

DICK LIGHT — TRIBUTE

Statement

HON COLIN HOLT (South West) [6.32 pm]: I want to take a few moments to recognise the passing of a National Party lay party member, Mr Dick Light, who was a great stalwart and a great supporter of the party. He was born in Esperance on 3 May 1937 and was one of two children. He was raised in Grass Patch until about 1958 when he moved to Narrikup. There, he worked with his brother-in-law, Ken Peck, at Downs Road, Redmond, and was a shearer throughout the great southern. He continued working in the great southern until about 2000, when ill health forced him to retire to Bunbury.

Dick joined the Country Party, as it was called then, in the mid-1960s. He has probably been a member of the party for more years than most of us have been alive, which is a great tribute to Dick. Hon Murray Montgomery, who was a member of this chamber and represented the south west, first met Dick in the early 1970s when he was a member of both the Country Party and the Farmers Union of WA. Most country members would know that the Farmers Union is the birthplace organisation of many agripoliticians in this state, many of whom have gone on to be members of Parliament. Many of them started their engagement in agripolitics or politics in the Farmers Union.

Dick was secretary of the Narrikup branch of the Nationals. He and his wife, Anne, joined the Mt Barker branch and were there for many years. In Narrikup, he was an active member of the community. He was a member of the bush fire brigade in both Narrikup and Bunbury for many years and he received recognition for those many years of service to the community. He was also a keen cricketer while in Narrikup. If any members have been to Narrikup sporting oval and they have seen the cricket ground, they will have seen that the pickets on the cricket ground are made from old cricket bats. If members look carefully, they will find Dick Light's bat as part of the fence. Members should go and see it because it is quite marvellous. After moving to Bunbury, Dick joined the Busselton branch and then the Bunbury branch. He attended numerous state conferences as a member of the state council.

I first came across Dick when I was seeking preselection. I remember going to see him at his house in College Grove. It was the middle of summer and he invited me in for a cup of tea. It was in the afternoon, but it must have been 45 degrees outside and I reckon it was about 55 degrees in his kitchen because they did not believe in putting on the air conditioner. They were people from the bush who were used to doing it tough. We had a cup of tea in his kitchen and members can imagine how that sent up the temperature. He was the sort of guy you could listen to and talk to because he was one of those people who held the views of the community that we represent. He was not afraid to express those views and he could be relied on to help steer the ship in terms of the policy outcomes that we wanted to implement for the community.

He and his wife, Anne, received a National Party distinguished service medal for more than 55 years of service to the party. I know he was very proud of being recognised in that way.

Ill health forced Dick and Anne to move into care in Bunbury. Dick passed away on 25 December 2018—Christmas Day last year. He is survived by his wife, Anne, and his children: Margaret, Robyn, Suzanne, Rodney and Christine. He has 19 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

He will be seriously missed by the party. I and my National Party colleagues send our thoughts and wishes to his wife and family.

House adjourned at 6.37 pm
