




Speech by

Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Hansard Thursday, 4 August 2011

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE: GIBBS, HON. IJ

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (9.48 am): Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the presence of Doris and her extended family, friends, and indeed also my darling wife, Pauline, who is here in support of Doris today. The Hon. Ivan James Gibbs was born on 22 November 1927 and passed away on 19 May 2011. He was born and bred in Whittlesea, Victoria, before moving to the Gold Coast in 1956 with his wife, Doris, and their two children at the time. Ivan and Doris were married for just one day short of 61 years on the day of his passing—a marriage that had been without doubt a near perfect one.

Ivan and Doris had five children: sons Chris, Paul, Andrew, Matthew and daughter Megan. Ivan's working life commenced with work on local farms after school at the age of 10, more for fun than money. He then took on a country mail run that he completed before school each morning and continued to do so after completing his schooling, having achieved a merit certificate at the age of 14. He also worked as a farm labourer in his early years and learned a great deal from those he worked for and with. He attributed much of his later success to listening to and learning from those he respected. His early work also saw him as a rabbit trapper, a farm hand, a drover, a horse trainer and even a jockey. Eventually Ivan followed family into the grocery and shopkeeping business.

Ivan's community involvement also started in those early days. True testament to the man was his involvement in the rural fire brigade and the encouragement of youth in the area through a training program with the National Fitness Council and hosted by the Whittlesea Rural Fire Brigade. Those early years in the rural fire brigade were an ideal training ground for the man who would one day become national parks minister in the Queensland government.

Ivan's commitment to his church, the Church of England, now the Anglican Church, was also forged in those early years in Whittlesea. When Ivan brought his family to the Gold Coast in 1956 he saw the opportunities in what was to become the sixth largest city in Australia. He is regarded as one of the pioneers who made that fact a reality. Shortly after arriving on the Gold Coast, Ivan developed his business interests, as well as becoming an alderman in the local council where he took on the role of health chairman and deputy mayor. In 1974 Ivan won the seat of Albert which at the time included Springwood in the north down to Southport. He spent 15 years in this place diligently representing the people of the seat of Albert, the last 10 as a minister of the Crown.

I remember fondly the times that our lives crossed in the early to mid 1980s when he as a busy minister took time out to visit Beenleigh Little Athletics and Beenleigh High School on the annual awards night to present the prestigious Ivan Gibbs award to the outstanding male and female athletes. I am proud to say that my son Michael was one of the recipients of the award on four of those occasions. Michael still has those awards in his home and we have a beautiful certificate on parchment that was given with the award.

Diligence and loyalty were the cornerstones of Ivan's life from when he was a young man in Whittlesea through his life in business, local government, state politics and all of the years that he continued to work in and for the community in his later years. Indeed, Ivan continued to guide local community groups as a mentor until just a few days before his passing. One of Ivan's many involvements was with the Coomera Anglican College. Ivan was chair of the college steering committee and the main

driver for the school. The principal of Coomera Anglican College, Mark Sly, remembered at Ivan's memorial service his first meeting with Ivan regarding the new college. As he said on that day, what was immediately evident was Ivan's passion, belief and commitment in getting Coomera Anglican College up and running despite the odds. He had gathered a dedicated team around him and together they were absolutely determined to succeed. When listening to Ivan speak about his vision for the college, it was impossible not to be caught up in the excitement of it all. Mark went on to say that Ivan oozed passion, enthusiasm and great confidence and they became hallmark traits of those working with Ivan to establish and develop the college. He often said, 'There is no such thing as can't. With effort and persistence we can achieve anything.' Those words epitomise the man Ivan Gibbs.

In every aspect of his life, whether it be family, business, community, his church or just helping someone, his passion and enthusiasm were apparent. I can attest to his determination and commitment as witnessed by me in the way Ivan supported me in my quest to represent the people of the Coomera electorate in this place. His support for me and my family was a cornerstone of my campaign in 2009. His advice and wise counsel over the years were so important to me and I shall miss our chats over a cup of coffee. There is no doubt that Queensland is a much better place because he was here with quiet but dedicated commitment. His legacy lives on.

Ivan's funeral was held at St Peter's Anglican Church Southport, the parish where he and Doris have worshipped since their arrival in Queensland more than half a century ago. He leaves behind his beloved wife Doris, surviving children Chris, Paul, Andrew and Megan, daughters- and sons-in-law, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The Hon. Ivan Gibbs, Queensland's quiet achiever, may he rest in peace.