

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING MEMBERS' SERVICE

Motion

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Nollamara - Leader of the House) [9.16 pm]: I move -

That this House extends its appreciation to all retiring members both for their service to the people of Western Australia and their contributions to this House.

I will not speak to the motion at this stage, but may get the opportunity, in closing the debate, to thank those members who will be given the opportunity to make an address to the House on the basis that they have indicated that they will not be continuing as members of Parliament after the next election.

MRS C.L. EDWARDES (Kingsley) [9.17 pm]: Nearly 16 years ago I rose in this Chamber to give my maiden speech, after the electors of Kingsley had given me the privilege of representing them in the Western Australian Parliament. Today, after that privilege was endorsed on three further occasions, I rise to address members for what may be my last time, although there are two days of the session left to go!

Mr P.G. Pendal: Does that mean you're coming back?

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: The member for South Perth may hear from me in the next two days.

Throughout my parliamentary career I have worked on the foundations of representing the interests of my electors to the best of my ability; learning from and applying the experience of others, inside and outside this place; and always placing a special emphasis on families and children, starting with my own. My parents, especially my mother, have influenced my life significantly. I was lucky enough to have the best mother and the best father anyone could ask for. They helped to give me those basic family values that are too often taken for granted or even, in today's permissive society, challenged for their validity. Basic family values of being responsible and responsive parents, teaching children right from wrong, encouraging them in their development and giving them unconditional love will never change. The need for parents to make time for their children, irrespective of the pressures of work and modern life, will never change. Our youngest son, Scott, who was just 12 days old when he attended his first public meeting, is this week studying for his tertiary entrance examination and turns 18 in a couple of weeks. In between he has had to live with a mother who has tried to balance parliamentary and ministerial duties with family life. Throughout those years my husband, Colin, has been the linchpin of the family, which also includes our eldest son, Warren. My husband has always been there when I could not be; the best husband and father anyone could ask for. Even with the pressures of public life, family time always remained a priority. When the House sat on Wednesday nights, I would dash home for tea or we would meet somewhere close to Parliament House to spend time together. On a Friday or a Sunday night we would again try to set time aside for a family that has now extended to include a wonderful daughter-in-law Corinne and two lovely grandchildren, Cora and Alec. We are all very close, and perhaps our grandchildren will get to see even more of their nan in the years ahead - I am looking forward to that.

In looking back over the years, I am bound to say that my greatest satisfaction has come from helping the electors of the Kingsley. The size of an individual problem has been irrelevant. What has been important has been the ability to do something about fixing the problem, and the smile on the person's face when I have been able to do so. It may have been something as simple as listening, filling out a form or sorting out a very personal detail, or it may have been something more widespread such as the opposition to those precinct planning proposals that would have changed community life in Kingsley forever.

The biggest single event within the Kingsley electorate in the past 16 years was a tragedy that none of us could have foreseen; the Bali terrorist bombings that took the lives of seven members of the Kingsley Amateur Football Club. It was a tragedy that brought the whole community much closer together to support each other, particularly the family and friends of those who lost their lives and those who were in Bali. The Kingsley Amateur Football Club, of which I have the honour of being the No 1 ticket holder, will always occupy a special place in my heart, particularly the boys, most of whom now call me "Aunty".

I have often been asked why I went into Parliament and whether I have enjoyed my time. The answer is a simple yes. I went into Parliament because I wanted to help people. Have I achieved what I set out to achieve? I will leave that answer to the electors of Kingsley; after all, they are the people who enabled me to become the longest serving current female member of Parliament. I am the mother of the House. I knew that when I became the mother of the House it was definitely time to leave.

I was also privileged to serve Western Australia as a cabinet minister for eight years; the State's longest serving female minister. There are clearly highlights from the range of portfolios entrusted to my care during that period. I probably had the most number of portfolios of any minister during that period. I had the privilege of being the State's first female Attorney General and guiding an overhaul of the justice system through the

Parliament. I still cherish a Christmas card that I get every year from one of those most affected by the reforms, particularly the sentencing reforms. A district court judge who shall remain anonymous continues to express his thanks by writing to me and saying, "Thank you, Cheryl. You have made my life so much easier." Every year I still get that Christmas card from him.

As Minister for the Environment there were many challenges, and I would like to think that we laid down the framework for the future with the state of the environment reports. However, there were two other portfolios from which I derived the greatest personal satisfaction; Family and Children's Services and Censorship. I was Minister for Family and Children's Services for only a relatively short period, but that short term served to reinforce the critical importance of families as the cornerstone of our society, and the need for Government to support them. In a world that is becoming increasingly complicated and a world that faces greater dangers than it ever did a generation or two ago, support for families has never been more crucial. We now know that many parents need support and guidance according to the age of their children. Apart from the parenting centres established in various parts of the State, parenting support booklets provided essential advice for dealing with babies, toddlers, young children, teenagers and the modern day curse of drugs. As short as my time was in Family and Children's Services, I had responsibility for censorship matters in Western Australia for eight years; I was probably the longest serving Minister for Censorship in the whole of Australia. That was a period of significant achievements all related to the protection of family values and all a recognition that the protection of children is paramount. In recent times there has been a massive nationwide police crackdown on child pornography with arrests across the country. Those actions only underline the importance of protecting our children; still more needs to be done at national and international levels. At a national level, censorship ministers need to review what needs to be done to offer more protection for young children in cartoons on television, on computer games and on the Internet. At an international level, the need for an international agreement on issues such as child pornography remains unresolved; it is absolutely necessary that we start acting on this, and we can be the Australian leader in getting that international agreement under way. All of these censorship matters impact upon families, especially the ability of parents to raise their children with the sort of values most of us would regard as essential.

I may be retiring from Parliament but I am a long way from sitting at home knitting, not that there is anything wrong with knitting in general; it is just my knitting. As those following my recent contributions in this place may have noticed, I have already identified a life after Parliament. I say "after Parliament" because it may not be after politics. I have identified three major issues in which I intend to become involved and make a voluntary contribution to put something back into the community, and it will involve the Parliament of not only this State but also all the other States and Territories. The three issues involve young head injured people who find themselves in nursing homes, workplace lobbying and the ongoing campaign to protect children. I have recently discussed those issues in some detail in this House. These three issues all have the one common thread of impacting upon family life; they are all about people, their families and their quality of life, and they are all issues which should be above party politics.

Thanking people is always fraught with danger, and when one looks back on nearly 16 years in politics, the danger is magnified accordingly. Having said that and bearing in mind the assistance and support I have received from so many people over those years, there are those who I will take this opportunity to mention specifically as an individual or a group. First, my thanks go to the Liberal Party for giving me the opportunity to contest the seat of Kingsley and to represent the people who have become so much a part of my life. Without its confidence, that opportunity would never have arisen. Second, my sincere thanks go to the electors of Kingsley. Without their continued support, I would not be standing here today. My thanks also go to the 12 primary schools and three high schools and their principals and staff, parents and citizens associations and parents and friends groups for their courtesies over the past 16 years. I give them my special thanks for their strong support of the annual Joondalup-Wanneroo schools Anzac Day service. Without the support of the schools in the district, this event could not have become such an integral part of the local calendar. I particularly thank the Woodvale Senior High School band; the Marangaroo Primary School choir; Blackmore Primary School, which provided the master of ceremonies; the emergency service cadets from Woodvale Senior High School; the Wanneroo army cadets; and the Returned and Services League. This event was inaugurated to enable current generations to participate in Australia's most important national ceremony irrespective of the school holidays, the timing of which was changed following the change from three terms a year to four terms. It also provided a valuable bridge between the generations.

At this time of the year, attending graduation ceremonies to see so many students preparing for the next stage of their life has always been a highlight of my years in politics. Given my personal background, it has been my privilege - and this extends back to even before I became a member of Parliament - to donate a law prize to the high schools in the area as a small encouragement for students contemplating law as a career. I will continue to donate that prize for as long as the schools believe it is serving a useful purpose.

To all the groups and organisations with which I have been associated inside or outside the electorate as patron, sponsor or in some other capacity, I offer my sincere thanks. I am currently patron, vice-patron or sponsor of the following organisations: the Wanneroo Joondalup Tee-ball Club, the Kingsley-Woodvale Junior Cricket Club, the Edgewater-Woodvale Junior Football Club, the Woodvale Senior High School Emergency Services Cadet Unit, Greenwood-Warwick Senior Citizens, the Wanneroo Baseball Club, the Kingsley Junior Football Club, the Kingsley Amateur Football Club, the Wanneroo Districts Netball Association, the Whitfords Junior Cricket Club, the Western Australian Women's Cricket Association, the Creative and Therapy Activities Disabled Group, the Greenwood Tennis Club, the Western Australian Chess Association, and Kingsway Little Athletics. I am a life member of the Greenwood Village Playgroup. From childcare to seniors, from sporting clubs to business and service organisations, it has been my privilege to work with them all. Anyone who has ventured into my electorate office will have noticed that my walls are covered with plaques, photographs, certificates, banners and art, including that from the students at the Dalmain Primary School. It is a potted history of my association with the community, and those memories are all very dear to my heart. They are just a sample. I have enjoyed every minute that I have been associated with every single organisation.

Without nominating them in any particular order, I thank my parliamentary colleagues past and present. I particularly thank the Leaders of the Liberal Party with whom I have served - Bill Hassell, Barry MacKinnon, Richard Court and Colin Barnett. I thank the entire Parliament House staff, who probably know far more about our families, particularly the girls on the switchboard, than we know ourselves. I particularly thank the administration executive and the Hansard staff, who have made my speeches sound so good. The Legislative Assembly staff have helped in every possible way to make our jobs in this place much easier than would otherwise have been the case. The catering staff are phenomenal. Every time I invite guests for a meal in this place, they ask whether a dish on the menu is nice. I say, "I don't know; we may not have had it on the menu for a year." The dining room staff are fantastic and their efforts to make our guests feel welcome and comfortable are phenomenal. I also thank the people of building services, the telephonist ladies, as I mentioned earlier, and those in finance, human resources and IT - have they not been a bonus when we needed them? The security, gardening, parliamentary education, library and information services officers all deserve a very special mention. They do their jobs quietly, efficiently and with the utmost courtesy. My thanks go to each and every one of them.

At this stage I will relate an anecdote - I have been encouraged to do so. When I first came into Parliament in 1989, I was the only female Liberal Party member of the Legislative Assembly. I was put right up in the very far corner of the Legislative Council wing of the building. That did not worry me, but it worried a lot of other people - as it turned out. The bathroom was just down the end of the corridor and it had a sign on the door that clearly read "Bathroom". I knew what it was. I went in, and it was obviously very much a male bathroom. That was okay. I locked the door. It took six weeks for the men to shift my office to another part of the building. As soon as they moved me, the sign was changed to "Male Bathroom". I do not know who was responsible for that action. That person can stay absolutely anonymous, but it is absolutely true!

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Did that stop you using it?

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: They shifted me out of the wing because they did not want this female in their wing. That is what it was. That illustrates some of the changes that have occurred in Parliament, and the fact that all members of Parliament are now acknowledged. Our accommodation and the services provided have changed in the short time that I have been here. One can imagine what members of Parliament had to make do with 30 years ago when operating with fewer resources than we have today.

Over all my years as a member of Parliament, and particularly during my period as a minister, I worked with a range of public servants of all levels. I have only the highest regard for those people who worked with me. "Professionalism" can be overused. We rely on the professionalism of public servants for impartial advice, and "professionalism" is not misused in that case. Every minister of every party owes a debt to those public servants who year in, year out, Government in, Government out, never waiver in the professionalism of their advice. It is up to us to listen to that advice. I have the highest regard for all those public servants with whom I have worked.

I also acknowledge those who help out in the electorate offices; namely, our electorate staff. I refer to those who have helped me out over the years. My current electorate officer is Norma Tyler, and she has been absolutely phenomenal. I also thank her husband, Peter. I refer also to Geoff and Kay Paddick, Iain and Tess MacClean and Craig Halligan, who was with me for some 10 years. Norma has been with me for 10 years also. I also thank Lesley Gilhausen, Ellen Shannon, Maura Gilleece, Penny Scott and Carol Mitchell, who all worked in my office part-time from time to time. I have been fortunate to have had young men who upon entering their tertiary studies volunteered to work in my office. Such volunteers were Matt Blampey, Drew Ninnis, Trent Pember and many others. Without such volunteers, we could not do our job.

Finally, I end as I began - by thanking the electors of Kingsley, who have given me the privilege of representing them in Parliament, of allowing me to help them to resolve their various problems and of hearing them open up to me their or their family's most personal details. In a real sense, we have grown up together in the Kingsley electorate. We have experienced many of the problems together, and we have worked together to resolve them. You, the electors of Kingsley, have given me an opportunity for which I will always be grateful.

[Applause.]

MR J.L. BRADSHAW (Murray-Wellington) [9.39 pm]: It is with sadness and regret that I stand for my valedictory speech after nearly 22 years in this House. One of the problems with being in a place for a long time is that one can start to become institutionalised. I can understand that people who go to prison for a long time never want to get out! Over the past year when I have thought about my time in Parliament coming to an end, I have started to get a twinge of panic and to wonder what it will be like on the outside afterwards!

Mr P.G. Pandal: You're about to get a long parole.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: It will be an interesting time adjusting and adapting to the freedoms that I look forward to experiencing once I finish my time in this House.

I will always hold the electorate of Murray-Wellington very dear to my heart. I have had a long association with it in one way or another. It has been a great relationship in general. I did not enjoy the last election; it hurt. However, I am fortunate enough to still represent the area. I will start by thanking the staff at Parliament House. During the almost 22 years I have been a member of Parliament, the staff have been fantastic and helpful. The various clerks including Peter McHugh, John Mandy, Andrew Young and the Legislative Assembly Papers Office people in Victor Moate, Nigel Lake, Tony Melia, Kathy Hoare and Gemma Broomhall have always been very helpful. Other people for whom I have had a great feeling have come and gone in that time. They were always there to help and look after us. The staff on the switchboard, Marilyn and Cathy, have probably been here for nearly as long as I have. They do a great job keeping up with members and finding us when we are needed. Just the other day one of the ladies at the switchboard - I forget whether it was Cathy or Marilyn - tried to protect me from somebody who rang up and was putting some demands on her. Cathy or Marilyn telephoned me and told me what the person wanted and asked me whether I really wanted to speak with the person. That was quite incredible and is an example of the family atmosphere that surrounds this Parliament.

Mr M. McGowan: What was the answer?

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: I knew who it was and I was happy to speak with the person.

I thank also the catering staff. A number of them, whose names I cannot remember, have moved on. The two who have stood out in the time I have been here are Vincent and Romeo, who are always pleasant, friendly and overhelpful. They are the staff whom members love to know and be associated with. As the member for Kingsley said, Hansard makes members' speeches sound good; they provide the odd grammatical correction and other corrections. I thank also the library staff and information technology staff.

It has been a great time being a member of Parliament. It will be interesting to see whether I come back to Parliament House much after my retirement, but I am sure I will.

I thank the many people who have been involved in my electorate over the years. I will not name them because hundreds of people have helped during elections. Some have worked in a voluntary capacity in the electorate office. It has been fantastic being the member for Murray-Wellington. Members in any electorate meet and get to know thousands of people, not necessarily always by name. It is amazing that when I go somewhere somebody will say g'day, and I wonder where I have met the person and whether I know him. I do not know whether people get to know members of Parliament through the media or at functions. It is a great feeling when people I do not know say g'day.

My career in Parliament has been interesting. I became a member in 1983 when the Burke Government was elected. Brian Burke was one of the best performers I have seen in Parliament. He was a sensational member. He could handle the most difficult of situations and turn it around to make someone else look like the villain rather than him. It was interesting to see how he operated and performed. He was good. It was sad to see the way everything went under the Burke Government because some of the ministers were quite good. They were probably too young, which may have been one of the Government's downfalls. However, it was an interesting time. I grew up in that time in the sense that I was very naive. I thought that people in Western Australia were straight and decent. However, my colleagues had their phones tapped and Ian Laurance was followed for nine months by a private eye; his bank statements were found in a private eye's residence. That was beyond my comprehension. People say that the things that happened during the WA Inc days read like a novel, but they actually happened in Western Australia. I could say more about it but I will not because it was a sad time in Western Australia's history. It is sad that some brilliant people went in the direction they did.

I pay tribute to some of the past leaders of the coalition. Like the member for Kingsley, I started my career under the leadership of Hon Bill Hassell, followed by Hon Barry MacKinnon, Hon Richard Court and currently Hon Colin Barnett. They all have their attributes and specialities and shone in various ways. Some were successful at winning elections and some were not. I wish Hon Colin Barnett all the best in the coming election. I think he will make a great Premier. He is a person of substance. He knows what he is on about and, as I said, will certainly head in the right direction if he becomes the Premier of Western Australia.

Over the years I have found that I have not made a lot of close friends with other members of Parliament. It will be interesting to hear what some other members have to say about that. However, I have certainly become friends with some members with whom I mix socially. The member for Dawesville, Arthur Marshall, and I have grown close together. Another member with whom I became friends is unfortunately unable to communicate. I refer to Bob Bloffwitch, the former member for Geraldton. He was a character. He was different. He said that people should always make the most of it because no-one knows when they will die. In his case, unfortunately, he has not died; he has dementia. I made the mistake of seeing him earlier this year, which was a very sad state of affairs.

Some of the characters who made Parliament include Bill Grayden. Members will remember his speeches on dugongs. I think he had only one speech, which was about dugongs.

Mr P.G. Pendal: What about his speech on monkey brains?

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: I had forgotten about the speech on monkey brains. He was an interesting character. On occasions he used to perform in the bar. One day he told me that he was a good boxer in his youth. He said he used to go to the boxing tents at the shows and made a few dollars. He told me that his force used to come from his thighs. The next second a fist flew past my chin. Fortunately he did not connect. In his day he may have. It was quite interesting being with him.

Ernie Bridge, Ken McIver and Tom Jones are interesting also. The current member for Collie is taking after Tom, because Tom had only one speech, which was about coal. Every time the issue of coal arose, out would come his speech on coal. The other day I saw the member for Collie pull out his speech on coal. I think Tom must have handed on his speech to the current member for Collie. I do not know whether members remember Bert Crane. Unfortunately he died a couple of years ago. He was an old-fashioned campaigner. He had a ukulele and used to win hearts. People thought he was a bit different, but he was the only member of the three members who converted from the Country Party to the Liberal Party to win a seat. The other two got rolled. That shows that he had the community behind him. In his valedictory speech he either sang a song or recited a poem.

Dr E. Constable: Ernie Bridge sang a song.

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: He did. I will spare members from listening to me sing.

An issue that has caused me a lot of pain is the deregulation of the dairy industry. We can always look at issues in hindsight. I left it up to the farmers to decide what they wanted. When the Kerin plan was introduced in the 1980s, I opposed it. I thought it was the wrong direction in which to go. In my mind, I opposed deregulation. However, the issue of federal funding came into play. I thought it was up to the farmers to decide whether they wanted it, and they did decide. Regardless of what they decided, the party and I still got the blame for it. During the election after the deregulation I was at a polling booth in Lake Clifton and a dairy farmer from Harvey was handing out One Nation how-to-vote cards. I asked how he had voted, and he said "sucked in". He voted for deregulation, and then blamed me. I find this a bit hard to take. It caused me a lot of pain, but that is life.

Regardless of what the Department of Environmental Protection says about Alcoa Wagerup working within its permitted emission allowance, the facts are that people are getting ill. We have failed to properly examine that situation. It is sad that the Government says that, because the company is working within those parameters, everything is okay. I can tell members that it is still not okay.

Economic rationalism has disappeared a little today, but the problem is that, when the Government ran the railways, the public works and what is now the Water Corporation, there was a situation in which people with disabilities might have got jobs. Nowadays, because everyone must perform at their maximum level and make the most money, those people tend to be pushed out of the way. The way we have gone with economic rationalism is quite sad. There is a place for looking after those people in the community who are not as well off as ourselves. That has certainly been one of the problems.

I was disappointed in the last election. Receiving 36 or 37 per cent of the primary vote really hurt, because I felt as though I was putting the effort into the electorate. I have dedicated my life for the past 22 years to the electorate. I was reading in the book *The Premiers of Western Australia, 1890-1982*, the story of Alfred Edward Morgans, who was Premier for a very short time. He contended that more people became his enemies during his

years in public life than during the whole of the rest of his existence. That is how I have tended to feel over the past few years. I feel that things have gone off the rails a bit. As members of Parliament, we all love to be loved, but for a while every time I turned around I seemed to be fighting with somebody or telling somebody I did not like him. It is sad the way life goes. I had a dream run for a few years in this place, and all of a sudden there was Alcoa, dairy deregulation, the Peel region scheme and other things that sent everything off the rails. I kept saying in the party room that they were turning my electorate into a marginal seat. Well, they did!

There are some issues in disability services that I would like the members continuing in this place to take to heart. I have not had much to do with that area, and, even though I put my name down to adopt a person with a disability, that never happened, for some reason. I am not quite sure why. A lot of people in the community are hurting, and have to look after their loved ones 24/7. It is a big burden on those people and sometimes they need relief, and to be able to place their loved ones somewhere so that they can get some respite. Others are reaching an age at which they need to put their children into a home of some description, so that they can be looked after. I know it is difficult to make the budget fit the bill, but more effort must be put into looking after those people.

The Department of Health is another area that needs attention. I hope that Dr Neale Fong, for whom I have great admiration, will do something positive to fix the health system. There are difficulties with the fact that the population is ageing and some procedures are very expensive, but we need to make sure that people are able to get the treatment they need sooner, whether that be surgery, speech therapy or physiotherapy. Somehow or other, the health system must be rationalised, rather than be allowed to continue to operate an ad hoc basis. The Department of Health has too much bureaucracy, and that needs to be sorted. From the first, Dr Neale Fong seems to have been heading in the direction of fixing some of those problems.

I pay tribute to the former Speaker, Hon George Strickland, and the former President, Hon George Cash, for the work they started on upgrading Parliament House. When I first came to this place, Parliament House was a disgrace; it was falling to bits. The previous Speaker and President began the job of fixing it. I congratulate the current Speaker and President for continuing the upgrading, which is very important.

Another issue for the members continuing in this place is the need to look after some of our country towns. I can understand why the wheatbelt towns are in decline, because their populations are declining with the amalgamation of farms and the use of bigger machinery. Fewer people are required to run the farms.

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: However, some of the towns closer to the coast, where the population tends to be growing, such as Pinjarra, Waroona, Harvey, Brunswick Junction and other places outside my electorate, need extra special attention. The Government has set up a Brunswick-Pinjarra sustainability study, and I hope it is not just something to make people feel good in the run-up to the election, and to then be forgotten about. The recommendations of that study, which are due to be released shortly - I think the report has been sent to Cabinet - need to be worked on to find ways of getting people to live in those places. How can we make those towns much more enjoyable to live in? While I am talking about those shires, I will pay tribute to their councils. In the past 10 years or so, shire councils in my electorate have certainly lifted their game in making their towns more attractive places. A main street upgrade has taken place in Pinjarra, and one has been started in Waroona. It is not going as quickly, but it is moving in that direction. Harvey has done a main street upgrade, and much work has been done in Brunswick Junction. The shires are working towards creating better places in which to live, but they need more financial help from both the federal and State Governments.

One issue that is coming to the fore in my mind, from the federal coalition Government, is that of States' rights. I was appalled when Brendan Nelson, during the election campaign, said the federal Government would direct funding to state schools for repairs and renovations. That did not appeal to me at all. It was a disgrace. If the federal Government wants to give more money, it should be done through the States, otherwise it will start to duplicate functions. Now he is talking about running the universities. I do not agree with that. It is about time we started talking to our senators, and asking them whether they are senators for Western Australia or for their parties. While they are concerned about becoming ministers, they will not be looking after the States. They will be more worried about being close to their leaders so that they can become ministers.

Mr M.G. House: How many senators can you name?

Mr J.L. BRADSHAW: I am running out of time, so I will not try. I can probably name most of the Liberal senators.

I have had a great relationship with the shire councils in my electorate over the past 22 years, although it may be necessary to ask them what they thought of the relationship. However, I always felt warmly welcomed by either the shire presidents or the CEOs. During my time in Parliament, as well as dealing with the Harvey, Waroona and Murray shires, my electorate included Dardanup and Capel at one stage. It is good to be able to work with these councils, and it is often beneficial to work together. One of the outstanding CEOs I came across was Keith

Leece from the Shire of Harvey. He has now retired, and his position has been taken by Michael Parker. Keith Leece had vision for the Harvey shire, and the shire went ahead at a great rate. Michael Parker is new to the job. However, he is keen, young and enthusiastic, and things will continue to move in the right direction. Unfortunately, Kevin O'Connor from the Shire of Waroona has moved to the Shire of Kalamunda. He was very active and dedicated to the shire, as is Neil Leach from the Murray shire.

A number of volunteers and organisations do a lot of hard work. I am disappointed when people are named citizen of the year and the like because there are probably another thousand or so people in the community who have done just as much and yet they do not get recognised. That is why I always have a problem with awards, whether they are Australian, state or shire awards. A lot of people do not get any recognition. I pay tribute to those people.

I turn to my electorate staff. I started off with Pauline Gillett, who worked for the previous member for Wellington, June Craig. June was defeated when I was elected. Pauline came to work for me and stayed with me until she retired. Colleen Gannon worked for me for a few years. Currently Hannie Jasper is working for me. Electorate officers do a tremendous job looking after the front line of a member's electorate office. They take the brunt of most of the calls. I thought I did a lot of work, but they are at the office every day and they do a lot of work. I pay tribute to my electorate staff for the great work they have done.

Last year I got a bit of flak from the Press for using my imprest account. I used the same amount that everyone else gets. However, I got a couple of things out of my trip, which I hope will come to fruition in my electorate. One is the idea of putting into my area a fish hatchery. When I was in America I saw a joint fish hatchery venture between the Indians and the American Government. Fish are put into the dams usually twice a week, but sometimes it is monthly. That means that there are more fish for people to catch. The Waroona and Harvey Dams are in my electorate. We could attract a lot more tourists to those dams, which would do a great deal for the community in the sense of more businesses and more jobs. I hope that a fish hatchery will become a part of the Liberal Party's policy and a reality, because it would make a huge difference.

When I was in the United States I visited a small town called Madrid, which was a ghost town until a cluster of artisans moved in. People go to Madrid in droves. It is a sensational place that is home to jewellery makers - it is in an area in which turquoise is found - painters and people who make clothing. It is a great little town that sprung from nothing. It often holds music festivals. I envisage that for Dwellingup, because it is a prime spot and a beautiful town. I get a good feeling every time I drive into Dwellingup. A cluster of artisans in Dwellingup would make that town. We are only an hour from Perth and people are always wanting something to do. That would be a great thing for Dwellingup.

I thank my former wife, Beverley. It was sad that we parted in the mid 1990s. Those years were hard. However, she gave me a lot of support. I also thank my current wife, Liz, who has been a great support. She has helped wherever possible. Fortunately, she is into the political scene. It has been very easy for her to adapt to the lifestyle of a member of Parliament. Sometimes I think she is more politically orientated than I am. She certainly likes the political scene and has been a great help.

One of the things I intend to do in my freedom is spend a bit of time in England. Liz has two daughters who are married to Englishmen. Cate is married to James, and Bridget is married to Keith. Cate and James have two children - Jack and William - and Bridget and Keith are having their first child in December. Unfortunately, I will not be able to go to England in December, but Liz will go. We hope to spend a few months at a time in England to be with our family.

I take the opportunity again to thank the electorate of Murray-Wellington for having me as its member for so long. It has been a great opportunity. There have been ups and downs, as I have pointed out. I wish Craig Carbone and Murray Cowper all the best in the coming election in the seats of Collie-Wellington and Murray. I still have a gut feeling that the election will be held in December because of what has been in the newspapers and because of what members opposite have told me. It does not worry me when the election is held. I thank all members of Parliament. I have got along quite well with most members, but there are others whom I have not got along with because of their political leanings. I certainly enjoyed the odd drink with the odd Labor member of Parliament, and I have even had a drink with a member from the Greens (WA). Sometimes I do not mind the Independents! Thanks to everybody and to the parliamentary staff. It has been a great opportunity. I will miss coming to Parliament. It will be hard readjusting, but it is something I will have to do. In some ways I look forward to leaving and in other ways I know I will regret leaving.

[Applause.]

MR A.D. MARSHALL (Dawesville) [10.08 pm]: I have found myself putting off preparing my valedictory speech, realising that it is with sadness that I will leave this place. My 12 years of fun and camaraderie have left me with experiences that could become a part of a best-selling novel. However, I know that it is definitely time

to retire. At times in the past few months I have felt like a football coach who has tried all his tricks and strategies and who has started to become predictable. At 70 years of age, I have new horizons to seek, conquer and enjoy.

To be a member of Parliament is one of the highest honours a person can achieve. Every time I drive on the freeway and look up at the lights and waterfall of Parliament House, I tingle at the thought that I have been privileged to be part of the Government of Western Australia. However, I have never regarded myself as a politician. Thanks to the negative approach to politicians by the media, politicians are on the lowest rung of the ladder when it comes to community respect. Having come from a sporting business background and having worked in a community in which I had respect, that situation is difficult to take.

I would like to put on the record how I stumbled into politics. In 1990 there was a by-election for Fremantle. The then member, David Parker, was involved in a misdemeanour. Clive Griffiths, the President of the upper House, rang me and said that the Liberal Party could not get a candidate for Fremantle. He said that it was looking for a high-profile candidate who would have a 100 to one chance and who would have to put in six weeks of his or her own time and \$5 000 of his or her own money. It was the 100 to one odds that made me start to bubble. I took on the challenge and history records that Marshall was first, McGinty was second and the Greens (WA) candidate was third. Being naive and knowing nothing about politics, I did not know it was a handicap event in which the Greens candidate would double up with the Labor bloke. To tell the truth, I was pleased he beat me, because I did not want to become a politician. I ran for the seat as a dare. History shows that I am the first Liberal candidate to ever finish first over the line in Fremantle, and that is an honour.

One year later, at age 55, I was diagnosed with cancer of the kidney and it was touch and go. The growth haemorrhaged but I got out of it. For the two years following that haemorrhaged cancerous growth, I had the constant problem of thinking that the cancer would come back. I would play a game of tennis and have the normal sore shoulder, but I would think that something had lodged in my shoulder. People in that situation suffer a depression that they do not own up to, but is nevertheless there.

My wife and I were semi-retired and we went down to live in our shack in Mandurah. At the age of 57 I was asked whether I would be prepared to stand for the marginal seat of Murray at the next election. I declined; I had done my bit. I was not interested in politics. I was asked again and was told that I was a 10 to one against chance. When I measured 10 to one against 100 to one, I thought "Hang on". I told my wife that I needed to stop thinking about myself and the possibility of cancer, and that we should go for the challenge. I did not think I could win but I thought it would be a bit of fun. However, I did win. I won by 80 votes on the night of the election. As such, we could not crack any champagne in celebration because game, set and match had not been called. By the time the postal votes came in - God bless my television career - I finished 450 votes ahead and won the seat by about one per cent. At the age of 62, I was asked to contest the seat of Dawesville, a new electorate, and history records that I won by 12 per cent. I was very proud of that result. At the age of 66, the 2001 election was held. I had wanted to pull out but they wanted me back, so I arranged a workplace agreement with Richard Court under which I had every second Wednesday off to play golf. He agreed but, unfortunately, we lost the election and I am still working. I won my seat by six per cent. As such, I retire undefeated and it is a pretty good feeling.

Valedictory speeches usually record what members have achieved in the House. People may remember me for initiating the shelf desks, microphones and lights in the Assembly. When I first arrived in this place I had the very back seat, I could not hear or see anything, and there was nowhere to work. I also initiated the toilet ablution block for people with disabilities, and developed the parliamentary wine. The idea for a toilet ablution block for people with disabilities came after sharing a urinal with Graham Edwards. As we all know, he is confined to a wheelchair. I was utterly appalled that we, the leaders of the community, had done nothing in Parliament House for people with disabilities. The wheels were set in motion, but it took six years before the project was completed. Unfortunately, by then Graham Edwards was in federal Parliament and never had the opportunity to write his name on the urinal as the first person to use it.

The development of the parliamentary wine was a victory. The House committee said it would never work. However, the first forward order was for 10 000 bottles, of which 5 000 were pre-sold. It has been a marketing winner for all politicians.

My parliamentary team nicknamed me "the Coach". I naively entered Parliament thinking we were all part of a team, and I spent 12 years endeavouring to get our group to work as one with annual presentation shows and numerous pep talks. On reflection, I failed. However, I certainly pricked a few consciences on the difference between selfishness, individualism and power plays. In a strange way it has been an honour to have been called "the Coach". Being captain of the Parliamentary Sports Club has also been a wonderful experience. We created a parliamentary tennis team, which has played Tennis West, Royal Kings Park Tennis Club and the Press. The cricket team that played against the Press has been well supported. Mike Board's golf day has been an enormous

success. The interstate parliamentary bowls carnival has seen Western Australia victorious on several occasions. The interstate carnivals encourage networking in a way that only sport can do.

I have enjoyed the company of members from both sides of the House. Early in the piece in 1993 I noticed that John Kobelke was having supper on his own in the dining room. At that time I did not know anything about the sections reserved for Liberals, Nationals, Greens and Labor. I asked John to join us. However, he was reluctant to do so. He finally did and, after a few wines, he returned to the House and apparently made some loud and persistent interjections and was ejected by the Speaker! I do not think he has ever had a drink with the Liberals since!

The David Smith incident was an emotional one when the former minister, who had an outstanding political career, made an error of judgment. David stood to make a special 10-minute pre-lunch address as an explanation. In doing so, he knew that his career was gutted, and he broke down. At the conclusion of his speech I went across and shook him by the hand and said, "It took a lot of guts to do that, David", and wished him well. When I came back after lunch, two members of my own side tried to tell me that we should never shake hands with the enemy. I have never forgiven them for that statement.

Another memorable moment was when Mark Nevill invited me to his fiftieth birthday. I was the only Liberal among the 60 or 70 guests. Mark and I had travelled to the Cook Islands together on a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association delegation, and we had become friends. I was placed at the head table and sat next to one of the top unionists, who had flown over from Canberra. Rather than embarrass him, I said, "I think I'm the only Liberal person in the crowd here", to which he replied, "That's okay; the mob has already warned me about you."

Being a member of Parliament is a tremendous learning curve. Before we get into Parliament we do not think we have any enemies or people who do not like us. However, as soon we declare our hand and go to the polls we realise that a percentage of people will not vote for us and may dislike us. That is hard to take initially. It is a matter of becoming a little thick-skinned, tolerant and understanding. The real learning experience for me was in doorknocking. My first experience was at Dwellingup. Inner Dwellingup was mainly Labor people - people associated with the old timber mill unions and the like - and on the outskirts were mainly orchardists, who are Liberal. The orchardists have five or 10 acres. It takes half an hour to walk from the front gate to the house. I therefore decided that I would doorknock the urban part of Dwellingup. One day after knocking on a door out came a magnificent lady with a beautiful Irish accent. She said, "Mr Marshall, I have heard of you. I am not political at all, but would you come out to the garden and talk to me?" I was green as grass and did not know that I was wasting my time on that one, but out I went, and I started talking to her. In the course of the conversation she said, "But I do like Brian Burke." I said, "Burkie? He was a cadet under me at Channel Seven. If you had an apple on your desk in those days and it disappeared you would know that Burkie had pinched it - and he's still pinching from us!" With that she went off and soaked me with the hose! Non-political! She soaked me in my best suit!

One of the other things that is hard to take is doorknocking in tough areas. On another occasion the door was opened by a huge man in a black singlet with tattoos all over him, and when I said sheepishly, "Excuse me, but I'm the Liberal candidate for this area", he shouted, "Buzz off, mate, I'm a worker; I'm Labor", and slammed the door in my face. I used to take great pleasure in knocking on the door again and saying, "Hey, mate, I'm a Liberal, and I'm a worker, so get nicked!"

One of the other ways in which I learnt to get that toughness was at a public meeting in Pinjarra on land rights. It was early in the piece. It was the first public meeting I had ever been to, but I made out that I had been to many. There were 200 to 300 people at the meeting. They were in a lynching hysteria. They had been set up by a very unfortunate person, I believe, by the name of Tim Emanuel, who had excited the crowd, and they wanted blood. "I'll get you", he said, and he leaned over towards me. I gave him a poker-faced smile, but my heart was pounding so fast and so loud that it continued for three days after that! That was the worst experience of my life.

On another occasion, after I had worked to increase the capacity of Peel hospital from 30 beds to 150 beds, which I consider to be one of my major contributions to my electorate, Premier Richard Court, Minister Kevin Prince and I were walking down the red carpet at the opening when we were confronted by three Labor people who had been against the expansion of the hospital and had fought to stop it. They were waving placards and cursing, and one of them spat at us. I know who that person is, and so does the member for Mandurah, but I will never mention his name. It was something I do not think any person should have to endure. It showed me how politics can get in the way of good judgment.

On a brighter note, the opening of the Dawesville Channel was an unforgettable affair, with the two tall ships, the *Endeavour* and the *Leeuwin*, surrounded by a flotilla of over 700 small boats. It was a sight for sore eyes as the maritime engineering feat of its time in Western Australia was officially opened. I had a similar experience of awe and pride when we opened the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre. James Morrison, the world-class

trumpeter, was our guest performer. There we were, all in our dinner suits, with some of the guests having arrived by boat. During the formalities, James Morrison announced that our regional centre was the best in Australia for its acoustics. He let out a soft, controlled note that floated to the ceiling and spread around the hall until it reached every individual and sent shivers up their spines. It was a privilege to experience such an occasion.

Being on the Mandurah ocean marina task force for five years was truly an education. I saw a dream come to fruition and a plan drawn up and then promoted. In three years this remarkable new facility for Mandurah has become another local showpiece in Australia. I congratulate former Premier Richard Court. In the eight years between 1993 and 2000 the coalition Government gave more money to my region than it has been given in the entire history of that area.

The member for Nedlands recently said in Parliament how privileged we are to have the power to be in a position to help people. I wholeheartedly agree. It is not what one knows, but whom one knows. Members of Parliament become consultants with a wide network of contacts, which allows results to be achieved. One example is when the people of Dwellingup wanted a library, but there was no facility or house available for one. At the back of the school, edging onto the forest, was an old Government Employees Housing Authority house, which was formerly used by the headmasters. The house had deteriorated. No headmaster would live in it. When I rang the bureaucrats at GEHA and said that we wanted the house, they did not even have it on their labour listings; they did not know that it existed. The bureaucrat said that GEHA would give it to us for \$8 000. The P&C had only \$2 000. What did we do? Going up to the forest was a side road that the preprimary school students had to cross to use the sporting facilities of the major school. We got the Shire of Murray to close the road. I then rang the bureaucrat and asked how GEHA would rent or sell this house when there was no thoroughfare to it, because it was by the forest and people could not get to it. He nearly collapsed. He gave us the house, we opened the road and the library now exists!

In Dwellingup we were able to put the first caravan park on Department of Conservation and Land Management land. It took three years to convince the bureaucrats of the importance of having this type of accommodation to improve the tourism aspects of that town. That was done by influencing the right people and knowing the right people to go to.

Another example is a preprimary school at Barragup. The Barragup Hall was overused. It was small. It was used by a preprimary group, a pottery group and other community groups. The little children had to use adult latrine areas. There was a lake alongside, which was extremely dangerous. The ladies wanted a preprimary school. We got the land for it from the Shire of Murray. One of the most extraordinary things was to think of how to get a house. Then I thought of Homeswest, so I rang Greg Joyce and said, "Greg, you wouldn't have a house around, would you?" To my amazement he said, "How many do you want?" Homeswest was knocking them down at Hilton Park. We took the ladies to select one, but the Homeswest fella said that they would not want the one that they chose. This was an education. We got out of the car. The entire street frontage of the house was okay. When we went around the back we saw that everything had gone - the pedestals, the washing tubs and the screens. It was only half a house; the front. Everything had been stolen. Anyway, we scored a different house for free. We then found out that it would cost \$6 000 to transport the house with police guides and the like. Alcoa came to the party. Bless Alcoa! In six months we had a preprimary school, all because I was a politician who had the power of influence. That gives one a wonderful feeling.

Some humane examples from my Falcon office are similar. We have been able to help a family adopt a Korean baby girl. They recently called in. They are very happy and thankful. A constituent of mine had a cancerous growth in the brain and needed an urgent upgrade. We helped him and he believes we saved his life. An 80-year-old from Mandurah had a stroke and was being treated in Hollywood Private Hospital. He was fretting because he wanted to come back to Mandurah. We were able to find him a position in the hospital. Numerous orthopaedic operations have been fast-forwarded through our being in the know. Needles for sugar diabetes can now be given by carers and not just nurses. The Minister for Disability Services fixed that up for me only two weeks ago. A public meeting on prostate that we organised proved a lifesaver for some of the attendees.

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: The most rewarding feat of all was to chair a steering committee that would result in Mandurah breaking the domination of the 120-year-old Western Australian Football League by metropolitan clubs through the inclusion in the competition of a regional team called Peel Thunder. To have formed this club and see it win the colts competition this year confirms the opportunity that politicians have to lead the community in important projects.

Parliament has been very generous to me. In the Cook Islands I delivered a paper to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association on waste management and recycling. I was the first Australian ever to give a speech to the Delhi Asian Olympic Conference. I delivered a paper at the Asian Olympic Conference in Kuwait inviting

nations to train in Perth for the Sydney Olympics. I was a VIP guest at the Asian Games in Bangkok, the Arafura Games in Darwin and regularly represented Western Australia at the sports ministers' conference in Canberra. For all these sporting trips I say thanks to Hon Norman Moore. It was a privilege to be a member of Larry Graham's select committee on asbestos and the problems at Wittenoom, of which 95 per cent of the recommendations were adopted. I later travelled to Italy, Switzerland and the United States of America with Kim Hames on a select committee dealing with waste management and recycling. I had trips to Mauritius and South Africa setting up guidelines for a proposed Indian Ocean games, while the Paralympic Games in Sydney changed my outlook on life.

The abortion legislation, with its right to life or right of choice, was an engaging, enthralling, interesting, moving and emotional debate that was unforgettable. I came into Parliament - taking a drop in salary - wanting better job opportunities for the youth in Western Australia and with a desire to see the union stranglehold on our industry better controlled. This was achieved under the Court Government.

Over the past 12 years many people have given me wonderful support. I thankfully acknowledge Andrew McCormack and his Pinjarra team for talking me into politics and then helping me win the 1993 election by taking out a marginal Labor seat that initiated the change of government. I thank my lifelong friend and doubles partner at Wimbledon, Bruce Francis, for raising huge campaign moneys over three elections and the hundreds of Liberal supporters who appear mystically to help out at every election. I thank Malcolm Flett and Tony Iannello, former and present presidents of the Dawesville branch. I thank the Dawesville committee and all branch members for their total support. I also thank Peter Wells, who was always on hand for advice. I thank my electorate staff - Margaret van Nus, Ruth McKeown and Fran Boucaut - who are trusted friends and are a joy to work with. I thank the House staff, whether it be the presiding officers, the switchboard team, the library crew, security, the dining room staff and especially the *Hansard* experts. Everyone has been extremely helpful and kind to me in my parliamentary career.

Finally, I say thank you to my wife, Helen, who, although coming from a Labor family background, was my campaign manager for three elections and secretary to the Murray coastal branch and then the Dawesville Liberal branch for 13 years. She created some wonderful innovative fundraisers, with the Wimbledon lunch becoming a calendar event in Mandurah. Helen has been at my side for hundreds of functions. We have been married for 44 years - she is a gem!

Unfortunately, the pace of Parliament is so fast that it is practically impossible to make close friends with the people I work with. We really sit together for only 40 days a year, but I shared an office with Phillip Pental for three years in my early days and learnt more from him about this place than from anyone else. I have also enjoyed the friendship of John Bradshaw, who met me on the steps of Parliament in 1993 and introduced me to the parliamentary staff. He has continued to be a generous person in this place. I have also shared an office with Kim Hames, Rob Johnson, Bill McNee, Cheryl Edwardes and Sue Walker and have enjoyed their wisdom of life.

People ask me why I am retiring. They say I have the best regional electorate in Western Australia, but when, during a pep talk in the party room, someone says, "That was a top rev-up, coach, but who the heck is Jack Sheedy or Steve Marsh", it is time to go. It is time to go because the much-publicised, excellent parliamentary superannuation scheme changes at 65 years of age and in the past five years it has cost me \$45 000 a year to be here. This scheme is outdated and should be challenged on the basis of age discrimination! It is time to go when a couple of youngsters on the other side taunt an ageing statesman. To the lads I simply say: it is better to be a flickering flame that never goes out than a flash in the pan. I also say to the youngsters: it does not matter how important they think they are, it does not make them better people.

It is also time to go when we must endure the thrust of a poisoned pen from a political journalist. I used to coach a journalist from the press gallery who was selfish and highly opinionated as a youngster and who has not changed as an adult. That writer has little respect for women or older people. He has become sour in his reporting and is definitely ready for a change of occupation. Journalists of his ilk are not fair to readers and definitely not good for politicians.

It is time to go. For the first time in 12 years I can share opinions with my daughter, Dixie, on politics. This job has not been good for family closeness because hot issues were not on our agenda and were not allowed to be discussed. Dixie is a Channel Nine journalist - I got the plug in - and news reader. It is time to go because Helen and I have a lot of life to share together. Having experienced nothing but positives for the past 12 years it is time to go before something changes that. Pride of place in my memory will always be the get-well card I received from my Labor colleagues when I was in hospital three years ago because of a ruptured appendix. I received a nice card from my team, but the card from the other side was reminiscent of Paul Hogan's famous line in *Crocodile Dundee*, "You call that a knife?" The card from members opposite was enormous and contained some wonderful wisecracks from each member. It was a gesture I will always appreciate.

It is time to go because the time allocated for this valedictory speech is nearly up. I thank the Liberal Party for endorsing me as a Liberal candidate, my Murray-Dawesville constituents for the honour of representing them over the past 12 years and David Templeman for the fairness he has shown since winning the seat of Mandurah and being part of the government team. I thank everyone at Parliament House for their warm friendship. My time as a member of Parliament has been the experience of a lifetime, but it is time to go and I bid everyone farewell.

[Applause.]

MR R.A. AINSWORTH (Roe) [10.32 pm]: Madam Acting Speaker -

Mr M.G. House: Life is so unfair.

Mr R.A. AINSWORTH: Life is unfair when one must follow a speech like that.

In taking this opportunity to make a brief speech, I will make a general comment about the 16 years of my parliamentary career, something I did not dream I would have. It was not something I had aspired to and it came about almost by chance. I will not go into detail. Suffice to say, having been given that chance and been elected and re-elected three times by the people of Roe, I have had a most interesting, entertaining and very special time as the member for a very large country electorate.

Every profession has its bad times, but what made being a member of Parliament bearable is the very good people I have worked with, whether they work in this place, or be the likes of the staff who have been mentioned by many members. I will not mention every individual; they are all fantastic. The same applies to the members of Parliament on both sides of the House - there is no dividing line between the people with whom we can work and enjoy friendships. Perhaps there are members on both sides we would prefer not to have anything to do with, but that reflects life in general. The majority of people we deal with throughout the electorate and in this place make the job what it is. It has certainly been a privilege to enjoy membership of this place for 16 years.

As we do when we start reminiscing, I can remember some funny incidents. I recently recalled an occasion on which I went doorknocking for the first time. It was during a summer campaign leading up to a February election. I was knocking on doors in a Homeswest area when I came across three fellows dressed in blue singlets who were pouring concrete onto a driveway. The largest one of them, the one nearest to me, said in most unparliamentary language, "Piss off!" I can take a hint as much as anyone, so I kept on going and went around to the front of the house thinking he was a tradesman doing the concreting. He followed me around and said, "I thought I told you to clear off!" He was the owner of the house. Some years afterwards, I was talking to a fellow who owns a business in Esperance and has been a good supporter of mine over a few years. He said, "Do you remember the time you doorknocked at my house and I told you to piss off?" I did not know that it was the same person. He is from a Labor family from Kalgoorlie, and he probably has been a staunch Labor voter all his life. Everyone is not the same. People judge others on their merit. He judged, for whatever reason, that I was someone worth supporting even though I was not of his natural political persuasion. Thereafter, he was a very strong supporter. To my embarrassment, he even did some discount deals on some of the work he did for me in his business. It shows that when people take members on face value, a lot of fun can be had in doing this job.

All members can relate experiences, I am sure, of the funny characters who come into electorate offices. More than average seem to turn up after a full moon. A man came into my office one day and told me he had been sent down on the bus from Kalgoorlie by one Graeme Campbell. Knowing Graeme Campbell, I believed this fellow. He asked for some guidance on how he could find a diver, as he wanted to take some samples from an extinct volcano in the bay. I am no geologist, but I did not think we had any volcanic activity around Esperance. I pointed him in the direction of someone I thought might be able to help, and off he went. I did not see him for about six months. The next time I saw him, he was coming in the door as I was going out. Luckily, I did not let him in. I knew that once he was in, it would be a half-hour before I could get him out again. He looked me right in the eye 10 centimetres from my face and said in a conspiratorial tone, "When are we going to switch on those volcanoes?" I said I had not given it a lot of thought. I said that they would be a good tourist attraction and told him to go and see Les at the tourist bureau as he could help. Off he went. I do not think that Les has spoken to me since, and I have never seen that bloke again. Maybe he suffered the fate he deserved when he went to the tourist bureau! Such matters highlight time spent in the electorate office. It is an interesting place at any time, but some notable characters walk in. A female came into my office one day and told me she had a string of unlikely sounding medical complaints. I made the appropriate sympathetic noises while wondering what the woman was really on about. I would love to have seen what my face looked like when she said, "My nipples have fallen off." I was aghast. She went on to say, "... and I've got them at home in a jar on the mantelpiece." What does one say to that?

Mr P.G. Pendal: What did you say?

Mr R.A. AINSWORTH: I said, "I'm sorry; there's nothing I can do to help you." Off she went. It was quite stunning. I have never forgotten that example. What does one say? There is no manual on how to respond to such contacts, which, luckily, are few and far between.

On a more serious note, what also makes the job of a member of Parliament possible is the support of family. I particularly place on record my thanks to my wife and family for their strong support over the years. I come from a remote country electorate. Esperance, my home town, is 700 kilometres from Perth. A lot of the electorate is on this side of Esperance and I must drive through it regularly. I did some figures a few months ago before our state conference on what being the member for Roe for 16 years had entailed. Apart from being away from home for four years from 16, when all the nights away from home are added up in one block, it also meant travelling about 1.2 million kilometres in an electorate motor car and taking about 1 000 flights in an aeroplane. I have used 26 electorate motor cars in that time. The statistics continue. Therefore, pretty solid support is needed from one's wife and family to run that life for 16 years and still survive as a family at the other end of the process. Thankfully we have done that.

I will not revisit the one vote, one value debate, but one aspect of being a member of Parliament for which I have always envied city members is that they can pop home to their electorates in an afternoon for an hour, or go home for dinner if they live close enough and still get back to Parliament. That just does not happen to members from the country.

Mr P.G. Pendal: At least we have electors here though!

Mr R.A. AINSWORTH: We certainly have quite a few scattered over a large area.

The point is that when country members are away from their electorate offices, sometimes for several days at a time - for instance, in my case when other commitments outside Parliament keep me in the western end of my electorate as opposed to where my home and electorate office are situated - our reliance on electorate officers is absolutely enormous. They are, in effect, *de facto* members of Parliament while we are not there. They are required to meet and greet all the people, including our difficult and less difficult clients, and start the process of helping those people in whatever fashion they can. They cannot ask them to come back in three or four days because the member is away, as some problems have to be dealt with immediately. The electorate staff that I have been fortunate to have work for me over the years have all been excellent. They have done an immense job. Their loyalty is unquestioned. It is fantastic to have people like that who really do make a difference, because no matter where a member of Parliament's electorate is situated, whether it be in the city or the country, the member cannot do the job alone; those supportive people make it possible.

It has been a great 16 years for me. I have had the privilege of being a member of a party that allows its members a great deal more independence than some major parties allow. Several occasions in this place come to mind, but I recall one memorable occasion when a National Party minister crossed the floor, which was virtually unheard of. However, a humble member like me - a backbencher - has the opportunity to vote according to my conscience on matters of significant importance to my electorate. There is no mechanism in our party for taking any step to chastise a member for doing that. That has made it very comfortable for me, as I certainly believe that the first responsibility of any member is to the electorate and the second responsibility is to the party, rather than the other way around. That is the way I have tried to represent my electorate. I think my electorate has responded accordingly, as I have had support from across the political spectrum. To me, the commitment of people in public who put their name on the line and not only voted for me but also helped to elect me when they had been a member of another political party in a past life made the job worthwhile.

Mr P.G. Pendal: Give us a bit of doggerel!

Mr R.A. AINSWORTH: Madam Acting Speaker (Ms J.A. Radisich), I can hear my good Independent friend behind me offering advice, which I really do not need.

I was about to say - he pre-empted me by 30 seconds - that although a lot of things we do in this place are fairly serious and we have fairly acrimonious debates at times, some members we work with in other capacities make it a lot of fun. I was privileged to chair a select committee on road safety for three and a half years. There were four other members on that committee, two Labor and two Liberal. They were Nick Catania, Diana Warnock, Ian Osborne and the only one of the four who is still a member of Parliament, John Day. We had a great time on a fairly serious subject, but it is fair to say that during a lot of travel and debate in those three and a half years, there was never a cross word between us. We were there for one reason; that was to achieve a good outcome for the improvement of road safety in Western Australia. It would have been impossible for anyone outside our group who did not know which party we each came from to listen to our debate and work out who was Liberal, who was Labor or who was National. We were a team of parliamentarians working for the greater good of Western Australia. There were a lot of jokes on the side about various political party issues, which were made in a light-hearted and not a serious way.

I am about to finish my speech with a little poem that I have written. Writing poems is something I do quite often, but I do not always read them into *Hansard*. This poem may border on the unparliamentary in some respects, but take it as it comes, as it is something I wrote. I wrote another poem about a year ago because of something that happened in the House, something I took seriously. I wrote the poem and read it at a National Party dinner that is held with the media each year. Apparently it went down well. This year when the dinner was about to be held, Peter Kennedy asked me whether I had written another poem. I told him that these things do not just happen. If something triggers it off, it happens, otherwise I cannot be forced to write a poem. On the morning the dinner was to be held at Parliament House - I was in Esperance - I was having a shower thinking about what was to happen during the latter part of the day and was suddenly inspired; a few lines flashed through my head. My wife got a great shock when I rushed out of the shower and dripped water on the kitchen floor while I grabbed a pen to write down those lines. When people get older - as the member for Dawesville knows - their short-term memories fade. I had to write down the lines while I was still in the mood. The poem was fleshed out on the plane trip and finally this is what I read out that night at the dinner. It has a sporting connection too, which Arthur will be pleased to know. My poem goes like this -

The old racing stables of Gallop and Co
have horses in every race run.
But winners have been rather scarce for three years,
and the punters aren't having much fun.

In the Western Power stakes, the favourite broke down -
he was carrying maximum weight.
But when Ripper was challenged, he ran out of gas,
and suffered a terrible fate!

He fell in the straight and was carted away -
the crowd thought he should be put down!
They had to restrain about 10 volunteers
who wanted to strangle the clown!

Now, their horses are normally beautifully groomed
but in one race the stable slipped up!
It entered an unprepared filly - "Alannah" -
to run in the Hairdressers Cup!

The jockey who rode her was taken aback
when she bolted like mad down the straight.
But his shock turned to joy as she ran through the field,
and won by a head at the gate.

His joy was short lived - a protest was lodged -
as it turned out, a jolly good job.
Alannah was banned at the end of the race
for returning a positive swab.

The next race to run was the Schoolteachers Stakes.
The favourite - in his estimation -
was "Alan the Lad"
who'd distinguished himself by causing some great consternation.

His connections - the teachers - had suffered abuse and taken a beating in class.
While training, young Alan had just run amok and kicked almost everyone's arse!

For the Hospital Cup - a very big race

they entered a nag called "Big Jim".
By repute a strong runner who never broke down
It'd take a brave horse to beat him!

But "Big Jim" had bad luck at the barrier draw,
then stumbled before the first turn.
He was cut off by "Bypass" and then "AMA" -
'twas a lesson he needed to learn.

They say that "Our Clive" will be put out to stud.
He's run his last race so it seems!
But of glories now past, like his verbal hysterics
he'll look back on proudly and dream.

Now Clive as a stud is a thought that's perverse,
And the picture it conjures quite freaky!
There's even some fear he's not up to the job,
you all know what makes a voice squeaky!

The dud of the stables, "Young Geoffrey" himself
was given short odds when he started.
The bookies, impressed with appearance and form,
were not keen from their cash to be parted!

Now they are quoting him 50 to 1,
his form has been so unimpressive.
Broken key promises abound by the score
and a bag of high taxes regressive.

The really big race, only held each four years,
comes up in a month or two's time.

This is the unparliamentary bit -

Will we re-elect losers who can't tell the truth,
and whose standards are down in the slime?

The public need better - they can't afford more,
Of arrogant high-taxing waste!
So the race to the line will be crucial this time. Place your bets - but don't do it in haste.

That was written as a light-hearted poem. It also highlights the fact that Parliament is a serious place. At times some of the things that have happened in this place have concerned me regarding the standards of behaviour of members of the House. A lot of things could be said that are probably inappropriate in a valedictory speech. Suffice to say that I have great faith in the future of this place. There is a lot of negative criticism in the media about parliamentary behaviour and individual members. Generally, the public has a negative view of the parliamentary system. I was speaking to some members earlier tonight and they said - I have heard it said before - that members of the public say that all members of Parliament have their noses in the trough. That is a negative view. Yet when people talk about their individual local member of Parliament, they say kind things about that member, and their member is almost seen as being different. If that were put across every electorate, the same thing would be said about each one of us. What it really says is that there is a general and probably unfair view that Parliament and parliamentarians are not doing the job properly, yet individual members - I think we would all be in this category - are seen by their respective electorates as doing the job, and in fact doing it for the right reasons.

I believe we need to change some of the perceptions about what we are here for. I think there is the opportunity for that to happen. I have great faith in this parliamentary system, because when I look around the world and see what is happening in other places, I realise that although we are not perfect and although this system is not

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perfect, it is by far the best system in comparison with anything else. I believe that we really need to fight to make sure that it is retained and that the respect of this place does not diminish, because without maintaining that respect and the consequent support of the population, our future as a democracy could be under threat.

I will finish by thanking all the people I have worked with. I thank the electors of Roe who have put me in this position and given me the opportunity to be a member of this place for 16 years. I thank the people I have worked with here. I have enjoyed it. I will certainly miss it. I will miss the friendships that I have gained over those years. However, I, like Arthur Marshall, am looking forward to bigger and brighter things in the future. I have some challenges and some great projects in front of me. I will leave everyone with thanks and best wishes for the future.

[Applause.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr M. McGowan (Parliamentary Secretary).