



Speech by

Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Hansard Tuesday, 13 May 2008

CURRUMBIN ELECTORATE, ANZAC DAY SERVICES

Mrs STUCKEY (Currumbin—Lib) (10.14 pm): Tonight I wish to share with honourable members the sense of pride and humility I felt as I attended Anzac Day services in the Currumbin electorate. As was reported by the media, the 2008 Anzac Day services were supported by bumper crowds across our nation, with Aussies and allies coming out in droves to remember those who served their country.

In making my way down to the car park on Currumbin beach in the darkness that came before the dawn, with hundreds of families and countless individuals wishing to pay their respects to our lost soldiers and those who fought so we may be free, the feeling was both solemn and respectful. Some 10,000 people from all over the Gold Coast and beyond crept out of their beds in the wee hours of Anzac Day morning to attend the now famous dawn service held each year at Currumbin, at the base of iconic Elephant Rock.

Attending the Currumbin services was decorated Vietnam soldier Keith Payne VC, OAM, DSC, SS (US) and Kokoda veteran James Stillman. Once the silent procession of veterans and their families marched into the car park, popular Currumbin-Palm Beach RSL President Ron Workman OAM commenced this emotion charged service. Ron listed, from memory I might add, the 52 club member veterans who had fallen this past year—a truly terrible loss felt by our club.

Each year I hold an Anzac essay competition for primary school students in my electorate with students given the choice of topic 'The significance of Anzac Day' or 'My Anzac Day hero is ...'. Once again there were a large number of entries. Malee Rowell and Jasmin Hunter from Elanora State School were the winners. Malee recited her essay at the dawn service before a huge crowd, while Jasmin recited hers at the cenotaph at the Palm-Beach Currumbin RSL late morning service. Both of these young ladies are to be congratulated for their thoughtful words and beautiful articulation. If they were nervous you could not tell.

Fifteen-year-old Marymount College student Madeline Keenan was honoured to play the last post right on top of Elephant Rock as the sun majestically rose, followed by the release of white doves to signify peace in the world. The service concluded with much Aussie flag waving to John Williamson singing *True Blue*.

Another service, small in number but steeped in ceremony and reverence, was held at the Galleon Gardens RSL nursing home, where residents and their families joined together to pay tribute to the sacrifices made to defend our great country. I wish to congratulate the dedicated staff for the efforts they make to ensure that Anzac Day is a memorable one.

The late morning service held at the Currumbin-Palm Beach RSL was another significant service in the electorate. In appreciation to everyone who made these services so memorable I say thank you—from veterans, to our cherished Father Ben, to our Currumbin surf-lifesavers, the Mudgeeraba Light Horsemen, Army and Air Force cadets, police escorts and students. Channel 7's *Sunrise* captured the austerity and significance of this tradition which dates back to Gallipoli some 93 years ago.

As the daughter of an 85-year-old World War II Royal Australian Air Force veteran, I am well aware of the sacrifices men like my dad made. Dad did not march this year but was thrilled to be able to watch a delayed telecast of the Currumbin dawn service. We will remember them. Lest we forget.