



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

THURSDAY 02ND NOVEMBER 2017

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE AND BUSINESS

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:42): I rise to support this motion moved by the member for Frome, which states:

That this house—

1. Congratulates the Women in Agriculture and Business of South Australia Inc., which was founded in Riverton, on its Centenary held in Riverton on the 28 and 29 October 2017.

2. Recognises the organisation's achievements and services; and in particular for—

(a) encouraging interest and participation in activities of rural people and organisations, especially in primary industries;

(b) promoting goodwill, friendship and understanding among members;

(c) providing effective leadership to link Women in Agriculture and Business and Agricultural Bureau activities through the membership network;

(d) generating opportunities for educational, cultural and technical advancement to members, combining with other rural organisations where appropriate;

(e) encouraging and fostering the ability of women to take a shared responsibility for the community in which we live, from local to world level; pressing for recognition of the needs and worth of rural people at all levels of government; and

(f) promoting and supporting the preservation of our environment and ecology and care for the land.

I note that the mission statement from Women in Agriculture and Business is:

To facilitate a range of activities through a statewide network which supports, encourages and develops women with rural, agricultural and business interests, in their role as key decision makers and facilitators in rural communities and in primary industries.

Women in Agriculture and Business was first established in 1917, and I note that it was first established at Riverton, where they celebrated the centenary the

other day, and it was to meet the needs of women who were isolated and who were working with their families to establish farms and homes in rural districts. Women in Agriculture and Business now has some 300 members.

To show that there is no gender bias in Women in Agriculture and Business, I note that I was an associate member for a while. I said, 'Is that appropriate?' and they said, 'Yep, that's fine,' so that was good. I would like to acknowledge the centenary celebrations at Riverton; I was not able to get there as I had other commitments. I note that the member for Frome was a sponsor and I was a sponsor and got some good coverage out of it.

I am very pleased to get on board and sponsor the centenary celebrations. Women take not just the supporting role but the leading role in rural life in many instances, whether or not it is actively being out there on the land. I can certainly talk about issues at sheep yards, which bring out either the best or the worst in men and women. It is a real teller of character to see how people get on. Before my wife and I were married, I remember that we were drafting some prime lambs on a block where we were share farming. We were leasing it for running these lambs. I was yelling at the dog, yelling at dad to shut the gate, as you do, and I must have yelled at my future wife. Next thing, she is walking off.

The Hon. G.G. Brock: You're game.

Mr PEDERICK: Well, it was probably a very light yell. I said, 'Where are you going?' She said, 'I'm not going to be spoken to like that.' I said, 'Look, we are handling sheep. That's how it is.' She did come back because it was about a 20-kilometre walk home.

The Hon. A. Piccolo: She probably regrets it now.

Mr PEDERICK: Exactly. I did not think it was too harsh, but when the action is on handling animals—and they can be a bit frustrating—you have to work with the situation. I would like to salute all women in agriculture who, as I said, have been in the lead role and also have been actively either running the properties or playing a true partnership role with their husband or partner in managing the properties. There are stories about women having to take over running a property who come from an urban background. Sharon Oldfield is one person who comes to mind from up north. Her husband died tragically in a plane accident many years ago. She took over Cowarie Station and is doing a great job. I have visited that station several times and seen how she runs the property.

I think that where women are truly the unsung heroes of agriculture and business is in doing the book work. I do not think that I was Robinson Crusoe as a farmer before I came in here, but paperwork was not my first choice when I came in from the paddock off the tractor or from handling livestock. I believe that, apart from the assistance or the main role women take in the outside jobs, in a very high percentage of cases they are the ones doing the GST returns. They are doing the book work. They are making sure the business just works.

Sadly, for too many of us blokes—and I put up my hand—our first choice is not to deal with the paperwork. Sure, we can handle how to put in a crop, how to take it off and how to raise livestock, but when it comes to going through the

paperwork and making sure the business is operating effectively, thankfully, in the main, women are there doing that work. As I said, for most of us blokes, that is not our first choice, so I salute all the ladies who do that. It is a huge role.

As we know, with GST receipts it is unpaid work. It has to be done to make sure you get the claims right with the tax office. Apart from that, it is running the business, paying the bills on time and, if you are marketing stock or grain, making sure that that is on track and that the money is flowing in as well. The contribution of women in rural life will probably never be measured appropriately because of the amount of contribution they give both out in the field and in the office. I salute them.