




Speech By  
**Deb Frecklington**

**MEMBER FOR NANANGO**

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**ADJOURNMENT SPEECH**

**South Burnett Parkinson's Support Group**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (10.26 pm): I would like to discuss a new community group in the Nanango electorate called the South Burnett Parkinson's Support Group. I was recently invited to attend their monthly meeting by their coordinator, Maree Millard, to learn more about this committed and dedicated group. I met Maree at the Orana old people's home Christmas party. She is just so driven by this cause. Maree herself was diagnosed with Parkinson's just two years ago. Along with several other community members she identified the enormous need within the South Burnett region to form a support group. In November 2012 they held their first meeting under the auspices of Parkinson's Queensland. Today, just a few months later, they have 42 members.

Parkinson's disease is one of the most common neurological conditions in Australia, second only to dementia. There are 80,000 Australians with Parkinson's. Seventeen thousand of these are from Queensland. In Australia, 30 people are diagnosed every day. Unfortunately, Parkinson's is more common in rural and farming areas than in our more highly populated city areas.

When I attended the South Burnett Parkinson's Support Group meeting I had the chance to meet with many people who have been touched by this disease. Also, it was wonderful to see such a fantastic support group for the people of the South Burnett. I would encourage anyone from the region to attend this monthly meeting.

In particular, I would like to tell the House about a lovely man I met at the meeting called Kel Wenke from Nanango. Kel recently underwent deep brain stimulation to assist with the effects of this disease. While this option is not suitable for everyone, it can provide hugely improved quality of life. In Kel's case, the outcome has been simply amazing. He has improved significantly. In particular, the therapy has also stimulated an ability to sketch and draw which he previously did not possess.

Whilst Kel has said to me that he would prefer not to have Parkinson's at all, he now enjoys this amazing new ability and creates the most amazing sketches with a basic carpenter's pencil. The South Burnett Parkinson's Support Group will be raising awareness about Parkinson's and the support available in the region on World Parkinson's Day, which is held on Thursday, 11 April, and I look forward to following its progress on this day and supporting this wonderful group into the future.