

A man of courage and grace

Eric Graham Hillam

Farmer, grazier and community leader/worker

Born: March 19, 1931; Port Pirie

Died: June 25, 2005; Adelaide

ERIC Hillam has been described by those who knew him as a man of "courage, strength and grace". He was a farmer at Baroota, in the Mid North, who devoted much of his time to community work, his church and his family.

Born to John and Eva Hillam in Sister Bray's Hospital at Port Pirie, Eric went to school on horseback. While at Thebarton Technical School in Adelaide, he joined the St John Ambulance Cadets, and was the secretary/treasurer for three years.

While in Adelaide, he learned the guitar and raised money for charities. After a couple of years, Eric left Adelaide and returned to Baroota to work on the farm. In 1956, he began flying, gained his licence to fly Tiger Moths and was a founder member of the Aero Club in Port Pirie.

With wife Rosalie and one-time professional comedian Tom Hardie, they produced variety concerts, touring nearby



towns and cities. The money raised from these productions was given to the Mambray Creek School and the Port Germein Methodist Church. Eric was founder chairman of the local high school bus committee, obtaining grants for school buses in the Mambray Creek area. He was secretary/treasurer of the Mambray Creek School committee for five years.

Eric also was a member of the high school council; represented the Port Germein District Council; was a member of the Port Germein Agricultural Bureau, serving as chairman; member of Port Germein St John Ambulance Council; and member of the Port Germein Institute.

He was fire control supervisor for Port Germein and Mt Remarkable District councils, member of Port Germein CFS and counsellor of Port Pirie Lifeline.

Eric served on the Melrose District Council and was involved with the development plan for the State Planning Authority Regulations for the Flinders Ranges.

Due to his ill health, in 1984 the family sold the farm "Culdaburra" at Baroota, and moved to One Tree Hill, ending a family tradition and commitment to the Baroota area of 106 years. While at One Tree Hill, with the help of cousin Pat Hillam and daughter Minnetta, they wrote, photographed and typed the Hillam family book for publishing.

Eric was a forward-thinking and innovative man, and his interests were many and varied. He was admired and respected by all who knew him, and was known and loved for his compassionate, caring and gentle nature.

Eric is survived by his wife, Rosalie, of 52 years, and two daughters, Vicki and Minnetta Gaye.

Prepared by the Hillam family