

Island leader and farm pioneer

Dudley Gould Kelly

Kangaroo Island identity

Born: March 19, 1908; Hazelton

Died: October 25, 2003, Adelaide

DUDLEY Kelly was a prominent and respected Kangaroo Island farmer, a former chairman of the District Council of Kingscote and author of a history of the Kingscote Council.

Born on the property Hazelton, near Tarlee, he was the second of three children from the marriage of John Gould Kelly to Drusilla Jane Gray. There were seven other children from John's first marriage.

Dudley's mother died when he was aged nine. With older brothers away at the war, Dudley took on many responsibilities around the farm from an early age.

About the time he lost his mother and his older brother Nelson, who was killed in action, Dudley moved with his father to Halldale, near Riverton, where he attended school, later completing his education at Prince Alfred College.

In 1933, Dudley married Edith Jacobs and they had four children - Ian, Margaret, Mary and Kathryn. Dudley purchased Deep Creek, a scrub block near Parndana on Kangaroo Island, in 1938. He spent many months away from his young family camping on the block and beginning the work of clearing it. In 1944, he bought Pioneer Bend, a property near Deep Creek that was



already partly developed, and the family moved to the island. On Pioneer Bend, with strong support from Edith, Dudley soon gained the respect of his neighbours.

The first agricultural bureau in the area was established at Pioneer Bend in 1946 and the first chairman was Dudley. For the first 12 years, the bureau meetings were

held in the front room of the homestead at Pioneer Bend. At the time Dudley came to Kangaroo Island, trace element deficiency was just becoming understood, so there were many problems for the early settlers. Dudley and his family kept in touch with the current research and continued to develop Pioneer Bend into a fine property with 810 hectares cleared.

An articulate person, highly regarded for his integrity, it was logical for Dudley to become involved in local government. He served on the District Council of Kingscote between 1952 and 1981 and was chairman from 1969 to 1974, the final chairman before the mayoralty was inaugurated.

He played an important role in commissioning the council's first development plan for the council and later wrote a history of the first 100 years of the Kingscote Council: *People, Places and Serious Business*, published in 1988. He was also an active member of the Liberal Party.

In early days Pioneer Bend was one of the homes where Methodist Church services were held. In retirement, Dudley helped in the management of the Kangaroo Island Parish of the Uniting Church.

In 1982, Dudley and Edith moved from Pioneer Bend to Kingscote, where they enjoyed seven years of retirement before Edith died. Dudley is survived by a son, three daughters, 11 grandchildren and many great-grandchildren.

READER CONTRIBUTIONS

Readers are invited to contribute obituaries. These should include dates of birth and death, and a photograph. Contributions must also include the author's telephone contact details.

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