

**JOHN BELL — TRIBUTE**

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**HON LOUISE KINGSTON (South West)** [6.21 pm]: Today marks a part of my life that has always been very difficult. In 1996, my father was killed on a routine drug surveillance flight at Manypeaks, with two police officers and a customs officer. They were Charlie Scott; Steve Hill, federal officer; and Peter Siep. They were investigating drugs of an unknown substance found washed up on the beach when their Cessna 337 stalled and crashed. All three officers were based in Albany. My father was a former whale spotter employed by the Cheynes Beach Whaling Company. He was well known for a rescue that occurred in 1965 when one of the chaser skippers had put his foot in a rope and had taken his leg off as he fired a harpoon. On that day, dad landed the plane in the open seas and rescued Ches and repatriated him to Emu Point. My dad was awarded a medal for bravery that was presented here at Parliament House. I often walk around and wonder which places in Parliament he walked.

It was a very difficult time for us as a family, as members can imagine, but on the nineteenth anniversary of the accident, my brother's two twins, Harrison and Grace, were born. It is their birthday today, so it is a bittersweet day. The funny thing is that the aeroplane my dad flew in was a 337 and Harrison was born at 3.37 in the afternoon. If people believe in that sort of stuff, they know they are up there looking down on us. I wanted to pay tribute to those brave men who lost their lives that day and tried to keep our lives safe from the scourge of drugs. Thank you.