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**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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Sir Kevin was knighted in 1969. He was a Director of the National Heart Foundation, Deputy Chancellor of the University of New South Wales and a Director of James N. Kirby Holdings Pty., Limited from 1964 to 1975.

He sat on the Boards of several Eastern Suburbs hospitals for a number of years - the Prince of Wales from 1961 to 1975, Prince Henry from 1962 to 1975 and the Eastern Suburbs from 1968 to 1975. He was President of the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association from 1969 to 1975.

Sir Kevin was a member of the Imperial Services Club enjoying fishing and bowling.

Sir Kevin Ellis died on 22 November 1975 at his Point Piper home. A State Funeral was held at St. Jude's Church of England, Randwick, followed by cremation at the Eastern Suburbs crematorium.

MASONIC CAREER

Sir Kevin Ellis was initiated into Lodge Haberfield No. 248 on 8 October 1927, passed a Fellowcraft on 12 May 1928 and raised a Master Mason on 20 June 1928. He served as Worshipful Master in 1936.

He joined Lodge Fortian No. 649 as a foundation member on 27 January 1936, calling off in 1953.

He affiliated with Lodge John Williams No. 148 on 5 September 1947. He became a foundation member of Lodge Randwick High No. 946 on 10 August 1961.

He called off from Lodge John Williams on 21 January 1963.

In March 1966, the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales conferred on him the rank of Past District Grand Inspector of Workings and in September 1969 with the rank of Past Junior Grand Warden.

REFERENCES

Australian Dictionary of Biography.

Randwick Historical Society.

Lodge John Williams - Records.

United Grand Lodge of New South Wales - Membership records.
