

SENIORS WEEK

Statement by Minister for Seniors and Volunteering

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah - Minister for Seniors and Volunteering) [2.17 pm]: On Sunday I had the pleasure of launching the twenty-first BankWest Seniors Week with a gala presentation ceremony of the annual Seniors Awards. The remarkable stories of the award nominees demonstrated the selflessness, drive and dedication of Western Australia's seniors and the organisations that support them.

The 2006 BankWest Senior of the Year, South West Senior of the Year and winner of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award was Busselton's Vilma Webb. Vilma is known locally as "the walking encyclopaedia" because of her extensive understanding of Aboriginal issues and culture. Her most notable achievement is the establishment of the Wardan Aboriginal Cultural Centre. A successful artist, she has also developed an art gallery representing Nyoongah artists. Vilma has earned admiration and respect by providing a cultural grounding for at-risk youth, by spreading cultural awareness and by handling sensitive issues with courage and humility.

Also vying for the BankWest Senior of the Year were the winner of the Community Achievement Award and Metropolitan Senior of the Year, Judith Parker, who is a lifelong promoter of women's interests; Community Participation Award winner and Goldfields Senior of the Year, Jack Tinetti, for his dedication to improving the welfare of seniors; and Bunbury's Robert Prestage, who won the Business Participation Award for his innovative projects for the city's underprivileged and older citizens. Other regional winners were Neroli Roberts, John Lane, Vida Clap, Jack Trust, Gavin Mason and Elizabeth Franz. The Active Ageing Leadership Award went to the City of Melville. The Deborah Kirwan Media Awards demonstrated the media's heightened interest in promoting positive ageing and in exploring issues around ageing.

The Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering has done a fantastic job in coordinating the program of events for BankWest Seniors Week. This week there are movie screenings, expos in a number of city and regional locations, today's Australian Pensioners Insurance Agency "Big Walk" from Point Walter to Fremantle and back, and "Have a Go Day" tomorrow at Burswood Park. A full program of events was published in the *Sunday Times* on 15 October. During the week, seniors can enjoy the "Seniors in the City" trails, taking in the sights, landmarks and eateries of Perth and Fremantle. Senior SmartRiders can travel free on all metropolitan transport and in some regional towns. I urge members to take every opportunity to actively participate in the many community events that have been organised to acknowledge our wonderful Western Australian seniors.