




Speech By
Jonty Bush

MEMBER FOR COOPER

Record of Proceedings, 25 May 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Brusasco, Mr I

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (7.27 pm): I rise to pay tribute to the late Ian Brusasco AO, a Queensland Great and legend within the Labor Party, an Ashgrovean and a Cooper local. To give a comprehensive account of Ian's lifetime achievements certainly is not possible in the time permitted. In sport, Ian first excelled at Rugby, playing for the Nudgee 1st XV, both the Queensland University and Brothers Rugby clubs, and in the Queensland representative side. As Ian told me when we last spoke, he would have played for Australia had illness not gotten in the way.

True to his character, this setback did not deter Ian from further involvement in sport, this time in soccer. Ian served first as secretary of Azzuri, which later became Brisbane City FC, after which he served as an Australian delegate to the FIFA Congress, leader of the Australian under 16 soccer World Cup teams between 1985 and 1989, chairman of the Australian Olympic Football Task Force and chairman of the Trustee Management Group of the Brisbane Strikers. For these contributions, Ian was inducted into the Australian Soccer Hall of Fame in 1999 as an inaugural member. More broadly, Ian was an inaugural member of the Queensland Academy of Sport in 1989, serving on the board until 1997, and was chairman of the Brisbane World Masters Games from 1993 to 1994.

In business, Ian practised his profession as a pharmacist. He qualified in 1955 and married fellow pharmacy student Patsy Wilson in 1956. Together they opened several pharmacies in Brisbane. Some short years later, in 1960 he would join the Ashgrove branch of the Labor Party. By 1970 Ian would turn his full-time career to politics, serving as a council alderman for 14 years, chairing both the health and planning committees.

However, in perhaps his greatest contribution, Ian worked behind the scenes, integrating business acumen with political strategy through his crucial role in running and revitalising the 4KQ radio station. As we know, the sale of 4KQ in 1986 provided the capital to establish Labor Holdings, the investment fund to which we owe much credit for Labor's electoral dominance in Queensland over the past 30 years. For these exceptional contributions to our party, both Ian and Patsy were awarded life membership.

Finally, I turn to Ian's legacy of philanthropy. In 1993 he founded Foodbank Queensland alongside former lord mayor Clem Jones AO and solicitor David Muir. With Patsy he also seed funded the Foodbank Queensland Foundation to ensure Foodbank Queensland's long-term viability. Ian considered this achievement his proudest and the most satisfying of all his work.

It is said that behind every great man is a remarkable woman, and there is no truer personification of this than Ian's wife, Patsy, who has herself been awarded an OAM for her community work. Patsy is not able to be here tonight. However, I did seek her permission to give this speech. I would like to offer my most sincere condolences to her, along with their three children, Mark, Tim and Linda. Vale Ian Brusasco.