




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Hewitt, Mr WD

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (10.01 am): I would like to join previous speakers in paying my respects to the late Hon. Bill Hewitt. I pass on my condolences to Mr Hewitt's wife, Shirley, and the rest of his family who are here today. It is only fitting and proper that they are here.

When preparing for my first speech to the House someone suggested that I research former members who represented the seat. I listened to the Queensland Speaks interview that was conducted with Mr Hewitt. For anyone who is interested in Queensland political history, it is worthwhile listening to the Queensland Speaks interviews. To me, throughout that interview, Bill's honesty, integrity and his commitment to democracy shone through.

In that interview, Bill described a difficult childhood and a challenging start to working life. These situations could have led to bitterness and negativity, but Bill chose a path of reflection, growth and ultimately public service. The trauma Bill's father suffered in World War I and the resultant difficulties for Bill became his motivation for entering politics. Bill also described his early involvement in the Young Liberals. He described that feeling of being hooked by the people, the questions, the arguments and the policies.

I met Bill on only one occasion and his passion for politics was evident. Earlier this year, I attended the opening of the park that was named in Bill's honour. At this stage, Bill was very unwell and confined to a wheelchair. I took the opportunity to introduce myself. Bill immediately plied me with questions about state parliament, revealing a very in-depth knowledge of the workings of this place. I asked Bill if he had any advice for a new member. He told me to always be open to learning from any source and not to close my mind off to people with different ideas. Bill also told me that if anyone ever came to me for help I should listen carefully to them and do all that I could. He said, 'You can't keep everyone happy, Joe, but people respect you if you have a go and you'll respect yourself.' Perhaps this willingness to listen to people in the community was the reason that, when Councillor Adrian Schrunner surveyed the community to determine the name of the new park, the people of the area chose to name the park after Bill.

As I said, I met Bill only once, but I have met so many people in the community, particularly many who are active in Rotary, who held him in the highest regard. When I was seeking election, I was out doorknocking in Bill's area with a volunteer. I started at one end of the street and the volunteer started at the other end. When we met up in the middle, the volunteer told me very excitedly that he had doorknocked the former member for the area, Bill Hewitt. I am a hard taskmaster so, of course, I asked the volunteer if I could count on Bill's vote. The volunteer advised me that Bill's vote was definitely not going my way but that if I ever wanted a lively, respectful and intelligent debate then I should go and see him. The volunteer had some warnings for me—'Don't expect to win that debate.'

I again pay tribute to Mr Hewitt. I pass on my condolences to his family. I acknowledge the significant contribution that Bill made to the community of Greenslopes and to the state of Queensland.