



Speech By  
**Jarrold Bleijie**


**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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**MOTION**

**Death of Queen Elizabeth II and Accession of King Charles III, Address of Condolence and Congratulations**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (9.59 am): On 8 September we lost our beloved Queen Elizabeth II. Like millions of people around the world, I felt a profound sense of sadness and disbelief. It is a day that we knew was coming but had hoped and prayed never did. Many people have reflected on Her Majesty's passing, and the speech she made with respect to her service of life has been quoted this morning by the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Premier. What many people do not know is that she made that speech on her 21st birthday.

I would challenge honourable colleagues in this room to recall what they were doing on their 21st birthdays, if they have any recollection of that occasion, but this was the way of our monarchy. This was a young princess on her 21st birthday. When we would ordinarily be celebrating that dubious occasion, the young princess said—

I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.

But I shall not have strength to carry out this resolution alone unless you join in it with me, as I now invite you to do.

That was said in 1947, and I think we have shown Her Majesty the Queen that we did join her, we did take up that invitation. Little was it known to her or anyone at that time when she made that speech that a few short years later she would become Queen, Queen of Australia, Queen of Queensland.

Opposition members gathered yesterday and celebrated another milestone—that is, my honourable colleague the member for Maroochydore's 30 years' service to this House. If we doubled that service and added 10, that is the service of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as our Queen. You have a bit of catching up to do, member for Maroochydore.

In 2002 the Queen visited the Sunshine Coast. She went to CHOGM and I recall the streets lined with wellwishers. I was a young boy lining the streets in 2002 wishing to get that glimpse of Her Majesty the Queen as she headed to the CHOGM meeting. In 2011 she visited Queensland after the floods and I have recalled in the parliament before the occasion that I too lined the streets with many thousands of Queenslanders over at South Bank wishing to grab that glimpse of Her Majesty as we watched her do what she did best—that is, comfort people and talk to people. She had a deep understanding and a real commitment to the people of Queensland. It was not just a show; she had a real understanding and a deep understanding of wanting to know what people were feeling and how the comfort of the Queen could help in those terrible situations.

Although the first reigning monarch to Queensland was in fact Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1954, many royal tours and visits had taken place in our sunny state since 1868. Edward Prince of Wales, who had served in World War I and was awarded the Military Cross, came by train to Beerburum

via the north coast line on Wednesday, 4 August 1920 to the electorate of my honourable colleague the member for Glass House. I would put it to the House that if a member of the Royal Family travelled on the north coast line now they would probably say that not much had changed since Edward Prince of Wales was there in 1920 unfortunately. I will have more to say on that later.

I also recall a story from my honourable colleague the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Ray Stevens. He had the opportunity as a young boy to present a flower bouquet to the Queen, but he unfortunately had his foot scalded and burnt so someone else, Johnny from memory—

**Mr Stevens:** Tommy.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Tommy took the flower bouquet so Mr Stevens could not give the bouquet to the Queen. He was very sad about that.

When I was the Attorney-General in this state, I had the honour of naming the courts the Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law in honour of Her Majesty for her Diamond Jubilee. I am proud that whenever anyone attends the Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law they can pay tribute to Her Majesty the Queen, although many people who go to the courts are not there for particularly happy purposes or as tourists. That said, it will be there. We did that because we wanted to honour Her Majesty for the Diamond Jubilee.

Queen Elizabeth II was a modern monarch. She had a wicked sense of humour, and stories relating to that have been told this morning. People would not forget the London Olympics, where James Bond collected Her Majesty with her corgis. It is debatable whether Her Majesty actually jumped out of the helicopter. I would hope, as the admirer that I am, that she did and it was actually her but her face was never seen on the video so it is debatable. She had a wicked sense of humour. The story of the American tourists was told by the Deputy Premier. It is a true story. When she was asked, 'Have you ever met the Queen?' she answered, 'No, but he has,' and then proceeded to take the photo.

Her Majesty was about service to people, not service to self. I think we saw that over the 70 years that she reigned as our Queen. Could you imagine being under the guidelines of the monarch not speaking about politics while being someone who keenly watched politics? As our monarch and head of state, she was so interested in politics but she was not able to freely speak what she thought outside of closed doors. One would have loved to have been a fly on a wall on many occasions with all the prime ministers, governors, governors-general and premiers that the Queen had serve under her reign.

The Queen loved the Commonwealth. She absolutely loved the people of the Commonwealth. She brought the Commonwealth together. She modernised the Commonwealth. She modernised the monarchy. I think that is why we are seeing the outpouring of grief and support for our Constitutional monarchy today, with the support being as strong as it has ever been in our history.

Prime Minister Gough Whitlam introduced the Royal Style and Titles Act. Following the passage of the Whitlam government's Royal Style and Titles Act, the Queen's official title was amended. From that time on, she was thereafter known as Queen of Australia in her capacity as the Australian monarch. The first function Queen Elizabeth II attended as Queen of Australia after the passage of the new law was a lunch at the Lodge in 1973 at which the then senior president of the Labor Party, Jack Egerton, greeted her by remarking, 'They tell me, love, you've been naturalised.'

I place on record my congratulations to our new King, King Charles III, on his accession to the throne. I take this opportunity to affirm my allegiance to His Majesty King Charles III. I first met King Charles when he was Prince of Wales in Longreach for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012. I then met Prince Charles during his visit to Brisbane in 2018 in the Botanical Gardens, where my children and I lined up to greet the Prince, and also at Government House that night. There are many stories from people who have met members of the Royal Family that you do get very nervous and very sweaty, and I can attest to the House that it is absolutely true. When I met Prince Charles at Government House and greeted him, I said, 'Your Royal Highness, I met you first in Longreach,' and I gave a date of 2013 or 2014. He corrected me and said, 'It was actually 2012.' It was like a hole had opened up and I had just sunk, because I had prepared for this moment to meet His Royal Highness at Government House and I completely botched the date up.

**Mr Mander:** Did he remember you?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. Yes, he did remember meeting me in Longreach in 2012, but I completely stuffed the date up and it was His Royal Highness who corrected me.

From what I have seen of His Royal Highness and his training to be our monarch, I know that King Charles III will be a great King, supported by the Queen Consort Camilla. They love Australia and they love Queensland. I look forward to when they and other members of the Royal Family come to Queensland to visit us. I think the future is bright for our Constitutional monarchy. Of the top five functioning democracies in the world, four are Constitutional monarchies and I think that shows the

great legacies of Constitutional monarchies. That is why as one of the national spokespersons of the Australian Monarchist League I will always defend the stability and calmness of our Constitutional democracy—and that is our Constitutional monarchy—because it has served Australia, it has served Queensland and it has served our people well.

I congratulate the new King. I know he will be a great King for Queensland and for Australia. How do I know this? It is because he was trained by the very best, Elizabeth the Great.