



**City of
Ipswich**

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Condolence – Tom Edwards | Council Ordinary Meeting | Friday, 1 March 2024

Tom Edwards OAM, was at the forefront of electrical innovation in Ipswich.

It started with ringer washers as electricity was first introduced to households from the poles and cable Tom himself helped roll out across Kalbar, Roadvale and Mt Walker.

One such story of Tom's enthusiasm was how residents would line the footpath outside his store window display to watch the latest invention - television. People would even bring their deck chairs and call Tom at home to ask him to come and change the channel.

His store was of course, RT Edwards. The very mention of his store became synonymous with reliability and trust, earning it the status of a household name.

You would be hard pressed to find anyone in Ipswich, who did not have an appliance in their home, bought from RT Edwards.

Tom's father Roy had started RT Edwards with five pounds he borrowed from his aunty in 1931, with just a push bike and a few tools doing electrical repairs door-to-door.

Tom took over the company when he was 19, and worked alongside his uncles and later his own family.

The company went from strength to strength and after 77 years, had a staff of 350 people, 18 electrical retail outlets, 3 furniture stores, a commercial division and electrical contracting and service division.

He faced many challenges over the years including the 1974 floods, that inundated the electrical service centre on Marsden Parade, and a fire in 1995 that burned the Beaudesert store to the ground.

He never gave up, as his deep appreciation for the Ipswich community drove him forward.

The friendly service set this store apart and that was down to Tom's leadership and support of what he thought his greatest asset 'his great team'.

Thomas Haddon Edwards was born in Ipswich on 15 February 1937 to parents Roy and Agnes Edwards. He had a brother Llew and sisters Gwen and Merlyn.

He attended Raceview State School and Ipswich Grammar School before starting his electrical apprenticeship at 15.

He met his wife, Ivy Weatherhog and married her in 1959, the year after he completed his National Service.

They have four children, Gary, Suzanne, Paul and Anne-Maree along with nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren – two of which have been born in the last week.

Tom was a man of faith.

A life Deacon at the Raceview Congregational Church, he used his gifts of leadership and generosity to serve in various roles in his church as well as at church events.

His service extended all through the Ipswich community. He had memberships with the Ipswich Show Society, Ipswich Rotary Club, St Andrew's Hospital Board, The Salvation Army Advisory Board, Electrical Contractors Association and Retravisation.

Tom carried the Queen's Baton across the David Trumpy Bridge in 2018.

He was Business Person of the Year on two separate occasions and was awarded the Order of Australia medal for five decades of service to our community.

When Tom wasn't at his store, you could find him atop a horse mustering his cattle or showing his best cattle at the Ipswich and Boonah Shows.

Tom passed away in his sleep on the 16th of February 2024, the day after he turned 87.

May Tom's remarkable legacy, his remarkable family, inspire us all to emulate his commitment to service, community and the pursuit of excellence.

Matter of Public Interest – Acknowledgement of service for Councillor Kate Kunzelmann | Council Ordinary Meeting | Friday, 1 March 2024

I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for the exemplary service of Councillor Kate Kunzelmann.

Councillor Kunzelmann is not contesting for Division 4 at the local election and so I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge her service to the community over the past four years.

Councillor Kunzelmann leaves behind a legacy of listening, and acting, on behalf of Division 4 residents and the wider Ipswich community.

She is the only councillor who is a member of every, single, committee. Councillor Kunzelmann is Chair of the Economic and Industry Development Committee as well as Deputy Chair of the Ipswich Central Redevelopment Committee, and Community, Culture, Arts and Sport Committee.

In times of crisis, Councillor Kunzelmann has been an unwavering pillar of support for the community as Deputy Chair of the Local Disaster Management Group as well as Chair of the Local Recovery and Resilience Group.

Her decision-making during COVID, several floods and significant rain events, ensured stakeholders and council were working as cohesively as possible, as well as influencing how our flood risk management and recovery could be improved, as we moved through our council term.

At the forefront of her work though these times of adversity, was ensuring the clear and most recent information was being communicated consistently between the authorities and residents.

Beyond crisis management, Councillor Kunzelmann has been a passionate advocate for domestic violence awareness.

Recognising the profound impact this issue has on our community, she has worked hard to raise awareness of this issue and also to see positive action implemented by Council.

A long-standing member of the Zonta Club, Councillor Kunzelmann was instrumental in bringing the Red Bench to Tulumur Place, which is a clear sign of our city's unity and commitment to bring an end to domestic and family violence.

A strong advocate for the upgrade of the North Ipswich Reserve, Cr Kunzelmann has been a champion for this project to be delivered, alongside Deputy Mayor Russell Milligan and myself. Subsequently, we were able to secure a \$20 million federal commitment and continue to advocate to the Queensland Government for its support.

Councillor Kunzelmann has been at the forefront of ensuring her residents' concerns have been heard and actioned in relation to a number of significant community issues. Many of the issues Cr Kunzelmann has addressed are complex, challenging and emotionally charged.

This included standing up for Chuwar residents in the face of noise and dust issues from the Tivoli Raceway site, ensuring resident concerns were addressed in the assessment of a new childcare centre in Karalee, and her strong advocacy for the flood-affected residents of Mihi Grove, Brassall.

Councillor Kunzelmann, alongside the Deputy Mayor, have brought forward significant commitments during this term including; the \$1.6 million upgrade of the Sutton Park Skate Facility - in partnership with the Queensland Government; major works to stabilise and improve Iron Pot Creek and Pine Mountain; a new barbecue shelter and amenities block for Rosewood Showgrounds; as well as significant commitments to road upgrades including William Street Rosewood, Adelong Avenue Thagoona, Borallon Station Road Pine Mountain, and Blackwood Avenue North Ipswich.

Not only has Councillor Kunzelmann's work delivered significant outcomes for the City of Ipswich, what truly sets her apart is her commitment to listening to the needs and aspirations of her local community.

I think it is easy to see, this is where her true passion lies.

Empowering local community groups, organisations and sporting clubs to make a positive contribution to Ipswich is at the heart of her values.

Her dedication for empowering local groups through support, resources and collaboration, has built a more resilient community, and added value to the Ipswich community at a grass-roots level.

I would like to express my gratitude to Councillor Kunzelmann for what she has achieved during her time as Councillor as well as being a beacon of compassion and dedication for both myself, this council, as well as the Ipswich community.