

TRIBUTE TO BOB WALSH, OAM

Sutherland Shire Council Meeting

19 March 2018

Councillor Barry Collier OAM

There can be no doubt that we, in the Sutherland Shire, have lost one of our favourite sons.

An incredibly gifted, and yet humble man of genuine caring and compassion, Bob Walsh OAM understood, perhaps better than most, the importance of preserving, restoring and protecting our precious environment for the present and future generations of Australians.

He had a profound sense of social justice and when it came to commitment, to tackling the issues that were important to the people of the Shire and to standing up for the things he believed in, few could surpass Mr Bob Walsh.

Bob Walsh had many strings to his bow. His contribution to education was one of them. I first came across his name 50 years ago this year as a student doing my Higher School Certificate. I can still remember the excellent textbook with the yellow cover and the picture of Mahatma Gandhi on the front entitled *The Student's Guide to World History since 1789* by R D Walsh.

I would come across Bob 30 years later as the candidate for Miranda on key community issues like overdevelopment. I well recall, as MP, standing with him and Kirrawee residents in 2002 as the then Shire Mayor and Minister Carl Scully, planted a tree on the F6 to celebrate the Minister's decision to return corridor land south of Miranda Park back

to the people of the Shire. And Bob was there at the forefront of the public outcry when Minister Costa reversed Scully's decision.

The last time I saw Bob- by chance about a year or so ago- I had the privilege of catching a train with him to Town Hall. We had a wonderful discussion about TS Eliot's poetry and he told me he used to write poetry himself. I wasn't aware of that and I do hope I get to read it one day.

Few of us here in the Shire have not been touched in some way by Bob's work- and *all* of us in the Shire, I know, will benefit from his legacy.

This extraordinary person; this outstanding Shire citizen of vision and achievement- Bob Walshe- walked softly across this land of the Dharawal people, and he left it a better place than he found it.

As the Executive Director of the Shire Environment Centre and former Councillor Jenni Gormley told the Leader newspaper, "it's hard to imagine the Shire without him."

My deepest sympathies to Bob's family and friends

Vale, Bob Walshe OAM.

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