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PAPER No. 125

PREPARED & PRESENTED BY: J. SCULLION

DATE: 23 January 2006

**Rt. Wor. Bro. Sir KEVIN WILLIAM ELLIS KBE., PJGW.
1908 - 1975**

Kevin Ellis was the third son born to farmer James Palmer Ellis and his wife, Florence May, nee Wyse, on 15 May 1908 at Grenfell, New South Wales.

Educated at Fort Street Boys High School, then the University of Sydney, he graduated in 1931 with First Class Honours in Law (LLB) and the University Medal. Then in 1939 with a BEc. (Bachelor of Economics). During 1937 to 1939, he was the President of the Students' Representative Council and the first to represent Undergraduates on the University Senate.

Admitted as a solicitor in March 1932, he practiced with D. Lynton Williams between 1933 and 1945, then as Kevin Ellis & Company from 1946 to 1954, and with David Price until 1975.

On 26 June 1941, he married Betty Mena Maunsell at St. Mark's, Darling Point.

In 1942, Kevin joined the RAAF and rose to the rank of Temporary Flight Lieutenant serving in Administrative and Special Branches until 1945.

In May 1948, he narrowly won a by-election for the Liberal Party in the Legislative Assembly seat of Coogee.

He held that seat until his retirement in 1973, except for two terms between 1953 and 1956 and between 1962 and 1965.

When the Liberal/Country Party coalition was returned to office in 1965, Kevin Ellis was appointed Speaker of the House, a position he held until his retirement from politics at the end of 1973.

As Speaker, he endeavoured to restore decorum to a Parliament long marred by vitriolic debate and allegations of partiality against previous Speakers.

Then as a symbol of respect for his office, he re-instituted the wearing of the Speaker's wig and he emphasised the impartiality of his office by not attending meetings of his own party. His eight year term as Speaker and his control over the sometimes noisy assembly won him praise from both sides of the House. The Leader of the Labor Party, Neville Wran, acclaimed him as one of the most distinguished and respected Speakers of the House.

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