

Eulogy Jim Cooper AM and Jenny Cooper

Jim and Jenny Cooper are forever inscribed in the history of the Territory. I never had the opportunity to farewell my good friend Jenny but today it come nicely together with this service commemorating two outstanding lives well lived.

Jim Cooper knew who he was and where he came from. I was deeply honoured to write the forward to his biography.

Jim and Jenny were not just firm supporters of my Chief Ministership, on the bumpy road we all experience leaving the political fray they were there to help me on my way. They remained firm friends and in time presented me wonderful post politics business opportunities. To serve on Boards associated with Jim and Jenny Cooper was to understand what they had achieved through sheer hard work, grit and determination.

Jim always acknowledged his parents and a gruff Scotsman names Jock Edgar.

He drew inspiration from the great industrialist Henry Ford and from fellow Territorians of another era including Noel Healey, Kurt Johannsen, Dave Baldock, Noel Buntine, Ben Hingston and Bob McMillan who had embarked on a similar journey. As Jim and Jenny's businesses traversed the rollercoaster of commercial activity, other Territory identities including pastoralists such as Ken Warriner figured prominently. And Stui Strain role alongside Jim for most of the journey.

Jim's biography contains important reflections and reminiscences involving many of the icons in the Territory's transport industry. In time over the decades the Territory's road transport industry shaped our economy and infrastructure.

There is an old saying in Africa that when an elder dies its as though an entire library has burned to the ground. And so in publishing his biography and telling not only his story abut also Jenny's he reminded us of the trials and tribulations that he, Jenny and other pioneers endured and overcame.

In moving to the Territory from across the ditch Jim and Jenny demonstrated courage. Commitment and some might say blind faith that Northern Australia in presenting a challenge just might be an opportunity. That we up here might actually amount to something one day.

As a family they arrived in Darwin sight unseen and in the ensuing years became quintessential Territorians who lived the dream and were rewarded for their tenacity and faith. Subsequent generations of the Cooper family now know who they are and where they came from, and the foundations upon which the family is built. They, many here today, carry a special responsibility to build on the legacy of Jim and Jenny.

Jim once concede to me that he was privileged to have had a swing and wasn't going to die wondering.

He once remarked that my often-stated call to arms as Chief Minister "You can be anything you want to be in Australia's Northern Territory" would send a tingle down his spine. Jim and Jenny Cooper are the embodiment of that challenge. Many of us came from else where to live the adventure of the North – we are in good company.

Lauded by the industry Jim and Jenny considered amongst their greatest achievements "Gulf never lost anyone who worked for us".

Australia Day 2008 Jim was honoured with Member of the Order of Australia – we got 2 for the price of one that day in Jim and Jenny. The citation read "service to the transport industry, particularly through the development of specialist transportation systems for mining and livestock".

Today is sad day but also an occasion to celebrate two outstanding Territorian.