



Speech by

Ted Sorensen

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

Hansard Wednesday, 19 August 2009

SCHMIERER, MRS M

Mr SORENSEN (Hervey Bay—LNP) (9.07 pm): Hervey Bay is a beautiful place to live and, by all accounts, as of 3 June 2009 we may have the oldest resident in Australia. Tomorrow, 20 August, Mrs Miriam Schmierer will be 110 years of age. She has lived a long and fruitful life. She has a love of letter writing, a pastime which keeps her in close touch with her family, including her eight grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. She likes to bring one back to earth and will certainly let them know that her birthday is the last thing on her mind. She is more interested in other people and is a great listener wanting to hear what family and friends are doing. Her Christian walk is an inspiration to all. Any visitor can only be encouraged by her perspective of life with her Lord Jesus Christ.

Born in 1899 on a dairy farm at Mount Whitestone in the electorate of the honourable Ian Rickuss and having lived in three centuries, the Hervey Bay resident has seen a lot in her life: two world wars, the Great Depression and the reign of two queens and four kings. The Boer War, in 1899, occurred in the year in which Miriam was born.

Then there are the inventions and industrial developments that Miriam has witnessed over the three centuries. She has seen the horse and carriage, the train, the automobile, the aeroplane, and the information technology era. Miriam has seen 24 Premiers of Queensland, 38 Queensland Governors and 10 popes. Her life has spanned every Prime Minister of Australia since Edmund Barton in 1901. When you think about it, it is really quite amazing.

On Miriam's birthday on 20 August 1924, she married Grenville Schmierer, who she met at Woodmillar, Gayndah, whilst helping her sister with her children. Grenville was a cream carrier who later became a dairy farmer and the farm is still with the family in Gayndah. Grenville and Miriam had two sons, Austin and Mervyn. Her husband and two sons have predeceased her. I am sure she will reflect on her wedding 85 years ago tomorrow.

Members of Miriam's family from the United Kingdom, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Gayndah and Hervey Bay are gathering for her 110th birthday celebration. Recently, Masters Lodge asked Miriam to write down her recollections of the lodge for the past 10 years. She responded with four pages of a neatly written account. I congratulate Miriam and wish her a happy birthday.

(Time expired)