




Speech By
David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Edwards, Hon. Sir LR, AC

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.37 am): Today I join all members and the Premier in acknowledging the contribution of Sir Llew Edwards to his community, the people of Queensland and this parliament. For over 11 years Sir Llew served as the member for Ipswich and he served as minister for health, treasurer, deputy premier and the leader of the Liberal Party for nearly nine of those years.

In 1972 he was elected as the member for the newly created seat of Ipswich. He joined a class of Liberals who, in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, overcame the traditional voting records of their electorates to win seats that had not traditionally been won by that side of politics. I instance the likes of Sir Peter Delamothe in Bowen, Rex Pilbeam in Rockhampton, Dr Norm Scott-Young in Townsville, Gilbert Alison in Maryborough and Mervyn Anderson in Toowoomba and Toowoomba East. But Llew Edwards was the most successful of them all. He was a genuine son of Ipswich. His Welsh heritage and his religious convictions were central points in his life and mirrored the community from which he came. They also provided direction in his professional and political life and his post political endeavours.

Sir Llew along with his late wife, Leonie, raised his family in Ipswich. Despite his medical achievements in later years, Sir Llew began his life working as an apprentice electrician and he qualified as an electrical mechanic and fitter. That he graduated from the University of Queensland with a medical degree in his 30s in no way diminished the pride he felt in his initial qualifications.

Upon graduation in 1965, he served at the Ipswich General Hospital and as a GP in Ipswich. It was as a family doctor that Sir Llew recognised the great contribution that could be made to local communities. In his maiden speech in this place in 1972, he spoke of the important role of the general practitioner and said—

It is often the family doctor who is the first to arrive uncalled, yet very welcome, when a sudden unexpected tragedy strikes the home of a patient. The general practitioner knows, therefore, the crises in his patients' lives as well as their problems, their aspirations and their disappointments. The family doctor who lives among his patients not only knows them and their families, but enables them to know him and to trust him.

It was this ethos that drew Sir Llew into politics for the newly created seat of Ipswich in 1972. His belief in the importance of community service was a mainstay during his time in politics and says much about his success in being elected to parliament on four separate occasions.

Sir Llew's record of achievement in parliament and government is well-known. Appointed as minister for health at the relatively young age in those days of 39, elevated to Treasury in '78 and assuming the deputy premiership and leadership of the Liberal Party in the same year stand as a testament to his ability, his willingness to work hard and the high regard in which he was held.

Sir Llew gained a reputation for courage, particularly in his efforts to maintain the integrity and direction of the government. Few would forget his opposition to the advocates of cancer quackery as he sought to protect the health of Queenslanders, relying on his unique perspective as a medical

practitioner and minister for health. It was his belief in his professional experience that gave him the strength to tackle what many have regarded as an impossible political task. To his credit, Sir Llew stood his ground and ensured the interests of Queenslanders were protected.

However, there is no doubt that in the 1970s and 1980s, it was a time of great stress within the then coalition government and indeed within the Liberal Party. It was Sir Llew's role to steer a course that preserved the best features of both the government and the party, but acknowledged the need for change where circumstances called for a new approach until his retirement in 1983. It is to his credit that, once again, in the face of changing circumstances, Sir Llew embarked on a new productive phase of his life. His achievements as head of Expo 88 are widely recognised. In that role he did much to bring Brisbane, Queensland and Australia to the attention of the world and created an amazing legacy which we all enjoy.

Sir Llew also served as Chancellor of the University of Queensland from 1993 to 2009 as well as accepting directorships on the boards of some of Australia's most prominent public companies. Again, the key element to Sir Llew's post political life was his willingness to contribute to his community. For this he was recognised through the awarding of a knighthood in 1984 and the Companion of the Order of Australia in 1989.

It is interesting to note that Sir Llew was elected to this House nearly half a century ago and yet his legacy lives on across the river where thousands get to enjoy it every day. While it is obvious none of the members in this House served with Sir Llew, there would be few of us who do not feel they know him in some way. We know him because of what he has achieved and what he has contributed. We know him because we have seen him at work. We know him because we are members of the community he served.

We are honoured his great-nephew, the member for Bonney, sits in this House. It is not lost on me how he, too, has developed a strong personal following amongst many in his local community who have not traditionally supported this side of politics.

I pay tribute to Sir Llew's wife, Lady Jane, a highly respected businesswoman, one of the premier public relations operators in Brisbane and a woman of immense generosity and integrity.

Let us all be thankful for the life and work of Sir Llew Edwards and I extend my sympathy and that of the entire opposition to his family who join us today. Vale, Sir Llew.