



MARY MACKILLOP
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Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): I draw the attention of the House to a significant happening in Adelaide this Sunday, 18 February: the celebration of the beatification of Mary MacKillop is to be held at Football Park. It is a notable honour that the first person in Australia to be considered for sainthood in the Roman Catholic Church was a South Australian. It is not too much to say that the whole of Eyre Peninsula has benefited from this woman's initiative and dedication to an ideal. We have a branch of the Sisters of St Joseph in Port Lincoln. Nowadays, St Joseph's School caters for children from reception to year 12, producing students who not only achieve a solid academic record but also complete their education with sound social graces. Businesses in Port Lincoln, commenting on teenagers who apply for jobs, say that those who have attended St Joseph's School invariably are polite and courteous—something which employers look for in staff relations with customers.

But one of the biggest influences that the Sisters of St Joseph have had locally is in the area of music. Individuals, families and the community have all been blessed through the strict tuition of the Sisters. It is therefore appropriate that, as part of the celebrations at Football Park this Sunday, excerpts from *This Woman* a musical on the life of Mary MacKillop, will be played. This musical received complimentary community comment when staged by St Joseph's School in Port Lincoln. Among those who praised the merit of this work were people of the calibre of ABC pianists and State renowned accompanists.

To put it another way, those who recognise the work of this composition have considerable standing and experience in the world of music. The composer of *This Woman*, Dieter Hauptmann, has had experience across the world in stage presentations. He was formerly the Director of the Cossacks, a troupe of European musicians who toured many countries. The Cossacks' repertoire consisted of Cossack and other European music, highlighted with appropriate folk dances. Dieter made reproductions of early instruments, such as the balalaika, which were used in the performance.

I give members this background to show that the composer of *This Woman* is a man of considerable talent and experience. During two tours of Australia the Cossacks played in Port Lincoln. Dieter and his wife, Almuth, were so taken with Port Lincoln that a friend sponsored them to migrate here. Since moving to South Australia, Dieter has been actively involved in arts in general and music in particular. It is almost as if this man was in this place at this time for the opportunity to write this musical. Now, financial sponsorship is being sought to stage and tour *This Woman*.

The background of the Hauptmanns, as I have described, gives credibility to the proposal because of their past experience. It is an exciting concept, which I trust will come to fruition. It is especially pleasing that a woman from South Australia is being considered for sainthood, and now a South Australian has written a musical about her life. We can be justly proud of our State. Just as the musical *The King and I* promoted what was then the country of Siam, so the musical *This Woman* could promote South Australia across the world. It would be positive publicity in a pleasurable form.

It would be gratifying if some of our Government departments involved in arts and tourism could work with the proposal. A lot of taxpayers' dollars are spent in these areas. It would require hard work to successfully produce *This Woman* but the spin-offs would be immeasurable. One spinoff would be to put South Australia on the map as a cradle of the arts, nurturing and promoting excellence in all fields. We have world names—such as Robert Helpmann, Julie

Anthony and Thomas Edmonds—to add credence. Additionally, the South Australian Festival of Arts has been a vehicle for the performing arts, albeit mainly from the importation of acts and events.

However, one of the thrusts of the festival, which could possibly be given more prominence, would be the promotion of local talent, bearing in mind that we do not want to become an elitist clique playing to ourselves. Compositions such as *This Woman*, could have the double effect of elsewhere publicising this State and its talent, thus encouraging listeners to visit South Australia for more of the same.

The South Australian Education Department has developed a high standard of music education in schools, and the State generally is blessed with considerable talent. Our tertiary institutions, such as the Elder Conservatorium of Music, are well regarded also. Another spin-off could well be an increase in overseas students seeking training in these areas. Paying students would provide additional places for professors and teachers, all of whom would add to our State's reputation in the music world.