

FIELD OF LIGHT: AVENUE OF HONOUR — ALBANY

Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [9.07 am]: Mr Speaker, I am very pleased to talk this morning about the Anzac story and, more specifically, your city, Albany, and its very special place within that larger story. Last week, Mr Speaker, you were generous enough to host me, along with my colleagues the Ministers for Veterans Issues and Tourism, in your electorate. We were in Albany for the opening night of renowned artist Bruce Munro's *Field of Light: Avenue of Honour*, a breathtaking immersive art installation of over 16 000 lights planted along both sides of the Avenue of Honour at Mt Clarence, glowing in the colours of the national floral emblems of Australia and New Zealand in homage to the Anzacs who departed from Albany for the First World War a century ago.

It was an incredibly moving experience that led all of us, as Australians, to reflect on the enormity of the Anzac story as a central theme in the cultural histories of both Australia and New Zealand. Albany, as many members would know, was the point at which the fleets from both countries combined and set course for the Great War. This was the starting point for the Anzac story. The coastline around Albany and the town itself—a town of just 4 000 people at the time—was the last glimpse of Australian soil that some of the over 41 000 departing soldiers would ever have. It struck us that over the years, thousands of Australians and New Zealanders have made a pilgrimage to Gallipoli, such is the importance of the Anzac story to our identity. However, thousands more who would like to do so simply do not have the resources to make such a trip. Albany is the logical first bookend to the Anzac story, and with this incredible light display running right through until Anzac Day 2019, there is now a genuine second option for a pilgrimage to a region sacred to the Anzac story that is far closer to home and far more accessible for all Australians and New Zealanders. Albany is also home to the acclaimed National Anzac Centre.

With this in mind, I would encourage all members—indeed all Australians and New Zealanders—to make a point of visiting Albany and taking in the incredible experience that is the field of light, and to fulfil a spiritual journey to better understand the story of Anzac and to pay their respects to those who went before us.

Lest we forget.