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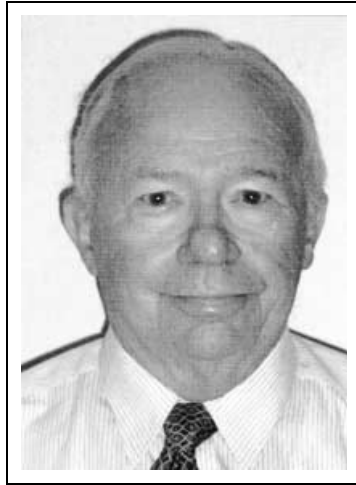
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## **2002 AARES Distinguished Life Member**

Peter C. Druce



Senior Economics Research Officer, then Deputy Chief and then Chief of the Division of Marketing and Agricultural Economics, New South Wales Department of Agriculture, 1950–1972;

Economics Research Officer, Division of Agricultural Economics, New South Wales Department of Agriculture, 1943–1949;

Chairman, Grain Elevators Board of New South Wales, 1972–1981;

President, Australian Agricultural Economics Society, 1965; and

Treasurer, Australian Agricultural Economics Society, 1960.

Peter Druce was one of the founding fathers of the Australian Agricultural Economics Society. In February 1957, a conference was held in Sydney, at which the following motion was passed,

‘This meeting endorses the formation of a society to be known as the Australian Agricultural Economics Society. Moved by P.C. Druce. Seconded by D.B. Williams’.

(Verbatim Report of Conference of Agricultural Economists, 21/2/57)

As well as moving the decisive motion, Peter was a member of the organising committee for that first meeting of the Society, and he edited the proceedings of the meeting.

His contribution to the new Society continued into the 1960s, with him serving as Treasurer in 1960 and President in 1965.

During his 29 years with the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Agriculture, Peter made important contributions in the areas of agricultural policy, farm management extension, the publication of the *Review of Marketing and Agricultural Economics*, and the professional development of many agricultural economists.

In the area of agricultural policy, he acted as advisor to the Director-General of Agriculture and the Minister for Agriculture on a broad range of agricultural policy matters, particularly relating to the wheat industry, but also the dairy and poultry industries. In this capacity he attended most meetings of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and the Australian Agricultural Council from 1949 to 1972.

Peter was responsible for the development of regional farm management services in NSW. In 1958 he undertook a study tour of farm management advisory services in the UK and the USA. Following this he developed a programme for the development of farm management extension in NSW, and this was fully implemented in due course.

Under Peter, the Division of Marketing and Agricultural Economics at NSW Department of Agriculture was the first agency in Australia to place agricultural economists on agricultural research stations. This made a great contribution in getting agricultural scientists to think about optimal levels of production rather than maximum levels.

He played a major role in establishing and editing the *Review of Marketing and Agricultural Economics* as a fully professional quality journal, and edited it for many years. The journal received national recognition as one of the two premier journals of agricultural economics in Australia, until it was merged with the *Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics* at the end of 1996. It lives on in the 'Survey' and 'Policy Forum' sections of the *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*.

Peter contributed greatly to the professional development of numerous young agricultural economists working at the NSW Department of Agriculture in the 1950s and 1960s. Many of the people who worked under Peter's supervision are now in senior positions in Australia and around the world.

As Chairman of the Grain Elevators Board, Peter studied grain handling facilities, services and administration in Europe and North America, and these studies led to a number of initiatives in NSW grain handling and administration.

The Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society is grateful to Peter Druce for his important and diverse contributions to the foundation of the Society, and to the development of agricultural economics in Australia. The awarding of Distinguished Life Membership is a fitting tribute and recognition for an outstanding career.