



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck

Liberal Senator for Tasmania

MEDIA RELEASE

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Remembering Dame Enid Lyons

Today marks the 75th anniversary of the day Dame Enid Lyons became the first woman elected to the Australian House of Representatives.

Senator Richard Colbeck paid tribute to the Smithton native who represented the seat of Darwin, the precursor to the seat of Braddon in North West Tasmania.

“Dame Enid Lyons stands as a giant of Australian politics and an inspiration for Tasmanian women and men who wish to make a difference for their community,” Senator Colbeck said.

“We pay tribute to her today as the first woman elected to the House of Representatives and we acknowledge her also as the first woman to sit in Federal Cabinet.

“Elected during World War II, her strength of character cannot be overstated as she represented us from our darkest days through to reconstruction.

“She is a significant figure for our community, our Party, our State and our Nation.

“Her words from her maiden speech resonate still when she said “We go along, thinking always that we progress, but sometimes we have to pause and take stock. I think that every Australian should pause now and again and say to himself, “Only 150 years ago this land was wilderness. Now we have great cities, wonderful feats of engineering and beautiful buildings everywhere. And this is still a land of promise”. We cannot afford to neglect some recognition of our past, even though we gaze into the future.”

“Dame Enid and Joe’s residence remains in almost its original configuration in Devonport representing an important part of the heritage of the North West Coast and the State of Tasmania.”

Dame Enid Lyons represented Darwin in the House of Representatives from 21 August 1943 - 19 March 1951. She served as Vice-President of the Executive Council in the Menzies Cabinet between 1949 and 1951.

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