



**Margaret Olley and the Cultural Achievements of Newcastle**  
**Chamber of the House of Representatives**  
**24 August 2011**

**Ms Grierson** (Newcastle) (19:30) — A very dear and important part of the Newcastle cultural community till her death last month was Margaret Olley and I take this opportunity to acknowledge her talent, her generosity, her individuality and her long association with Newcastle. It is an association that grew from her friendship with well-known gallery owner Anne von Bertouch, beginning in 1964. Margaret Olley painted a number of famous paintings of Newcastle from her iconic Church Street residence. She grew in love with the city's then iconic industrial atmosphere, picturesque working harbour, unique architecture and stunning natural beauty. She was famous for sketching or painting the view from her home on the hill, which provided unparalleled views of the juxtaposition of Newcastle's heavy industry, architectural heritage and natural beauty. Of course, Newcastle has changed enormously since Margaret first visited in 1964. Whilst its skyline is no longer dominated by the smouldering blast furnaces of BHP, the unique creative energy that Margaret cherished continues to this day. Margaret said:

“The marvellous thing is, I miss all that smog and that sort of humming in the night that used to be part of Newcastle. It was like the heartbeat of Newcastle”.

Well, we will miss Margaret. She was a great and generous friend to the Newcastle gallery and the people of Newcastle. Her earthiness had special synergy with our city.

Another talented artist and teacher in my electorate, Carol Carter, was recognised this week with a Premier's Teacher Scholarship, one of only 31 awarded in New South Wales. This is due recognition of Carol's significant contribution to education and the arts. Carol received the Premier's contemporary art scholarship and will go to Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong in April and May next year. She will be there for five weeks to research the way that Chinese contemporary artists use a range of photomedia in new ways. Carol will use this trip to document Chinese practices so that she can develop materials to be used in local schools. This is a wonderful opportunity for a well-deserved, enriched learning experience—one that will broaden the cultural understandings and opportunities for teachers and students in Newcastle. We take great pride in Carol's achievements.

Sadly, I would like to take the time to acknowledge the wonderful work of ABC journalist Paul Lockyer, pilot Gary Ticehurst and cameraman John Bean, who died when their chopper crashed near Lake Eyre last Thursday, 18 August. I express my deep regret and condolences to their loved ones and friends. In their craft and through their unique approach they also gave expression to the Australian landscape and the human experience. They were artists of very special talent. They will be sorely missed. Our cultural fabric is an important element of our identity and our purpose. When it is strong, it strengthens the civil society that the people of this nation deserve. I applaud generally all those Australians enriching our cultural experience and heritage.