




Speech By
Shane King

MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2020

ADJOURNMENT

Gleeson, Mr R; Barrarister Coffee Co.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.26 pm): I rise to speak about two matters this evening. First, I pay tribute to a good, hardworking man, a comrade and a friend, Mr Robert ‘Bobby’ Gleeson AM, who sadly passed away on Friday, 5 June 2020. Bob was a working man’s hero—a shearer from Longreach, a staunch union man and a life member of the Australian Labor Party, having joined the Longreach branch back in 1962.

Queenslanders, particularly those in the federal seat of Kennedy, might remember seeing Bob’s name on a ballot paper a couple of times. It is a real shame he never got to represent the ALP bush vote in the parliament. He would have done us all proud. Bob did make a contribution to local politics—serving on the Longreach Shire Council—before finding his real passion: the preservation and education of Australian outback history, especially as it relates to the trade union movement in Queensland.

Bob pursued this passion with acclaim as the CEO of the Barcaldine Australian Workers Heritage Centre. It is a place that holds fond memories for me. It contains the history of working Queenslanders. He was associated with the Wanpa-rda Matilda Outback Education Centre for over 20 years. Bob is an honorary life member of my union—the ETU—and a foundation member of the Tree of Knowledge Committee. Rest in peace, mate, you have earned it.

I want to continue on a lighter subject. I extend my congratulations and support to a great local businessman, James ‘Jimmy’ Sullivan, and recognise his unusual business venture taking the world by storm. If you drive along Pitt Road at Burpengary on your way to work, if you are part of the Burpengary State Secondary College community, if you visit the Burpengary fresh food and vegetable markets on Saturday mornings or if you just live around Burpengary, chances are you know about Jimmy’s Barrarister coffee van and have sampled his wares. Jimmy is also a passionate fisherman, hence the name Barrarister.

Jimmy set up his van locally in 2013. This year he has raised the stakes again, launching the Barrarister Coffee Co.’s new chilli coffee with business partner, Doug Bates. It was great to get along to their world-first launch on Tuesday, 10 March this year. I shout out to another Burpengary business, Basil and Vine, for hosting the occasion and creating the accompanying chilli inspired desserts. If people need proof that people like their coffee hot, I can tell them that Jimmy and Doug have already scooped up a prestigious Mr Chilli award for the best new product. Chilli coffee was featured on the news last month with channel 10 describing it as ‘palate priming’. I bought my chilli coffee a while back, and I concur it is my go-to in the office most days.

This year’s COVID-19 shutdowns and restrictions have made things even tougher than usual for small business. Jimmy is larger than life and through hard work and perseverance, the orders for chilli coffee are still coming in, including from overseas. Post COVID, the full potential is unknown, but I have a feeling we will be seeing a lot more from the Barrarister Coffee Co. and Jimmy Sullivan.