



Speech by

## Barbara Stone

MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD

Hansard Tuesday, 30 October 2007

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### JACKSON, MR KG

**Ms STONE** (Springwood—ALP) (10.08 pm): Tonight, I rise to speak about the life of Ken Jackson and inform the House of his sudden and tragic passing. Kenneth Garry Jackson was born on 17 November 1951 to Bill and Gwen Jackson in Gunnedah, New South Wales. Ken was the second child in a family of three girls and two boys. Ken joined the Army in 1969 and did his recruit training in Kapooka. His family are proud of his very successful Army career, which took in South Vietnam, Townsville, Randwick in New South Wales, Mossman in New South Wales and Melbourne. Ken's good organisational skills and his natural ability to lead were noticed by the Army as he worked his way up from private to captain.

In 1974 Ken met the love of his life, his soul mate, Jane, and they married in 1978. The year 1984 saw the birth of their first daughter, Emma Louise Jackson, and Melanie Rebecca Jackson was born in January 1987. Ken was very proud of his girls. He was proud of his family. He would often talk about their wonderful achievements.

In 1992 Ken decided to retire from the army and the family moved and settled in Daisy Hill. In 1993 Ken began work at Slacks Creek State School as the grounds facilitator and he worked there until his sudden death on Wednesday, 26 September 2007. I have some words from the school community that I believe truly describe Ken. They write—

When Ken joined the Slacks Creek State School family he was immediately seen as part of the family, a straight-talking, hard-working and loyal employee, friend to the staff, students and school community. He went beyond the call of duty to help everyone. His army captain's voice was a real bonus sometimes.

The children of Slacks Creek State School loved Mr Jackson or as the year ones would say Mrs Jackson. The children knew him as their mate but they also knew he would not stand for any nonsense or disrespect to anyone.

As the news of Ken's death filtered through the community during the recent school holidays, children came to the school to leave flowers and notes that would melt your heart. They displayed the respect and affection they had for him.

Ken worked tirelessly to get the best deal for our school and to get the best value out of the funds allocated. Everywhere we look we see improvements to our school environment that he has been instrumental in organising and implementing.

Our students have better, safer playgrounds, more shade cover, more waterwise facilities, a koala food plantation and a worm farm courtesy of Mr Jackson—all of this in addition to the regular school maintenance.

As you know Barbara, Ken looked after us all. When we think of him, we think of the Anzac spirit and the Aussie sense of humour that brightens your day. It was an honour to call him a friend.

The current principal, Mr Mike Sawbridge, said—

Ken was a professional in all he did at work. His commitment to our school was enormous and his legacy will be felt throughout school life for many years to come.

Ken's family attended a very moving school assembly where the children placed flowers, cards and messages in memory of their mate Mr Jackson. They also released a balloon each to celebrate the life of Ken and to say thanks. We all have very special memories of Ken. I remember the first day I met him; I thought he was the principal. I was so surprised when he took me over to the principal. For 12 months I

thought he was a teacher and it was an easy mistake to make because he was always involved very heavily in any school activity and he knew the children so well.

Ken loved his job. His passion for making the school environment a better place for the children can be seen in the many projects he initiated and implemented. Ken Jackson was respected and loved by the staff, students and friends of the Slacks Creek State School community. Jane, Emma and Melanie, I send you my deepest sympathy. You have lost a great husband and father.

Time expired.