



Speech by

**GEOFF WILSON**

**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Hansard 5 October 2000

### **SENIORS WEEK**

**Mr WILSON** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (10.28 a.m.): Last Saturday I had the great pleasure of representing the Honourable Anna Bligh, the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care, and the State Government at the official launch of Queensland's Seniors Week 2000 by the Lord Mayor, Jim Soorley. About 1,500 people attended to kick off the week with the third Gray Mardi Gras. The Seniors Week theme was "Rage at any age"—to show that older people really know how to have fun. Seniors Week was a chance to challenge the negative stereotypes in our community, to portray older people positively and promote a greater understanding of ageing issues.

Figures provided at the launch by the Lord Mayor are very revealing. Research on older people in Brisbane shows a great gap between popular myth and reality. Popular myth No. 1 is that most older people live alone. The reality is that only 29% of Brisbane's older people aged 60 and older are living at home on their own. Popular myth No. 2 is that most older people live in retirement villages, hostels and so on. The reality is that more than 90% of older people in Brisbane aged 60 and older live at home in ordinary houses. More than 70% of older people aged 80 and older also live at home.

Myth No. 3 is that most older people are frail or ill, but the reality is that research shows that people aged 60 and older rate their health as good, very good or excellent. Myth No. 4 is that people become disabled in old age. The reality is that only 9% of people aged 65 years and older have a disability that restricts their daily activities. Myth No. 5 is that most older people need assistance. The reality is that only 46% of people aged 65 and older report a need for assistance. Myth No. 6 is that most older people are cared for by someone else. The reality is that many older people are more likely to give than to receive care in Brisbane. There are about 20,000 older people aged 65 and older who care for others.

I congratulate all those who participated in Seniors Week. Let us hope it is even bigger and more fun next year.

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