

Jill Halls Speech to Parliament

Monday, 22 November 2010

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SPEECH

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Speaker Hall, Jill, MP

Ms HALL (Shortland) (10.15 pm)—Tonight, I rise to acknowledge the fine work done by Landcare groups throughout Australia. As all members and most Australians know, Landcare is a grassroots organisation operated by volunteers, with groups in every electorate throughout Australia. The benefits delivered by this organisation to Australian communities are enormous. In addition to this benefit, Landcare delivers benefits to those tens of thousands of volunteers who work tirelessly to improve, protect and restore our environment.

In the Shortland electorate there are a number of fantastic Landcare groups. When mentioning particular groups, you are always in danger of leaving a group out but tonight I just want to concentrate on a couple of groups I visited very recently. In doing so, I would like to acknowledge the fine work done by all those other groups within the Shortland electorate and give my total commitment to the work that they do. I am actually a trustee on the public funding committee of the Lake Macquarie Landcare group, so I am really committed to the work that Landcare does.

On 11 September I visited the Warners Bay Landcare group. They had received a Community Action Grant for a project and the work had been completed on that project. The morning that was organised to celebrate the completion of that work included people from the local community and those who were involved in the Landcare group. The work that they had done in restoring Warners Creek was spectacular, as was the involvement of the local community in bringing about the changes to that area.

I then visited the Floraville ridge Landcare group, and what had been achieved in that area was spectacular. There had been restoration of the rainforest, removal of bitou bush and total weed eradication, and a wonderful walking trail had been set up in that area. It is a tribute to each and every person who has been involved, but I would particularly like to acknowledge the work of Winsome Lambkin. She was previously a teacher at Floraville Public School where the restored land backs onto the school.

I also visited the Kenibea Bushland Reserve. Barry Wheatley has been involved in that Landcare group for in excess of 10 years. I had a similar

experience there. It is such a beautiful and wonderful area that has been restored by caring people who are committed to the environment and the area they live in. On 30 October I visited the Swansea Landcare group's open day and that was also a similar experience.

There have been a number of groups that have been successful in getting projects funded through the latest Community Action Grants. One of those was the Black Neds Bay rejuvenation committee's project to undertake work on endangered remnants of rainforest at Black Neds Bay and the nearby Caves Beach. The project will be conducted through the surf club and will involve one of my very good friends, Stuart Chalmers, who has received an Order of Australia for the enormous amount of work he has done in that area. This project will enhance the natural environment at Caves Beach and will also involve bush regeneration.

The other successful project was from the Fernleigh Track Landcare group. For the benefit of those in the House, I might add that this government has funded the Fernleigh Track to the tune of \$2 million, but this project is at the Highfields end. Doug Lithgow, who is a person totally committed to the environment and Landcare, will be involved in that group's project to enhance the natural environment. Landcare is a fantastic organisation and it delivers untold benefits to Australia.

