

John Castrilli MLA



Sisters' contributions recognised

Last week I was honoured to officially recognise the contributions of the Sisters of St John of God to the whole of Western Australia, including their work in Bunbury. Speaking in Parliament, I had the unique opportunity to say thankyou on behalf of people throughout our State whose lives have been touched by the efforts of these extraordinary women.

After eight pioneering Sisters arrived in WA in 1895, the Sisters of St John grew and expanded, establishing hospitals, schools, missions and even a leprosarium in WA's north-west. It is extremely important to acknowledge the immense contributions made to the entire State, including Bunbury where some of the Sisters established a hospital in 1927. I have personally been impacted by the compassion of these Sisters, including during the births of my two daughters which were made even more special by Sr Killian's involvement. Along with Sr Killian, Sisters Leonie, Bridie and Romanus also provided local health services and unconditional pastoral care to people of all walks of life ranging from parishioners to prisoners.

They were also involved in the early days of palliative care in Bunbury, making an immeasurable difference to many local families during times of great sadness and distress.

It was an honour and a privilege to be able to officially recognise the contributions of the Sisters of St John of God, who have helped shape our State in countless ways.

New website for young carers

The tireless role of family carers can often go unnoticed in our community as these people quietly go about their lives.

There are an estimated 307,000 family carers in WA, helping care for a loved one who has a disability, serious illness, mental health or substance abuse problem. About 40,000 family carers are aged under 26 and I know there are many young people in the Bunbury area taking on these roles.

Being a young carer can be very challenging as they often combine their responsibilities with school studies or work and can feel socially isolated, and there may also be a stigma attached to the person they are caring for. To help young carers in their roles, a new website was recently launched by Youth Minister Robyn McSweeney thanks to a State Government funding investment of \$200,000. The website will help put young carers in touch with one another, offer more information on where to get further assistance and advice, and remind young carers that they are not alone. The website can be accessed at www.youngcarerswa.asn.au and young carers needing support can also contact Carers WA on 1300 227 377.