Terry Mills, Leader of the Country Liberals, has extended his condolences to the family of Bernie Kilgariff, a former member of both the Federal and Territory Parliaments.

“Bernie’s family has lost a wonderful husband, father and grandfather; the Territory has lost a true pioneer,” says Terry Mills.

“I was fortunate to have known Bernie Kilgariff and recall those conversations with gratitude and humility. His love of family, the Territory and its people have left its mark on me.

“Bernie told me once that he saw the emergence of a political movement that eventually delivered self government to the Territory as a train he decided to jump on and see where it took him.

“It was that same adventurous family spirit that brought the Kilgariff’s to Alice Springs and carried Bernie into a pivotal role in the political and economic history of the Northern Territory.

“It saw Bernie help establish the CLP, become the first Speaker of the Territory’s first fully elected Legislative Assembly and later become one the Territory’s first elected Senators.

“But Bernie’s influence extends far beyond his immense political contribution to the Northern Territory.

“Bernie served in the Australian Army during the Second World War, built and operated motels and service stations in Alice Springs, turned his hand to farming and pastoralism and was instrumental in opening up Central Australia to tourism.

“Bernie also served as Chairman of NT Housing Commission, Director of the Central Australian Travel Association, President of Alice Springs Art foundation and Chair of Alice Springs Community College.

“Yet Bernie should probably be best remembered first and foremost as a proud family man and a friend to those who shared his love for the Territory and its people.

“Bernie, Aileen and their children had have left an indelible mark upon Alice Springs in particular and the Northern Territory in general.

“Bernie has left the Territory, a place that he has helped shape, his legacy remains.”