



Speech By  
**Hon. Brent Mickelberg**

**MEMBER FOR BUDERIM**

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Record of Proceedings, 3 March 2026

**ADJOURNMENT**

**O'Flaherty, Mr K; Mansford, Mr G**

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.09 pm): I rise today to place on the record my deepest condolences to the family and friends of two great Queenslanders who tragically passed recently. The first is Buderim great Mr Ken O'Flaherty. UK-born, Ken and his wife, Lois, made the life-changing decision to bring their young family to Queensland 53 years ago, in 1973. On 26 January they arrived at South Brisbane station, where they were greeted by bands playing, crowds cheering and flags waving. Ken assumed it was a welcome just for them, and he only later discovered that it was Australia Day, but it became a story that Ken loved to tell and a moment that marked the beginning of his deep affection for this country and for the community that he would go on to serve so wholeheartedly.

Ken's love for Australia grew quickly and with it came a strong call to service. He became a stalwart of our community in Buderim, contributing to countless organisations across my electorate. He was the patron of the Buderim Historical Society, Buderim Rotary, Bloomhill, the Buderim Foundation and the local men's shed. Most notably, he served as the president of the Buderim War Memorial Community Association, first in 2007 and again in 2019 to 2021. His commitment to civic life also saw him stand as a candidate for local government in 2008.

Ken's service extended far beyond committee meetings, however. He was the founder, photographer, manager, occasional journalist and driving force behind the much respected community newspaper the *Buderim Chronicle*, which kept our community informed from 1997 to 2020. It celebrated the people, the stories and the things that make Buderim great. Ken's contribution to our community in Buderim extends far beyond what I can do justice to tonight here in this short tribute to him. He will be keenly missed. On behalf of our community I want to pay tribute to Ken, and I know that his legacy will live on as our community honours his life.

The second great Queenslander I want to pay tribute to tonight is my friend Brigadier George Mansford AM, who passed away in Cairns on 19 February. 'Warrie' George was a legend in the Australian Army. He served in Korea, Malaya and Vietnam, and he became the standard young soldiers and young officers aspired to in the Army. He came in and spoke to young officers at the Royal Military College. He founded what is called the Battle School in the jungle in Tully, and he was a man who lived the uniquely Australian value of mateship. Everything George did was about making the Australian Army better. I got to know George really well in my time in the 51st Battalion, Far North Queensland Regiment—a unit that George said was the best unit in the Army. I do not have time to swap some of the stories. I remember George telling stories about tanks crushing defensive pits that soldiers were inside, just to make sure they had done their revetting properly, and the odd occasional artillery battery that were off the books. George will be laid to rest next week in Cairns. On behalf of my family and the infantrymen I served with, vale George Mansford.