



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday, 4 May 2021

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 4 May 2021

The Speaker (The Hon. Jonathan Richard O'Dea) took the chair at 12:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Business of the House

CHAMBER SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That, unless otherwise ordered, this House make provision for all 93 members to sit on the floor of the House and in the Speaker's gallery in designated positions as part of an expanded Chamber.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: CONDOLENCE MOTION

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended at this sitting to:

- (1) Provide that business before the House be interrupted at 3.30 p.m. to permit the moving of a motion of condolence regarding Councillor Lilliane Brady, OAM.
- (2) Postpone the public interest debate until the conclusion of the motion of condolence.

Motion agreed to.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the guests who are seated in the Cooper Gallery. I welcome Sal Petrocitto, CEO of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator; Duncan Gay, Chairman of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and, as members of this place would well know, a former member of the other place; Kelli Walker, Program Executive of the National Service Transition; and Paul Olendrowsky, Director of the National Service Transition. They will be present for debate on the Heavy Vehicle Legislation Amendment (National Regulator) Bill 2021 and, in particular, the contribution from the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Kiama to order for the first time.

Later,

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I call the member for Kiama to order for the second time. I allowed the member for Shellharbour to continue giving notice of her motion beyond the usual time limit because of the interjections from the member for Kiama. However, the motion of which the member was giving notice was too long.

Bills

HEAVY VEHICLE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (NATIONAL REGULATOR) BILL 2021

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 24 March 2021.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (12:18): On behalf of the Opposition, I contribute to debate on the Heavy Vehicle Legislation Amendment (National Regulator) Bill 2021. I recognise and thank our guests in the gallery who, since 2009, have contributed to getting New South Wales to this point. As the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads outlined in his second reading speech, the purpose of the bill is to give effect to the transfer of certain functions under the Heavy Vehicle National Law from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy

Vehicle Regulator. The principal objectives of the bill are to provide for the transfer of certain members of staff from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and to safeguard their employment conditions, as well as to enable the Minister to direct by written order that specified assets, rights or liabilities of Transport for NSW be transferred to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. The bill will also enable Transport for NSW to obtain and use, in the exercise of its statutory functions, information held by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and to provide the regulator with certain information to enable it to undertake its functions in New South Wales.

Heavy vehicle regulatory reform was identified as a competition reform priority in the National Partnership Agreement to Deliver a Seamless National Economy and the intergovernmental agreement should be read in conjunction with that agreement and subsidiary schedules. I refer to the Intergovernmental Agreement on National Heavy Vehicle Regulatory Reform. That process started in 2009—my colleague the Hon. Michael Daley reminded me that he was the Minister at that time—when the parties to the agreement agreed to establish national systems for heavy vehicles, rail safety and commercial vessel safety that are aimed at improved safety and reduced costs and regulatory burden for Australian transport companies as well as reduced costs of exports and trade.

On 25 February 2010 the parties agreed that national legislation regulating all vehicles over 4.5 tonnes and establishing a National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, the NHVR, would be established under legislation of the Queensland Parliament, with each State and Territory passing enabling legislation to give effect to the Queensland legislation. That process has been undertaken, and New South Wales is the last State before Queensland to go down this road. In entering this agreement, the Commonwealth, States and Territories recognise that they have a mutual interest in improving outcomes in heavy vehicle regulation and that they need to work together to achieve those outcomes. The agreement sets out the principles and processes to implement the parties' decision to deliver a national heavy vehicle regulatory system for vehicles over 4.5 tonnes.

The regulation impact statement, the RIS, marked the next step in the national heavy vehicle reform program. The purpose of the RIS was to explore the impact of the Heavy Vehicle National Law, the HVNL, and to summarise the responses of governments, industry and other interested parties to the exposure draft. In all, around 368 issues that required resolution were identified. The vast majority of those variations were of a minor technical or definitional nature for which consensus on the way forward was reached at the State and Territory level. Around 34 issues of a more contentious nature were presented for consideration in the RIS. Those issues had medium or high economic impacts and/or tended to be of a more complex nature. Where a change to the existing model law was proposed, the RIS explored the rationale for the change, the benefits likely to accrue from it, any disadvantages that may arise, and the quantitative and qualitative impacts for industry, the regulator and the jurisdictions. Those areas included driver fatigue, variations to load limits, heavy vehicle registration and compliance and enforcement.

The HVNL and regulations took effect on 10 February 2014. Transport for NSW currently delivers services under a services agreement with the NHVR. Some matters are dealt with exclusively by the NHVR—for example, all heavy vehicle permit applications and accreditation under the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme. Some matters, such as registration and licensing, are managed exclusively by Transport for NSW. In respect of other areas of heavy vehicle operations, including compliance and enforcement, and vehicle standards, Transport for NSW performs services on behalf of the NHVR and has direct contact with customers in relation to those matters. The bill will move those responsibilities across to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. I turn to the bill itself. The explanatory note states:

The object of this Bill is to give effect to the transfer of certain functions under the *Heavy Vehicle National Law (NSW)* from Transport for NSW (*TfNSW*) to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (*the NHVR*).

This Bill—

- (a) enables TfNSW to obtain and use, in the exercise of its statutory functions, information held by the NHVR, and to provide the NHVR with certain information, and
- (b) provides for the transfer of certain members of staff of TfNSW to the NHVR, and
- (c) enables the Minister to direct, by written order, that specified assets, rights or liabilities of TfNSW be transferred to the NHVR, and
- (d) makes other amendments to the *Fines Act 1996*, the *Heavy Vehicle (Adoption of National Law) Act 2013*, the *Passenger Transport Act 2014*, the *Road Transport Act 2013* and the *Transport Administration Act 1988*. I take this opportunity to thank the Minister and his staff for their consultation. The Hon. Mick Veitch had a Zoom conference to consult about any issues. There were no issues, which was a positive. We appreciate what the Minister and his staff did, and thank them for that. We also acknowledge that we consulted separately with the Public Service Association [PSA] and the Transport Workers' Union, Road Freight NSW, the NRMA, NSW Farmers Association, contract harvesters association and the Bus and Coach Association regarding the bill. All of those parties were happy with the legislation. The PSA has said that the negotiations on the transfer of staff are going well and that, naturally, as occurs in these situations, there is some trepidation with the staff who are not being transferred. They are pleased, though, that the Minister and the Government have given a guarantee that those staff members will have their employment retained and that there will be no forced redundancies in that situation.

The PSA is happy with the current negotiations and will continue to follow that to make sure that is the case. I also acknowledge my colleagues in the other place the Hon. Mick Veitch and the Hon. John Graham for their assistance on the bill. I have learnt a lot about heavy vehicle regulation over the past few months reading lots of very interesting documents, and I am convinced that this is the right path. The process has taken since 2009. I note that the Minister has said that if we are not happy with how things are going down the track he has powers under the jurisdiction of New South Wales. I am sure that will not happen but it is good to have that safeguard in place. The New South Wales Opposition strongly endorses the bill.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (12:27): I speak in support of the Heavy Vehicle Legislation Amendment (National Regulator) Bill 2021. Before I do so, I acknowledge the presence of the Hon. Duncan Gay in the gallery today. On behalf of my community and those communities in the Northern Rivers, we thank him for his service as the roads Minister in securing the funding for the Pacific Highway upgrade, which saw the completion of the dual highway upgrade between Woolgoolga and Ballina. It is a safer piece of road now thanks to the Hon. Duncan Gay and, of course, subsequent Ministers after that. I note that the Minister in the House was here for the completion of that stretch of road, but the Hon. Duncan Gay was there at the beginning and he made sure we got the money from the Feds with his persuasive abilities to negotiate.

The bill gives effect to the transfer of certain functions under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (NSW) from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. As the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads noted when introducing the bill, maintaining safety outcomes in New South Wales will be critical post-transition, particularly as New South Wales has historically had a very comprehensive heavy vehicle compliance and enforcement approach, which we do not want to see diminished. Enforcement and compliance is all about safety and I note that safety is paramount to the trucking industry. We have a number of trucking industries in Grafton and every year they have a truckies memorial service in South Grafton where they recognise, commemorate and acknowledge the truckies who have passed away in the service of their industry. Before agreeing to transition heavy vehicle regulatory services to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, New South Wales successfully advocated through the former Transport and Infrastructure Council for an independent assurance review to be undertaken. New South Wales undertook a similar assurance review process before agreeing to transfer New South Wales rail safety regulator services to the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator.

The key outcomes of the review have been the development of a national regulatory model for heavy vehicles, which describes the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator approach to risk-based regulation. This approach will allow the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to rely on evidence to assess risks and to deploy resources in proportion to the risk of harm. It will also enable the regulator to tailor its service delivery and administration so that compliance costs are commensurate with risks. The review also identified the need for the national regulator to be responsive to State Ministers in maintaining road safety outcomes post-transition. To ensure this happens the review recommended the development of a national statement of expectations, which includes high-level performance expectations about the way the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator performs its regulatory functions, including jurisdiction-specific requirements, performance expectations and other requirements. The New South Wales specific requirements will be included in future statements of expectations before final transition to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

To ensure that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator remains accountable for the future delivery of heavy vehicle regulatory services in New South Wales, the bill provides for the Minister to enter into an agreement with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator on a statement of expectations. The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator intends to adopt a like-for-like service delivery approach for the heavy vehicle regulatory program in New South Wales. This will mean that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will continue to deliver heavy vehicle regulatory services utilising the same staff in the same locations and using the same physical resources as presently occurs. It will also result in minimal disruption to industry.

The decision for the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to undertake the New South Wales Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme under a service level agreement with Transport for NSW will mean that heavy vehicle customers have to deal with only one regulator for on-road and roadworthiness matters, but it will result in a number of safety benefits. It will also mean that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will have a more comprehensive view of the New South Wales fleet, which will better enable an integrated risk-based approach to operator and vehicle compliance. It will also mean that the regulator will acquire valuable mechanically qualified resources that will enhance its national regulatory capability.

The bill ensures that employees transferring from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will have protections for terms and conditions of employment, including superannuation and long service leave entitlements. In addition to providing certainty to Transport for NSW employees, these measures will ensure that the knowledge and expertise these employees have in delivering heavy vehicle regulatory services

will be maintained. It will also allow the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to build on this expertise to achieve improved safety and productivity outcomes not only within New South Wales but also nationally.

I note that the Minister has advised that the transition of functions and staff is most likely to occur in mid-2022. This will allow the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and Transport for NSW sufficient time to complete their transition-readiness activities and for the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to be in a position to assume full responsibility for delivering Heavy Vehicle National Law and Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme functions in New South Wales. The Minister has advised that this will occur only once the Minister is satisfied that Transport for NSW and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator are in a position to implement a seamless transition.

The measures outlined will ensure that safety outcomes in New South Wales will be maintained when the heavy vehicle regulatory functions and Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme functions are transferred from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. They will also lay the groundwork for the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to achieve improved safety outcomes in both New South Wales and nationally. As I mentioned, this is all about improving safety for the trucking industry, which provides a vital service, especially to the regional communities where I live. We rely on them daily to bring in the food, fibre and consumable goods that regional communities depend upon to survive. That is exactly what the trucking industry does for our communities. We value its work and we want to keep people in the industry safe. This bill will help to improve safety outcomes in New South Wales and nationally. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (12:35): I support the Heavy Vehicle Legislation Amendment (National Regulator) Bill 2021, which gives effect to the transfer of certain functions under the Heavy Vehicle National Law from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. As the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads noted, the principal objects of the bill are to provide for the transfer of certain members of staff from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, provide safeguards for their employment conditions and enable the Minister to direct by written order that specific assets, rights or liabilities of Transport for NSW be transferred to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

The bill will also enable Transport for NSW to obtain and use, in the exercise of its statutory functions, information held by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and provide the regulator with certain information to enable it to undertake its functions in New South Wales. The transfer of the New South Wales heavy vehicle regulatory functions to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator completes over 10 years of reform to create national regulatory regimes for heavy vehicle safety and productivity, rail safety and domestic commercial vessel safety. The aim of these reforms is to improve safety and reduce costs and regulatory burden for Australian transport companies operating across State borders.

For the regulation of heavy vehicles, these benefits will be achieved in many ways. Most importantly, heavy vehicle drivers will now need to comply with only a single set of consistent rules and a single heavy vehicle regulator when travelling in New South Wales and between States. To support the delivery of nationally consistent regulation for industry and customers, it has been agreed that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will also deliver the New South Wales Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme. By assuming responsibility for the New South Wales Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will have a more comprehensive view of the New South Wales fleet, including having access to a considerable amount of data on heavy vehicle roadworthiness. The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will also acquire valuable New South Wales mechanically qualified resources that will enhance its national regulatory capability. Importantly, it will also mean that our heavy vehicle customers will continue to deal with one regulator for on-road and roadworthiness matters.

The decision of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to adopt a like-for-like service delivery approach for the heavy vehicle regulatory program in New South Wales will not only result in minimal disruption to industry but also ensure that the knowledge and expertise these employees have in delivering heavy vehicle regulatory services will be maintained. Under this arrangement, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will continue to deliver heavy vehicle regulatory services using the same staff in the same locations and using the same physical resources as presently occurs. To facilitate the transfer of staff to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator the bill provides protections for staff terms and conditions of employment.

The continuity of service of transferred employees will also be recognised for all purposes. Any rights to accrued sick leave, family and community service leave, accrued and unpaid annual leave, or extended or long service leave will be transferred. At the time of transfer, employees will be able to opt to be paid all or part of their accrued annual leave and, if they have completed more than seven years of service, their extended or long service leave. Superannuation arrangements will continue, including membership of defined benefit schemes. In addition to providing certainty to transferring employees, these measures will ensure that the knowledge and expertise these employees have in delivering heavy vehicle regulatory services will be maintained. It will also

allow the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to build on this expertise to achieve improved safety and productivity outcomes not only within New South Wales but also nationally.

As the Minister has noted, maintaining safety outcomes in New South Wales will be critical post transition. For this reason, the bill provides for the Minister to enter into an agreement with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator in relation to a statement of expectations to ensure that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator remains accountable for the future delivery of regulatory services in New South Wales. To this end, New South Wales and other jurisdictions have worked with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to develop a national statement of expectations. The statement of expectations includes high-level performance expectations about the way the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator performs its regulatory functions, including jurisdiction-specific requirements, performance expectations and other requirements.

This bill, which gives effect to the transfer of functions and staff to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, will allow many of the safety and productivity benefits identified over a decade ago to finally be realised while ensuring that heavy vehicle safety outcomes in New South Wales are not diminished. I acknowledge the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads is in the Chamber and the work that both he and his staff have done in relation to the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (12:42): I speak in support of the Heavy Vehicle Legislation Amendment (National Regulator) Bill 2021. The bill gives effect to the transfer of certain functions under the Heavy Vehicle National Law from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. Significantly, this bill is the final step of a national reform journey that commenced more than 10 years ago for such an important industry. If this journey started about 10 years ago then all members would know that the Minister of the day was Duncan Gay. I acknowledge that Duncan Gay is in the public gallery today. He was the Minister who started this very important reform process, so it is good to see him in the Chamber and still working hard for the industry after all these years.

In 2009 the former Council of Australian Governments identified the worthy goal of creating national regulatory regimes for heavy vehicle safety and productivity, rail safety and domestic commercial vessel safety. The establishment of national regulatory regimes was seen as addressing a number of problems. Firstly, transport services often traverse State and Territory borders, meaning that operators would often encounter multiple regulatory regimes in the course of a single journey. Businesses with operations in multiple jurisdictions were also faced with duplicate compliance efforts, and it was believed that national regimes would reduce costs for transport workers moving interstate or for businesses moving fleet assets interstate.

Importantly, in addition to reducing the cost and regulatory burden for Australian transport companies, these reforms were intended to improve safety outcomes. The establishment of national regulatory regimes for rail safety and domestic commercial vessel safety is now largely complete. In 2019 the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator assumed direct responsibility for rail safety regulation in each jurisdiction under the National Rail Safety Law. In 2017 New South Wales terminated its service-level agreement and transitioned its rail safety regulatory functions and staff to the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator. In July 2018 the Australian Maritime Safety Authority assumed responsibility for the regulation of domestic commercial vessels in all States and Territories.

Although the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator was established in 2014 under the Heavy Vehicle National Law, jurisdictions have continued to undertake heavy vehicle regulatory services on behalf of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator under service-level agreements. Those agreements allowed the Heavy Vehicle Regulator to develop administrative arrangements and systems to support a smoother transition to the new national regime. They also provided an opportunity for the regulator to mature before assuming direct responsibility of the national regulatory regime. Now that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator is sufficiently established and matured as a regulator, jurisdictions have commenced phasing out their service-level agreements and transitioning their heavy vehicle regulatory services. South Australia transitioned its heavy vehicle regulatory services to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator in 2017, Tasmania in 2018, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria in 2019. Queensland is expected to transition after New South Wales. This will mean that heavy vehicle drivers will now need to comply with only a single set of consistent rules and a single regulator.

To support national transition, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator has also developed a national regulatory model that describes its approach to risk-based regulation for heavy vehicles. This approach will allow the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to rely on evidence to assess risks and to deploy resources in proportion to the risk of harm. It will also enable the regulator to tailor its service delivery and administration so that compliance costs are commensurate with risks. For the New South Wales transition, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator is proposing to adopt a like-for-like service delivery approach for the heavy vehicle regulatory program in New South Wales. In practical terms, it will mean that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will continue to

deliver heavy vehicle regulatory services utilising the same staff, in the same locations, and using the same physical resources as presently occurs.

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will have access to both New South Wales data and national compliance data, which will ensure more effective compliance monitoring and regulatory outcomes and support the development of a unified regulatory mode for the heavy vehicle sector. By assuming responsibility for the New South Wales Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will have a more comprehensive view of the New South Wales fleet, including having access to a considerable amount of data on heavy vehicle roadworthiness. This will further inform the development of the national regulatory model to ensure more effective compliance and enforcement activities across jurisdictions.

The transfer of the heavy vehicle inspection service to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will also mean the regulator will acquire valuable mechanically qualified resources that will enhance its national regulatory capability. From our heavy vehicle customers' perspective, it will mean they will continue to deal with one regulator for on-road and roadworthiness matters. The measures in the bill which provide protections for terms and conditions of employment of staff to be transferred will ensure that the knowledge and expertise of those employees will be maintained. This will allow the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to build on its expertise to achieve improved safety and productivity outcomes not only within New South Wales but also nationally.

With the transition of New South Wales heavy vehicle regulatory services and the Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme functions, the goal has finally been achieved to create national regulatory regimes for heavy vehicle safety and productivity, rail safety and domestic commercial vessel safety. The way is now clear for the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to deliver the benefits envisaged by the reform, including reducing the costs and regulatory burden for heavy vehicle transport companies while at the same time improving heavy vehicle safety outcomes.

Firstly, the legislation enables Transport for NSW to obtain and use information held by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator in the exercise of its statutory functions and provides it with certain information. Secondly, it provides for the transfer of certain members of staff from Transport for NSW to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. Thirdly, it enables the Minister to direct by written order that specified assets, rights or liabilities of Transport for NSW be transferred to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. The bill also amends the Fines Act 1996, the Heavy Vehicle (Adoption of National Law) Act, the Passenger Transport Act 2014, the Road Transport Act 2013 and the Transport Administration Act 1988. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:50): In reply: I thank the member for Clarence, the member for Miranda, the member for Myall Lakes and the member for Wyong for their contributions to the debate on the bill. As they noted in their speeches, the bill is the final step in a national reform journey that commenced over 10 years ago to create a national regulatory regime for heavy vehicle safety and productivity. The Government has worked long and hard with Transport for NSW and many stakeholders throughout this journey. I acknowledge the chair of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, or NHVR, Duncan Gay—who has been instrumental in this bill being brought before the House—and Sal Petrocchio, the CEO of NHVR, for their commitment to ensuring a smooth transition so that high standards will be retained. I also acknowledge Paul Salvati and Kelli Walker, who are seated alongside Mr Gay and Mr Petrocchio in the Speaker's gallery, for their roles as part of the transition team. They have been committed to highlighting the importance of the bill for the heavy vehicle industry in New South Wales.

I thank the member for Wyong for his contribution to the debate. I note the Opposition's strong endorsement of the bill and its acknowledgement that the Government is on the right path. I also note the support for the bill from the Hon. Mick Veitch in the other place. I thank him for his time a couple of weeks ago when the Government engaged with him to speak about the importance of the bill and to answer any questions he had. The Government will continue to work closely with the Public Service Association through the regulatory transition to support staff along the journey. In 2014 the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator was established under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (NSW). Initially, jurisdictions undertook heavy vehicle registry services on behalf of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator under delegations and service level agreements. Those agreements allowed the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to develop administrative arrangements and systems to support a smoother transition to the new national regime. They also provided an opportunity for the regulator to mature before assuming direct responsibility of the national regulatory regime. Now that the regulator is sufficiently established and matured as a regulator, it is proposed to fully transition State heavy vehicle regulatory services to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

Other jurisdictions have already transitioned to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. In 2017 South Australia transitioned its heavy regulatory services to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. Tasmania transitioned in 2018. Both the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria transitioned in 2019, and Queensland is expected to transition after New South Wales. Importantly, this reform will enable heavy vehicle

drivers to comply with a single set of consistent rules and a single regulator while at the same time ensuring that safety standards in New South Wales are maintained and improved. It is also important to note that all New South Wales heavy vehicle compliance and enforcement services will be transitioned on a like-for-like basis. This will mean that the NHVR will continue to deliver the services using the same staff in the same locations, using the same physical resources as presently occurs. It will also mean that regional and metropolitan employment will not be diminished as a result of the transition to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

As well as transitioning heavy vehicle registry services to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, New South Wales has agreed to transfer the New South Wales Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to ensure the delivery of nationally consistent regulation for industry and customers. While the requirement for heavy vehicles to be inspected is primarily for New South Wales registration purposes, these inspections are also a significant component of the overall heavy vehicle compliance monitoring strategy for vehicle standards compliance under the Heavy Vehicle National Law in New South Wales. By assuming responsibility for the New South Wales Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will have a more comprehensive view of the New South Wales fleet, which will better enable an integrated, risk-based approach to operator and vehicle compliance.

The transfer of the heavy vehicle inspection service to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator will also mean the regulator will acquire valuable, mechanically qualified resources that will enhance its national regulatory capability. Importantly, it will mean that our heavy vehicle customers will continue to deal with one regulator for on-road and roadworthiness matters, as the Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme is currently delivered by the same field staff who carry out the on-road compliance function. In addition, the same checking stations are generally used for on-road compliance and for the Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme. This will result not only in minimal disruption to industry but also ensure that the knowledge and expertise those employees have in delivering heavy vehicle regulatory services will be maintained. The primary focus of the bill is to facilitate the transfer of staff to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and to ensure that staff retain all of their current terms and conditions of employment.

Importantly, the bill provides that there will be an employment guarantee for two years from the date of transition. Employees will transfer on the same award terms and conditions of employment, and continuity of service will be recognised for all purposes. Rights to accrued sick leave, family and community services leave, annual leave and extended or long service leave will be transferred. At the time of transfer, staff will be able to opt to be paid all or part of their accrued annual leave and, if staff have completed more than seven years of service, their extended leave. Superannuation arrangements will continue, including membership of defined benefit schemes. As has been noted, there will be a workforce strategy for the transition of staff to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. It will also be developed in consultation with the Public Service Association. The strategy will include the process for determining which roles will transfer to the NHVR, which roles will be retained by Transport for NSW and the process of filling those roles from the current staff of the impacted units.

The bill also replicates the current practice of not providing redundancy or other termination payments where the role being transferred is comparable in functions and terms and conditions. The bill will guarantee that staff are available to undertake the functions that are required to ensure business continuity, the high standard of services and the safety of the travelling public. The conditions of employment for staff who stay with Transport for NSW will remain the same. In addition to providing certainty to Transport for NSW employees, the measures will ensure that the knowledge and expertise of those employees in delivering heavy vehicle regulatory services will be maintained. It will also allow the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to build on that expertise to achieve improved safety and productivity outcomes not only within New South Wales but also nationally.

I thank all those user groups that have been involved in the consultation process. I thank the Local Government Association, the NSW Road Freight Industry Council, the Freight and Logistics Advisory Council, Road Freight NSW, the bus and coach industry and all those stakeholders who have played a part in developing this very important bill. New South Wales plays a key role in moving freight across this country. When we speak about 60 per cent of freight being moved by heavy vehicles, there was no better time to acknowledge the industry than during COVID. During COVID we saw that the heavy vehicle industry was more important than ever. There was a greater appreciation by the public and the community for the trucking industry and the drivers who worked tirelessly to ensure that the supermarket shelves remained full and that chemists had the supplies needed not only in New South Wales but also across this nation.

That is why the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and this transition bill are important. Anyone driving a truck would know that the boundaries go beyond State borders. We were all reminded of the importance of the industry and its drivers during the COVID pandemic. Safety was the number one priority and plans and systems were put in place to ensure that there was no disruption. Borders were closed and a licensing scheme was introduced to enable drivers to cross into other States. We worked with other jurisdictions to ensure that those

trucks moved through in a timely manner. There is no point in produce rotting away on the backs of trucks because those trucks could not achieve their required destination. This is an important bill. It has been a long and important journey but this legislation will underpin heavy vehicle safety and productivity in the long term. It is a significant step. We are moving towards a single national regulator for heavy vehicles—an issue that we have looked at since 2009.

It has been a 10-year journey. There has been general support across the sector and from both sides of politics for a single approach to the regulation of heavy vehicles to reduce compliance costs for regulators—an approach that is mindful of so many businesses that operate across borders—to get rid of some of the red tape and to make it easier to understand compliance regulations. When the regulatory regime was set up in 2014, it was delivering mostly regulatory activities on behalf of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator under the service level agreements.

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator now has had time to mature and assume responsibility and is ready to undertake this change. It means that heavy vehicles will now be subject to a single set of consistent rules. It also means that the single regulator will ensure that safety standards in New South Wales continue to be maintained and improved. I thank those who are in the gallery today: Duncan, Sal, Kelli and Paul. I thank the team from Transport for NSW for assisting with this bill; my chief of staff in the Chamber, Sally White; Isabella McDougall, my policy adviser in this area; and my team, who are in my office watching this debate. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2020-2021

Debate resumed from 18 March 2021.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:06): I speak in debate on the budget reply speech and mention the Government's inability and its strong desire not to fund various projects in Newcastle, the most obvious one being the Newcastle Art Gallery. For 10 long years this Government has failed to find one cent to go toward the Newcastle Art Gallery redevelopment. We have asked for this funding time and again. In fact, the requests go way back to the time when the Federal Government offered one-third of the cost of the redevelopment and Newcastle council offered one-third. This State Government refused to stump up with the final third. If it had done so at the time, the cost would have been a lot less than it is now, given that as time has marched on all expenses associated with the redevelopment have increased. When we asked the Minister in the other place about this redevelopment during budget estimates, he indicated that there simply was not any pool or pot of money, so to speak, for which Newcastle council could apply. It beggars belief, considering the hundreds of millions of dollars that have gone toward the Art Gallery of New South Wales redevelopment and other cultural facilities throughout the State. It is an absolute disgrace.

The other item I briefly mention is the Hunter Sports and Entertainment Precinct. Our leader, Jodi McKay, when she was the member for Newcastle, submitted a draft plan for this project well over a decade ago. We had a draft plan, which we were going to turn into a final master plan, act on that plan, get the money and activate this precinct. Unfortunately, with the election of the previous State member from the Liberal Party nothing was done. When I was elected in a by-election—when the Libs got swept out of the Hunter as a result of the ICAC scandal that hit the State, taking out Newcastle and Charlestown—one of the first things I did was to chase up a master plan for the Broadmeadow sporting and entertainment precinct. A draft was put together by this Government, but it took some time. It was put on public exhibition but, unfortunately, things have not moved since then. That is some years ago now. What we need is approximately \$7 million for a business case before we can proceed to the next stage. I urge the Government in preparation of the upcoming budget—obviously it was not in the previous budget—to look long and hard at this proposal.

I have had conversations with representatives of the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation who believe that it is the next big development for sport and government investment in Newcastle and the Hunter.

There is no doubt that this proposal should be on the Government's radar. I urge the Government to consider this development proposal in the forthcoming budget and to find the funds. Once we have the funds, we can finalise the business case and complete the final plan. Then we can begin to consider the investment of serious dollars in this precinct to make it a world-class sporting facility and focal point for the Hunter.

We have the ridiculous situation of ad hoc infrastructure. The Hunter has not been eligible for any of the major sporting funds. The Newcastle and Wollongong local government areas [LGAs] have missed out on major funding time and again. We had the ludicrous situation of Newcastle Basketball applying for funds for a facility in the Lake Macquarie local government area, which is on the edge of the Newcastle LGA. And lo and behold, it received funding. But the facility will be in a place, a position, a geographical spot that is difficult to access from a major link road and it will be outside the major sporting precinct. It is a very bad planning decision. While that funding is welcome, the people of my electorate would welcome focused coordination of funding for the sport and entertainment precinct and getting a draft plan up and running.

Strangely enough, over the past few years this Government, in its budgets, has allocated funds to planning for the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor. The idea is to have a freight corridor between Hexham and Fassifern to remove freight from the inner-city line, which currently experiences incredible disruption at the Adamstown gates in particular and the Clyde Street gates in the heart of the city. It also causes no end of frustration to an immense number of commuters. The Government has allocated funds to the planning of this project but the ludicrous reality is that the Government does not actually spend those funds. I repeat: the Government allocates funds in the budget for a heavy freight rail bypass between Hexham and Fassifern but does not spend the money. Each year the Government allocates a little more to the project but the money is not spent and no progress is made.

Commuters in particular and residents of Newcastle and the Hunter tear their hair out every time they get stuck at the rail line and are prevented from getting to the other side of the tracks to continue their school and work routes. They are stationary for a very long time while the heavy rail freight very slowly passes. This has been an issue for many years. Labor committed to an overpass or underpass in 2014. Since then, the Government has decided that the solution is a heavy freight rail bypass. Labor will support the Government's decision, but the Government has to do the job and spend the money. Progress must be made so that the people of Newcastle and the Hunter can stop tearing their hair out and begin seeing some progress.

Prior to the 2019 State election and in the most recent State budget, the Government announced the Newcastle Education Precinct project. After many freedom of information requests and finally a call for documents under Standing Order 52 in the upper House, the Government produced documents which revealed that the Government's election commitment to build a new primary school in the Newcastle Education Precinct was false. After examining two and a half thousand pages, the Labor Opposition discovered that the Government no longer wants a preschool and primary school in a new precinct but is considering some type of redevelopment of the Newcastle High School site. That is a positive indication, but I urge the Government to show transparency, get on with the job and produce education outcomes for the people of Newcastle. Given the billions of dollars in investment that this Government has made in the Newcastle CBD, in the near future there will be thousands of new apartments occupied by young families, who can afford apartments rather than houses in Newcastle and as a result of the exodus of homebuyers from Sydney.

Debate interrupted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmeh Singh): I will now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Members

MEMBER FOR HEFFRON

MEMBER FOR COFFS HARBOUR

The SPEAKER: I welcome back all members and particularly the member for Heffron and the member for Coffs Harbour, who celebrated birthdays during the break.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I warmly welcome the guests of the member for Lake Macquarie from Lake Macquarie High School, who are watching question time from the McKell Room today. I welcome Tia Schmierer-Clift, Cooper Smith, Samuel Lysaght, Ambrose Johnson-Pold and teacher Andrew Swan.

*Announcements***CHAMBER COVID-SAFE ARRANGEMENTS**

The SPEAKER (14:16): Following an inspection of the Chamber by a representative of NSW Health and advice given to the Minister, approval has been received for all 93 members of this House to sit in an expanded Chamber during question time. However, to mitigate against risk, each member will be designated a seat; there will be no unnecessary movement around the Chamber, including to converse with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition; and voices will be moderated to minimise airborne transmission of biological material. When it was suggested that no voices be raised I responded that that would not happen. I warn members that if they do not moderate their voices I will not hesitate to ask them to leave the Chamber under Standing Order 249A, even just for 15 minutes, to cool their heels. Part of the quid pro quo of getting all 93 members in the Chamber for question time is moderating our behaviour from what might be seen as "normal". Members voting in divisions will continue to be counted as they walk through the Chamber. The fresh airflow into the Chamber has been increased by turning up the fresh air capacity of the air conditioning, and opening doors and windows leading to the Chamber. I particularly thank the health Minister and his department for assisting in the evaluation of returning all 93 members of this House to the Chamber for question time.

PARLIAMENT ON DEMAND

The SPEAKER (14:19): I am pleased to confirm that Parliament On Demand, a self-service video on demand and clipping tool, is now available. Members and their staff no longer have to submit a request to the library and wait for the clip to be sent. They can simply log on to Parliament On Demand in the Webcasts section of the intranet and generate their own clipping. For more information about training sessions, members should refer to recent emails.

DEATH OF THE HON. EMILIA MONJOWA LIFAKA

The SPEAKER (14:20): It is with regret that I inform the House of the passing of the Hon. Emilia Monjowa Lifaka, MP, Chairperson of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Executive Committee and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cameroon. On behalf of the House, I acknowledge her contribution to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and have expressed our condolences to her family and friends.

Governor

DEATH OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH

The SPEAKER (14:19): I report receipt of correspondence from the official secretary to the Governor advising of the death on 9 April 2021 of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. This will be the subject of a motion of condolence on a future day. In the meantime, I ask that members stand as a mark of respect.

Members and officers of the House stood in their places as a mark of respect.

Bills

COMMUNITY LAND DEVELOPMENT BILL 2020**COMMUNITY LAND MANAGEMENT BILL 2020****MARINE POLLUTION AMENDMENT (REVIEW) BILL 2020**

Assent

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of messages from the Governor notifying Her Excellency's assent to the bills.

Members

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF UPPER HUNTER

Issue of Writ

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that on 31 March 2021 I received a letter from Michael John Johnsen resigning his seat as member for the electoral district of Upper Hunter. I also inform the House that I issued a writ on 30 April 2021 for the election of a member to serve in place of Michael John Johnsen, resigned.

Nomination day Thursday 6 May 2021

Polling day Saturday 22 May 2021

Return of Writs

Tuesday 29 June 2021

MINISTRY**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** On behalf of the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian: I inform the House that:

- (1) On 31 March 2021 Her Excellency the Governor appointed the Hon. Victor Michael Dominello, MP, as Minister for Digital.
- (2) On 24 March 2021 the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, MLC, resigned as Parliamentary Secretary for Health.
- (3) On 25 March 2021 Michael John Johnsen ceased to be the Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture.

*Question Time***ASSET PRIVATISATION****Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:23):** My question is directed to the Premier. Two years ago, before the last election, the Premier looked the people of New South Wales in the eye and said there would be no more privatisations. Since then she has privatised about \$82 billion in public assets. Last week she indicated she would be embarking on yet another round of selling public assets. Why did the Premier not tell the truth?**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:23):** I acknowledge the question from the Leader of the Opposition and I say the following: The Treasurer has already indicated the Government's commitment to dealing with the pandemic as well as a number of other major shocks.**The SPEAKER:** Order! The question is being responded to. Members will remain silent.**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I have, of course, already placed on the record our commitment to monetising the balance of WestConnex. We need to remember that this was a project the Opposition opposed. It did not exist when we came to government. As the Treasurer, Minister Tudehope from the other place and Minister Dominello reported back to me, a number of people in Strathfield are very happy with the WestConnex project. They are also happy with a number of other things.**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members and the Treasurer will remain silent.**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Government's program has ensured that our balance sheet has grown by about 30 per cent so that the mums and dads of this State—**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question was specifically about why the Premier did not tell the truth, why she said she was not going to privatise anything. In fact, she said, "If we were, we would have told you." Why did the Premier not tell the truth?**The SPEAKER:** The Premier is being relevant and I will hear further from her.**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In relation to the balance sheet—**Ms Jodi McKay:** It is not about the balance sheet. You are not telling the truth. It's about your honesty.**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Swansea to order for the first time.**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Leader of the Opposition may not think the State's financial management has anything to do with the balance sheet—**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. I actually think integrity and honesty has something to do with the leader of the State. Why did the Premier not tell the truth?**The SPEAKER:** The Premier will continue. She is being relevant.**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In addition to her constituents being happy with the WestConnex project and many other things, I say the following: Since the Liberals and Nationals have been in government, mums and dads, individuals, communities and families across the State own more schools, more hospitals, more roads and more public transport than ever in our State's history.**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time. I call the member for Keira to order for the first time. I call the member for Londonderry to order for the first time.**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Rather than own half a telegraph pole, our mums and dads own schools, hospitals, roads and rails, and all those things that make our community stronger.**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Not only have we demonstrated that our public policy in relation to managing the State's finances actually supports our infrastructure pipeline, but I would ask everyone to name any

other jurisdiction anywhere which, according to its population, is investing more than \$107 billion in infrastructure pipelines in the next four years. What we do know is that the people of New South Wales endorsed our policies, the people of New South Wales—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. You did not tell the truth when you went to that election and last week you again confirmed you were going down this path of selling public assets. Why did you not tell the truth?

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. She will direct her comments through the Chair.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: The positive thing about the Liberal-Nationals Government is that not only are we building for our State's future; we are protecting jobs and creating jobs because we are the party for the workers.

COVID-19 AND STATE ECONOMY

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (14:28): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the Government is keeping the community safe while supporting the economy?

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. Government members are not assisting the Premier.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:28): I welcome the question from the member for East Hills and thank her for providing me with an update this morning on not only the way in which her community is responding to the COVID pandemic but also the support of local businesses in getting onto programs like Dine & Discover, which is encouraging both individuals and families and, of course, small businesses to be involved in a program that is not only generating economic stimulus but also supporting those businesses and communities that have been hardest hit during the pandemic. New South Wales has prided itself on making sure not only that we get on top of the health issues regarding the pandemic but also that we make sure our economy stays as open as possible and that jobs are protected as much as possible. I thank all of my parliamentary colleagues in government who have supported our efforts but also all members of this place who have made sure their constituents have been made aware of what is on offer to support communities during what has been a very difficult 18 months for New South Wales.

I stress that, in addition to obviously keeping community transmission low to zero in New South Wales, now because of the good work done by the Treasurer and all of our team New South Wales' recovery is going ahead better than expected on the economic front. In fact, Deloitte forecast that our State will grow by 5.2 per cent next year, which is an incredible achievement, given what we have been through and what the forecasts were previously. I pay credit to team New South Wales, the business community, the community sector and non-government organisations supporting the Government in our efforts to keep the community as strong as possible during this difficult time. It is also very interesting to note that consumer sentiment has bounced back. Ordinarily, a number of around 100 is regarded as positive and every State strives to get 100. New South Wales in the most recent figures released was at 117 points, which was actually stronger than pre-COVID numbers. So consumer sentiment is positive and, of course, we want that to continue.

I am particularly proud because when you keep infrastructure going during the pandemic, when you keep your borders as open as possible internally in Australia and when you make sure that you are providing business input, whether it is a small-size business in the regions or a larger-size business in our suburbs or in the larger cities, that business confidence is so critical in investing off the back of the Government's investment. Whether it is investing in staff, in plant or in various other things, I am very pleased to say that business confidence in New South Wales is at a massive plus 16, which again is far higher than the decade average of plus three. Now, more than ever, when we need the business community to really rally and invest, whether it is a small business or a large business, we are seeing business confidence at very high levels in New South Wales—something that we would not have anticipated would occur.

It is also very pleasing to see unemployment down to 5.4 per cent in New South Wales. That is why we are the party for the workers, because we believe in providing meaningful work to all of our citizens. I am very pleased to say about our participation rate—because some States have seen a drop-off in participation, which is always a concern—that in New South Wales not only have we seen the participation rate hold but also we have seen it exceed, at 65.7 per cent, pre-COVID levels. The good news is that female participation has risen by a massive percentage to 61.3 per cent, which is an all-time high for New South Wales. So notwithstanding the challenges we have had, our policies in keeping the community safe, in making sure that we also keep the economy open—that balance—are really seeing things move in the right direction for New South Wales. But we also appreciate the ongoing threats that exist in relation to the pandemic. Not only do we have to keep an eye on those

jobs and those new jobs and the struggles that business and non-government organisations are going through, but also we have to be mindful of the risks that occur.

New South Wales is proudly the only State that has continuously welcomed home thousands and thousands of Australians every week. We are the only State that has agreed to make sure not only that we continue to keep bringing home thousands and thousands of Australians but also, on any given day, we have an excess of 5,000 Australians in our quarantine system. I take this opportunity to thank all of our health workers, our hotel workers, our cleaners, the NSW Police Force and our emergency services personnel as well as the transport workers who, combined, have made sure that more than 5,000 Australians have stayed safe in our quarantine system at any given time, plus making sure that community transmission is reduced. That is why I was very keen— [*Extension of time*]

I am sure by the end of the time on my feet the Minister for Customer Service will update me on how many vouchers have been downloaded. More than any other State, because of Sydney's status as a truly global city, New South Wales loses one and a half billion dollars every month because of the lack of international travel. We know how key it is for us to vaccinate as many people as possible in New South Wales, as safely as possible. I thank all of our NSW Health staff as well as the GP Network, who in total have already provided nearly 700,000 jabs across the State since the vaccination program began. Of course, we are working hard to make sure we vaccinate as much of our population as possible, as quickly and as safely as possible.

We know that being in government is not just ticking the boxes; it is about thinking creatively. The Minister for Customer Service can update me now. I know this matters to the member for East Hills, as it does to many of our colleagues: 3.5 million citizens in New South Wales have downloaded the Dine & Discover vouchers. That means our businesses are getting a boost and individuals are getting a reduction in the cost of living. Not only are we keeping the community safe, but also we are keeping their jobs safe because we are the party for the workers.

JOHN SIDOTI, MEMBER FOR DRUMMOYNE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:36): My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. In March, after the ICAC had announced its inquiry into John Sidoti, the Minister told Sky News, "Let me tell you about John Sidoti: There is no other man in the Parliament that I would want next to me in the trenches other than him. He is a great man." After everything we heard over five weeks of hearings, does the Minister still feel that way?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (14:36): It is good to see that the Labor Party is still getting its questions off two-month-old media outlets, but that is the work ethic. I am sure you will continue to be in Opposition for quite some time yet. I am quite happy to stand by the fact that I think John Sidoti is a good worker. He beat a corrupt Labor MP in his seat to hold it for 10 years. While we are on the subject of corrupt Labor MPs, we could list off the many, many that you have been associated with over the years. I do not remember you attacking Milton Orkopoulos when he was up to no good in the Hunter Valley. In fact, I am pretty sure you defended him quite a few times.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order—

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I am coming to you. You sit down and wait your turn.

Ms Kate Washington: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister was asked specifically whether or not he thought John Sidoti was a good fellow, like he has said in the past. Do you still think he is a great man?

The SPEAKER: The Minister has responded to that question and is continuing in the vein of the question.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: The member for Port Stephens is just trying to waste time because she does not want me to come to her. But I will get to you. Remember your predecessor Milton Orkopoulos, who you were quite happy to campaign for over many, many years.

Mr Paul Lynch: Point of order: My point of order is that the Minister should address his comments through the Chair.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. Minister, please address your comments through the Chair.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I thank the member for Liverpool, who has also got his own form with stacking branches in Liverpool from housing commission houses.

[*Opposition members interjected.*]

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I am going through the Chair.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. We do this by way of substantive motion if that is the way we are going to go past it. We will talk about all the Hunter MPs on their side, including a vet who left a dog on a table and took some money.

The SPEAKER: Minister, Standing Order 73 relates to members in this Chamber, so please be mindful of that.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I certainly am. To the point of order: The question was about defending MPs. I was just highlighting the fact that when the member for Liverpool was stacking branches from housing commission houses, nobody here defended him. We can, of course, go on—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I was going to finish with you, but keep going.

Ms Yasmin Catley: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. It is clear that the Minister is not answering the question.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has answered the question and is continuing.

Ms Yasmin Catley: The reason the Minister is supporting this guy is that he is bent as well.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I am allowed to answer the question. I am allowed to keep going.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Swansea to order for a second time.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Did you say that I was bent? I will ask her to withdraw the remark, Mr Speaker. That is an outrageous slur.

The SPEAKER: I ask the member for Swansea whether she will retract that comment.

Ms Yasmin Catley: No.

The SPEAKER: Minister, please continue.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: Then have the guts to say it outside. Go on. You agree to? We have it on the record: She is going to call me corrupt outside. I will be looking forward to that one. I am horrified that Labor Party members would stand up in this Chamber and try to accuse anybody but themselves of impropriety considering the number of people in their caucus who have ended up in my correctional establishments when I was the Minister for Corrections. Of course, I understand that my successor, the member for Lane Cove, is continuing to allow members of the Labor Party who have been convicted to stay in his prisons. Quite frankly, they are unable to provide a positive contribution to Australian society and they will remain in prison. The list just goes on and on when it comes to the previous Labor Government. If members opposite want to cast aspersions against the member for Drummoyne when ICAC has yet to make a judgement, they should probably start with their own mob. We can, of course, start with the predecessor of the member for Swansea, who no Labor MP has yet condemned, which is just absolutely horrifying. We could obviously finish off with Eddie Obeid and, of course, Joe Tripodi. We can spend some time— [*Time expired.*]

REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (14:42): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier please update the House on why the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government is best placed to represent communities in regional New South Wales?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:42): I thank the member for Myall Lakes for his question. He is a hardworking member and, more importantly, a member who was there when his community was battered by fires and then floods. It was good to see us get off the ground quickly with the joint funding announcement supporting farmers and small businesses impacted by floods. They have had a tough period. Our farmers were burnt out during the fires, a lot of businesses were doing it tough due to the impacts of COVID and then, of course, there were the floods.

As the Minister responsible for disaster recovery, turning up to these same communities that were impacted by fires and now by floods is something that is very hard to deal with. To those communities, individuals and business owners, I say that I do not know how you do it; but you have. You continue to do it and you have our support. With the member for Myall Lakes, I know you have a strong voice on your behalf, making sure that we keep turning up and keep supporting you through this period. The question was about representation. When I look

across the board in New South Wales, The Nationals is a party that is not driven by ideology. We are a party that is brought together by geography. We represent some of the poorest—

[Opposition members interjected.]

Mr JOHN BARILARO: They think it is funny. They do not care. When we are representing some of the poorest and most disadvantaged communities in this State, those opposite sit in this Chamber and laugh. We are representing communities that are part of the engine room of this economy, like our irrigators down south, our farmers, our mining industry, tourism—those engine industries that are part of the 20-year economic blueprint of the New South Wales Government. They are the industries that we have backed in for the future. But those opposite sit in this Chamber today and want to laugh. We have been impacted by bushfires, floods, COVID and a mice epidemic out in the Central West. We continue to be called resilient. It takes more than just being called resilient. It is not just a word; it is an action.

Again the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals have been there side by side, through the hard times, but we are also there through the good times. Right now we are seeing a boom in regional and rural New South Wales, as the rains have come. Our farmers are doing better than they have done in recent years. Agriculture continues to be the backbone of industry in regional and rural New South Wales. That is why our recent announcement to buy back the Shenhua lease on the Liverpool Plains was to find a balance between mining and agriculture. This Government put out the Future of Coal Statement, ruling out parts of the State from mining but also identifying areas where mining can coexist.

During the Upper Hunter by-election campaign, we have seen a whole heap of "Johnny come lately" parties wanting to announce their support for mining and their understanding of agriculture. It was rank hypocrisy on the weekend when the Labor Party announced it is going to beef up the Agricultural Commissioner's role. That is the same party that voted against the right to farm. They will allow invasion of farms but they would not vote for that legislation in this House. That is the same party that had no vision, no policy and no platform in relation to dealing with the worst drought this State has ever seen. That party went to the last election wanting to tax tractors and farm vehicles. It is the same party that, when we were fighting to protect property rights for farmers, ambushed and attacked this Government.

They cannot turn up on the eve of a by-election and pretend they are the friend of farmers. The same goes for mining. It is the same party that, over the past two years, has attacked and criticised this Government on approvals of mining across the State, be it the gas reserves in Narrabri or mines in the Upper Hunter. Yet they have picked a Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy [CFMEU] candidate who is pro mining. I will feel sorry for Mr Drayton—if he is elected on 22 May—when he is sitting in the caucus room, where we know the Labor Party is driven by eastern suburbs' votes, led by The Greens. We know those opposite have never genuinely supported mining, even though they have accepted the donations from the CFMEU. This party, on the eve of an election, will turn up and say whatever it takes.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD: I ask for further information.

The SPEAKER: I will grant an additional two minutes. I know you are passionate in what you are saying. I am allowing Opposition members to interject more than I normally would because of the nature of what you are delivering.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: God help it if I tell the truth.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Opposition to tone it down because I cannot hear properly. I refer in particular to the member for Maitland.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is sad to see, but those opposite are attacking a candidate who has no voice to answer for himself. They are sitting on the benches, hiding behind parliamentary privilege—in other words, in the cowards' castle—attacking a candidate about some of the things that have been said. Let us make this clear: Where were those opposite when this Government committed to the Singleton bypass at the last election? They have short-changed the bypass by \$300 million. Where were those opposite when, in 2010, the Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for the Hunter and never actually delivered on a single infrastructure project in the Upper Hunter or the Hunter region?

Those opposite choose to come to an electorate, especially in the regions, on the eve of an election, promising the world. Think about all the promises they have made in this by-election. What they are promising is a delay on the Singleton police station by two years, a delay on the interchange and the Singleton bypass by two years because they have no ability to deliver on their election promises. When they make election promises, the Leader of the Opposition should be honest and stand up and say, "If you elect our member at this by-election, we

will fund it in three years' time", because they are not going to be in government before then. We have a billion dollars in roads, we have just opened the Scone bypass—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. Order! I call the member for Canterbury to order for the first time. I call the member for Wollongong to order for the first time. I call the member for Swansea to order for the third time. Members are yelling out, which is not acceptable.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The difference is, when we make a promise—like we did at the last election for the Singleton bypass, the Muswellbrook bypass, the Scone bypass—we deliver. When we committed to stage one and stage two of Muswellbrook Hospital we delivered, and so we continue to deliver to the people of the Upper Hunter. Mr Veitch said that the Resources for Regions is the greatest program delivered by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals. That is \$345 million, five rounds, delivering amenities, infrastructure and funding for the people of the Upper Hunter.

MUSWELLBROOK HOSPITAL

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (14:51): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. The Minister promised the people of Muswellbrook a hospital upgrade, but all he gave them was a surgical ward that opens to an empty room where the surgical theatre should be. The people of Muswellbrook generate hundreds of millions of dollars for this State, so why will the Minister not give them the hospital they deserve?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:51): I thank the member for the question because it gives me an opportunity to show again the misleading statements they make in the House and the absolute lies they say in the campaign. Our commitment to Muswellbrook Hospital was stages one and two—delivered. Part of stage two was that we prepare for the future. Additional infrastructure is now being built as part of stage two for a future stage three investment. That planning has been happening and they are aware of it. Once again, what we are seeing is that the Labor Party does not like the investment we have delivered. What they are trying to do is pick through their commitments. Yes, they have turned up on the eve of the by-election and made a \$32 million commitment to stage three, which means they have acknowledged that we have delivered stages one and two.

Ms Kate Washington: To complete stage two.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, no, it is stage three. That is unfortunate for those opposite, who are making policy on the run.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: Health Infrastructure says that—

The SPEAKER: What is the member's point of order?

Ms Kate Washington: —there is a shell space for a new operating theatre.

The SPEAKER: What is the member's point of order?

Ms Kate Washington: A shell space—

The SPEAKER: Sit down. Sit down. The member for Port Stephens will leave the Chamber for 15 minutes. She repeatedly ignored my instruction to sit down.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Port Stephens left the Chamber at 14:54.]

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I am not going to be lectured by Labor. When we look at this year's budget alone we find that \$950 million is going into hospital upgrades right across the regions in regional and rural New South Wales. Who would have thought we would be building an \$800 million-plus hospital in Tweed for a catchment of 120,000 people? It was the Liberal-Nationals. The new hospitals at Wagga, Dubbo and Parkes are new investments by this Government—the Griffith hospital, \$224 million; Maitland Hospital and John Hunter Hospital. One thing Labor cannot out-campaign the Liberal-Nationals on is the investment we can see in education and health. The infrastructure spend has been at a record high. In regional and rural New South Wales, we are seeing the landscape change when it comes to hospital upgrades. In Braidwood, in my electorate, I had the privilege recently of opening a \$35 million Multi-Purpose Service.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: I take a point of order under Standing Order 129. With due respect to the Speaker, the question was entirely about Muswellbrook, which is a really important community in the Upper Hunter. It is Standing Order 129—

The SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her point of order.

Ms Jodi McKay: The question was: Why, when Muswellbrook generates hundreds of millions of dollars for the State, will the Deputy Premier not give it the hospital it deserves? And to clarify, the \$32 million was for stage two.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough.

Ms Jodi McKay: I am very happy to send you a media release.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume her seat. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is funny, but pre-2011, when the Leader of the Opposition was the Minister responsible for the Hunter, she did not deliver on a hospital upgrade, nor did she deliver on bypasses, schools, roads or anything for the Hunter region. Many commentators and Labor backbenchers are saying on the eve of the by-election that this is a referendum on the leader of the Labor Party. The reality is—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Deputy Premier will cease for a moment. I call the member for Newcastle to order for the first time. I call the member for Keira to order for the second time. I call the member for Gosford to order for the first time. I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time. I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the first time. I call the member for Kiama to order for the third time. The member for Kiama was called to order on two occasions earlier today and now he has been called to order for the third. The Deputy Premier will be heard in silence.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: As I said earlier, when one looks at the Liberal-Nationals Government's track record one finds that it has invested in infrastructure across hospitals and multipurpose services to deliver better health services across the State. Members opposite can cherry-pick the Government's investment in stage one and stage two of the project in Muswellbrook, but more will be said in relation to health services during the Upper Hunter by-election. However, the Government is not going to use the by-election for only that purpose. At the end of the day, the Government will honour the commitments that it has made. The best way to predict the future is to look at the past. It is not just about the words that are said but what is done on the ground. That is why members opposite continue to sit on the Opposition benches: They never deliver what they say they will. They had 16 years in government and they did very little for the regions. The people of regional and rural New South Wales continue to have disdain for the Labor Party.

I am confident that the people of the Upper Hunter will use the by-election to reinforce the investment, policy position and work that the Government has put into the Upper Hunter. There is more to be done, which is why the Government has introduced Resources for Regions. That program will give more royalties back to those communities. Recently the Government also announced Royalties for Rejuvenation. That program accepts that when the mines are turned off we must underpin those industries and those businesses. The Government has set aside another \$25 million a year in perpetuity to support those communities when mining is wound down in the decades ahead. The Government has a plan for the future. There is investment for today and there is an investment pipeline for the future. That is why the Liberal-Nationals Government continues to deliver for the people of the Upper Hunter—unlike members opposite, who use it as a political football.

REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (14:57): I address my question to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on what the Government is doing to ensure economic security for regional New South Wales and across the State?

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Cessnock to order for the second time. I call the member for Oatley to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (14:57): I thank the member for Goulburn for her question. It is great to be back at work in Parliament—unlike the Legislative Council. According to the upper House, it is still Wednesday 24 March.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Maroubra to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: At the moment Adam Searle, the Dennis Denuto of the New South Wales Parliament, is running the lines against Bret Walker's advice. Look at the contrast: Here in the Legislative Assembly Chamber—

Mr Clayton Barr: Someone has had a long lunch today.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: —we are looking after the people of New South Wales, yet in the middle of the pandemic the Legislative Council does not want to sit. I am happy to offer it \$100,000 a year forever to

never sit again because that arrangement is working very well. The offer remains open for 48 hours, until 2.15 p.m. on Thursday. I read the Hon. Daniel Mookhey's maiden speech; this is our opportunity to send them out of business for good. Anyway, turning to the question—what was the question? It was about regional New South Wales. Everywhere we look in regional New South Wales there is record investment, as the Deputy Premier well knows. The Government has made a \$60 billion commitment, and 30 per cent of the infrastructure commitment will go to the bush. There has been investment in education; the upgrade at Muswellbrook South Public School is going well.

Some \$650 million has been invested in regional programs and projects this financial year. Investment has been made at Armidale Secondary College as well as at schools in Bungendore, Jerrabomberra, Kingscliff and Murrumbateman. Investment has been made in primary schools and secondary schools right across the State. When Labor was in government it closed 90 schools—and I acknowledge the earlier interjection from the member for Cessnock. Labor closed 90 schools. Now the asset base in the State is building; under Labor, it collapsed. Some \$900 million has been invested in rural health. Almost one-third of the \$3 billion worth of capital funding that was provided in the budget has been allocated to regional and rural health infrastructure. Forty-seven new hospital redevelopments or upgrades are underway this financial year; two-thirds of those will occur in regional parts of the State.

Earlier we spoke about the Tweed Hospital. That was opposed by Labor and now it is being built by the Liberal-Nationals Government. Labor members loved Shellharbour Hospital so much that they wanted to come to the announcement. If one looks right across the board—in Maitland, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Inverell, Goulburn, Griffith, Lismore, Tumut, Wagga Wagga and Wyong—one finds that there is more construction in regional New South Wales than ever before. When the Labor Party was in government it made promises to Parkes but did not deliver, it made promises to Tamworth but did not deliver and it made promises to Wagga Wagga but did not deliver, as the member for Wagga Wagga knows all too well. Some \$8.7 billion has been invested in regional roads and transport. As the Deputy Premier mentioned, the New South Wales and Federal governments have invested \$1 billion in roads in the Upper Hunter electorate. There has never been a more committed government.

Mr Paul Toole: And two bypasses.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: And two bypasses. Who did that?

Mr Paul Toole: Us and the Feds.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That is great news. The Federal and State governments are working together. Never have we seen a government more committed to the bush than the Berejiklian-Barilaro Government. The Deputy Premier touched on the Royalties for Rejuvenation fund, which he announced in Breeza along with the planning Minister. That fund will set aside \$25 million a year in perpetuity not only to support the Royalties for Regions program but also to ensure that, as regional New South Wales transitions from mining, those local areas and communities will have that infrastructure investment going forward. That comes off the back of the NSW Generations Fund, which has generated close to 10 per cent returns, and the same principle will apply here. That return will enable the Government to make investments without increasing taxes or debt. On debt, the Government is taking the opportunity to lock in low interest rates so that it can borrow to build, and it will continue to build in the bush. The Government is lengthening the weighted average life of its debt portfolio from seven years to eight years, and it has more than halved the cost of its debt from 5 per cent to 2.3 per cent. The environment Minister has been hiding but he is here— [*Extension of time*]

The Government has a 10-year green bond. We lead not only the nation but also the world with our TCorp green bonds. They run for 10 years, they are valued at \$1.3 billion and they return an interest rate of 1.1 per cent. That market interest is enabling investment in our State. The Government candidate for the Upper Hunter is doing really well. I thank the new Nationals candidate, David Layzell. In the spirit of bipartisanship, I also congratulate the Labor Party on its campaign. It is running completely complementary to ours. In fact, the more the Leader of the Opposition goes up there, the more our vote grows. When people meet David Layzell, they vote for Dave; when people meet the Leader of the Opposition, they also vote for Dave.

Ms Jodi McKay: No-one knows who Dave is, mate.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: No, it is all about you. You have pushed your candidate to one side. I love the Leader of the Opposition's social media. The Girl from Gloucester is everywhere. She is front and centre everywhere she goes. We do not see the Labor candidate for Upper Hunter up there very much—in this image he is in the corner with a cup of tea. My favourite quote is, "I grew up in Gloucester and my dad worked in the dairy industry. I know the people and I know the area."

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I will give the Treasurer a little bit of latitude. The Treasurer will continue.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: In that tweet from the Leader of the Opposition there are three "I's" and a "my" in two sentences. As I said, there is no "I" in team but there is a big "I" in Jodi. While we are out there promoting David Layzell on the hustings, promoting our track record, we say to Chris: Keep the campaign going and send the Leader of the Opposition every single day.

SINGLETON HOSPITAL STAFF

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (15:05): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. At least four doctors have resigned from Singleton Hospital, with at least one of them blaming unsafe work conditions in the emergency department. The people of Singleton, as members know, produce hundreds of millions of dollars for this State every year, so why does the Deputy Premier continue to treat them as second-class citizens with a second-class health system?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (15:05): I thank the member for Cessnock. I find it difficult to accept when Opposition members come into the Chamber with an issue they want to play on. They want to go back to the millions of dollars in royalties that the Upper Hunter produces, which go back into paying for nurses, police, teachers and services across the State.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Maroubra to order for the second time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: At no other point do we ever carve out another part of the State and say that, for example, because the Snowy Mountains produces hydropower every bit of revenue from the Snowy Hydro should go to that region. Last time I checked, we are one State, one team—the State of New South Wales. We managed COVID because we remained united as a State. In saying that, when we look at the royalties that come into the coffers of the Government and then look at the investment that goes back into the Upper Hunter, it is clear what we are seeing. Earlier we heard about two bypasses aligned in Singleton and Muswellbrook, which was \$1 billion in joint funding.

Mr Ryan Park: They are getting enough. They are getting more than they should. Is that what you are saying? They are getting too much, is that right?

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, I will come to it. When we come to the investment in health, I have to accept that it is distressing to read that four doctors are in the media today saying that they are resigning from their posts because of a number of issues.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Wollongong to order for the second time.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I like how members opposite try to single out that it is just somehow the fault of the Federal and State governments. We have a shortage of doctors and allied health professionals across the State. There are 13 GPs—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: You've been in government for 10 years.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: We have been in government for 10 years and we are building hospitals. We had a shortage of doctors when you were in, and there is a shortage of doctors today. Guess what? Unless we fundamentally change the way we encourage people to live, work and play—

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I will pre-empt the point of order and say that the Deputy Premier is being relevant, if that is the member's point of order.

Mr Clayton Barr: It is.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

Mr Clayton Barr: But the question is about unsafe work conditions.

The SPEAKER: Order! Sit down now. I direct the member for Cessnock to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of 30 minutes.

[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Cessnock left the Chamber at 15:07]

I will not tolerate members continuing to speak when I have told them to stop speaking and to resume their seats. It will only escalate from here. The next member who is removed from the Chamber will be removed until the adjournment of the sitting.

Mr Ryan Park: On both sides?

The SPEAKER: If they behave in that manner. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I feel for our GPs in rural New South Wales because they are under a lot of pressure. They do a lot of time in emergency and they have rosters that are lengthy. The reality is that we are seeing a shortage right across the board. In recent weeks I have had to deal with my own issue in Bombala where a GP clinic has announced it is going to close. The local health district [LHD] has stepped up and we are going to bring in the GP locum. We have 13 GPs on an on-call roster system. I know the LHD is now looking for GP locums to come in and take off some of that pressure. In relation to the accusation that there is an unsafe work condition, we will have to look into and consider that.

Ms Kate Washington: You have ignored it.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, Labor members cannot go putting words in a media story today that we have been failing for years, or whatever they are saying. Again, members opposite are trying to single out an issue. I feel for those doctors but I feel more for the doctors and nurses who are used as a political football by members opposite during an election campaign.

Ms Kate Washington: Because they are the ones that are talking about it.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Absolutely, but Labor does not recognise that the Federal Government changed the classification of Singleton from a distribution priority area, which means less incentive for those doctors. That is the fundamental issue in today's story. It is a real issue but it was a decision by the Federal Government. Primary health care is the responsibility and jurisdiction of our Federal colleagues. We have said today that there are nine GPs on an on-call roster and the LHD is looking for the GP locums to assist to take off the pressure. We will continue to work with the people of the Upper Hunter and we will keep working with the doctors to find a model that works. But I tell members this: Those opposite do not have an answer; they just know how to find problems. They were in government for a very long time and did nothing in regional and rural New South Wales. It reeks of hypocrisy for those opposite, with their track record, to use this Chamber to politicise an issue that is serious and that impacts on our communities.

COVID-19 AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (15:10): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health and Medical Research. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government continues to keep the community safe through the COVID-19 pandemic?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health and Medical Research) (15:10): I thank the member for Clarence for his question. Recently I was with him in his electorate. He has done an incredible job for his community, who well understand the work he is doing to make sure they have good health services, including a new ambulance station—well done. At the outset, I thank the Health team who have been working to keep us safe over these past 15 to 16 months. We have become very familiar with that team through the media—Dr Kerry Chant and her public health team, the epidemiologists, virologists and infectious diseases specialists—who work incredibly hard. There are also the logistics people, who make sure we are rolling out the vaccines as best as possibly can be done. I thank the deputy secretary, Susan Pearce, and her team for that work. It is a challenging circumstance in a one-in-100-year pandemic to do all that is necessary. Of course, the person who is overarching across that is the secretary, Elizabeth Koff.

That work often goes through the night and is quite amazing. I have been there to see it. It has been gruelling and exhausting but they have done an incredible job. I also thank the frontline health staff, the police, the cleaners and all the administration people who are working flat out each day to make sure our hotel quarantine system works. We have now reached a stage where we have a vaccine. If anybody had asked this time last year—as many members on both sides of the House did—whether we would have a vaccine, I have to say that this time last year I doubted whether we would ever have a vaccine. Of course, because of the imperatives of a world exposed to its most dangerous, vile situation in 100 years, we have had teams work across the world and now we have multiple vaccines. Of course, the Australian Government has accessed both Pfizer and AstraZeneca for us in Australia. Now the challenge is to get access to the amount that we need and roll it out in a way that is efficient. That is certainly a challenge when we have to vaccinate more than 20 million people.

The logistics team has been doing an incredible job in New South Wales and has continued to focus particularly on the gates to keep the virus out of our State and our nation—that is, the quarantine hotels and all of the staff who work in those quarantine hotels. In any one week we have about 6,000 people working in those hotels. That is an incredible logistical exercise and we have largely addressed the vaccination of all those people

with the guidance of the public health teams. Health has now moved on to vaccinating the families of those quarantine workers and rolling out vaccines to port staff.

Many of us will remember that we started the Pfizer vaccines at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Liverpool Hospital and Westmead Hospital. I thank the Sydney Local Health District under the direction of Dr Teresa Anderson for the work that she did at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. I also thank the Western Sydney Local Health District and South Western Sydney Local Health District for what they have done in regard to both Westmead and Liverpool hospitals. As they rolled out that Pfizer vaccine, when we got to the point where we had largely covered off with our quarantine workers and our ports people and their families, we started looking at what other options there might be. Originally we were allocated only 300,000 people to look after by the Federal Government. The Federal Government was going to make sure that the majority of people in New South Wales would be vaccinated through GPs, but that has proved a little challenging for them, so our Government here in New South Wales has stepped up and has offered to assist in the broader community. As a result many members will have seen that the incredible health staff went out looking for premises for a large-scale vaccination program. They found a property at 1 Figtree Drive, Homebush, at Sydney Olympic Park. [*Extension of time*]

The work that is going on out there at that vaccination centre at the moment is quite amazing. The builders are going flat out. Yesterday there were also hundreds—and I mean hundreds—of health staff out there. Doctors, nurses, allied health, administration staff, all of the support staff were learning how to take up what will be a massive effort by New South Wales to back in the GPs across New South Wales. We expect that we will be doing around about 30,000 vaccinations in that centre, and obviously that does not happen easily. Most members will have had the experience of going to see their GP, but even just the arrangements in the GP practice are quite complex—you have to have your details taken down and there have to be chats with you about the various issues to do with your health—but this is being done on a massive scale.

The centre well and truly has been having a lot of work done on it and by next week it will be open, and we expect that the vaccines will roll out in that centre. Pfizer will be first to reduce any final numbers that relate to quarantine workers, health workers and emergency workers, but by 24 May we will also be backing in the GP system and providing vaccines, both Pfizer and AstraZeneca. A lot of the local health districts are providing AstraZeneca vaccines to health staff more broadly. I visited Tamworth recently and they are doing an incredible job up there, as is Broken Hill and other centres. By 24 May we expect that we will also be able to do that extra work here in Sydney.

I again thank all the health staff. New South Wales has an incredible health staff. I thank the unions as well, which have been very supportive. I thank the Health Services Union, Allied Health Professions Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia for the work they are doing. I can absolutely guarantee that we will continue to take the best health advice and will work to do whatever we can to keep our New South Wales community safe.

NSW POLICE FORCE

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (15:18): My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Given the Government's four-year commitment of \$580 million for 1,500 additional police officers prior to the last election, will the Minister update the House on how many new officers have been added so far and when we might see additional officers added to the Lake Macquarie Local Area Command?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (15:18): I thank the member for Lake Macquarie for taking an interest in police welfare and resources. It is refreshing to get a question about the assets and support this Government is giving our brave men and women in blue. For that reason, probably one of the greatest honours I will ever have is to be able to stand up as the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in this Chamber. As this past year has shown us—and I am sure the member for Lake Macquarie is aware of this—more than ever our police officers have our backs. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week our police officers are protecting communities right across this State. Likewise, this Government has their back, with a record \$4.2 billion budget. This year we will continue to see the deployment of the largest single increase for our frontline policing in more than 30 years, on the back of another \$585 million commitment from the New South Wales Government.

A snapshot of the deployment of the additional 1,500 police officers includes 182 to general duties positions across regional and rural New South Wales; 45 to child protection and sex crimes positions; 42 to domestic violence high-risk offender positions; and 12 to aged-care crime positions. These numbers will continue to grow as more officers join up and graduate from the NSW Police Force Academy. The local police district of the member for Lake Macquarie has already received eight new officers, and they are composed of six field operations positions, an aged-crime prevention officer position and a child protection registration officer position.

They stand shoulder to shoulder with the over 18,000 police officers who risk their lives each and every day to keep our communities safe.

Our police receive some of the best training in the world. I am pleased to note that we are spending a record \$549 million in police infrastructure, which includes the recently announced \$60 million upgrade to the NSW Police Force Academy at Goulburn. We know how important policing is to our community and that modern-day policing is done in close partnership with the community and other combat agencies. Since coming to government we have provided record funding to our close community partners at PCYC, with an \$80 million commitment towards club infrastructure, programs and staff across the State, providing more young people with the opportunity to visit a local PCYC. If any member in this Chamber has not visited a PCYC recently they really should; the work being done, particularly with Indigenous youth, is second to none. Our police work hand in glove to deliver a range of programs that help to target youth offending through a range of intervention strategies, including the very successful RISEUP program, Youth Action meetings and Youth on Track programs, just to name a few.

In talking about policing in the northern region, which I know the member for Lake Macquarie is specifically interested in, it would be remiss of me not to mention the contribution of former Assistant Commissioner Max Mitchell, APM, who, after more than 40 years of diligent service to the NSW Police Force, is now able to spend more time on himself following his march-out parade on the streets of Newcastle just last week. I was delighted to join the Parliamentary Secretary for the Upper Hunter from the other place in being part of that ceremony. I place on the record my thanks to Assistant Commissioner Mitchell for his service—and I know I am joined by the member for Lake Macquarie in offering that—and wish him every success in his retirement, spending more time doing what he loves, which he assures me is surfing, golfing and spending time with his family; honourable traits indeed. I acknowledge also the relationship the member for Lake Macquarie had with Assistant Commissioner Mitchell and his staff. I am sure he will make a contribution in this place acknowledging Assistant Commissioner Mitchell's service to his community.

It is our responsibility to ensure that we have the resources and support police officers need to get the job done. That is what this Government is doing. But it is not just the police. All of our emergency services now enjoy a record \$180 billion investment across the emergency services fraternity, which is helping to deliver state-of-the-art facilities, and have we not been able to benefit from that investment in recent times? Fire and Rescue received a record \$900 million budget as part of our commitment to keeping communities safe, and the NSW Rural Fire Service has received a record \$700 million budget—both services today celebrating St Florian's Day, the patron saint of firefighters across the Western world. The State Emergency Service has not gone without support, with a record \$200 million budget. I know the Treasurer saw that firsthand in the electorate of Hawkesbury not long ago. As one travels across the State one sees those in uniform benefiting from this particular investment from the Government, and I know every member of this House joins me in thanking them for their service.

REGIONAL JOBS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:23): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is using the planning system to boost jobs, and diversify regional and rural properties?

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (15:24): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I love what you have done with the place; it is looking great. The Deputy Premier noted that the Minister for Transport and Roads looks like he is waiting for a bus—but, of course, in New South Wales he will not be waiting very long.

Mr John Barilaro: He looks like Forrest Gump. Life is a box of chocolates.

Mr ROB STOKES: Life is a box of chocolates, as the Deputy Premier remarked. Mr Speaker, I love the new place. Ironically, it seems more intimate than it was before. Nevertheless, here we are.

[Members interjected.]

I am mindful that I have question number 10, so we can get through this quickly or we can take more time. It is up to members; it is their time.

Ms Yasmin Catley: You've wasted a whole minute!

Mr ROB STOKES: I would like to thank the member for Dubbo for his question and for his strong advocacy for the greatest tourism opportunities in his neck of the woods, the great Central West. Some of the great league matches have happened at Apex Oval in Dubbo and Glen Willow Regional Sports Complex at Mudgee. I understand, Deputy Premier, that the Sea Eagles were quite successful there.

Mr John Barilaro: Were they? Very good, very good.

Mr ROB STOKES: I think it was 36-nil against the Gold Coast Titans; the former sports Minister Graham Annesley would no doubt be upset about that. There are many great opportunities in regional New South Wales. As a Government, we are keen to do everything we can to support our hardworking farmers with new opportunities to effectively use their landholdings to create income for themselves and their families, and generate more local jobs and opportunities for people across New South Wales. Members of this place would know that anytime someone in Sydney sneezes, Premiers across the country close their borders, which has created an opportunity in New South Wales. Lots of people from metropolitan New South Wales are keen to visit the regions.

We want to make more opportunities through the planning system for them to be able to visit farms and to allow farm owners to open their premises—whether it is for concert venues, wedding venues or roadside stalls. There are a whole series of great opportunities under the overall banner of agritourism. We know that industry can generate about \$2 billion worth of value for regional New South Wales. I thank the Deputy Premier, the small business Minister and the tourism Minister for their strong advocacy for what we have been able to do in the planning system to liberate more opportunities for people to use smallholdings or larger holdings in the bush to generate a range of income opportunities. The Government governs for everyone—not just farmers, but also members of the Opposition.

I note from a recent article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* that the Leader of the Opposition has been expanding her landholdings in the Upper Hunter with, I understand, a deconsecrated church added to the list of property ownings. It is great to see her investing in regional New South Wales. Who knows? If politics does not work, there is an opportunity to use that for alternative income at the farm gate. Jodi's Jams might be something that rings a bell; I do not know. There are a whole lot of possibilities for people here and right across New South Wales, but there is always more. It is not just agritourism; it is also the opportunity to create more opportunities, not just on farms and regional and rural locations but also in regional New South Wales. While we have tourists visiting our farms, we are also working to entice more and more people to enjoy the main streets of country towns and suburbs in metropolitan New South Wales.

Through our \$30 million program to work with local councils to transform our streets into great public spaces, we have funded 42 regional projects to beautify their high streets. This benefits locals and businesses alike with better footpaths, murals, planting, signage and more things to attract a greater range of activities in main streets—whether that is commercial or retail activities—to make it a more pleasant place to live or to visit. Recently Wagga Wagga was one of 12 regional councils to receive a \$1 million share of grants as part of the Your High Street Program to revive the main street as a focal point for the region, bringing the town to the riverfront through lighting, artwork and parklets. Singleton, Maitland, Tweed and Scone councils have also benefited through the Your High Street Program.

Documents

REGISTER OF DISCLOSURES

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983, I table a copy of the Supplementary Ordinary Returns by members of the Legislative Assembly as at 31 December 2020. I order that the document be printed.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 142 of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016, I announce receipt of the reports of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled:

- (1) *Operation Kadenwood*, dated March 2021, received out of session on 26 March 2021.
- (2) *Operation Monza*, dated March 2021, received out of session on 26 March 2021.

I order that the reports be printed.

INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES

Reports

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 16 of the Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2012, I announce receipt of the report of the Inspector of Custodial Services entitled *Health services in NSW correctional facilities*, dated March 2021, received out of session on 26 March 2021. I order that the report be printed.

SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER**Reports**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with section 28 of the Small Business Commissioner Act 2013, I announce receipt of the report of the Small Business Commissioner for 2020, received out of session on 9 April 2021. I order that the report be printed.

INDEPENDENT PRICING AND REGULATORY TRIBUNAL**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 33 of the Sydney Water Act 1994, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *Sydney Water Operational Audit 2020, Report to the Minister*, dated March 2021, received out of session on 30 March 2021 and authorised to be printed.

The CLERK: In accordance with section 111 of the Water NSW Act 2014, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *WaterNSW Operational Audit 2020, Report to the Minister*, dated March 2021, received out of session on 30 March 2021 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AMENDMENT (RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS AND EQUALITY) BILL 2020****Reports**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the report of the Joint Select Committee on the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020 entitled *Inquiry into the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedoms and Equality) Bill 2020*, report No. 1/57, dated March 2021, received out of session on 31 March 2021 and authorised to be printed.

*Documents***AUDITOR-GENERAL****Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the following reports:

- (1) Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Delivering school infrastructure*, dated 8 April 2021, received out of session on 8 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.
- (2) Corrigendum to the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Delivering school infrastructure*, dated 9 April 2021, received out of session on 9 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.
- (3) Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Addressing public inquiry recommendations – Emergency response agencies*, dated 22 April 2021, received out of session on 22 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE****Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government's response to report No. 5/57 of the Public Accounts Committee entitled *Examination of the Auditor-General's Performance Audit Reports August 2018 – January 2019*, received out of session on 16 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.

*Documents***INSPECTOR OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION****Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 49 of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007, I announce receipt of the report of the Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *Report under Section 49 (1) of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 for the period ending 31 December 2020*, dated April 2021, received out of session on 27 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE****Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government's response to report No. 1/57 of the Committee on Children and Young People entitled *2020 Review of the Annual Reports and other matters of the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People*, received out of session on 28 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government's response to report No. 1/57 of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters entitled *Administration of the 2019 NSW State Election*, received out of session on 28 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.

*Documents***LAW ENFORCEMENT AND NATIONAL SECURITY (ASSUMED IDENTITIES) ACT****Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 35 of the National Security (Assumed Identities) Act 2010, I announce receipt of the following reports:

- (1) *Australian Security Intelligence Organisation for the year ended 30 June 2020*, received out of session on 30 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.
- (2) *Law Enforcement Conduct Commission for the year ended 30 June 2020*, received out of session on 30 April 2021 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE****Inquiry**

Ms ROBYN PRESTON: As Chair: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1), I inform the House that the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure has resolved to conduct an inquiry into the transport technology sector, the full details of which are available on the committee's home page.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**Reports**

Ms FELICITY WILSON: As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 29/57*, dated 4 May 2021. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I also table the minutes of the committee meeting regarding *Legislation Review Digest No. 28/57*.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

The CLERK: I announce that the following electronic petition signed by fewer than 500 persons has been lodged for presentation:

Queanbeyan-Palerang Region Respite Care Facility

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly provide funding for the annual ongoing running costs for the respite care facility for the community of the Queanbeyan-Palerang region, received from **Mr John Barilaro**.

The CLERK: I announce that the following electronic petitions signed by 500 or more persons have been lodged for presentation:

Removal of the Statue of General Lachlan Macquarie

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly remove the statue of General Lachlan Macquarie in Hyde Park as the first step to acknowledging and remedying the harm done to First Nations people, received from **Ms Jenny Leong**.

Edmondson Park High School

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly to urgently approve funding and fast-track the construction of the master-planned public high school in Edmondson Park, received from **Ms Prue Car**.

Gay Family Koala Advocacy

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly to allow the Gay family to reside at 180 Appin Road, Appin, so that their vital work can continue in support of the recommendations of the Parliament's inquiry into koala populations and habitats in New South Wales, received from **Mr Greg Warren**.

Plumpton Public School Pedestrian Crossing

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly upgrade the pedestrian crossing at Rooty Hill Road North to Plumpton Public School, received from **Mr Edmond Atalla**.

NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal Landlord Register

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly create a register of NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal rulings against landlords and review the tribunal's power to impose and monitor orders on landlords, received from **Ms Jenny Leong**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

The CLERK: I announce that the following Ministers have lodged responses to paper petitions signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell—Gregory Hills Public School—lodged 25 March 2021 (Mr Peter Sidgreaves)

The Hon. Melinda Pavey—Social Housing—lodged 18 February 2021 (Mr Alex Greenwich)

The CLERK: I announce that the following Ministers have lodged responses to electronic petitions signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Paul Toole—Oxley Highway and King Creek Road Intersection—lodged 16 March 2021 (Ms Leslie Williams)

The Hon. Paul Toole—Milton Ulladulla Bypass—lodged 24 March 2021 (Mrs Shelley Hancock)

The Hon. Andrew Constance—North Balgowlah and Seaforth Bus Routes—lodged 16 March 2021 (Mr James Griffin)

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell—Murrumbidgee Regional High School Principals—lodged 16 March 2021 (Mrs Helen Dalton)

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell—Gregory Hills Public School—lodged 16 March 2021 (Ms Prue Car)

The Hon. Matt Kean—Kosciuszko National Park Horse Management Plan—lodged 16 March 2021 (Mr John Barilaro)

The Hon. Shelley Hancock—Central Coast Council—lodged 16 March 2021 (Mr David Harris)

Business of the House

BUSINESS LAPSED

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 general business order of the day (for bills) No. 2 (State Insurance and Care Governance Amendment (Employees) Bill 2020) and No. 3 (Independent Commission Against Corruption Amendment (Property Developer Commissions to MPs) Bill 2020) have lapsed. I order that a message be sent informing the Legislative Council that the State Insurance and Care Governance Amendment (Employees) Bill 2020 has lapsed.

WITHDRAWAL OF BUSINESS

The SPEAKER: In view of the resignation of the member for Upper Hunter and in accordance with past practice, I order the removal from the *Business Paper* of general business notices of motions (general notices) Nos 1902, 1988, 2076 and 2201.

*Condolences***LILLIANE BRADY, OAM**

The SPEAKER: Lilliane Brady's daughter Deidrei Bedwell and John Bedwell will be seated in the Cooper Gallery for the duration of the condolence motion. I welcome them and extend my condolences for their loss.

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (15:33): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Extends its deepest sympathies and condolences to the family of Councillor Lilliane Brady, OAM, on her passing.
- (2) Acknowledges the years of public service given by Lilliane as a vocal advocate for her local community and the broader western New South Wales region.
- (3) Recognises the enduring legacy left by her during 20 years as mayor of Cobar Shire Council, and as New South Wales' longest-serving female mayor.
- (4) Celebrates the life of an icon of the Cobar community and stalwart of regional New South Wales. For 10 years I have stood in this House and this Parliament for very many special moments. It has always been an honour to do so—from my very first day and my inaugural speech, to legislation that was so significant it changed lives, to debates in this House that were so important to our community, and delivering on promises that meant so much. I have also often stood in this House talking through private members' statements about champions in my local communities. We as a House acknowledge some of the great former members who have served the Legislative Assembly and Parliament in years gone by. But one of the greatest privileges that I will ever have will be to stand here today in relation to the condolence motion for Lilliane Brady, OAM, who in my mind was one of the fiercest defenders of regional and rural New South Wales and, of course, Cobar. I pass on my deepest sympathy to Lilliane's friends, family, colleagues and the communities of regional New South Wales that she fought so tirelessly for. I also acknowledge Lillian's daughter, Deidrei, up in the gallery and Deidrei's husband, John.

When you think about service and local government, you are the front line of government. Often we in State or Federal politics are surrounded by staffers. We are hidden away in a parliament, either in Canberra if you are Federal or in a State parliament like the one in Sydney. But local government, councils and mayors are the front line. They become the one-stop shop for every grievance that every constituent has ever thought about or has, regardless of what jurisdiction or level of government is responsible for it. That is why when someone has been in service like Lilliane—30 years in council plus 20 years as the Cobar mayor—you must take time, stop and acknowledge that level of service. I believe local government is one of the hardest areas of government to be part of. I was lucky enough to be a councillor for four years. They were some of the toughest four years compared with even times in the State Government and Parliament.

Local government is the face of all government. That is why you can be battered down easily. But it made Lilliane stronger. She was passionate about it. That is why it was so important that we as a Government acknowledged that service through a State funeral. I acknowledge the Premier for supporting me on that advice. I also acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition, Jodi McKay, who was a strong advocate; Roy Butler, the member for Barwon; and many others who genuinely believed—I think it was the first time in the State's history that we took time out and had a State service for a mayor, and I would think appropriately because I do not think we will ever see another Lilliane Brady again. I count Lilliane as someone who was not only a fierce advocate for the regions and who championed, took governments and Ministers to task and fought for her community but also who fought for more than just Cobar. She fought for the Western Division, the Far West and those disadvantaged and poor communities that had no voice. Lilliane was their voice. And she had the ear of government and past Ministers from former governments to current.

We all know the stories of the way she spoke to many of us. Those terms have been documented, lines like "finance not romance". I could talk through others about her view on policing response times or what some thought about her fur coat but they are not appropriate. This is a PG Chamber so I will remember those and I am happy to share those stories with individuals privately because they will make me blush telling the story and might possibly make people blush hearing the story. But Lilliane had a style. Even in that very robust style there was a level of respect. At no point ever did I feel that she did not do it in a respectful way. She just did it in the Lilliane Brady way, which one day hopefully someone will write a book on. If other mayors spoke to me like Lilliane did, I would probably punch back or refute their demands. But Lilliane had a way because behind her style and what she had to say, there was a genuineness and an authenticity that you cannot make up, create or write about and that you do not learn; it is in your DNA. Lilliane was that very person.

She was able to get the ear of government and Ministers because she earned respect in two ways. She did it through her professional approach and her approach as a fierce advocate, using her title as mayor, but she also, when the fight was over, was prepared to have a beer with you, stop and reflect. My recollection of Lilliane will not be just as the mayor of Cobar, a fierce advocate for the regions, but also as a friend. It is very rare in this game

of politics that we enter and leave and say we made friends along the journey. We are lucky enough to make friends in our own parties, let alone—

Mr Jihad Dib: It's easier on the other side.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: It is actually probably easier to make friends across the aisle. But to be able to talk to someone like Lilliane Brady—the very first time I became leader of the National Party and the Deputy Premier 4½ years ago, I went to a Western Division conference. Lilliane again used very colourful language. It was the first time that I really got to know her from a level of advocacy, but I also then took time out to have a beer and a chat with her. I am a sucker for racehorses. I have a couple. I think she had a dozen. I feel sorry for the family because they have inherited the racehorses, which means a big money pit. After she lost her husband, Lilliane always used to say that she was going to enjoy the rest of the second part of her life. She said she bought racehorses so that she could chew up the inheritance so the kids got nothing—I think she did that very well. But she also backed some bloody winners and got some good horses. We used to share tips. The secretary of my agency, Gary Barnes, who also became very close friends with Lilliane, would share tips on a Friday and Saturday.

I have heard Lilliane's description of certain jockeys who lost races and trainers who she thought were corrupt or threw the race. Lilliane was fierce about racing. She was fierce about Cobar. She was fierce about the regions. Those sorts of stories and the opportunity to come together and talk about things outside of politics in my mind is why I call Lilliane Brady a friend. I also have to say that, in my very publicised breakdown last year when I took a month of mental health leave, I know a lot of people thought I was not going to come back. There was possibly a point in time in that journey and month off when I was thinking of not coming back. But, I tell you what, the phone calls from Lilliane Brady—I cannot repeat all the words she would say in those phone calls. Again, this is PG, but she kept asking me to get up out of bed: "I want you back. Stop being a sook. We need you."

Mr Greg Warren: I tell you that every day.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Yes, but you're not Lilliane Brady. I take offence when you say it. She just kept ringing. I think at one stage—I am going off my recollection—one of those phone calls was actually out of her own hospital bed. I used to say to her, "Stop there please, Lilliane. I will come back if you come back and if you get out of bed. I am looking forward to seeing you on the road again." Like I said earlier, in politics you do not make friends. I made a friend in Lilliane Brady. I made a friend in someone who I believe cared about me as much as I cared about her and someone who I believe cared about her community as much as she cared about the State. She was fierce about New South Wales and the regions and the country. To her family, I tell you what, I would have loved to have called Lilliane Brady mum, because I would have loved to have had a mum like Lilliane Brady: someone who was so passionate but so caring and who touched so many people in so many different ways.

I know it must be hard for family to hear stories from strangers like the Deputy Premier of New South Wales or the leader of The Nationals or the leader of the Labor Party, because they do not know that interaction we had, and to hear strangers talk about your mum in the way that we are talking about her. Everybody who will stand up today to talk on this condolence motion will talk about that personal story with Lilliane. She had my back. She would warn me about things that were on the horizon. She would warn me about other mayors who were not happy. Honestly, she was probably a better adviser than my advisers who I paid a lot of money to be in my office. Maybe I should have put her on the staff because she was so good at her job. She was always driven by outcomes for the people of Cobar and the regions and the State.

In Parliament there are two chambers. The upper House—I do not know if they are sitting or not—is our House of review, which keeps the lower House, our legislation, honest. It makes us rethink through our legislation. It makes us rethink policy and work with the crossbench and the Opposition to design better policy. In my mind I think Lilliane was that. Lilliane was the House of review or the person of review. She would tell me when a policy was crap or did not work. When we redesigned Resources for Regions, we got away from what we called the beauty contest, where there was a pot of money and the big towns got all the money and the little towns kept missing out. We redesigned it in a way so that everybody in every community that was impacted by mining was able to get a fair share of the royalties coming back to that community.

Lilliane was a fierce advocate for mining. She was a fierce advocate for the regions. She was a fierce advocate for jobs in her community. If she lost one job in a mine, she would be on the phone to see what we could do. When there were other mines closing there were new opportunities, but she was always in the middle of the negotiations with mining companies, with government and with her community. She continued always to represent the regions. Lilliane loved Cobar and its 4,000-plus residents. That community that we all know and we have all visited because of Lilliane Brady received a lot from her advocacy. It was nice to see the town close up shop, line the streets and turn up at the park for the State funeral. It was a bloody hot day; I know that. Roy Butler had on his three-piece suit. He must have sweated through it. But it was appropriate that it was a hot day—it was

exactly the sorts of conditions that Lilliane would have wanted us all to suffer through to remind us how hard it is to live in regional and rural areas in New South Wales or Australia. It was a lovely service, and so were the words from her family. Her farewell is something that many of us will never forget.

As I said, Lilliane Brady was one of a kind: We will never meet one like her again. I hope that we do not forget the lessons that Lilliane taught us in her style. It is a reminder to governments that hide in Macquarie Street or on the hill in Canberra that communities in regional and rural New South Wales and Australia need representation and need a voice. I believe that Lilliane's voice will always resonate through the halls of this Parliament and this Chamber. But I tell you what, I am going to miss her friendship. I am going to miss her advice. I am going to miss the robustness of her advocacy. Most of all, I am just going to miss Lilliane Brady. I am lucky enough to stand in this House to move the condolence motion, and I am also lucky enough to say that I got to meet Lilliane Brady. Others will read these contributions. They will read stories about Lilliane in the press, and her family will continue to tell her story, but I got to meet the real McCoy. I got to meet Lilliane Brady. I have had the opportunity to serve as the Deputy Premier and as a Minister to deliver for the people of Cobar. Lilliane might have been small in stature but she was a giant of western New South Wales. We will never see another Lilliane Brady again. Vale, my dear friend.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (15:47): I too pay tribute to one of Cobar's longest serving representatives and greatest advocates, Lilliane Brady, OAM. I thank the Deputy Premier for his sincere address. I know that he had a wonderful relationship with Lilliane and that it is very difficult for him—as it is for me—to speak about someone who is no longer with us but who really had an impact on the way we go about our jobs and indeed the people we are. Deidrei and John, who are in the gallery, can take heart from the fact that, with the Deputy Premier and with me as the Leader of the Opposition here, there is so much love and respect for Lilliane. I had many discussions with Deidrei in the lead-up to the State funeral, and I thank the Deputy Premier for his support and leadership on the funeral. On one occasion when I called Deidrei to talk about it she told me that she was in Lilliane's shoe cupboard. That says an awful lot about Lilliane's priorities: racing, her shoes, her family, and of course Cobar and rural and regional New South Wales more generally.

On 7 February this year, Lilliane passed away in her local hospital at the age of 90. She was surrounded by those who loved her most. It is fitting that Lilliane's final moments were spent in the place that initially motivated her to run for council—the town that she had dedicated her life to serving. In the early 1970s Lilliane, her husband, Allan, and their three children moved from Balmain to Cobar after Allan secured work as a local general practitioner. Balmain was very different back then, but can you imagine moving from Balmain in the centre of Sydney to Cobar? It was only meant to be a 12-month stint; however, Lilliane ended up staying a little bit longer than that! In a 2018 interview with Australian Community Media, Lilliane reflected on her arrival in Cobar and said, "When I first arrived in Cobar I did not want to get out of the car." But her love of the wonderful mining town grew quickly. She embraced the community wholeheartedly and the community embraced her—so much so that she decided to run for a seat on the local council.

It was hearing the story of an elderly man who died alone after being transferred from the local hospital to Orange due to a lack of aged-care facilities that pushed Lilliane to go into public service. I think it was probably Lilliane's personality that helped guide her decision: She loved her community, she knew that she was a leader, she was outspoken and she had a real sense of how things should be done. It was just so Lilliane that it was someone else's situation that inspired her to take up public service. When it came to making change and fighting for a better life for the people she represented, Lilliane absolutely did not mess around. She launched herself into fighting for better health care for the people of Cobar. There will be a lot of quoting of Lilliane in my speech, let me tell you, because she always said it best. In her own words she said, "I went to see the hospital's CEO, who told me it was policy. I told him to stick it, I'll build a facility." And that is exactly what she did.

Over the course of the next six years Lilliane lobbied the Federal Government for funds and she embarked on several fundraising efforts in the local community. In 1982 her hard work, dedication and willingness to fight for the people she represented paid off when the Lilliane Brady Village—a 34-bed not-for-profit hostel, nursing home and health centre—opened. She had her community behind her organising an extraordinary series of local fundraising efforts to get the Lilliane Brady Village up and running. She said this:

In the same year [the village was opened], the community raised \$104,000 for the hospital, \$66,000 for the village and \$70,000 for Relay For Life. The community give their hearts to anything you put on and that's what I love about it [Cobar].

Can you imagine raising a total of \$240,000, plus the money for the village, from a town of 4,000 people? That is extraordinary, but that sort of extraordinary achievement happens when you have Lilliane at the helm. Her approaches to fundraising were very innovative. They included having pet food made from local kangaroos and holding concerts, car club shows and of course the Grey Mardi Gras. I want to include something from President of Local Government NSW Linda Scott in my speech because Linda just loved Lilliane and, in representing councils throughout New South Wales, she is also best placed to understand how other local councillors and

mayors viewed her. Linda tells the story that when she asked Lilliane about how she raised the money to build the village Lilliane said that some of the money might have even come from some "exceptionally good luck at the racetrack". So we can count the pet food and the Grey Mardi Gras, and we can thank her luck on the races. Lilliane loved her racehorses almost as much as she loved Cobar, and she was happy when the two were combined. That is a good example of how she was able to combine those two loves.

As the Deputy Premier said, these are the things that made Lilliane so extraordinary. As a mayor and a local councillor she focused on rates and rubbish, on the trees that needed trimming and on the gutters that needed restoring. She focused on all that, but she also had a broader vision of her role as mayor. She was the town's greatest advocate. Whatever the issue—whether it was State or Federal—if it needed addressing, Lilliane would take it on and as her responsibility. She would not just deal with an issue in the council chamber but actually take on whatever the issue was. When you look at that, it is no wonder the people of Cobar loved her so much—and she loved them.

Members well know—and the Deputy Premier touched on this—that it is one thing to be elected to a council or to the Parliament; it is quite another to be re-elected and supported over many years. In a rural town trust must be earned continually. I grew up in a small community, as did the Deputy Premier. In a town of 4,000 people, everyone knows everyone. If you do something that someone does not like, they will take it out on you. Lilliane managed to get elected year after year. She spent 23 of her 40 years on the council as mayor, which makes her the longest serving female mayor in New South Wales history. She earned the support and trust of the people of Cobar over and over again. Lilliane was a forceful and passionate advocate for the best interests of her community.

Broken Hill mayor Darria Turley described Lilliane as one of the outback's great icons. The outback itself is a great icon, and Lilliane Brady comes immediately to mind when thinking about what makes it so. Darria and Lilliane were great friends, colleagues and comrades. Although Lilliane never joined the Labor Party, her views were very progressive. She liked to have her say in all matters, including who should be elected as the leader of the party. When I put my hand up to lead the Labor Party, she was one of my greatest supporters. She made sure that she let everyone know who they should vote for. If there was ever a time when Lilliane wished she was a member of the Labor Party, it was so she could participate in the ballot to decide its leader. Apart from telling everyone to vote for me, the final outcome was the one thing she could not ensure.

I loved Lilliane and I appreciated her support at that time so much. She never showed fear or favour to anyone. While Lilliane may have leaned towards the Labor side of politics—although she never joined the party—she never showed favour to anyone. The Deputy Premier spoke about the "PG" approach that is needed in the Parliament. There was one case, which he did not mention in his contribution but I am sure he remembers, where Lilliane was fighting for funds for Cobar to Sydney flights. The language she used was not just unparliamentary, it could not even be uttered outside this place. Her feistiness and political courage were extraordinary. When Lilliane was asked about the language she used, she put it down to being born underweight. She said that being born at only 2½ pounds and beginning life in a shoebox being cared for by her grandmother gave her the courage to survive and fight, things she did in spades. But she did not just survive and fight in Cobar, she also thrived. She was a trailblazer who set an amazing example for the countless women from across the regions who followed in her footsteps to represent their communities in local government.

In 2018 her contribution to the community and the local government sector were officially recognised when she was awarded the Local Government NSW Lifetime Achievement Award. That was a proud moment for her and for all Cobar residents. She was also awarded the prestigious Medal of the Order of Australia for services to local government and to the community of Cobar. That was a much-deserved accolade for someone who had dedicated so many years to helping others. The comments on the Cobar Shire Council's Facebook post reporting the news of Lilliane's passing show how much Lilliane was loved by her community. That gives a good sense of how she was truly regarded because community members tell you the good and the bad—they tell you exactly what they think. I will read some of the comments because it is important to acknowledge how Cobar residents felt about Lilliane. Lisa Travis wrote:

Vale Mayor Brady OAM. What a legacy you left in Cobar. Condolences to her loving family, many many friends & workmates.

Yvonne McConnell also paid tribute:

A LITTLE LADY, BUT BOY OH BOY WHAT ENORMOUS SHOES LEFT BEHIND TO BE FILLED. HERE'S HOPING SOMEONE CAN CONTINUE HER LEGACY. MAY SHE R. I. P.

Fae Mahy best captured the depth of the sentiment felt in the Cobar community for Lilliane. She wrote:

Vale Mayor Brady . Condolences to your family, friends and workmates.. R.I.P Lilliane, your work has been done but our memories of you will last forever .. Thank you for all that you gave of yourself to the Cobar community.

That is how highly regarded Lilliane was in Cobar and across the Far West of New South Wales. She dedicated her life to making her community a better, fairer and happier place. Her contribution to her community will never, ever be forgotten. I was so privileged to have known her and I thank the Deputy Premier and the State Government for giving Lilliane the State funeral she deserved. It is also important to acknowledge ABC's *Back Roads* program. It was a wonderfully crafted story that captured Lilliane and her passion for her community. I know from the discussion I had with Deidrei as we worked with the Deputy Premier on her funeral that it was one of the last things she saw and I think that was important. I offer my sincere condolences to Lilliane's family—to her children, Sue Graham, Deidrei Bedwell and Allan Brady. I know Deidrei and John are in the gallery today. I also offer my condolences to her friends and colleagues at Cobar Shire Council and to the entire Cobar community. Vale, Lilliane Brady, OAM.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:00): As the Government Whip, I make a brief contribution with regard to the quite amazing Lilliane Brady, OAM. I acknowledge John and Deidrei, who are in the Chamber with us today. Unfortunately I did not know Lilliane Brady but fortunately I was not on the receiving end of one of those famous calls from Mayor Brady. It was interesting listening to the contributions from both the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Premier with regard to Deidrei's mother. I too am the child of horse lovers and my parents have also been horse poor many times. People who are lacking in stature and who may have been frustrated jockeys in a former life tend to attach themselves to horses. It is so interesting to hear the contributions with regard to Mayor Brady and I suspect that the good people of Cobar will always refer to her as "Mayor Brady". She leaves an incredible legacy to her community and she was still serving in local government at the age of 90.

Reading about Mayor Brady, there are a lot of deleted expletives. It was interesting to see that feistiness and the calibre of conversation about a lady who was small in stature but very large in delivery, passion and fight. When we talk about people who have served our community, it is often the case that they had not planned to put themselves into public life. But Lilliane saw a need in her community and saw the things that Cobar was missing out on. She was determined—absolutely hell-bent—to make sure that the people of Cobar never missed out on any of those opportunities. She became a champion of Cobar. That was also reflected at her service when the whole of the town closed its doors as a mark of respect not just for the longest serving female mayor in New South Wales but also for her 40 years of service to her community. As we have heard from both sides today, she fought passionately, fervently and without fear or favour for what she believed and what she knew was right for the community of Cobar and the wider area.

To raise the sorts of funds that she did for the 4,000 residents of Cobar is unbelievable. Today we have the ability to use social media as a tool but Lilliane went out and did it with her own energy, passion, fight and fire. Reading about Lilliane is amazing. She was also regarded as a plain speaker, which we have absolutely heard, and someone who did not suffer fools. She was much feared but also revered among so many politicians due to her fierce determination to get things done for Cobar. People were often left wondering where they stood after they had copped a spray from Lilliane, but at the same time she wanted to put her community first. She was described as a no-BS mayor and that is a credit to this lady. Twenty-three years of service as mayor is historic in itself. Most people get into local government and realise what a tough ask it is to deliver at a micro level for a community, but that obviously never fazed Lilliane. In 40 years of public service and 23 years as mayor she never stopped campaigning for Cobar, whether it was for the new hospital or for better infrastructure and mining rights, making her one of Cobar's greatest possible citizens.

If Lilliane was not at the council chambers she could often be found at the racetrack. I was just looking at a beautiful photograph of Lilliane with one of the horses—as I said, small in stature but big in character. Lilliane's passion for Cobar was equalled only by her passion for racehorses. That passion was suitably matched by her collection of fascinators. It was a credit to her that when she was not wearing them she was happy to loan them to others. It speaks volumes about the quality of the person and the myth of Lilliane's character. In 2001 Lillian was awarded the Centenary Medal for service to local government.

Lilliane was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia becoming Lillian Brady, OAM, for her service to local government in her beloved community of Cobar. In 2018 Lilliane Brady received the Local Government NSW Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2020 the Minister for Local Government acknowledged her commitment to increasing participation of women in local government. It is fierce advocates such as Lilliane Brady who brought to the forefront the need for strong leadership. As the member for Terrigal, I can say that we could have used a Lilliane Brady on the Central Coast Council. She was a lady who could have fixed the place single-handedly had she been given the opportunity.

It is an honour to say a few words regarding Lilliane's contribution to the community that she was so passionate about. To Deidre and John, and the rest of the family I offer our condolences. Lilliane Brady, OAM, leaves a massive hole in the community that will never be filled. Every day she worked passionately to deliver for every person in Cobar to make sure that they did not miss out. That is the legacy that she leaves behind. She may

have been small in stature, but she leaves very large, if not impossible, shoes to fill in her community. I am pleased that the Government honoured her with the public funeral she deserved for the years of service, passion and fight for the people of Cobar.

After reading the commentary on Cobar council's social media page I doubt that there is any mayor in New South Wales who will receive the accolades that she has received for the work she has done for her community. To Deidrei and John and the rest of the family we thank you for giving Lilliane to our community, to New South Wales. It was a huge sacrifice. She will be remembered with fondness and love by the people of Cobar. Vale, Lilliane Brady.

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (16:07): I acknowledge Deidrei and John, who are here today, and those family members who cannot be here today. I hope that they get the opportunity to hear some of the stories that they may not have heard before. Thank you for sharing Lilliane with us. It was quite a ride. It is with great sadness today that the House marks the passing of Lilliane Brady, OAM, the longest-serving female mayor in the State's history. She is best known for being an outspoken champion for Western New South Wales and for Cobar.

I first heard of Lilliane, the Mayor of Cobar, when I was working for the Western Region Police District. She had come to the attention of those around me as a result of her staunch advocacy for 24-hour policing and improved police presence in Cobar. Lilliane would write letter after letter to the Western Region Police District, making an impressive and persuasive case for why the town needed more police. At every function or event she would make a beeline for the police commanders to make her case, and be assured by them that they definitely knew her position on the matter. Although Lilliane never finished her quest for 24-hour policing in Cobar, her persistence and tenacity on the issue was typical of many of the issues she did succeed on. She did not give up. She kept finding ways and people to put pressure on decision-makers to bring things about.

As many in this place would attest, you have not made it in New South Wales politics until you have copped a serve from Mayor Brady. It was air—all delivered in the pursuit of better outcomes for Cobar and the whole of Western New South Wales. We all have wonderful stories and fondly held memories of our favourite Lilliane Brady quip. She could make many a grown man blush with some of the words that came out of her mouth, but Lilliane made sure that we never rested. She was adamant that we could always be doing more, advocating for more, changing the rules and pushing the boundaries. For Lilliane, just because something had always been that way was never a good reason for it to stay that way.

Lilliane was an amazing judge of character. This went well beyond elected officials. I am going to look up at the gallery when I say this to see if I get any recognition that this is a thing. Lilliane's years on this earth and interactions gave her a fine-tuned sense of whether someone was genuine. If I mentioned a name to her, and the person did not meet Lilliane's standards of integrity or diligence, there was a one-second shake of the head and a purse of the lips. The look said it all: They were not a person I should trust. She was never wrong. Conversely, wherever Lilliane recommended someone as reliable and a person of integrity, she was always right. There were members of Parliament who Lilliane held in high esteem and others for whom she had little patience. They would most definitely know which camp they sat in. Lilliane could teach us all a lesson in political opportunity and political astuteness.

Lilliane had a well-honed ability to see opportunities to leverage situations with members of Parliament and government departments. I was an actor in more than one of her orchestrated plans. The first was around domestic water supply pipes under Cobar, before I was even elected. The pipes were 100 years old and rusting, leading to discoloured water plus reported skin irritation. Lilliane wanted them fixed and needed \$7 million to do it. Lilliane spoke to me and we worked out a narrative. A news crew was in town that day and we shot some footage. It was on the news that night. Within a day or two, she got the call telling her the money would be available from the New South Wales Government. Lilliane knew that making it an election issue would get action and she was right.

Lilliane will be remembered as New South Wales' longest serving female mayor. Today I reflect on why Lilliane first ran for council in 1974; this was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition. After an elderly man was transferred to Orange due to a lack of aged-care facilities in Cobar, he died alone a long way from home. Lilliane stood for council, was elected and successfully fought for the much-needed aged-care facility. The Lilliane Brady Village now carries her name, as it should. It stands as a reminder of the ability of one person to take a stand on an issue and effect change. For 40 years Lilliane took local issues head on. Where other people had failed, she succeeded. She pulled no punches when it came to fighting for her beloved Cobar.

Lilliane was incredibly kind and compassionate but, at the same time, hard as nails. I do not think I have ever seen such extremes in one person. Having been in the army and worked with the police, I can tell members that Lilliane could mix it with the best of them. At the same time, Lilliane's remarkable ability to be attentive, gentle and empathetic was second to none. Lilliane was an extraordinary lady. She helped shape my character and

the person I am as a representative. Lilliane first and foremost cared about people and the people of Cobar, and that is why the whole town stopped to farewell their mayor in an outpouring of admiration. It is with great fondness that we recall her enormous contribution to western New South Wales and to Cobar. Vale, Lilliane Brady.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (16:12): As The Nationals Whip, I join the chorus of voices celebrating the life and legacy of Lilliane Brady, OAM. To Lilliane's family, particularly her children and grandchildren, I offer my sincere condolences. I thank Deidrei and John for being here today and I hope they really do know just how much their mother and mother-in-law was respected by all of us. Lilliane was a champion of her community of Cobar in western New South Wales and of women in politics. She has left an unfillable gap not only for the community of Cobar but also for the community of regional New South Wales. In recent years she became an icon—an example of a cheeky local leader, straight-talking local governance and a no-bulldust approach to getting things done. That is how she will be remembered: for her quick wit, for casually sipping a tinnie at the local races, and for fighting for her community with a ferocity and a passion that will be deafening in its absence.

She was the longest serving female mayor in New South Wales, giving almost 38 years of service to her local council and 23 years as mayor. She fought for her community's interests right until the end. As we have heard today, Lilliane did not always call Cobar home, moving from Balmain in the late 1960s with her husband, Allan "Doc" Brady. In her words, it was a "godforsaken town", somewhere the young family thought they would only stay a year. Six decades later, the Bradys are now part of the DNA of Cobar—as intrinsic to the community as is the red dirt that dots the iconic landscape. They were a couple who became the backbone of a country town. That alone shows just how remarkable Lilliane and Allan were. They gave up the familiarity of Sydney's inner west for the isolation of far western New South Wales.

In his time as a local GP, Allan Brady would rush without hesitation to the mine to treat victims of accidents at the site. He is still fondly remembered by the people of Cobar and his picture hangs in the Great Western pub—a high honour in any regional community. There is some comfort that Allan and Lilliane are now reunited. But many, including members here in this Chamber, are keenly feeling Lilliane's loss. As country members of Parliament, our mayors and general managers are a constant in our lives, keeping us informed and occasionally getting stuck into us about the condition of their communities. As the member for Cootamundra, which is the fourth largest electorate in New South Wales with nine mayors, I can certainly testify to that. My electorate has many towns the size of Cobar so I am very familiar with what it is like to represent those communities and also to deal with the mayors who stick up for them, day in and day out.

It is wonderful that Lilliane's achievements were recognised throughout her life with a Medal of the Order of Australia, a Local Government NSW Lifetime Achievement Award and the Minister for Local Government award for working to increase the participation of women in local government. It is remarkable that this one-time city girl became one of the greatest champions of western New South Wales in living memory. It is difficult to imagine Cobar without her. Perhaps Lilliane's original outsider status was exactly what Cobar needed. Rather than accepting the lack of services in her community, Lilliane fought for change because she fundamentally believed things could or should be better. We have heard today about Lilliane's motivation for originally running for office. The story is that an older gentleman in his eighties died alone in Orange. He had been transferred there, some five hours drive away, because he could get aged care services locally. We have heard about the inquiries that Lilliane made at the hospital in Orange at the time and, upon receiving some unacceptable advice, she said to the hospital's CEO they could pretty much "stick it"—that she would build a facility.

We know it took eight years, but a 14-bed nursing home with nine self-care units was opened in 1982 in Cobar. It is now a 34-bed not-for-profit co-located hostel and nursing home, and the town also has a multipurpose health centre. It is a testament to just how long Lilliane has been held in high esteem by the community that the facility bears her name: the Lilliane Brady Village. That is so very fitting. It is remarkable that this woman lived not only to see her legacy secured in bricks and mortar but still had almost half her life ahead of her when it happened. We must remember too that Lilliane entered local government at a time when women were rarely seen in leadership roles or politics in general. Barely 30 years had passed since the first woman had been elected to the Commonwealth Parliament and we were still 45 years from our first elected female Premier of New South Wales. But Lilliane Brady simply saw that there were wrongs to be righted in her community.

She has been an example to all women in rural and regional New South Wales to stand up and step forward for their communities. We have much to learn from her. She is someone whose ability to look outside of a problem and find a solution never diminished with age. As Cobar's mayor she was part of the ingenious Grey Mardi Gras, which is a chance for people of all ages to come together and celebrate—bringing tourism, colour and music to the community. Despite her small stature and advancing years, she was never afraid to enforce discipline in council meetings. We owe it to Lilliane to keep fighting for our small towns, our villages, our backroads and our communities west of the Great Dividing Range. To the Cobar community; I am sorry for your loss. You were

blessed with a woman whose passion for her community was matched only by her will to get things done. She will be dearly missed. There is no more fitting way to end this than with words from Lilliane herself: Get on with it and give us the money.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:20): I express my condolences on behalf of the NSW Labor Party and Opposition members in this Chamber to the family of Lilliane Brady. John and Deidrei, thank you so much for being here today. It is lovely that you have been able to make it here. It is nice that you been able to come into the Parliament. Of course we have had rather unusual circumstances so we are very grateful that you have been able to share this. I join with my colleagues in the Chamber and in the other place in paying tribute to Lilliane's lifelong commitment to public and civic service, especially through local government. It is often a throwaway line that local government is the closest layer of government to the community, and nowhere can that be more true than in the bush. That was certainly the case with Lilliane. In parts of the State that have a sometimes closer relationship with Adelaide than with Sydney, the remoteness of their communities means that the local or shire council is a very significant and important organisation in the daily lives of the people in those towns.

It is therefore not surprising at all that Lilliane became such a towering figure in her community as the mayor of Cobar for over 20 years. That comes in the context of a term of service to the council as an elected representative spanning some 40 years. To be mayor at the age of 90 is really quite unique. It is remarkable and it is possibly the longest example of civic duty. So Lilliane has a significant and enduring legacy of representation and activism. You have heard how active she was in this place. By all accounts, Lilliane was a firebrand and a fighter and that is what we loved about her most. I have heard many of Lilliane's friends and colleagues speak of her uncompromising nature, especially in demanding a better deal for western New South Wales and in particular for Cobar itself. If you were a visiting politician, you were certainly a target for Lilliane; she often won but always for the right reason. They also speak of her being a devoted and determined advocate for her beloved Cobar and her community. It was sincere, genuine and real.

If you were a politician who tried to waste her time with waffle, you were disrespecting not just her but also the community of Cobar. It was something that she did not tolerate at all; she just would not cop it. It speaks volumes of her character that there are so many politicians of every political stripe who have spoken in this place and in the other place, to pay tribute to the wonderful legacy and the wonderful contribution that Lilliane Brady made to this State and, most importantly, to western New South Wales and Cobar itself. It was a life of civic duty that has not gone unnoticed, and people's tributes are a testament to that. I too would like to add my voice to those messages and tributes, and to thank her family and her broader family—please pass this on from all of us—for sharing her and her wonderful advocacy for this State. Through her astonishing career she has shown many of us how to be strong, determined and passionate representatives for our own communities, and for that we thank her. I commend the life and service of Lilliane Brady to the Chamber and reiterate my condolences to her family.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (16:24): I honour a tremendous champion of the Far West, the one and only Lilliane Brady. I acknowledge family members John and daughter Deidrei who are here today. I first met Lilliane when I was a councillor on Evans Shire Council and also Bathurst Regional Council. I had a strong association with her for the 18 years I was a councillor and I knew that if you wanted to go into battle about an issue, she was someone that you wanted to take into the trenches with you. She would fight for that cause and would be someone who was very vocal and very strong about it.

She used to call me Hooley Dooley Tooley and nothing changed. Even when I became a Minister, she still continued to call me by that name. We shared a laugh at many local government conferences and I witnessed her tearing strips off Labor Minister after Labor Minister after Labor Minister as they came through the door of those conferences. So I could not help but be a little apprehensive when I returned back to that local government conference as the local government Minister and I had to face Lilliane myself. She was someone who did not mince her words. When I ran into her in the foyer she said to me, "Don't you bloody merge my council, Tooley, or you're gonna have me to deal with." I certainly listened to the advice given by Lilliane.

It has been a year or so since I last saw Lilliane in person and it was when she dropped into my office. She came to lobby for a new rest stop to be built between Cobar and Bourke, which was needed, given the number of elderly people who use that road. I did not act fast enough for Lilliane's liking so she sent word out and it got back to me that if I did not build her toilet she would park a portaloos on Macquarie Street and she would sit on it until I gave her the funding to be able to do it. Lillian fought for that and it was built. I think that sums up Lilliane. She was pleased about that. A profile written about Lilliane in *The Land* back in 1998 was shared with me and it captured her so perfectly. Even then she was such a big personality in the bush. It was headlined simply "Lilliane"; there was no other. In it she was typically unapologetic about her passion for the bush. She said:

I am outspoken, I am controversial, but I believe you have got to fight to do the best for your town.

She saw every day as a challenge, saying she woke up every day, lifted her head off the pillow and wondered what would happen by the time she got back into bed that night. In the same article she recounted the first time she drove into Cobar back in the 1960s and promptly rolled the family car. Lilliane said:

My two-year-old baby was screaming, my husband was furious, the dog was barking and a budgerigar had escaped from its cage and was flying around in the car.

Lillian certainly knew how to make an entrance. I am so sad that she has now made an exit. Like so many in this Chamber, I will miss her very dearly. She was one of the most formidable people that I have ever met. She was a passionate fighter for her community. She was a treasured and certainly very dear friend. Vale, Lilliane Brady.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (16:28): I begin by also acknowledging Deidrei and her husband, John, in the gallery this evening and offer them my condolences, the Opposition's condolences and I am sure the condolences of every member in this place. On 7 February this year Cobar lost one of its fiercest advocates with the passing of Lilliane, but the Far West and regional New South Wales also lost a fierce advocate. Her passion for rural and regional New South Wales, particularly the Far West, was formidable. We have heard all the stories from those opposite. I was talking to Bob Carr a while ago. He was telling me about an issue she had with her goats on her farm and the funny conversation they had together.

The common theme with Lilliane is not only her passion but also what motivated that passion, which was the love for her community, and her admiration and adoration for the Far West of New South Wales. She loved her community, and her community loved her. That was on display not only at her funeral, with all the media reports and the sheer numbers of people around, but also in her representations every day. Councillor Brady, at the age of 90, passed away in a local hospital, surrounded by her loved ones. Since that time, there has been much said, particularly tonight, about Lilliane, with those who knew her reflecting on her wit, her sharp tongue, her intellect, but, most importantly, as I mentioned before, the love she had for her community.

Mrs Brady was born in 1930 and moved with her husband and children from Sydney to Cobar in the sixties. She initially was not impressed by what she saw and later commented that she did not want to even get out the car at that time. But that small town with a big heart grew on her, and she soon considered it to be "one of the best places on earth". She has told the story to colleagues—and I think it speaks volumes—of when she marched with striking miners. This came as a surprise to the community, given it was not the behaviour expected of a doctor's wife at that time. However, when she decided to run for Cobar Shire Council, the miners returned the favour and supported her election unequivocally and unconditionally.

Mrs Brady went on to serve as a councillor for almost 40 years, with 23 of those years as mayor, making her the longest-serving female mayor in New South Wales. I think you need no greater example of the contributions and the important role of women in local government than Lilliane. I know the Minister too is a very strong advocate to encourage women into local government. I acknowledge that she was a long-time councillor who made good contributions on her council. Lilliane was a fine example of the importance of having women in local government. I do not say that lightly. She took everything in her stride. When things may not have gone her way, she did not dwell on it. She would simply say to herself, "Suck it up, princess." I know she would commonly say that to many others, as referred to earlier by Minister Toole and others.

Mayor Brady was an icon within the local government sector. If she took to the microphone at any Local Government NSW conference you knew that whichever politician was on stage for the Q&A was about to cop a roasting. She really did not have any boundaries when it came to fighting for her community. And I do not think it would matter whether it was a Labor, Liberal or Nationals Minister at that time, she would show no quarter because it was Cobar and the Far West that mattered most to her. Reflecting on some of the earlier contributions from members, it was very clear that Mayor Brady instilled fear in politicians of all persuasions, as I referred to. Minister Toole referred to it happening when he went to the conference about local government, at a very turbulent time for the local government sector, whilst some big policy decisions were being made. I am sure the roasting was quite heavy and hot at that time as he stood up there.

She never missed the opportunity to seek out funding for her community. She lobbied often and she lobbied hard. No doubt her greatest achievement and something very personal to her was the opening, following the death of an elderly Cobar man alone at an Orange aged-care facility, of the Lilliane Brady Village, a 34-bed not-for-profit hostel, nursing home and health centre connecting the village and the hospital. But of course, as has been mentioned, it was also one of the motivations for Lilliane to run for her local council. She ran for election to her local council not just to be on the council, but because an issue was brought to her attention that she was not willing to walk past and she wanted to do something about it.

At the service following the passing of Lilliane, Cobar Shire Council General Manager Peter Vlatko recalled a time when she was attending a meeting in my original home town of Dubbo at the former Dubbo City Council. She drove into the council car park and pulled up at a sign posted "mayor parking only". She remarked

to the then mayor of Dubbo—the member for Dubbo might recall who that was, but I am not sure who it would have been—that the sign should be more specific. That was very typical of Lilliane. Her love of horseracing was well known and she owned a number of racehorses. She loved going to the races dressed up in a hat and coat, and had her own marquee at the Cobar race day. It was a real treat for her to host guests to the town at the races and to show off her home that she was proud of—and that was proud of her. She relished her role as a hostess and showed the town off with immense pride, as she should. She always had a good tip too.

As much as she loved her horses, without a doubt, other than her three children and their families, her greatest love was for the people of Cobar. I have no doubt they will feel her loss for a long, long time. Her absence from Cobar will simply never be filled. On the day of her funeral the Mitchell Highway was closed as people from all over the State travelled to Cobar to give their farewells to Lilliane. Council staff and emergency workers formed a guard of honour and people lined the main street as Mrs Brady made her last trip through town, followed by her red Holden Commodore with her famous LOB 003 numberplates.

Mrs Brady's contribution and dedication to her community will never be forgotten. She was outspoken, she was a straight shooter, but she was an icon of Cobar and a formidable advocate for the Far West. I offer my sincere condolences to her family, her friends, her colleagues at the Cobar Shire Council and, of course, the entire community of Cobar. I thank the Government for the State funeral that she so well deserved. The ABC program *Back Roads* shone a light on a truly special human being. Cobar lost its favourite mum and I think humanity lost one of the truly great people from that region. Vale, Lilliane Brady, OAM. She will never be forgotten and never replaced.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (16:37): It is with great sadness I acknowledge the passing of Lilliane Brady, OAM, and yet I am smiling because every time I think about Lilliane Brady I have a smile on my face. When I heard of her passing I was immensely sad, as so many of us in this place were. No doubt they were grieving and still are. One of the privileges of being the Minister for Local Government is that over the past two years I have met many of the characters in local government. Every time I give a speech about how privileged I feel to be the Minister for Local Government I talk about the characters in local government and in the next sentence I mention Lilliane Brady. Even though I only met her three or four times she impressed me with her sparkle, passion and genuine love of her area and local government. I feel privileged to have met her and to have been in the same room with her at conferences. I am immensely sad, but at the same time I am still smiling.

I thank the Deputy Premier for bringing this condolence motion before the House. All members were jumping to get to the Premier first to say that we need a State funeral for Lilliane Brady, and the Premier had no qualms about that. The Premier agreed to it because we must recognise Lilliane's extensive achievements; not only her longevity as mayor but also her achievements for the Cobar region. I know that Lilliane admired the Deputy Premier. She acknowledged his passion for the regions and for rural New South Wales. She was one of his greatest supporters.

I acknowledge Lilliane's daughter Deirdre and son-in-law John, both of whom are present in the Chamber. I was really pleased to meet Deirdre and John, along with their family and the wider family of Cobar at the funeral for Lilliane. That fantastic funeral was one to remember. It was an opportunity to listen to stories from Lilliane's family and from the general manager for Cobar Shire Council. Some of those stories were hilarious. I had a wonderful morning in Cobar. We have heard today that Lilliane was a strong and tireless advocate for the Cobar community. Her passion for making change stemmed from the wish that no community member should be forced to leave Cobar in order to receive the appropriate care they needed. Today we heard the story of a local resident who passed away after being transferred to Orange for medical care. Lilliane knew then that she must become involved in the council and in her community in order to make a change.

She was first elected to the Cobar Shire Council in 1974 and only six years later secured funding for an aged-care facility in Cobar. The facility opened in 1982 and was appropriately named the Lilliane Brady Village. Earlier this year as I came in to Cobar for the funeral I was privileged to see the expanded aged-care facility. The 34-bed, not-for-profit facility includes a hostel, a nursing home and a multipurpose health centre that connects the village. That was only the beginning of many changes that Lilliane oversaw in Cobar, and we have heard member after member talk about the changes that she brought to the town.

Lilliane pushed for a new hospital, better infrastructure, improved local roads and mining rights, all of which led to her becoming one of Cobar's most notable citizens. She served a remarkable 40 years as a councillor and 23 years as mayor, making her the longest serving female mayor in New South Wales history. Lilliane was not afraid to say what was on her mind; she would always tell it how it was. I am sure that many members of the House know her story from the 1990s. In response to a compliment from Minister Carl Scully on what she was wearing, Lilliane said, "I'm here for finance, not romance." She told that story many times. In fact, she had many stories to tell, but it is not appropriate for me to repeat them in this place at this time. She was a hilarious and

lovely woman. I have heard today that she was tough and hard, but to me she was a gentle, beautiful soul. She was a beautiful woman. I connected with Lilliane immediately and I loved her—as many people did.

During her time at the council Lilliane was recognised regularly for the work that she had done for the community. Those accolades included a Centenary Medal in 2001 for services to local government, a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2012 for service to local government and to the community of Cobar, and a Local Government NSW Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018. In 2020 I was honoured to award Lilliane the first ever Minister for Local Government Award for her commitment to increasing the participation of women in local government—what an achievement. Earlier this year it was an honour to announce that the Minister for Local Government Award for Women would formally be renamed the Lilliane Brady, OAM, Award for Women in Local Government. That is a fitting tribute to a true icon of the sector and a true trailblazer for women.

To further immortalise Lilliane's life and career, recipients of the Ministers' Awards for Women in Local Government – Young Achiever's Award will also receive the Lilliane Brady, OAM, Scholarship, valued at \$1,500. Lilliane's achievements will be remembered through scholarship and through awards. The Young Achiever's Award recognises an outstanding trainee or apprentice aged under 25 in our local government sector. Lilliane was the epitome of passionate community service, determination and commitment, and the strength of character that is synonymous with our rural communities. She exemplified what many people who enter politics wish to achieve: positive changes that improve the lives of those in their community.

We are all watching the 128 councils as we head to local government elections in September this year. I wish there were a few more mayors like Lilliane Brady sprinkled throughout the local government sector who could lead their communities and show real commitment, not to themselves or to their egos but to their community. I wish they could all take a page out of her book, just one page, and we would be better off in New South Wales. As the Minister for Local Government, I was fortunate enough to work with Lilliane on a number of occasions in her capacity as both mayor of Cobar and as chair of the Far North West Joint Organisation. She will be dearly missed in Cobar. We will all miss her. I think everybody in this Chamber who has spoken knew her or knew of her and had remarkable respect for her.

I remember the first time that I met her at a local government conference—or it might have been the second time. I went over because I needed to meet this icon of a woman whom I had not met before. I approached her sitting at a table—it might have been a New South Wales local government awards ceremony or dinner. As I walked up to her, she stood up. Knowing her age, I said, "Lilliane, please don't stand up. Stay where you are." She said, "But you're the Minister." I said, "But you're Lilliane Brady. I don't want you to stand up. I'll sit down beside you." Those were the kind of conversations we had. Those were the kind of conversations she had with everybody. You felt that if you did the right thing by her, that if you respected her wishes and what she said, then she would be your friend, even though you might have only met her a few times.

I regarded Lilliane as my friend. I know the Deputy Premier certainly regarded her as a close friend and I know that she loved him as well. I pass on my condolences to the family. It was certainly a privilege to be at her funeral, to meet you all and to see the absolute outpouring of grief in Cobar that day. She will be missed. She will be missed in the local government sector. As the Minister, I will still talk about her in future as one of the greatest characters I have ever met—one of the greatest.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:46): I also pay my condolences to Deidrei, John, Pally, Suzanne and the whole family. I first met Lilliane in about 2007 when someone said, "Lynda, can you go out to Cobar? The mayor wants someone to switch on some lights that we've just funded in a sports field." I said, "Yeah, sure", not realising how far I would have to drive. I go out there, make my speech, the lights get turned on, we sit back down, someone walks around with a plate of sandwiches and offers me one. Lilliane turns around and says, "Lynda doesn't want those bloody sandwiches. Piss off with them. Go and get her a beer, will you?" I thought, "This must be the first place I have ever been where the sandwiches are being shooed away and I have the beers being brought out while I am sitting in the official party." But that was Lilliane. She was, "These are my kind of people. This is a place where we don't stand on ceremony and it is all about just getting the job done and then having a bit of fun."

I know we talk about how tough and funny she was, but I think Lilliane had a very tough life. I do not think it was easy for Lilliane when she got to Cobar and she had the farm. It was a big farm—I think it was something like 150,000 hectares. She had small children. She had a husband who was away a lot. It was a real struggle. I think what Lilliane brought to Cobar was that sense of getting things done, understanding the struggle and how difficult it was, particularly for women, and bringing that country sense of humour and feel and showing that they got by.

Lilliane did achieve a lot. She was extraordinary. If she could not get access to a Minister, I would often get a phone call out of the blue asking me to duck around to such and such's office and tell them to stick it up their

jumper or to give them a message. I would say, "Yeah, sure, Lilliane." Only half those messages ever got delivered, of course, because I would like to get preselected again next time round. But if she didn't get you one way, she would get you another way. Although there was a person she never attacked—I think she had a very fond spot for him—and that was Steve Whan, who was then the member for Monaro. So maybe just any MP from that region is her favourite. That is what I am starting to think.

Lilliane loved Cobar. I know she loved the kids. I would go for the Cobar races, where Deirdre and I have had a few beers together. There would be some young scamp who would come up to Lilliane and say, "I really want to go in the Fashion in the Field event but I haven't got a hat." I know Lilliane did not want to give her hat up because she knew it was not the right way to be dressed at the races, but she gave the hat up anyway to give the kid a go. If she saw someone in need she would say, "Linda, go up there and check if that bloke is alright and see if he needs 50 bucks for his bus fare home."

There was always a sense that everyone should be looked after and she always had an open-door policy. She loved people coming into her town; she loved people having that experience. She would often ring up and say, "Will you be up for such and such an event?" You would think, "Well, it is around the corner so I may or may not be there." But quite often you would go. I know she probably tired of my brother, Dave, swinging through town and beeping his horn and yelling out, "We love you, Lilliane." Fortunately, Cobar probably does not have to put up with that kind of behaviour anymore from my brother. I know Lilliane from council because my mum was on council for a long time and that is where she knew Lilliane really well, along with Dawn Fardell, in particular, and the other mayors of Wellington. I know that Jane and Veronica Fardell in particular miss her. There was a strong group of women who came through in the nineties and 2000s, particularly in that region out through the western plains of New South Wales.

We can just look at Wellington, Cobar and Dubbo and look at the women who were on council to know that that was changing the landscape of what was happening in the city and in the bush. Probably queen of that group of women coming through, the most dominant figure of those who went out there to achieve better deals for their towns, was Lilliane. It was probably the hardship she experienced in that town and how difficult it was for her that made her fight so hard to make sure that town had a future. She had great concerns for it as a mining town, as people do about fly-in fly-outs—whether the schools would continue and whether they would have the services. The idea of resources for the region was really originally grown by Lilliane and became a catchcry for a lot of people after that. She was a tremendous person and we miss her dearly. I know that her mates will miss her dearly. People like Dawn are devastated that she has gone. She was sick for a long time but she fought hard every step of the way. We send her all our love.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (16:52): I join with all my colleagues in the House to pay tribute to the wonderful, full and colourful life of Councillor Lilliane Brady, OAM. At the start I acknowledge Deidrei and John, who are here today on behalf of the family, and extend my deep sympathies and condolences for their loss. A lot has been said, quite rightly, about Lilliane, who was literally larger than life; the great dame of not just Cobar but also western New South Wales. It is not just local government but the communities of western New South Wales that have lost a champion, a champion the likes of which I do not think we will ever see again or, if we do, it will not be for a considerable period. The great irony of Lilliane being held in such great regard as the great champion of Cobar and western New South Wales—as she is, quite rightly—is that she never wanted to be in Cobar to start with. She was dragged there, essentially, by her husband, a medical practitioner. She always used to tell me the story that she had to be dragged out of the car when they got to Cobar because she was not that impressed with the place when she first saw it.

Yet meeting her later on, particularly at the peak of her powers in her mayoral career, you would never have known that she was a reluctant starter of coming to Cobar because she absolutely bled for Cobar. She loved the place to death and personified what great, local country mayors should be about—their community and working without fear or favour with the government of the day to extract whatever they can to advantage their local community. Like so many members in this debate, I had a lot to do with Lilliane when I was starting out in my local government career. The fact that so many people in this place, professionally and personally, have been touched by Lilliane speaks volumes for her influence and the impact that she had not just in Cobar but also all the way here in Macquarie Street, Sydney.

As a very young mayor of Gunnedah shire, I remember meeting Lilliane for the first time at a Shires Association conference and we quickly struck up a very good friendship. Indeed, she became a mentor to me, such was her commitment not just to her community but also to supporting people in local government who she thought had a bit of something going for them. I do not know whether she was right about that with me, but I definitely appreciated her guidance and support. She was a very loyal person. Once she made a decision that you

were all right, she would stick by you through thick and thin—a very old-school trait in politics and local government and of that generation.

That was brought home to me when she encouraged me to run for the vice-presidency of the Shires Association of NSW. She became a real champion of mine, whipping the votes around the conference against her good and longstanding friend Phyllis Miller, who was then and still is the mayor of Forbes Shire Council. Phyllis was running, I was running and Lilliane was backing me even though Phyllis had been a friend for pretty much longer than I had been alive at that point. That to me was what Lilliane was about: She made a decision and she stuck by it. Even though it might have upset one of her friends, she thought that that was the best thing to do and she stuck by it. For the record, Lilliane was good at counting the votes and that tilt was successful, so I thank Lilliane very much.

A lot has been said as well about the famous Lilliane Brady Village in Cobar, but not much has been said yet about how some of that money was raised by Lilliane to construct that facility. It is a curious link with some colourful racing identities. In order to help raise money for this village, Lilliane would sell raffle tickets at the races here in Sydney. That is where she ran into a gentleman who she would later find out was George Freeman, the famous, or infamous, SP bookie. But Lilliane had no idea who this colourful character was. She always described him as this gorgeous-looking man resplendently dressed in a suit. He not only bought some raffle tickets; she also told him her story about why she was there and what she was trying to do back home.

As Lilliane would always tell the story, George said, "Look, I can't make a sizable donation to you, but I will give you a call every Friday with some tips for the races for that weekend and you should put a bet on those horses. That is how I help." Of course, Lilliane just agreed, oblivious to who this gentleman was and how he would know which horses would be winning the races. He would ring Lilliane's husband's surgery not under his real name but under a different name—again, no alarm bells went off at this point; Lilliane was just happy to take tips. Lo and behold, over many years, tens of thousands of dollars were raised through the winnings on those horses, and the Lilliane Brady Village was built. It stands there today in an expanded form as a true edifice of her commitment to her community. When others said, "You'll never be able to do it," in her typical dogged style that made her more determined to make it happen. We have the late George Freeman, in no small part, to thank for her fundraising efforts there. For the sake of other reputations, I have left a few people out of that story, as Deidrei would know, but you get the flavour for that.

It was not at the first conference I met her but at a subsequent conference—I am trying to remember which one it was—when Lilliane recounted that famous story about her fur coat; a story that others have mentioned as well. I happened to be sitting at that table at that dinner that night when a Greens councillor—and no offence to any Greens in this Parliament; I am just saying it was a Greens councillor—spoke to Lilliane about the lovely fur coat that she was wearing and said that they were concerned about how many animals would have died to produce that fur coat. Lilliane being Lilliane, as quick as a flash, quick-wittedly said, "Well, do you realise how many men I had to sleep with to get this coat?" Those were not her exact words—there were a few expletives used—but essentially that was Lilliane's quick retort and the councillor just did not know what to say.

There are many, many stories about Lilliane's quick-wittedness, her turn of phrase and her interesting use of vocabulary. I can say with certainty that no-one was ever offended. She was the type of person who could always get away with saying what no-one else could get away with saying. That was highlighted to me at a huge conference we had in about 2011 or 2012 when we were considering merging the Shires Association of New South Wales with the Local Government Association of New South Wales to create what is now known as Local Government NSW. There were about 1,000 attendees at this conference in Sydney and I remember vividly Councillor Alan Smith from Dubbo City Council, as it was then, standing up and giving an address on one of the topics of interest. It was quite a lengthy speech—typical of Alan Smith—and if he is watching this I hope he does not mind me telling this story. What Alan said was reasonably controversial and when he sat down Lilliane leapt to her feet, was the first to the microphone and said, "Councillor Smith, you are a c-head"—the House will know I have abbreviated that. She absolutely ripped into him and there was a stunned silence across the whole conference. Then everyone just burst out laughing and Lilliane went on a big tirade about how Alan Smith got it completely wrong.

Lilliane called a spade a shovel, which I and many people found was one of her most endearing qualities. She was loyal and dogged, and told it how it was—it was absolutely refreshing. She treated everyone how she found them. In her later mayoral years I remember going out to see her at the council chambers where she had a stuffed miniature cattle dog on her desk. I made the mistake of asking her what that was all about. She said, "This is my pet dog called Kevy"—in relation to a strained relationship she had with the then member for Barwon. She picked it up, threw it at the wall and said, "You bad boy, Kevy." And yet she absolutely loved, and still did right to the end, the Federal member for Parkes, Mark Coulton, proving again that she did not base her relationships

with politicians on political parties or no political parties; she based those relationships on the strength of the character of the individual concerned—he or she was just a lovely person.

We all know that Lilliane was always looking for money for Cobar. When I was tourism Minister, I made the mistake one day on a visit to Cobar of agreeing on the spot to provide her with a \$5,000 discretionary grant for the museum in Cobar. We agreed, we shook hands and had a little hug as I jumped in the car to head off. In the next week's mayoral column in the *Cobar Weekly*, which she wrote in religiously, I read that it was great to have the tourism Minister in Cobar and it was great that he agreed to a \$10,000 grant for the museum at Cobar. I rang her up and said, "Lilliane, I only agreed to \$5,000." She said, "Oh, come on, it's printed now. You've got to give me the \$10,000." I think we agreed to settle on about \$7,500—we met halfway. That was Lilliane's good negotiating style and, I tell you what, I actually respected that. I thought that was pretty cunning; it was pretty good.

The very last project funding that was secured just before Lilliane passed was \$100,000 to revamp the kitchen at her much-beloved RSL club. That took about 12 months to secure, and didn't I know it! Almost every week I would get a phone call or an email, "Where's that bloody money you promised me?" In the end I was absolutely delighted that we were able to deliver that. Lilliane was able to see the upgraded kitchen so I am really pleased. So many superlatives could be used to describe the great Lilliane Brady. Suffice to say she was much loved and respected by everyone who came into contact with her. She leaves an enormous hole in the fabric of the Cobar community, in local government, and in leadership and advocacy in western New South Wales.

I was pleased that at the recent Western Division Councils of NSW conference in Broken Hill—the first one in decades without Lilliane—a minute's silence was observed for her passing, which was beautiful. I acknowledge the effort that the two Peters have made—the general manager and the new mayor—in trying to fill the huge shoes that Lilliane has left and to continue that good momentum for Cobar Shire Council and the Cobar community. Lilliane will be missed. Personally, I will miss her. Although I joke about the phone calls and the occasional abuse, deep down I really enjoyed it. I will miss that. People like Lilliane simply cannot be replaced; they are one of a kind. I am delighted that Lilliane put her passion into what she did because her community and western New South Wales are all the better for it. She will be missed, but we were very lucky to have her for as long as we did. Good on you, Lilliane.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:06): I add my voice to all those mourning Lilliane Brady's passing. The last time Minister Marshall and I saw Lilliane was last year when we presented her with an award for her service to local government. It was a lovely occasion. I had not seen her for quite some time but, as always, Lilliane was full of spirit and cheek. It is great to see Deidrei and John in the public gallery today. I first met Lilliane in 2008 in my role as an ABC radio presenter. I had spoken to her before that. Many times over the next 10 or 11 years I spoke to her on radio and visited Cobar for business awards and social events. As for most people, the thing that struck me about Lilliane was her way of summing up any situation clearly and succinctly. She did not muck around or waste words. She thought wasting words was a waste of time. She let you know what she thought in the most direct way possible, which was perfect.

We have heard some of the stories and one-liners—"I am here for finance, not romance," and the classic, "Suck it up, princess," which I heard many times. The list goes on. Over the years Lilliane delivered a few of those stories and one-liners to me, and a couple have stuck with me. One that is family-friendly enough to share relates to the upheaval of airlines flying around Cobar, then not flying and then flying again. I had spoken to Lilliane on the radio about the airline problems on a number of occasions and she had expressed her feelings about certain airlines and their complete lack of vision. Of course she left nothing to the imagination. On one occasion I called her with the news that one of the airlines was looking at changing its mind and recommencing services. A lot of things had happened in the background, but the gist was that the airline was about to start flying again. I rang her and said, "What do you think?" I started to interview her and asked, "Would you be happy to start flying with the airline again?" As only Lilliane could, she replied, "Dugald, I wouldn't be seen dead on that plane. I don't care if Jesus himself is flying it, I will not be on it," so I took that as a no.

As I mentioned, the last time I saw Lilliane was in Cobar late last year with Minister Marshall and another colleague Sam Faraway when we presented her with an award for her service to local government on behalf of the Minister for Local Government. That was a really nice thing to do. I had not seen her for a while. She had been in and out of hospital and she had been quite ill at that point, but she was in her usual mood regardless, with stories of her punting success and what she was looking at getting done in Cobar. At that stage she had announced she was retiring, but she was talking about what she wanted to get done before that happened. That was the last time I saw Lilliane.

The last time I spoke to her was in mid-December. In fact, the second-last time I spoke to her was with the Deputy Premier—we were on a bus together. I had a quick chat with her and then passed her over to John Barilaro. The last time I spoke to her, she had returned home from the Dubbo hospital. She had been in there again and had

been fairly crook. We had a chat and she said, "Before I go, I need you to know that the hospital and the staff at Dubbo are excellent." She said, "I know you get told lots of different stories and I know you get bombarded with this, but I just want you to know that your hospital and your staff are great." That was nice to hear. She was always honest about that sort of stuff. If she thought it was bad, she would have told me. She also said that she thought I was doing a good job, which meant a lot to me.

Funnily enough, the morning that I heard about Lilliane's death, I was planning to call her because the night before I had watched that famous *Back Roads* program. I had not watched it live; I had recorded it and had not got around to watching it. I knew I wanted to call her about a couple of things and I thought, "Before I do, I need to make sure I have watched it." I watched *Back Roads* and I was on the plane flying down when I heard what had happened, so I never got to call her. That week was a parliamentary week, so there were plenty of members in this Chamber who were reminiscing about Lilliane, as we are again today. We shared that at the time, which was really special. I attended the State funeral at Cobar, along with thousands of community members and plenty of people who travelled hundreds of kilometres because they wanted to say a final farewell to a really special woman. Deidrei, your mum will be missed. Thank you for coming today. Vale, Lilliane Brady.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Members and officers of the House stood in their places as a mark of respect.

Public Interest Debate

COVID-19 AND STATE ECONOMY

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:12): I move:

That this House acknowledges that the Government has kept the community safe and prosperous.

There probably would not be a person in this House who does not believe that we live in the best State in the best country in the world. Through COVID and natural disasters over recent years, whether it be drought, bushfires or floods, the New South Wales Government has stepped up on each and every one of those occasions as we faced those disasters. It has stepped up to support each and every person who has been impacted. First, I will talk about the COVID response by the Government. The 2020-21 State budget showed the commitment that the Government made to ensure that our community got through the COVID-19 pandemic. It made sure that we invested significantly—in fact, \$1.6 billion—to support our State, our people and our economy. Every one of us should be grateful for that.

I want to talk about some of the aspects of that \$1.6 billion investment. To start with, and probably most importantly, \$500 million was put aside for activities, including the very important COVID-19 clinics that were set up right across the State when the pandemic started. The quarantine arrangements came at a significant cost. There was the increased pathology testing and contact tracing. On that note I commend our frontline staff, but particularly the pathology staff right across the State—whether in the metropolitan area or our regions. They worked tirelessly to make sure that we could track down every case of COVID and respond accordingly. There was also over \$458 million to fast-track elective surgery procedures, particularly focusing on surgery that had been delayed by COVID-19. I know my local health district was just one of the local health districts right across the State that benefitted from increased investment to make sure that we could play catch-up following some of the closures of surgeries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There was \$385 million to provide additional personal protective equipment to keep our frontline health workers safe. Importantly, there was funding to make sure that we supported those with mental health and wellbeing issues. Also provided was \$45 million to expand programs in the community, including non-clinical care and services to support patients out of hospital; \$30 million for additional emergency department attendances and ambulance calls; \$20 million for research and clinical trials to tackle the global COVID-19 pandemic and reduce its impact across our communities—and the list goes on.

There were also capital works stimulus projects as part of the COVID economic recovery. Of course, members now know that will be critically important. Who would have thought at the time that we were going to be facing the repercussions of the pandemic for such a long period? I think when we went into our first lockdown in March last year most of us thought it would probably all be over in a few months. We never imagined that it was going to be for such an extensive period. I think the way the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government responded to the ongoing pandemic through the months that followed is absolutely commendable. As I said, part of that was investing in more capital works, particularly across the health sector.

We also made sure that we committed additional funding to our health infrastructure. Obviously we have made record investment in health infrastructure over the 10 years that we have been in government. However,

I particularly mention the \$100 million in funding to accelerate the commencement of selected sites under the Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration stage two program. It was wonderful to welcome the Hon. Brad Hazzard to the lovely community of Lake Cattai in my electorate, which I am a little bit biased about after living there for 25 years. It was great to have him there to announce a new ambulance station for Lake Cattai as part of the stage two program. At this point I also acknowledge those in the Harrington community. I know they are advocating very hard for an ambulance station and I want to make sure that they understand that I will continue to work with the community, NSW Ambulance and the health Minister to make sure they get access to the health services that they need.

In closing, I say that it is no accident that New South Wales has come through the COVID pandemic so well. It has taken incredibly courageous leadership, real commitment and a dogged determination, most importantly led by our great Premier, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian. It has also taken an incredible team, from the Premier at the top to our frontline health staff, who undertook COVID testing right across our communities. I also acknowledge the health Minister, Brad Hazzard, for the incredible role that he has played and continues to play throughout the COVID pandemic. Of course, I must commend Dr Kerry Chant. We looked to her day after day to get our updates about what was happening on the ground and what other initiatives were being taken to make sure that we as a community stayed protected. Our health workers, our pathology staff, the police—the list goes on of those who absolutely stepped up across our communities to make sure that we were kept safe during the COVID pandemic.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (17:19): Over the past 10 years in this place I have often found myself agreeing with the member for Port Macquarie, but on this occasion I do not. Instead, I will move a very simple amendment to the motion. The words are very similar, but there is an important and succinct change. I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out all words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:

"this House acknowledges that the efforts of our community, and in particular our frontline workers, have kept us safe and prosperous."

We are safe because of the men and women in every town, village, suburb and neighbourhood right across New South Wales. We are safe because when the government of the day said to go into lockdown, they did, and when it said, "wear masks", they did. We are safe because even when the government of the day did not tell them to wear masks on public transport, they still did. We are safe because when we said to the men and women on the front line—whether it is our emergency services, health workers in our hospitals, clinicians, nurses, those in pathology or the cleaners in our hospital system—that we were going to stay at home but they were going to work to protect us, they did. When we said to the community, "There has been an outbreak. Go and get tested", they waited for hours. The communities that I represent stood for hours waiting to get tested. They are the heroes of this pandemic who this House should be celebrating.

This place is not about self-congratulations; it is about representing our community. I say thank you to my community that I am so fortunate to represent. I thank the men and women of the towns, suburbs and neighbourhoods for whom I am fortunate to be their local member in this place. When I got on radio and said, "Listen to the health messages", they did. When I and my colleagues, the member for Shellharbour and the member for Wollongong, appealed to them when we had spikes—as many communities did—to go and get tested, they did. I sat and talked with them for such a long period of time about their concerns, but they did the right thing. They were up for the challenge and listened. When I met health workers with my colleagues and talked to them about their concerns and the fact that they had to go into an environment where the likelihood of transmission and catching this invisible killer was high, they still did. My messages to the community and the Government are very similar. I say thank you to the community. I thank them for everything they have done to ensure the community is safe, and for the way in which they have listened to the government of the day and the political leaders, whether it is locally, State or Federal, when they have asked them to do some of the challenges.

I thank those frontline workers, including the police, who have had a very difficult task of enforcing the public health orders that are not familiar in this State and country. They went out of their way and did the right thing. Against sometimes challenging commentary they still ensured that, above all, the priority was our community's health. It was the men and women in our suburbs, towns, villages and communities who wore the masks. They kept 1.5 metres apart from each other. They made sure they got tested. They made sure that, if any of their family or friends had symptoms, they got tested. They made sure they did it time and time again. Now they are getting vaccinated, despite an appalling program. This motion should be changed because this Parliament is about representing your community, not yourself. It is not a place of self-congratulations. It is a place where we bring issues from our community and acknowledge our community in some of the most difficult times. Over the past 12 months it is our residents, community members and frontline workers who deserve this congratulations.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:24): I speak in support of the motion. All the commentators have talked about how well New South Wales has performed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

They acknowledge that New South Wales has performed better than any other State, and particularly in comparison to any Labor-led State. As the best performing State in Australia, many commentators have said that New South Wales has performed better than any other nation on earth. That is because of the State's leadership and frontline workers. I thank the nurses, the doctors, the pathologists, the hospital workers and all those who were at risk for their efforts during the pandemic. I also thank the police, the paramedics and the other frontline workers who kept on working during this time. In his contribution the member for Keira spoke about the police having to enforce new health orders, something that they had never had to do before. I take my hat off to them for the amount of discretion and wisdom that they showed in doing this.

I will concentrate on the electorate of Myall Lakes. At the start of the pandemic, with over 40 cases, the region was one of the hotspots in New South Wales. Of those cases, three were in intensive care, one was in higher needs and others were in hospital. Residents from two nursing homes had also contracted COVID-19. Despite this, not one person died and not one health worker contracted the virus. That is testament to the professionalism of the health workers, the cleaners and the other staff in the hospitals and nursing homes. For hours on end Myall Lakes residents lined up willingly and heeded the call from the Government to get tested. I also take my hat off to the private and public pathology units that carried out the testing. People largely abided by the rules. However, on the few occasions when they did not the police were forced to take action.

In early-to-mid December there was another outbreak when two people from Sydney who were unaware that they had contracted COVID-19 visited my electorate. They went to several places, including a couple of restaurants and their accommodation. That meant that everybody in the region needed to be tested, so people lined up again for hours. In the space of 24 hours, a number of COVID testing clinics were set up in Taree and Forster to allow those who had been to the affected locations, and their families, to get tested. That shows how, when times are tough, Myall Lakes residents do the right thing—as I am sure is the case in other places. The height of the pandemic—which I note we are not yet out of—came after one of the worst droughts in living memory and fires that tragically impacted the region, and has been followed by tremendous losses during the recent floods. The people of Myall Lakes stood up and did the right thing during all those crises, rallying together for the farmers during the drought, for those impacted by the fires and for those affected by the floods. That says a lot about their character.

When Australia was about to be attacked by Japan during the Second World War, John Curtin said the strength of a nation is measured by the character of its people. The same could be said about Myall Lakes—the strength of the region can be measured by the character of its people. Their response to the COVID-19 pandemic is another example of them showing their character and doing the right thing. The only slip-up—not so much in Myall Lakes but across the State—was that when it came to toilet paper it was every man for himself. Notwithstanding that, the people of New South Wales have been led so well by this Government—the best in Australia—and I trust that leadership will continue into the future.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (17:29): I could not agree more with the member for Keira that this is not the place for self-congratulation. It is almost obscene to think that people in this place would actually do that. It was not governments that kept the community safe—as the member for Keira has said—it was individuals who have acted together collectively for the common good. We have all praised the dedication of our frontline workers in what have been very dark days through the drought—as the member for Myall Lakes said—through bushfires, through floods and now through a pandemic that seems never-ending.

Many go in to jobs where the dangers are very real. It is hard to forget our firefighters, many of whom are constantly exposed to what have been called our worst ever bushfires. From August 2019 to January 2020 Australia's unprecedented bushfire emergency burned more than 18 million hectares and left 34 people dead, with some of our firefighters making the ultimate sacrifice while keeping their communities safe. This is about acknowledging and congratulating our communities, our frontline workers and their dedication—the dedication of our hospital cleaners, some of the lowest paid workers in the country.

In these times of heightened anxiety around the pandemic, the cleaning staff of our public hospitals were a very reassuring presence in the hallways, the theatres and the wards, cleaning every surface that could be touched and always running the risk of contracting COVID—or, worse, taking it home to their families. That is a risk that they accepted and it was just a part of their job of keeping our communities safe. This Government could acknowledge that by paying them a decent wage, giving them their pay increases that are so deserved and ensuring that their salary packaging is adhered to. Every day in this place we thank them and say how grateful we are. They do not want to hear our gratitude or our thanks anymore; they want their pay increases.

Some of the people who we are talking about look after our aged in aged-care facilities. They work in our nursing homes. They have watched in vain as the pandemic took place around the people they cared for and they have struggled to keep them safe. Those people were never able to be off during the pandemic. They would not be able to work from home. They had to go to their job, come what may. They had no choice. It is the same with

the firefighters, the police, the teachers, the security personnel and those who keep our cities and our towns clean—the very people who kept us ticking over. They worked through the worst times and they did everything to keep the community safe. They are the people we acknowledge and congratulate today. We must remember that the people who we are talking about are the people who care for our aged-care residents. They work in our nursing homes, our hospitals, our fire stations, our police stations and our schools. It is just never-ending for them.

Reports of good neighbours emerged from the cities and towns across not only New South Wales but also Australia, with younger and less vulnerable neighbours doing the shopping, getting prescriptions, mowing the lawns and generally helping older neighbours out. The motivation was to keep the community safe. This was not a government initiative but a people's initiative—and it continues on today. We must not forget those people. Our safety and our good fortune during the pandemic is owed to so many of our public servants, whose outstanding resilience and control in so many areas of the economy has put us in a better situation than many other countries around the world.

We need to value them for what they have done for us and, in particular, for the extra burden that they have had to shoulder in the past two years, doing their job and keeping us safe. I said from the outset that I could not agree more with the member for Keira. He is 100 per cent right: This is not a place for self-congratulation. I am sick of hearing how proud the Premier is of everything. I can tell members that the people I am proud of are our teachers, nurses and police.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (17:34): I thank the member for Port Macquarie for bringing this important motion before the House. We must acknowledge the importance of resourcing the people and systems that protect our communities. Keeping New South Wales safe is one of the highest priorities for this Government. It has committed more than \$3 billion to help transform our healthcare system and increase its capacity so that it is well-placed to manage the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. We are also supporting and protecting our frontline workers by placing a substantial investment in personal protective equipment, expanding our healthcare and hospital security workforce and providing ICU training to upskill healthcare staff to support increased ICU capacity.

Special Health Accommodation provides care for international travellers who identify at the airport as having COVID-19-related symptoms, have health conditions that require active monitoring or care during their quarantine period or develop a COVID-19 infection. The service also plays an important role in helping to contain community outbreaks. During periods of community outbreaks, Special Health Accommodation provides quarantine for members of the community who are either a confirmed case or close contact and are unable to effectively self-isolate. Special Health Accommodation commenced operation in late March 2020.

The New South Wales Government and community values our nurses and midwives and acknowledges their vital work. NSW Health nurses and midwives play a vital frontline role in providing safe, effective and empathetic health care to patients. An investment of \$2.8 billion from the 2019-20 budget has been committed over four years to boost the NSW Health frontline workforce by 8,300 full-time equivalent staff, including 5,000 more nurses and midwives. New and upgraded hospital building projects were fast-tracked to significantly increase ICU capacity in New South Wales public hospitals to meet healthcare needs during the COVID-19 outbreak and beyond. Those projects included two purpose-built COVID-19 recovery wards at Royal North Shore Hospital at a cost of \$15 million. The wards provide 55 beds and are ready to care for patients.

Other fast-tracked projects include the Maxwell hospital development, opened in May 2020 six months ahead of schedule; Mudgee hospital redevelopment, opened in May 2020 three months ahead of schedule; Dubbo hospital redevelopment with new critical care beds, handed over in June 2020 six months ahead of schedule; John Hunter Hospital emergency department interim expansion, stage one, completed in September 2020 five months ahead of schedule; and Westmead central acute services building, with major construction finishing three months early, providing Western Sydney Local Health District with extra capacity, if required. NSW Health has allocated more than \$900 million—almost a third of the \$3 billion capital funding in 2020-21—to rural and regional health infrastructure.

Of the 47 New South Wales hospital redevelopments or upgrades underway or set to commence in 2020-21 nearly two-thirds are in rural and regional parts of New South Wales, including the new Tweed hospital redevelopment, estimated to cost more than \$673 million, which has received more than \$72 million. The new Shellharbour Hospital on a greenfield site, estimated to cost almost \$699 million, which has received more than \$10 million. The Eurobodalla Health Service redevelopment, estimated to cost \$200 million, which has received \$10 million. More than \$611 million has been allocated to continue investment in Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Inverell, Goulburn, Griffith, Lismore, New Maitland, Tumut, Wagga Wagga and Wyong hospitals. So much funding has been given to infrastructure.

I could not agree more with the member for Keira and the member for Shellharbour—people make the difference. We have outstanding leadership and outstanding people working in health care, emergency services and all our government departments. Let us not forget our communities, our small businesses and everyone who has contributed to keeping New South Wales safe. We cannot forget the people keeping us safe in our communities. I could not agree more with the Opposition members. I do not think there is any Government member that disagrees with me. I commend the member for Port Macquarie. The people of New South Wales are keeping us safe.

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (17:39): The COVID crisis has shown us time and time again how vital our frontline workers have been in the recovery. The Wallsend electorate is home to two of the Hunter's largest hospitals: John Hunter Hospital and Calvary Mater Newcastle. I say a big thanks to all our wonderful doctors, our ambos, our nurses, our healthcare professionals, our security personnel, our admin workers, our cooks, our cleaners and our wardsmen, who have worked non-stop throughout the COVID crisis. I say to them, without you and your commitment we would not have done as well as we have.

I totally agree with the member for Keira and the member for Shellharbour that it is about the people; it is about the community. It is not about the Government. The Government says that it values our nurses and staff. I say to the Government, why not reward them by giving them the pay increase that they deserve? I thank all the workers at John Hunter Hospital and Calvary Mater Newcastle and statewide because they have put themselves on the front line every day, day in and day out, to care for patients whether they had COVID or not. Those who put themselves on the front line care. They perform critically important work. We must acknowledge what they have done every single day.

Can you imagine how stressful it is for them just to put on and wear the protective equipment every day? Opposition members and Government members did not have to do that. The workers did. And how are they rewarded? We are told that the Government is grateful to them but it does not want to give them a pay rise. The workers did it, and they keep doing it every day because they are professionals and they care. I thank you on behalf of the Wallsend community and on behalf of the Opposition. We on this side say a big thankyou and we say to the Government that our workers and our staff deserve more.

In New South Wales there are about 100,000 nurses, midwives and healthcare workers. They have been on the front line of the COVID pandemic. They have provided care and support for our community. Of course, the police have also ensured community safety and community health, and we thank them as well. Instead of supporting these workers, the Government has announced it was cutting the pay of more than 400,000 public sector workers across the State—and that included 5,231 workers in the Wallsend electorate. It is a betrayal of nurses, police, teachers, ambos and healthcare workers, bus and train drivers, cleaners, security guards and so many others who have backed up day in and day out during the pandemic. Our public sector workers have been the heroes during this public health crisis—not this Government, not any government. They deserve a medal. They do not deserve a pay cut. It is a deliberate act of disrespect to our hardworking professionals who kept our State going in the face of a once-in-a-century crisis.

The Government cannot manage the New South Wales economy, so it has propped up a bad budget by cutting the wages of public sector workers. Beyond being cruel and heartless to those workers, it is also a gross act of economic vandalism. Our local economy got slammed during the pandemic and was only made worse by the recession that came after. Our local economy is still doing it tough. Not since the global financial crisis in 2008 has there been a better time to stimulate the economy by putting dollars in people's pockets so that they can keep spending. Instead, what does this Government do? It hits the workers who have kept the pandemic at bay and who have kept showing up to work, or who have had to adapt to different standards of working conditions and kept doing that daily. I am asking the Government to have pity on the workers. To not just say thank you to those workers, and not to self-congratulate. Please look at the vital job that these frontline workers have done and pay them what they deserve.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:44:5): In reply: I thank all members who have contributed to the debate—the member for Keira, the member for Goulburn, the member for Shellharbour, the member for Wallsend and the member for Myall Lakes. It is somewhat disappointing that members opposite are suggesting that because we use this opportunity to acknowledge the record investment this Government has made in infrastructure and services across the State to keep our communities safe, that that somehow equates to us, as local members, not understanding, not acknowledging or not valuing our community. Each member opposite knows that is actually not the case.

Every single day that we are in this House members on both sides take opportunities through notices of motions, community recognition statements and private members' statements to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of those in our community. This week I will be doing that on many occasions because I saw firsthand throughout the floods, and now in the aftermath of those floods, how our community stepped up. Government

members have acknowledged our frontline workers and we will continue to do that because we know the incredible role they played, and continue to play, during COVID, bushfires, drought or floods—as occurred recently on the mid North Coast. The member for Keira is right: The community did step up and they looked to the leadership of people like the Premier of New South Wales. They tuned in every day at 11 o'clock.

Mr Ryan Park: Did they do the right thing?

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS: Excuse me, can I finish my comments? I did not interrupt you.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS: They did step up when they were given those instructions from the Premier and from Dr Kerry Chant. They continue to do that. They continue to get tested if they have symptoms. They continue to practice good hygiene, social distancing and so on. As the member for Myall Lakes rightly said: the strength of this State can be measured by its people. There is absolutely no doubt about that. It is very true. As I said, the community absolutely looked to our leaders during the pandemic, the bushfires and the floods for that guidance. I commend that. But in doing so, of course I continue to commend our community, each and every person who has contributed to making sure that we are all being kept safe during each of those disasters. I acknowledge the amendment that has been moved by the member for Keira. The Government will support the amendment.

Mr Ryan Park: Thank you.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS: That is because all members of this House who participated in this debate acknowledged the workers and I also do. I will not ever take away from any of them the contribution that frontline workers and communities have made across our State.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that the motion as amended be agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Private Members' Statements

SUTHERLAND SHIRE RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (17:49): One in two Australians will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85. In 2020 there were around 150,000 new cases of cancer diagnosed nationwide. When those numbers are considered, it stands to reason that there would be few people in our country whose lives have not been touched one way or another by cancer. Even though the number of cancer diagnoses continues to rise, we are seeing a promising downward trend in the death rate, which has fallen more than 24 per cent over the past four decades. Patients today benefit from more effective, personalised treatments. Every dollar spent on research brings us a step closer to a cancer-free future.

For 20 years now, the Sutherland Shire Relay for Life has given residents the chance to contribute financially to groundbreaking cancer research and vital support services, to celebrate survivorship and to honour the memory of loved ones lost. Relay began in the United States in 1985 and today is celebrated by more than four million people in over 20 countries. The Sutherland shire event—a labour of love for local cancer survivors—is one of the 10 biggest relays in the world. It has raised close to \$7 million, the equivalent of funding 70 \$100,000 research grants. Faced with COVID restrictions in 2020, the Sutherland shire community mobilised for a "virtual relay" that raised another \$120,000 for Cancer Council NSW. This year Relay for Life once again looked a bit different, with participants encouraged to "relay their way".

In addition to events at Don Lucas Reserve in Cronulla, participants walked in local streets with friends or canine friends to contribute to the effort. Walkers were encouraged to clock up 20,000 steps each—1,000 for each year the event has been held in the Sutherland shire. Others committed to the "20km for cancer" at local gyms or the gruelling 24-hour "treadmill challenge for cancer". Around 1,000 people attended the traditional candlelight ceremony on Saturday night to remember loved ones who lost their lives to cancer or to support someone currently battling illness. This year's response has been tremendous, with organisers suggesting the final tally of money raised could be as much as \$200,000, far in excess of what was expected several weeks ago.

This excellent result could not have been achieved without the resilience and determination of the Sutherland Shire Relay For Life committee. The committee is chaired by Rod Coy and Luke Barbuto, with Olly Woolrych as the Cancer Council representative. A smaller group met regularly to deal with urgent issues as

they arose: Rod Coy, Luke Barbuto, Olly Woolrych, Glenn Nicholas, Cathy Mason, Blake Williams, Jasper Downes, Natalie Pisani, Craig Wintstanley and Stefan Wisniewski. Cathy Mason is the 2021 Cronulla Woman of the Year. They were also helped by, among others, Alison Todd, who was the Cronulla liaison for Cancer Council NSW and the 2017 Cronulla Woman of the Year. A larger group of approximately 22 met more frequently to work on specific areas of shire relay. Over the weekend, approximately 60 committee members were involved. Rod Coy said:

It's a chance to remember people, to walk for someone, to be part of a group where we care about each other. There's no better way to teach kids about community than to let them experience Relay.

Cancer never rests and nor should we. Congratulations to everyone who supported the event, making the twentieth anniversary year another big success story for the Sutherland Shire Relay for Life.

MACQUARIE FIELDS ELECTORATE FUNDING

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (17:52): There's no place like home, as they say. Dorothy uttered those famous words in the 1939 classic film *The Wizard of Oz*. They have been repeated countless times over the past 82 years. I state clearly now that my constituents share Dorothy's sentiments. They also know there's no place like home and they only want what is best for their area. Now in the movie, Dorothy and her friends set out on their journey along the yellow brick road to have their dreams and wishes fulfilled. We all know the movie ends with Dorothy, Tin Man, Lion and Scarecrow getting everything they wished for: Dorothy goes home, the Tin Man gets a heart, Lion finds his courage and the Scarecrow gets a brain. If only I was lucky enough out here in the real world to have a Premier and a government that had a heart, courage and the intelligence to give my constituents their fair share.

Alas, my constituents are still left wishing for their most basic needs because in my electorate of Macquarie Fields, the yellow brick road is paved with empty promises by this Liberal Government and, literally, the M5 and M5 East is paved in tolls to line the pockets of its private operator. The upcoming State budget is an opportunity for this Government to right the wrongs of the past 10 years. I know the Liberals know how to take care of their own homes because they do it so well in their own electorates. They openly admit to blatant pork-barrelling just to win votes. What would Toto think? This Liberal Government continues to ignore the infrastructure needs of south-west Sydney. Previous budgets have been lacklustre to say the least and my constituents are fuming.

Surely, somewhere over the rainbow there must be money for the Macquarie Fields electorate. Our needs are growing as our population grows, but the investment from this Liberal Government in our community remains at zero. This Government has had its head in the sand when it comes to south-west Sydney, so I take this opportunity to remind it of what must be funded. That includes lifts and accessibility improvements at Macquarie Fields station; construction of a new school in Edmondson Park; extra commuter parking along the railway corridor at Minto, Ingleburn, Macquarie Fields and Glenfield; construction of all 2,000 promised parking spaces at Edmondson Park; school upgrades to combat overcrowding; and the expansion of toll relief for struggling drivers and local small businesses. It is a long list—as long as the yellow brick road.

The question remains: How much money will my electorate see when the Liberal Government unveils its 2021-22 budget? Hopefully this year there will not be empty pockets to match its empty promises. But I will not hold my breath because if we take a closer look at this Liberal Government we will see that behind the curtains are budget blowouts, pork-barrelling, ICAC hearings, toll mania and unfair overdevelopment and, just like the disappointing wizard, this Liberal Government is full of tricks and deception. Just like the tornado in the *Wizard of Oz*, this Liberal Government has left a path of destruction and neglect. My constituents are paying the price. When Dorothy arrives back in Kansas, her family and friends discount her tale and adventure as a dream but Dorothy insists it was real. She insists that she will never run away again and that there is indeed no place like home. My expectations of the upcoming State budget are certainly not dreams. They are based on the reality of my constituents' everyday experiences and expectations. I hope that this Government develops a heart, has some courage and shows some intelligence to deliver for my community and give them their fair share.

BATHURST ELECTORATE PROJECTS

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (17:56): I am very happy to talk about a number of investments that are happening in my electorate and how this Government makes promises and actually delivers on them. There are projects that are going to be changing the lives of many people in my local area. Today I will touch on a couple that are quite significant. The first one is the Riding for the Disabled Association [RDA]. The Riding for the Disabled Association has a pet therapy program, which the New South Wales Government has supported with funding of \$153,000. In the past it has been very difficult for those who are in wheelchairs and those who have mobility issues to access the Riding for the Disabled site. With that funding we have sealed the footpath around the facility, which has now made it more accessible. That means they can go and see the animals that are all on site for the pet therapy program, including the Shetland pony, the

alpacas, the ducks, the rabbits, the chooks, the calf, the sheep and the pigs. New fencing has also been put up and a new annex houses a number of those animals on site.

We were there for the official opening a couple of weeks ago. I congratulate the board of Riding for the Disabled on its vision and on the work that it has done in providing this incredible service back to the local community. I also congratulate Melinda Gavin who is the president of the RDA. She does a lot of volunteer hours and was instrumental in seeing the program commence a number of years ago. It was a real pleasure to be able to name the annex after her. I thank everybody who has been involved in the program.

While I was there I also popped into the Carenne School, which supports children who have special needs. The New South Wales Government provided just over \$14,500 to the school to help it plan and build an accessible vegetable garden. This is important, especially for children in wheelchairs. They will now have access to the kitchen and garden. It also means that they will have a water tank and drip irrigation installed. They will have vertical hanging garden beds. The intention is to make it user-friendly and accessible for students of all abilities. I congratulate the staff and students at Carenne School, who are going to benefit from this government investment.

Another project being rolled out is our \$4.6 million state-of-the-art Central Tablelands Collections Facility. At \$2.3 million it is jointly funded by the New South Wales Government and Bathurst Regional Council. The collections facility will be purpose-built and one of its kind in regional New South Wales. I understand it will be the only one in the Central West. Local artists and councils will have an opportunity to ensure that important items that usually end up in garages or storerooms can now be archived and stored in a climate-controlled environment. TAFE students will also have the opportunity to use the facility as part of their learning. It will allow photographs to be digitised. Construction of that facility has just commenced and it will be a great investment to the area.

The Lithgow community was impacted by the bushfires. The New South Wales Government has not stopped providing support to that area. Mingaan Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation received \$300,000 for Blackfellows Hand Cave to improve the road, which became horrendously impassable. That support will help the community. Lithgow City Council has received \$300,000 to upgrade its civic ballroom to make it an evacuation centre in times of disaster. The Wolgan Valley community is also putting a plan together for when natural disasters occur in future to ensure that they have an evacuation plan.

ALBURY ELECTORATE ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (18:01): Tonight I speak about positive things happening in the Albury electorate for the betterment of our environment. This includes the largest funding announcement for the environment that I have seen for the Albury electorate, which is providing \$9 million to improve the health of our river and creek systems; the emergence around Albury of large-scale solar and battery storage; electric vehicle charging points in regional New South Wales, which will drive tourism and support a fundamental change in the way we travel and connect; and recycling initiatives that are game changers for Albury and our State. I have already spoken in Parliament about the \$9 million River Connections grant to a consortium led by Murray Local Land Services to deliver its Refreshing River Management project. Funded from the NSW Environmental Trust, the project will be a welcome boost for inland river health around the South West Slopes, Riverina Highlands and Lower Billabong Creek. Additional funding will lift the investment to a \$20 million set of projects.

Whilst transition is important, solar and other renewables are perhaps one of the more challenging aspects of change in our local community. The transition to solar and other renewables depends on a strong energy grid. TransGrid has been planning the development of the interconnector that will unlock the full capacity of the expanded Snowy Hydro scheme. This will provide more power and enable new energy sources to come online, with HumeLink to the east and EnergyConnect to the west, creating the connections that enable renewables to take over from fossil fuel dependence through New South Wales and into the ACT, Victoria and South Australia.

I fully appreciate that some sectors, notably farming, bear the brunt of the nation's transition from fossil fuels to renewables. Farmland is taken for new uses and regional residents become the neighbours of those imposing facilities. Notwithstanding the benefits to the nation as a whole, the impact of renewables, particularly solar farms, is not lost on me. I have been meeting with farming families and taking their concerns and interests to the Minister and TransGrid to see that processes are transparent so that local people get their chance to comment about what impacts them. I will continue to take such issues forward.

With plastics recycling, the introduction of the Return and Earn container deposit scheme has produced outstanding results for the State and my electorate. Almost 95 million containers have passed through the machines in the Albury electorate, with the busiest location—outside the PCYC—accounting for nearly 30 million of these. Remarkably, our three reverse vending machines are bringing around 650,000 containers per week into the State's recycling stream. In Albury we are seeing the positive outcomes from having a stream of polyethylene terephthalate [PET] collected through reverse vending machines and over the counter, which will soon be heading

to a \$45 million facility to be constructed at Ettamogah with New South Wales and Federal financial support. This factory will take the clean PET and turn it into reusable PET.

Businesses such as Plastic Forests are also part of our circular economy: an award winning manufacturer of recycled plastic products made from soft plastic waste. Based at Lavington, Plastic Forests collects soft plastics such as silage wrap and plastic bags, and puts them through a dry-cleaning process that uses neither water nor chemicals. The product is then turned into a range of useful products, including garden stakes, fence posts and air conditioning mounting blocks. Other businesses in Albury such as Geofabrics are making a difference in the circular economy. Geofabrics is a business making innovative use of geosynthetic products such as concrete canvas, retaining walls, drainage products and root block for gardens. Another Albury business Milspec is manufacturing food and organic waste processors. These businesses are all benefiting from the move to a circular economy.

In further news on organic waste, Albury City Council has received \$290,000 to work with New South Wales businesses to help them increase their recycling and to reduce waste going to landfill. Funding for the Bin Trim program was made available under the New South Wales Government's Waste Less, Recycle More. The program provides businesses with access to expert waste assessors who can give advice and support to individual businesses about waste and recycling. The Government, together with the motoring association, is also putting in place the most comprehensive regional electric motor vehicle charging network in the country, including in Jerilderie. I thank Minister Kean for visiting the Albury electorate. The Government is working to provide benefits for the community and the environment as well as boosting opportunities for local jobs and industry, particularly in the regions.

OATLANDS GOLF CLUB

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (18:06): I want to read onto the public record a text message I received from Ms Bridget Sakr, who would be known to the House as a parent of a child who was tragically killed at the Oatlands Golf Club. I acknowledge Minister Jeff Lee. We have worked hard on this issue. I preface my speech with this message from that mum:

The Oatlands Golf Club's lack of human spirit eats into my soul. I do not understand how anyone could have a cold, stone heart with this tragedy. It is certainly no "accident", as they highlight. That was an unimaginable tragedy that occurred to four young innocent lives. ... My daughter landed on the golf course. Does that mean nothing to them?

These are hard messages to read, but they are important messages. This is not the first time the Minister and I have spoken about this particular issue. Everybody knows the tragedy that was the Oatlands crash. Everybody knows the story and has been inspired by the families and the incredible way that they have made us better individuals. Those of us who have been fortunate enough to get to know them through this process have had our lives enriched. Four beautiful children had their lives cut short and other children have survivors guilt: Liana, Chebel and Mabelle.

These tragic circumstances shook the nation and humanity and have had a massive effect. What is the end result? The perpetrator gets 28 years imprisonment, there is a change in legislation and an i4give Day, which is all about the willingness of this family to forgive and to say, "Let's help each other out." That started. Who was there? Minister Lee, the Prime Minister, the Premier and I were there—a range of people supporting these families who have inspired change in all of us. Again, only last week another hardship hit them when the Abdallah's house was robbed. Yet they still bounce back and say, "This is the card we are dealt with."

These people are amazing. When amazing people do things like that, we as a society should do something for them. Today I will talk about the grace and dignity they have shown, which is the exact opposite of what we have seen from the board of directors of the Oatlands Golf Club. Make no mistake: This is not about the Oatlands Golf Club; this is about the board of directors, who have a lot to answer for. Their behaviour is the exact opposite of the grace and dignity that the Abdallah family has shown. The family has requested that a memorial be built on the grounds of the golf club. It is not huge, it is not the Taj Mahal; it is a beautiful commemorative garden. It has been designed using four stones that come up to the knee, along with a curved seat and a beautiful terraced hedge. The memorial will not impact on the golf course. I encourage anybody in this Chamber to visit the place.

The parents have said that they are willing to pay for the memorial, but again the golf club has rejected their proposal. Further than that, the club has actually said that negotiations are closed. The board's idea was to place four rocks, 30 centimetres by 30 centimetres, one metre inside the fence and that was the end of it. If ever there was a tokenistic approach, that is it. When I am talking with members of the golf club I sometimes wonder whether they are trying to make themselves out to be the victims. It is as though it is an inconvenience that the tragedy happened on their site. That tragedy absolutely broke the nation's heart, and the club is expected to do something. I grant that it is a private club, but it is part of a community. The club has an obligation to do something. Meet the family halfway. The club said it was either a yes or no to its proposal, and then it wanted to walk away.

In my opinion the club is looking for an excuse to get away. The response has been, "The scale is not what we wanted, so we are going to close negotiations."

There was a meeting between me, the Minister, members of the council, members of the golf club and the families affected. We tried everything. But the truth is—I said this at the meeting, and I am happy for it to be on record—I felt that the club went into that meeting without a genuine desire to find a solution. The club basically said, "This is what we want and this is what you are going to get." The reason I am so fired up and passionate is that we as a country have seen what that family can do. They have not asked anything of anybody. The golf club should do much more. I will not accept its passive aggression. The club said, "It is not our fault. We are trying to find middle ground." But the club is not trying to find the middle ground; it is trying to find a way out. Those families are heartbroken.

As I said, the memorial is not the Taj Mahal; it is a small commemorative garden that stretches five metres into the grounds of the club and is covered by trees. We are willing to do anything we can to install that memorial. The average person on the street would agree that this is really important. Let us put aside that sense of elitism and start caring about people. The Abdallah family has inspired us to be better people. It is our responsibility to try to be better. I urge, I implore, I ask and I even beg the board of directors at the very least to take the family's proposal to their members so that members can make the final decision. This is not the way to respond to people's kindness and goodness. A tragedy has affected those families unlike any other.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, and Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (18:12): I support the condemnation of Oatlands Golf Club from the member for Lakemba. I am also extremely disappointed by the actions of the directors of the golf club. The loss of four lives was a national tragedy that affected the Sakr and Abdallah families forever. I have always said that a tasteful, dignified memorial that commemorates the tragic loss of life would be appropriate. I have had difficult conversations with the families on what is possible. In the end the approval of the memorial is up to the directors of the golf club. My opinion has not changed; it is still up to the directors to approve the designs that will go to members. An appropriate design should be put to members of the club for their consideration. I call on the directors to work with us on a memorial that commemorates the loss of those four angels.

NEW ENGLAND RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (18:13): Last Wednesday one of the most important steps to date in the development of the game-changing \$12.7 billion New England Renewable Energy Zone [REZ] was taken in Armidale with the inaugural meeting of the New England Renewable Energy Zone regional reference group. The group, made up of the region's local councils, Aboriginal Land councils and relevant State government agencies, was established to ensure that the views of locals are front and centre in the development of the modern-day power station. At 8,000 megawatts of renewable energy, once fully developed, the New England REZ will make a huge contribution—in fact, the largest single contribution—to achieving an affordable, reliable and clean energy future for all of the residents of New South Wales.

The New England REZ is the largest single renewable energy zone anywhere in Australia. This once-in-a-generation plan will inject conservatively over \$12.7 billion into the local economy in the Northern Tablelands and northern New England areas. It will unlock private sector investment and will deliver 830 ongoing operational jobs, as well as over 1,200 construction jobs each year in our region. To ensure we capture, maximise, milk and extract every single benefit from that huge economic stimulus and investment in those large game-changing projects, without any of the negative impacts and not at the cost of any of our existing industries, the reference group is critical to make sure we get the planning, the consultation and the detail just right.

It is no accident New England has been chosen as the largest renewable energy zone in Australia. Northern New England is blessed with an abundance of wind, solar and hydro resources. We also benefit from some of the State's most promising sites for pumped hydro, as well as our strategic proximity to existing transmission infrastructure and, of course, very strong private sector investor interest in our area. A foundational workforce and training and educational systems and sectors also exist, which can be leveraged. They have to be leveraged to make sure that as many of the 830 ongoing jobs and over 1,200 construction jobs are filled by people from our local region rather than people from outside. The reference group is critical to planning for that aspect as well.

The reference group is about working with the local community from day dot to make sure the REZ is delivered in a way that boosts the benefits to the local community without compromising the assets that make our region so unique, without compromising good agricultural land, without compromising rural amenity and without compromising anything our local communities value highly. We welcome and love renewables in our region. I am an unabashed, strong supporter of renewable energy and always have been, but it must not come at the cost of

existing industries or amenities. We welcome good developers and good projects in the right spots. We do not welcome cowboys. In fact, we reject them utterly.

As of this morning, within the draft footprint of the REZ there are around a dozen projects that have been lodged for assessment and approval with the department of planning. As with any major developments, there are projects that are good and attract a lot of community support. They work with the community and they let the community guide the design of their projects. There are others projects that communities are against because the companies do not engage early enough with those communities. They just plonk their project on a map and say, "This is what we are doing." Two such projects have attracted enormous criticism.

One is the Rangoon Wind Farm proposal by Meridian Energy Australia, right on the outskirts of the Ben Lomond village, which is contrary to the guidelines of the National Wind Farm Commissioner. The other is the Oxley Solar Farm in the Castle Doyle area. That environmental impact statement, which just came off exhibition, attracted 79 submissions and every single one of them was against the project. Not a single one was in favour. I put on the record, despite my huge support for renewables and my track record of doing so, that these two projects do not meet the approval of the community and they do not meet with my approval as the local member. It is my ardent view that both projects should be rejected and hit for six. The uncertainty that hangs over the community should be removed as quickly as possible.

That is why the REZ is important. The establishment of the REZ gives the community the ability to reject such proposals before they go through the arduous, long and cumbersome planning process. It allows the leadership teams at Glen Innes, Inverell, Uralla, Walcha, Armidale and all of those surrounding councils to set the ground rules for where the projects can be developed and where they cannot, where they are welcomed, and the legacy infrastructure we want to secure as a result of the investment. There is no doubt that renewables will play a major role in the economic fabric of our future. That is brilliant and everyone welcomes it. But, again, it should not and will not be at the expense of any of our existing industries.

ROTARY CENTENARY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (18:18): It is with much pleasure that I speak on the centenary of Rotary in Australia and the role that Rotary plays in communities across New South Wales and the world. "Service Above Self" is the motto of Rotary across the local community, New South Wales, Australia, the Southern Hemisphere and the world. This month Rotary Sydney Club celebrates its 100th birthday as the first Rotary club in Australia. As co-chair of Parliamentary Friends of Rotary, I have been involved in its celebrations. With 1.2 million members around the world, Rotary is one of the largest volunteer organisations on the planet. But everything is local and my local club Engadine Rotary punches well above its weight, running the Sydney to Wollongong bike ride to raise funds for Father Riley's youth programs. Raising millions of dollars over the decades and organising such a massive event with just a club from the suburbs is a herculean effort. My club, the Rotary Club of Caringbah, runs the Caringbah Markets, which raise money for projects such as Adopt a Town. During the recent drought, fires and now floods, that project has connected rural communities with their city cousins, and relationships have blossomed through visits from city to country and vice versa.

Caringbah is also organising a sea container of school furnishings and equipment to go to Tonga because schools in these regions have little, often sitting on dirt floors learning from slate boards. Local schools were more than helpful in donating furniture, which has been written off their equipment register leaving them without a dumping bill—a win-win for all involved. On the world stage, one of the most prominent projects is the eradication of polio through vaccinating 2.5 billion children across the planet. That program has been very successful, with just a few pockets in Afghanistan and Pakistan remaining. With the support from the Gates foundation this work is almost completed. Rotary in every community supports programs like clean water, supporting education and protecting the environment. One program, Shelter Boxes, is a wonderful self-contained box with all the things people need in a state of emergency—floods, earthquakes, fires and tsunamis. Containing a tent for 10 people, kitchen equipment, a water purification station and bedding, this self-contained box can be air-dropped or quickly distributed to areas of need from strategic warehouses around the world, with Australia's situated in Darwin.

Rotary across Australasia supports communities of the South Pacific and further afield. My club has supported many projects delivering school buildings in Indonesia, Fiji and Tonga. Some of the programs Rotary runs include the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards [RYLA], Peace Fellowship, Rotary Community Corps, Youth Exchange, New Generations Service Exchange, Scholarships and Friendship Exchange. My daughter-in-law completed the weekend RYLA course, for example, and was changed in a very positive way. In fact, she said that in an interview for a Qantas intern role, the one thing the interview panel concentrated on was her RYLA experience. I am happy to report she got the internship and is still working at Qantas in a senior position.

Youth Exchange is another program that is changing young people's lives. Obviously it has not been occurring in recent times due to COVID-19, but it was an exchange where students left their secure, home lifestyle

to be thrust into dealing with another culture. Students put down three choices of where they would like to go and then a destination is chosen for them, where they stay for six months. The objective is to place them in a safe home but truly outside their comfort zone. One of our club's students went to Finland with no language and no real understanding of where she was going. When talking to her today of her experience, her eyes light up and she gushes with stories of being thrown in the deep end, coming home speaking Finnish and loving another culture from the perspective of total immersion.

Little did my colleague Dr Hugh McDermott and I know before co-chairing the NSW Parliamentary Friends of Rotary that it would be the first in the world and a blueprint for Rotary friends in every parliament around the world. For my over nine years in Rotary I recently received from the Sydney Rotary Club my Paul Harris Fellow Double Emerald for progressing Rotary in the New South Wales Parliament. I was simply blown away. We all have Rotary clubs in our electorates and I encourage members to reach out in May to congratulate Rotary on celebrating its 100th birthday.

NEWCASTLE ELECTORATE HOUSING

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (18:23): According to the latest data from the Real Estate Institute of New South Wales, 0.7 per cent was the residential rental vacancy rate in Newcastle in March. That is lower than Sydney, at 4 per cent; the Illawarra, at 1.1 per cent; and the Central Coast, at 0.9 per cent. That is not a figure that surprises anyone on the ground in Newcastle, though. They all saw it coming. It does not matter which service provider I speak to, they all say the same thing: they have never seen it like this. The end of JobKeeper, the end of the moratorium on rental evictions, the exodus of Sydneysiders out of the city and ongoing under-investment in social housing has left us in the eye of a perfect storm of housing stress, homelessness and an unsustainable property market.

Just over a week ago, I spoke to NBN News about what is happening in Newcastle. That week three people had approached me about their homelessness. The next week that figure was nine. They are singles. They are couples. They are families. Some have been evicted from their current property. Some are struggling to secure somewhere safe. Some are recovering from addiction. Some have applied for dozens of properties, with no joy. The only thing that links these people is their housing situation. Such is the breadth of this crisis that having a steady income no longer puts you in good stead to be offered a property. You may be able to pay the asking price, but there is someone willing to pay more. Those people are turning in droves to local organisations like Jenny's Place, Nova For Women and Children, the Matthew Talbot Homeless Service, and Hunter Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service. Hunter Tenants has reported that of late 50 per cent of its callers had sought advice about a notice of termination. In two months, that amounted to 300 people who had been evicted.

Securing long-term accommodation for those people, however, is not the first battle our homelessness services face. Finding permanent housing is one thing; finding a roof to put over someone's head that very night is just as hard. On Friday morning my office was informed that no temporary accommodation was available in Newcastle for that evening—not one bed. One service had started giving out tents and sleeping bags. During the height of the pandemic, this Government was able to find the money to expand the temporary accommodation budget and find people a safe place to sleep. Homelessness is increasing but that needed extra funding has gone. Temporary accommodation is being cut off at 28 days, but it is taking much, much longer than that to secure housing. Where do those people go? Tents and sleeping bags.

A measure of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable, and when our homelessness services are running out of resources and cannot keep up with the demand, that is an indictment on the Government that is supposed to support them. But it is not the case that this Government is only now dropping the ball. It has been chronic and systemic. The Government would not listen to the warnings, and now we are reaping what it has sown. Members do not need to take my word for it, though. My questions during budget estimates have revealed all. In the past five years, this Government has constructed just 33 new properties in the Newcastle allocation zone. Compare that to Labor's final year in government, when 41 new properties were built in one year alone. The next financial year, when planning commenced under Labor, a further 59 properties were constructed.

Here is the bigger issue, though: In the last decade 46 homes with three or more bedrooms have been sold off, and only 13 have been constructed in their place. This Government will point to an apartment block and say, "Look! We've built so much," but members should not be deceived. Using one- and two-bedroom properties to bolster its stock at the expense of larger premises is nothing to brag about. Where do you place a woman who has fled domestic violence with her kids? Certainly not in a one-bedroom property. Now is not the time for this Government to pinch pennies and recoup what was spent during the worst of the pandemic. A new pandemic is upon us, and without immediate action it, too, will cost lives.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CENTENARY

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (18:29): Tonight I pay tribute to the Royal Australian Air Force [RAAF] which recently commemorated 100 years of service to our nation. It was an occasion marked with a spectacular flyover and the presentation of a new The Queen's Colour, embodying service traditions, achievements and the distinguished history of our RAAF. As a former captain in the Australian Army, it is an honour to stand in this place and reflect on the history of the RAAF and its 350,000 past and present members, who have made an invaluable contribution to the force and to our nation. Just over a century ago the RAAF was established after an agreement was made at the 1911 Imperial Conference to adopt air power as a central pillar of the British Empire defence. While the main territories of the empire agreed to adopt air power, only Australia implemented an action plan to make it happen.

The Central Flying School was established at Point Cook as the first step in building air power through the Army Australian Flying Corps [AFC]. In World War I about 5,000 served in the AFC in Palestine and on the Western Front, and many others served with the Royal Flying Corps [RFC] and the Royal Naval Air Service. A notable first for Australian air power was the first ship-launched air-to-air engagement. Her Majesty's Australian ship HMAS *Sydney* was on patrol in the North Sea when it came under attack from a flight of German fighters. Quickly launching the ship's fighter, it engaged a pair of German aircraft and fought them off.

The RAF was formed on 1 April 1918 from the RFC and the much larger Royal Naval Australian Service, adopting army enlisted ranks and navy officer ranks. Following the British example, as there was not a naval air service, Australia re-formed the AFC into the RAAF. In the post-World War I era and the Depression, the expansion of the air force was severely constrained until the late 1930s, when rearmament against the growing fascist threat became a necessity. From 1939 to 1945 the RAAF went through a remarkable expansion from being a barely credible air force to the fourth largest in the world, with operations around the globe.

Following the end of World War II, the air force returned to a more sustainable size and was the first to fight in Korea. The 77 Squadron flew in a day from the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan to the Pusan perimeter—the first non-American force to arrive to push back the communist assault—dropping bombs as P-51 Mustangs took off from the airfield. As the Cold War became more intense in the 1950s and 1960s, the air force became vital for security in South-East Asia and for opposing communist expansion on a number of fronts. The air force evolved into a high-tech force, employing the most advanced aircraft and weaponry from the iconic F-111 bomber to the ubiquitous C-130 Hercules and the Vietnam workhorse: the UH-1H Iroquois helicopter. The air force returned to combat operations in the Middle East in the 2000s, including numerous aircraft being involved in the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant—ISIL—in Iraq. I might add that the air force, through the C-130, flew Minister Roberts and I in and out of Bougainville in 2000 and 2001 respectively.

The missions that our air force achieved displayed the highest standards of airmanship and operational excellence, which our nation should be extremely proud of. Today's air force is on the pathway to becoming the world's first fifth-generation air force—a modern, high-technology enterprise adopting the latest capabilities from around the world. The advanced supporting aircraft are already in place: the tankers, the airborne control aircraft, patrol and anti-submarine bombers, the MQ4 Triton drones, and the essential airlift fleet of the C-17s, the C-130s and the C-27s. Combined with long-range radars, strategic intelligence and extensive contractor logistics and maintenance support, the RAAF is well placed to cater for the growing strategic challenges in our region. Here's to another 100 years.

LISMORE ELECTORATE HOUSING

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (18:33): Tonight I highlight the housing supply, affordability and homelessness crisis in my electorate of Lismore and in the broader regions, particularly in the Northern Rivers. The Northern Rivers has the lowest rate of rental vacancies in New South Wales and one of our local councils, Tweed council, has declared a housing emergency, and it looks like other councils are set to follow. The Real Estate Institute of New South Wales found that in February the Northern Rivers had a vacancy rate of just over 0.3 per cent, which is down from 0.6 per cent. That is the lowest in New South Wales. In our region we have had the largest increase in housing prices across the nation and our vacancies are too low.

Social Futures, a local housing support organisation, has expressed its deep concern about the impact on communities if there is not urgent investment in affordable and social housing, and the organisation wants that investment to arrive as soon as possible. *The Northern Rivers Times*, one of the local community newspapers, quotes me as saying:

"The housing crisis is only getting worse, so we are all hoping for a real commitment in Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg's 2021-22 Budget speech on Tuesday—

because it is a Federal issue also—

and a substantial amount in the NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrotet's Budget speech 2021-2022."

Some of the statistics are telling. They are more than statistics; they are people, human beings whose lives are shattered by not having a safe and secure place to call home. I ask members to imagine what it is like for anyone anywhere to have no home to go to. Our region is in a housing crisis. People who have grown up and lived their whole lives in my electorate are facing having to leave our community because there is no housing. Some people, particularly older women, are coming to me because they are concerned that the rents will go up and they will be told to get out. They wonder what they will do then. Some of them have lived in their houses for years. Not all landlords and landladies will do that because we have a lot of good ones who look after people.

I grew up in a Housing Commission house, as it was then called. I know how important it is for the Government to build and invest in housing or, if it does not want to do that, to ensure that others do it. The Government has an important role in making sure that everyone has a secure home. Government at both State and Federal levels must have a stronger role in housing. We all have a responsibility to ensure people have a secure home. As members of Parliament, we do that through strong advocacy. We cannot leave it up to the private sector. We must work together. Housing investment ticks all the boxes: It gives people the security of a home and enables them to take their place in their community and do the things they want to do—work, study and all the things we take for granted. It also creates local jobs for small businesses and for our tradies.

When speaking to local media in my electorate, the Deputy Premier of New South Wales said that the housing crisis is a "champagne problem", which is not a good characterisation of the housing crisis at all. He should tell that to the people in my electorate of Lismore who face a lack of supply, a lack of affordability and homelessness. They cannot find anywhere to live. His comment was out of touch. As I mentioned, the Northern Rivers rental vacancy is 0.3 per cent. The region has 19 per cent of the State's homelessness across the board but only 3 per cent of homelessness funding, which is a telling statistic. Victoria announced 12,000 new social housing dwellings over the next four years—an investment of \$5.4 billion. We need that in New South Wales, but the Government plans to build only 1,200 new homes. We need more than that. I will continue this speech on a future occasion, as I have more to say.

ST IVES SHOW CENTENARY

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (18:38): Local shows in New South Wales are a window into communities, illustrating the values of their residents. The events are particularly popular across regional and rural settings but they are also popular in city areas. Local shows provide many benefits, including bringing people together, providing entertainment to adults and children, showcasing produce and animals, and revealing the unique history and traditions of local communities. This year marks the centenary of the St Ives Show, an annual fair that brings the community together in my electorate of Davidson. Last year the fair was cancelled due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, so I am pleased it will return in 2021 to celebrate its centenary—a major milestone.

The event will run on 15 and 16 May at the St Ives Showground and is organised by the St Ives Agricultural and Horticultural Show Society. Attractions will include music, woodchopping, carnival rides, a sideshow alley, food stalls, arts and craft markets and animal amusements. Interestingly, the show first launched while the main industry of St Ives evolved from timber-getting and milling to agriculture—that was in the early twentieth century. During that period, residents grew their fruit and vegetables and some raised poultry and animals. By the end of World War I, St Ives produced all kinds of fruit. An active group of farmers subsequently formed the St Ives Fruit Growers' Association in 1913. Initially, agriculturalists displayed their produce at Hassall Park on Mona Vale Road.

In 1920 the St Ives Agricultural and Horticultural Association was formed, holding its first show in 1921. The event included woodchopping and sawing, a parade and exhibits of local produce. In 1926 the St Ives Show was held in what is now the St Ives Showground for the first time. The show ceased during World War II but was revived by Ku-ring-gai Council after the war. It stopped again in 1968 and was revived in 1975, a year when 8,000 people attended. Despite its breaks, the show continues to this day. The showground is now classified as historically significant by the National Trust of Australia, which is the peak body committed to conserving Australia's national and historic heritage.

Since last year St Ives Showground has received grants from the New South Wales Government totalling over \$2 million to improve the buildings, internal roads and main arena. Those improvements should facilitate an even greater experience for attendees this year. I have been fortunate to attend the show in previous years and have always enjoyed the experience. I likewise look forward to attending this year and am honoured to have been asked to officially open the 100th anniversary show. I congratulate all those involved in organising the St Ives Show over the years—particularly during this year's centenary milestone—including the St Ives Agricultural and

Horticultural Show Society, which was led by its former President, Elaine Tracey, until 2019, and the current President of the Association, Brian Walker, since 2019. I acknowledge the local and State governments for their backing and members of the community for their support.

I hope the St Ives Show continues well into the future for the benefit of local constituents and the wider community. I want to emphasise the importance of community. I have just come from an event in the Jubilee Room with Parkinson's NSW, which supports important people in our community who are suffering from Parkinson's disease. I acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of one of the board members of Parkinson's NSW, Janina Jancu, who is here with her husband, James Crawford, and friends Lachlan and Rebecca Edwards, and is also accompanied by my wife. I acknowledge their presence as members of the community and I am sure that, like others, they love to see activities like the St Ives Show thrive. We look forward to its prosperity in the future.

CABRAMATTA ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATION SERVICES

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (18:43): On Sunday 25 April I attended several Anzac Day commemorative services throughout my electorate to honour and remember those brave men and women who have served and are currently serving in defence of our nation. As many members in this Chamber can attest, Anzac Day services have been very different since COVID-19 hit our shores. Last year Anzac Day services were held in the virtual world, with Australians right across our nation standing proud at the end of their driveways, tuning in to dawn services in solidarity with the Anzacs. Thankfully, this year approval for Anzac Day services to go ahead was provided at the eleventh hour and we were fortunate to have commemorative services, which were able to be organised in a short time frame and hosted by local clubs.

This Anzac Day I had the great honour of attending the dawn service at Canley Heights RSL, as well as commemorative services at the Mount Pritchard Mounties and the Triglav club, with each service well attended by ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen, community leaders, club officials and local residents. This year all our local services put social distancing measures in place as an extra precautionary measure, which were welcomed and respected by all in attendance. Although no marches took place locally, commemorative services still followed tradition, with a welcome to country, prayers, poems, wreath laying and *The Ode*, which was a beautiful. Solemn return to the Anzac Day services we so dearly missed. On behalf of my electorate I express my sincere gratitude to Canley Heights RSL, Mount Pritchard Mounties and the Triglav club for organising commemorative services this year, and allowing our community to join together to pay their respects and honour those who have given their all in service to our nation.

Anzac Day is an important day in our national calendar, as Australians across our nation band together to remember the contributions and sacrifices made by extraordinary Australians who embody the spirit of the Anzacs. Commemorative services provide our communities with the opportunity to pay their respects and join together in honouring the brave perseverance and sacrifices made by diggers past and present. As proud Australians, it falls on our shoulders to honour the legacy of the Anzacs, and to ensure future generations understand the importance of Anzac and remember sacrifices made by their forefathers to provide the freedoms and security we all know and cherish today. To each and every Australian and New Zealander who has courageously served or continues to serve in the armed forces today, on behalf of all members of this House and my electorate of Cabramatta, I thank you for your service. As Australians it is important for us to continue commemorating and instilling the significance of this important tradition. For as long as we continue to do this the spirit of our Anzacs will never be taken for granted nor will their sacrifices be forgotten by generations to come. Lest we forget.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (18:46): I endorse the comments of the member for Cabramatta, and add my respect and support for those RSL sub-branches made up of volunteers—former servicemen, many of them now very elderly—who take on the task of organising Anzac ceremonies to be able to share with the younger generations in our community what Anzac means. I acknowledge their hard work and I foreshadow that the community may have to find a way to support those groups to make sure this tradition extends into the future. But certainly I share the sentiments of the member for Cabramatta in respecting the service of all those who have served this country in the past and those who are doing so now.

DUBBO ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (18:47): Members in this place do not always think along the same lines. However, one thing we all agree on, as we have just heard from the member for Cabramatta and the member for Riverstone, is the significance of Anzac Day. While Parliament was in recess 25 April rolled around and most, if not all, members joined with our communities to commemorate arguably the most special day on the calendar. Of course, last year we were faced with an Anzac Day the likes of which we had never seen. COVID-19 forced us into our homes and we could not come together for the dawn service. We could not come together and march.

We could not even come together to toss the coins at two-up. Fast forward to this year and, thankfully, things were pretty close to normal. That is because of the incredible work of this Government but also the communities that have responded to the various ways we have had to do things since COVID-19 arrived on our shores.

This year I attended the service at Mudgee. It really was fantastic to not only see the brave men and women of our armed forces involved but also, importantly, a return to having school groups and other community organisations marching with them. It was the same at other services around the Dubbo electorate. Having spoken to some of the RSL sub-branches and looking at the coverage of different events across local and social media it is fair to say that veterans and their families loved having Anzac Day back as a community event. As part of the build-up to Anzac Day this year, I did some research about some of the local people from my region who make up our proud military history. I put together a number of written stories for my website and videos for people to watch and share on social media. I recognise some of those people formally here today.

As part of the research, I discovered the likes of Private Thomas Cohen, who was born at Mookerawa and lived in Stuart Town before enlisting in March 1916 and being assigned to the 2nd Battalion. After a long period of service in France, Cohen's unit was engaged in fighting in the Mont St Quentin area, and he was killed there in action on 18 September 1918. Then there is the story of the Dowling brothers, Ted and Claude, who coincidentally were both drapers by trade, both fought in Gallipoli and survived that part of the war. Both men were awarded military medals, Ted for his work as a stretcher-bearer in Palestine and Claude for his bravery in attending to the wounded under heavy fire at a time when stretcher-bearers were unavailable. Sadly, Claude was killed in action in 1917, while Ted returned to Dubbo in June 1919.

Another amazing individual from my region was Reginald Kierath—"Rusty" to his friends—who is best known for the part he played in "The Great Escape" from a prisoner of war [POW] camp during the Second World War. Originally from Narromine, Rusty was the youngest of nine children. His parents, Ada and William Kierath, owned the Narromine general store. Rusty joined the air force in 1940. In April 1943 he was flying with a group of fighters off the coast of Tunisia when they received heavy anti-aircraft fire from a German ship. His engine seized after being hit and he had to bail out into the sea, where he was rescued, taken prisoner by the Germans and sent to a POW camp in Poland. In March 1944, on a freezing cold night, Rusty and 75 others made "The Great Escape" through underground tunnels and out of the camp. Rusty was part of a group of members who posed as timber mill workers. They were pretending to be on leave and heading to the mountains, but they were arrested by a mountain patrol as they tried to cross into occupied Czechoslovakia and then were handed over to the Gestapo. Unfortunately, Rusty and three other airmen were executed by the Gestapo and he was cremated. His remains are now buried in part of the Poznan Old Garrison Cemetery.

These are just three of thousands of stories that ensure that Anzac Day holds a special place for all of us. I am grateful that our younger generations were involved in Anzac Day activities again this year. Doing so ensures the Anzac legacy will live on as we appreciate the sacrifices made so that we can enjoy the benefits of living in the best country in the world. Plenty of people work very hard to ensure that Anzac commemorations come together, but I will finish by giving an example of the emotions the day can stir up. Tom Gray was born and raised in Dubbo and spent 20 years in the navy. These days he is involved in a number of community groups in town and is president of the Dubbo RSL Sub-Branch.

If you have watched an Anzac Day or Remembrance Day in Dubbo, chances are that Tom has helped organise it. He normally leads the procession. He was at it again this year but got a bit of a surprise. Singer-songwriter Mick Davis was entertaining people who returned to the Dubbo RSL club for their annual luncheon and announced that he was going to perform a song for the first time publicly. The song spoke about conflict, returning home and featured a chorus that relayed what Anzac Day means to Mick, which was "shiny boots and medals and a walk with Tommy Gray". It was a really nice thing for Tom. I say a massive thank you to him and all the other RSL sub-branches. Lest we forget.

MOUSE PLAGUE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (18:52): I draw to the attention of the House the current mouse plague that is running rampant in New South Wales. I express the concerns of the people in Maitland and indeed farmers and others across this State who have been or will be impacted by this plague. First there was the drought and then the summer bushfires followed by flooding and COVID-19, and now we have a mouse plague to contend with. On social media farmers have uploaded photos and videos of mice blanketing their land, destroying tonnes of fodder and grain set aside for drought proofing, and even stories of people who have been bitten in their own beds. The crisis continues to escalate and so does the health and mental trauma of living on the land with the plague. It has been reported that at least three patients were bitten by mice while they were inpatients in Tottenham, Walgett and Gulargambone hospitals.

NSW Health has also reported increased leptospirosis cases—a disease that spreads from infected animal urine from the likes of rodents to other animals and humans. It does not matter where I travel across the State, including the Upper Hunter in Scone and even Gloucester in the past few weeks, farmers are telling and sharing similar stories with me about their costly mice experiences. In fact, we even found a couple at my place in the past few days in Maitland. Many farmers have given up on their efforts to control the plague with bait and are instead ploughing their summer crops back into the ground. Other desperate measures include burying entire haystacks to try to prevent them from total destruction by mice. NSW Farmers has been calling for urgent action from the State Government for some time, including an emergency use permit from the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority [APVMA] that would give farmers earlier permission to use the legal rodenticide known as zinc phosphide off-label on fallow ground.

More than this, farmers want to be able to expedite the process for commercial operators to get approval to set up more stations, particularly in the north, so that zinc phosphide can be applied to farmers' own grain. Not having to purchase pre-baited fodder that may have foreign weeds in it would reduce the biosecurity risk of weeds. It would also reduce costs, as sterilising that same fodder to reduce weeds costs about \$200 per tonne. There is also a risk of price gouging when there is such difficulty in getting the fodder. Commercial providers have to jump through a number of hoops to get approval from a number of agencies to set up bait stations, including the Environment Protection Authority [EPA]. Transport is another issue for farmers who have to take this action because they have to travel to bait stations in the south of the State with their own fodder and then bring it back. Obviously, we need more stations.

NSW Farmers has asked for financial assistance through a small grants program with a subsidy of up to \$25,000 per farmer. That sounds like a lot of money, but just last Friday in Tocal I heard of a farmer who had spent over \$100,000 on rodent management and still had not managed to quell the plague. Off the back of the long drought, the bushfires, the floods and COVID-19 farmers do not have the capacity or funds in the bank to fight this plague by themselves. I understand that the Minister finally applied for the permit through the APVMA and it has been approved, but farmers are crying out for an immediate financial assistance package to subsidise the cost. Local Land Services does help with pest control, but farmers—much to their anger—have apparently been told that this is not a mouse plague; rather, it is a "mice breeding event". How disgraceful.

There is an urgent need for more extension work from Local Land Services on this issue. In late February the EPA called on people to contact it to remove and dispose of commercial mouse baits in their homes due to the high levels of toxicity and the suspected poisonings, or even suffocations, that resulted in hospitalisation from their use in enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces. We are well aware of the health and broader environmental concerns of using zinc phosphides. An example includes on fallow ground where birds of prey may be impacted. However, if the Government had acted earlier to approve off-label use at the beginning of the plague and applied for the approval from the APVMA we may have seen it contained earlier. Certainly the colder, wetter weather did help a little, but the mice are back and moving south. Over the weekend I even heard of a miner in the Upper Hunter who put a bucket into the dirt in a mine to get the coal and it came out with mice jumping all through it. That is beyond what people have seen in the past.

Due to more advanced farming technology, headers now go through wheat fields and sheep do not, as in days past, go in and get the grain. Instead, the grain lies on the ground for the mice. They are opportunistic vermin and they will go for it. Once mice get the taste of sorghum or other crops, they will destroy them. Farmers and other people living in these areas need immediate support from the New South Wales Government to ensure that their winter crops have some hope. Like always in New South Wales, The Nationals are doing nothing to support country people.

KU-RING-GAI ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (18:58): This Anzac Day we came together in person and in spirit to commemorate the men and women who served our nation and its allies so that we can live in freedom. Locally, it was an honour to take part in our community's services to remember veterans like my dearly departed father. This year Ku-ring-gai's dawn service at West Pymble Bicentennial Park, and the services at Wahroonga Park and Turramurra Memorial Park, were led by our local youth from the Sydney North Region Scouts and Girl Guides NSW. I acknowledge District Commissioner Mr Allen Hyde and his team of parent volunteers from the Scouts and Girl Guides NSW who organised our local Ku-ring-gai Anzac services. I also acknowledge our local Rotary clubs of Turramurra, Wahroonga and Ku-ring-gai that supported the Scouts and Girl Guides as marshals to help manage the proceedings.

This past weekend I attended the Knox Grammar School cadet parade and Anzac memorial service. Anzac Day has always been an important part of the school's heritage, with the first parade held in 1944. Ms Emma Woodcock, from Ravenswood School for Girls, was the leader of the parade and is the first female senior cadet underofficer and parade commander of the Knox cadet unit. The Knox Anzac address was delivered by Reviewing

Officer and Knox parent Rear Admiral Lee Goddard. During his address, the Rear Admiral mentioned the sinking of the HMAS *Perth* in 1942 during the Battle of Sunda Strait. Of the 686 crew, most of the men perished and the few survivors were taken as Japanese prisoners of war. Only 218 men were eventually repatriated.

The story reminded me that those survivors were part of the many people who fought the war without a gun, like members of my family. The survivors of the HMAS *Perth*, like my uncle Jacques Henskens, who was in the Dutch East Indies Army, would find their greatest war battle lay ahead, spending the rest of the war on the infamous Burma Railway as Japanese prisoners of war where few survived. I first met my uncle Jacques when I was a teenager in 1981, almost 40 years after the war. But for him, as for many veterans and civilians, the war had never ended. He told me many stories of those times as a Japanese prisoner of war. He suffered great psychological torture from events like having his best friend pulled out of a parade to be shot in front of everyone for no good reason. He was almost starved to death. At 182 centimetres in height, he weighed only 40 kilograms at the time the camp was liberated.

On his return to the Netherlands, Jacques was hospitalised for six months as a consequence of his malnourishment and ill-treatment. He told me that every second he was in the camp he could think of nothing else but food. His back was like leather from the beatings he endured, and pieces of bamboo would continue to come out of his back for over a year after liberation. In May 2016 I was asked to give the Sydney Holocaust Remembrance Speech in tribute to my uncle Leo and his wife, Zus, for housing a mother and her two teenage children in their home in German-occupied Holland during the Second World War in order to save them from the Holocaust. If they had been discovered by the Germans, Uncle Leo's family would have been taken to a concentration camp to die with the family that they were hiding. Everybody in that house lived in fear for 2½ years. Uncle Leo was greatly affected as a consequence and, according to my father, developed a nervous disposition.

My father joined the Dutch Resistance as a 17-year-old. He was reluctant to talk about the war as it brought back sad memories of the friends and family who he had lost. My father did not feel psychologically able to march every year on Anzac Day, but we were always proud when he did. In my first speech in Parliament I told the story of my father's capture of an SS officer and his men. In 2006, when I took my parents to Europe for their fiftieth wedding anniversary, my father told us for the first time that his main job in the Resistance was not to shoot guns but to risk his life stealing them from the Germans.

There was a depot in Den Bosch where the German soldiers used to place their guns on a fence. After taking his opportunity to steal a German rifle, my father would walk for about 15 minutes through the city in the middle of the day with the rifle under his coat and take it down a lane to the rear door of a private bank where an arm would come out of the door after he knocked. He never saw who was on the other side of that door and they never saw him. The rifle would be handed to the person in the bank and the door would close. Many people like my father had bad dreams about the war for many years after its conclusion. Life for them would never be the same again. We are thankful for those who have served and continue to serve today and acknowledge the impact of war upon them. Lest we forget.

STONE & WOOD BREWERY

LOGGERHEAD TURTLES

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (19:03): The first topic I will talk about is Stone & Wood: a brewery born and bred in Byron Bay. I acknowledge the member for Ballina sitting opposite me. This is a story about friends Brad Rogers, Ross Jurisich and Jamie Cook who decided back in 2008, after many years in the brewing industry, that they would start their own thing. Inspired by an idea of a village brewery, the three came up with Stone & Wood. Starting in a modest shed in a Byron Bay industrial estate, it was the beginning of what is now a very popular brand that is looking to grow. A \$50 million expansion is on the cards. Currently, they produce around 13 million litres of beer, and they wish to increase that to 20 million litres.

A Northern Rivers-based business priding itself on giving back to the community now has the potential to create more than 40 jobs during the construction phase while the new brewery will support 150 ongoing jobs, with room to expand. Following a two-year construction phase, the fully automated 200-hectolitre brew house will have increased fermentation capacity, a high-speed bottling line, high-speed processing and increased warehouse space. After COVID saw them scratching their heads to work out how they could make ends meet without cutting a fifth of their workforce when they lost 70 per cent of their volume overnight, currently they can barely keep up with demand for the beers—especially the ever popular Pacific Ale. This is an exciting time for the team, who never thought back in 2008 that they would see such growth from such a small idea.

Changing the subject, I was honoured last Saturday to witness the release of over 50 loggerhead turtles that were rescued and incubated by locals Steve and Erin from Green Heroes together with rangers from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and over 200 locals from Fingal. Earlier this year, when loggerhead turtles were sighted

on Fingal Beach, plans were discussed to create an incubation system should the nests require rescue. Drawing on knowledge from his previous experience building temperature control systems for the medical industry, local Steve designed and created a state-of-the-art prototype for the incubation of marine turtle eggs. The prototype incubator design was approved by local National Parks and Wildlife Service staff, Australian Seabird Rescue volunteers and Associate Professor David Booth from the University of Queensland.

After a few weeks cool weather caused a drop in sand temperature, compromising the outcome of the Fingal nests and several other loggerhead nests laid along the Tweed Coast, the decision was made to rescue the nests and conduct a pilot trial of a new incubation system. The decision to intervene was not made lightly and every other avenue was explored first. But when an endangered species is battling against coastal development, erosion, light pollution, plastic pollution and other negative human impacts, all efforts should be made to boost the population and assist survival. On 27 March the first hatchlings began to emerge from the Green Heroes incubation chambers. Over the next few days 107 hatchlings emerged from a clutch of 113 eggs. Special mention goes to Tweed Byron Local Aboriginal Land Council Elders Leweena Williams and Des Williams, who performed a ceremony. In the Dreamtime Cook Island was actually a turtle, so it was very symbolic to release those important native Australian animals back to the sea.

Those little turtles are all males because the sand is cooler. Up north they breed females because the temperature is warmer. I thought the males would track north, but unfortunately loggerhead turtles go to Chile. In about five to 10 years we see them back in Australia but, unfortunately, only one out of 1,000 survive, so the mortality rate is pretty high. It was pretty awesome to see the communities come together with our local Indigenous leaders and to witness them swim away on their long journey to Chile. One of the reasons Tweed is special is that we do not have beach development. The little turtles get confused if there are lights on the beach because every morning the sun comes up and that is how they end up in Chile, which is a long way to swim. I wish them all the best, and I wish the Green Heroes and our local Indigenous people all the best. What they have done is rather symbolic. I plan to do more with the Green Heroes and more in the turtle rehabilitation space.

HEART HEALTH

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (19:08): I draw attention to an issue that impacts upon all Australians but is of particular significance for people living in my electorate and in rural, remote and regional areas: the matter of heart health. The issue was highlighted to me recently by a number of constituents who sadly were family members of men who had symptoms and did not recognise them, and who lost their lives. It is also more broadly an issue about the lack of support services and the lack of access to cardiac CT scans. Men in regional communities, in particular, are also not aware of their symptoms. It is a sad fact that while cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in Australia, data from the Heart Foundation shows that the death rate from heart disease is 60 per cent higher in rural and regional areas compared with metropolitan areas.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in regional and rural areas, the picture of deaths from preventable heart disease is shocking. Heart disease represents one in five of all deaths in Australia but one in four in regional areas such as the North Coast. Hospitalisations due to heart attack are double the metropolitan rates and hospitalisations due to heart failure are 90 per cent higher. Nationally, the burden of chronic heart disease is continually increasing, with hospital admissions for coronary artery disease, heart failure and atrial fibrillation combining to around 1.3 million every year among Australians aged 35 years and over. The further a person lives from a metropolitan centre the greater their risk of hospitalisation, poorer disease outcomes and death from cardiovascular disease.

When you think of the context of COVID-19, it is quite shocking that those statistics exist right now. The gaps between demographics pose significant challenges for matching health services to individual needs. Cardiovascular disease prevention and management must be a policy and research priority of this Government. There is good news. While there is no single cause of heart disease and some of the risk factors that increase the chance of developing it such as age, ethnic background and family history of heart disease cannot be altered, others are amenable to change. Those include smoking, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, physical inactivity, being overweight, depression, social isolation and lack of quality support. Those are things around which we can make significant changes. As someone who struggles with their weight and with slightly high cholesterol, I recently paid to have a cardiac CT scan of all the coronary arteries in my heart. I was relieved to score 0 per cent in blocked arteries.

However, not everyone is as fortunate as I am and can afford to request a cardiac CT scan, as it is a highly specialised test. It should be an absolute minimum for people in regional areas to be able to access free cardiac CT scans because a heart attack in regional New South Wales is tragically not the same as a heart attack in urban New South Wales. Someone who has a heart attack in a regional community may not get an ambulance in time when so few ambulances are on the ground. Someone in a regional community who is having symptoms leading to a heart attack may not get to a doctor in time as most GPs have waiting lists of a few weeks or even a month.

That is certainly the case in my electorate. Men in regional communities may lose their lives because they ignore or minimise their symptoms. Education is key to that. When it comes to a heart attack, the best care includes access to expert clinical assessment, acute treatment and pathology services.

It also comes down to public awareness campaigns around symptoms. I encourage the Government to look into the success of South Australia's Integrated Cardiovascular Clinical Network. It has been incredibly successful in reducing the gap in heart attack deaths between rural and urban patients. Acclaimed health academic John A. Stevens, PhD, from the Ballina electorate and his colleagues have pioneered a healthcare model of shared medical appointments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. They have found that group appointments with their GPs for Aboriginal men resulted in greater engagement in health and they predict that this model can significantly improve health outcomes for Aboriginal men, in particular. That has huge potential for heart health and needs government support.

Many people who die of cardiac arrest have already experienced symptoms of heart disease without understanding what they were or their seriousness. Families of loved ones who have died reflect on weird symptoms in the lead-up to the heart attack, but men in particular are reluctant to check it out with their doctor. We desperately need education about the symptoms of heart disease and a boost in public awareness campaigns as well as free access to cardiac CT scans. We have focused so much attention on the health impacts of COVID-19 while the silent killer of people in regional communities continues unabated.

TAXI ROUNDTABLE

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (19:13): I recently hosted a roundtable with taxi plate owners in my community and with NSW Taxi Council representative Nick Abraham to discuss their concerns. Those people are not rich; they are migrant Australians who do not want to be on welfare. They do not want to be on Centrelink so, like hardworking people across New South Wales, they bought taxi plates to provide for their retirements. Less than 10 years ago, taxi plates were worth as much \$400,000. However, since the introduction and lack of government oversight of rideshare services, the value of those plates has decreased rapidly. The average value of the taxi plates is now only around \$50,000—and that is if you are lucky enough to find a buyer. Thousands of hardworking, mainly migrant Australians across the State have seen the value of their plates drop to virtually nothing. Many of these drivers purchased the taxi plates on loan. Now in debt, they have limited capacity to pay back their debt because rideshare services have drastically reduced the taxi industry.

The Government promoted the taxi licence as a licence to make money. Many people thought the safest way to plan for their retirement was through a government-backed asset. These people are now in desperate need of financial assistance from the Government. It has been six years. There have been three major inquiries into the taxi industry. All three reports recognised the need for taxi owners to be compensated at a fair and just price, but so far the affected families have received minimal or no assistance. We are urging the Minister for Transport and Roads, Minister Constance, to have a heart. Look into these people's eyes. Enough is enough: six years of their pain and suffering. They require just and fair compensation.

I will share the story of Ahmet Ozaras from Campsie. Mr Ozaras has worked for 15 years as a full-time taxidriver. In 2011 he bought a taxi plate worth over \$400,000, the value of which has now dropped to \$50,000. Mr Ozaras currently receives \$50 a month in rental. This is miniscule compared to the \$700 a week he made driving his taxi before rideshare services. His family has been struggling. It has taken a toll on his personal life due to the financial stress and uncertainty that now looms over his family. Mr Ozaras' story is similar to that of many other drivers across the State who saw the taxi licence as a safe safety net because it was underwritten by the New South Wales Government. It was for them to plan for their retirement because they did not want to be on Centrelink. They did not want to go on benefits. They made a decision but it was a decision based on government regulation.

I will also share the story of Mr Peter Maniatakos from Earlwood. Mr Maniatakos has been a taxidriver for over 20 years. In 2007 he bought a taxi plate for \$310,000, borrowing the entire amount from the bank. He bought his taxi plate to secure his future and be a self-funded retiree. He expressed to me that he felt comfortable buying a taxi plate because he was buying into a heavily regulated industry and partnering with the New South Wales Government, and that the New South Wales Government had advertised a taxi plate as a licence to make money. However, now, like many other taxi plate owners, Peter has seen his investment virtually disappear. He now faces an uncertain financial future, which has impacted his physical and mental health and personal relationships. Like Peter, other drivers I met with expressed to me the impact the situation is having on their mental health. The financial uncertainty, the burden of having large amounts of debt to pay and watching their life savings evaporate is understandably a significant source of stress and has worsened the mental health of many taxidrivers.

I also spoke with Ferat Aktop from Earlwood, who revealed to me the strain the situation has had on his physical and mental health. Mr Aktop started working as a taxidriver in 2009 after suffering a hernia and spinal injury in his previous job. His taxi licence was the only source of income for his family and was going to be used as security for a home loan. Mr Aktop expressed to me concerns about how he was going to pay off his debt. His age and injuries make it virtually impossible for him to change jobs. He now has to work longer hours and has been forced to take his son out of university to help pay off the debt. Working longer hours, coupled with the financial stress, has taken a significant toll on his physical and mental health. Thousands of families have put their life savings into taxi plates. These owners are from migrant backgrounds, with limited English, but they did not want to be on Centrelink. Today they face a very difficult and uncertain future, particularly after COVID. Minister Constance and Treasurer Perrottet, please listen to these people. They are hardworking Australians. They need your support. Please pay them just and fair compensation now.

REGIONAL NURSES AND MIDWIVES

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (19:18): I draw attention to our fantastic nurses and midwives. This month we will celebrate our nurses on International Nurses Day and our midwives on International Day of the Midwife, but tonight I draw the attention of the House to the ongoing pressure they are under to deliver high quality health care in the bush when our system is often working against them. Our nurses and midwives are being called upon to do more and more in our small rural facilities. As one nurse put to me, they are working at the top of their clinical scope. She said:

We're placing ourselves at risk by pushing the limit of our clinical scope. But when you're in a small facility you have no Doctor on shift or on call and the nearest major hospital is hundreds of kilometres away it comes back to you. And the people we are treating aren't strangers to us. They're people that we know and they're looking to us in their time of need.

It is through the goodwill of our local nurses that the health system has been able to function in the bush. Our local nurses have been there for communities through locum doctor after locum doctor, through periods of no doctor and through periods of an over-reliance on telehealth. They are the people who are going to tell you that you are going to be looked after. But more and more the nurses are saying that they are finding it hard to tell people that it is all going to be okay. What has become clear to me is that for too long our nurses have been forced to shoulder the burden of a barely functioning system. When the Nurses and Midwives' Association talks to its members about regional health care, staffing is the number one issue raised by members trying to deliver care in the bush. According to the Nurses and Midwives' Association, on a routine shift they are expected to care for more patients than they have capacity to attend to safely and, when emergencies arise, they are woefully unsupported.

Across the Barwon Electorate we have 27 health facilities. The majority of them are category F multipurpose services [MPSs], two are category C district hospitals and four are category D community hospitals. These categories will not mean much to people outside the health bureaucracy but they do mean a lot when it comes to nursing numbers and election commitments. In the lead-up to the 2019 election the Liberal-Nationals Coalition and the Labor Party got involved in game of political one-upmanship on nursing numbers: Who could announce the most? Who would come up with the grander sounding number of new nurses? The Coalition came out on top, announcing an extra 5,000 nurses—an "unprecedented workforce rise". The Premier was quoted as saying:

Labor promised hundreds of nurses across NSW in its election material but the Liberals & Nationals are boosting frontline staff numbers to figures never seen before.

Premier, would you like to come out to some of the facilities in western New South Wales who struggle to cover every shift to tell them that? Would you like to visit the facilities where a cleaner had to support a stroke victim, or perhaps the hospital that had to call on the catering staff to monitor aged care patients whilst the nurses dealt with an emergency? The Premier also made the grand claim:

Patients in NSW will now have more nurses to look after them and nurses will have more colleagues to share the workload ...

Every night there are nurses in my electorate working the phones trying to find other nurses to cover the night's shift. It is likely that a nurse from the day shift will stay on. That person will work between 15 and 18 hours. It is accepted by the system, but is it right? Is it in the best interest of patients? Is it placing nurse and patient safety as a high priority? No, not really.

Tonight, across a number of multipurpose services in the bush, two nurses will be responsible for an emergency department, a multiple-bed medical ward and an even bigger capacity aged care facility. If they are lucky they will have a doctor on call but it is more likely they will be relying on telehealth, where they will need to be the hands of a doctor hundreds of kilometres away. It is likely that they will struggle to get a break, even to duck to the bathroom. In the thousands of positions promised by this Liberal-Nationals Government, we are not set to receive any because the Government's new nurses have been promised to category B and C hospitals—nothing for the MPSs. This Government, through its local health districts, will continue to burn out nurses and

keep saying the problem is nobody wants to go to the bush. The nurses in MPSs deserve better and so do the communities that rely on them.

GOULBURN ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (19:22): Today I will talk about Anzac Day 2021 and the somewhat "return to normal" after the cancellation of most Anzac events last year. As Australians and also as members of Parliament, we all appreciate the service and sacrifice of our veterans and it is important we continue to pay our respects, even amidst a pandemic. The Goulburn electorate, along with most of Australia, is very proud of its Anzac history. It was great to be out and about again this year to pay our respects and join together in our local ceremonies. This year, I began Anzac Day with the dawn service at Yass, with a great turnout. I thank the Yass RSL Sub-Branch for its efforts in putting this event together.

Following the dawn service I went to Grabben Gullen to attend their service at the newly constructed war memorial. I commend the community for the war memorial they have created to commemorate those who have served their country and local community. Set in the grounds of the community hall, the memorial establishes a lasting legacy to the individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice. A lot of thought has gone into this memorial, and I will share it briefly with the House as an example of the admiration and gratitude shown by the Grabben Gullen community to those who served on their behalf.

Beginning with the poles, each of the poles carry a short biography of 14 men and the unknown soldier on plaques. The red poppy featured on one plaque is known as the Flanders poppy, linked with battlefield deaths since the Great War, World War I. The poles are spaced along a pathway in a concrete arc of embracing arms and symbolise, through their range of heights, the unique persona of soldiers. This crescent shape traditionally represents the soul and the mind. When the circle is completed by audience seating, placed in a curve, the resulting amphitheatre welcomes the present to be inclusive with the past being honoured by the site.

A central flagpole is on the main axis of the circular design, which makes use of a natural focal point offered by the sloping landscape of the site. The rusted finish of the COR-TEN steel used for the main sign and the mesh of the gabion wall express the hardship of battle. The locally sourced red basalt rock featured in the retaining wall is a fundamental element in the soil of the area—the land the soldiers fought to defend. The gardens showcase Gallipoli-Anzac related plantings of rosemary, grevillea and roses beautifying and accentuating the pure white of the concrete path, which has a brushstroke finish radiating from the centre to simulate the rays of the rising sun. The orientation of the main axis is east-west, allowing the shadows of the poles to traverse the space within the arc at the setting of the sun. Well done to everyone involved in this memorial. So much thought and effort has gone into it and everyone involved should be very proud of their efforts. I look forward to the memorial being officially dedicated next year at a special service.

Finally, I finished my day with the Goulburn Anzac service held at Belmore Park. Although COVID restrictions were still evident and social distancing measures were still in place, it was wonderful to see such a large crowd. The highlight of this event was the opportunity to meet World War II veteran and patron of the Goulburn RSL Sub-Branch, Mr Peter Lloyd, who turned 100 last December. On 31 May 1940 Mr Lloyd enlisted in the Second Australian Imperial Force for service in the Second World War. He was assigned to 2/6th Field Regiment and saw action in the Middle East and New Guinea, ending his service as a lance sergeant. On 8 March 1945 he was mentioned in despatches for gallant and distinguished service in the South West Pacific. In 1964 Mr Lloyd was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire as President of the Royal Aero Club of NSW. In 1969 he received the Oswald Watt Gold Medal: Australia's highest aviation award. In 1989 Mr Lloyd was awarded the FAI Gold Air Medal. He is one of only three Australians to have won the award.

In the 1990 Australia Day Honours, Mr Lloyd was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for service to aviation and international relations. In 1992 he was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame. In the 2016 Queen's Birthday Honours, Mr Lloyd was upgraded to a Companion of the Order of Australia for eminent service to the aviation industry, particularly the advancement of air safety in Australia, through leading roles with national and international aeronautical organisations and air sport associations. In 2016 he was awarded the Oswald Watt Gold Medal by the Royal Federation of Aero Clubs of Australia. He is a lovely man. Mr Lloyd, it was a true honour to meet you. I wish to commend the many communities of the Goulburn electorate for their services and recognition of Anzac Day this year. Although still in the midst of the pandemic, in paying our respects and coming together as local communities, it is more important than ever that we commemorate such an important day on our calendar. We will remember them.

LOWER HUNTER SOCIAL HOUSING

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (19:28): This is not the first time I have stood in this place and spoken of the housing crisis currently gripping the Lower Hunter, and I know you are experiencing it in your

electorate too, Madam Temporary Speaker. This is not the first time I have implored the Government to act to address the critical shortage of housing in my electorate, and I fear this will not be the last time I stand here to advocate for the many vulnerable people in New South Wales who require what is a basic human right: shelter. In February, I spoke of the desperate need for more social housing in the Charlestown electorate. I spoke of the unprecedented demand from women with children seeking the assistance of specialist homelessness services in the Lower Hunter. Many of those women are fleeing domestic violence. Since that time, things have gone from bad to grim.

When it comes to trying to find a place to rent in the Lower Hunter, you will be required to line up with 100 or more people just to inspect a rental property. The rental vacancy rate for the Lower Hunter is 0.7 per cent but in my electorate of Charlestown the rental vacancy rate has plunged to an alarming 0.4 per cent. I know the member for Lismore spoke about the rental vacancy rates in her electorate earlier tonight. At the same time, in parts of the Charlestown electorate rents have increased by as much as 30 per cent in just one year. In the past 12 months, the Hunter Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service has taken almost 500 phone calls from tenants in the Hunter facing eviction and the service reports a doubling in the number of calls from tenants facing a "no grounds" eviction.

This is not an issue just affecting the Lower Hunter, though. Just last week the April Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot found there was only one rental property in the whole of New South Wales that was affordable for a single low-income person. Every measure in that report, which surveyed 74,000 rental properties, found a deteriorating situation for low-income households compared to the previous year. The report notes that the housing affordability crisis has now extended to regional areas, and don't we in the Lower Hunter know it! What happens to people when they cannot find anywhere to live? They become homeless people. In the Lower Hunter, emergency and crisis accommodation and all the refuges are full. They are full because there is no housing for these people to transition into.

What is meant to be short-term crisis and emergency accommodation has become long term because there are simply no exit points. There is no accommodation to move these people into. People who cannot enter crisis and temporary accommodation because there is currently none available can access the State Government's temporary accommodation budget, but only for 28 days per year. Specialist homelessness services in the Hunter have reported that some people have used up all of their annual temporary accommodation allocation. These people are at the end of the road in terms of support available to them. These people are on the street. They are facing the coming winter living in their cars, under houses or in tents. Just last week my office worked with a 75-year-old woman who had been living in her car since January. She is not the only elderly woman who has reached out to my office for assistance in recent months.

I am sure I was not the only Lower Hunter MP who read, with great surprise, news reports on Friday in which the Premier was quoted as saying a fast rail link between Sydney and Newcastle would help ease Sydney's housing crisis. Premier, we cannot house our own people, let alone Sydney's. We cannot allow homelessness to become the status quo. We cannot allow homelessness to become the new normal. We must take every step and every measure to ensure that every member of our community has somewhere affordable to live. In the short term the Premier must urgently act to include the reduction and prevention of homelessness for women and children into the Premier's priority list, she must extend the temporary accommodation budget beyond 28 days and she must end "no cause" evictions. In the long term, the Government must build more social housing as a safety net for the most vulnerable in our community and implement every possible policy lever to make housing more affordable and accessible for all. The experiences we are having in our electoral offices now are shameful. We must do something to fix housing and homelessness in our State.

CHIEF INSPECTOR GARRY SIMS

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (19:33): I commend and thank Chief Inspector Garry Sims, APM, for his 6½ years of service to the Hawkesbury community through his time at the Hawkesbury Police Area Command. Mr Sims has recently transferred to the Blue Mountains Police Area Command, much to Hawkesbury's loss. His service to our community has been exceptional. He always took a pro-active approach to protecting our community, particularly the most vulnerable, and he invested great time and effort in educating the community to ensure that each individual protected themselves and those around them. Chief Inspector Sims appeared on a podcast to advise the community of the measures he and his colleagues were taking to reach out to seniors. One such measure was the creation of a new Facebook page as a forum and platform for seniors to engage rather than feeling isolated. It offered topical information about issues that mattered most to our most vulnerable.

Chief Inspector Sims and his colleagues have always been helpful in educating others about elder abuse, particularly around 15 June each year: World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Mr Sims and his colleagues at the Hawkesbury Police Area Command, including Detective Superintendent Jim Stewart, have organised community information sessions where people from all walks of life were educated on how to pick up the signs of elder abuse

and how to respond accordingly. Each year, Mr Sims would actively collect playdough to donate to the Children's Hospital at Westmead. He wore a great smile when he was doing this. The product is used by physiotherapy teams to assist in the children's recovery, coordination of building skills and treatment. Having the playdough donated meant the hospital could divert the money it would spend on playdough towards other much-needed areas. Mr Sims did not let the COVID-19 pandemic get in the way and he continued this very important initiative throughout 2020.

Chief Inspector Sims put together an excellent event during this year's Seniors Festival, arranging the 35-piece NSW Police Band to perform for our Hawkesbury seniors during a morning tea. It was another remarkable effort by Chief Inspector Sims and the seniors were definitely appreciative of the performance. I must say that it was also great to have Dr Geoff Lee, the seniors Minister, join us on that occasion. Chief Inspector Sims is also an ambassador for R U OK?, which is further proof of the qualities of his character. He is always proactively making those who are vulnerable aware of what to do but also that help is available and that they are never alone. During Mr Sims' time in the Hawkesbury Police Area Command, the Hawkesbury electorate faced multiple floods, destructive bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenges and workload of dealing with those disasters was at times unbearable but it also provided an opportunity for Chief Inspector Sims to excel, and he did.

Chief Inspector Sims' transfer is a massive loss for Hawkesbury and a great gain for the Blue Mountains. I hope that the member for Blue Mountains has an opportunity to get to see Garry working at his best. I know Chief Inspector Sims will cherish his relocation to this local appointment. Hoping to spend more time at the kitchen table with his family was one of the driving factors for him accepting this appointment. Chief Inspector Sims was a comfort to many who have grieved at the sad loss of a loved one, a trusting face to those who were victims of crime and he has worked tirelessly to protect and serve Hawkesbury. I speak on behalf of many in the community when I thank him for his service. He will be missed. I wish Chief Inspector Sims all the very best. I have no doubt that he will be embraced by the Blue Mountains community.

COVID-19 AND INDIAN COMMUNITY

SUNSHINE GRAIN HARVESTER

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (19:37): Blacktown City has a large and vibrant Indian community. I wish to acknowledge that many of them still have close ties to India through family, friends and loved ones. Many are suffering anxiety and depression due to the COVID outbreak in their homeland and the uncertainty of the health effects impacting on their family and friends. In 2019 I had the honour as mayor of leading a Blacktown City trade and civic delegation to India, which was organised by Austrade with the support of Australian consulates and embassies. We met many wonderful people, including government ministers and Tamil Nadu's chief minister, Mr Palaniswami. We met many mayors and councillors, businesspeople, teachers, school students, university academics, religious leaders and members of community organisations in various cities, including Chennai, Amritsar, Mumbai and Delhi.

My heartfelt sorrow goes out to those suffering from the cursed pandemic. They are in our thoughts and prayers. Rather than focusing on the constant rhetoric of jail sentences, we call on the Liberal-Nationals Federal Government to focus on the real solutions to support our friends in India through vaccines, oxygen supplies and any other possible means. Approximately 36,000 Australians live across the world, with 9,000 in India registered with the Government as wanting to return to Australia. We want to see a transparent debate on creating temporary quarantine accommodation, what they would look like, the cost of building and operating them and monitoring an overall analysis of such a project, including the risks. This Government feeds on people's insecurities rather than developing strategies to protect Australian citizens and to bring them home while securing the health and security of everyone in Australia. The Federal Government, many State governments and local councils have sister-State or sister-city arrangements. It is time to help our fellow citizens who are in trouble with whatever capacity is available to us.

Wednesday 28 April was the International Day of Mourning, often referred to as the Workers' Memorial Day. A commemoration ceremony was held at the Workers Memorial, which is a timber boardwalk around a wetland retention basin at the Blacktown Showground. This year saw the unveiling of a restored 1907 Sunshine Harvester. The significance is that the Sunshine Harvester manufacturing plant was the first company to be brought before the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration to determine what a minimum wage ought to be. Justice Higgins defined a living wage to be the normal needs of the average employee, regarded as a human being living in a civilised community. The question then turned to what was a fair and reasonable wage for an unskilled worker who was housing, feeding and clothing a wife and three children. Justice Higgins decided that 42 shillings a week or seven shillings a day was the minimum wage.

The harvester in Blacktown was donated by Robert O'Neill. Its condition reflected it had had a hard life since it was built in 1907. I sent a picture of it to the then mayor of Liverpool Plains Shire Council. He replied within a short time and told me to send it to Bob McInnes and his team from the Quirindi Rural Heritage Village Men's Shed so they could have go at restoring it. It looks as good as new—as if it were straight off the production line. Liverpool Plains Shire Mayor Doug Hawkins will be proud of the efforts of the volunteers in this restoration project. The harvester was unveiled by Blacktown Mayor Tony Bleasdale and AWU National Secretary Daniel Walton. Commemorating Workers' Memorial Day is important to remind everyone about the importance of workplace safety and the industrial struggle of workers for safety, pay and conditions. I give my thanks to all involved in the project of bringing back to life a wonderful part of Australian history, which is now in the care of Blacktown City Council, and for it to be provided a suitable place at the Workers Memorial.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, and Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (19:42): On behalf of the New South Wales Government I offer our thoughts and prayers for the people of India in this very difficult time of the second wave of COVID and also for the families and the friends they have in Australia, who also are affected by the very difficult times in India. We have seen news reports of those difficult times because of COVID. Though we all understand the temporary closure of the borders is a Commonwealth decision, after speaking to Minister Hawke this morning I feel confident that we will work closely together and do everything we possibly can to alleviate this situation. We look forward to working with the Commonwealth Government to reverse the decision and provide opportunities for Australians returning home.

LOCAL SPORT GRANT PROGRAM

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (19:43): The Local Sport Grant Program [LSGP] aims to increase regular and ongoing participation opportunities in sport in New South Wales. The program works towards achieving increased participation in sports, increased access to places and spaces for sport, and encourages the growth in sport and active recreation across New South Wales. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the acting sports Minister, who is in the Chamber. I had the pleasure to award eight successful organisations who applied for a grant under the Local Sport Grant Program administered by the Office of Sport. I acknowledge Camden Equitation Inc, which is a small friendly local club mainly based at Camden Bicentennial Equestrian Park. The club offers competitions in dressage and working equitation and training days for local equestrians in the Camden community. I congratulate Camden Equitation on its success in receiving a grant to assist with the upgrade of working equitation education for judges and riders and to help clinics to hire venues at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre.

Camden Rugby Club has housed enthusiastic supporters and passionate future stars for nearly 50 years. Rugby engenders desire, builds teamwork and helps to develop social skills. I congratulate the club on receiving a grant to upgrade the floodlighting of two of its sports fields. Basketball benefits teamwork, fitness and critical thinking. I acknowledge the Camden Valley Basketball Association on its success in receiving a grant that will be used in its expansion and development package. Basketball NSW has grown to over 86 associations over eight decades. For nearly 50 years Campbelltown City Hockey Club has successfully trained hockey stars from ages five to 75. Hockey is one of the best cardiovascular games. It teaches toughness, skill and passion. I congratulate the Campbelltown City Hockey Club on its success in receiving a grant, which will be put towards its new "come and play hockey" project.

Horseriding teaches discipline, trust and responsibility. The electorate of Camden is home to a horse community. Cobbitty Pony Club is a family-oriented club where members of all ages enjoy a full range of activities and receive instruction from dedicated and knowledgeable instructors. Congratulations to Cobbitty Pony Club on its grant, which will be put towards the overhaul of operation equipment. Macarthur Equitation is an exciting premier club that offers working equitation and caters for all levels of riders and horse breeds in that fast-growing and exciting new sport. Congratulations to Macarthur Equitation on receiving a grant to update working equitation equipment and training initiatives. Cricket teaches patience, skill and coordination. The sport builds team bonding and encourages teamwork and sportsmanship. I congratulate Oran Park Cricket Club on successfully securing a grant for volunteer programs to help promote the club. The grant will also go towards playing gear for the 2020-21 season.

I congratulate the Western Condors Football Club on its successful grant application to install an awning at Bringelly Park. The Western Condors has been commended for its new direction and is a club with proud traditions. Formally known as the New Chilean Club, the change of name also brings with it a new look to the way they play football. The club aims to become a multicultural, grassroots institution that focuses on developing creative and technically skilled football players. Sport is a crucial part of growth and development. Sport teaches, mentors and builds individualism in ways that other activities simply cannot. Sport teaches discipline and leadership and builds confidence. It empowers and sets goals and is proven to assist with and even enhance

academic performance. I am proud, honoured and amazed by the work that the local sports clubs in the electorate of Camden have done for their members and for the community. I wish all of those clubs the best success in their current sporting season.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, and Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans) (19:47): I commend Peter Sidgreaves, the member for Camden, on his focus and dedication to all things sport in his community. He is a tireless advocate for his community, and that obviously includes advocating for sport. He never stops knocking on the door asking for more. Today's recognition of the clubs that have received a sports grant truly reflects the member's passion for sport. Sport is beneficial for individual physical fitness and helps to build an individual's confidence. It also helps to form social cohesion through team-building skills, as well as helps young people and not-so-young people to develop a wonderful aptitude—whether the sport they play is passive or active. As the sports Minister, I have seen the great benefits of individual and team sports right throughout the community of New South Wales.

KILLALEA RESERVE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (19:48): Killalea has for so long been an iconic and much-loved part of our local identity. It has been home to the Koori people for at least 17,000 years. To surf at The Farm requires a walk along well-worn tracks through thick bush and wetlands. In 2009 The Farm and Mystics beaches were declared part of a national surfing reserve. In 2013 the O'Farrell Government consolidated the operations of 28 coastal and nine inland holiday parks and reserves located on Crown land throughout New South Wales and put them under the control of one organisation: Reflections Holiday Parks. In 2019 the member for Kiama, Gareth Ward, announced that the New South Wales Government had awarded a \$6.5 million grant to upgrade the site, which is run by Reflections Holiday Parks. That group would invest \$4.4 million into the project to upgrade facilities at Killalea Reserve.

When the member for Kiama made that announcement in 2019 he almost did a victory lap around the park because he thought it was such a great idea. That was really interesting because back in 2011, just prior to the election, the then candidate—now the member for Kiama—told the communities of Shellharbour and Kiama that a State Liberal government was absolutely committed to preventing development on Killalea Reserve. Either the member for Kiama says one thing to the electorate and another thing to Macquarie Street or he has a really bad memory. It is one or the other.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Or both.

Ms ANNA WATSON: It is probably both. Saturday's plan was met with uproar from members of the community, who have fought hard over the past 12 years to protect the environmentally sensitive land from overdevelopment. The development of a multipurpose centre that could attract up to 100 cars at any one time will forever change the pristine ecology of the area. There is one road in and one road out. I say to Reflections, "Get in your car, take the road out and don't darken our doorway again." My community is absolutely opposed to the development. On Saturday a world record was broken when 682 surfers and non-surfers paddled out at that iconic beach to protest the obscene development of a multipurpose function centre, which is neither wanted nor needed.

Many local people are concerned not only about the development of such a pristine area but also about the ongoing management of the reserve by Reflections. Walking tracks have been neglected and the local community has been kept in the dark about the plans for the area. It is my contention that Reflections has intentionally let the park run down and it has ignored protests from those who support the park being left undeveloped. The project has no support base in the community at all. The only support it has comes from the board of directors, which was appointed by the Liberal-Nationals Government after it threw out a community-based committee that was affiliated with the area. Its members knew the area because they lived and worked in the electorate. Then a board of directors came in that was made up of lawyers, accountants and public relations experts; it is a developers' consortium.

At a glance, the board of directors has no environmental credentials. It is just a collection of academic ideologues who serve the Berejiklian Government's vision for our community-owned Crown land. We should not forget that it is community-owned land. Thousands of people gathered to attend the rally on the foreshore at Killalea. There were numerous speakers and a very clear message was chanted by the crowd over and over again. My community has said, "No means no." I say to Gladys, listen to my community. No means no. They will not stand by and let you rape that piece of land, which is sacrosanct to my community. It would be a great achievement if we could leave the land as it is. So much time and money is spent preserving the architecture and the aesthetic of our cities but not much time or money is spent preserving the beauty of our natural landscapes. I implore the Berejiklian Government to listen.

*Community Recognition Statements***CLAUDIA ZAMMIT**

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (19:54): The devastating rain a few weeks ago left many individuals and businesses impacted. Land in the west and south-west of the Camden electorate is still semi-rural, which meant that some of our local livestock were also impacted. I acknowledge Claudia Zammit, who voluntarily transported a number of our local horses to safety. From Arslan's Horse Farm & Agistment in Cawdor to Kembala, Silverdale and Hawkesbury, Claudia offered transport and feed to the livestock affected. I commend Claudia's selfless actions and for being available to assist those in need. I thank her for providing help and working alongside other businesses to ensure the safety of those animals.

JESSICA BUCHANAN

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:55): I congratulate former Narrandera High School student Jessica Buchanan, who was recently awarded a Sydney University Medal for her outstanding academic performance and is starting her PhD on screenings on peptide targets. The medal is awarded based on both the honour and undergraduate mark. Jessica is living proof for the many young people living in regional and rural areas that they can achieve anything they put their mind to. Jessica is a fine example to other women who are interested in a career in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. I am so proud of Jessica's achievements and I acknowledge the hard work she is doing for the community in her chosen field. I wish her all the best with her studies.

LAKE ILLAWARRA CRICKET CLUB

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (19:56): I extend my congratulations to the Lake Illawarra Cricket Club on being recognised by Cricket NSW as an "All Abilities" Cricket Club. It is important to be inclusive where you can and it gave me great pleasure when I was made aware that Lake Illawarra Cricket Club was the first cricket club in the Illawarra to have an "All Ability" cricket program. Cricket is very much an Australian sport and is part of our collective psyche, being played by both men and women at all levels. To make the game available to people with disabilities and special needs is most commendable. The club held its "Come and Try day" on 11 April and I understand it was the great success it was hoping for. I thank both Cricket NSW and the Lake Illawarra Cricket Club for creating an opportunity for those who otherwise would not have the opportunity to participate in cricket. Once again, I offer my congratulations and the very best of luck with this great program.

VOLUNTEER RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:57): Last Thursday I had the pleasure of joining the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and Commissioner Mark Gibson from the Volunteer Rescue Association at the Volunteer Rescue Association on the Central Coast to present it with its brand-new \$230,000 light rigid rescue vehicle. The Central Coast VRA does an outstanding job and for years it has been front and centre protecting our community. The incredible volunteers are dedicated to the job and, in addition to providing them with the new light rigid vehicle, the Minister also announced the launch of new uniforms. It is the first time in the organisation's history that volunteers will have their own brand-new, dedicated uniform, for which the Government contributed \$1.2 million. I again congratulate the Volunteer Rescue Association on the Central Coast.

GOT YOUR BACK SISTA

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (19:58): We do not have to look far to see the influence of Got Your Back Sista in Newcastle. From partnerships with the Newcastle Knights to opening its own op-shop, the domestic violence charity has grown significantly and has now commemorated five years of operation. From its early days in founder Melissa Histon's home, the organisation has now assisted more than 500 women who have fled violence through the provision of items to help them set up new homes, workshops to build confidence and independence, and self-defence lessons. Women also have the opportunity to learn computer, administration and retail skills to help them enter the workforce. While in a perfect world Got Your Back Sista would not need to exist, changing the lives of more than 500 women and their families is phenomenal. I can only imagine what the next five years will bring.

KU-RING-GAI CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF ROTARY IN AUSTRALIA

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (19:59): The first Rotary club in Australia was chartered in 1921. Some 100 years on, Rotary in Australia has grown to over 1,000 clubs. In my electorate, I am proud to be an honorary member of each of our local Rotary clubs: Turrumurra, Wahroonga and Ku-ring-gai. As a local acknowledgement of the centenary, last week I joined Rotarians, family and friends, and students from Turrumurra High School at the memorial park for a tree planting ceremony by Bob Burnett, the first president and original charter member of the Turrumurra Rotary Club. Our local Rotary clubs are involved in many projects, including

Anzac Day, Gordon Markets, Graffiti Removal Day, Daffodil Day and the Bobbin Head Cycle Classic, to name a few, as well as international projects such as caring for people with eye disease in the Pacific Islands, involving local eye specialist Dr Geoffrey Painter, AM, and other medical volunteers. I congratulate all Rotarians across our great nation on 100 years of "Service above Self".

BLACKTOWN WORKERS CLUB

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (20:00): I congratulate the wonderful Blacktown Workers Club on its support of the Blacktown Youth Services Association. BYSA provides an avenue for at-risk youth to engage in youth development programs to improve their self-worth, where they are inspired, skilled and civically engaged. Kay Kelly, president of the Blacktown Workers Club board of directors, with vice-president Jack Miller and all board members visited BYSA to speak to the youth and watch them in action. They fell in love with the way the youth interact and strive to do their best. Blacktown Workers Club has donated over \$70,000 in assistance to BYSA and engaged in fundraising activities. I thank the staff of the club for their personal donations. Movie fundraising nights were organised by CEO Morgan Stewart, and a huge special thanks to Tina Maamari, Blacktown Workers Club community relations manager, for her massive efforts in organising the sponsors and logistics coordination for the event. Blacktown Workers Club is truly a club that makes a difference in the lives of people in Blacktown City.

SENIOR OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (20:01): Maureen Symmonds and Senior Constable Barbara Beard were jointly awarded Senior of the Year at the Goulburn Mulwaree Council official opening of Seniors Week in Goulburn. Finalists included Sue Weeks and Rosemary Turner. The Senior Community Group of the Year award went to Marulan and District Lions Club, accepted by the wonderful Marlene Skipper. The Home-Start Volunteer Home Visiting Program was also named as a finalist. I congratulate them all. The contribution that our seniors make to the electorate is outstanding and these people duly deserved the awards they received on this day.

YELLOW EMPEROR COMMEMORATION

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (20:02): On Saturday 10 April I had the great pleasure of attending the special ceremony commemorating the birth of the Yellow Emperor with the Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association at Cabra-Vale Diggers. The Yellow Emperor continues to be celebrated for the many teachings, innovations and skills bestowed upon his people, with his reign said to be a golden age, and to be honoured as a wise and generous ruler. The commemoration service had a fantastic turnout, with numerous community leaders and dignitaries in attendance, including Ms Helen Sham-Ho; Mr Xiao Xiayong, director of the China Cultural Centre; and the Australian Chinese Descendants Mutual Association president, Mr Henry Woo. I commend and congratulate the Australian Chinese Teo Chew Association's president, Mr Hung Ly, chairman Frank Chou and their organising committee on hosting such a wonderful event.

VICTOR DAY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (20:03): On Saturday 1 May 2021 I was extremely pleased to visit local North Nowra resident Mr Victor Day for a very special presentation. I presented Mr Day with a gold driver award in honour of his 70 years' clean driving record, without a single speeding infringement or penalty notice. That is an absolutely extraordinary achievement and I was really pleased to present Mr Day with this award in recognition of his outstanding milestone. To have a clean record for 40 or 50 years is significant, but to get to 70 years is quite remarkable and certainly worthy of much praise and recognition. Mr Day not only has managed to reduce his annual insurance premiums but also is a positive example to other younger drivers and road users that being responsible behind the wheel has many benefits. I congratulate Victor Day on this amazing achievement.

CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (20:04): Many in the Charlestown electorate chose to Light Up the Dawn and pay their respects to our diggers on Anzac Day if they could not attend a service in person. I attended a Friday Anzac service at Charlestown Alesco Senior College, run by the students and emceed by Lateisha Jones. Myja Hicks and Lola Donohue spoke admirably. I also attended the dawn service at Cardiff RSL. I acknowledge the hardworking people who organised that beautiful and solemn event. Finally, I recognise the memorial service at Charlestown Lions Park, organised by Club Charlestown and the Charlestown Lions Club, where I heard an impressive and moving speech given by Ally Hunt, one of Whitebridge High School's 2021 captains. I once again pay my respects to all men and women from the Charlestown electorate who have served or continue to serve our country. Lest we forget.

STEVE CHEERS AND KELLI HILL

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (20:05): I recognise Mr Steve Cheers and Ms Kelli Hill for the incredible driveway Anzac Day display they put on in Wattle Grove. Last year, as COVID interrupted our usual Anzac Day traditions and commemorations, the pair decided to put on an incredible display to make their driveway dawn service extra special. Due to its popularity and success with the community, they chose to put it on again this year. Last year more than 2,000 locals visited the display on the day, and this year was even bigger. Eighty people alone attended their dawn service. The display featured 20 mannequins dressed in soldiers' uniforms. These came from Mr Cheers' own collection and included uniforms that have been worn from 1915 to 2015. The pair put on a sausage sizzle, tea and Anzac biscuits for those who visited on the day. The gold coins used to buy the goodies were put towards military charities. I was happy to donate some money in support of their cause as well. Once again I commend Mr Cheers and Ms Hill for putting on the amazing Anzac display for the whole community to learn from and to commemorate.

LISMORE ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (20:06): I congratulate and thank our local RSLs, veterans and families for their efforts in honouring Anzac Day. After we lit up the dawn last year it was nice to be back together. I attended a moving dawn service at the Lismore Memorial Baths organised by the City of Lismore RSL Sub-Branch president Darryl Hawke and honorary secretary Wilson McLelland. I then went to an 8.00 a.m. service with veterans Ken Jolley, Reverend Graeme Davis and Bob Moules at the WW1 memorial in North Lismore. At 10.00 a.m. I went to the Kyogle march and service organised by honorary secretary Jack McDonagh, OAM, and president Bruce McKenzie of the Kyogle RSL Sub-Branch. I also want to acknowledge the Murwillumbah Rotary Club, which displayed 7,000 poppies over the Murwillumbah Bridge after their Light Up the Dawn service. None of this would happen without the volunteer efforts of so many who give their all to make sure our service men and women are never forgotten.

CARAGABAL PUBLIC SCHOOL PP6 SWIMMING RELAY TEAM

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (20:07): I recognise and congratulate the Caragabal Public School PP6 swimming relay team on its recent success in winning a silver medal at the PSSA State Swimming Championships in Sydney. The team includes Annabelle Maslin, Charlotte Reid, Eve Napier and Lizzie Toole. The girls had previously competed in Dubbo at the Western Carnival in early March 2021, qualifying for the State championships, a huge effort from the young superstars competing against the best in the State and bringing home the silver medal to their school. The young girls represent their school in not only swimming but also soccer, netball and cross-country. My congratulations to Annabelle, Charlotte, Eve and Lizzie on their recent achievements, and I wish them the best of luck representing their school in future sporting competitions.

CENTRAL COAST TENANCY ADVICE AND ADVOCACY SERVICE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:08): I send my thanks and gratitude to the wonderful team at Central Coast Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Service, which has been operating on the Central Coast since the 1970s and continues to do a stellar job for our community. It was a New South Wales Labor Government, with housing Minister Frank Walker, that ensured that tenant services were appropriately funded statewide through the Housing, Information and Tenancy Services program. CCTAS continues to ensure tenants have access to support, legal advice and relevant information around their tenancy to safeguard their rights. CCTAS works tirelessly for some of the most vulnerable within our community. With the increasing numbers of individuals and families experiencing rental stress, the service that CCTAS delivers is absolutely essential. We are all aware of the low rental vacancy rates across our State—on the Central Coast it is sitting at 0.4 per cent. We also know of the huge increases in rents being charged. CCTAS ensures a somewhat level playing field for those renting. I sincerely thank everyone involved for their dedicated work.

EDNA WATT

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (20:09): I congratulate my fellow patron of Berry Red Cross branch, Edna Watt, who has been awarded a New South Wales Red Cross service award for her dedicated and selfless work for Australian Red Cross. Her voluntary work started in 1998 with "Hands on Care", a then Red Cross program providing manicures for residents in care at the Berry Masonic Village. Edna is a hard worker, always ready and willing to assist with any program or fundraising event, sometimes under incredible duress, with family and her own health issues. In August 2017 Edna took on the demanding role of Trauma Teddy coordinator, even teaching some members and friends to knit from scratch. Edna delivers the teddies herself to the local doctor and dental surgeries, as well as to the hospital and ambulance stations. Edna is well known for giving her time to assisting the homeless in the Shoalhaven, collecting blankets and clothes and then distributing them through local police and/or homeless organisations. It

is not a Red Cross program but Edna will always take more items for the homeless. Edna still continues to work for and support the Berry Red Cross branch and is very deserving of the award. I acknowledge branch secretary Margaret Walsh for bringing the significant milestone to my attention.

NICOLA BOLTON

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (20:10): While COVID has changed the way we commemorate Anzac Day, it has not dampened our spirit nor our memories of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. Maitland artist Nicola Bolton, a finalist in this Parliament's Plein Air art prize a couple of years ago, has come up with an innovative way to commemorate Anzac Day. For the second year in a row, Nicola has made poppies from red and black tissue paper and surrounded the war memorial at Bolwarra with 200 of them. She told me it is the "best way to show the fragility of mankind. When the poppies get wet they bleed red. They are biodegradable and environmentally friendly. I started making them last year and had such a positive response from the Bolwarra community. I'm hoping to continue every year and make more and more." When I visited the site last week I was so pleased to see that other people from the local area had taken the opportunity to place small handmade wreaths and tributes. I thank Nicola for so eloquently expressing the care and memory of our community in these difficult times of COVID.

DR CYNTHIA BRIGGS

NICOLE SCHOLES-ROBERTSON

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (20:11): I recognise social justice campaigner Dr Cynthia Briggs and rural health advocate Nicole Scholes-Robertson, both from Armidale, on being named finalists in the 2021 NSW Women of the Year Awards. Dr Briggs has also been named a finalist in the NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year category for her dedication to improving education, health and welfare in local Aboriginal communities. Dr Briggs is a strong voice on a number of important committees, including the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Gamilaraay Aboriginal Legal Services and the Domestic Violence NSW board. Her drive to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people everywhere is remarkable. Armidale Citizen of the Year and NSW Regional Woman of the Year finalist, Nicole is an advocate for patients with chronic kidney disease. Following a kidney transplant, Nicole launched the Rural Kidney Association to support others from the bush suffering from kidney disease, raising tens of thousands of dollars to support the cause. I recognise Dr Briggs and Nicole for committing their lives to improving social and health outcomes for rural and regional people.

SUSTAINABLE WETLANDS AGRICULTURAL MAKERS PROJECT

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (20:12): Sustainable Wetlands Agricultural Makers Project [SWAMP] is a community garden in Tuggerah run by volunteers who run programs on how to grow different plants, how they can be cooked and how you can set up your own garden at home. SWAMP is promoting sustainable gardening and fostering the connection between health and the land. The garden is a great space to learn valuable skills and to connect with other locals from the community. Organisations are welcome to participate in a wide range of activities such as the recently founded Foodie Nature Play playgroup, which caters to preschool-aged children, who every Wednesday explore the wetlands, sing songs and eat produce grown on site. Youth Connections visits the garden on Thursdays to learn valuable life skills such as mowing lawns and gardening. The Glen Centre helps with the gardening and building structures such as garden beds, and recently the Doyalson RSL donated \$2,000 to help build garden beds for the winter crop. SWAMP has received positive feedback from the community and has seen benefits of being involved in the garden such as better mental health.

ROBERT LAPSLEY

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (20:13): In light of recent Anzac Day commemorations, I acknowledge World War II veteran Robert Lapsley of Frenchs Forest in my electorate of Davidson. Robert was just 17 when he enlisted with the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps. In 1941 he saw fierce combat and was wounded in Hong Kong. After several months recovering at a military hospital, Robert was captured as a prisoner of war and spent 2½ years in a prisoner of war camp in Japan. Once the war ended, the prisoners of war were taken to Sydney on the HMAS *Ruler*. Robert is now 100 and recently recalled his service days to the *Northern Beaches Review*, alongside other World War II veterans. I am pleased that Robert's story is recognised in popular media outlets, and I thank him, as well as veterans across Australia more broadly, for their courage and sacrifice.

TLC CENTRE

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (20:14): I congratulate the TLC Centre in Earlwood. The TLC Centre is a multidisciplinary health care centre providing a space for combined health and social work services. I congratulate the hard work of founder and managing director Elizabeth Lucas, who used social media to connect

with local residents and find out which services were needed in the community. That resulted in an overwhelming request for adolescent mental health services, support groups and workshops. The TLC Centre aims to provide services and support groups as a way to create a safe space for the community. The centre is not just about children or disabilities; the space is for everyone of all ages. From pre- and post-natal Pilates, mums-and-bubs days and fun workshops to support groups, safe spaces and one-on-one interventions, the centre has already begun its fantastic work. It has already introduced group classes, workshops, one-on-one focused interventions and therapies. I congratulate and thank all the professionals.

CENTRAL COAST PROBATIONARY CONSTABLES

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:15): I congratulate Class 346 on its graduation at Goulburn. It is the most recent class to graduate from the NSW Police Force Academy. In that class there were 149 men and 55 women. The great news is that on Monday three of those officers took up their posts at Gosford Police Station as part of the Brisbane Water Police District. I welcome all three of those brand-new probationary constables to the Central Coast—admittedly, two of them were already Central Coast residents. The third was from the UK, so I assured him that our winters on the Central Coast are much more pleasurable than the ones he has experienced in the UK. I acknowledge the great work of the men and women of the NSW Police Force, especially the work done by those who are part of the Brisbane Water and Tuggerah Lakes police districts every single day. We cannot thank them enough for the great work they do, putting their lives on the line to keep the people of the Central Coast safe. Again I offer my congratulations to the three new probationary constables and wish them all the best for their future in the NSW Police Force on the Central Coast.

WINTER SWIMMING CLUBS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (20:16): Winter is well and truly here, and members know what that means: Winter handicapped swimming season has arrived. While I am a Clovelly Eskimo myself, all across the Eastern Suburbs the winter swimming clubs have kicked off their seasons. From Bondi Icebergers to Coogee Penguins, Bronte Splashers and Clovelly Eskimos, there is a winter swimming club for everyone. Now, the Bronte Splashers may be the oldest winter swimming club in the world; however, it is the Clovelly Eskimos' social culture that is unlike any other. I thank Bondi Icebergers for having me at their opening. To all those who have thought about giving winter swimming a go, I say: Go for it! I wish everyone the best of luck for this season.

WATTLE GROVE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (20:16): I acknowledge Wattle Grove Public School for putting on a moving and special Anzac Day service. I always feel honoured to attend the school's service as its community has such strong ties to the army, with defence families making up almost 20 per cent of the families at the school. The service included army personnel from Holsworthy Barracks, and it was lovely to gather together with the community after COVID kept us apart for over a year. The school also put on an incredible interactive Anzac display in its library. It involved some clever technology to showcase interviews that have been recorded onto poppies. I had the chance to be interviewed and have it recorded onto my own poppy. My interview focused on how we commemorate Anzac Day in our community. I thank principal Nicole Cameron, defence school mentor Kim Lazarevic and the rest of the school staff and students for putting on such a special Anzac Day service and allowing me to be a part of it.

ALEX WALKER

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (20:17): A surf lifesaving star of the future was born at last month's national championships, with Cooks Hill junior Alex Walker returning from the Sunshine Coast with three gold medals. Alex was victorious in the board race, the surf race and the iron-person event, taking out rivals from up and down the coast. Success does not come overnight or in isolation though, and Alex's results are testament to his hard work and dedication to improvement. I also acknowledge his parents, Emma and Matt; his coach, David Reynolds; his teammates; and the volunteers at Cooks Hill Surf Life Saving Club for the support they have provided. I congratulate Alex; I do not think this is the last time we will be hearing his name.

LUSI AUSTIN

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (20:18): I congratulate Cowra local Lusi Austin on establishing the Central West Auto Immune Disease Support Group on Facebook. Having recently been diagnosed with systemic lupus, Lusi felt that a support group for those with autoimmune diseases in our region was desperately needed, evidenced by over 90 people joining the group within a few short weeks. It was fantastic to learn recently that members have had their first physical meeting at the Cowra Bowling and Recreation Club, for which I understand the club kindly donated the meeting room, tea, coffee and biscuits. In updating me about these efforts, Lusi said it was amazing for the group to meet in person and share how autoimmune disease is impacting on their day-to-day lives. Lusi's goal is to create a safe space where people can connect and share stories, resources and

information for those living with autoimmune disease in the Central West. It certainly sounds as though she has achieved this already.

DALE YOUNG PARENTS SCHOOL

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:19): It was absolutely fabulous to join the St Philip's Christian College DALE Young Parents School team at Wyong for the celebration of 20 years of this amazing organisation. Most importantly, it made me incredibly proud to be amongst young mothers who have finished their education and graduated with high school, HSC, TAFE and/or university qualifications. The visionary school which was once an idea is now an integral part of our community. It offers such an important wraparound support to allow young mums to continue their education on the Central Coast. I personally congratulate every graduate and offer my sincere gratitude to every single person who has been involved—from the seed of an idea to its ongoing delivery in an absolute space of love and respect every single day—for their efforts to equip and empower those young women for life. I also send a special shout-out to all those who run the Narnia early learning child care facilities at both Waratah and Gosford. To every person I say: Every day, your generosity of spirit is appreciated.

INVERELL ART GALLERY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (20:21): I recognise Jane Peterkin, manager of the Inverell Art Gallery, where art is not only visible but has hands-on participation at all levels. It is an exciting place of creative activity. Hundred-year-old buildings have a history of many uses—the Inverell School of Arts, which was opened in 1909, was returned as an artistic centre in the 1970s, was expanded in 1995 and has flourished with a team of dedicated volunteers to what it is today. The gallery has regular exhibitions and promotes local arts and crafts for sale. A variety of classes range from photography to pottery and painting and there are opportunities for social groups to share their artistic works. I congratulate the 2021 executive members of the art gallery Christina Smith, Kate Dight, Belinda Emerson, Robyn Johnson, Nadia Narelle Kliendanze, Debbie Lehman, Jim Schliebs and Helena South. I commend those who provide such wonderful resources in our regional towns, and those who take advantage of such resources. The benefits are immeasurable, not least of which is the effect on a healthy community.

MAITLAND ELECTORATE ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (20:22): Thank you to the Maitland and East Maitland RSL Sub-Branch members and auxiliary members and the Morpeth Anzac Day Committee who did so well to deliver Anzac Day commemorative services at the Maitland Park, East Maitland and Morpeth war memorials. It was unfortunate that, due to COVID restrictions and renovations at Lochinvar Hall, we could not hold services at Beresfield or Lochinvar, but the spirit was still there at those other sites. I dropped into the East Maitland RSL memorial hall coffee morning before Anzac Day. Everyone was working hard on the final details, which resulted at Maitland and Morpeth in very moving and respectful commemorative services. It was wonderful to see the active participation of our local police officer in charge, Chief Inspector Tony Townsend; our Federal member of Parliament Meryl Swanson, member for Paterson; mayor Councillor Loretta Baker; and other councillors attending their local services. Most of all, I thank the members of the RSL, the auxiliary and the public for their participation, whether it was at home, in quiet, private reflection at one of our many local memorials or at a formal service. We will remember them. Lest we forget.

WESTERN SYDNEY WANDERERS FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (20:23): I acknowledge the Western Sydney Wanderers Football Club for taking part in Lurnea High School's Multicultural Day last term. What an incredible experience for the school community to have the Wanderers visit on such a special day and play some football with the staff and students! Lurnea High School's Multicultural Day is a day of celebration for the school community and is about recognising differences. It is a great day for staff and students to get together and learn about the various cultures that make up their cohort. Other than playing some football, the Wanderers players and the students engaged in some cultural musical performances and dancing. It is great that the club is able to get back into the community and connect with locals, as COVID prevented them from doing events like that one last year. Once again, I commend the Western Sydney Wanderers players for visiting Lurnea High School and I would like to congratulate the school itself for hosting such a successful multicultural day.

SUSAN RYAN MEMORIAL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (20:24): It was an honour to attend and briefly speak at the unveiling of the new memorial for Susan Ryan, AO, which now takes pride of place at the southern end of her beloved Coogee Beach. Ryan was born and raised in Maroubra and spent much of her life in Coogee and on Coogee Beach. The memorial plaque and garden, kindly donated by Randwick City Council, can live on as a reminder of her great contributions. Regardless of political affiliation, Susan Ryan paved the way for women in

parliaments, ministries and cabinets across Australia. Her contributions to Australia were significant and will be felt long into the future. Susan Ryan was a feminist, a human rights campaigner, a trailblazer, a strong Labor woman and one of the funniest and most compassionate women I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. Her last moments were spent doing one of the things she loved most: swimming at Coogee Beach. This memorial is a fitting remembrance to her and all that she fought for and secured for her generation and many generations to come. Susan will be missed.

NICOLA MCDERMOTT

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:25): On Sunday 18 April history was made. For the first time ever an Australian woman jumped two metres in the high jump and I am so proud to say that that woman was the Central Coast's own Nicola McDermott, an outstanding Central Coast athlete. I have had the pleasure of meeting Nicola on multiple occasions, including when she was the Central Coast's sportsperson of the year. To say that Nicola is an inspiration to us all is an understatement. Nicola is absolutely proud of her dedication and performance. That two-metre jump made her automatically enter the Olympics, so we are proud as a region to support Nicola's bid going off to the next Olympic Games, which are of course delayed because of COVID. Again, Nicola is an inspiration not just to our community but to so many young athletes from one end of the Central Coast to the other. She gives her time generously with Little Athletics during her own difficult regime of training. Again I congratulate Nicola McDermott. She is doing us so proud.

Community Recognition Notices

BANKSTOWN CITY NETBALL ASSOCIATION SEASON LAUNCH

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I had the pleasure of attending the Bankstown City Netball Association [BCNA] Season Launch and annual parade on 17 April 2021 at the Deverall Park Court, Condell Park. This year also marked the 60th Anniversary of the BCNA, a terrific milestone that is worthy of commendation. I was delighted to see players, their coaches, managers, and umpires from Bankstown City Netball Association's 11 clubs participate in their beloved sport of netball. I commend the BCNA on their efforts in promoting netball amongst our clubs, schools and local community. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of Bankstown City Netball Association's President Nicole Oram, Treasurer Deanne Mawer, Umpires Convenor Kelly Davies-Bobbin, Rep Liaison Officer Julie Chesterton, Competition Convenor Sue McLeod, Register Helen Lee, and the netball Clubs' Executives involved in coordinating this wonderful event. I am proud to be a supporter of the Bankstown City Netball Association, and I wish all teams the best of luck in the upcoming season!

MALEK FAHD ISLAMIC SCHOOL IFTAR DINNER

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I was delighted to attend Malek Fahd Islamic School's Iftar Dinner on 21 April 2021 at the school's Greenacre campus. Malek Fahd is the largest Muslim School in Australia, with over 2,700 students across three different campuses. Since its establishment in 1989, the school has delivered both excellence in educational standards and a welcoming environment for Muslim students to practice their faith alongside like-minded peers. It was a pleasure to be included in this community event as students, staff, and others present all broke their fasts together and joined each other in celebration. I take this opportunity to thank the school principal, Mr Bruce Rixon, the school chaplain and spiritual advisor, Sheik Fawaz Kamaz, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the school board, Dr John Bennett and Mr Fayez Moussa, teachers, staff, families, and students in organising this wonderful event. I wish all those observing Ramadan in my Electorate a happy and blessed Ramadan Kareem.

MICHAEL SEDIN – 50 YEARS JP SERVICE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Justice of the Peace services are a critical part of every community and one we have all needed at multiple times in our lives. I am delighted today to congratulate and acknowledge an outstanding Glenmore Park resident who has served the local community as a Justice of the Peace [JP] for 50 years. Congratulations to Michael Sedin for your generous contribution to the community as a JP for 50 years! Late in 2020, I had the privilege of meeting Michael in my office and presenting him with a certificate acknowledging and thanking him for his many years of service as a JP, you devote many hours to assisting and supporting your local community and reaching 50 years of this service is a fantastic achievement worth celebrating. Well done and congratulations to you Michael, I wish you all the best for 2021!

TRACEY RYLEWSKI

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—I would like to take the time to acknowledge Glenmore Park resident, Tracey Rylewski, who recently launched a local community club named 'Standing Strong' to support the health and wellness of children aged between five years and seventeen years of age. 'Standing Strong' provides

evidence-based programs designed to support and empower children to build confidence, self-esteem, resilience and connection through holistic and preventative approaches to health and wellbeing. Tracey has dedicated much time into starting up and facilitating this program in the Penrith area and is hopeful that this program will make a large positive difference in the lives of these children and even their parents. 'Standing Strong' launched its first program in 2013 and with Tracey becoming the official Licensee for the Penrith area, children across this region will now have access to these programs for the first time. I wish Tracey and all those involved with 'Standing Strong' all the best for 2021 and I look forward to hearing of the great outcomes of this program!

BOYS TO THE BUSH

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to acknowledge Boys to the Bush, a not-for-profit providing programs for disengaged boys. Their motto, "It's easier to build a strong boy than to repair a broken man", is forged from the tragic realities that males are three times more likely to die by suicide than females, 4-out-of-5 people in the juvenile system are males, and 50,000 Australian kids are living in out-of-home-care arrangements. Boys to the Bush engage with youth to create better sons, brothers, and, future fathers, husbands and employees. Their mission is to provide an environment free from the distractions in boys' lives, allowing the opportunity to be surrounded by positive influences and giving them opportunities to succeed. Encouraging mateship, resilience and a sense of belonging. They're achieving this through their camp and MENToring programs, also linking boys with the community through activities and work. Farm-based camps are held near Forbes, Lake Cargelligo and Howlong, where boys experience life in the bush through a range of activities that they would not normally have the opportunity to experience. Congratulations to the passionate and dedicated team of Boys to the Bush, who are positively guiding boys to a bright and rewarding future.

FORBES' BOYS TO THE BUSH

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I acknowledge Boys to the Bush at Forbes, who provide a variety of programs for disengaged boys in the Central West. They're providing camp, sibling and mentoring programs, and also linking boys with the community through activities and vocational work experience. This important work is being delivered to boys across the Central West by the passionate team; Central West Area Manager Jared DeMamiel, Program Coordinator Tim West, Trainee Program Coordinator Matt Evans, Program Assistant Warwick Edgerton, Mentor Cassandra Tyack, and Camp Assistant Andrew Dwyer. Boys to the Bush programs are strongly supported by the Forbes community, including; James King of Central West Diesel, Justin Roylance of Roylance's Tractor Supplies, Darren Jelbart of Forbes Tyre Power, Kevin Gunn of Work control, Forbes Bakehouse, Jo Bernardi of Bernardi's Supermarket, Jono Roylance of Platinum Painting, Brad McMillan Pest Control, Abe Duggan Plumbing, Lakeside Takeaway, Flint Street Butcher, Gunn's Menswear Forbes, Forbes Men's Shed, Jeff Steward Farm Management, Walkers AGnVET, Auswest Seeds, Tyack family, Deb Roylance, Cowan Dairy, Sharon Welsh, and Sam Tyack Auto Electrical. On behalf of the community, we thank you all for what you're doing to positively influence and guide boys toward brighter, successful and rewarding futures.

CAPTAIN HONOURED FOR A DECADE OF SERVICE (TUMBARUMBA)

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I wish to congratulate Captain Joerg Ernst from Tumbarumba Fire and Rescue who was presented with his 10 year Service Medal on the 1st April 2021 by Superintendent Stewart Alexander and Inspector Daryl Manson. This is a part time role for Mr Ernst who is primarily responsible for co-ordinating communication between RFS and Fire and Rescue. This was a key function when the Fire and Rescue NSW strike team, led by Inspector Phillip Eberle, was fighting to protect Tumbarumba township and the Hyne Timber Mill during the 2019-2020 fires. When not performing this role, Mr Ernst also assists as a primary school chaplain and teacher's aide. He and his wife own the local nursery and garden centre Tumba Bikes and Blooms as well as Magenta Cottage in the heart of Tumbarumba's beautiful parklands. This medal signifies distinguished service within the emergency service and great leadership in many roles within the Tumbarumba community.

LOCOMOTIVE 3801 IN ALBURY – FULL CIRCLE IN RAIL HISTORY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—Albury Railway Station brought back the days of old over the Easter weekend, when the famous 3801 locomotive steam train returned to the region for the first time in 78 years. This visit follows a decade of restoration on the locomotive. The 'Easter Train Spectacular', as it has been called, provided our community with opportunity to ride the 3801 from Albury to Gerogery and back. Transport Heritage NSW rail operations manager Daniel Page said that the 3801 locomotive changed rail travel and was recognised as the most travelled locomotive in Australia. Its first journey was in 1943 departing from Sydney's Central Station and operating as a passenger train. Later the train became a freight locomotive, completing its final journey in 1962. But now the restored 3801 is back on the tracks and rail enthusiasts have had this opportunity to see such an iconic steam locomotive in Albury. I would like to congratulate all the volunteers from Transport Heritage

NSW, which include the workshop, operations, customer service and marketing, as well as the support of NSW Trains for the success of this operation.

YOUTH HEAR YOM HASHOAH EVENT

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—On Sunday the 11th of April I attended the Yom HaShoah Youth Commemoration service run by the Youth HEAR organisation. The event was organised to remember the individuals lost in the Holocaust and to acknowledge the long lasting cultural impacts it has had. There was a specific focus on youth engagement so as to mitigate hate in society by connecting youth with the memory of the Holocaust, especially as there will continue to be less Holocaust survivors to tell their stories. The event constructed of six sections to mark the pre-war life, deterioration and oppression, mass destruction, resistance and survival, refuge and rebirth of the Jews. Stories of each of these sections were presented by both survivors themselves and their offspring, and each section ended with an emotional candle lighting. It is critically important that we continue to always commemorate and remember the Holocaust and the 6 million Jews who were murdered, to ensure it never happens again. A big thank you to Youth Hear for organising an engaging and insightful remembrance for the 6 million lives lost, and a special thank you to the founders, Julia Sussman and Harrison Rosen.

YOM HASHOAH COMMUNAL COMMEMORATION

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—On Wednesday, 7th of April I attended the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies' Yom HaShoah Commemoration service at Moriah College. Every year, this event remembers the individuals lost in the Holocaust and to acknowledge the long lasting cultural impacts it has had. The theme of the 2021 commemoration is 'The Holocaust in the Soviet Union', with 2021 marking 80 years since Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union. Many survivors from the Soviet Union came to Australia in the 1980s and 1990s, yet not often are their stories told or heard. The theme this year looks to bring more of these stories to light and in doing so, provide greater awareness and support for the survivors and their families. The keynote address was given by Alex Rychin, Co-CEO of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. Alex spoke about the importance of honouring those who escaped the holocaust in the former Soviet Union and of course, honouring and remembering all those who were murdered. Thank you to the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies for organising this respectful and insightful remembrance for the 6 million lives lost.

JOCK MARTIN

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)—I recognise Jock Martin, who emerged as a hero for the Manning Point community in the midst of the devastating floods. He stepped up helping visitors and residents evacuate and offering them shelter at the Manning Point Bowling club. When the community was completely isolated Jock reached out for help, calling on myself and others to coordinate an emergency drop of vital medication, food and more. When the water receded Jocks' selfless acts continued as he helped Manning point and the surrounding communities begin the mammoth clean up.

ALICE GODFREY

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)—I congratulate Taree local Alice Godfrey after she was named the 12 years and under, overall winner at the Taree and District Eisteddfod. The eleven year old was awarded two firsts, two seconds and two highly commended for her six songs. The adjudicator spoke highly of the performances, one report saying Alice captured the mood of the song perfectly and sang with lovely storytelling and a warm even tone throughout. The talented singer has been taking vocal lessons for four years now but had only performed in one Eisteddfod before her success at the Taree and District Eisteddfod. I again congratulate Alice on her achievement and wish her luck with future performances including the Eisteddfod's Grand Concert on the 5th of June.

ANZAC DAY 2021

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—Dawn services recommenced this year in the Fairfield Electorate after COVID-19 restrictions forced the cancellation of services last year. The Anzac Day Dawn Service at Leo McCarthy Memorial Park was well attended by Members from the Smithfield RSL Sub-Branch, ADF personnel, local school students and community members. I commend the Smithfield RSL Sub-Branch organising this solemn service. It was a pleasure to see the gathering in such large numbers once again. The Triglav Advisory Committee held the ANZAC Day 2021 Sunset Service at the Triglav Club, St John's Park. This is the club's traditional ANZAC commemorative service which is held at sunset local time to coincide with the rising of the sun in Europe. The service was hosted by Mr Branko Fabjancic of the Triglav Sub Club Committee. Uncle Tony Scholes gave the official Welcome to Country with Father Darko Znidarsic presiding over the Religious reflection of the service. Nick Lalich MP and I participated in the service through the Prayer of Thanksgiving and the

Commemoration of the Fallen. It is always an honour to lay a wreath in memory of those that have sacrificed their life for the freedoms we have today. Lest We Forget.

FAIRFIELD SCHOOLS ANZAC SERVICES 2021

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—In the lead-up to Anzac Day, I had the opportunity of visiting various schools in the Fairfield Electorate who held Anzac Day Commemorative Services. I wish to commend the staff and students Fairfield High School, Patrician Brothers' College Fairfield and Pal Buddhist School for their exemplary services in commemoration of our ANZACS. It is extremely important for us to continue to keep the ANZAC spirit and the ANZAC legend alive for future generations to come. We owe so much of our present-day lifestyles to these young men who went to war to fight for their country and never came home. Lest We Forget.

WESTLEIGH PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)—Today I would like to acknowledge the outgoing President of the Westleigh Progress Association Rex Taylor. Rex has been part of the association since 2003 when he took on the role as Treasurer. He believes Westleigh is an oasis in the big smoke and is passionate to see the suburb continue to be one of the best places to live in Sydney. Rex took over as President from Carolyn Cannings who had been part of the organisation for 20 years. Having campaigned in the 90s to stop townhouses being built on the site that is now a dog park, she became a passionate advocate of the suburb. I would like to congratulate the incoming president Dana Logiudice, along with Geoff and Kerry Hinchcliffe who will continue as Treasurers. Secretary has been taken up by Phil Newman with committee members Paul Sowter, Bill Pym, Lisa Walsh and Karl van Dyke. Thank you to all involved in the Westleigh Progress Association for their continued hard-work for all the residents of Westleigh. I can't wait to join you all for the first drive through the Chilvers/Duffy/Esplanade intersection when it is completed later this year.

MUSEO DELLA DIVINA COMMEDIA

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I am delighted to recognise the opening of the Museo della Divina Commedia, the Museum of the Divine Comedy on Friday 26 March. The Museum is located at premises at Bossley Park associated with CNA Multicultural Services and Marco Polo – The Italian School of Sydney. The Divine Comedy is the Italian masterpiece of Dante Alighieri. It was thus appropriate that the Museum was officially opened during Dante 700 week which was 21-7 March. It also marked seven hundred years since the death of Dante. The Museum has a replica collection of 115 framed miniatures from a XV Century copy of the literary work commissioned by Alfonso d'Aragona King of Naples. The miniatures were created between 1444 and 1450. The Museum opening was hosted by Marco Polo – The Italian School of Sydney. There is also a bust of Dante Alighieri and a 1902 edition of Divine Comedy. The Museum celebrates one of the glories of Italian culture. It's also a reminder of multiculturalism in Sydney.

IRISH UNITY

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—This month marks the 100th anniversary of the coming into effect of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920 (on 3 May 1921). This was a statue of the British Parliament that implemented the Long Committee recommendations to divide the island of Ireland into Southern Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Partition of Ireland and the creation of Northern Ireland one hundred years ago has been an open sore for many of Irish heritage and in the Irish diaspora – especially those like myself whose ancestors came from Ulster. Overcoming Partition and establishing Irish Unity is a movement gathering pace in light of Brexit and changes in voting patterns. Sinn Fein is now the largest political party on the island of Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement of 1988 provides a pathway to Irish Unity on the basis of consent and the holding of a referendum. I welcome a referendum on Irish Unity as do many constituents with an Irish heritage.

ANZAC DAY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I acknowledge the work of local RSL sub-branches in holding ANZAC Day services this year. As a result of COVID-19 health restrictions, many sub-branches were unable to hold their usual public ANZAC service and march. Instead, several sub-branches reverted to invite-only services, I had the honour of attending both the Swansea RSL sub-branch and Pelican Flat RSL sub-branch services. ANZAC Day is such an important day for our community to come together, to honour the sacrifice of all current and former service personnel, along with their families. Without their sacrifice, we would not be the nation we are today. Despite public services being limited this year, I have been pleased to see the fantastic community support for the New South Wales RSL's Light Up the Dawn campaign. I would like to thank all the hard work of the local sub-branches and their partners to ensure ANZAC Day services could be held this year.

MAY DAY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I acknowledge the importance of May Day, which took place on Monday, 3 May 2021. To celebrate May Day, Hunter Workers held a march on Saturday, 1 May, to Gregson Park. May Day celebrates the granting of the eight-hour working day for Australians. This was a great victory for the union movement and workers all across our nation, who had campaigned for the eight-hour working day. Without the hard work and advocacy of the union movement, along with workers, many workplace conditions we take for granted today, would not exist. This includes minimum wage, unfair dismissal laws, superannuation and workers compensation support, among other crucial industrial relations victories. I have had the opportunity during my career to work alongside numerous dedicated union officials, I have seen firsthand how hard they work to improve the lives of those they represent. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all current and former union officials, delegates and members, for their tireless advocacy to improve workers lives.

MIA KUMAR

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield)—I bring to the attention of the House Mia Kumar, Principal of Burwood Girls High School. This year Ms Kumar celebrates her 50th anniversary in public education. During her extensive career, Ms Kumar has taught, led and inspired students and staff. Ms Kumar started her career as a maths teacher, soon becoming Head Teacher of Mathematics at Burwood Girls High School, whilst simultaneously serving as President of the Mathematical Association of NSW. After a promotion to Principal of Peakhurst High School, she returned home to Burwood Girls High School as Principal in 2002. The calibre of the women who graduate from Burwood Girls High School is a testament to Ms Kumar's excellence as an educator. Ms Kumar places students at the forefront, fostering an engaging and diverse learning environment which supports students to think critically, take risks, and become change makers and leaders. Ms Kumar's commitment to public education is commendable, and I look forward to many more years with her at the helm of Burwood Girls High School.

CRONULLA RSL SUB BRANCH

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)—I thank the Cronulla RSL Sub Branch for organising a moving Anzac Day dawn service at Monro Park Cronulla. This year, the Sub Branch had the added challenge of implementing ticketing and security as part of its COVID-19 Safety Plan, which limited attendance to around 2000. The ceremony was live-streamed to the Cronulla RSL Memorial Club for the benefit of those who were not able to secure tickets. I acknowledge President Cory Rinaldi, Honorary Secretary Matt Coady, the rest of the committee and office manager Kristy Nichols, who worked tirelessly to organise a special event that gave local residents an opportunity to honour the men and women who have served in Australia's armed forces. Senior Vice-President Paul Zaat was the master of ceremonies and Tony Dibetta RAN 1963-1967 gave an incisive Anzac Address. Lest we forget.

DR BERTHA DE SOUZA

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)—On 29 March, the Sutherland Shire lost the much loved Dr Bertha de Souza. Bertha de Souza was born in Aldona, Goa in 1932. She studied medicine in Mumbai (formerly Bombay) and later worked at an air force base in Aden, where she learned to speak Arabic. Civil unrest forced Dr de Souza to leave Aden in 1965. She migrated to Australia in 1969 at a time when the White Australia Policy was still in effect. After her children had reached school age, she opened a medical practice in Engadine, before moving to Cawarra Road in Caringbah. Dr de Souza earned the admiration and respect of the community she dutifully served for many decades. She was a trailblazer for professional women, especially from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. I extend my condolences to Dr de Souza's children – Mark, Susan, Dunstan, Melanie and Nigel – as well as her 11 grandchildren and five great grandchildren. They can be immensely proud of Bertha de Souza's remarkable legacy.

BRADBURY PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—Teaching is without a doubt one of the most challenging yet rewarding occupations. Coordinating a class full of children is no easy feat. But watching them grow, learn and evolve must be extremely satisfying. Of course, it's not just teachers that make up a school community – office staff, support staff, children, volunteers and P&C members all contribute to a thriving school. We are fortunate in Campbelltown to have so many wonderful schools in Campbelltown but I would like to particularly acknowledge one of those schools – Bradbury Public School. The team at Bradbury Public School – led by principal Michelle Lester – are extremely driven and passionate, and it is clear for all to see. Every time I visit the school I am always impressed by what I see. I was at the school last year during a mufti day, organised by the P&C. The day had been embraced by everyone – staff, teachers, parents and students. You could see how much pride everyone involved

with Bradbury Public School had in their school. Well done to everyone at the school for creating such a wonderful school community.

KARI

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—There are many organisations that throughout Campbelltown and the wider Macarthur region that make an enormous difference to the lives of local residents. KARI is one of those organisations. The organisation was formed 22 years ago with the simple aim of providing services and programs for the Aboriginal community. That vision certainly has become a very successful reality. KARI has several offices located around Western Sydney, however the organisation's presence is felt throughout the entire region – particularly here in Campbelltown. It was great to see the organisation partner up with a couple of companies to construct KARI House – a home in Campbelltown for young people leaving foster care. The difficulties with the transition out of foster care is not often talked about, however it was an issue KARI identified and addressed. Its initiatives like that that have really made a big difference to our community. I have had the pleasure of being involved with KARI for a number of years in my capacity as the Member for Campbelltown and I look forward to working with KARI for many, many more years to come.

PARKINSON'S AWARENESS MONTH

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—April was Parkinson's Awareness Month and it was inspiring to hear former Lismore man Clyde Campbell AM, Director of Shake It Up Australia Foundation, at Lismore Parkinson's Local Community Heroes Awards and Awareness Event at the Workers Club. Clyde founded the Shake It Up Australia Foundation in 2011 after being diagnosed with young onset Parkinson's at the age of 44, and has since co-funded, with the Michael J Fox Foundation, 50 Parkinson's research projects across 13 Australian research institutes to the value of over \$15 million. Clyde gave a presentation on groundbreaking research in the quest to slow, stop, cure and prevent Parkinson's, one which gives hope to many. The successful Sydney businessman's grandfather, the late Alderman Clyde Campbell, was Mayor of Lismore from 1956 to 1966. Janet Griffiths received a Local Hero Award for her work in supporting the group through librarian services, and as Co-Patrons, I know myself and former Lismore mayor Jenny Dowell OAM, were honoured to be in her company, receiving the same award. Well done Di Lymbury, Rosemary Beasley and John Waters, of Lismore Parkinson's Support Group, for arranging for Clyde to return to his hometown to share his message of hope.

KILDARE ROAD SEALING A BOOST FOR TENTERFIELD SHIRE TOURISM

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I was in Tenterfield recently to welcome NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Paul Toole's advice that the New South Wales and Australian governments will invest \$3,359,880 to seal Kildare Road, west of Tenterfield. I drove this popular tourist drive with Tenterfield Shire Mayor Cr Peter Petty and key Council staff -- Kylie Smith, Harry Bolton and Fiona Keneally -- taking in sheep grazing country, granite outcrops and scenic views along the 12.5-kilometre gravel section which is set for a major upgrade. We stopped at Wallangarra Lookout, Draining Rock and The Doctors Nose, and I'm sure that once sealed, many more travellers will experience the natural beauty of the once much larger Tenterfield Station. This shovel-ready project, funded under the Fixing Local Roads Program Round 2, builds on Council's world-class tourism promotion campaign, Tenterfield True, and will create more jobs during construction. I also inspected \$59,420 worth of improvements to Tenterfield's Rotary Park playground, funded under the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 3. This playground is very popular with local families and this massive shade structure offers very good protection from the sun. Fencing is to be installed.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MAX MITCHELL APM

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—40 years serving your community is impressive by anyone's standards. Max Mitchell commenced his Policing career as a Probationary Constable at Chatswood in 1981. In April, Assistant Commissioner Max Mitchell APM, finished his career as Northern Region Commander. Max had hoped to retire in 2020 but with the COVID-19 pandemic he decided to see the community through the tough times. When appointed Northern Region Commander in 2017, he acknowledged he was back where he belongs – "Newcastle is home". Max was the Newcastle Local Area Commander from 2008 until 2011 and also spent nine years as the first Commander of the newly-formed Police Transport Command. In 2011 he headed up Strike Force Munro, which was the NSW Police response unit for the Christchurch earthquake in New Zealand. He was awarded the Australian Police Medal in January 2008. I understand that Max will be transitioning, in boardies, with his partner April and their pup Bailey to the travelling grey nomad community. Congratulations on your retirement and thank you for 40 years' service to the NSW Police Force and the community.

NSW MOUNTED POLICE

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—The NSW Mounted Police are not a common sight in Newcastle, but recently they paid a visit to a very special lady. Rita Meredith was spending her final days in palliative care at

Calvary Mater Waratah and her wish was to see and smell a horse one more time. At age 18, Rita joined the UK Police Force and 2 years later she became the first woman to join the Mounted Police Division. Rita spent 10 years in the UK Police Force before leaving to set up her own riding school. She moved to Australia in 1991, after having her own children, and went on to foster more than 60 kids, many with disabilities. A call went out to the NSW Police Mounted Unit to see what they could do. Not wanting to disappoint a fellow officer, horses Hollywood and Don, with their handlers Constable Nicole Harvell and Senior Constable Graham Lovett, travelled to Newcastle to create an unforgettable experience for Rita. Rita was able to spend time smelling and patting Hollywood and Don and even fed them a few apples. Thank you to the NSW Mounted Police for making Rita's final wish come true.

RIDING FOR THE DISABLED TALL TIMBERS BOX HILL

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the terrific charitable endeavours of Riding for the Disabled within my Electorate of Castle Hill. Riding for the Disabled is a nation-wide charity, but nowhere is its positive impact more keenly felt than in Box Hill, at the Tall Timbers Centre, now reaching its 10th year of operation. The RDA program is vital in the lives of its participants, and does wonders in increasing their confidence. In learning a new skill, riding a horse, participants are challenged and motivated with these gentle animals providing a unique opportunity to learn and grow. The centre is currently expanding their services to include allied health services, speech pathology and occupational therapy. As the former Minister for Disability Services, I know the benefit that charities like the RDA can have, and I'd like to thank the charity, and all involved with the Box Hill site, including Nicole King, Kerry Souter and Kirsty Harman, for all their hard work in the disability sector.

ANZAC DAY

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I would like to take this opportunity to commend the multiple RSL sub-branches, local community groups, veterans and locals who, like every year, got together on the 25th April to recognise and reflect upon the sacrifices made by the ANZAC troops from the Second Boer War through to ongoing conflict in the Middle East. It is a chance to remember the fallen and the injured, and also those who would return home with lifelong psychological and emotional scars. It is also an opportunity for the Community to get together, and, with public ANZAC Day commemorations being cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it was welcome relief for all to be able to return to a sense of normality on this important day. I would also briefly like to thank all our servicemen and women who are currently stationed overseas, who have had to deal with additional pressures placed on them by the Pandemic, and I thank them for their services to Australia.

MIKAYLA HINDMARCH

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—It is always great to meet Charlestown Electorate students when they visit us here in Parliament, but a recent visit by year 12 student and Warners Bay High School captain Mikayla Hindmarch was a particular highlight. Mikayla, who last year participated in the 2020 online NSW Schools Constitutional Convention, was selected to participate in the prestigious 2021 National Schools Constitutional Convention based on her outstanding performance. Selection was a thorough and highly competitive process, with Mikayla being one of just thirty students from across the State to attend the Constitutional Convention. Usually the convention is held in Canberra, but due to COVID-19 we were lucky enough to host it here at the NSW Parliament. It was my pleasure to address the attendees and discuss some of my role here in Parliament, and the commitment and intelligence of all the young people involved was on full display. My congratulations to Mikayla for her involvement, and I wish her all the best for her final year of high school.

TREES IN NEWCASTLE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Trees in Newcastle is an organisation based out of Redhead with an important goal: conserving native vegetation and supporting people who care about the environment. Founded in 1989 by a small group of like-minded people who gathered at a public meeting, the organisation was based around the simple goal to plant more trees in Newcastle. The group agreed to focus on native plants, and before long they decided to grow plants collected from local seed. Since then, Trees in Newcastle has planted trees all over the local area. They help with bush regeneration, restoring health to native habitats by controlling threats and allowing native plants to flourish; offer environmental education, training and engagement for the local community; and provide advice on appropriate species selection for people and organisations looking to plant natives. My congratulations to Jocelyn Barker, the Nursery Manager, and Elise Briggs, Trees in Newcastle's chair, for helping to guide this organisation, as well as to the many volunteers who contribute so much to this important work.

MICHELLE BORDIGNON

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—I am privileged to recognise Michelle Bordignon for her wonderful charity work for the vulnerable people of the Griffith community. Michelle works tirelessly on a voluntary basis to help those who are in desperate need. Seven years ago while volunteering with the local Carevan distributing meals to disadvantaged families she saw that a number of families, particularly children, were in need of warm clothing. Michelle spread the word and within a short period of time was inundated with clothing and blankets from community members. Michelle's created a charity known as Helping Hands which has progressed to receiving and distributing not only clothing but also bedding, furniture, electrical goods, baby requirements, and toiletries. These goods are distributed over a large area including Leeton, Narrandera, Ivanhoe, Wilcannia and Lake Cargelligo. Helping Hands even assisted families in Fiji following a cyclone where so many families lost everything. Seventeen community groups are now involved in Helping Hands including Mum's with newborn babies and women affected by domestic violence. Thank you Michelle and your family for your caring and generous contribution to those most vulnerable in the Griffith community and surrounding areas, this support is invaluable.

DOT MATHEWSON

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise and congratulate Dot Mathewson of Deniliquin who recently achieved life membership with the Deniliquin & District Historical Society for her many years of service. Mrs Mathewson became a full member of the Deniliquin & District Historical Society in 2001 and has spent years researching families and their heritage. Notably, Mrs Mathewson completed extensive research for the Deniliquin & District Historical Society honour board. The honour board was recently unveiled and completely funded by Mrs Mathewson. Mrs Mathewson is a valued member of the society and at age 90 still plans on continuing her work with other volunteers.

LAUNCH OF THE SYDNEY STATEMENT

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield)—I bring to the attention of the house the launch of The Sydney Statement: Building Bridges between Believers from Different Religions. The Sydney Statement is an interfaith charter for building relationships between believers from different religions. It is unique among interfaith statements throughout the world because it was developed and led by the brilliant young people at Youth PoWR, the Youth Parliament of the World's Religions. Youth PoWR and The Sydney Statement are both initiatives of the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations. The Sydney Statement was a two year long project, which was done in partnership with Western Sydney University. It was overseen by a Steering Committee of senior representatives from different religions and generated by Youth PoWR. I was pleased to attend the launch of The Sydney Statement at Sydney Town Hall on Thursday 11th March 2021, and I was heartened to see young people take the lead on this important initiative. I congratulate all the members of Youth PoWR Committee and its Chair Ryan Epondulan, Director of the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations Reverend Dr Patrick McInerney and Western Sydney University on this remarkable achievement.

UNITED HOSPITAL AUXILIARIES

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Like so many of us in NSW, Linda Swales has long recognised that hospitals are the lifeblood of small communities. Mrs Swales is one of thousands of dedicated members of hospital auxiliaries who, every year, raise millions of dollars across NSW to buy equipment for their local hospital. Mrs Swales is not only the Riverina's regional representative to the United Hospital Auxiliaries of NSW, but also its current state president. A member of the Adelong-Batlow auxiliary, she will in July complete nine years as regional representative and five as state president. Stepping into the regional representative role is another hard-working resident of the Wagga Wagga electorate, Tumut's Liane Preinbergs. Mrs Preinbergs was elected as the secretary of the Tumut auxiliary in 2018, after a call went out to the community for more volunteers to step up and become office-bearers with the group. I would like commend both Mrs Swales and Mrs Preinbergs for their hard work and dedication to the hospitals in their communities, as well as all the members of the auxiliaries across the Wagga Wagga electorate. The funds raised by these hard-working auxiliary members genuinely make a difference in regional hospitals and to patient care.

TALBINGO TALKABOUT

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Men's Sheds have a way of bringing people together, sometimes in unexpected ways. Regular gatherings at the Talbingo Men's Shed not only brought together men from the community, it also spawned a community newsletter. Jo Erskine, Leanne Leggett, Joy Otto and Melanie Weckert often visited the Men's Shed with their husbands and came up with the idea for a community newsletter. Talbingo Talkabout was born. Initially the newsletter was produced twice a month, then it settled into a regular fortnightly cycle. It is mostly an electronic publication, but hard copies are produced to make sure everyone in the

community who wants one has access to it. In 2020, the Talbingo Talkabout committee was awarded a service to the community achievement award in the Snowy Valleys Council's Australia Day awards. Since the first edition was published almost four years ago, there have been some changes at Talbingo Talkabout. Joy Otto and Melanie Weckert have moved away from the community and Jo Erskine has returned. Publication continues with Vicki Cass now joining editor Leanne Leggett on the team. I wish them well in producing many more editions. And I congratulate all those involved on their outstanding contribution to the community.

DARCY DUNCAN

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—I recognise a rising star in the film and production industry, Darcy Duncan from Shopfront Arts. In 2017, his mother encouraged him to join Shopfront Arts as a workshop participant and he simply fell in love with the organisation. At the age of 15 he has already been involved in 11 different productions as an assistant technician. Darcy is always on time, polite and ready to learn. Some shows that he has been a part of include: Cake, The Pecking Order and The Unknown. Shopfront is a youth led organisation and aims to encourage youth to become involved in theatre. I would also like to thank Darcy Duncan and Cathy Nisbet who do an outstanding job at making this happen and I thank them both for their commitment over the past few years. Last year I was able to recognise Darcy with a Youth Achievement Award as part of the St George Community Awards, which recognises so many wonderful people in our community every year, for their ongoing service to the region. Well done Darcy, I wish you all the best for the year ahead.

CATHY NISBET

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—I recognise an icon of our local community, Cathy Nisbet, who has been a critical part of local community organisations including Shopfront Arts and Kogarah Community Services. Just before Christmas last year, Cathy left Shopfront Arts to peruse a role at Lost in Books in Fairfield. Cathy is an asset to our community and her ability to mentor talent and build up an organisation is second to none. Despite the fact that I am sad to see her leave our area, I have absolute confidence that she will do an outstanding job for the wider region within all of her future endeavours. Shopfront Arts in Carlton do an amazing job at boosting young talent to make them the stars of theatre in years to come. I always enjoy watching their productions and it is always great to see their students grow and develop their skills. Again, I congratulate Cathy Nisbet on all of her fine achievements here in the St George area and I wish her all the best in the future.

ANZAC DAY

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government)—On Anzac Day I was pleased to join with the South Coast community and honour those who have served and defended our nation. The Huskisson RSL Sub-Branch organised a march along the main street followed by a moving ceremony in Voyager Park where more than 4,000 locals came together to pay their respects. I thank all members of the Huskisson Sub-Branch who organised the event, and the members of our community who supported it so strongly. I was pleased to also be represented at services across the South Coast including Graham Williams at Sussex Inlet, Roy Burgess at Culburra Beach, Denis Williams at Coastal Waters, Jan Gregory at Ulladulla, Luke Sikora at Nowra and John Carney at Bomaderry. Lest we forget.

ANZAC DAY 2021

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—On ANZAC Day I was privileged to attend the Bundeena RSL and Sub-Branch Dawn Service at the War Memorial at Bundeena Reserve. I was humbled to join the community and lay a wreath to honour the service and sacrifice of the Australian Defence Force and Veterans. It was great to see the widespread support from the Bundeena community on such a beautifully idyllic morning for the service – a fitting tribute to those who have and are loyally serving our country.

PENRITH 2021 SENIORS FESTIVAL

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney)—It was my pleasure to present four seniors with Local Achievement Awards as part of the recent 2021 NSW Seniors Festival. Recipients included: Kathleen McInerney for service to the Penrith Community Kitchen, Vivienne Ross for service to the Nepean Blue Mountains Parkinson's Support Group, Alan Cooper for service to the Lions Club of Emu Plains and Colin Murphy for service to the Museum of Fire. Kath, Vivienne, Alan and Colin display the qualities of seniors who make our region such an inspirational place to live and I thank them for their generous contributions. These deserving seniors received their accolade at the Penrith CBD Corporation Senior's Week Morning Tea held at The Savoury Dining. The morning was an outstanding success thanks to the planning by Gai Hawthorn and Beth Spanos of the Penrith CBD Corporation. I also note the following people and businesses who gave their time to support the event: Lamrocks Solicitors, Kerry McCarthy of the Commonwealth Bank, Simon Gould of Orbit Marketing, Luke Priddis of CPR Wealth, Chris Gross of Vision Personal Training, Jeffrey Eyles of Nepean Art Society and Corrina Aitken of OnePoint Health.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale)—I would like to say a big thank you to all the incredible workers and volunteers at SES Units right across NSW who worked so hard during the floods in March. As demonstrated time and time again, the commitment to our community from the SES is unwavering and incredible. A particular thank you to my local SES Units in Kogarah and Bexley who worked day and night to keep St George residents safe, completing many rescues from cars and rivers and doing an excellent job in the clean-up. We are lucky to have such wonderful volunteers in our area.

IRIS AND HENRY SMITH

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)—Platinum is the symbol for 70th wedding anniversaries. Rarer and more valuable than gold, platinum is precious and incredibly durable – much like a solid marriage. It was a pleasure to share in my dear friends, Iris and Henry Smith's, 70-year wedding anniversary. Iris and Henry migrated from England to Australia with their young family in the 1970s. After a stint in Tasmania, they moved to Glenfield and now reside in Macquarie Fields. Iris and Henry share a special love for each other. Marriages of such longevity are rare and, like platinum, uniquely shaped and formed by the ups and downs of life. Iris and Henry's enduring partnership is one to be respected and admired. The couple chose their wedding date – 21 April – to coincide with Queen Elizabeth II's birthday. Fittingly, Iris and Henry's long partnership would follow in the footsteps of the Queen's 73-year marriage to Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Another platinum marriage and one that stood the test of time. I wish Iris and Henry every happiness as they celebrate their special milestone and continue to make special memories together.

REVEREND JO INKPIN

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I wish to congratulate Reverend Josephine 'Jo' Inkin for her induction as Minister of Sydney's Pitt Street Uniting Church. In a first for Australia, Reverend Inkin is the first openly trans person to be inducted into a mainstream church. Pitt Street has a long history of progressive inclusive practice. Jo served the Anglican Church of Southern Queensland for four years before moving to the Uniting Church. She is lecturer in Church History, Senior Tutor at St Francis College and has served as the Co-Chair of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland's Reconciliation Action Plan Group. When I met with Jo and her wife Penny Jones, it was clear that both are passionate about inclusion in the Church and inspiring others to be welcoming and compassionate. I am sure Jo will continue to inspire and support the community in this new appointment. I commend Jo on her historic appointment to Pitt Street Uniting Church and look forward to working with her to support equality and acceptance, where I know she will continue to educate and challenge our ideas, understanding and knowledge.

MSIC 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I wish to recognise the Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) in Kings Cross on their 20th anniversary. Opening on 6 May 2001, this was the first service of its kind in the southern hemisphere and was a major practical outcome from the 1999 Drug Summit. This pioneering facility has consistently provided life-changing care to vulnerable members of our community. MSIC staff provide a therapeutic service for people who are often stigmatised, saving lives and giving marginalised drug users a gateway to safety, while keeping injecting off the streets and improving local amenity. Over the 20 years, this means 1.2 million safe injections, over 10,000 overdoses managed without a single death and nearly 19,000 people helped into treatment. Uniting MSIC has also played a crucial role in advocating for sensible drug law reform to reduce harm and help those with drug problems. Most recently, director Dr Marianne Jauncey moderated a panel discussion with the NSW Bar Association in NSW Parliament about the 'Fair Treatment' campaign. I congratulate the Uniting MSIC on this historic occasion in acknowledgement of their holistic lifesaving support provided with dignity and respect.

WARILLA HIGH SCHOOL SOLAR PANELS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—My congratulations goes to Warilla High School who will go completely solar after students led an initiative to fund-raise through the Return and Earn container deposit scheme to purchase solar panels for their school. Also for your award in the 2020 Keep Australia Beautiful Tidy Towns Award, taking out the Return and Earn Litter Prevention Award – Schools, Population category, for your student-led initiative to utilise container recycling to fund solar panels. Congratulations to Warilla High School for taking on the very difficult task of making your School carbon neutral in terms of its electricity consumption and improving the school's sustainability. My congratulations to Brandon Harry and Jay Gehrels for their guidance and direction, for starting the collection bottles and cans within the school, and who by the end of 2019 had developed a Return and Earn Bin Implementation system and to the SRC, for their commitment to the School, who worked tirelessly to fund raise their goal of \$5,000 to put towards the schools solar program, which will see

a 50KWh system going in by mid-year. My congratulations to the volunteers in the "Sortin Squad" for their hard work and Warilla High school for their great enterprise.

VALE GEORGE BANANIS

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—I mark the sad passing this year of George Bananis, co-founder of Faros Seafood in Marrickville. George and his wife, Dorothea, founded Faros Seafood on Buckley St, Marrickville, over 50 years. Together, they grew a small oyster shucking operation at the back of their garage into a multi-generational seafood dynasty that is a Marrickville institution. Any inner westie will tell you that a dawn visit to Faros is critical to the success of any Christmas, Easter or New Years' celebration. George and Dorothea are representative of so many Greek migrant families. They worked hard to balance building their business and raising a family. Along the way, they transformed Marrickville, making it the diverse and exciting place it is to live and work today. A number of years ago, George and Dorothea passed the reins to their son Pandelis, who has been helping run the business since he was 16 years old. I acknowledge George's sad passing and on behalf of our community, offer deepest condolences to his wife Dorothea and children Anastasia, Thalia and Pandelis. Vale George.

ST DAVID'S CHURCH HABERFIELD

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Prominent Haberfield resident and historian Vince Crow has written a new book detailing the 150 year history of St David's Uniting Church. Vince's book, St David's Haberfield, chronicles the rich history of the St David's community, from the founding of the Church in 1869 through to the formation of the Ella Centre in 1973. The book draws on photographs, church records and importantly, the many voices of church members past and present, to tell this important story. Earlier this month, I was thrilled to join Reverend Joy Steele-Perkins to celebrate the book's launch and to catch up on the important and continuing good work of the congregation. The book was officially launched on Sunday 2 May by Reverend Joy Steele-Perkins, the Hon. Anthony Albanese, MP and Clr Lucille McKenna, OAM. Thank you as always to The Haberfield Association for your invaluable contributions to preserving Haberfield's history, to Reverend Steele-Perkins and the congregation at St David's for all you do to enrich the local community. And I send my warmest thanks and congratulations to Vince Crow on creating such a wonderful, engaging and informative retelling of the history of St David's Church and his beloved Haberfield.

GRANVILLE RSL SUB-BRANCH ANZAC DAY 2021 COMMEMORATION

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On Anzac Day I joined Granville RSL Sub-branch for their commemoration of Anzac Day at Granville Diggers Club in my electorate. Like all communities across NSW and the then-fledgling Commonwealth of Australia, Granville made a big contribution to the effort in the Great War. 1,469 names appear on the honour roll for Granville and District and two men from Granville, Private George Cartwright and Lieutenant Arthur Hall, were recognised for their service, bravery and sacrifice with the awarding of the Victoria Cross. Granville soldiers served in New Guinea in 1914 before heading to Gallipoli. At the Gallipoli landings 157 soldiers from Granville died. As the daughter of a serviceman who served in the Royal Australian Air Force in World War II, Anzac Day is incredibly important to me. 2021 is especially important as the centenary of the establishment of the RAAF and following the pandemic-related restrictions imposed last year. My thanks go to the committee of the Sub-branch for their kind invitation to attend Anzac Day this year and I am grateful for the opportunity to join them for their first COVIDsafe commemoration. Lest we forget.

MERRYLANDS RSL SUB-BRANCH ANZAC DAY 2021 COMMEMORATION

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I joined Merrylands RSL Sub-branch for their ANZAC Day dawn service at Charles Mance Reserve. Mance was honoured with a State funeral in 2001. At the time of his death he was one of the last remaining ANZACs. He was born on 3 December 1900 and at the age of 16 he lied about his age and enlisted for World War I with the 1st Battalion. He received many honours recognising his military service, including the Legion d'Honneur, France's highest decoration; and was President of the First World War Diggers Association. He tried to teach everyone about the horrors of war and said, "War is no solution to a problem; it's useless. Why make things that destroy humanity. We should utilise the wonders of the Earth". His words ring as true today as they did years ago. As the daughter of a serviceman who served in the Royal Australian Air Force in World War II, Anzac Day is incredibly important to me. 2021 is especially important as the centenary of the establishment of the RAAF. I am grateful for the invitation to join the Sub-branch, for their first COVIDsafe commemoration. Lest we forget.

DANNY CHEETHAM – MOREE BOXING ACADEMY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales)—I recognise Danny Cheetham, President of the Moree Boxing Academy, for his commitment to sport and giving young and upcoming boxers an opportunity to develop on a state-wide and national level. Danny has

been instrumental in holding numerous events in Moree which led the League Boxing Inc. (NSW) to invite Moree to host this year's City vs Country event. Many local youth have come through the Moree Boxing Academy and won championships such as middleweight boxer Stanley Swan, NSW featherweight champion Zack Crouch and Flyweight Champion Katie Defraigne. I congratulate Danny for bringing the Moree Boxing Academy to National attention along with the many benefits to the community and him for his dedication to teaching sport which has not only benefitted the well-being of sports enthusiasts in Moree but given those with extra talent an opportunity to fully realise their potential.

100 TREES TO CELEBRATE 100 YEARS.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I acknowledge and thank the five local Rotary clubs in Maitland: Maitland, East Maitland, Rutherford/Telarah, Maitland Sunrise and Greenhills-Maitland. On 18 April at Telarah Lagoon, 100 Rotarians planted 100 trees to celebrate the 100 Years of Rotary. Maitland City Council also marked the occasion with a community Street Eats event to help celebrate the important milestone. Many members of the community attended and participated in a morning of tree planting bringing along their picnic blankets to enjoy a range of food trucks and live music once the 100th tree had been planted. I personally attended this event and commend the Rotary Clubs of Maitland on how well the event was organised and run. Everyone was so impressed by the hard work of Maitland City Council to prepare the area. Our Mayor Cllr Loretta Baker and her team have such a strong commitment to greening our community. It was lovely to see so many attend and get involved, celebrating this milestone and recognising the Rotarians of our community - all of which demonstrate a shared passion for community service and friendship with the determination to make a positive change to the lives of many.

BOB MCLAUGHLIN A PILLAR FOR MAITLAND'S BOXING COMMUNITY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—Sadly, on 1 April 2021, Green Hills Hit N Dip closed its doors with the sale and redevelopment of the building. This iconic sporting facility has been home to many in the sports and fitness community for the last 40 years. Firstly, I thank the hardworking Bob Geoghan who passed away in 2019, and his family for their long term commitment to improving fitness in our community. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Bob McLaughlin who for the last 26 years has trained, coached and mentored so many young people in the sport of boxing from Hit N Dip. I thank Bob for his decades of dedication and contribution to the lives of many in our community. All the best with whatever it is life has in store for you next, I know your contribution to Maitland's sporting community will be recognised for years to come.

SARAH MILLER

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to extend my congratulations to Sarah Miller from Hennessy Catholic College of Young who was awarded Winner of the East Vision 2021 ANZAC Writing Competition. Sarah was one of 900 students from the Riverina who submitted entries into the writing competition. Sarah's entry "The Day That They Left" is a lovely poem about the soldiers whom were heading off to war. It is amazing to see so many students submit entries into the competition and no doubt it was a hard contest to judge. The competition was categorised into primary and secondary and the Riverina electorate divided into North, South, East and West. Many other students from the Cootamundra Electorate submitted stories, poems etc. about ANZAC and I congratulate them also for their efforts. Sarah also had the privilege to present her poem at the Young ANZAC day main service. Congratulations Sarah, it was an absolute pleasure to read your poem.

SENIORS AWARD FOR TEMORA LIONS CLUB

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I was delighted to celebrate the service and dedication of the Temora Lions Club when I recently presented President, Mr Rob Cartwright and other members with a Seniors Local Achievement Award. The Temora Lions are champions of recycling in the community, working closely with the Temora Shire Council to reduce recyclables going in to landfill. Processing recycling is physically hard work and the Lions do it not for financial reward, but to fundraise for others. Temora Lions go above and beyond for their community and it's wonderful to acknowledge the work of the entire team for their years of service. I am so pleased the Temora Lions Club is being recognised for the ongoing hard work they do for the community, congratulations and keep up the great work!

THE HILLS SPORTS HIGH SCHOOL 2021 LEADERS

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—It is my great pleasure to talk on The Hills Sports High School's new leadership team for 2021. The Hills Sports High caters for locals in southern Seven Hills and future sporting champions from across Blacktown and The Hills areas. I acknowledge the 2021 student leaders, including school captains Blake Metcalfe and Palvisha Farooq and school vice captains William Jarman and Ashley Bedwell. I thank the Parents and Citizens' Association of The Hills Sports High School for its assistance in school fundraising, projects and community endeavours. Well done to the P&C president Renea McLachlin on her

election. I know our local community will be well served by the new P&C. I would also like to acknowledge the long term principal of The Hills Sports High School, Mitchell Struyve, for his dedication and commitment to Seven Hills and Toongabbie students and the local athletes who attend for specialised sports programs. I wish the school all the best for the rest of the 2021 academic year.

WESTMEAD HOSPITAL ORAL HEALTH TEAM

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—Recently, I was fortunate to meet with Oral Health team workers at Westmead Hospital along with representatives from Western Sydney Local Health District and the Health Services Union. Also in attendance was the Minister for Health, Brad Hazzard, and State Member for Parramatta, Dr Geoff Lee. We all spoke to the Oral Health staff on their efforts to ensure locals from the Seven Hills Electorate and across Western Sydney are provided adequate public dental assistance. It was great meeting local Oral Health staff from the Seven Hills Electorate who are working closely in the new digital dental laboratory, the state's second of its kind, to ensure those across Western Sydney are provided the best and most advanced dental care at Westmead Hospital. After the meeting it was great to speak with medical researchers and clinicians on technological developments in dentistry, particularly allowing for patient treatment to be conducted remotely and simplified through 3D printing. It was also terrific to see the refurbishments at the Westmead Education Centre which were part of the New South Wales Government's \$1 billion Westmead Hospital Upgrade.

MARY JO REEVE

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)—I would like to pay tribute to Mary Jo Reeve of Beecroft, who passed away on 25 January 2021. She was a fine citizen and made an outstanding contribution to the Beecroft community over many decades. Mary Jo's legacy was honoured in 2005 by Hornsby Shire Council with a commemorative plaque, recognising the time she gave to beautify and maintain Booth Park in Beecroft. Formally a neglected area of land for dumping and rubbish, Mary Jo cared for Booth Park, spending countless hours over many years transforming the park into a suburban oasis. Mary Jo also cared for those who made use of the park, keeping a watchful motherly eye. She would supply afternoon tea for children playing in the park and on one occasion, noticed a young person, depressed and despondent. She approached them and found out that they could see no reason for living and were contemplating suicide. She was able to care for them, talk them through their concerns, and encourage them with a new perspective on life. Mary Jo's life has left a lasting impression on the local community, and especially her family and friends. She will be greatly missed.

THIRLMERE PUBLIC SCHOOL ANZAC DAY

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—April 25 marked the 106th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings. More than 2,000 ANZACs would die that first day and the eight-month long battle would become central to our self-image and values as a liberal democracy. The guns at Gallipoli may be silent, but teachers in my electorate of Wollondilly continue to teach a new generation about the importance of the day. Jennifer Landsdown, a Thirlmere Public School teacher, has found a novel way to teach her students about the ANZAC tradition whilst honouring our present-day heroes serving abroad on active service. For the past 11 years, Ms Landsdown has arranged for her students to send care packages to our troops in Afghanistan. These parcels include coffee and chocolate, baby wipes, and good old Aussie favourites like Tim Tams, Vegemite and Minties. Just like the First World War, these parcels elicit letters, photos, and drawings from our grateful soldiers. This unique experience supports the students understanding of the ANZAC tradition and better relate to our soldiers' experiences of more than a century ago. I thank Ms Landsdown and her students for keeping the ANZAC spirit alive and lifting the spirits of our troops serving abroad.

GUMNUT PATISSERIE

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—It is with delight that I inform the Parliament that a Southern Highlands favourite, Gumnut Patisserie, was recently awarded the Royal Agricultural Society [RAS] of NSW's prestigious President's Medal. The pinnacle of the RAS Sydney Royal competitions, this year's award attracted more than 5,000 entrants and underwent extensive judging over a 12-month period. The President's Medal aims to look beyond a product, delving into the social, economic, and environmental impact of a business and its long-term sustainability and impact on its local community. RAS Judge Michael Bullen described Gumnut as an outstanding Australian fine food business that gives back to its community and embodies everything the RAS President Medal stands for. I agree. Last October, when visiting the Patisserie's purpose-built bakery in Mittagong, I witnessed firsthand the level of dedication the pastry chefs have for their work, and the pride management have in their staff. This commitment to excellence is reflected in the pies and pastries that draw large daily crowds, including myself, to the Bowral, Mittagong, and Berrima Gumnut stores. My particular favourite is the Lamb shank Pie. I congratulate Tracy and Vicki Nickl and the entire Gumnut Patisserie team on an outstanding achievement.

CHRISTINE LANGSHAW

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—No one knows when the craft of knitting first originated although there is evidence dating back to ancient times. Throughout the ages people have knitted both alone and socially, and I'm pleased to say that one Lake Macquarie woman has used her skill to bring together not only loops of yarn but also like-minded people. Christine Langshaw from Wangi formed Wangi Library Knitting Group in 2012, enlisting the help of six women. The group now boasts 50 members. Christine moved to our area from Penrith and wanted to come up with a way to make friends, not only for herself, but also for other people in a similar situation. The group has gone on to do wonderful things. Each year members create thousands of knitted items which are donated to charities, organisations and causes such as Mission to Seafarers, the Anglican Church, Newcastle Hunter Homeless Connect Day and drought-affected families. It also holds fundraising stalls where proceeds are donated to charities. Christine's efforts were recently recognised when she was named as a finalist in the 2021 Lake Mac Volunteer of the Year award. I commend Christine's enduring community spirit.

JOHN BENNING

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—I'd like to acknowledge the passing of a wonderfully community-minded man, John Benning of Toronto. John was just 79 years old when he suddenly passed, leaving behind his beloved wife of 47 years, Barbara, his children Paul, Margaret and David, stepchildren Rod, Grahame (deceased), Michael and Stewart as well as 18 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. John was widely admired and was known for his love of gardening, which extended into his role as a vital member of the Toronto Community Centenary Hub, located next door to his home. Members of The Hub say John was the "perfect neighbour". For many years he was its grounds keeper and official gatekeeper. He always knew who was on site and was quick to lend a hand, provide some company and a sense of security to The Hub's members. He kept the grounds neat and tidy and made sure its lawns were always immaculate, just like his. I recently met some of John's family and friends when I visited The Hub for a special commemoration service and plaque unveiling for him, and he was by all accounts a very well respected and much-loved man. Vale John Benning.

ROTARY CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS WITH ROTARY CLUB OF NORTH SYDNEY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—This year marks 100 years since the beginning of Rotary in Australia. I would like to acknowledge this milestone by recognising the 93 years of service provided by the Rotary Club of North Sydney. The club recently celebrated this great achievement by unveiling a plaque in the grounds of North Sydney Council. The Rotary Club of North Sydney has always played a pivotal role in bringing the people of North Sydney together to support local causes and drive community-engaged projects, such as the monthly Crows Nest markets. The new D-Caf Dementia Café in Crows Nest, launched by a joint Rotary effort, offers a warm and welcoming environment for those living with dementia to take a break and have a cuppa with their loved ones. Such an initiative is incredibly important to a community that thrives on volunteer support and helping one another. Congratulations to the Rotary Club of North Sydney and thank you to President Toni Field and club members for their ongoing service to our community.

MIDDLE HARBOUR YACHT CLUB COMPETITIONS AND LOCAL SPORT GRANT

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Today I congratulate Tracy Richardson for her achievement as part of the 'No Friends' team in the Helly Hansen Women's Challenge, hosted by Manly Yacht Club. Representing Middle Harbour Yacht Club, Tracy took out first place for the All-Female crew called 'No Friends', second place for her individual performance, and third place in the overall Performance Handicap System result in Division 1. With a record fleet of 37 boats participating this year, Tracy's achievements cannot go without mention. In its 26th year, the Helly Hansen Women's Challenge is a popular sailing event for women, acting as the deciding race of the inaugural Sydney Harbour Women's Keelboat Series. Next year will see the expansion of the event to host up to five races, which is both a win for women in sport and a win for the local economy. Middle Harbour Yacht Club has also secured funding through the 2020-2021 Local Sport Grant Program. The club will purchase a new inflatable safety boat for their youth sailing program. Well done to Tracy and her team and congratulations to Middle Harbour Yacht Club for their successful Local Sport Grant application.

HARRINGTON UNITED FC M-LEAGUE LAUNCH

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—Last month the Mayor of Camden Therese Fedeli and I had the pleasure to attend the Harrington United Football Club 2021 M-League launch. Along with the president of the club Ray Zammit, we presented the 2021 M-League team with their New jerseys and kits to kick off the season. Since 2020, the club has increased its membership by 20%, going from approximately 700 players to nearly 1,200. I would like to acknowledge the major sponsors of the club, Vogue Homes, Emerald Hills Shopping Village and Coates Hire, for supporting a local club. I further congratulate the M-League teams of 2021 and wish you all the best of luck in the season you have ahead.

ELDERSLIE PUBLIC SCHOOL RAZORBACK REPRESENTATIVES

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I congratulate Ben, Noah and Charlie from Elderslie Public School for representing their school at Razorback. I acknowledge Ben, who participated in the Razorback Hockey Team. Ben was also selected to represent Razorback at the Sydney South West Carnival. I also acknowledge Noah and Charlie for their selection and participation into the Razorback AFL team. Congratulations to these young athletes who represented their school with pride and determination. I wish you all the best in your future sporting careers and future endeavours.

SIMON RICHARDSON

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—I thank the Mayor of Byron Shire, Councillor Simon Richardson for his dedication and service to our community for the last 13 years. From the start of public life as a Councillor in 2008 to his two terms as a popularly elected Mayor, Simon has devoted 13 years of his life to the community of Byron Bay. I admire him for his passion, determination and vision of a better future for our community. Simon will leave behind a considerable legacy, too vast to do justice here. In the last two years alone Simon has helped steer the Byron Bay community through drought, bushfires, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic. Simon has had immense personal loss during his time as Mayor, and his decision to spend time focusing on his amazing daughters as the family embarks on their next adventure has touched the hearts of all of us. I look forward to seeing what he achieves next.

PETER WARNER

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—I would like to remember seafarer Peter Warner a hero and sailing legend who died at the age of 90 crossing the Ballina bar. Mr Warner won line honours in no less than three Sydney to Hobart yacht races as a skipper aboard the yacht Astor in 1961, 1963 and 1964. In 1962 they came in second place losing by only a minute. However, it was Peter's sighting of six teenager castaways marooned on an Island of Tonga that made him famous worldwide. Whilst sailing past a remote island in the Tongan archipelago Peter and his crew came across a group of stranded teenage boys. The boys, who were presumed dead after missing for 15-months, had become shipwrecked after fleeing their boarding school in a small boat. In 1974 Peter and his crew, including Filipe Totau, one of the original shipwrecked Tongans, came to the aid of another shipwrecked sailing crew in the Tasman Sea. We have lost a legend of the high seas and I send my condolences to his daughter, friends and the sailing community.

BLACKTOWN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Monday 19th April 2021 I met with representatives and local teachers of the Blacktown Teacher's Association in the Electorate of Prospect. We discussed the many challenges that our teachers are facing in schools throughout Western Sydney. We discussed the Gallop Inquiry which found that there have been profound changes to the workload of teachers. Significant increases in student need, constant policy changes and rapid changes in technology all contribute to the intensification of teacher's work. Despite these challenges, teachers have continued their selfless efforts to ensure our children are properly educated. Providing our children the tools to succeed in their future lives is an enormous feat. I would like to thank teachers in the Electorate of Prospect for their remarkable efforts despite these challenges. Blacktown Teacher's Association work tirelessly to represent teachers and advocate for teacher's concerns in Blacktown. I would like to thank Guy Johal, Secretary, Blacktown Teacher's Association, for his incredible efforts in standing up for teacher's concerns. Teachers within Blacktown have worked tirelessly for our children and it is crucial that we listen and act on teacher's concerns.

FAIRFIELD TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Tuesday 20th April 2021, I met with representatives and local teachers of Fairfield Teacher's Association working within the Electorate of Prospect to discuss some of the challenges facing their members. We discussed the Gallop Inquiry which found that there has been profound changes to the workload of teachers. Significant increases in student need, constant policy changes and rapid changes in technology all contribute to the intensification of teacher's work. Teachers work tirelessly acting not just as educators, but as an academic and emotional support network for our children. This makes teaching an incredibly selfless profession and a profession that is vital to our community. Thank you to teachers in the Electorate of Prospect for their remarkable efforts. Fairfield Teacher's Association does outstanding work in representing teachers and advocating for teacher's concerns. The Association has repeatedly stood up for our teachers and worked to address the challenges faced in Western Sydney. I would like to thank Terry Moriarty, representative, Fairfield Teacher's Association, a Maths Teacher at Bossley Park High School, for his incredible efforts in representing teachers throughout Fairfield and having teacher's best interests at heart.

GYMEA NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate the Gymea North Public School Gardening Club who recently celebrated their 10 year anniversary with a prize crop. Led by Gymea North Public School's outstanding Learning Support Officer Miss Shelly Kaczka, the 120 students meet weekly at lunchtime to plant and care for their school veggie patch. This year, the students have reaped the reward of their hard work as they harvested giant zucchinis with the largest weighing in at 3.4 kilograms at 50 centimetres in length. The students were also invited to taste the fruit of their labour as they enjoyed the grown carrots, peas and mint, which they helped cook. Led by Principal Kirsty Sharman and supported by Administrator Leonie Griffiths, Gymea North Public School is a beautiful community where students are encouraged to immerse themselves in the many opportunities the school provides. This is reflected in the incredible work of Miss Kaczka who volunteers her lunchtime to ensure that the students continue to grow and learn alongside the crops they nurture. I congratulate the Gymea North Public School Gardening Club on reaching this milestone anniversary and extend my best wishes to each of the green-thumbs.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge the Sutherland Shire Football Association who recently celebrated the opening of their new canteen and barbeque area at Harrie Denning Football Centre, right in time for the opening of the 2021 season. The project included refurbishing the existing canteen and the installation of a new barbeque and serving area to further facilitate community engagement. This was successfully delivered under the NSW Government's 2019 Community Building Partnership Program which provided \$22,000 to the Association for the works. On 11 April 2021, I was delighted to join with players at Harrie Denning Football Centre to see the 2021 season return in full force and officially open the barbeque. Of course, none of this would be possible without the strong executive team behind the Sutherland Shire Football Association. I acknowledge President Matt Brady, Vice President Laura Cowell, Treasurer Giulio di Stefano and Committee Members Paul Gallagher, Jim Hankins, Barry Jones, Russel Marsden, David Plant and Keith Ward for their hard work and dedication to our community. I extend my best wishes to everyone in the Sutherland Shire Football Association for the new season and trust that the barbeque will be put to good use.

BOOMALLI ABORIGINAL ARTISTS CO-OPERATIVE

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative. Boomalli was established in 1987 and has called Leichhardt its home for over 20 years. It is the longest running Co-operative for Aboriginal Artists in New South Wales and I have been delighted to deliver \$24,817 in grants to support its wonderful work. On Tuesday 20 April I had the great pleasure of hosting Boomalli here in NSW Parliament to celebrate their exhibition on the Reconciliation Wall. The exhibition included artworks by seven Boomalli Artists: Sharon Smith, Annette Kennedy, Joe Hurst, Jude Jarrett, Kevin "Sooty" Welsh, Jai Walker and Luke Close. I would also like to acknowledge the Boomalli Board of Directors including Liesa Clague and Jim Alexander who joined us in Parliament, their wonderful staff and passionate volunteers. The halls of NSW Parliament are lined with the images of colonisers but the Reconciliation Wall is a reminder that this always was, always will be Aboriginal land. On behalf of the Balmain Electorate I thank all of the wonderful people involved Boomalli, which continues to make its mark on our arts community.

STOPASIANHATE VIGIL

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—I draw the attention of this Parliament to the #StopAsianHate Vigil which was held outside of Sydney Customs House on Saturday 24 April. In the face of rising anti-Asian racism and hate crimes in Australia, it was heartening to be together in solidarity with Asian communities, here and across the world. It is becoming more important than ever for us to speak out against anti-Asian racism and events like this play an important role in doing so. I would particularly like to thank the organisers, Shona Yang from Kozziecom and Erin Chew from the Asian Australian Alliance. Thank you to Nathan Moran from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council for his Welcome to Country. It was wonderful to speak alongside powerful community leaders including Benjamin Oh from the Asian Australian Alliance, slam poet, Kelly Huynh, rapper, Jono Park, writer and podcast host, Jessie Tu, Brenda Gaddi from Women of Colour Australia, comedian Harry Jun and Leon Zhang from MSG Approved. I am certain this will not be the last #StopAsianHate action in Sydney and thank all who joined us.

ARCHIE CROSS, JED & MIA BOLAND

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I acknowledge the selfless efforts of teens Archie Cross and Jed and Mia Boland for bravely facing the harsh elements to support residents trapped by the March 2021 floodwaters. Labelled as a true hero of the North Haven community, Archie Cross did not hesitate to put others before himself as he valiantly braved the rising waters to rescue residents from flood-affected homes. Taking his

tinny with his father Andrew, the Year 7 St Columba Anglican School student sprang to action, delivering food and moving residents to higher ground, before evacuating with his family to the Laurieton United Services Club. Down the road in the township of Dunbogan, 12-year-old Jed and 17-year-old Mia Boland were among the rescue teams, courageously braving the weather and the rising waters to save people trapped. Sadly, the Camden Haven was one of the worst areas impacted by flooding, with many today still unable to return home until essential repairs are carried out to ensure their safety. I applaud our first responders including the SES, RFS, Fire and Rescue, surf lifesaving community, Army, local service organisations, welfare agencies and community volunteers for tirelessly supporting those displaced by the flood waters.

JAMES GARRETT

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise a natural born talent on the footy field, Port Saints defender James Garrett on completing a 12 month stint with Arsenal Football Academy in London. Described as a football protégé in the making, the 21-year-old Port Saints player was one of 2000 applicants selected for a position with the English Premier League Giant's coaching development program. Determined to make his mark and achieve his life ambition, James took every opportunity to build connections and increase his skills before returning home due to COVID. Confident he had secured a shot with the Academy, James is gunning to become the next superstar coach of the Premier League in the area of youth development. At just 18 years of age James had secured his spot at the Academy and was passionately committed to taking on the big league, as he knuckled down and soaked up the culture of a community that lives and breathes everything English football. James is the perfect example of hard work and commitment paying off and I am sure his fellow teammates, coach and family are proud of his achievements.

MAY STEVENS – WARIALDA PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales)—I recognise Mrs May Stevens, a valued member of Warialda Public School community for more than 27 years. She retired from her role as the school cleaner on the 28th February 2021. May certainly set the standard of cleaning to the highest of levels receiving high praise from all. The pride that she has taken in ensuring the staff, students and community enjoyed a clean and safe school is amazing and she will be very hard to replace. Over the 27 year period, May not only worked fulltime at the school but also held many roles with sporting clubs including; treasurer of the Warialda Sports Council, Secretary of the Yallaroi Cricket Club for 22 years, Treasurer of the Warialda Wombats as well as scoring at junior and senior cricket fixtures each and every weekend. Congratulations May, I wish you a very happy and long retirement and commend and thank you for your service and loyalty you have given to the Warialda Public School and the wider community.

**The House adjourned pursuant to standing and sessional orders at 20:27 until
Wednesday 5 May 2021 at 09:30.**