



Speech By  
**Lachlan Millar**


**MEMBER FOR GREGORY**

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## MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

### His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (11.57 am): It is with great sadness that I rise to speak to the condolence motion to mark the passing of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. People all over the world are sharing sadness at this event, both for the loss of the man and for the loss of Her Majesty's partner for more than 70 years. His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh accompanied the Queen on two visits to the seat of Gregory. The first was in 1970 when the couple's royal tour of Australia brought them to Longreach. The then mayor of Longreach, Sir James Walker, and his wife, Lady Vivienne, hosted a luncheon at their home at Camden Park Station just outside of Longreach. People came from all over the outback to meet the Queen and Prince Philip. The district was in the middle of a drought, much like we are today, and the royal couple were very sympathetic to the challenges it created to the local people.

On that visit Sir James's little granddaughter, Tricia, a toddler of just 12 months of age, met Prince Philip firsthand when she refused to be parted from her mother, Rosemary, who was part of the official party. Baby Tricia made it clear, as only toddlers can, that she must be included in the royal function. Prince Philip reached out to her saying, 'What a beautiful little girl,' and stroked her arm. She immediately stopped crying and this fatherly concern for a small child endeared him to the folk of Longreach and outback Queensland. It demonstrated his interest in people, young and old, right across the Commonwealth—although it is to the young that his Duke of Edinburgh award scheme leaves a lasting legacy.

The Duke of Edinburgh's second trip to Longreach was to accompany Queen Elizabeth on 29 April 1988 to open the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre. This was a visionary project which still celebrates the old story of the outback and the people of the outback. This second royal visit to Longreach within 18 years demonstrates the love of the outback expressed by both Prince Philip and the Queen, who had said at Camden Park how rare it was to stand and see a 360-degree view of nature without any man-made intrusions.

Prince Philip was a unique figure, an historic figure but, at the same time, a human figure. Of course the Queen and Prince Philip have a great affection for the remoteness of this country. This was demonstrated when the Queen and Prince Philip were so impressed with a bloke called Tom Kruse. No, I am not talking about Hollywood's Tom Cruise. This bloke I am talking about is a real action hero, the Birdsville Track's Tom Kruse. Tom worked the Birdsville Track mail run from 1936 to 1957 driving his Leyland Badger truck. He delivered mail and other supplies including general stores, fuel and medicines to remote stations from Marree in the north-west of South Australia to Birdsville, totalling 523 kilometres, through flooding creeks and rivers and getting bogged on desert dunes.

Tom Kruse came to fame with the release of John Heyer's documentary *The Back of Beyond* in 1954. The film follows the typical journey made by Tom Kruse. The Queen and Prince Philip watched the documentary and were so impressed with Tom's determination and, more importantly, his service to rural and remote families in the outback that he was appointed an MBE in 1955.

The people of the outback and the people of Gregory hold Prince Philip in warm affection and regard. On their behalf I express our sincere and sad condolences to Her Majesty and the whole Royal Family on this great loss.