

Good evening and welcome to the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dinner for the Pine Central Holy Spirit Rugby League Football Club. I would like to welcome a number of guests tonight including: Member for Pine Rivers Nikki Boyd and her husband Reece along with Ali France the Labour candidate for Dickson

Col Richmond – Chairman of the Sports Club

Brian Morris – Chairman of the Old Boys/Treasurer of our Sports Club.

Michael Hopkins our current Club Captain

Life Members here with us along with all of the 79 people here tonight I thank you for attending.

Tonight is about celebrating our Club, where it has come from and what it has now become as well as acknowledging the many tireless volunteers who have helped build this Club over the last 40 years.

From my perspective, I have been at this Club for approximately 14 years, so of course I wasn't around at the very beginning, but I am well aware of the sacrifices that many founding members made and the blood, sweat and tears that they poured into establishing this Club. For those that don't know – this very site used to be a rubbish tip and when it was first established, there were 9 foundation members. Those

members, by putting their houses on the line, secured the necessary funds to obtain a loan to build our Clubhouse, a loan that they helped repay in 10 years, despite the initial loan being for 15 years.

As a Club, we owe a great debt to those 9 members, as they were the individuals who had the vision, the faith and the know how to get our Club going, something that was no doubt done with numerous personal sacrifices. And I think that their foresight paved the way for us as a Club and established some very strong work ethics for the countless volunteers that have followed in their path, to help create what is now considered to be one of the strongest Clubs on the north side of Brisbane.

When you compare those very early days (when we only had a handful of teams) to what we have now, you sometimes have to pinch yourself, to wonder how did this Club become so strong? We now boast 32 teams with approximately 518 registered players from u6's to Open Men's Teams, as well as a few all girl teams – something that was unheard of way back in 1986! I am proud to say that we will be bringing back a seniors women team next season which we haven't had for many years.

As President of this Club, I am very proud of what this Club has achieved. We have won numerous premierships, various awards from Rugby League Brisbane, hosted countless finals, organised gala days – and done it again and again, for the last 40 years.

When I look around this room, I see many, many people who have helped to make our Club what it is today. I'd like to thank each and every one of you for your contribution. They say it takes a village to raise a child, well I say, it takes a community to grow a football club.

I am very proud to be part of the Pine Central Holy Spirit Football community. I am probably most proud by the opportunity that this Club has provided to thousands of children, youths and adults by allowing them to play rugby league over the last 40 years.

Rugby league is a great leveller – it teaches us many things. It teaches us about hard work, respect and teamwork. It teaches us about adversity but it can bring us overwhelming joy – like when your team wins a game on the final siren. It creates lifelong friendships, sometimes even marriages but most importantly it's about having a place where kids can play rugby league.

I know I am, and I'm sure many before me have only really wanted one thing out of our involvement at this Club – and that is to have a place where our kids can play footy, to have a place where we can create new friends and to maybe have a place to relax and enjoy a drink or two.

I think we've done that and I'm pretty sure that we'll be around for a little while yet.

So on behalf of our great Club, I'd like to propose a toast. A toast to everyone that's ever contributed to our Club for the last 40 years, but also to the next 40 years.

Your Club President and Secretary

Sharon Hickey