

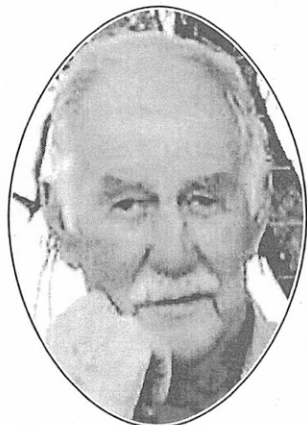
Close to the land and the people on it

Trevor James Dillon

Agronomist

Born: January 3, 1938; Wagin, Western Australia

Died: May 31, 2006; Kadina



TREVOR Dillon was an icon in rural and regional South Australia. About 800 people of all ages from agriculture, government, sporting bodies, industry and commerce gathered on Kadina Oval on June 5 to celebrate a life well lived and to the full.

For Trevor, the Kadina football oval was "hallowed" ground. Goal umpire, line marker, curator and timekeeper - he did them all.

Not long after Trevor was born, his father, Leslie, enlisted at Tea Tree Gully in the 2/43rd Australian Infantry Battalion. Leslie Dillon was killed in action in North Africa on July 9, 1941. Trevor was not yet four years old. In later life, Trevor was deeply moved when he was able to visit the grave site of his father.

Trevor's formal schooling was at Hope Valley Primary School and then Norwood High. On leaving Norwood, Trevor worked for Megaw & Hogg carting furniture, but this was only intended to be a temporary job. He was waiting to be accepted into Roseworthy Agricultural College. He was assisted in this endeavour by the Legacy organisation.

After graduating from Roseworthy, Trevor held various positions.

He sold windmills for Southern Cross in the state's South-East. Later he worked as a property manager near Wilcannia and as a farmhand in Western Australia. In 1965,

Trevor joined the Department of Agriculture. His passion for agriculture is legendary: not from an armchair in a city office but out in the paddock.

He had enormous local knowledge and was a good communicator, speaking in a language farmers understood. His powers of observation in the field were exceptional.

He was instrumental in observing the effect that different crops had on minimising the damage caused by nematodes.

Together with researchers, Trevor encouraged growers to modify crop rotations. This strategy has added countless millions of

dollars to this state's economy. Trevor's skills were always in great demand. He attended farmer meetings, field days, crop walks, sticky-beak days, judged crop competitions and sat on state taskforces for drought, snails, mice, root and leaf diseases.

In 1991, Trevor helped to establish the Yorke Peninsula Rural Counselling Service and was a founding member of the Yorke Peninsula Alkaline Soils Group. In the mid-1970s, Trevor and his family moved to Libya to serve on the SA government's project at El Marj. He was also a member of the project team that developed a major SAGRIC project in Iraq in the mid-1980s.

Agricultural researchers relied heavily on Trevor for assistance in problem definition, monitoring research programs and in the all-important interpretation of results and their relevance to practical agronomy.

In February this year, the SA zone of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology, the peak agricultural science body in Australia, awarded Trevor an Award of Merit.

Also in February, the Trevor Dillon Agronomic Roseworthy Study Scholarship was launched to assist undergraduate students at Roseworthy.

Primary producers will remember Trevor for his dedication and leadership and the "invention" of the Harvest Report, more commonly known as "Dillon's Bible", which he prepared for the 16 agricultural bureau branches in the Yorke Peninsula region.

Trevor is survived by his wife, Valerie, two sons and a grandchild.

Michael McClaren and Greg Schulz