



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

**Corio Electorate: Geelong Central
Business District, Pistola, Mr Ben**

SPEECH

Tuesday, 16 June 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Speaker Marles, Richard, MP	Question No.

Mr MARLES (Corio) (12:19): The camaraderie and friendship that comes with playing golf is something that the member for Mayo and I work on together as co-conveners of the Parliamentary Friends of Golf, and I very much hear his thoughts in that contribution and associate myself with them.

The Geelong CBD has been a topic of conversation in Geelong for many years now. How do we revitalise this urban heart in the context of a modern world where shopping malls tend to provide a place where more and more people do their shopping and have their retail experience? There is obviously a convenience in that, but by the same token the beautiful, magnificent buildings of the Geelong CBD and the retail space which they afford are something which now needs to be focused upon so that we have a vibrant CBD. It is a topic which has rightly consumed a lot of the attention of the local debate in Geelong. In that respect I particularly refer to the contributions made by Councillor Michelle Heagney, who is the ward councillor in the City of Greater Geelong responsible for covering Geelong's CBD.

In another respect, I would like to highlight a growing trend in Geelong, a fantastic trend, which is the emergence of a remarkable coffee scene in Geelong. Indeed, *The Age Good Food Guide* coming out of Melbourne describes the coffee scene in Geelong as 'going gangbusters'. *Broadsheet*, which is Melbourne and Sydney's online magazine covering food and drink and night life, says in relation to Geelong and its food and cultural attractions:

... *you can't go past a day in the bay* ... Whether you're an art and history buff, a coffee lover ...

It is something which is increasingly coming to define Geelong, and that is fantastic. A lot of those coffee shops are in the CBD: Coffee Cartel, A Spot for Joe and the Maddison Lounge, to mention just a few. Indeed, around the corner from my electorate office there is Freckleduck. I could go on. It is fantastic. We have seen an explosion of the coffee culture within our CBD, and it has led to the Geelong CAT Splash, which was a coffee and tea expo which highlighted the fantastic offering that Geelong now has in this respect.

This points to the future of the Geelong CBD. There will of course be retailing outlets of a variety of kinds in the Geelong CBD, but art, cafe, coffee and heritage are the future of the Geelong CBD. It is about making it a tourist destination for people from Melbourne. So today I am calling on the Geelong council to set up a laneway coffee festa in the heart of Geelong so that we can celebrate this culture and the contribution it can make to the revitalising of the Geelong CBD.