

ADDRESS BY
HIS HONOUR MR TOM PAULING AO QC
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
ON THE OCCASION OF
OPENING OF EXTENSIONS TO THE
LAKE BENNETT WILDERNESS RESORT

Lake Bennett

9 November 2008

Thank you for inviting us here today.

What a transformation from the original dam that created Lake Bennett. That dam was constructed by George and Ken Bennett in 1980. The story goes that they wanted to grow rice but instead it became a recreation area and one or two serious Darwin citizens of today remember hooning up and down on their water skis.

The dam wall was rebuilt, George Milatos saw the potential, and over the past twelve years a great deal of endeavour has transformed his vision from bushland to resort and weekenders, from an unknown Northern Territory destination to a favourite of both locals and visitors.

Nowadays Lake Bennett provides a wonderful getaway. Children play happily on lawns at the waters' edge, Granddads breeze up and down on their hobie cats, some even snare the occasional barra and there's hardly a vacant block to be had.

The peace and tranquillity of Lake Bennett has, however, been preserved. When the children finish creating chaos in the canoes and hurtling themselves from the bathing platform into the safe fresh waters, and the sun begins to recede, then those lucky enough to stay here glimpse something of the perfect home of the resident sea eagle.

It may be worthwhile inviting a well known local cartoonist to capture some of the scenes for display in your new extensions: After all the approach road is named after yet another George (this must be a name fated to be linked with Lake Bennett) –

George William Chinner, a company manager of South Australia who was granted title to land in the area in 1871.

His son, John Chinner, twice the Mayor of Unley, was an outstanding cartoonist who worked for almost every major newspaper in Adelaide, the Sydney *Bulletin* and London *Punch*. In fact young Mr Chinner's favourite sport was lawn bowls, which he excelled at, representing South Australia several times – maybe lawn bowls would do well here too George.

It now gives me great pleasure to congratulate all of those involved in the construction and promotion of Stage 2 of Lake Bennett Wilderness Resort and to officially open the development and unveil the plaque.