




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

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ADJOURNMENT

Burleigh Men's Shed

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.19 am): I rise on Ipswich Cup day to advise the House that last year it was my great pleasure to attend the opening of the Burleigh Men's Shed by Mayor Tom Tate in Pizzey Park, part of the fabulous Mermaid Beach electorate. The gang at the Burleigh Men's Shed are the friendliest and most obliging gentlemen you could ever find and their real aim, apart from delivering some superb woodworking, is to assist in the provision of men's health and wellbeing. I was particularly pleased to run into a long-time friend who was a star national footballer and also a very successful small business operator on the Gold Coast. He has suffered some pretty serious health issues, and he told me that he was in some dark spaces mentally. To see how he has bounced back physically and mentally through his membership of the Burleigh Men's Shed was an absolute joy to behold. There is no pressure, no bitchiness and no hassles—just a solid, friendly workplace where men can enjoy each other's company and make worthwhile and appreciated contributions through toys, wood artworks, furniture pieces et cetera to bring joy to others and to give its members a sense of worthiness and camaraderie.

I was pleased to support the shed with lessons for their members on the operation of a defibrillator, which was generously supplied by the Bendigo Bank and Bunnings, who are regular supporters of timber for the shed. The Gold Coast city council has been a major supporter of the shed, providing premises and machinery to ensure a safe and clean working environment for the 'shedites' to complete their work. Bob Hinze, Robert Rowe, Ray Devenson, David Harris and Roger Merrett are just some of the boys who keep the shed ticking over. Their warm and friendly welcome to me and new members makes it a pleasure to visit the Burleigh Men's Shed whenever I can. My office has firsthand experience of the welcoming and convivial atmosphere of the shed as my executive assistant, Lisa Hedges, after experiencing the lovely people involved with the Burleigh Men's Shed, sent her stepdad, Mr Michael Fisher, along. He has reported back that it is an inviting, pleasant hub for social gatherings and he looks forward to his further participation.

Some may see the woodworking group as just hobbyists pursuing their passion, but the Men's Shed concept is far more important, to the point where you could almost classify men's sheds as men's health clinics. The sense of purpose and the gregarious friendship derived from regular association with other men in a stress-free common situation put light in the lives of particularly middle-aged men whom other circumstances may have cast gloomy shadows upon. I am a great supporter of the men's shed. I am very proud to say that I guarantee my ongoing relationship with and support of the Burleigh Men's Shed in whatever form they need me as their local member in the years to come. They do a wonderful job, and I recommend that as an activity all members in this House can support.