




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Henderson, Mr JD

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.10 pm): Last Wednesday at the Gold Coast Turf Club I had the honour of attending the memorial service for a great Gold Coaster, a real estate icon in Mermaid Beach, an enormous supporter of lifesaving in the community and, above all, a wonderful family man. John Dudley Henderson—Johnny, to his family—passed away on Thursday, 11 November after 79 years of a life well lived, surrounded by his wife, Jan, and supported by his sons, David, Andrew, Luke, and their families. Testimonials to his generous, fun-loving and family focused lifetime mantra epitomised his positive attitude to life and was best summed up by son Luke's final words: 'Sadly missed but never forgotten.'

Johnny moved to the Gold Coast after an early career as a stock and staging agent with Elder Smith Goldsborough Mort in Western Queensland, honing his auctioneering skills, but he soon realised there was more commission to be made on houses on the Gold Coast than in selling sheep and cattle and started up his own real estate company, John Henderson Real Estate. A short while later he realised the great advantage of being part of the Professionals Real Estate group and joined that franchise.

While he was a busy real estate agent, his sons had started nippers at the local Nobby's Beach Surf Life Saving Club. John did not have the opportunity to support the children as much as he would have liked physically because of his work commitments, so he started donating financially to make up for it. To date, his charitable foundation has donated over \$1 million to the three clubs in his area—which is also my area—and I am sure those donations have resulted in the saving of many lives by our lifesaving fraternity with equipment purchased through Johnny's benevolence.

John was also a keen horseracing man. Hence, the holding of his memorial service at the Gold Coast Turf Club was a most fitting send-off. John was the proud winner of the Melbourne Cup with Fiorente, and I remember well his hosting celebrations at the Mermaid Beach Surf Club and passing 'the cup' around to be photographed by one and all. I particularly fondly remember another one of his winners, Descardo, which won the Caulfield Cup at 20 to 1. This made me very popular as a tipster at the annual Taroom Cup, where I watched the race as the shadow racing minister on one of my many working days as a politician.

In summary, John Dudley Henderson was a highly respected businessman, community supporter, family man and generous benefactor. He will be sorely missed in our community, but I know that his legacy will live on through the outstanding local work and commitment of his sons Luke and Andrew. To his wife, Jan, and their extended family: my deepest sympathy to you on Johnny's passing. The Mermaid Beach community's gratitude for his life well lived has been set in stone.