




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Fouras, Hon. D, AM

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (9.52 am): May I join by adding my condolences to the Fouras family, his wife, Tanya, his friends Debra, Susan and Kerry who join us here today, and the remainder of his family who cannot be with us. I had the great privilege of Jim being my local member growing up. In Ashgrove, Jim was constant presence in our community. He was a hard worker and had a generous approach.

My parents always voted nothing but Labor and Jim was on the right side of that and off to a good start in our house, but my family's connection with Jim came from the almost lifelong friendship that they share with Brian and Judy Timms. Judy was Jim's electorate officer during his time in the Ashgrove electorate. I am often left to ponder on the embellishment of my parents' escapades so, not wanting to mislead the House, I will say that I know one thing for sure—that is, I will never be the best host of my parents when they come to this place. That is a title I am sure Jim will always hold. They hold memories of dinners with the Speaker, parliamentary wines—thank goodness the gin was not around then, Mr Speaker—contests in the billiard room and the removal of their shoes and jackets for frivolity on the squash courts.

It was difficult meeting Jim not to hold him in high regard. I was not studious by any stretch of the imagination, but I recall one school assignment that I was particularly proud of during my primary school years and that was one where the topic was this place, the Queensland parliament. I believe I was in grade 6 or 7, still at Ashgrove State School, and Jim, Speaker at the time, was generous enough to have me come into his electoral office and interview him. Google was not a thing back then and the library was not one of my haunts, but sitting across the table from Jim I learnt of his passion for his roots, his Greek heritage, his family, his love of the Labor Party, his passion for standing up for working people and fairness and, of course, the depth of knowledge and regard that he had for this place. I got sent off with some reference materials and copious notes that afternoon and a very clear understanding of the love that Jim held for the community that I grew up in.

While I regarded that assignment—which I typed; computers were around at that point—as some of my best work, I know it was something that I cared about because of that interaction with Jim. I suspect that the trade-off was actually when I was called up to don my school uniform on a weekend and head up to school to capture some photos for Jim's political materials. Those images he used for the remainder of his political career, which kept me informed of every mail-out that went through in my senior years. Jim was a hard worker and he did not believe in needless self-promotion. He refused to have any nameplates or stickers on his car—and that is probably just as well because he was not the world's best driver. He was an astute politician and could always read the wind. He would always predict an election outcome with great accuracy. He had the respect of people from both sides of the political fence and he was a constant in election campaigns in his retirement, chatting and connecting with voters and volunteers alike.

Brian Timms shared with me a memorable encounter that took place on an Anzac Day service at Ashgrove. The management would not open the doors of the club as it was 9.40 am and the club did not open until 10 am. It was unseasonably hot that morning and a large crowd was milling at the front door and they were getting fractious. Jim sensed the situation and disappeared around the back of the club. A few minutes later the doors were flung open by none other than Jim and the crowd poured into the club, much to the horror of the manager there that day.

The imprint that Jim left on my life while exceptional was not rare. There are many through our party, community and democracy that Jim made an indelible imprint on. He invested in people, he valued people, and he transformed people's lives. His good friend Gough Whitlam phoned him one election night and said to him, 'Demetrios, you will never be defeated.' In a political sense that was very true. Vale, Jim Fouras.