



Speech by

Mr N. ROBERTS

MEMBER FOR NUDGEES

Hansard 27 April 2004

MR W. J. C. MCBRIDE

Mr NEIL ROBERTS (Nudgee—ALP) (9.10 p.m.): It was a poignant moment when Bill McBride's name was called at Zillmere's Anzac Day service on Sunday. Bill had planned to be at the service and to march with his sister Linda proudly wearing the service medals earned by his late father, Lambert. William James Cameron McBride—Bill or Billy to his family and extensive network of friends—was born on 10 January 1955. He died unexpectedly in Sydney in his 49th year on 14 April 2004. Bill is survived by his sisters Linda and Monica, his nieces Georgia and Alinta, his partner Michelle and former partners and children whom he loved and cared for. Bill also had a strong family and spiritual connection with the Butchulla and Bungalung people of Hervey Bay and Casino in New South Wales.

For the record, I table two copies of the order of service for Bill's funeral which contains the eulogy, some aspects of which I have used in this tribute to this great man. Bill was a proud indigenous Australian. I am privileged to have known Bill and his family, who have all made significant contributions towards our local community, the wider indigenous community and to the worthy cause of reconciliation.

I particularly recall Bill's involvement in the Zillmere community and police action group, which he helped to establish. His passion for giving and making a positive contribution to his community was plainly evident in his work on this committee, particularly his interest in supporting and encouraging the aspirations and dreams of young people.

More recently, Bill returned to Brisbane to participate in the official naming of Lambert McBride Park, named in honour of his late father. Lambert McBride Park, situated in Muller Road, Zillmere, now stands as a stark reminder of the lives of both Lambert and Bill McBride. Like his father, Bill served his country in the armed forces. He joined the navy in 1972, and through hard work and perseverance rose to the rank of petty officer. But for his untimely death, we are all confident that Bill would have progressed to more senior levels, continuing to blaze a trail that he had already established for other indigenous Australians.

Bill completed a Bachelor of Science in Health Promotion earlier this year to add to his long list of personal achievements. Photography and rock 'n roll dancing were Bill's passions. He won awards within Australia and the United States for his photographic works and his passion for rock 'n roll was aptly displayed during a Christmas break-up of the Zillmere community police advisory group where his skills and his love of the pastime were self-evident to all who witnessed his spectacular display. Bill also dedicated much of his time in the navy to the issue of drug and alcohol rehabilitation, for which he was awarded the Conspicuous Service Medal in 1994.

Bill's funeral was held on Thursday, 22 April in the presence of hundreds of family and friends. The final words of his eulogy are an apt way of concluding this brief commentary on his life on this earth: God had a sailing boat in heaven and needed someone to sail it and he chose the best, Billy McBride.