



Speech By  
**Jim McDonald**


**MEMBER FOR LOCKYER**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2023

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**McDonald, Mr JN, AM**

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (2.12 pm): I welcome my brother, Mayor Geoff McDonald, to the gallery today and our family watching from home. In preparing for today, I wondered what Dad would say if he had the opportunity. He would not talk about his success in athletics; he would not talk about his success in coaching, playing or administering Rugby League. He never spoke of his success; he celebrated the achievements and success of others. He would say thank you to Steve Hadden for his tribute for Rugby League and Damon Phillips for his tribute for RASQ. He would say thank you to Geoff and me for our contributions regarding family, athletics, business and community. I table these tributes in full.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of tributes to Mr John Norman McDonald AM [1649](#).

Dad would say thank you to Ree, Lisa and Geoff for their work in preparing a tribute booklet. I table a copy of this excellent publication.

*Tabled paper:* Order of service for Mr John Norman McDonald AM [1650](#).

Dad would say thank you to all for the tributes and wishes that have helped us to grieve.

I want to place on record my personal thanks to all of the members, on both sides of this House, for their thoughts and wishes at the loss of my father. He was a true champion—a champion of Queensland and Australia but a true champion of regional Queensland and the development of Rugby League across this state. He would be grateful for the tributes. The ARL Commissioner, Peter V'landys, said—

John McDonald was one of the greatest leaders ever to grace the game of Rugby League ... He was also one of the game's absolute gentlemen and he will be remembered for many decades to come for his immense contribution to grassroots and elite Rugby League.

He would say thanks to 'King' Wally Lewis, who after the celebration of life said—

It was a privilege to know 'Cracker' and an even greater honour to have him guide me in my early days in representative footy. Suddenly I knew the meaning and value of being confident and how to adjust if I wasn't. He played a major role in teaching me how to remain cool, calm and collected in pressure situations and this input proved helpful in many tight games and will never be forgotten.

From the first date Mum said, 'He was so nice. He was the nicest person I'd ever known. He was always a gentleman and always respected my and my mother's wishes.' Dad would say that he loved and he has been loved. He would say thank you to Mum, 'his Joanie', for her love on their lifelong journey and her devotion to their shared goals. Mum and Dad had negotiated the trials and tribulations of life. They had been successful in many ways. They were wonderful hosts, both humble and unassuming. It is their example that has taught us wonderful qualities and a work ethic but, importantly, to enjoy life along the way. Dad would be grateful for all of the well wishes. He would say thank you.

John 'Cracker' McDonald—a kind, strong gentleman with a great sense of humour and love of life—was a great bloke to be around and an even better man to have on your side. We will miss you, mate. Rest in peace.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!