



Speech By  
**Ros Bates**


**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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Record of Proceedings, 31 October 2013

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Kearney, Mr JF**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.00 pm): I rise to outline the contribution to the Mudgeeraba electorate of John Fouhy Kearney. Earlier this month the Mudgeeraba community lost one of its true visionaries and contributors. Today, I would like to put on record the thanks of the Mudgeeraba community and my own personal appreciation. John Kearney was the head of a strong local family who meant so much to him. He was an accomplished barrister, a property investor and a strong advocate for the value of education.

John Kearney saw the potential in the location of Mudgeeraba and its community that was in many ways removed from what many at the time would have considered the true Gold Coast. Mudgeeraba was separated from the rest of the coast by a dirt road and paddocks, but John Kearney had a vision of what Mudgeeraba would become many years before others would recognise its full potential. Mr Kearney purchased what would become Woodlands and Jabiru. During the eulogy for John, delivered by his daughter, we heard that he believed that one day that part of the Gold Coast would become the city's centre. I would not be surprised if at the time he was the only person on the planet who truly believed that. He was spot-on. That dirt road and paddocks became what we now call Robina.

John Kearney had an enormous passion for education. That passion included sponsoring many people to attend university, acting as an adviser and supporter of the foundation of Bond University and as president of the Friends of Bond University; a supporter of the development of Griffith University on the Gold Coast, including being a member of the Griffith University Council and chairman of the Griffith Gold Coast Campus Advisory Council. He was also a benefactor of many educational bodies, including Bond, Griffith and Melbourne universities, Newman College, Marymount College, Somerset College and All Saints and Xavier schools.

John was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Law by Bond University and an honorary doctorate at Griffith University in 2000. In this regard, my own son benefited from John's efforts in attending Marymount College and becoming school captain well before I ever met John Kearney and going on to attend Griffith University on the Gold Coast. It just goes to show how broad his influence was and how many people's lives his efforts must have touched. John Kearney became a Member of the Order of Australia in 2005 for his services to the community as an adviser and benefactor to a number of education and church organisations and through the preservation of a number of architecturally significant buildings in Melbourne.

I will always be thankful for the guidance and support John generously offered to me in my efforts to represent the Mudgeeraba community in this place. The support of John Kearney and his family, combined with his deep knowledge of the local area and its residents that he shared with me, will never be forgotten. John Fouhy Kearney will be sorely missed by the Mudgeeraba community. He passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on Wednesday, 2 October 2013. My thoughts are with his family at this time and his legacy will live on for many years to come.