




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Springer, Mr R; Thirkill, Mr B; Pugh, Mr M

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (10.14 pm): Tonight, I rise to speak on behalf of my community about the loss of a pair of community stalwarts. We have just commemorated Vietnam Veterans' Day, but there was somebody very special missing from the service. It was Ron Springer. Ron was the beloved husband of Jacki, father of a number of my community members and Pappy to too many to name. He was a longstanding member of our local Centenary RSL.

For the first five years of Ron's life it was just him and his mum. His mum, Myrtle, was a single working mother and she moved around rural and remote locations in North Queensland to make a living. Ron was very proud of his single mum, who looked after him so well. In his later years, he and his beautiful wife, Jacki, moved to Brisbane to be close to their family. He joined the Centenary RSL in 2003. I want to thank the Centenary RSL for the care they have shown the Springer family since Ron's passing. Thank you, George and the Centenary RSL team, for your genuine care for this wonderful family.

We also mourned the loss of Bill Thirkill, a longstanding Rotary member in my community and a stalwart of the Oxley bowls club and the Oxley Progress Association. I first met Bill at the Oxley bowls club. He was working behind the bar. As he so often did, he began to regale me with the tales of his adventures with his beautiful bride, Fran, bussing all over Africa and other exotic locales. It was only at his funeral that I came to understand the true depth of his adventures. It turns out that he had been really underplaying them. Apparently, Bill was cast in a Bollywood movie when he was much younger. He was interrogated by Russian guards during one of his trips. As a young man, he represented Australia in the international skydiving championships. He truly lived an amazing life and he lived each day to the full.

Both Ron and Bill leave behind an enormous hole in our community. In the parliament tonight I want to pay tribute to them both for their community contributions.

In the time that I have left, I reflect on a recent loss in my family, that of my grandfather Murray Pugh. Just like Bill and Ron, Murray lived every one of his 96 years and 11 months to the full. He was fishing and tinkering with his engineering projects until close to the end of his life. As a teen he spent years in an orphanage before getting a job at Tip Top and marrying my nan, Marg. They had a happy if not harmonious marriage for 70 years, which they celebrated earlier this year. Nan passed away a few short weeks after that. He missed her terribly and I will miss him. He is a true inspiration to me. Vale to three wonderful men.