Jeffrey Keith Clift  
Farmer, agricultural company director  
Born: April 24, 1939; Ardrossan  
Died: May 18, 2006; Adelaide

Clift was a significant figure in the South Australian grain industry. During his career, he served as an SA Cooperative Bulk Handling (later AusBulk) director and chairman, a United Growers Holdings Ltd board member, and a director of ABB Grain Ltd.

The youngest of four children born to Arthur and Betty Clift, from Ardrossan, Jeff, aged four, began his education at the local school to help maintain standards on the farm.

His secondary schooling was at King’s College where he boarded from 1951 to 1953. Afterwards, he returned to the family farm to help his father and brothers, Howard and Rex. The family bred and showed Chaffydale horses at the Royal Adelaide Show. In 1962, Jeff obtained his wool grading certificate from the SA Institute of Agriculture. This took him across the state and to western Victoria.

In the same year, Jeff married Glynaa Wharey (they’d met at Ardrossan’s 1968 Easter dance). He initially sharefarmed at Sandilands before moving back to the homestead at Fine Point in 1960. Jeff is remembered as an efficient farmer who “could buy two farms in five years when other farmers were the broke”. He had a large and active part in the Ardrossan district community. He pigeoned fodder for Ardrossan (even having a “run” with West Adelaide), golf at the Ardrossan and Port Vincent Clubs, was involved with Ardrossan and District Lions Club (president 1979-80) and the local retirement home.

But it’s his long-standing commitment to the grain industry for which he is best remembered. Jeff was the longest-serving grains industry director in SA, and probably only surpassed in Australia by Sir Mick Gaylor’s 37 years as an director with Cooperative Bulk Handling in WA. Jeff was an SA Cooperative Bulk Handling (later AusBulk) director from 1970 to 1994 (SACBH chairman from 1984 to 96), United Growers Holdings Ltd board member (2000-04) and a director of ABB Grain Ltd from September, 2004, until his retirement in 2007.

Jeff’s farming success carried through to SACBH. His legacy was that, while chairman, SACBH built storage for 2.6 million tonnes of grain across the state. He drove initiatives to improve on-farm hygiene, drastically reducing the rate of insect pests. Always the mentor, Jeff also took pride that during his chairmanship, SACBH developed a cadaver, later aimed at bringing new blood into the industry. He is survived by wife Glynaa, children, Roger and Lynette and four grandchildren.