




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Morgan, Mr L

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (2.57 pm): Today, with the family's permission, I would like to pay tribute to a remarkable individual—a true Australian, a Queensland and bayside legend: Lionel Morgan. Lionel was a stellar Rugby League player. In fact, he was recognised in 2008 with selection as a member of the Indigenous Rugby League Team of the Century. He had amazing skill and mastered his talent, often during great adversity. This enabled him to achieve his dreams to create opportunities for his family and his beloved community. That is what drove him. Lionel dedicated his life to serving others. It is fitting to acknowledge the profound impact that he had on our community and Rugby League and, indeed, the legacy he has left behind.

Lionel was an outstanding Rugby League player. For many, that is what he will be remembered for; however, there is so much more to this man. Lionel played football just as he lived life, showing his prowess and ability on the field. His actions on the field displayed the sort of person that he was. There is no doubt that Lionel faced terrible harshness; however, he never let that define him. He was always steadfastly focused on his goal and rose above that harshness.

In 1960 Lionel was selected to represent Australia in a test and world Rugby League matches. He was also the first Aboriginal man to do so. This was at a time when Aboriginal people could not vote, nor could they get a passport. They could not get a home loan; they could not buy property. You can imagine that not being able to get a passport would have caused some grief when he was selected to represent Australia, as the matches were all overseas and it is a bit tricky to leave and return to the country without a passport. This did not hold him back. Instead, this made Lionel the man that he was—a dedicated family man and community worker.

From raising funds for the construction of the Wynnum North swimming pool, running the Kianawah swim club, coaching his beloved Wynnum-Manly Seagulls or developing young players, he was determined to provide opportunities and support to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. He was a founding member of the Wynnum Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-op and an elder at Murri Court, and he did both of these for many years. It is hard to imagine how many lives Lionel touched—whether it was through the great pleasure he gave through football, his guidance and support through the Murri Court, Winnam Housing or swimming and the kids' school. He was a quiet man with a gentle sense of humour. He had an uncanny ability and desire to bring people together, to bridge divides and instil a sense of unity within our community. It is telling at this moment in history which side of history we should all be on. That is why I encourage everyone to vote yes.