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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

McMillan Electorate: Avenues of Honour

SPEECH

Wednesday, 6 February 2013

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Wednesday, 6 February 2013	Source House
Page 308	Proof No
Questioner	Responder
Speaker Broadbent, Russell, MP	Question No.

Mr BROADBENT (McMillan) (09:49): On listening to these three-minute constituency statements, I have to say it has been a pleasure to stand here and listen to the member for Wannon, Hasluck, Macarthur—and Wright of course; I am yet to hear what he has to say—and their heart for their constituency. It has always been an honour for me to hear what they have to say, especially the member for Macarthur in his response to the loss of that greatly loved principal.

I want to talk to you today, Mr Deputy Speaker, about avenues of honour. I do not know what it is like in your electorate but in Victoria avenues of honour have played a major role in commemoration of World War I and World War II battles, particularly as they affected local communities. Quite often local communities were recruited into the one brigade, the one band. In any given battle, all of the men in that community may have lost their lives.

The avenues of honour with their trees each depicted an individual person who was lost in those battles. Some avenues of honour have been protected, cared for and enhanced; others have lost their glow. Yet still as I drive through small communities of my electorate in South Gippsland, I come across the beginnings of the avenues of honour that are still there.

What I am suggesting to you today, Mr Deputy Speaker, regarding the century of Anzac next year, is setting aside funds either for new Avenues of Honour—there is a two-sided part to this—for reconstruction or rehabilitation or for new Avenues of Honour, because the entrances to the towns have changed. In parts of your electorate where the new highway has changed, the highway comes into a different part of town and the old highway, where the Avenues of Honour were planted, are no longer the entrances. So the visitor to the town does not get the inspiration that is clearly about commemorating the Anzac spirit in World War I and World War II—and other wars that we have been a part of.

It is also a local celebration. We have our war memorials, we have our shrines of remembrance, but local communities have their Avenues of Honour and their memorials. I know when you were a minister in this regard, and I will be very quick, many of the memorials were rebuilt and I honour you for that and all those who were involved in that. However, this is a chance for us to set aside funds for each community to create a new Avenue of Honour or entrance to the community or to give the opportunity for local government and others to respond to the centenary.