




Speech by

Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Hansard Tuesday, 21 August 2012

GAMBRILL, MRS B

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (9.43 pm): I would like to acknowledge the passing of one of the South Burnett's community elders in Beryl Gambrill nee Bligh-Watson. I would like to take this opportunity to read an excerpt from Auntie Beryl's funeral, which I had the pleasure of attending on Monday of this week. Beryl Gambrill was born at Palm Island on 13 August 1930 and passed away on 12 August 2012, a day short of 82 years. She grew up with her brothers and sisters: Vivian, Percy, Mavis, Freda, Cyril, Lance, Vincent and Maureen. They are all deceased. Beryl was the youngest in her family and was still living in their childhood home.

Beryl attended Cherbourg State School from grades 1 to 6. Auntie Beryl was then taken to Maryborough to her older sister Mavis Torney to complete grade 7. Her parents knew that she was very smart at school. When she completed her education she returned to Cherbourg and had numerous jobs. Her jobs on the community included working at the retail store, primary store and Cherbourg Hospital. When the department of native affairs offered her a job, she took it and became a liaison officer and worked at Mount Isa.

She always fought hard for Aboriginal rights, even being arrested in 1967 for supporting the referendum. This was an easy thing to do for Auntie Beryl because she was fighting for equal rights, equity and respect. She lived an active and long life and she had the right to express her opinion and expected to have it heard.

Auntie Beryl married Jack Watson and had nine children, two of whom are now deceased. Auntie Beryl was full of energy. She also played several sports. She rode poddy calves at rodeos, rode horses, took part in barrel races for leisure and enjoyed camping and fishing. She was an active member of the Cherbourg Apex Club, CWA and several sporting clubs.

One incident that was memorable to her family and caused her family to stick by her values and support her was when they cut down the historical bunya trees. She was willing to go to jail for them, protesting with her nieces and nephews. Some of Auntie Beryl's personal achievements include being a long-time teacher aide, JP magistrate, member of Barambah Local Justice Initiative Group, member of the Ration Shed, P&C school committee, traditional owner of the Bunya Wakka Wakka and Kullali, sportswoman and go-getter. She was also a member of Cherbourg Youth Justice, Bunya Mountains elders, Iron Bark Ridge and Advisory Agreement Implementation Group for Stanwell.

Auntie Beryl is survived by seven of her children—Charles, Jack Jr, Stephanie, Kevin, Florence, Ronald and Arlene—and their families, her nieces and nephews, cousins, grandchildren and great-grandchildren too numerous to mention.

On behalf of the Deputy Premier and member for Callide and the electorate of Nanango, I would like to pass on my deepest condolences to the family of Auntie Beryl.