




Speech By
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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (11.43 am): I come from a generation that has always had His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, forever present. Indeed, he has been a constant and enduring leader through the entirety of my parents' life as well, so it is little wonder that he will leave a significant hole in the world that he departs—even with many an Aussie republican. He has been an enduring part of the story of our nation. It was at a young age in a working-class home poring over glossy, invasive images in my mother's magazines that I grew to learn of the Royal Family. I developed an interest in them, the lives they lived, their duty, their service, and ultimately a sympathetic admiration.

We all walk different paths in life, and it was the path the Duke of Edinburgh walked that captured the imagination and regard of so many across the world. A baby smuggled aboard a boat in an orange crate became Admiral of the Fleet and almost a centenarian. He was a refugee—a Danish citizen born to a Greek prince and German princess. He was schooled in Germany and Scotland, happiest on boats in Malta, an Australian knight—we thank Tony Abbott for that decision on this side of the House—whose father died in Monaco and whose mother was born at Windsor Castle and died at Buckingham Palace. Yet to so many he remained the quintessence of the stiff-upper-lip Englishman.

He was a complex man: stubborn, energetic, occasionally impolite, disciplined, precise, businesslike, innovative, loyal, determined and, frankly, a little bit of a lad. He was the most loyal subject, husband for a love that stretched a lifetime, beloved father and grandfather, often at the barbecue, always with a joke—we are told usually more than one.

His was a life of love and duty: the beneficiaries of his love, his family; the beneficiaries of his duty, the world. It is rare that someone has a lifetime of uninterrupted service, and it is in this time and service that we find so many accomplishments—such a profound impact. Her Majesty, during one of their many wedding anniversaries, famously and lovingly described him as her 'strength and stay all these years'. Today she celebrates her 95th birthday, and can I add my voice and my community's voice to the many wishing her a happy birthday.

Theirs was the longest marriage of any British sovereign and one of the most remarkable and enduring partnerships of our time. For seven decades he walked two steps behind but rarely in her footsteps. He served a distinguished career in the Navy—a career surrendered for service to the world. His work with the conservation movement was trailblazing and his work with the Commonwealth unwavering. So many of his initiatives, such as televising the Queen's coronation, lifted the veil and modernised the establishment.

In Australia alone almost 800,000 young lives have been transformed, enhanced and expanded by one of his many lasting legacies: the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. He was born into a different age with rare privilege. His mark was one that left a transformed world, a more modern monarchy, more

sophisticated and liberal democracies, a more free world, but one not without profound challenges. His passing marks the passing of an age, the ending of an era. Mr Speaker, I will finish with a poem by the poet laureate Simon Armitage to mark the passing of the Duke of Edinburgh. It reads—

The Patriarchs—An Elegy

The weather in the window this morning
is snow, unseasonal singular flakes,
a slow winter's final shiver. On such an occasion
to presume to eulogise one man is to pipe up
for a whole generation—that crew whose survival
was always the stuff of minor miracle,
who came ashore in orange-crate coracles,
fought ingenious wars, finagled triumphs at sea
with flaming decoy boats, and sidestepped torpedoes.

Husbands to duty, they rolled their plans
across billiard tables and vehicle bonnets,
regrouped at breakfast. What their secrets were
was everyone's guess and nobody's business.
Great-grandfathers from birth, in time they became
both inner core and outer case
in a family heirloom of nesting dolls.
Like evidence of early man their boot-prints stand
in the hardened earth of rose-beds and borders.

They were sons of a zodiac out of sync
with the solar year, but turned their minds
to the day's big science and heavy questions.
To study their hands at rest was to picture maps
showing hachured valleys and indigo streams, schemes
of old campaigns and reconnaissance missions.
Last of the great avuncular magicians
they kept their best tricks for their grand finale:
Disapproving Immortality and Disappearing Entirely.

The major oaks in the wood start turning up
and skies to come will deliver their tributes.
But for now, a cold April's closing moments
parachute slowly home, so by mid-afternoon
snow is recast as seed heads and thistledown.