



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Bunting, Mrs Margaret

SPEECH

Monday, 22 June 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Monday, 22 June 2015
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Questioner
Speaker Husic, Ed, MP

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Mr HUSIC (Chifley) (10:36): The area I represent has a wealth of spirit, generosity and character—wealth valued beyond the material and evidenced in the many you are blessed to meet and work with daily. Margaret Bunting was such an extraordinary person. To those closest to her she was a wife, mother, grandmother, sister and dear friend.

Born in South Wales on 25 January 1948 to James and Letitia Cody, she was the second child, with older brother Anthony and younger brother Bryan. When she was 15, Margaret's family migrated to Australia, and Margaret would later tell how she was dragged screaming from the valley away from friends and the life she knew. In Australia, the story of her new life opened up when she met her one great love: her husband, Warren. It would be hard to find a couple who complemented each other better, with a bond that seemed to strengthen as the years progressed. Humour cemented the relationship from the start. One of her husband's fondest courtship memories emerged from travelling through South Australia with Margaret's family—a great trip until they ran out of petrol on the Hay Plains. As the only Aussie, Warren was given the job of hitchhiking, and he secured a ride with newlyweds from Queensland. On getting the fuel, his return trip was with a truckie. Warren was impressed with all the gears the driver negotiated, and he asked the driver, 'Have you hit top gear yet?'. The truckie replied, 'I just did.' Warren exclaimed, 'That's great, but stop—there's the car.' After Warren's heroics, wedding permission was granted. Tregear became home where they raised family and grew with the local community that valued them so much.

Twenty-five years ago, Margaret was diagnosed with breast cancer, which developed to lung cancer five years ago. One lung was removed, but a persistent cancer returned three years later. Despite this, Margaret did what she did best—helping others battling cancer. A prolific fundraiser, she helped generate over \$150,000 via work with Daffodil Day, Pink Ribbon Day, Relay for Life and Australia's Biggest Morning Tea. One Pink Ribbon Day, she roped me into buying business socks with pink toes and matching pink heels. 'They'll look great in meetings,' she laughed. I remembered those words while leaning back on a chair during one such meeting as I crossed my legs and saw the pink heel creep above my shoes—my face going red, not pink.

I welcome Margaret's husband, Warren, and her children Brad, Letitia Gavin and Jennifer Whiteman. Unfortunately her eldest son, Barry, cannot be here due to work. I welcome her daughters-in-law and son-in-law Linda Bunting, Norma Bunting and Brian Whiteman. I welcome Margaret's brother Bryan and his wife, Kim, and her grandchildren Emily, Brandon, Georgina, Jackson, Constance, Jessica, Laura, Nicholas, Alexis and Mackenzie. Three grandchildren send their best—Joel, Monique and Cooper.

Sadly, we farewelled Margaret on April 7, and today I wanted to record some appreciation. In bringing together my thoughts about Margaret, I suddenly remembered the words of the inimitable US poet Maya Angelou. They speak to me today when recalling the amazing Margaret:

I've learned that people will forget what you have said, people forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

Thank you for the way you made all of us feel, Margaret Bunting.