor, Members of Parliament, Director-General, Registrar, distinguished guests,

I am very pleased to be present on this historic occasion, and to acknowledge at once that the history of the place transcends its use since 1873 as a courthouse. I particularly in that regard note the presence of Mr Garry Mooney, representing the traditional owners, and thank him for his welcome.

In speaking briefly today, for the judiciary, I note with pleasure the presence together of all three heads of State jurisdiction, and as well the Northern Judge (Justice Cullinane) and the Central Judge (Justice Dutney), who regularly conduct sittings here.

The Executive Government is to be applauded for this fine initiative. It grew out of the increasingly evident inadequacy of the heritage courthouse to meet contemporary needs. The old courthouse is historically very important: a Georgian revival building completed in 1939, to the design of the Government architect Andrew Levan as part of the employment thrust driven by the Great Depression. With its reconfiguration and refurbishment, we will later this year be able to admire the recovery and enhancement of a fine provincial building. I am



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reassured, by the way, that it will remain a working courthouse, and not suffer translation into an art gallery or restaurant, or as happened in Cairns, a public bar.

For now, we can appreciate the excellent additional facilities available, through this annexe, which complements, I hope it is felt sympathetically, the face brick building. I warmly congratulate the architects and builders.

The Mackay Courthouse is being restored to distinction, as an imposing public building of which the region may be proud: prominent in its presentation and capacity, and grand in its symbolism of the justice according to law assured daily through its usage.

I wish finally to compliment the Director-General and her officers for their extensive and willing consultation with the judiciary as to the detail of the redevelopment. Mr Justice Helman, the Chief Judge and I met on numerous occasions with Mr Ian Murray and Mr Bob Pollock in particular. We did have substantial input – especially as to layout, courtroom configuration, furnishing and decoration, and external design, and were most grateful for the opportunity to contribute.