




Speech By
Lachlan Millar

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

Record of Proceedings, 18 April 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Acton, Mr A; Davies, Mr G

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (7.06 pm): It is with great sadness that I rise to pay tribute to Alan Acton, who tragically passed away on 4 April at age 65. His loss will be felt by many. I offer my deepest condolences to his wife, Jennifer; children, Daniel, James and Jessica, and their partners and children; sister, Elizabeth; and brothers, Robert and Evan. The Acton family is one of Queensland's best known and most successful pastoral families. Alan was a worthy part of the family's 150-year contribution to the Queensland beef industry and, of course, our thoroughbred racing industry.

Central to the story of the Acton family is a beautiful home property called Wilpeena, near Dingo, where Alan sadly lost his life while helicopter mustering. Alan loved Wilpeena, so it is fitting that it is his last resting place. Wilpeena Station celebrated its centenary in 2017. It is renowned among Central Queenslanders for its famous Wilpeena races. These were held on the property from 1927 to 2008, attracting crowds of up to 3,000 people. As his great friend Colin Dunne told *Emerald Today*, Alan was a great force for the community and he and Jennifer did a huge amount for the community behind the scenes.

We also lost another icon in Queensland agriculture, Graham Davies OAM, a very successful canefarmer, cattleman and business leader in the Mackay, Moranbah and Middlemount region. When I say that he made a contribution to reforming our sugar industry, that is an understatement. In 1988 he led the charge for Mackay Sugar, which would become one of Australia's biggest farmer owned mill cooperatives. Graham had a motto: 'I want farmers to be price makers, not price takers'. Forming that cooperative allowed Mackay canegrowers in the 1990s and early 2000s to gain full financial benefit from that investment. Graham was also chair of the Australian Sugar Milling Council and later served as the chair of the state government Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority under the late Tim Mulherin.

Tonight we say vale to two Central Queensland icons of our agriculture industry: Alan Acton and Graham Davies. We are starting to lose too many of these people who have been involved in our agriculture industry for a long time. I just say vale to both those people.