



Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Thursday, 12 November 2009

SILVER MEMORIES

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.06 pm): *Silver Memories* is a unique 24-hour-a-day radio service that has been developed by 4MBS Classic FM, a Brisbane community radio station that is based in and broadcasts from the Greenslopes electorate. *Silver Memories* was created to specifically address the needs of older Australians who are often socially and emotionally isolated, including those living in residential aged-care facilities.

On 4 November I had the pleasure of visiting the 4MBS studio at Coorparoo in my electorate to attend the official broadcast launch of the *Silver Memories* service. *Silver Memories* fills a gap by playing music that is not available on any other radio station. The programs have strong emphasis on music of the past, from the 1920s through to the 1950s—the golden age of Hollywood movies and musicals and musical theatre. *Silver Memories* also broadcasts big band, swing and other popular music of that era. The service uniquely features singalong sessions, birthday calls, old radio serials, comedy spots, special highlights and requests, making *Silver Memories* truly interactive with the local community.

Silver Memories also regularly broadcasts information on government services, particularly for the elderly. The 4MBS *Silver Memories* service can be received only by special radio units designed to pick up the appropriate subcarrier frequency or, alternatively, listeners can access the service via the internet online.

Researchers from the University of Queensland recently formally evaluated the impact of *Silver Memories* upon listeners' quality of life and wellbeing. There were 114 participants who completed the evaluation in total. Participants included 68 community-dwelling older adults and 46 living in residential aged care from 14 separate facilities. Participants were asked to listen to *Silver Memories* for at least one hour a day over a period of three months and to keep a daily listening diary. Participants also answered questions regarding the quality of their life both before and after the trial. The average age of participants in the trial was 80 years and participants had an average of 2.6 chronic health conditions, with 14 participants bed or wheelchair bound.

I am pleased to report that the results of the evaluation were very positive indeed. One hundred per cent of carers and care staff involved in the trial stated that they would recommend the radio service to others. It was found that *Silver Memories* significantly improved the quality of life of those who participated and an improvement in depression was also observed amongst listeners.

Even more encouraging was the finding that *Silver Memories* had a calming effect on some patients with dementia. I personally donated six radios to the Archbishop Duhig Nursing Home at Holland Park during the 2009 state election. I am very pleased to advise that I have been recently advised that a resident suffering from dementia who had not been communicating began to do so after listening to the *Silver Memories* service.

Silver Memories will have significant benefits for many older Australians and I commend 4MBS Classic FM, in particular its indefatigable general manager, Gary Thorpe, for providing such a valuable and sometimes life-changing service to those living in the electorate of Greenslopes and beyond. 4MBS

Classic FM operates mainly due to the generosity of volunteer staff, and I thank them for providing the *Silver Memories* service and helping older Australians to cope with serious issues such as loneliness, depression and chronic illness. I am very proud that this radio station operates from the Greenslopes electorate and I intend to continue to offer 4MBS my support in its future endeavours.