



Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 9 September 2020

ADJOURNMENT

Burdekin Electorate, Sweet Days, Hot Nights Festival

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.12 pm): We commemorate many things in this House. All of them are important and all of them are about acknowledging an issue, a cause or a person's achievements. Tonight I rise to mention a commemoration that does all three of those things. A few days ago, 'Gimme Jimmy' was officially launched in the Burdekin. At its heart is a plea for Australian music royalty Jimmy Barnes to join us at the 2021 Sweet Days, Hot Nights Festival, but it is much more than that. No matter where you grew up, everyone remembers that iconic vision of Jimmy Barnes standing in front of a roaring cane fire belting out the lyrics to *Working Class Man*. That was over 30 years ago and it was filmed near Cairns.

As I have said many times in this House, our canefarmers excel at improvement. For most cane-growing regions, the days—or should that be nights—of cane fires are over, but not in the Burdekin. The biggest sugar-producing area in Australia is still home to cane fires and what we call 'black snow'. It annoys the hell out of us but it also symbolises the driving force of the Burdekin economy. COVID-19 forced this year's Sweet Days, Hot Nights Festival to become a virtual event, but from 27 to 29 May 2021 the crackle of the cane fire will herald both the start of the festival and the start of the crushing in the Burdekin district.

Let me give the House an overview of Sweet Days, Hot Nights and members will see why we deserve the one and only Jimmy Barnes. The competitors gather with the 'Rising Sun'—a bunch of 'Misfits' piling into the showgrounds, and those who do not make it in are left 'Standing on the Outside'. Some of the competitors are in it for fun and some have amazing stories about their dedication to the sugar industry. Whether they wear a suit during the week or they are a 'Working Class Man', they all fight it out to be 'The Best' because there is certainly 'No Second Prize'. Jimmy, if you say yes, I will even shout you a drink on the 'Saturday Night'—none of that 'Cheap Wine' but a decent drink. By the time you say 'Goodbye', you will understand the charm of the Burdekin. I think we could probably come up with lyrics for Jimmy Barnes for a song called 'Sweet Days, Hot Nights' and have him perform that song at that festival next year. It would be a great event for the Burdekin. To Jimmy, remember, 'I'm Still on Your Side'. See you next May in the Burdekin.