



Speech by

# Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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Hansard 9 December 1999

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### International Year of Older Persons

**Hon. P. D. BEATTIE** (Brisbane Central— ALP) (Premier) (9.33 a.m.), by leave: Later today I will be lunching with a group of very special Queenslanders. They are members of the 100 plus Club. Mr Speaker, this is one of the most exclusive clubs in the State, because you need to be over the age of 100 to get in. There will be 18 members at today's annual Christmas lunch here at Parliament House, including that great World War I veteran Ted Smout. I will be hosting the lunch, of course. I had the pleasure of being with them all for Christmas lunch last year—and what a terrific group of Queensland seniors they are. As I understand it, Ted Smout lives at Sandgate. He catches the train in every year and walks down to Parliament House. He is 105 years of age. That is not a bad achievement.

This lunch is just a small tribute from my Government to these great Queenslanders as we continue to celebrate the International Year of Older Persons. This has been an extraordinary year of community involvement in Queensland. And it says much about Queensland's community spirit that our State has made the best response of all the States to the International Year of Older Persons.

Next Wednesday at the International Year of Older Persons Conclusion Lunch here at Parliament House, the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care, Anna Bligh, and I will honour more than 50 local groups which organised hundreds of International Year of Older Persons projects around the State. My Government committed more than \$800,000 for these projects which ranged from a grey mardi gras and belated debutante balls, to Internet training and information expos. The projects were important in increasing awareness of ageing issues throughout the Queensland community.

This State is leading the way in changing community attitudes towards ageing through—the media resource "Don't Call Me Granny!", developed by the Office of Ageing in the Department of Families, and adopted across Australia;

a documentary coproduction with ABC TV called "A Matter of Attitude: Confronting the Fear of Frailty"—this also came out of the Office of Ageing;

Australia's first National Seniors Tourism Guide, developed by the Seniors Card Office in the Department of Families;

my Government, through the Families Department, also developed the intergenerational "Respect" advertising campaign, and a web site for Queensland school students.

We have also recognised the contribution older Queenslanders make to this State by initiating a series of benefits, including the Senior Shopper Service and the Seniors Enquiry Line. We have also introduced—

free ambulance for Queensland pensioners and Seniors Card holders—an initiative that has been very well supported by all Queenslanders;

motor vehicle concessions for Seniors Card holders;

more regional 60 and Better programs.

Though the international year may be drawing to a close, I am also about to launch my Government's future blueprint on ageing issues. Next week at the conclusion lunch, I and Minister Anna Bligh will be launching the Queensland Government's framework on ageing 2000—2004. It is called

Our Shared Future. The framework will help us work towards a fair society where all older people are valued members of their community.

The international year has been about improving community attitudes towards older people and growing older. It has also been about highlighting the contributions older people make to our community. I want to take this opportunity to thank the hundreds of dedicated older Queenslanders who gave their time to make the international year such a success. On behalf of the Government and the people of this State, I thank all our seniors for their enormous contribution to our community, not only during the International Year of Older Persons, but every year.

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