

2ND PERTH GIRLS' BRIGADE — SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Statement by Member for Morley

MR I.M. BRITZA (Morley) [12.52 pm]: This year marks the 2nd Perth Girls' Brigade's sixtieth anniversary and I would like to share with members a little of their history. The 2nd Perth Girl's Brigade started in 1954 with Joan Rycroft as captain and Rae Semple, Julie Howarth and Glen Stewart as lieutenants. It was based in the Bayswater Methodist Church, where Lloyd Semple was the minister. Activities included drill, folk dancing, gymnastics, marching and badge work of all kinds. Parents helped with many of the activities. Once a year they had a display for parents and the church congregation and anyone else who wished to come, partly to demonstrate what had been done during the year, plus extras such as singing, skits et cetera. A church parade was held once a month. When Captain Rycroft retired, there were some crises of leadership, but always someone stepped in to fill the position of captain. Because of the willingness of these people, the company has functioned without a break for 60 years—far longer than any other company in the state. I was delighted to attend the anniversary service, and it was a pleasure to catch up with people I had not seen for 30 years. Many past leaders were there to help celebrate this wonderful milestone. A history of the company past and present was presented by Mrs Rycroft's daughter, Barbara; the first Queen's Badge recipient, Jeanette Hudson, and by one of the present young leaders, Greta Mewhaw. Some of the girls dressed in uniforms from past years and the girls presented a play covering a young girl's journey from cadets through to pioneers and young leadership. The company now meets at Noranda Uniting Church and has a membership of about 30 girls, and I am thrilled that they are in my electorate.