

**REMARKS BY FRANCES UNDERWOOD ON THE
OCCASION OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON OF THE
SCOTTSDALE HOSPITAL AUXILLARY, SCOTTSDALE,
WEDNESDAY 2ND MAY 2012**

Thank you all very much for inviting me to join your 60th anniversary celebrations. I was just thinking as we drove up here this morning what a beautiful part of Tasmania this is, although I am aware of course, of your concerns arising out of the uncertain future of the forest industries up here. Let us hope that the conflict is soon settled and a satisfactory balanced resolution achieved.

Certainly as far as the Hospital Auxillary is concerned there is a lot to celebrate today and a good future to look forward to.

In February exactly 60 years ago the Scottsdale Hospital Ladies Auxillary was formed and the annual fete established. I note the initial membership fee was a not inconsiderable 2 shillings.

Over the years the work of the volunteers for the Auxillary has resulted in the purchase of a considerable quantity of equipment that would not otherwise have been bought for the hospital, and I am told that recently the Auxillary contributed \$40,000 towards the purchase of 12 ergonomic beds. I say, "Pretty good effort for a small, but dedicated band of volunteers."

You know the truth of the matter is that volunteers like members of this Auxillary are the backbone of Australia. At the end

of last year the Minister for social inclusion, Ms Tanya Plibersek said “more than six million Australians or 36% of the adult population, formally volunteered last year, up from just 24% in 1995.” She continued, “The volunteering sector contributes more than 700 million hours of unpaid work each year to the Australian community, valued at more than \$14 billion.”ⁱ

Think of that. It’s a staggering sum of money; \$14 billion a year. The work that volunteers do simply would not get done if they insisted on being paid. No government or private organisation could afford it. But of course, as many surveys have shown us, volunteering is a two-way street. As the Minister said, “Volunteering connects us, strengthens our sense of belonging and creates positive relationships that build stronger local communities.”

I am sure that you would all agree that volunteering is a two way street, and as well as helping those in need it also helps to build close and strong communities.

I’ll bet that has been the experience of Life Members Kit Ranson and Joan Heazlewood who have served the Scottsdale Auxillary for no less than 57 years and also for the other three Life Members each of whom who have served as volunteers for well over 20 years.

So on this special anniversary I say thank you on behalf of all those who have been the beneficiaries of your hard work; I

congratulate each of the member of the Auxillary on the valuable contributions they have made to the needs of the patients at the hospital and I wish you a happy 60th Anniversary and many more anniversaries to come.

ⁱ http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/html/s02_article/default.asp?nav_cat_id=208