




Speech By

Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2025

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (10.11 am): I had the privilege of attending Mark's funeral in his beloved Caloundra with hundreds of other people who supported him and his family. His siblings, Andrew and Jennifer, gave wonderful dissertations, beautiful dissertations, on their life growing up together—a time that was filled with a lot of joking, a lot of hilarity, a lot of ribbing, and that carried through to Mark's persona in his life here in the parliament. Mark came into the parliament in 2004, as we have heard, and I came into the parliament in 2006, with the member for Clayfield. Mark was a great friend to me and we loved to have our little joke sessions as well. He would particularly deride me about my lack of a defined benefit superannuation scheme, which I knew nothing about when I ran for parliament—

Government members interjected.

Mr STEVENS: True story. I know a lot about it now. He and others voted to abolish the system while still remaining on it themselves. To square up, whenever Mark got in the lift with his perfectly coiffured, stylish grey hair, I had great fun in tussling it up, which would send him immediately off to the mirror to redo it to keep up his immaculate appearance.

Mark's place in the history of Queensland politics is indelibly etched in the birth of a brand new party in Queensland called the Liberal National Party. If Laurie Springborg, as leader of the National Party, the senior partner in that group, is the father of the LNP, then Mark McArdle, as the leader of the Liberal Party, was his co-founding second-in-command to bring about the successful amalgamation in 2008 that led to government in Queensland in 2012.

Mark was an accidental leader of the Liberal Party—here I go, with three members from that era still here. This came about after the then eight-member parliamentary group of Liberal members gathered at the Heritage Hotel in 2007—I love telling this story; this is my truth-telling, folks—to pick a new leader after Bruce Flegg. For three days and countless ballots the vote was drawn, time and time again, four-all. In fact, Eric Idle of Monty Python fame, who was in Brisbane at the time, said that even Monty Python could not have come up with a comedy sketch as ridiculous as the Liberal Party leadership spill. Eventually, Mark prevailed and the rest is history.

Marky Mark, as we affectionately called him, was the epitome of good grace, gentle leadership and a dedication to job and friends, but his greatest dedication was to the love of his life, Judy, and his family. The age-old adage of two peas in a pod fits them and their life together to a T. Judy was always foremost in his thoughts, even when he deliberated about becoming leader of the Liberal Party, which was a bit of a surprise to him at the time.

I attended his massive funeral, where Laurie Springborg spoke eloquently and passionately about Mark's contribution to the parliament. The tributes were glowing from friends and family, and the Deputy Premier did a wonderful job as well. I am extremely proud and honoured to have called Mark my friend. To Judy and family, I am so sorry for your untimely loss. Rest in peace, Marky Mark. As Mark would have said in his own special way, he was admired and respected by thousands. Sorely missed, never to be forgotten.