



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Main Committee

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Cunningham Electorate: Mr Ted Tobin

SPEECH

Wednesday, 24 February 2010

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Wednesday, 24 February 2010	Source House
Page 100	Proof Yes
Questioner	Responder
Speaker Bird, Sharon, MP	Question No.

Ms BIRD (Cunningham) (9.39 am)—I want to take the short time available to me in this chamber today to put on the record of this nation the passing of a marvellous Wollongong gentleman who will be sadly missed by many of us in the area. Mr Ted Tobin passed away in Wollongong on 8 February this year. He was 72 years of age.

The last time I saw Ted was at the opening of the new Headspace service in Wollongong and I had a chance to chat to him. My main connection and dealings with him were through his great commitment to mental health services for young people. He was very dedicated to the importance of dealing with youth anxiety and depression illnesses in particular. It was great to see him there on that occasion and to have the opportunity to talk to him about those issues.

He was a gentleman in the true sense of the word. He was one of those people who smiled when you met him, warmed your heart and made you feel good about the day. There was always a healthy dose of mischief in the twinkle in his eyes. He was very well regarded by local people; indeed, about 1,500 people attended his funeral.

Ted was probably most well-known across our community for the extensive service he had given to many organisations in the local area. He served for 13 years on Wollongong City Council and was chairman of the Illawarra County Council. He was also a fellow at the University of Wollongong. Ted was a strong supporter of sports in the Illawarra. He had been a young sportsman, but, sadly, at 29 he was diagnosed with a form of inflammatory arthritis which results in a rigidity of the spine and he was forced to give up sport. What was so admirable was that he then translated his love of playing sport into making access and opportunities in sport available to others. That was reflected in much of his public service as well.

He was founding chairman of the Illawarra Academy of Sport and Beaton Park Leisure Centre and he served for 20 years on the board of the Illawarra Leagues Club, of which he was chairman for a decade. He served for 15 years on the Wollongong Sportsground Trust and was a director for nine years of City Coast Credit Union. He was also a member of the Vikings Rugby Club, the Wollongong Golf Club, the Wollongong Whales Winter Swimming Club, the Wollongong Hawks—Go the Hawks in the current competition!—and the Bondi Icebergs Club, and many others.

His service to the community was recognised by an award in the Order of Australia in 1995 and he was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 1977 for his services to local government. On top of that he was a prolific fundraiser in the community for many excellent services. As you can see, he was a great loss to our community; but more importantly, he was a great contributor to our community in his life. My condolences go to Bev and his children at his sad passing.