

Learned man of the land

Newton Stanley Tiver, AM

Leading agricultural scientist

Born: August 10, 1920; Adelaide

Died: November 18, 2005; Adelaide

AS a child, Newton Tiver dreamed of becoming a farmer. Although his dream was never fulfilled, his contribution to farming has been monumental.

In his unpublished memoirs, Newton writes: "Although I never fulfilled my childhood dream of becoming a farmer, I was fortunate in being given the opportunity of participating for almost 40 years in many and varied roles throughout the world as an agriculturalist. This opened up much broader horizons than I would have had as a farmer".

His 1981 citation for Membership of the Order of Australia reads, in part: "One of Australia's outstanding agriculturalists... his key contribution to Australian agriculture has been his career-long translation of basic scientific and theoretical understanding of pastures through to the applied, commercial and practical world of farming and land development... his publications on the South-East region of this state remain standard reference papers."

Newton attended Goodwood and Rose Park Primary Schools and Adelaide Technical High School.

His interest in agriculture was fostered by frequent school holidays on his grandparents' farm at Hallett. He graduated in agricultural science from the University of



Adelaide in 1940, gaining a first class honours degree in 1942, and receiving the Master of Science degree in 1947.

It was during his involvement with youth Christian activities that he met Joan Kneebone, a promising young Adelaide violinist. They were married in 1943.

Newton joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1942 and served on the corvette HMAS Inverell. He was discharged in 1945 with the

rank of lieutenant, resuming civilian life at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute as assistant agronomist and grassland ecologist. There, he made a major contribution to our understanding of southern Australian pastures.

In 1950, he joined Koniak Seeds Ltd, a pioneer in the development of Australia's pasture seeds industry. He then joined the SA Department of Agriculture as its first senior research officer (agronomy), later being promoted to senior agronomist.

In 1965, he helped found one of Australia's earliest agricultural consulting firms. In 1971, it became known as Australian Agricultural Consulting and Management Company (AACM) and was involved with land development projects for Aboriginal people. Newton was personally responsible for studies defining the management of the first Aboriginal-owned cattle station at Roper River in the Northern Territory.

With AACM, Newton conducted successful projects in more than 20 countries, in North and South America, South-East and Central Asia, north and west Africa, southern Europe and the UK. He retired in 1984.

In 1980, he was elected a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science, and received the Agricultural Technologists of Australasia Award of Honour.

Newton is survived by son, Lincoln, and daughter, Guila, five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and his two brothers.

Peter Trumble and Philip Young