




Speech By
Patrick Weir

MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mary's Commercial Hotel

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (2.18 pm): In the early hours of the morning on Wednesday, 22 August the Commercial Hotel, located in the main street of Dalby, was extensively damaged by fire. The hotel, fondly known as 'Mary's', was an icon of the town. Although Dalby is no longer in my electorate, I spent a lot of time in Mary's from a very early age as did many others. I thank the member for Warrego for allowing me to tell this story today.

The original hotel was built in 1885. The building was demolished in 1909 and a two-storey brick establishment was constructed in its place. The Commercial had several female publicans. One, Miss Mary Barry, became the owner in 1952. Mary passed away in 2010 at the age of 91, still living in the hotel and coming downstairs when she could to be with her faithful patrons.

Mr Boyce: You'd always get your first beer free.

Mr WEIR: As the member for Callide said, you always got your first beer free. Absolutely! The hotel was officially named Mary's in 2010 as a tribute to Mary. Mary Barry was a living legend in Dalby. She was known far and wide for her hospitality and her hotel was an institution. Everyone knew about Mary's, no matter which part of the country they hailed from. After the Dalby cattle sales all of the agents and buyers would end up at Mary's for a drink or two to wash the dust away. It was the favourite haunt of many a local bank manager, farmer or grazier, with generations of families all growing up in the familiar timber bar.

As a small child I fondly remember sitting up at the bar and being given a red lemonade by Mary followed by, 'Happy days, darling!' When I was old enough I loved going to Mary's for a beer or two after our cricket matches, as did my father and both of my grandfathers. At times it was packed to overflowing, with patrons new and old spilling out onto the pavement. Mary was a big supporter of local sporting clubs, with the Rugby Union and cricket clubs being amongst her favourites. Famous faces were seen from time to time enjoying the warm, relaxing atmosphere of Mary's. I well remember having a few beers with a young fellow by the name of Stuart Law after a game of cricket there many years ago.

Unfortunately, the fire has destroyed memorabilia that were collected over many years along with decades of photographs and sporting successes. The loss of Mary's has left a deep sadness in the hearts of all those who entered this historic building. It was one of the institutions of the downs and it will be sadly missed.