




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Laming, Mr BE

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.44 am): It is an honour to stand in this place today and remember the legacy of Bruce Edric Laming, the Liberal member for Mooloolah from 1992 to 2001. I acknowledge the family and friends of the late Mr Laming who are here today: his wife, Estelle; his children Julie, Andrew and Suzanne; and his grandchildren Jazz, Jinja, Jack, Sophie and Isobelle, who are all sitting here today.

The electorate of Mooloolah revolved around the river, which gave the division its name. In fact, the Mooloolah electorate existed only when Bruce Laming was the member. It was created in 1992 and abolished in 2001. Bruce came from the old style of politics. He lived to serve his community, working as a councillor in the former Landsborough shire council and later running for the Senate. The signs of Bruce Laming's commitment to his community are all over the Sunshine Coast. When he ran for council in 1980, Bruce campaigned on a platform to sewer Kawana and end the run-off into the Mooloolah River. He fought against the controversial development proposal at Point Cartwright, preserving its public amenity for all of us to enjoy to this day. He secured an agreement between the Landsborough and Maroochy councils to preserve both sides of the Mooloolah River, allowing bikeway connections along the river.

But Bruce was not to be stopped there. He went on to campaign strongly against the tolls on the Sunshine Motorway, the result of a broken promise by the then Goss Labor government. It was this campaign that saw Bruce elected in 1992 as the member for Mooloolah. During his time in state parliament, Bruce served as whip, housing and public works spokesman and deputy speaker. He continued to focus on the infrastructure that was needed for the ever-growing Sunshine Coast, including transport routes, rail corridors, an upgrade to Nambour Hospital and schools at Mountain Creek. Bruce was particularly passionate about improving transport links on the Sunshine Coast and urging the government of the day to consider the interests of the commuters of the next century. Bruce championed the cause of a university on the Sunshine Coast. Indeed, during his maiden speech he spoke with passion on this matter. Bruce is credited with convincing Rob Borbidge to take action on the site of what is now the University of the Sunshine Coast and he would go on to earn a Bachelor of Arts from the University of the Sunshine Coast.

Both Bruce and his wife, Estelle, served their party for many years, working on many campaigns and even opening up their family home as a venue for young members of the party to meet. They both worked tirelessly on campaigns for my colleague the member for Kawana and for the federal member for Fisher, Andrew Wallace. Bruce is even credited with giving now Senator James McGrath his first job. I am sure that Bruce's loss will be keenly felt by my colleagues throughout the state, particularly on the Sunshine Coast.

After politics, Bruce turned to writing, even winning best short story by the Fellowship of Australian Writers on his first attempt. Bruce loved to write. He wrote from his heart, producing short stories, poetry and novels. He documented his early working career, including working on the Snowy Mountains scheme, for Mount Isa Mines, as a wool classer in Tasmania and the four years that he spent patrolling Bougainville in the highlands of Papua New Guinea.

From his poem, *The Red Gum Tree*, Bruce wrote the following of his early days as a wool classer in Tasmania—

I thanked the boss, then got to work
A-classin in his shed,
But he made me do the work of two
As round the shed I sped.

Bruce was determined to document the history of past generations of Australians and his own personal story. He wrote in his book *You've Got to Knock About Son* that he hoped to spark curiosity in his grandchildren by putting pen to paper while he still had his wits about him. Tragically, mere weeks after finishing his book Bruce was diagnosed with the first signs of dementia. Bruce's loving wife, Estelle, nursed him throughout his health battles. With the help of excellent home-care services, Estelle was able to nurse Bruce at home so that he did not have to live out his days in a nursing home.

Bruce was proud of his family, and rightfully so: his wife, Estelle, his daughters Julie and Suzie; his son, Andrew; and his grandchildren. Of course, many in this House are aware that Andrew has followed his father's lead in serving his community, being elected as the member for Bowman in 2004. With the support of his parents, Andrew has been re-elected as the member for Bowman five times.

Bruce's passion for life and his commitment to service will live on not only in his writing but also in his family who are here today. Sadly, Bruce passed away in September last year in the family home he built with Estelle many years ago. Bruce has left behind a great legacy of service to our community and to conservative politics. On behalf of the Liberal National Party I place on record our condolences to the Laming family and extended friends and our thanks for his many years of service. May he rest in peace.