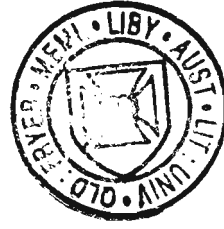


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THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Accepted for the award of

*Doctor of Philosophy*

on *13 June 1995*

**Ghost of Caution  
Haunts  
House of Dunn:**

**The Rise and Fall of a  
Queensland Newspaper Dynasty  
(1930-1989)**

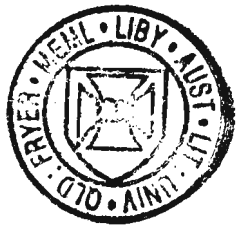
By Rod Kirkpatrick\*

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Submitted for Doctorate of Philosophy

Date: 30 June 1994

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## Declaration

The work as presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

Signed:

*A. K. Kpalle*

## Abstract

This is a study of a newspaper species that is almost extinct: the family-run country daily newspaper. It is an account of many of the conditions under which the regional dailies that serve Queensland today grew up and took form. Its primary focus, however, is the Dunn family chain of daily and non-daily newspapers which developed from 1890 until 1964. A secondary focus is those family newspapers which, in 1968, linked with the Dunn newspapers to form the PNQ Group - Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. In each of the six cases, the families had run those newspapers for at least three generations.

In 1930 the Australian press stood on the threshold of turmoil. World War I had changed the economic basis of newspapers so that, during the 1920s, the most fragile were suddenly confronted with the prospect of amalgamation. As the Depression dawned, chilly winds were blowing in the newspaper world, leaving behind fewer mastheads as well as fewer owners. Chapter 2 sets the scene for the period under review in this thesis, 1930-1989, and provides a narrative account of the Dunn family's entry into newspapers and its development of the first chain of provincial daily newspapers in Queensland. The Dunns are placed, in Chapter 3, within national and international dynastic contexts. Case studies of other newspaper dynasties are provided.

The Dunn family ethos of caution, conservatism, honesty, integrity, Presbyterian values, localism and personal involvement in the community evolved in the twenty years of struggle (1891-1911) which the patriarch Andrew Dunn, his second wife Jane and the six sons endured in Maryborough when

(iii)

the Dunns controlled only one newspaper, the *Maryborough Chronicle*. Chapter 4 examines how the administration of the newspapers evolved from family to corporate control, yet retaining a strong family influence, and how the ethos influenced the style, tone and content of the newspapers which the family members directed, managed and edited. Comparisons are drawn between the ethos, style and demise of Australian and overseas newspaper dynasties and those of the Dunn dynasty. Chapter 5 examines the impact of ethos on the executive appointments the Dunns made. It considers industrial relations issues and looks at differential treatment: the Dunns treated their executive staff well, even generously, and the latter responded with loyal service, even to the extent of working themselves into an early grave, but sometimes the ordinary employees were dealt a different card by the Dunns.

From Chapter 6 to Chapter 10, the thesis paints on a broader canvas that incorporates not one but six pioneering Queensland provincial press families. The six joined together in a merger in April 1968 to ward off perceived threats of takeover from the metropolitan press, especially Rupert Murdoch and Sir Frank Packer. The amalgamation resulted in the formation of PNQ, which, technically, was a continuation of the Dunn family company. Chapter 6 considers marked similarities between the Dunn ethos and the ethos of each of the other five families and suggests why, finally, the Dunns were prepared to link with these other newspapers in an amalgamation on a more co-operative scale than the mergers of the twenties and thirties.

A sub-theme running through the thesis is that country newspapers are markedly different from metropolitan daily newspapers in their treatment of news and in their relationship with their communities. Chapter 7 considers this issue, especially in relation to impact on circulation and to survival as a business enterprise. The number of mastheads has dwindled, especially in the capital cities, and ownership has become more concentrated. Within this context, the daily newspapers which the Dunns published in Queensland, were

survivors, and so contributed to the natural history of the Australian provincial newspaper. Their ethos of localism and integrity reflected the desires of their communities and won the loyalty of subscribers. The Dunns knew their communities, were involved in them, and this was reflected in the pages of their newspapers and in the steadily growing circulations and edition sizes. Circulation comparisons are drawn with 'yardstick' newspapers published in roughly comparable regional communities.

The profound revolution that has swept over newspapers since the mid-sixties - with the change from hot-metal typesetting to photo-composition, and the shift to web offset printing - is examined in Chapter 8. Economies of scale in the newspaper industry affect bigger and smaller newspapers differently, but one common factor is that they provide an impetus towards single-newspaper markets. Chapter 9 considers the profitability of the Dunn family newspapers and PNQ from 1930-1988. It considers also the 'corporate grasp' of the family newspaper executives in an increasingly complex commercial and political environment, and it examines the successes and failures, particularly of PNQ. Chapter 10 focuses on the ultimate demise of the Dunn newspaper dynasty and the five other dynasties that linked with it to become PNQ.

This thesis considers three major factors as having contributed to the demise of the six Queensland provincial newspaper dynasties:

- (1) the caution of the families and their nepotism in executive appointments;
- (2) the blurring of the vision of the patriarchs;  
and
- (3) the increasingly complex corporate environment and the vastly different media and trade practices rules that prevailed in the late 1980s.



**Additional publications on the  
provincial press by the author**

*Sworn to No Master: A History of the Provincial Press in Queensland to 1930.* Darling Downs Institute Press, Toowoomba, 1984.

'The Chronicle: Groomed to Survive', in Bruce Hinchliffe (ed.), *They Meant Business.* Darling Downs Institute Press, Toowoomba, 1984.

'Development of a great newspaper chain'. *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society of Queensland.* Vol. XII, No. 1, 1984, pp. 83-102.

'The first Cairns Post, 1883-1893'. *Cairns Historical Society Bulletin.* No. 282, June 1983, and No. 283, July 1983.

'Queensland provincial dailies, 1930-89'. *Australian Studies in Journalism,* 2 (1993), pp. 57-61.

'Six provincial newspaper dynasties end with a whimper, not a bang', *Australian Studies in Journalism,* 3 (1994) in press.

Articles for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* on:

- (1) Andrew Dunn and two sons, Vol. 8;
- (2) Henry Littleton Groom, Vol. 9;
- (3) Sir Arthur Morgan, Vol. 10;
- (4) Ernest Christian Sommerlad, Vol. 12.

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**Abbreviations**

<i>ADB</i>	<i>Australian Dictionary of Biography</i>
<i>AFR</i>	<i>Australian Financial Review</i>
<i>APN</i>	Australian Provincial Newspapers Ltd.
<i>APDP</i>	Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd. (forerunner of RDA)
<i>BRW</i>	<i>Business Review Weekly</i>
<i>FIRB</i>	Foreign Investment Review Board
<i>HWT</i>	The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd.
<i>NSW</i>	New South Wales
<i>PKIU</i>	Printing and Kindred Industries Union
<i>PNQ</i>	Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd.
<i>RDA</i>	Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd.
<i>SMH</i>	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>
<i>TPC</i>	Trade Practices Commission

## Preface and acknowledgments

This thesis, in effect, has two sections: the first section comprises the thesis proper and the bibliography; the second section, the appendices. Members of the Queensland newspaper dynasties that were involved in Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. are featured in a biographical register which forms Appendix 2 in this second section. Also included are key members of their executive staff, members of families which controlled newspapers acquired by, or sought by the Dunns or PNQ - such as the McFaddens of Nambour, the Fullers of Chinchilla, the Adamses of Kingaroy, the Macfarlans of Gladstone - and some non-Queenslanders such as the Sommerlads, of New South Wales, and two of the Shakespeares, of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Nobody contributed more to this thesis, in terms of providing an overall perspective of how the Dunn family newspapers operated and how Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. [PNQ] was formed and how it operated, than did Lex Seymour Dunn. Lex Dunn, who was the longest-serving chief executive of PNQ, was the first person I interviewed when I began research for this thesis. He provided me with invaluable insights into PNQ's emergence and demise, its successes and failures. Lex Dunn's letter to the editor, published in *The Journalist* in August 1975, prompted the research that led to my writing what became *Sworn to No Master: A History of the Provincial Press (in Queensland to 1930)* (1984). I first interviewed Lex Dunn on 16 March 1977 at the first PNQ headquarters, in the T & G Building, Albert Street, Brisbane. He had prepared well for the interview, summarising material from the Dunn Family minutes books, which were not made available to me during research for the book. With the demise of PNQ during my nine-year absence (1982-91) from Queensland, there was a ready-made thesis topic when I returned. Unfortunately, Lex Dunn (viz. Appendix 2) died before this thesis was completed. His widow, Audrey, generously lent me photographs of her late husband.

The other people whose assistance and/or co-operation I wish to acknowledge specifically (in alphabetical order) are:

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David Stretton, of the *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton.

I wish also to record the highest thanks to my supervisor, Dr W. Ross Johnston, for his advice at consultations and his incisive and prompt written comments on chapters submitted to him for review.

Last, but not least, I wish to thank my wife, Maureen, for her supportive co-operation and generous encouragement without which the thesis may never have been written.

— Rod Kirkpatrick

Buying a ringside seat  
at a great display:

The development of the traditions of the mass press

*This is essentially the land of newspapers. The colonist is by nature an inquisitive animal, who likes to know what is going on around him.*

— Richard Twopeny.<sup>1</sup>

Newspapers, whether they are capital-city dailies, suburban throwaways, provincial dailies or country weeklies, are as much a product of society and technology as of innovative individual proprietors and editors. They have, as Robert E. Park puts it, a natural history. The different publications are not wholly rational products; no one set out to make them just what they are. They have continued to evolve in unexpected ways, despite all the efforts of individuals and of generations to control newspapers and to make them something after their own heart. And so the natural history of the press is an account of the conditions under which the existing newspapers have grown up and taken form. The evolution of press content has depended largely upon two factors: the available technology, and the prevailing social structure.

This chapter provides an introduction to many of the conditions under which the regional dailies that serve Queensland today grew up and took form. The primary focus of this thesis is the emergence and demise of the Dunn family chain of daily and non-daily newspapers which developed from 1890 until 1964, and of the five other newspaper dynasties with whom the Duns became linked through the 1968 merger of their interests. This chapter has two closely linked purposes: (1) to review the literature that relates directly to the history of newspapers internationally and in Australia, and especially to provincial newspapers for the relevant period;

1. Richard Twopeny, Town Life in Australia (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1973), p. 221.

and (2) to trace the development of the mass press in the United States and Britain. No. 1 provides the backdrop for No. 2. The international aspects are important because it was from both the British and American traditions that Australian newspaper editors, printers and journalists drew as they established the colonial press. The British and American traditions have continued to this day to influence Australian journalism. In the 1920s, for instance, a leading Australian newspaper editor, Keith Murdoch, was drawing heavily on the ideas of a key agent in the British popular press, Lord Northcliffe, while Robert Clyde Packer, at Sydney's *Daily Guardian*, was mimicking the circulation-boosting stunts Joseph Pulitzer had used at the *New York World*.

A sub-theme of this thesis is explained, again with examples from British and American contexts: that regional daily newspapers play a different role from metropolitan dailies, and even from country weeklies. Because of their closeness to the community, the country newspapers come under much greater pressure from their readers. The readers, it is argued, quite apart from the influence on the nature and level of news and feature content, are perceived as the ultimate determinants of the overall network of values and of the ideals to which provincial newspapers subscribe. They also constitute a permanent 'pressure group' demanding reliability and accuracy.

\*\*\*            \*\*\*            \*\*\*

The twentieth-century Queensland provincial daily newspaper of the type that the Dunn family produced in various centres is, like newspapers in other periods and societies, the result of a process of evolution and adaptation that Robert Ezra Park has described as the 'natural history of the newspaper'. Park has argued that new ways of gathering news and the emphasis on new categories of news content can be traced at least as much to changing social conditions as to innovative individuals.<sup>1</sup> Schudson has attributed the emergence of the mass press and of the modern concept of 'news' to the democratisation of politics, the expansion of a market economy and the growing authority of an entrepreneurial, urban middle class.<sup>2</sup> Park described this process of adapting news content to a changing society as 'natural history', which he defined as the analytical account of how institutions evolve in response to the changing circumstances encountered within a particular society. This perspective can be applied in examining why the American press developed its present ways of gathering and presenting news:

The newspaper has a history; but it has, likewise, a natural history. The press, as it exists, is not, as our moralists sometimes seem to assume, the wilful product of any little group of living men. On the contrary, it is the outcome of an historic process in which many individuals participated without foreseeing what the ultimate product of their labours was to be. The newspaper, like the modern city, is not wholly a rational product. No one sought to make it just what it is. In spite of all the efforts of individual men and generations of men to control it and to make it something after their own heart, it has continued to grow and change in its own incalculable ways...

The natural history of the press is the history of this surviving species. It is an account of the conditions under which the existing newspaper has grown up and taken form.<sup>3</sup>

Within every society, the present arrangements for administering the news media, and for controlling and selecting their content, are the results of past circumstances — of history. Because of the nature of published news, the

1. Robert E. Park, 'The natural history of the newspaper', in Wilbur Schramm, ed., Mass Communications (2nd ed.; Urbana Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1972), pp. 8-9.

2. Michael Schudson, Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers (New York: Basic Books, 1978), p. 4.

3. Park, pp. 8-9.



evolution of press content has depended upon two factors that have been crucial in determining the timeliness and visibility of events that have been reported as news: the available technology and the prevailing social structure.<sup>1</sup> In the twentieth century, competing mass media, arising from technological advances, have also contributed significantly to shaping press content. Michael Schudson goes further. He has argued in his perceptive social history of the American newspaper that the rise of the mass press in the United States was 'closely connected to broad social, economic and political change' which he describes as the rise of a 'democratic market society': the expansion of a market economy and political democracy, or the democratisation of business and politics sponsored by an urban middle class which trumpeted 'equality' in social life. Although the modern mass-circulation newspaper would be unimaginable without the technical developments of the early nineteenth century, they do not explain why, for instance, the penny press emerged when it did.<sup>2</sup> Dan Schiller has argued that the middle class Schudson envisioned did not exist by the 1830s. There is now extensive evidence that sustained social conflicts were separating the two major groups in Schudson's middle class (merchants and artisans) into generally disparate and frequently hostile parties.<sup>3</sup>

Technological change was not autonomous and itself begs explanation. And while it made mass circulation newspapers possible, it did not make them necessary or inevitable. [In addition,] it says nothing at all about their distinctive content.<sup>4</sup>

Francis Williams regards newspapers as unique barometers of their age because they indicate more plainly than anything else the climate of the societies to which they belong. Williams suggests that the newspaper, because its business is news, operates in the 'most sensitive area of public interest'. It reflects in what it prints not only the common curiosities of mankind but also the extent to which authority at every level is prepared to disclose its purpose or can be cajoled or bullied into revealing its intent.<sup>5</sup> The newspaper

1. Bernard Roshco, News-making (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 23.

2. Schudson, pp. 30-31.

3. Dan Schiller, Objectivity and the News: The Public and the Rise of Commercial Journalism (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), p. 10.

4. Schudson, p. 35.

5. Francis Williams, The Right to Know: The Rise of the World Press (London: Longman, 1969), p. 1.

must be seen nowadays as only one of the forms of mass communications that seek to serve and/or profit from the needs of twentieth-century society. Even within the newspaper world there is great differentiation between the perceived audiences – and, hence, the role and functions – of metropolitan daily newspapers, regional daily newspapers, suburban throwaways and provincial non-daily newspapers, especially weeklies. To make sense of the current situation, we need to examine the evolution of the newspaper and of the mass audience.

In all societies, says Anthony Smith, there exist innumerable chains of information, rather like the food chains of nature, through which different types of knowledge pass by custom or contrivance. Since the end of the Middle Ages, in the Western world, the printed form now called the newspaper has acquired an important role as the major link between many of these chains, providing for a constantly growing audience large quantities of information drawn from countless different spheres. At the start the newspaper situated itself somewhere between the historian on one side and the diplomatic, financial and military courier on the other, Smith argues. In the information which it chose to supply, and in the many sources of information which it took over and reorganised, it contained a bias towards recency or newness; to its readers it offered regularity of publication. It had to be filled with whatever was available, unable to wait until information of greater clarity or certainty, or of wider perspective, had accumulated. The newspaper developed as an ephemeral object which had constantly to combine its audience's various interests and seize upon every economy offered by technical innovation in order to expand further.<sup>1</sup>

The modern newspaper can safely be regarded as a combination of elements from many societies and from many periods. Even before the birth of Christ the Romans posted newsletters called *acta diurna* in public places. The Chinese and Koreans

1. Anthony Smith, The Newspaper: An International History (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), p. 7.

were using movable type and paper for printing several centuries before these appeared in Europe. In the sixteenth century, well after printing had come to Europe, the Venetian Government printed a small news-sheet which could be bought for a *gazeta* (a small coin). This gave rise to a newspaper title, 'gazette', so common down through the centuries that even when Australia's first newspaper was published in 1803 it was called the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*.<sup>1</sup>

The technology capable of producing newspapers had been available for a century and a half before it was applied to that purpose. Printing was introduced to England in the late 1400s, but it was 1621 before early forerunners of the newspaper, called *corantos* ('news budgets'), began to appear.<sup>2</sup> Their content focused on foreign intelligence, and they were published irregularly under strong government regulation. The long struggle to establish the important principle of freedom of the press was fought during a period when the older feudal monarchies were beginning to decline, and new concepts of political democracy were on the rise. One of the most significant changes in Western society, favouring the development of some form of mass communication, was the changing political institution that eventually vested voting power in the majority of citizens. This long and complex change established traditions of journalism which, from the beginning, made the newspaper an arena of public debate, partisan protest and political comment.<sup>3</sup>

As the seeds of the American and French revolutions began germinating, the whole fabric of Western society was undergoing change. With the Renaissance, the ancient feudal society with its rigid stratification pattern was slowly being

1. Melvin L. De Fleur and Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, *Theories of Mass Communication* (4th ed; New York: Longman Inc., 1982), p. 30; and *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 5 March 1803.

2. De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, p. 31.

3. De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, p. 32.

replaced by a new social structure within which a strong middle class would be a key element. One result was the growth of commercialism that eventually culminated in the industrial revolution. This commercialism was to depend, inter alia, upon technological availability: the greater availability of various kinds of communication media. Techniques were sorely needed to coordinate manufacturing, shipping, production of raw materials, financial transactions, and the exploitation of markets.

Rapid, long-distance media were slow in coming. The rising middle class itself began to constitute an audience, not only for the latest information about commercial transactions, but also for political expression, essays, and popular literary fare. In the American colonies a middle class with commercial interests developed rapidly. During the first part of the eighteenth century a number of small newspapers was published, but many were financial failures. By the time of the Declaration of Independence, there were about thirty-five of these small and crudely printed newspapers in the thirteen American colonies, using basically the same printing technology that Gutenberg had used three centuries earlier. They lacked a mass audience with widespread reading skills and large concentrated urban centres that could serve as markets. A complex array of cultural traits, including elementary printing technology, private ownership of newspapers, and the principle of freedom of the press, had, however, accumulated in the society.<sup>1</sup>

Before a true mass press could develop, a series of sweeping social changes was necessary in western society. The changing political roles of the common citizen have already been mentioned, as has the growth of commercialism, which led to the rise of the middle class. To these can be added the necessary development of printing and paper technology, which

1. De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, p. 33.

increased its tempo with the mechanical advances of the early industrial revolution. Finally, when mass public education became a reality in America during the 1830s – with the establishment of the first statewide public school system, in Massachusetts – the stage was set for a combination of these many elements into a newspaper for the common people.<sup>1</sup>

A number of American printers and publishers had experimented with the idea of a cheap newspaper that could be sold not by yearly subscription but by the single copy to the urban masses. Various approaches to this problem were tried both in England and in the United States, but without success. An obscure New York printer, Benjamin H. Day, found a successful formula and began a new era of journalism that would revolutionise newspaper publishing. His paper, the *New York Sun*, which began modestly on 3 September 1833, emphasised local news, human interest stories, and even sensational reports of shocking events. The *Sun* signalled the change from scarcity to plenty in the production of news. It virtually ignored the month-old account of foreign events that was a staple of the six-cent businessmen's papers, and gave short shrift to political commentary and relatively little space to political reporting. Instead, in a breezy style that was novel for the time, it devoted most of its space to local news, with special emphasis on a feature new to American readers: stories of metropolitan low-life drawn from police-court cases.<sup>2</sup> This titillating content found a ready audience among the newly literate working classes and many critics among more traditional people in the city. In the streets enterprising newsboys sold single copies of the paper for a penny, soon establishing regular routes of customers. Assisted by vigorous promotion, daily circulation of the *Sun* rose to 2,000 in only two months, 5,000 in four months and 8,000 in six months.<sup>3</sup>

1. De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, p. 33.

2. Roshco, p. 25.

3. De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, p. 33.

The new, popular press was based on two concepts already proven popular in England (in weekly and Sunday papers, but not in dailies): low-priced papers and the 'human-interest' story. When the *Sun* showed how successful the formula could be in the United States, competitors sprang up in New York and imitators appeared in other cities. Two years after the *Sun* emerged, James Gordon Bennett, a forty-year-old Scot who had refused a job on the *Sun*, started New York's third penny paper, the *Herald*. He expanded and exploited the formula in ways that established him as the leading news entrepreneur of his time and the forerunner of those great newspaper publishers, William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer.<sup>1</sup>

The astonishing success of the *Sun* and the *Herald* came at a time when the steam engine had been coupled to the new rotary press. The famous Hoe cylinder press was available in the United States, along with abundant supplies of cheap wood-pulp newsprint. The technical problems of producing and distributing huge numbers of newspapers on a daily basis had largely been solved, and the emergence of the mass press, the first form of the media of mass communication, was an accomplished fact. Mass communication, as defined by Charles R. Wright, is:

directed toward relatively large, heterogeneous, and anonymous audiences; messages are transmitted publicly, often timed to reach most audience members simultaneously, and are transient in character; the communicator tends to be, or to operate within, a complex organisation that may involve great expense.<sup>2</sup>

Wright added entertainment to the three functions listed by the political scientist, Harold Lasswell, when he conducted his pioneering research on mass communication. Lasswell's three were: (1) surveillance of the environment; (2) correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment; and (3) transmission of the social heritage from

1. Roshco, p. 26.

2. Charles R. Wright, Mass Communication: A sociological Perspective (2nd ed.; New York: Random House, 1975), p. 8.

one generation to the next.<sup>1</sup> Surveillance refers to the collection and distribution of information concerning events in the environment, both outside and within any particular society. To some extent it corresponds to what is popularly conceived as the handling of news. Acts of correlation, here, include interpretation of information about the environment and prescription for conduct in reaction to these events. These activities are popularly identified as editorial or propaganda. Transmission of the social heritage focuses on the communication of knowledge, values and social norms from one generation to another or from members of a group to newcomers. Commonly it is identified as educational activity. Finally, entertainment refers to communicative acts primarily intended for amusement, irrespective of any incidental effects they might have. The newspaper, with its greater ability to present information in depth in a form that suits gradual and selective consumption by an audience, is more adept at surveillance and interpretation and less adept – than some of the other forms of mass media, such as film, radio and television, that have succeeded it – at education and entertainment.

De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach note that although the mass newspaper arrived in the 1830s, it was still limited in terms of news gathering, printing technology, and distribution. Before it could diffuse widely into the homes of every American city, a number of important problems remained to be solved. The decades immediately preceding the Civil War were filled with important mechanical, scientific and technical developments that were to make it possible for the infant mass newspaper to grow into a giant. Railroads were built between the principal cities in the eastern part of the nation. The steamboat arrived as a major transportation link after about

1. Wright, pp. 8-9.

1840. The telegraph grew increasingly useful as a means for rapid transmission of news from the scenes of important events to editorial offices. These developments substantially increased the newspaper's appeal to its readers and increased the number of people to whom newspapers could be distributed. They were part of the natural history of the newspaper.<sup>1</sup>

By the final decades of the nineteenth century, outside the United States, Canada and Australia, few daily newspapers spoke directly to or for the masses. Elsewhere they catered primarily for the official, professional and commercial elements in society, although in Britain, because of the popularity of reading rooms and mechanics' institutes, they were read more widely by the working classes than their circulation figures suggested. In addition, popular Sunday newspapers had begun to sell in immense numbers, for the reasons already given (principally their human-interest content and their low prices). Their content was still mainly opinion. They were concerned much more with the quality of their readership than its size, much less in interesting and entertaining a large public than in providing information and argument for a few. In some instances, this 'quality press' paid its way out of sales and advertising revenue. In others it was subsidised by rich men. Very rarely was it run primarily for motives of profit, although it was steadily becoming more commercial in size and organisation.<sup>2</sup>

A popular press, both good and bad, had been flourishing across the United States for over half a century before Alfred Harmsworth (later Lord Northcliffe) launched the *Daily Mail* on 4 May 1896. The slower development of popular journalism in Britain exactly reflected the differences between the two societies, says Williams. Although the *Daily Telegraph* took over circulation leadership from *The Times* after the removal

1. De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, pp. 35-36.

2. Williams, *The Right*, p. 51.



of the stamp tax and to do so borrowed some of the techniques of American journalism, it used them cautiously. It neither sought nor won the kind of mass readership that Bennett, Dana, Pulitzer and Hearst pursued. The public the *Telegraph* appealed to was a middle class public and, despite breaks with tradition, the paper was basically middle class in its attitudes.<sup>1</sup>

Even when British daily popular journalism arrived in earnest with Harmsworth's halfpenny *Daily Mail*, its form was at first very different from that of American popular journalism. This form was conditioned by the nature of the British market – not a market of teeming immigrants of all races, such as New York popular journalism had exploited from Bennett onwards, or of the free-wheeling pioneering communities of the Middle and far West, but a market of the new black-coated lower middle class born of the Education Act of 1870 and passionate for self-improvement.<sup>2</sup>

An important distinction between British and American popular journalism was that the makers of American popular journalism – even Hearst in his early days – were all possessed of reforming zeal. They were sensationalists but they were also muck-rakers and crusaders, their eyes on the submerged millions. They might, for the most part, lack a coherent social philosophy but they were against injustice and the exploitation of poor and helpless by the rich and powerful – especially when the rich and powerful happened to be great corporations like Standard Oil or the Southern Pacific Railroad. 'They were Robin Hoods of the pen.'<sup>3</sup> Harmsworth had no such emotional involvement. His emotional links, such as they were, were with the small shopkeeper and the ambitious clerk, with those who had no complaint against society but simply wished to improve their own position in it, satisfied

1. Williams, *The Right*, p. 64.  
2. Williams, *The Right*, pp. 66-67.  
3. Williams, *The Right*, p. 75.

to feel themselves a cut above the labouring poor and happy to be governed by their betters. There are many similarities here with the Dunns of Queensland provincial newspapers, as this thesis will demonstrate. Harmsworth's journalism did not reflect the social turbulence that produced strikes and lock-outs all over the country in the year the *Daily Mail* was launched. Nor did it reflect other social injustices of the time that cried out for publicity. The most startling social fact about the Northcliffe revolution, indeed, was that despite it – or perhaps because of it – British popular daily journalism avoided right up to the 1930s the kind of mass appeal that gave American popular journalism its strength. The position of the masses at the lowest levels of the social scale might move others to radical sympathy, but not Harmsworth. Such people had no purchasing power worth bothering about. By contrast the new white collar workers did have purchasing power – little, individually, at that time, but, in total, enough. They had money in their pockets and they were ready to spend it. They were the new market and whoever could command an entry to that market could command fortune.<sup>1</sup>

It was out of such thinking that the idea of a newspaper deliberately sold below cost to attract a mass public was conceived. The new reading public was taught to expect its newspapers at a subsidised price – a lesson it learned only too well for the future health of the newspaper industry. Nor did the Harmsworth brothers simply deal in promises of a worthwhile readership as others did. They produced facts. They published a net sales certificate certified by a chartered accountant and fixed their advertising rates at so much per column inch per 1,000 readers. The *Daily Mail* was the first newspaper to use such a method: it was in some ways Northcliffe's biggest contribution to the future of the

1. Williams, *The Right*, p. 79.

popular press.<sup>1</sup> Carlyon says:

Northcliffe had created the god, the sometimes amoral god, of circulation and more circulation. It reaches its final absurdity in the proposition: if garbage sells newspapers, then write more garbage.<sup>2</sup>

Henry Mayer says the *Daily Mail*, in spite of having had predecessors in the United States, still stands as a symbol of the *daily* popular press. It did not create a brand new public overnight, but rather expanded into one which had already existed long before, and had been catered for by the Sunday and weekly press.<sup>3</sup> Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the Stamp Acts had kept British newspapers dull in format; so anxious were editors to crowd available space that the headline stood no chance. The pages were a uniform grey and covered in type. There was little sport and less humour. Only when W.T. Stead took over the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1881 did a new, visually arresting form of journalism develop in London, greatly influenced by new practices in the United States. Stead imposed heavy black headlines, introduced the interview as a way of bringing out the personalities of journalists and public figures, and brought in the gossip column. He refused to use his newspaper any longer for the ponderous dissection of political affairs in theoretical terms. Perhaps his most influential innovation was the cross-head, rendering long stories accessible to those without the habit of reading them in full.<sup>4</sup>

It was labelled New Journalism by the poet Matthew Arnold, but the big readership was still to be established as the norm in Britain. A new group of London evening papers was emerging – for instance, the *Evening News* and the *Star* (of the radical journalist T.P. O'Connor), as well as the *Westminster Gazette* of 1893 – and they aggressively sought new readers. It was

1. Williams, *The Right*, p. 79.

2. Les Carlyon, *Paperchase: The Press Under Examination* (Melbourne: Herald and Weekly Times Ltd., 1982), p. 60.

3. Henry Mayer, *The Press in Australia* (Sydney: Lansdowne, 1968), p. 3.

4. Smith, *The Newspaper*, p. 152.

these evening papers which first 'educated the morning papers into editorial policies suitable for the masses'. Alfred Harmsworth and Kennedy Jones worked out their ideas for mass journalism after they had acquired and developed the *Evening News* in the 1880s.<sup>1</sup> But mass circulations in Britain really owed their origin to periodicals such as *Lloyd's Weekly News*, which sold 100,000 copies even in the days of the taxes and reached a million in 1896 when the *Daily Mail* was only struggling into the world. *The News of the World* and *Reynolds News* both achieved very high circulations among working class readers before the new mass press existed, and the former actually sold 1.5 million in 1909. The periodicals which set the new owners of mass newspapers up in business were not dedicated to news at all, but to digestible snippets of popular information. George Newnes, Alfred Harmsworth, and C.A. Pearson owned magazines called, respectively, *Tit-Bits*, *Answers* and *Pearson's Weekly*, which reached circulations close to one million and helped to finance the much more difficult ventures of their publishers in daily newspapers.<sup>2</sup>

Through his various publications, Northcliffe was a major influence in turning the press into a branch of consumer industry and journalism into a trade instead of a calling. He told his staff on the *Daily Mail* to think of their readers as the achievers of tomorrow but wanting to read what the achievers of today were reading. It was as a universal provider to this acquisitive and inquisitive new reader that the *Daily Mail* succeeded. Northcliffe was of like kind to Lever, Lipton and the other new captains of industry who made fortunes out of a mass consumer market. All successful newspapers must have one quality above all others: they must hold their readers' interest. Whatever other virtues they may or may not have, they must possess what the best of show business possesses, the power to attract and excite. Northcliffe brought these qualities to his newspapers in supreme degree.<sup>3</sup> In 1967 Cecil King, one-time chairman of

1. Smith, *The Newspaper*, pp. 152, 154.

2. Smith, *The Newspaper*, pp. 154, 156.

3. Williams, *The Right*, p. 79.

London's Daily Mirror group, summarised the Northcliffe revolution thus:

1. It created a nation of newspaper readers by producing newspapers cheap enough for everyone to buy and entertaining enough for everyone to read.
2. It turned newspapers from small private businesses into big public companies.
3. It greatly reduced the number of individual titles.<sup>1</sup>

Australian newspapers, drawing on both the English and American traditions, evolved their own distinct tradition over time. Thus, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and Melbourne's *Age* were listed by an American journalism professor, John Merrill, in 1990 amongst the world's top twenty daily newspapers.<sup>2</sup> From a British perspective, however, the first Australian newspapers could be regarded only as provincial journals at best, and as carriers of government proclamations at worst. They were established by authority, or with the consent of authority, to serve convict settlements. The papers looked to London for important news as naturally as the beginning newspapers of England had a century earlier. When the first newspaper appeared in the new colony on Saturday, 5 March 1803, the population of Sydney town was only 7000, and so, in terms of potential readership, the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* was a provincial journal. Only one-seventh of the population was free, making it hardly surprising that the publication resembled the seventeenth-century *London Gazette* as a weekly official newspaper issued primarily in the interest of the Government, containing notices, proclamations and ordinances, but also some news and a few advertisements profitable to its publisher. Convict George Howe printed the *Sydney Gazette* at Government House on a government press with government ink and government paper. The *Gazette* was subject to censorship by Governor King or his secretaries. This subservience of the earliest papers declined as the interests

1. Cecil King, *The Future of the Press*, p. 46, cited in Carlyon, p. 61.

2. Originally published *Gannet Centre Journal*, Fall 1990. Reprinted in edited form in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 October 1991, p. 11.

of an emergent commercial class ran contrary to those of colonial authority'.<sup>1</sup>

A major step in developing a distinctly Australian tradition in newspapers occurred when a rival appeared on 14 October 1824 for the *Sydney Gazette*. Two barristers, Robert Wardell and William Charles Wentworth, issued the first number of *The Australian* without bothering to ask for official permission, and Governor Brisbane did not intervene. At the request of Robert Howe, who had taken his father's place as publisher of the *Gazette*, censorship of that publication was ended. The change marked the end of the period of constraint on the colony's press, and the birth of the 'free press'.<sup>2</sup> In point of law, as R.B. Walker notes, the press in the remote jail of exile was now freer than in the country of origin, for registration of printers and stamp and advertisement duties did not exist.<sup>3</sup>

By the mid-1830s, New South Wales (which included territory that is now Victoria and Queensland) had seven newspapers, by 1840, ten, and fifty more started between 1840 and 1860, but the effective number published at any one time was about twelve.<sup>4</sup> In South Australia, there were five weekly papers by 1841, and Tasmania had eleven papers by 1854. A country press began to spring up in the 1840s, but 1850 to 1890 is regarded as the clearly defined era of the establishment of the Australian provincial press. The mining rushes, mainly for gold, provided the main impetus, with agricultural and pastoral development plodding along soberly and steadily, ready to lend stability when the glitter of the rushes was tarnished.<sup>5</sup>

1. Rod Kirkpatrick, Sworn to No Master: a History of the Provincial Press in Queensland to 1930 (Toowoomba: Darling Downs Institute Press, 1984), p. 6.

2. Kirkpatrick, Sworn, p. 6.

3. R.B. Walker, The Newspaper Press in New South Wales, 1803-1920 (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1976), pp. 6-19.

4. Mayer, p. 10.

5. Mayer, p. 10; Kirkpatrick, Sworn, p. 6.

One of the settlements established in the far-flung colony of New South Wales in the 1820s was called Moreton Bay. A penal settlement was established at Redcliffe, on the shores of the bay, on 14 September 1824 and was moved to a site on the banks of the Brisbane River in May 1825 to become the nucleus of Brisbane Town. In 1842, Moreton Bay became a free settlement, and by 1846 the population of North Brisbane was 483, of South Brisbane 346, of Ipswich 103, of the squatting stations 482, and of the military and governing establishment 185. Only half the population could read and write. It was here in 1846 that a newspaper was established 'to make known the wants of the community, to point out the most eligible field presented to capital and enterprise'. The *Moreton Bay Courier*, when it began publication on 20 June 1846 was, in effect, a provincial newspaper in the northern districts of the colony of New South Wales. It was one of the colony's early provincial journals, following on the heels of the *Melbourne Advertiser* (1 January 1838) and the *Port Phillip Gazette* (27 October 1838) – the Port Phillip district being a part of NSW, too – and the *Hunter River Gazette*, Maitland (11 December 1841), the *Maitland Mercury* (7 January 1843), the *Windsor Express and Richmond Advertiser* (May 1843) and its successor, the *Hawkesbury Courier* (July 1844). Four other fully fledged newspapers were established in the Moreton Bay district, at Ipswich and on the Darling Downs (and at Port Curtis a handwritten *Gladstone Times* appeared in 1855 for three issues, the first of which was dated 29 September) before Queensland became a separate colony on 10 December 1859. All these early newspapers in the emerging colony must be classified, at birth, as provincial newspapers of New South Wales. Apart from the *Gladstone Times*, they were: the *Moreton Bay Courier* (1846), the *Moreton Bay Free Press* (1850), the *North Australian*, Ipswich (1855), the *Darling Downs Gazette*, Drayton

(1858), and the *Ipswich Herald* (1859), established five months before Separation.<sup>1</sup>

Popular journalism in Australia dated, on the criterion of content alone, from as early as 1826, suggests Henry Mayer. Certainly, there was a period of popular journalism from 1826 to 1842. Taking joint criteria of content and layout, Mayer says popular journalism in Australia dates from 1867 when a bright, easy-to-read press was eagerly devoured by the workers. This flourished with Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* of the 1880s – a period notable for the birth of the predecessors of the *Daily Mail* in England, mentioned above.<sup>2</sup> Mayer discounts Clive Turnbull's widely accepted judgment that Australia's modern era of journalism dated from the 1920s. Turnbull saw it as characterised by joint-stock control, amalgamation and popularisation.<sup>3</sup>

The Sydney *Sun* of 1910 was the first Australian daily to have news on its front page (apart from a short-lived experiment by David Syme's *Age* when shipping advertisements were withdrawn). This practice was emulated only slowly by others, the *Sydney Morning Herald* holding out till 1944. By then many provincial newspapers were devoting Page 1 to news: for example, the *Warwick Daily News* made the change on 3 January 1928; the *Maryborough Chronicle* in 1938; and the *Toowoomba Chronicle* and *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, followed suit in 1942. The first plainly pictorial paper was a weekly, the *Mirror of Australia*, modelled on the *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Sketch* of London. It ran, with a very strong xenophobic and jingoistic anti-German streak, from July 1915 to September 1919 and was intended as a daily. The first picture tabloid daily, however, was Melbourne's *Sun News-Pictorial* (1922). It was in the early 1920s, too, that the rise of chains and monopolies took a sharp upward curve and that Sydney's *Daily Guardian*, on the

1. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 7.

2. Francis Williams, *Dangerous Estate: The Anatomy of Newspapers* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1957), p. 133.

3. Clive Turnbull, 'Journalism', in C.H. Grattan, ed., *Australia* (London, 1947), cited in Mayer, p. 20.



initiative of Robert Clyde Packer, then became a chief promoter of stunts, such as the Miss Australia contest – which boosted sales tremendously.<sup>1</sup> Packer mimicked in Australia the approach Joseph Pulitzer had taken so successfully in the United States with the *New York World*.

[Pulitzer] offered the public a ringside seat at a great display, rather than the conscientious enlargement of their citizenship. The new professional popular press of the twentieth century turned its reader into a consumer of excitement, sensation, pity and fear.<sup>2</sup>

Australia's political institutions were in a state of flux in the final half of the nineteenth century as the colonial boundaries were redrawn and the structures and electoral relationships reshaped. Separation opened the floodgates for the development of newspapers in Queensland in the wake of the freshly booming pastoral and mining expansion of the inland and the north. Where there had been a trickle of newspapers, even in Brisbane, suddenly there was a steady flow of new journals eager to promote the social and material advancement of their communities and to make known their wants at a political level. There were new political realities, not the least being the geography of government: no longer were the political masters based in Sydney. The *Ipswich Herald* (now the *Queensland Times*) issued an Extraordinary on 6 June 1859 that scooped the Brisbane press, announcing the issuing of the Queen's Letters Patent appointing Moreton Bay as a separate colony under the name of Queensland.<sup>3</sup> Among the papers established soon after Separation were a string of hardy survivors, including three that are a special focus of this study – the *Maryborough Chronicle* (established 1860), the *Toowoomba Chronicle* (1861), and the *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton (1861) – and a number of others that will feature prominently, especially the *Mackay Mercury* (1866); the Warwick

1. Mayer, p. 20; George Blaikie, *Remember Smith's Weekly* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1967), p. 42.  
 2. Smith, *The Newspaper*, p. 160.  
 3. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 20.

newspapers (1864 and 1867) that were to merge to become the *Warwick Daily News*; and the *Burnett Argus* (1861), forerunner of today's *Bundaberg News-Mail*.

Federation reduced the political power of the Australian metropolitan press. What were essentially capital city papers, circulating on a State basis, could not hope to wield the same influence over the new Federal Parliament that they might have wielded over their State Parliament. A growing readership with new interests, the increasing influence of women as potential customers for advertisers, new and rival entertainments – all produced a decline in political content in newspapers and a loss of political influence. The loss was gradual, and for the Melbourne press, especially the *Age*, it was masked by the Federal Parliament's location in Melbourne until 1927.<sup>1</sup>

The rise of the Australian Labor Party and of trade unionism in the face of a hostile press seemed to show that the press had little political power, Mayer said. With the exception of a few Labor dailies of small circulation, and of some of the Labor weeklies, foremost among them the *Worker* – even though Labor itself was not united in its opposition to conscription – nearly all Australian newspapers supported a vote for conscription at the two referenda on this issue during World War I. Despite this, conscription was twice defeated.<sup>2</sup>

So far as political values were concerned, country newspapers, almost without exception, supported conservatism. R.B. Walker studied forty-one NSW country newspapers for which the files for 1930 were still available. Only two firmly supported Labor in the State elections: the *Barrier Daily Truth*, Broken Hill, and the *National Advocate*, Bathurst. At this time the press was highly unrepresentative of public opinion, for Labor won fifty-five per cent of the vote and fifty-five out of eighty-nine seats. Provincial dailies in Queensland were also strongly conservative in that era, as this thesis will show.<sup>3</sup>

1. Mayer, p. 27.

2. Gavin Souter, Acts of Parliament: A Narrative History of the Senate and House of Representatives Commonwealth of Australia (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1988), pp. 146-148.

3. R.B. Walker, Yesterday's News: A History of the Newspaper Press in New South Wales from 1920 to 1945 (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1980), p. 170.

Although ready to push local development if necessary to the disadvantage of other towns, the New South Wales country papers, generally shared the agrarian myth by which the city, seen as immoral and parasitic, was invidiously contrasted with the decent, honest, industrious country, the real producer of the wealth which the city selfishly appropriated for itself.<sup>1</sup> David C. Jones made similar observations about the agrarian myth fostered by major farm periodicals in Canada early this century. Jones argues that local newspaper boosterism was one of many factors propagating the rural myth, or a way of seeing the world - the *Zeitgeist* of western Canadian settlement. Country life advocates identified the city as the counter culture, the source of many of their basic problems.<sup>2</sup>

In the literature on Australian newspaper history, Henry Mayer's 1964 work, *The Press in Australia*, stands supreme as an insight into general issues related to the nation's newspapers, even though it does not set out to provide an all-encompassing history. Mayer set as his main task the analysis of common attitudes towards the press and a critique of the various assumptions held by both critics and defenders. History took second place in his work: he set out to give only the 'basic facts about the history, structure and content of the Australian press'.<sup>3</sup>

Gavin Souter has made two major contributions to Australian press history, both focusing on the Fairfax family. His *Company of Heralds* (1981), a monumental history of the John Fairfax Group, paints a picture of the continuity of ideals at the *Sydney Morning Herald* during five generations of family control. Souter says that the *Herald* obeyed, almost to the letter, its early maxims of being sworn to no political master when it reported elections - as distinct from commenting on them - and in reporting and commenting on governments of

1. Walker, p. 169.

2. David C. Jones, "There is some power about the land" - the western agrarian press and country life ideology', *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 17:3 (1982), pp. 96-108.

3. Mayer, p. xiii.

whatever party between elections. The first issue of the newspaper said:

Whilst we are bound to respect Government and its measures, we are entitled to be independent in thought and speech. When these measures are evidently devised for the general welfare, we shall promote and recommend them. When they are of questionable character, or work evil, we shall neither fear nor refuse to state our sentiments.

In that sense, and in the sense that it strove to report events accurately and honestly, no matter how well or how ill they may have accorded with its policy, the *Herald* followed its own advice faithfully for 150 years. There were few newspapers in the world that could say as much, Souter concluded.<sup>1</sup>

In 1989-1990, Souter suddenly found that the work he had been commissioned to write to commemorate the family's 150 years of proprietorship of the *Herald* was overtaken by day-to-day events. He was having to stay up to date with headline-making events affecting the company as it lurched into receivership and then takeover. Souter's *Heralds and Angels* tells of the demise of the Fairfax newspaper dynasty two months short of its 150 years. Souter details, for instance, how solidarity in the family had on occasion been honoured in the breach rather than the observance, and that these breaches had left a residue of resentment and suspicion.<sup>2</sup> Souter's work, especially when read in conjunction with the contributions of other authors – such as James Fairfax, V.J. Carroll, Trevor Sykes, and Colleen Ryan and Glenn Burge – on the end of the Fairfax family interest in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and related publications, provides important insights into the complications that can arise in publishing dynasties as the later generations assume control.<sup>3</sup>

1. Gavin Souter, *Company of Herald*s (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1981), pp. 588-589.

2. Gavin Souter, *Heralds and Angels: The House of Fairfax 1841-1992* (Ringwood, Vic.: Penguin, 1992), p. 6.

3. V.J. Carroll, *The Man Who Couldn't Wait* (Melbourne: William Heinemann Australia, 1990); James O. Fairfax, *My Regards to Broadway: A Memoir* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1992); Colleen Ryan and Glenn Burge, *Corporate Cannibals: The Taking of Fairfax* (Sydney: Heinemann, 1992); and Trevor Sykes, *Operation Dynasty* (Elwood Vic.: Greenhouse Publications, 1989).

William Sprague Holden, an American journalism professor, produced the first detailed study of Australia's metropolitan daily newspapers as the result of spending thirteen months in Australia in 1956-57. In *Australia Goes to Press* Holden examined the news-editorial processes of the dailies - how news is gathered at home and from overseas, how it is written, edited, published and distributed - comparing them with American newspapers. His book is more than a nuts-and-bolts analysis. Holden found proportionately more newspapers in Australia had 'a sense of mission' to be papers of record than in the United States, but he also found a scarcity of deep, graceful, witty, allusive and evocative writing. Australia's leader pages suffered from starvation in the midst of plenty.

Nothing is wrong with them that a keener respect for their purpose, more money for better staff, and more time for effective research and contemplation by the leader writers could not cure.

Holden provides useful insights into the metropolitan press of the 1950s and useful biographical portraits, with historical backdrops, of the newspapers.<sup>1</sup>

R.B. Walker has contributed two volumes examining the history of newspapers, metropolitan, suburban and regional, in New South Wales, the first covering 1803-1920, and the second, 1920-1945. He says that in Australia, with few problems posed by the law of official registration, there was a proliferation of newspapers expressing the various and conflicting views of their proprietors and editors and competing for readers of different beliefs, tastes and character. Unburdened by newspaper and advertisement taxes, colonial newspapers started off with advantages denied to their British counterparts. Against these benefits were ranged difficulties arising from distance, sparse population, and higher costs of production, but the boon of free postage counterbalanced these disadvantages. Country newspapers sprang up apace. In 1909 Australia, with sixty-seven daily newspapers, had 15.8 dailies per million of population compared with Britain's 5.0; and there were 182.8 weekly to tri-weekly papers for every million

1. William Sprague Holden, *Australia Goes to Press* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1961), pp. 212-215.

compared with Britain's 59.9. Naturally, the circulation of Australian papers was much smaller than in Britain. The profusion of small towns in the interior offered great opportunities to the small capitalist, for in the days of hand presses, hand-setting, small staffs and the clipping of news cheaply from other papers, only modest capital requirements were necessary. An ideology of 'independence' and fierce local patriotism accompanied these conditions.<sup>1</sup>

Bill Trevena and Elizabeth Morrison have written theses focusing on different aspects of Victoria's provincial press. Morrison, examining how the country papers contributed to the making of Victoria, displayed the press as an agent of political change:

from preparation of the Port Phillip District in the 1840s for separation from New South Wales to preparation of the colony of Victoria at the end of the 1880s for federation with other British dependencies into a single nation.<sup>2</sup>

Trevena focused on the people who published and edited Victorian's country papers, producing a biographical dictionary whose 'primary purpose [was] to assist family and newspaper historians and genealogists to trace men and women who can then be fitted into a framework already constructed by the historian'. He placed special emphasis on the 'family influence' in the Victorian provincial press, as this thesis does on the provincial press of Queensland, especially, and of other states.<sup>3</sup>

On Queensland's provincial press for the relevant period, the two principal authors have been Rod Kirkpatrick and James Manion (Denis Cryle focused on the period up to 1875 in his social and political history of the Queensland press<sup>4</sup>.) Kirkpatrick, a journalist and journalism teacher, is the author of an encompassing history of the Queensland provincial press to 1930.<sup>5</sup> Manion researched and wrote a history of Townsville and Charters Towers newspapers while holding senior

1. Walker, Vol. I, pp. 257-258.

2. Elizabeth Morrison, 'The contribution of the country press to the making of Victoria, 1840-1890', doctoral thesis, Monash University, May 1991 (summary).

3. Bill Trevena, 'Country newspaper people: A select biographical dictionary of country newspaper men and women working in Victoria between 1840 and 1980', M.A. thesis, University of Melbourne, 1986, pp. 54, 59.

4. Denis Cryle, The Press in Colonial Queensland: A Social and Political History, St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1989.

5. Kirkpatrick, Sworn.

managerial positions with the North Queensland Newspaper Company Limited. He was the general manager when the company published his work in 1982. One of the most valuable contributions it makes to the literature on the Australian press arises from the potted biographies of key North Queensland journalists, editors and printers, ranging from such characters as William Henry Leighton Bailey and Edmund James Banfield (now more remembered as a beachcomber than a journalist) to Reginald Spencer Browne and James Harry Gibbard.<sup>1</sup>

The international literature on journalism provides evidence to support a contention of this thesis: that provincial or 'regional' daily newspapers, as they have come to be known, play a different role from metropolitan dailies, and even from country weeklies. In Australia, Clifton Mott perceived the early provincial newspapers as having been

moulded by the needs of their districts: the Albury *Border Post* by customs and transport (river, rail and road); Beechworth by gold and transport (road and rail); the *Hamilton Spectator* by pastoral pursuits and transport; and Corowa and Wahgunyah (Leslie) by customs and transport.<sup>2</sup>

Media scholars have argued, using what they term 'the structural functionalist paradigm', that media organisations are prominent and influential sub-systems within their communities. Tichenor, Donohue and Olien have commented in an American context:

Among the social controls that maintain the norms, values and processes of a community, those that regulate the generation and distribution of information are some of the most pervasive. Newspapers are highly visible mechanisms of this type and, as such, their functions necessarily fit into a pattern that varies predictably according to size and type of community.<sup>3</sup>

1. James Manion, Paper Power in North Queensland (Townsville: North Queensland Newspaper Company, 1981).

2. Cited in Trevena thesis, p. 105.

3. Tichenor, Donohue and Olien, Community Conflict and the Press (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980), pp. 102-103.

Thus, larger, more pluralistic communities, especially, depend upon media to provide means of communication among the various other sub-systems in the community. Political, economic and other large systems in modern societies come to depend upon the mass media for these communication links. In other words, as De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach contend, the media control information and communication resources that political, economic and other systems need in order to function effectively in modern complex societies.<sup>1</sup>

In small communities, such as those served by weekly newspapers, Bradley Greenberg has found that the community press, as a social function, facilitates individual and group assimilation into the community structure. It accomplishes this in part by distributing prestige - which is not available from the larger urban environment - throughout the local community in the form of stories, pictures and announcements about local persons and events. Further, the community press serves the welfare and progress of the local area. The depiction of the community press as impotent and comparatively inactive might have been anticipated.<sup>2</sup> Janowitz found that the content of community papers generally shunned controversy and contained much of what he termed 'social ritual' content, i.e. bulletin board items and perfunctory announcements.<sup>3</sup> Further, the tendency for the editors to attribute 'more potency' to the readers suggests a slight inferiority complex. Although there is much to indicate that the daily newspaper provides the model for the weekly, Greenberg says the evidence indicates that the weekly performs certain social functions for its readers that the daily does not, functions which give the community press reason to exist.<sup>4</sup>

1. De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, espec. pp. 236-251.

2. Bradley S. Greenberg, 'Community press as perceived by its editors and readers', Journalism Quarterly, 41:3 (1964), pp. 437-440.

3. Janowitz, pp. 130-135.

4. Greenberg, p. 440.



In Britain, Ian Jackson found that readers, quite apart from their influence on the nature and level of news and feature content, are perceived as the ultimate determinants of the overall network of values and of the ideals to which provincial newspapers subscribe. They also constitute a permanent 'pressure group' demanding reliability and accuracy. In endorsing the values of the institutions, the local press believes it is also upholding the family values of its readers. The operative assumption is that the family, as a social group, actively or passively accepts institutional values - including, for example, community progress and service, law and order, and morality. The institutions and the family readership are therefore seen as a joint influence on what (in many respects) editors include or omit, emphasise or play down.<sup>1</sup> An Australian study by Grant Harman found that newspapers in the New England area of New South Wales from 1856-1930 'invariably reflected the attitudes and values of the readers'. In most cases, this meant the norms of the respectable, landed and predominantly Protestant middle class. Harman found that the press sought to influence a number of separate centres of power, both directly and indirectly. It attempted, for example, to influence the direction and intensity of public opinion through encouraging the development both of a general political philosophy and of attitudes on specific policies and issues.<sup>2</sup> The local paper is still produced for a known community on a basis of common interest and common knowledge, as Raymond Williams puts it.<sup>3</sup> This matches what Katy Pretty found in her 1992 Australian study of provincial non-daily journalists, as will be shown later in this chapter. She found evidence of 'the influence and importance of country journalists' regard for local community feelings, coherence or unity'.<sup>4</sup>

But what is the composition of the local community? Are they like-minded people with parochial interests and common preoccupations moulded by an intense sense of community

1. Ian Jackson, The Provincial Press and the Community (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971), p. 40.

2. Grant Harman, 'The provincial press and politics in the New England region of New South Wales, 1856-1930', Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society, 61, 4 (December 1975), p. 223, 230.

3. Raymond Williams, Culture and Society, 1780-1950 (Ringwood, Vic.: Penguin, 1971), p. 300.

4. Katy Pretty, 'Dusting off the grassroots: a survey of Australian country journalists', Australian Studies in Journalism, 2 (1993), p. 118.

identity? An American study by Eugene Shaw and Daniel F. Riffe seriously questions this stereotype of readers of small-town newspapers. According to this traditional wisdom, members of all socio-economic classes feel comfortable with the levelling in-town familiarity and oneness that come with their small-town identification. Their intense interest in social and civic events is allegedly nourished by regular exposure to the local 'news minutiae' of the town's newspaper, which they read carefully and thoroughly. The paper's absence from the local scene, so it is claimed, would leave an 'irreplaceable hole' in their lives - as Sommerlad, Casey, Duggan, Fraser and Haire suggest later in this chapter.<sup>1</sup> Shaw and Riffe say readership studies that indicate a close association of demographic variables with media use should have long ago put to rest at least the stereotype of the homogeneity of a small town's use of its daily newspaper. Shaw and Riffe maintain that among small towns there are marked differences in their residents' use of and preference for news media, and also that, specifically, the differences in newspaper use among small towns cannot be satisfactorily accounted for by their different demographic profiles. A major factor affecting how much time readers spent with their newspapers is how long those people have lived in that community.<sup>2</sup> Keith R. Stamm and Lisa Fortini-Campbell found this, too. In an American study, published in 1983, they concluded that

newspapers are most effective in serving the 'settled audience'. For example, settled persons who owned their own homes spent more time with newspapers than any other resident type and also rated their newspapers as more useful to them. Persons in the process of making or breaking community ties (settlers and relocators) found newspapers much less useful.<sup>3</sup>

Cleve Killiby's findings in a Bathurst, New South Wales, study in 1992 confirmed the Stamm/Fortini-Campbell study.

Regional newspaper proprietors should take no comfort from the finding that people in the process of integrating into a new community may be more likely to rely on the television than on the newspaper for local news.<sup>4</sup>

1. Eugene F. Shaw and Daniel Riffe, 'Newspaper reading in two towns', Journalism Quarterly, 56:3 (1979), pp. 477.

2. Shaw and Riffe, p. 478.

3. Keith R. Stamm and Lisa Fortini-Campbell, 'The relationship of community ties to newspaper use', Journalism Monographs, 84 (August 1983), p. 24.

4. Cleve Killiby, 'Relationships between country newspapers and community ties', Australian Studies in Journalism, 3 (1994), submitted for publication.

If there has ever been any doubt that Australian audiences see the country or provincial/regional newspapers as a different product from metropolitan daily newspapers, circulation figures and readership studies over the past thirty years have removed that doubt. The relationship between reader and newspaper is different in the metropolitan cities than in non-metropolitan areas, as will be shown. Circulation has been steadily lagging behind population increases in capital cities such as Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane for the past thirty years, as is shown in Table 1.<sup>1</sup> In some cases, circulation

Table 1

**Circulation of selected metropolitan  
daily newspapers, 1950-1990**

Year	Sydney Morning Herald	The Age	The Courier-Mail
1950	321,000	127,000	192,000
1960	297,000	1670,000	234,000
1970	285,000	194,000	255,000
1980	258,000	243,000	270,000
1990	262,000	230,000	248,000

SOURCE: Audit Bureau of Circulations, (rounded) figures for relevant years; John Fairfax Group, letter to author, 27 August 1993 (for 1980 Sydney Morning Herald figures when not a member of A.B.C).

itself has fallen, especially in the past decade, as is shown in Chapter 7. By contrast, total circulation figures for regional dailies rose 9.27 per cent in the ten years from March 1983 to March 1993.<sup>2</sup> There was a constant and relentless growth in employment of journalists in the regional newspapers in the 1980s, increasing from 1,186 in 1981 to 1,550 in 1991.<sup>3</sup> In Toowoomba, the circulation of *The Chronicle* rose by

1. Murray Goot, Newspaper Circulation in Australia 1932-1977 (Bundoora, Vic.: Centre for the Study of Educational Communication and Media, La Trobe University), pp. 5-6; Audit Bureau of Circulation figures; also viz. circulation graph, Souter, Company of Heralds, p. 616.

2. PANPA Bulletin, July 1993, p. 38.

3. Geoff Turner, seminar presentation, Department of Journalism, University of Queensland, 5 November 1993.

slightly less than twenty-five per cent in the decade from 1980 to 1990.<sup>1</sup>

Participants in and observers of the country press have long claimed a special relationship between it and its readers – indeed, a special place for it in the affairs of the communities the newspapers serve. According to Grafton's *Daily Examiner*, a provincial daily newspaper occupies a unique position. It is halfway between a capital city newspaper, with its emphasis on world and national activities and a sketchy, often stale, country coverage, and the country non-daily with its exclusive preoccupation with local affairs. The provincial daily newspaper must walk between the two, attempting part of what each does and trying to find a balance.<sup>2</sup> Ernest Christian Sommerlad warned in 1936 of the danger of dismissing country newspapers as the 'local rag'.

Most country papers are a local institution, facilitating social intercourse within the community, promoting business, providing employment. 'The short and simple annals' of the country town may seem small to the big metropolis, but they are the very currency of life in the provincial community... The country paper touches life in all its aspects, and within its pages is embalmed the whole story of local endeavour. The provincial paper is an integral part of the make-up of the community, essential to its progress and the mirror of its local life.<sup>3</sup>

Sommerlad and a contemporary, John H. Casey, who was Professor of Journalism at the University of Oklahoma, saw eye to eye. Casey said that, without its newspaper, the small-town American community would be 'like a school without a teacher, or a church without a pastor'.<sup>4</sup> Jack Duggan, when Deputy

1. Audit Bureau of Circulations. N.B. Gordon Beavan argues effectively that circulation should not be taken as the sole or primary measure of 'growth' in newspapers. He says the growth in a newspaper's paging [output of pages per issue] contributes to increased staff in all departments and to greater demand for equipment and even land; viz. Gordon Beavan, 'Increased size: increased speed -- The Border Mail, a regional Newspaper history', Master of Letters thesis, University of New England, Armidale, 1991, pp. 1-14 .

2. *Daily Examiner*, as quoted by F.J. Meacham Award judges, Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd., 1969.

3. E.C. Sommerlad, cited in *Newspaper News*, 1 June 1936, p. 6.

4. John H. Casey, cited in Sommerlad, 'What is ahead of the country newspaper?', 23 October 1945, pp. 7-8.

Premier of Queensland, agreed with at least part of what Sommerlad and Casey said.

The newspaper, particularly the provincial newspaper, is an integral, familiar, and intimate factor in the development of local life...<sup>1</sup>

In 1959 Queensland Premier G.F.R. Nicklin lent support to the 'boosterism' function of many regional newspapers, contending that the provincial press in Queensland could be relied on to help the future development of the State.<sup>2</sup> In 1977 Malcolm Fraser, as Prime Minister, said:

In many ways, a newspaper is the single most important institution in a country town. It informs, enlightens, entertains; it often acts as a social conscience... newspapers in rural areas are read as closely and eagerly as a letter from a friend.<sup>3</sup>

In 1986, the *Jeparit Leader*, Victoria's smallest newspaper (circulation 520), was owned and published by Jock Haire and his wife, Pat. Jock Haire said: 'The paper is something that keeps this little town together.'<sup>4</sup> In keeping their towns together, in being sought to be read as eagerly as a letter from a friend, many of these newspapers would find it difficult to live up to the ideals espoused in 1927 by Sidney H. Barton, managing editor of the *Bundaberg Daily News and Mail*:

The newspaper of standing and worth in a community must lead, probe, support, condemn, investigate, praise, blame, aid, educate, and review.<sup>5</sup>

Studies undertaken both in Australia and the United States show high levels of readership for local, community, regional or non-metropolitan newspapers. A 1982 survey conducted by McNair-Anderson for the New South Wales and Victorian Country

1. *Downs Star*, 12 July 1955.
2. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 8 September 1959.
3. Cited in *Media Information Australia*, 5 (August 1977).
4. *The Australian*, 30 December 1986, p. 3.
5. *Daily News and Mail*, Bundaberg, 1 January 1927.

Press Associations found local newspapers were the first source of local news for sixty-eight per cent of respondents in twenty non-metropolitan cities and towns.<sup>1</sup> At Warrnambool, Victoria, a 1988 study, by the Centre for Regional Studies at Deakin University, Geelong, found that ninety per cent of households read their local newspaper, the *Standard*, on a daily basis, and another five per cent read it irregularly.<sup>2</sup> Another Australian survey, undertaken in Ayr, North Queensland, in 1978, found the 'most important sources of local news' for Ayr residents were the local newspaper and the local radio station, each nominated by forty per cent of respondents. The survey results suggested country media outlets were well patronised, having a 'better knowledge about the country and being more in touch with country opinions'.<sup>3</sup> High readership and a 'strong' orientation to the local newspaper were found throughout the sample of an extensive study of newspaper readership patterns in non-metropolitan communities in the American state of Tennessee.<sup>4</sup>

The special relationship between a country newspaper and its community as highlighted by Sommerlad, Casey, Haire et al, has a negative as well as a positive side. An Australian country newspaper journalist said in 1992:

Our paper is more aware of its readers... It has historical significance in the area and is part of the community just like any business that's been here a long time. Because of its proximity to the community it's less likely to kick up dust.<sup>5</sup>

One Australian study suggests says that country owners, editors and journalists are subjected to the full impact of group pressures and contradictions. They are enmeshed, says R.A. Wild, in a wide network of local contacts where most people know each other. They have to live in the town and get along with people. In a country town, mass communication is

1. Andrew Dettre, 'Newspaper news', *Rydges Sales and Marketing*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 1986, pp. 25-42.

2. Kevin O'Toole, 'The "unmass" media: the local appeal of the *Warrnambool Standard*', *Media Information Australia*, 64 (May 1992), p. 83.

3. Jacinta Burke, David Bednall, Maria Fricher and Colin Jones, *Television, Radio and the Public: A Rural Perspective* (Ayr, North Queensland, Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, 1978), p. 9.

4. J.R. Lynn and E.M. Bennett, 'Newspaper readership patterns in non-metropolitan communities', *Newspaper Research Journal*, 1:4 (1980), pp. 18-24.

5. Katy Pretty, 'Kicking up dust in the grassroots: a survey of Australian country newspaper journalists', (1992) Master of Journalism thesis, University of Queensland, pp. 6-7.

inextricably linked with personal communication. The ability of community newspaper editors or publishers to perform their roles in the community partly depends on their social origin, their career line and their self-conceptions.<sup>1</sup> Wild postulated a situation similar to that found in the community press of Chicago by Morris Janowitz.

The data clearly indicate that community newspaper publishers are middle-class in origin, and that the management of a community paper is both an avenue of relative social mobility and a source of personal psychic gratification.<sup>2</sup>

Wild found that editors and publishers of country newspapers were a crucial part of the power structure of country towns, usually helping to maintain and reinforce the existing social structure. Katy Pretty found in her 1992 study of 100 Australian provincial non-daily journalists that the journalists held in high regard the feeling of the local community and its need for coherence or unity.

Country journalists' responses regarding the difference between their own and metropolitan daily newspapers, their job-related attitudes and opinions, their attitudes towards functions of the press, their perception of their newspapers' most important function, their orientation towards and involvement in their local communities, and their understanding of their newspapers' role in the community all exhibited an obvious concern for the well-being of their local communities.

Pretty found that the country journalists exhibited such differences from other journalists in values, job conditions, attitudes, ethical stance and editorial priorities that they could be regarded as 'a different breed of news worker altogether'.<sup>3</sup>

Don Woolford, in a brief examination of the provincial press in South Australia (where no regional dailies are published) lists eight differences in circumstance between country and city journalism. One is the smallness of editorial staffs. Much of the copy comes from untrained and unpaid contributors and goes into the paper after some rough and ready subbing. Trained staff lack the time to develop stories that need

1. R.A. Wild, 'Communication, power and the country press', in Regional Journal of Social Issues, 12 (May 1983), pp. 4-5.

2. Morris Janowitz, The Community Press in an Urban Setting (2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 160.

3. Pretty, pp. 112, 116.

'digging'.<sup>1</sup> In a study of the British local press, David Murphy found similar problems. He said each of the four dominating constraints of time, space, money and circulation tended to emasculate the 'watchdog of democracy' role of the local press. All the advantages lay in producing news that depended on the minimum amount of research; all the disadvantages in news that might be informative but was troublesome in its gathering and in its consequences.<sup>2</sup> A similar if less extreme point was made at a New South Wales provincial press seminar in 1965. Max Praed said:

Do country papers perhaps refrain unduly from poking about for colonies of rats and white ants in local affairs? I am sure they do not suppress – but I feel at times they may fail to unearth stories that might reduce the wide grins of self-satisfaction that adorn the faces of some country politicians.

He attributed this to an 'offend nobody' ethic.<sup>3</sup>

In the United States in 1992 it was revealed that in the small Utah town of Beaver the publisher-editor of the local weekly paper had entered into what became a two-year conspiracy to keep quiet a town scandal that involved sex and embezzlement of possibly hundreds of thousands of dollars from a community hospital. The publisher-editor of the *Beaver Press*, Lisa Yardley, said: 'I was asked to withhold the information until a time when they could give me pertinent information.' She had received a clear message from the city leaders that she was expected not to sully the reputation of the town. She had felt threatened with a loss of business if she published the story. Two hospital administrators were later convicted of criminal charges.<sup>4</sup> In Australia, in the small Victorian town of Mirboo North, Norm Martyn would have had no hesitation in publishing such a story if he had been editor. Only now that his thirty-one years as a very independent owner-editor-printer of the weekly *Mirboo North Times* in the Gippsland region have come to

1. Don Woolford, 'Pressures on small-town journalists', in *Australian Journalism Review* 3:2, July 1980, pp. 17-20.

2. David Murphy, *The Silent Watchdog* (London: Constable, 1976), p. 19.

3. Max Praed, 'The influence of the reader on editorial policy', in *The Australian Country Press*, Proceedings of the University of New England Seminar, May 1965, pp. 18.

4. Jack Nelson, 'Utah weekly looks the other way', *Editor & Publisher*, 8 February 1992, p. 15.



an end is he becoming directly aware of just how others in the newspaper business bend to prevailing community desires. He squirms with indignation at what he sees as the paper's deterioration since he sold it to the Elliott Group in 1985. He says the readers who remain are irritated by the paper's drab sameness.

The modern, robot style of news reporting may suit some readership areas, but certainly not the bush town readers... The paper today is devoid of personality. It is cold, impersonal and, sadly, fails to take issue with anything savouring of the contentious. Thus, my 'In Passing' column [which he still contributes] must follow a set pattern... and not stir. It must come through in a whisper. It is an exercise in utter futility to convince management otherwise... Let it be as simple and unruffled as possible! Let's not rock the boat.

Martyn says it is akin to writing with an inkless pen. 'It dulls the wit.'<sup>1</sup>

A Canadian journalist, R. Fulford, suggests newspapers that are proud to be 'part of the community' sometimes grow so close to the community's dominant public values that they resemble house organs of official opinion. He says this tendency is found in its most critical form in newspapers whose executives are deeply involved in public community activities.<sup>2</sup> Kennedy knows those dangers well. He says that small-town newspapering is 'belonging', but he asserts that he revels in the independence.

Though I remain a part of the community, I am independent within it. It's my paper, they're my thoughts. I can do as I please, write as I choose. My Thursday product is mine.<sup>3</sup>

Despite arguing that towns needed to be stimulated and inspired by their local newspaper, Kennedy warned of crossing the line to the type of 'boosterism' in which newspapers virtually became Chamber of Commerce organs.<sup>4</sup>

1. Norman L. Martyn, letter to author, 12 July 1993.

2. R. Fulford in L. Lyons (ed.), Reporting the News (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1965).

3. Kennedy, p. 8.

4. Kennedy, p. 246.

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Available technology and the prevailing social norms and forms have played as great a part in the evolution of the newspaper as have individual entrepreneurs and editors. A revolution in content alone was not sufficient to create a mass press. There had to be a literate public, and there had to be the printing presses to produce newspapers in large volumes and the transport to take the finished product swiftly to distribution points. Proprietors such as James Gordon Bennett in the United States and Lord Northcliffe in Britain had a big influence on the emergence of the press as a branch of consumer industry. This chapter traced the development of the mass press in the United States and Britain because these were the two traditions from which editors, printers and journalists drew as they established the Australian colonial newspapers.

Regional daily newspapers, particularly because they are close to their communities, play a role different from that assumed by metropolitan dailies and this difference is clearly perceived by readers. Circulation figures show that regional dailies are withstanding much more strongly than their metropolitan counterparts the general downward trend in the number of newspapers sold per head of population. Regional newspapers reflect the community's values more closely than do metropolitan newspapers and are subject to pressures, generally subtle, from community opinion leaders. It has been shown that readers of provincial newspapers, quite apart from their influence on the nature and level of news and feature content, are perceived as the ultimate determinants of the overall network of values and of the ideals to which provincial newspapers subscribe. Readers constitute a permanent 'pressure group' demanding reliability and accuracy, and this helps shape the ultimate content.

## Chapter 2

### The Dunns dig deeply in the years of distress:

The Dunns putting together a newspaper group

*Somewhere surely afar...  
is practised that strength  
zealous, beneficent, firm.  
-- Epitaph for Andrew Dunn,  
headstone, Maryborough cemetery.*

In 1930 the Australian press stood on the threshold of dramatic change. The Great War of 1914-18 had already changed the economic basis of newspapers so that the most fragile were suddenly confronted with the prospect of amalgamation. As the Depression dawned, chilly winds were blowing in the newspaper world, winds that would leave behind fewer mastheads as well as fewer owners. Some chains of small newspapers were developed – for example, by P.J. Leahy and George Groom – but in the world of the provincial dailies, the Dunns developed the only chain of Queensland papers. This chapter sets the scene for the period under review in this thesis, 1930-1989. It presents the competitive context for Australian newspapers in the 1920s and 1930s so that the emergence of the Dunn family's newspaper group be seen in comparative terms. It provides a narrative account of the Dunn family's entry into newspapers and its development of the first chain of provincial daily newspapers in Queensland. Andrew Dunn (1854-1934) drew inspiration from the family newspaper businesses developed by the Grooms in Toowoomba, the Morgans in Warwick and the Buzacotts in Rockhampton, Maryborough, Clermont and Brisbane. It shows how the Dunns saw depressed times as windows of opportunity. The Dunns will be placed, in Chapter 3, within the context of national and international newspaper dynasties.

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After a 'year of distress' in the United States newspaper industry in 1991, a Boston editor observed that sturdy institutions often did their most creative work in bad times.<sup>1</sup> The Dunns, who began controlling newspapers in Queensland precisely a century earlier, demonstrated their sturdiness through several periods of 'distress'. Depressed economic times seemed to bring out the best in them, for, as a New Zealand newspaper publisher has said: 'It's amazing how adversity concentrates the mind.'<sup>2</sup> Through its patriarch, Andrew Dunn (1854-1934), the Dunn family laid the foundation for its newspaper empire in the depression in Queensland in the early 1890s. During the depressed times of World War I, the family made an important expansionary move into Warwick, and by the end of the war it had formulated a game plan for expansion. It concluded that the way to survive and expand was to merge competing dailies in the provincial cities close to Brisbane. Then came the 'monster depression' of the late twenties and early thirties, and still the Dunns demonstrated their aptitude for survival and even expansion during such times. They bought the *Evening News*, Rockhampton, at the beginning of the Depression, closed the *Allora Guardian* during it, and sold the *Warwick Daily News* at the end of it.

In 1930, with the nation in the midst of what became known as the Great Depression, the Australian press stood on the threshold of even greater change than it had experienced in the period since the Great War of 1914-18. Amalgamation had become the new prospect - in some cases, the new reality - confronting newspapers, especially those with more fragile economic bases. The war had both radically changed the economic basis of newspapers and made a major impact on journalistic techniques. Supplies of newsprint fell while prices rose sharply: from eleven pounds ten shillings a ton in

1. Thomas Winship, cited by J.M. Robson, address to Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. seminar, Brisbane, 20 November 1993.

2. Robson, R.D.A. address, 20 November 1993.

July 1914 to eighty pounds twelve shillings and ninepence a ton in July 1921. Cable charges jumped by about 600 per cent. While actual sales of papers increased, advertising revenue tended to fall.<sup>1</sup> During the war, both the volume of news and the hunger for detailed news from the front grew. Because the competition to be first in publishing the news increased, many messages which would ordinarily have been sent at standard rates were now sent at urgent rates. One result was a terser journalism. Proprietors, faced with rising costs and increased sales, cut the size of newspapers. Terseness became a necessity, not an experiment in clarity. What Sir Keith Murdoch told his staff in an office memorandum a little later was already becoming the order of the day: 'Always the need will be for condensation - all the news pointed, clear, terse - never an unnecessary word.'<sup>2</sup>

Just as economics spelt terseness in editorial copy, so it spelt amalgamation for country papers hanging by a thread. In the decade from 1 January 1920 the number of Queensland provincial newspapers slumped from 101 to seventy-seven. There were twenty-eight per cent fewer weeklies - forty-eight instead of sixty-seven - and even the number of dailies dropped from sixteen to fourteen. In Charters Towers the *Northern Miner* absorbed the *Evening Telegraph* in 1921; in Toowoomba, the Dunn family merged the *Chronicle* and *Darling Downs Gazette* from 2 October 1922; in Bundaberg, the *Mail* and the *Daily News* merged in 1925 less than four months after the death of the *News's* managing editor Steve Walker; and in Rockhampton the Dunns contrived economies of scale by buying out the *Evening News* and continuing to publish it with the *Morning Bulletin*. All this followed hard on the heels of the immediate post-war daily newspaper mergers: in 1918 at Mackay, with the *Daily Mercury* absorbing the *Standard* (partly

1. Henry Mayer, *The Press in Australia*, p. 28; the price of newsprint did drop to twenty-seven pounds a ton in 1922, viz Gavin Souter, *Company of Herald*s, pp. 124-125.

2. Mayer, pp. 28-29.

precipitated by a fire at the *Standard*), and in 1919 at both Warwick and Maryborough. At Warwick, the Dunns, who had published the tri-weekly *Argus* for five years, merged with the Irwins' tri-weekly *Examiner & Times* to produce the *Warwick Daily News*; and at Maryborough, the Dunns' *Chronicle* absorbed the *Wide Bay and Burnett News*.<sup>1</sup>

In Queensland, the number of country papers reached its peak in 1920, with the 101 publications mentioned above. In 1930 there were seventy-seven (including fourteen dailies), and in 1990, eighty-six (fourteen dailies – not all the same ones as in 1930 – viz. Appendix 3).<sup>2</sup> In New South Wales, the number of country newspapers appears to have reached a maximum about 1913 when there were 249. In 1920 (excluding Newcastle) 234 country newspapers were being published in NSW. From the 1920s their number fell, as is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

**Country newspapers published  
in New South Wales, 1922-1947**

Year	Number of times published each week					TOTAL
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(6)	
1922	133	69	6	-	17	225
1935	117	49	10	1	16	193
1947	97	49	7	1	17	171 <sup>3</sup>

Many of the fifty-six weekly and bi-weekly titles that were lost in those twenty-five years became incorporated in rival publications, such as those owned by Ernest Christian Sommerlad (viz. Appendix 2) throughout the New England region.

1. Kirkpatrick. *Sworn*. p. 212
2. Kirkpatrick. *Sworn*. pp. 328-330.
3. R.B. Walker, Vol. 2, p. 166; Sommerlad, *Mightier Than the Sword*, p. 109.

He initiated the following mergers over six years as the former *Tamworth Daily Observer*, retitled as the *Northern Daily Leader*, began to make a massive regional impact:

1924: Glen Innes (*Examiner* swallowed *Guardian*)

1927: Inverell (*Times* swallowed *Argus*)

1929: Armidale (*Express* swallowed *Chronicle*)<sup>1</sup>

The NSW Country Press Association favoured such mergers and in the ten years before 1932 they took place in twenty-one towns. Other papers closed without being merged, especially in the Depression and during World War II.<sup>2</sup>

The decline of the weeklies was partly attributable to the rise of the regional dailies. As farmers came to own cars, they did their buying in the big towns, bypassing the smaller centres. The modern Primary Circulation Area, to use the jargon of newspaper managers, as explained in Chapter 7, was beginning to take shape. Thus, the shopkeepers in the smaller towns had to close their doors and their advertising was lost to the small local weekly; on the other hand, reliable motor transport was able to deliver regional dailies such as Toowoomba's *Chronicle*, Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin*, Grafton's *Daily Examiner* and Lismore's *Northern Star* over a wide area.<sup>3</sup>

Of the 486 newspapers published in Australia outside capital cities in 1950, thirty-seven were dailies, 338 weeklies, and the remaining 111 appeared mostly on two or three days in each week. Four hundred of these papers were the only publications in their towns, indicating the extent to which consolidations

1. Kirkpatrick in *Australian Dictionary of Biography* [ADB], Vol. 12, p. 16.

2. Walker, Vol. 2, pp. 166-167.

3. R.B. Walker, Vol. 2, p. 167; minutes books of the Toowoomba Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. and the Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd.

had taken place. In Britain, the story was similar. The pattern of closure and the diminishing number of competitive situations in the provincial press were assessed as an unhealthy trend by Francis Williams. Of the period from 1918 to 1957, Williams wrote:

In scores of towns and cities where once the battle for freedom of news and opinion found its daily reflection in the challenge and counter-challenge of competing morning and evening newspapers with deep roots in local interests and loyalties, the position has so altered that in fifty-six of the sixty-six cities which are still capable of sustaining any sort of daily newspaper press those who wish to read a paper must content themselves with what is offered by one evening paper only.<sup>1</sup>

In the newspaper world, the mergers and takeovers which took place were a response partly to these tighter economic conditions, partly to the greater intrusion felt in provincial Queensland from the metropolitan press. Speedier rail services were bringing the Brisbane papers, such as the *Courier* (established 1846), the *Telegraph* (1872), the *Daily Mail* (1903), and the Labor-inspired *Daily Standard* (1912), to the provinces quickly enough for some readers to regard them as up-to-date purveyors of news. The provincial papers presented a united front, at least in the battle for advertising revenue in Brisbane and other capitals, through the Queensland Country Press Association (viz. Appendix 4). The struggle for survival made some papers more susceptible to takeover and – aside from the Dunn family chain of dailies at Maryborough, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Warwick – some chains of non-daily papers emerged. Examples were those controlled by Patrick James Leahy (1860-1927), in towns such as Longreach, Beaudesert, Cunnamulla, Crows Nest, Mitchell, Pittsworth, Esk, Clifton and Charleville; and George Groom (1900-1984), a son of the

1. Williams, *Dangerous Estate*, pp. 11-12:



*Toowoomba Chronicle* Grooms, in towns such as Innisfail, Atherton and Cairns (viz. Appendix 2).<sup>1</sup> The Dunn family, however, was unique in Queensland in controlling a chain of provincial daily newspapers.

The Great Depression brought political turbulence, with changes in 1929 both federally and in Queensland to what had previously been stable governments. Federally, the electorate in October 1929 tipped out the conservatives led by S.M. Bruce and elected J.H. Scullin's Labor team to power.<sup>2</sup> Five months earlier, in Queensland, in the tightening economic circumstances, the people had ousted Labor after fourteen years, only to return a Labor Government three years later when A.E. Moore's National-Country Party team appeared unable to handle the deepening unemployment crisis. By 1930 development and prosperity had ended in Queensland. Unemployment was rising, taxes were increasing, wages were falling and the government kept chalking up deficits. In 1931 unemployment stood at about thirty per cent of the workforce (on corrected figures). Queensland was suffering less than other States: the Australian average of unemployment in the workforce was about thirty-eight per cent (on corrected figures) - although even these corrected figures were conservative.<sup>3</sup> This disparity is explained by the rural emphasis that existed in Queensland and the state's slowness to industrialise.<sup>4</sup> In the newspaper industry, the Dunns fended off the worst effects by tight economic management and by being ready to see depressed times as windows of opportunity for expansion, merger or closure, as well as introducing new

1. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 212, 227, 300; D.B. Waterson, *Biographical Register of the Queensland Parliament 1860-1929* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1972), p. 106.

2. C.M.H. Clark, *A History of Australia, Vol VI* (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 1987), pp. 308-309; Douglas Copland, *Australia in the World Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), pp. 29-30.

3. W. Ross Johnston, *The Call of the Land* (Milton, Queensland: The Jacaranda Press, 1982), p. 166.

4. Johnston, p. 167.

technology in news-gathering, such as the dictaphone. The *Toowoomba Chronicle* began using a dictaphone to receive state news from the Queensland Country Press news agency as early as 1926.<sup>1</sup> The Rockhampton Dunns introduced a dictaphone to their newsroom in 1930, but found an ediphone (a slight variation) cut costs.<sup>2</sup> A check in mid-1933 showed that slightly more than 150 words a minute were received by dictaphone. Maryborough followed Toowoomba and Rockhampton into dictaphone use and each of the Dunn newspapers used it till 1947-48.<sup>3</sup>

Newspaper competition was dwindling. Brisbane newspaper readers in the early 1930s were about to lose two of their four dailies. The *Daily Mail* merged with the *Brisbane Courier* on 28 August 1933 to become *The Courier-Mail* and the *Daily Standard* closed on 7 July 1936, leaving the *Telegraph* the only rival for *The Courier-Mail*.<sup>4</sup> In provincial Queensland, competition was still present in Townsville, with the *Daily Bulletin* and *Evening Star*; in Cairns, with the *Post* and the *Daily Times*; and in Bundaberg, with the long-established *Daily News-Mail* and the newcomer, the *Daily Times*, at one another's throats. At Rockhampton, two dailies were published but both by the Dunn family, which took over the *Evening News* in June 1929. When the Dunns bought the *News* from the Purcell family, they already owned the oldest Rockhampton paper, the *Morning Bulletin*, as well as the *Chronicles* in Maryborough and Toowoomba and the *Daily News* in Warwick. Andrew Dunn, the man behind the first chain of major provincial newspapers in Queensland, the patriarch of a newspaper dynasty which would span nearly a century, was a Scot who caught a vision and pursued it.<sup>5</sup>

1. Bert Pottinger, typescript notes prepared for author, 9 April 1980.

2. Minutes of the Morning Bulletin Ltd., 19 August 1929 and 28 August 1930.

3. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 6 September 1947 and 30 October 1948.

4. Mayer, p. 31.

5. Kirkpatrick. *Sworn*, p. 172; pp. 236-241.

While explicit news of the impact of the Depression was reported in the editorial columns of Queensland country newspapers, implicit news of its impact was borne just as effectively in their advertising columns. The absence of up to one-third of the usual volume of advertising told the story as clearly as banner headlines could have. Members of the Queensland Country Press Association were told at their annual meeting in 1930 the first substantial slump in advertising had come suddenly and somewhat unexpectedly early in the second quarter of the financial year and had continued with increasing momentum to the close of the period. Advertising revenue for individual papers fell by from ten to thirty per cent and, overall, there had been a drop in receipts from this, the main source of newspaper income, of from 80,000 pounds to 100,000 pounds a year spread over the country newspapers of the State.<sup>1</sup>

The situation worsened. At the *Maryborough Chronicle*, for instance, advertising revenue in the first three months of 1931 was down on the corresponding period in 1930: January was down 364 pounds, February 335 pounds, and March 261 pounds – a total of nearly one thousand pounds. At a special meeting on 22 September 1930, directors were told of a 'serious falling off in advertising revenue' and increases in tax and the cost of production. The directors decided to increase the cover price of the *Maryborough Chronicle* from one penny to a penny half-penny from 29 September 1930.<sup>2</sup> Through all of this, the Dunn family newspapers continued profitably, with directors and managers keeping a tight rein on expenditure.

1. Minutes of Queensland Country Press Association, 12 August 1930 (University of Queensland. Fryer Library, UQFL 187/18).

2. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co. Ltd., 22 September 1930; *Maryborough Chronicle* 29 September 1930.

In 1928, the Country Press Association's business arm, the Queensland Country Press Ltd., had been warned at its annual meeting that things were grim and could become grimmer. James Tolmie (1862-1939), former Member of the Legislative Assembly, former co-proprietor of the *Darling Downs Gazette* and then the leader writer for the *Toowoomba Chronicle*, told members it had been a difficult year in trade and commercial circles, but things could worsen. A year later, Tolmie was still not sure whether they had 'totally reached bedrock'.<sup>1</sup> At the 1930 meeting, chairman John Henry Kessell, said the balance sheet was not a 'cheerful document'. Sidney Barton, managing director and editor of the *Bundaberg Daily News-Mail*, said all shareholders were 'seized with the seriousness' of the company's position.<sup>2</sup>

Virtually on the eve of 1930 the directors of the Morning Bulletin Ltd. met at Andrew Dunn's Hervey Bay holiday home, 'Sorrento', Pialba, for the company's annual general meeting. It was Boxing Day, 1929. Present were Andrew Dunn sen. (chairman), his son Andrew, and Andrew sen.'s wife Jane, their married daughter, Flora Armitage, their son Robert and their single daughter, Ruth, and Jane's brother, Len Cran (general manager of the company). The year could have produced magnificent results or it could have been disastrous, but the minutes convey neither optimism nor pessimism, not even a 'satisfactory'. And the only figure mentioned is the twenty-five pounds bonus voted for auditors Evans and Hearn 'for extra work during the year'.<sup>3</sup>

1. Minutes of Queensland Country Press Ltd., 7 August 1928 and 13 August 1929 (University of Queensland. Fryer Library: UQFL 187/24).

2. Minutes of Queensland Country Press Ltd., 12 August 1930; viz. Appendix 2 for biographical entries on Tolmie and Barton.

3. Minutes of The Morning Bulletin Ltd., 26 December 1929.

Annual meeting out of the way, the directors began the ordinary meeting within the hour, confronted by what would be one of many price increases for basic services. They lodged a vain protest against the Postmaster-General's Department's intention to increase telephone charges by forty-four per cent from 16 January 1930. In 1930, the *Morning Bulletin* directors demonstrated their caution and their eagerness to be both penny wise and pound wise. They hired a car for their photographer on a one-month trial, found it 'a very expensive business', returned it and bought a Morris Minor for 213 pounds. In May 1930, the Rockhampton directors declared a dividend of 6006 pounds out of the 1930-31 profits. They decided to increase the cover price of the *Evening News* from a penny to a penny half-penny as from 29 September since the *Maryborough Chronicle* was doing likewise.<sup>1</sup> The Depression was starting to bite in the provincial newspaper world and it is against this backdrop that this chapter now presents a narrative account of the Dunn family's entry into newspapers and its development of the first chain of provincial dailies in Queensland.

At the beginning of 1930; the proprietor of the five daily newspapers in Rockhampton, Maryborough, Toowoomba and Warwick was Andrew Dunn, who, when he arrived in Queensland in 1880, was as unlikely a newspaper proprietor as any Scottish emigrant in the nineteenth century. This man whose vision it became to establish the first chain of major provincial newspapers in Queensland, the man who became the patriarch of a newspaper dynasty which stretched nigh on a century, did not

1. Minutes of The Morning Bulletin Ltd., 28 March, 14 May, 3 June and 22 September 1930.

fit the stereotype of the pioneer provincial pressman. Dunn knew neither the grim existence of an apprentice printer, nor the financial hardships of establishing a newspaper in a tiny country town. He had tried his hands at a wide range of jobs – from seaman, clerk and grocer to tinsmith and plumber – before he demonstrated his skill with figures as business manager of the *Maryborough Chronicle*.<sup>1</sup> Dunn's lifespan (1854-1934) covered much the same period as that of Adolph Ochs (1858-1935), who rescued the *New York Times* from oblivion when he made a great leap forward from the *Chattanooga Times* in 1896. Ochs, a Jew, possibly even more conservative than Dunn, a Scot, was a newsboy at the *Knoxville Chronicle* at eleven, but left to earn a bit more in other odd jobs, including working in his uncle's grocery in Providence, Rhode Island, while attending business school at night. Both Dunn and Ochs took the lessons of the grocery – supplying the product the consumer wanted – into newspapers and applied it.<sup>2</sup>

At Maryborough, Dunn laid the foundations for a chain of newspapers which would encompass, in succession, publications in Rockhampton, Warwick and Toowoomba, and, later, Bundaberg and Nambour. By the mid-1980s the Dunn family was a substantial shareholder in Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd., a holding company which owned or controlled nine regional dailies, including the State's newest, the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, Maroochydore (viz. Appendix 3). The circulation of the brash upstart on the Sunshine Coast swiftly overtook the contemporary circulation of Andrew Dunn's first newspaper, the *Maryborough Chronicle*, a daily since 15 May 1882.<sup>3</sup>

1. Rod Kirkpatrick in *ADB*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-372.

2. Talese, p. 84.

3. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn to No Master*, p. 236; Audit Bureau of Circulation figures for early 1980s.



Andrew Dunn (1854-1934), the patriarch of a Queensland provincial newspaper dynasty that endured from 1891 until 1988.



GREENBERG



J. PATON.

PERMANENT PHOTOGRAPH.

Andrew Dunn's mother, Ann, and his fifth son, Lorne, at Greenock, Scotland, in late 1889 or early 1890. Lorne died in Greenock on 4 October 1890, aged eighteen months.

-- Photo supplied by Jessie B. Kirk, of Greenock.

Dunn was born at Greenock, a Scottish ship-building and fishing centre, about thirty kilometres from Glasgow, on 24 May 1854, the first of seven children of Andrew Dunn, grocer, and his wife Ann, nee Anderson.<sup>1</sup> The seven Dunn children had parents who knew how to turn a profit. The father's grocery store flourished for some years before he went off to fight in the American Civil War. When the father died in 1894, the mother kept herself by 'doing jerseys'. Greenock, which is proud today of possessing the oldest active ship-building yard in the world, had ships coming and going all the time and the crews needed woollen jerseys.

The shipping companies sent her bales of Navy blue jerseys and she employed women to embroider (by hand, of course) the name of the ship across the front. She paid the women a halfpenny per letter and she was paid by the companies one penny per letter. This kept her in reasonable comfort.

The youngest of the seven children, Hugh, born twenty-one years after Andrew, qualified as a chartered accountant and went to London where he became the principal partner in a large firm of city accountants, Dunn, Wylie & Co.<sup>2</sup>

Andrew Dunn, after attending Mearns Street School, Greenock, went to sea, then became a clerk in a tea merchant's office in Calcutta before returning to Scotland to serve as a cadet draughtsman in an architect's office. He was a grocer in his father's store in Mearns Street, Greenock, when he married Katharine Macintyre, an ambitious teacher from around the corner in Regent Street, on 4 November 1879.<sup>3</sup> They were married in the groom's parents' home 'after banns according to the forms of the Church of Scotland'.<sup>4</sup> Kate had been head mistress

1. Birth certificate of Andrew Dunn, Greenock, Scotland.

2. Greenock tourist brochure; Jessie B. Kirk, letter to author, 8 February 1994; newspaper catalogue cards (held by Watt Monument Library, Greenock).

3. Jessie B. Kirk, letter to author, 8 February 1994; Rod Kirkpatrick in *MSA*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-3/2; Greenock street map.

4. Marriage certificate of Andrew Dunn and Katharine Macintyre, Greenock, Scotland.



of St. Nicholas' Infants School, Whitehaven, Cumberland, in 1873, and then head mistress of the infants department of the St. Andrew's Square School, Greenock, from 1875-79. Her certificates and testimonials (1874-79) from clergymen, the masters of her Teachers College, the head master of St. Andrew's School and the members of the school board impressed the Queensland Department of Public Instruction sufficiently for it to offer her a position as head mistress of the Middle State Girls and Infants School, Toowoomba. On the strength of this, Andrew and Kate decided to emigrate to Queensland. They arrived in Queensland on 22 February 1880 and Kate, in the late stages of pregnancy, began teaching duties on 1 March.<sup>1</sup> The Dunns' first son, Andrew, was born in Toowoomba on 7 May. With no apparent interruption to Kate's teaching career, two more sons followed quickly: James Macintyre in 1881, and William Herbert Alan in 1883. Kate became head mistress of Toowoomba's Girls South State School in 1883, and in 1885 the Dunns made another move determined by Kate's career path, shifting to Maryborough so she could take charge of the Central Girls School. Two sons were born in Maryborough: Hugh Hector Harold in 1888 and Lorne Islay Macintyre in 1889. On 5 July 1889, with her youngest only three months old, Kate died of 'mennigeal congestion' (sic), or meningitis, from which she had suffered for fourteen days.<sup>2</sup>

For the Dunn family, trauma struck again swiftly: the ten-roomed house they rented in Tooley Street, Maryborough, was burned to the ground sixteen days after Kate's death.

It appears the fire was caused through the bursting of a kerosene lamp in the sitting room, and the spilled oil set the hangings and woodwork in flames in a very short time. Mr Dunn was just outside the house at the time, but could do nothing to extinguish the fire. The children were rescued and placed in a neighbour's house, and some articles of furniture got out.<sup>3</sup>

1. Ledger of female teachers, Department of Public Instruction, Queensland, QSA, Vol. III, p. 81.

2. Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Queensland; Wide Bay News, 6 July 1889, p. 2; Maryborough Chronicle, 6 July 1889; death certificate of Katharine Dunn; annual reports of the Department of Public Instruction, Queensland, 1881-1890.

3. Wide Bay News, 23 July 1889, p. 2.

In 1887, Andrew Dunn, who had been working as a builder and plumber, had been offered, by chance, an appointment as business manager of the daily *Maryborough Chronicle* and *The Colonist*, its weekly offshoot. This was the step which not only signalled Andrew's emergence from the shadow cast by Kate's professional success, but also set him on the path of a distinguished career as a newspaper manager and, later, proprietor.

The Maryborough newspaper business became a limited liability company in January 1888. At the company's adjourned half-yearly meeting on 9 August 1888, the directors decided to deduct a bonus of ten pounds per shareholder for 'Mr A. Dunn, business manager of the company, for his sedulous attention to its affairs'. On 8 January 1889 Dunn bought twenty-four shares at a fraction more than forty-two pounds seventeen shillings each and became a director.<sup>1</sup> How bright the horizon must have looked for Andrew Dunn, with wife Kate expecting, within weeks, their fifth child. But he was to face within four months the joy of birth, the grief of his wife's death, the trauma of possessions lost in a fire. And months later Andrew 'found a young woman who was desperate to get back to Scotland and he paid her fare in return for her looking after the children' on the voyage from Queensland to Scotland. In Greenock, their paternal grandmother, Ann Dunn (1833-1914), cared for them, for probably two to three years.<sup>2</sup> Andrew remained in Maryborough, continuing to attend, sedulously, to the affairs of the Maryborough Newspaper Company and to give not a little attention to the matter of building up his own interest in the company.<sup>3</sup>

1. Minutes of the Maryborough Newspaper Co. Ltd., 9 August 1888 and 8 January 1889.

2. Jessie B. Kirk, letters to author, 8 February and 7 March 1994; 1891 Scottish Census records (held by Watt Monument Library, Greenock).

3. Minutes of the Maryborough Newspaper Co. Ltd., 19 July 1889, 10 January and 18 July 1890, and 23 January and 24 July 1891.

On the eve of the 1890s personal tragedy again struck Andrew Dunn. Lorne Islay, the son born only three months before Kate's death, died at his father's birthplace, Greenock, on 4 October 1890. Lorne was just eighteen months old (viz. Page 54 for picture of Lorne and his grandmother). For Andrew, the grief of losing the child born so short a time before the death of his wife must have been accentuated by his decision to allow the boys to be taken to Scotland and by his very distance from them. He inserted no notice of Lorne's death in the Maryborough newspapers, and no news item appeared. His was a private grief, though no doubt shared with Scottish friends in Maryborough.<sup>1</sup>

With adversity concentrating his mind in the depressed economic times, Andrew Dunn set his sights on building a future for the surviving sons, each of whom was to play a central role in one or more of the newspapers that would become part of the family chain. In 1891 he took three important steps with long-term beneficial effects for his family. The first was to take the helm of the *Maryborough Chronicle*, the second was to marry a second time, and the third was to establish a home that would endure. By mid-1891, Dunn was chairman of directors of the Maryborough Newspaper Company Limited. His ascendancy to a majority shareholding in the Maryborough Newspaper Company Limited coincided with a general economic slump.<sup>2</sup> At the height of it, in May 1893, the Queensland National Bank closed its doors. The Government had been recording deficits since 1885 and was living on borrowed money to such an extent that it had to borrow to repay loans.<sup>3</sup>

1. Death register card (held at Watt Monument Library, Greenock, Scotland).

2. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 236-237; minutes of the Maryborough Newspaper Co. Ltd., 8 January 1889, 15 February 1889, 23 January 1891, 24 July 1891, 19 February 1892; *The Colonist*, 19 September 1891, p. 10, col. 1.

3. Johnston, p. 129.

Late nineteenth century Brisbane was very much a 'branch-office' capital and Queensland a haven for southern business interests.<sup>1</sup> Contributing to the crisis were drought in the west and serious floods in the south-east in 1890 and 1893, and shearers' strikes in 1890, 1891 and 1894.

The Maryborough Newspaper Company's six monthly profits dropped from 476 pounds for the second half of 1889 to fifty-four pounds for the second half of 1891. Dunn replaced Reginald Arthur St. Quintin Hill as chairman of directors. Hill had been editor and managing director of the *Chronicle* for much of his seven years in Maryborough. A 'vigorous and dominant personality', Hill was best known to the public for his hard-hitting weekly column under the byline of 'Constable X'.<sup>2</sup> Dunn appointed as the new editor George Illidge Roberts, the son of a former proprietor, W.S. Roberts.

On the same day as Hill severed his connection with the company, he put up for sale his grand house, 'Stanway', at the corner of Kent and Cheapside Streets. The home was offered at auction on 27 October 1891, a fortnight after a banquet at the Royal Hotel to farewell Hill, but it was passed in and, shortly afterwards, Andrew Dunn and his new bride, the former Jane Cran – whom he married on 18 November 1891 – moved in.<sup>3</sup> Dunn's new partner, sixteen years younger than he, was another teacher and one also of Scottish parentage. On 5 October 1892, their first child, Robert Cran Dunn, was born at 'Stanway'. The Dunns rented the house initially, for Dunn ownership of it was not registered until August 1900, and then in the name of Jane Dunn.<sup>4</sup>

1. Ross Fitzgerald, *From the Dreaming to 1915: A History of Queensland* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1982), p. 315.

2. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 14 September 1891, p. 4.

3. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 27 October and 3 December 1891, p. 4; marriage certificate of Andrew Dunn and Jane Cran; W.G. Rendall, letter to author, 21 December 1992.

4. Registrar of Titles, Queensland, Vol. 694, Folio 146, Plan No. 3441, and Vol. 696, Folio 134, Plan No. 3441.

'Stanway' would become the central meeting point for the extended Dunn family over the years, a place of family celebrations, such as marriages and baptisms, a place of business discussions, but also a place of sadness, such as funerals, including that of son, James, in 1925 and Jane herself in 1930. It was regarded as 'one of the most comfortable and commodious residences in Maryborough'. Built upon two allotments, 'Stanway' contained a drawing room, front and back bedrooms, dining room, two verandah rooms, pantry, kitchen, bathroom, storeroom, hall, passage, and a verandah nine feet wide on three sides. Other features were: stabling, and a high paling fence that made it 'thoroughly private'.<sup>1</sup> It was a very big, isolated house, according to Ailsa Dunn who lived in it soon after marrying Alex Dunn. They lived there while he was a sub-editor at the *Maryborough Chronicle* and Andrew and Jane Dunn were overseas. 'I used to be petrified when Alex was subbing at night,' Ailsa said. The home had a tennis court on one side, and the railway line nearby.<sup>2</sup> When Ruth Anderson Dunn married Adrian Akhurst Anderson at 'Stanway' on 8 June 1931, the drawing room was decorated with flowers and ferns, blue water lilies and pink gladioli entering largely into the colour scheme. The wedding breakfast was held in the dining room, which had been 'tastefully decorated with ferns, trails of virginia creeper and dahlias'. Adrian Anderson recalled 'Stanway' as 'just a nice, large family home' with a tennis court that he never knew to be used.<sup>3</sup>

1. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 12 September 1891.

2. Ailsa Dunn, interview with author, Rockhampton, 19 May 1979.

3. Adrian Anderson, telephone interview with author, 22 April 1992; *Maryborough Chronicle*, 8 June 1931.



ABOVE: Jane Dunn (1871-1930),  
second wife of Andrew Dunn.



LEFT: W.H.A. 'Herbie' Dunn  
(1883-1961), third son of Andrew  
and Kate Dunn.

BELOW: H.H.H. 'Hector' Dunn  
(1888-1971), fourth son of Andrew  
and Kate Dunn.



Initially Jane Dunn set out to make 'Stanway' home for the four sons by the first marriage and her own children – she was to have two sons and two daughters. What is not known is how soon after her marriage, at the age of twenty, she was confronted with the four sons of Andrew's first marriage. It appears, though, that it was probably after about twelve months – that is, about the end of 1892.<sup>1</sup> Across the families, there seems to have been nothing but praise for Jane Dunn, as wife, mother and helpmate.<sup>2</sup>

Soon after the Dunn-Cran marriage, the Maryborough Newspaper Company needed all the Scottish thrift it could obtain as the depression of the early 1890s took hold. The company recorded losses of twenty-nine pounds and twenty-four pounds for the two halves of 1892 and it was not until the final half of 1898, when a profit of 108 pounds was recorded, that Dunn could strike an optimistic note in reporting to his directors: 'There is reason to hope that the next half year will be some what (sic) better.'<sup>3</sup> Jane was regarded as an astute adviser to her husband in his business affairs – she helped in the front office at the newspaper business – as well as being able to keep to a tight budget on the home front.<sup>4</sup> The Dunns came through the depressed period strongly.

At the turn of the century, as the *Maryborough Chronicle* lifted itself out of the economic mire, Dunn raised his sights to the civic sphere and served Maryborough as its mayor in

1. Jessie B. Kirk, letters to author, 8 February and 7 March 1994; Elisabeth Leckie, letters to author, 4 and 28 March 1994.

2. Ailsa Lavinia Dunn, Hector Lockhart Dunn and Bert Cran, interviews with author, respectively, 19 May 1979, Rockhampton, 24 June 1992, Bribie Island, and 20 April 1992, Maryborough.

3. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., various in 1890s.

4. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 15 August 1930.

1903 and 1914 and as an alderman from 1904 to 1913 and again in 1915. As a Liberal, he served, without significance, in the closing years of the Queensland Legislative Council, from 3 July 1914 until its abolition on 23 March 1922.<sup>1</sup> His parliamentary speeches, delivered in tones of reasonableness, covered topics from fish and oysters to opticians, from sugar co-operatives to steel works, from amendments to the Elections Act to verbiage in Bills brought before the House, from shipping to workers' compensation, from industrial arbitration to railways. If there was a recurring theme, it was the railways, especially the need to open up the North Burnett agricultural lands. He gave detailed costings of various sections of line construction and his speeches demonstrated he knew just what had been discussed at the committees examining the railway proposals.<sup>2</sup> He argued that any line to serve the Upper Burnett must go to Dalgangal and the branch lines be constructed from there outwards.<sup>3</sup> He opposed the recommendation by the Commissioner for Railways for the building of the Cannindah mine extension that would lose the Government 20,000 pounds to 25,000 pounds a year.<sup>4</sup>

In one of Dunn's early parliamentary speeches, on the Bill to consolidate in one Act the various Acts relating to newspapers and printers, he said that the public should be protected against the publication of any objectionable matter by those who owned printing presses.<sup>5</sup> In 1915 he suggested doing away with 'as much unnecessary verbiage' as possible in Bills brought before Parliament.<sup>6</sup> Speaking on the Workers' Compensation Bill, Dunn supported the principle of increasing

1. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*. p. 237.

2. *Queensland Parliamentary Debates* [QPD], 122 (1915-16), pp. 3168-3169.

3. QPD, 123 (1916-17), pp. 1353-8.

4. QPD, 128 (1917), pp. 3049-3050, 3059.

5. QPD, 117 (1914), pp. 519-520.

6. QPD, 120 (1915-16), p. 290.



the amount of compensation payable to injured workers, but argued that private insurance companies should be able to compete with the Government in providing workers' compensation insurance.<sup>1</sup> A number of his speeches reflected his concern for the ordinary person, or the 'small man'. In 1916 he argued that the proposed minimum wage should keep a man, his wife and three children in comfort, irrespective of the age of the children.<sup>2</sup> He contended that the small man should have as much opportunity as the big man to borrow from the Government Savings Banks.

At any rate, I cannot see why every man should not be encouraged to build himself a good home so long as he keeps within his means and provides sufficient security for the bank. He may contribute largely to the funds of the bank and I think he should be at liberty to borrow from it.<sup>3</sup>

In taking up the cause of the returned soldier looking for work (and not wanting to go on the land under the Soldiers Settlement scheme), Dunn was able to give several instances of the embarrassment some of these men faced - for example, in having to cadge for money - because of red tape and not knowing what their entitlements were.<sup>4</sup> In all, Dunn was a small 'l' Liberal and small beer as a politician.

One factor that inspired Dunn to lay plans for his own family's involvement in newspapers was the success of newspaper families such as the Buzacotts, the Grooms, and the Morgans (viz. Table 5, Chapter 3).<sup>5</sup> The Buzacotts were principally associated with Rockhampton, but also with Maryborough, Clermont and, in important ways, Brisbane. William Hitchcock Buzacott (1831-80) founded the *Rockhampton Bulletin* on 9 July 1861. His younger brother, Charles Hardie Buzacott (1835-1918), had already established on 21 November 1860 the *Maryborough Chronicle*. Charles was involved in establishing four other newspapers in Queensland: the *Peak*

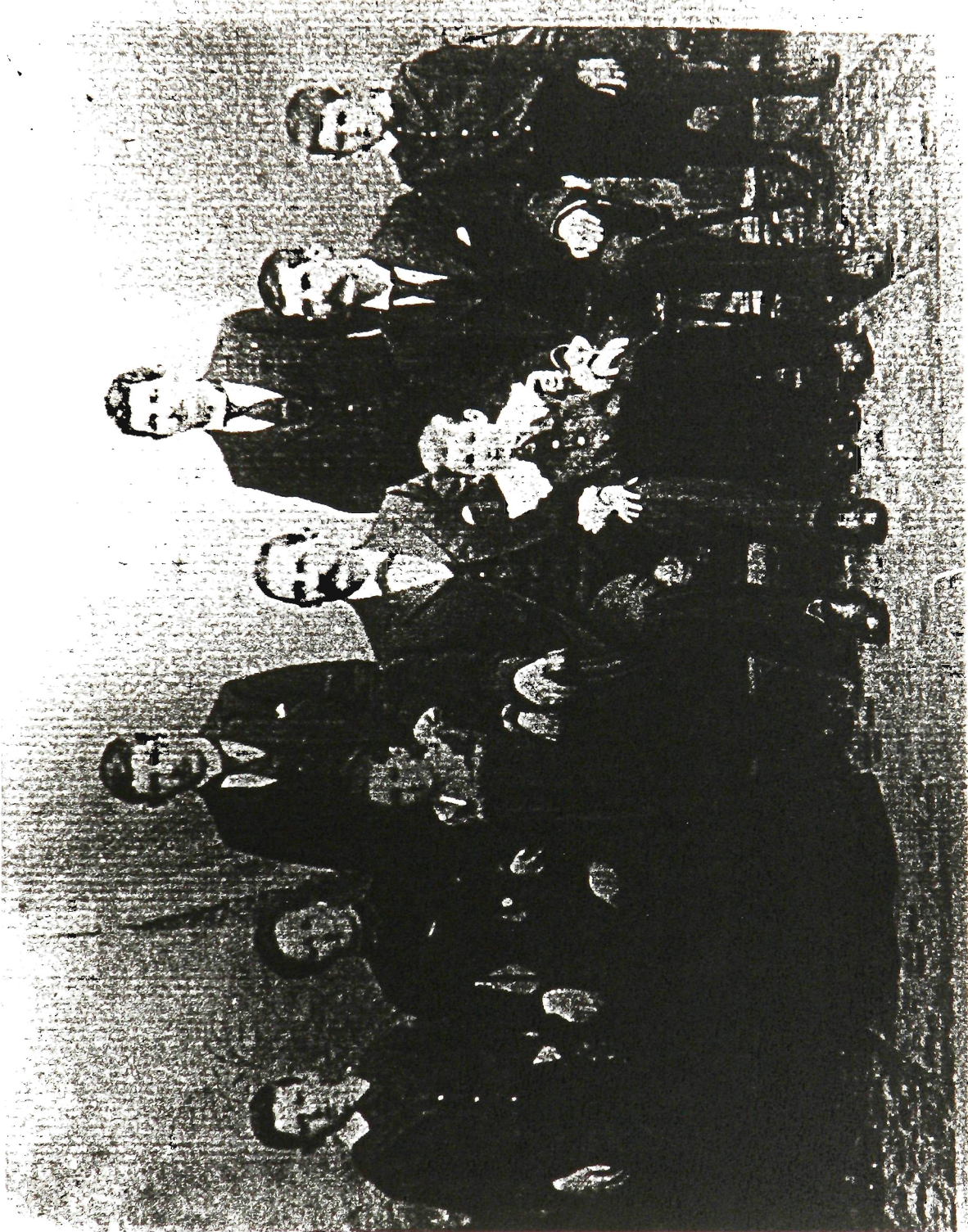
1. QPD, 120 (1915-16), pp. 982-983; also 121 (1915-16), p. 1695.

2. QPD, 121 (1915-16), p. 1810.

3. QPD, 123 (1916-17), p. 1373.

4. QPD, 128 (1917), pp. 2785-6.

5. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 8, p. 371.



The Dunn family, circa 1903. Back row: Herbie, James. Front row: Hector, Jane, Flora, Andrew sen., Alex, Andrew jun., Robert.

*Downs Telegram*, Clermont, in 1864; the *Gladstone Observer*, in 1868; *The Capricornian*, Rockhampton, in 1875; and the *Daily Mail*, Brisbane, in 1903. For the second decade of the Rockhampton *Bulletin's* existence, William and Charles swapped the editorship and proprietorship back and forth. In December 1880, six months after William's premature death, Charles bought a significant interest in the *Brisbane Courier* and played various key managerial roles over the following fourteen years. In 1883 he sold his interest in the *Morning Bulletin* to his son-in-law Stewart Williamson Hartley. In the 1920s William's only son, Walter Sewell Buzacott, became editor and managing director of Rockhampton's *Daily Record*, later the *Evening News*.<sup>1</sup>

William Henry Groom, succeeded by his son, Henry Littleton Groom, owned and managed the *Toowoomba Chronicle* for forty-six years from February 1876 to June 1922. The *Chronicle* was a useful weapon in the armoury the elder Groom used to wage his political battles as a State member for Toowoomba, a seat he held almost with break for thirty-eight years before becoming the area's first Federal representative.<sup>2</sup> At Warwick, the Toowoomba situation was almost replicated by the Morgan family which ran the *Argus* for forty-six years (1868-1914). James Morgan was mayor of Warwick when he bought the *Argus* in 1868. In 1870 Morgan was elected to the Queensland Legislative Assembly, holding the seat for eleven months. Re-elected in November 1873, he held the seat for five years till his death. Five months before his father died, Arthur, aged twenty-one, had become sole proprietor and editor of the *Argus*. He would follow his father's political lead more than successfully; he became Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (1899-1903), Premier (1903-06) and President of the Legislative Council (1906-16).<sup>3</sup>

1. McDonald, *Rockhampton*, pp. 469-472; Rod Kirkpatrick, two-part article, *Morning Bulletin*, 7 July 1980, p. 6, and 8 July 1980, p. 6.

2. Rod Kirkpatrick, 'The Chronicle: groomed to survive' in *They Meant Business* (Toowoomba: Darling Downs Institute Press, 1984), pp. 55-62.

3. Kirkpatrick in *ADE*, Vol. 10, pp. 584-585.

Andrew Dunn was to have several of his sons (viz. Table 3) trained in various departments of newspaper work and arranged that others who had taken up other occupations should be available if required. In fact, all six of the Dunn boys would play important roles in one or more of the family's newspapers. And one of the daughters, Flora Margaret (Connal), would be chairman of directors of the Toowoomba Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. - albeit only a figurehead - when the *Toowoomba Chronicle* celebrated its centenary in July 1961.<sup>1</sup>

As the Dunns began to make their presence felt in the newspaper world, the status of country editors was, with some exceptions, very low. The bush journalist was 'a frowzy, insanitary fragment, for the most part, of uninviting exterior and cheap morals, and with a yearning soul for spirituous and fermented liquors'.<sup>2</sup> Spencer Browne recalled that when he was editing the *Observer* in Brisbane, the owners regarded him 'as a kind of retainer or hanger-on'.<sup>3</sup> In Melbourne, as late as 1891, a reporter normally worked for almost fifteen hours a day and received two pounds ten shillings a week. Reviewing the pioneering North Queensland newspapers, James Manion observed that there was no doubt that the literary quality of many papers was 'minimal' and lack of experienced staff, as well as pressures for news from the rest of the world, often meant that standards had to be sacrificed. Traditional training methods by apprenticeship went by the board as demand outstripped supply. A clerical discipline was in many cases sufficient qualification for the craft.<sup>4</sup> Charters Towers' outspoken Irish editor, Thadeus O'Kane, often railed about the deficiencies of 'printers' papers'. Once he advocated that editors should be examined and issued with a diploma. His recommendation was put forward because:

There are ticket-of-leave men now editing newspapers in Queensland. There are other fellows who have no literary qualifications whatever. They have no knowledge of the English language, not even a 'bowing acquaintance' and they disgrace the noble Guild of Literature and the press...

1. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, centenary supplement, 12 July 1961.
2. Toby Twist, 'Our Local Correspondent', *The Free Lance*, 16 July 1896, p. 14.
3. R. Spencer Browne, *A Journalist's Memories*, Brisbane, 1927, p. 67.
4. Manion, p. 15.

If the law be reformed to this extent there will be some protection against murderers of the Queen's English and the braying of jackasses.<sup>1</sup>

A combination of death, a strategically placed family member, and profitability enabled Andrew Dunn to take the crucial step needed to begin expanding his newspaper interests just as several of his sons were reaching an age where they could take senior or responsible positions. On 19 December 1910, John Blair, regarded as one of Australia's most brilliant journalists, went for a stroll down a Rockhampton street in a heatwave, suffered a heart attack and died, aged fifty-three. He had been the editor and joint proprietor of the *Morning Bulletin* since November 1896. The surviving joint proprietor, William McIlwraith, in his late seventies, was ready to sell.<sup>2</sup>

The Dunns - with first son, Andrew, a journalist on the *Morning Bulletin* for the previous six years - were ready to buy what would amount to a controlling interest. In Maryborough, the newspaper business they controlled had surpassed 1000 pounds profit for six months for the first time. The Dunns offered, the Blair estate and McIlwraith accepted. On 11 March 1911 the Dunn imprint appeared in the *Morning Bulletin* for the first time. First-son Andrew became managing editor and third-son William Herbert Allan ('Herbie') became chief of staff.<sup>3</sup> Second-son James Macintyre, who had performed brilliantly in secondary studies, was sub-editing on the *Maryborough Chronicle* after six years' teaching in Maryborough and Cairns. After serving in the 1914-18 war, Jim became business manager of the *Morning Bulletin*.<sup>4</sup>

On 31 March 1914, Andrew Dunn, mayor of Maryborough and soon-to-be Member of the Legislative Council, bought The Warwick Argus Limited, from the Morgan family. The company was chaired by Sir Arthur Morgan, President of the Legislative Council. Sir Arthur persuaded his fellow directors to sell to the Dunn family, and Herbie Dunn was transferred from Rockhampton to

1. *Northern Miner*, 31 July 1889, cited in Manion, *Paper Power*, p. 15.  
 2. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 239, 282; McDonald, *Rockhampton*, p. 476-478.  
 3. *Morning Bulletin*, 11 March 1911 (publisher's imprint), p. 12.  
 4. Minutes of the Morning Bulletin Ltd., 4 July 1919.

Warwick as managing editor.<sup>1</sup> During the war, the Dunns concluded that it was impossible to build strong, independent newspapers in towns within easy reach of the metropolitan press. So, as part of their post-war plans to build a newspaper empire, they set out on a program of amalgamation. On 1 February 1919 they merged the *Warwick Argus* with the Irwin family's *Examiner and Times*; the result was the *Warwick Daily News*, with Herbie Dunn as managing editor and chairman of directors of the new company.<sup>2</sup>

In Maryborough, after the final issue of the *Wide Bay and Burnett News* on 29 November 1919, the Dunns bought the goodwill of that paper, whose proprietors had decided the company should go into voluntary liquidation because the amount of advertising revenue in Maryborough and region was too small to share between two dailies and two weeklies. The *News* ceased publication and, in effect, merged with the *Maryborough Chronicle*.<sup>3</sup> In Toowoomba, the Dunns bought the Groom family's interest in the *Chronicle* on 27 June 1922, and merged it with the competing daily, the *Darling Downs Gazette*, on 2 October 1922.<sup>4</sup> Rockhampton was not regarded as being 'within easy reach of the metropolitan press' and so the Dunn family continued the *Morning Bulletin* and the *Evening News* as separate publications after buying the evening paper from the Purcell Trust on 12 July 1929. The economic stringencies of World War II - especially newsprint rationing - led the Dunns to close the *Evening News* on 31 July 1941.<sup>5</sup>

The Dunns' perspective on provincial newspapers extended much more broadly than Maryborough, Rockhampton or Toowoomba at any one time. From the beginning of the Queensland Country Press Association in 1907, the Dunns were there, playing key roles. Andrew Dunn served as its president from 1908 to 1910, was on its executive committee from its formation till his death in 1934, and was chairman of directors of the business operations, known then as the Queensland Country Press Ltd.,

1. Kirkpatrick in *ADB*, Vol. 10, pp. 584-585.

2. *Warwick Daily News*, 1 February 1919.

3. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 1 December 1919.

4. Kirkpatrick, in *They Meant Business*, p. 64.

5. Minutes of the Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd., 18 July 1941; *Morning Bulletin*, 1 August 1941, p. 4.

for the three years before his death. Part of the ethos he established for the family was close personal involvement in the community, as Chapter 4 will show. He served in various capacities on the Maryborough Chamber of Commerce, the Maryborough Harbour Board, the School of Arts and the Technical College. He was an elder of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Maryborough, for many years.<sup>1</sup> Four years before he died, Dunn was described by an industry publication as 'a man of simple tastes and direct methods'. He had learned above all things how 'to labour and to wait'.<sup>2</sup>

Andrew Dunn's second wife, Jane, died on 14 August 1930, while visiting family members in Toowoomba. Aged fifty-nine, she died of chronic nephritis, influenza and bronchial pneumonia. She was buried with Presbyterian rites the next day in Maryborough.<sup>3</sup> Her headstone in Maryborough Cemetery carries the epitaph:

Many daughters have done virtuously,  
but thou hast excelled them all.

-- Proverbs xxxi.29

Andrew Dunn stunned his family by marrying a third time, taking a bride more than forty years his junior. The Dunn-Foote wedding took place on 23 February 1932 at St. Mark's Church of England, Darling Point, an exclusive Sydney marriage venue. Andrew gave his age as sixty-five, although he was seventy-seven, and his bride, the former Miss Marcella Heller Foote, who had been the head of the Sydney office of the Queensland Country Press Association, said she was thirty. One of the witnesses was Albert Edgar Joseph, general manager of the Queensland Country Press Ltd. (viz. Appendix 2). Family members were not invited.<sup>4</sup> Six years earlier Dunn had told directors of the Queensland Country Press Ltd. he 'appreciated the work that Miss Foote had done [as head of the Sydney office], but he did not think she would be as capable as a capable man would be in the same position'.<sup>5</sup>

1. Kirkpatrick in *ADB*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-372; minutes of Queensland Country Press Ltd., 9 August 1930.  
 2. *Newspaper News*, 2 September 1929.  
 3. *Toowoomba Chronicle* and *Maryborough Chronicle*, 15 August 1930.  
 4. Marriage certificate of Andrew Dunn and Marcella Heller Foote.  
 5. Minutes Queensland Country Press Ltd., 21 May 1926.

Andrew Dunn departed from strict Presbyterian ethics of honesty and correctness in one other significant way while he was married to this woman more than forty years his junior. Without the knowledge of the second-generation family members – his own sons and daughters by his first two marriages – he used them as guarantors for a debt he met on his third wife's behalf (viz. Chapter 4). His family newspaper enterprise had begun keeping minutes of its meetings in 1929. Although there was a semi-autonomous board in each of the four towns where the Dunns owned newspapers, Andrew senior co-ordinated them all. Family meetings discussed capital expenditure and the appointment of editors and other senior staff.<sup>1</sup> Andrew and Marcia Dunn had no children. Andrew died in Brisbane on 29 April 1934, aged seventy-nine, and was buried in Maryborough cemetery. His estate, valued for probate at 36,286 pounds, was left to a family trust.<sup>2</sup>

At the *New York Times*, in May 1935, one month after the death of Adolph Ochs, son-in-law Arthur Hays Sulzberger, aged forty-four and with eighteen years of experience on the staff, became the publisher. On the day after his elevation, he announced in the *Times* that he would never depart from the basic principles of Ochs, but privately he told his editors that there would be some changes in the paper within a year. When Gay Talese wrote that the 'era of the patriarch was over', he could have been writing of the Dunn family newspapers in Queensland precisely twelve months before Adolph Ochs's death.<sup>3</sup> Direction of the Dunn family newspaper enterprises – principally five daily newspapers – passed from the first generation to the second, from the patriarch to the family, when Andrew Dunn sen. died. The new chairman of the newspaper boards was first son, Andrew, who had been managing director and editor of the Rockhampton company since March 1911, but the patriarchal power was diluted. The three surviving sons of the Andrew/Kate marriage, Andrew, Herbie and Hector, as managing directors, effectively ran the individual

1. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, various dates, including 30-31 May 1929.

2. Will of Andrew Dunn (Queensland State Archives: SCT/P1942; 717 of 1934); Kirkpatrick in *ADB*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-372.

3. Talese, p. 182.



newspaper enterprises: Rockhampton's two dailies and a weekly (Andrew), Maryborough's daily and weekly (Hector), Toowoomba's daily, Warwick's daily and Allora's weekly (Herbie). Four days after the Patriarch's death, the Toowoomba Newspaper Co. board met, recording 'its sense of the great loss the Company had suffered through the death of the late Chairman'.<sup>1</sup> The Maryborough board did likewise three weeks later and the Rockhampton board followed suit in June.<sup>2</sup> But the family organisation itself did not meet until seven months after the death.<sup>3</sup>

No sooner had the patriarch died than Herbie Dunn, aged fifty, was granted six months' leave of absence on full pay to investigate modern methods of news collection and distribution in Great Britain and Europe. He planned to have a report available for the August meeting of the Queensland Country Press Association.<sup>4</sup> This was part of a pattern: Herbie exhibited a deep involvement in discussions and proposals on a wide range of issues at family meetings while elder brother Andrew was chairman. Herbie contributed significantly to the progress on dictaphone and teleprinter news services. Andrew was the facilitator and negotiator and Herbie the initiator.

Second-generation control of the Dunn newspapers would span thirty-four years and include incorporation in June 1957 of A. Dunn and Company Pty. Limited and the merger in April 1968 with other newspaper interests, principally owned by the Manning and Irwin families, to form Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd., or PNQ (viz. Chapter 6). Andrew Dunn jun. was chairman of the family organisation till his death in 1956. Herbie Dunn chaired first the family organisation, from 1956, and then A. Dunn and Co., from 1957, till he resigned as chairman on 18 September 1959, less than seven months before he died. Hector Dunn took over as chairman and served until the meeting of 19 October 1962 when Alex Dunn was appointed.

1. Minutes of Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 3 May 1934; minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 28 May 1934, and of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 26 June 1934.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 25 November 1934.

3. Minutes of the Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 3 May 1934.

4. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd. and Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd.

Alex chaired the company meetings till PNQ's formation in 1968. Hector died in 1971 and Alex in 1972.<sup>1</sup>

Nine children formed the second generation of the Dunn newspaper dynasty, as is shown in Table 3. Fifth son, Lorne, died in infancy and James, intellectually brilliant and a former school-teacher, died at the age of forty-four after having served as business manager of the Morning Bulletin Ltd. for six years. Leaving aside James, who had so little chance to demonstrate his abilities, first son, Andrew, and third son, Herbie, were undoubtedly the most astute newspaper administrators, as is shown below. In Rockhampton, seventh son, Alexander Gordon, a competent but not brilliant journalist, was a quiet administrator who kept a low profile. He became managing director of the Rockhampton company upon the retirement of Andrew jun. and formally became chairman of directors when the latter died on 31 January 1956.<sup>2</sup>

At Maryborough, fourth son, Hector Dunn served as managing director without distinction. The Maryborough shares, according to Lex Dunn, were always the least in demand by members of the family.<sup>3</sup> In the same office, sixth son, Robert Cran Dunn, was in charge of the mechanical aspects of producing the *Chronicle* for thirty years. First daughter, Flora Margaret, became involved at board level in the newspapers only once her first husband, Jack Wilfred Armitage, had separated from her before their divorce. Armitage had been business manager of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* for twenty years. Flora would one day be chairman of directors of Toowoomba Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd., but she was a figurehead. Second daughter, Ruth Anderson Dunn, who married an Anderson, was less interested in newspapers than any of the Duns and lived in Adelaide from the age of thirty-seven till she died at sixty-two.

Andrew Dunn junior, as the eldest son and the heir apparent as chairman of the Dunn newspaper boards, played a significant

1. Viz. Table 3 and Appendices 1 and 2.

2. Minutes of the Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 7 February 1956.

3. Lex Dunn, interview with the author, Indooroopilly, 12 February 1992.

role in shaping the Dunn ethos. His readiness to fight community causes and to take a stand against Supreme Court incursions on the freedom of the press won him plaudits widely. As editor and managing director for forty-three years of the Dunn family's newspaper flagship, the *Morning Bulletin*, his contribution was enduring. Andrew junior began an apprenticeship in the composing room of the *Maryborough Chronicle* before the turn of the century. When a vacancy arose on the literary staff, he filled it because he had shown ability as a writer. He widened his experience by moving to Brisbane to join the staff of the new morning paper, the *Daily Mail*, established in October 1903. There, he excelled as a reporter and writer of news commentaries. In 1905 he joined the *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, and had risen to a senior post when the Dunn family bought a controlling interest in the paper in 1911. He became the editor and managing director.<sup>1</sup>

Andrew Dunn jun. believed his primary function was to produce a good newspaper. If you produced a good newspaper, you deserved some reward, he said. If you used cheap, slapdash methods, then you did not deserve to succeed. 'Reserve comment for editorials and don't blow a story up.'<sup>2</sup> Andrew, however, did not always reserve his comment for editorials. In the 1929 Federal election campaign he used the news columns to highlight what he saw as contradictory statements by Frank Forde, the Labor Member who was seeking re-election. Dunn contrasted what Forde had said in 1926 during the referendum to give the Commonwealth the power to deal completely with arbitration and what he was saying during the 1929 election and commented:

Three years ago Mr Forde saw the wages of the workers threatened if the Federal Arbitration Court were made competent to deal with industrial arbitration. Now he sees the same wages of the same workers threatened if the same court is abolished.

Dunn's name appeared at the foot of the article - in which Forde's 1926 statement was featured in bold type and with an

1. Kirkpatrick in *ADE*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-372.

2. Kirkpatrick in *ADE*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-372; Andrew Dunn, interview with author, 20 January 1977, Caloundra.

indented left margin. Later in the campaign, Dunn ran two items written in a similar vein and with the complete text set in bold type - on arbitration and the Central Queensland cotton crop.<sup>1</sup>

When Andrew Dunn jun. became editor of the *Bulletin* on 11 March 1911 he was following in the footsteps of John Blair, the man who had been described by the city's mayor as 'Rockhampton's greatest citizen'. Dunn succeeded because he did not attempt to imitate either Blair's style or interests, but developed his own characteristic method of journalism.<sup>2</sup> Dunn has been described as gentle, quiet and unassuming, and as somebody who did not seek public office. He possessed a brilliant mind and read widely on a variety of subjects.<sup>3</sup> A clear and forceful writer, with 'a scrupulous sense of fairness and tolerance', he wrote a weekly column under the pen name 'Lictor' and was a competent drama critic.

The *Morning Bulletin* and the *Capricornian* became more modern under his editorship in the sense of providing popular articles and, after a few years, several series of contributed articles by staff members using pseudonyms, or by freelance journalists such as J.G. ('Battler') Pattison and Captain A.E. Sykes writing under the initials S.E.A. In 1912 Dunn sent a reporter around the agricultural settlements in the Rockhampton district to describe the progress of closer settlement. The 'rush' for agricultural land at the time almost assumed the feverish pitch of a gold rush and so there was again a wide readership. New settlements at Ambrose and Langmorn and in the parishes of Fitzroy, Barmoya and Jardine were the subjects of early articles and these were complemented by Dunn's leading articles on current topics, such as 'Central Queensland's Sugar Lands'. The series - which suggested that 'few things could be more satisfactory to the general public than to see the eager demand for land suitable for farming and dairying' - created so much interest that it

1. *Morning Bulletin*, 4 September and October 1929.

2. McDonald, *Rockhampton*, p. 479.

3. *Morning Bulletin*, 8 July 1961; McDonald, *Rockhampton*, p. 479.

was followed by more detailed articles giving the names of farms and their occupants and some of their experiences in becoming established.<sup>1</sup>

In 1931 Dunn demonstrated his readiness to take a stand on issues such as those relating to freedom of the press. He took on a Supreme Court judge in an editorial, arguing on the basis of the innocent-until-proved-guilty presumption of law. He criticised Justice Brennan's conduct of the trial of Ernest Alfred Alden, who was acquitted by a jury after being tried on a charge of cattle-stealing. Justice Brennan permitted Alden's cross-examination in relation to a previous charge of cattle-stealing, of which he had also been acquitted. Dunn commented that Justice Brennan had not only allowed the question, but in discharging the prisoner after Alden had again been found not guilty, adduced the fact that he had been twice acquitted as a reason for being more careful in the future.

Inferentially, if the man should happen to be indicted again on a similar charge, the fact that he has been twice prosecuted unsuccessfully may be cited to his detriment. But if we assume that instead he some day becomes a candidate for Parliament, the Court will rightly have little sympathy for any newspaper or political opponent who seeks to disparage him by quoting the fact that he has twice stood his trial, and its disapproval may find expression in heavy damages.<sup>2</sup>

That day Andrew Dunn appeared before the Central Judge, Justice Brennan, in response to a personal invitation, at a special sitting of the Central Court, to hear the observations of the court on his leading article. Justice Brennan said:

I must in the interests of the Court protect this Court by seeing that the *Bulletin* is more careful in publishing statements which are not correct and are absolutely incorrect and deliberately and dishonestly done for the purpose of injuring this Court. The very tone of the article shows malice and prejudice.<sup>3</sup>

The next day the *Bulletin* published in its news columns the full text of Justice Brennan's observations and, in its editorial column, Dunn commented:

1. *Morning Bulletin*, 2, 3, 6, 17, 18, 20 and 25 July 1912 (as examples); McDonald, *Rockhampton*, pp. 479, 484.

2. *Morning Bulletin*, 11 June 1931; Sir Gerard Brennan, a son of Justice Brennan, sits on the High Court bench in 1994.

3. *The Queensland Law Reporter*, 29 January 1932, pp. 1-17.

We do not yield place to Mr Justice Brennan, or anyone else, in our jealous regard for the prestige of the Central Supreme Court or any other of our public institutions. We make bold enough to number the Press of Rockhampton among those institutions; and we conceive it to be one of the duties of the Press to conserve the rights of the public whenever they seem to be invaded.

We strongly resent and repudiate Mr Justice Brennan's assertion that in upholding what we regard as those rights we ever resort to the publication of 'statements which are not correct, and are absolutely incorrect and deliberately and dishonestly done for the purpose of injuring this Court'. It was not the *Bulletin's* way to produce leading articles which showed malice and prejudice.<sup>1</sup>

Justice Brennan threatened to proceed against Dunn for contempt of court, but decided against this. Instead he forbade any reporter of the *Morning Bulletin* or the *Evening News* from sitting at the reporters' desk or taking notes on the floor of the courtroom during proceedings before the Supreme Court at Rockhampton. He ordered the restriction remain in force until Andrew Dunn apologised to the court for his inaccurate, misleading, and malicious report of the proceedings of the Supreme Court.<sup>2</sup> The reporters were restricted to the public gallery, which was 'so notoriously bad acoustically that the reporters might as well have been ordered out of the building'.<sup>3</sup> Dunn lodged a notice of appeal, and applied, unsuccessfully, to Justice Brennan for a stay of proceedings under his order pending the result of the appeal.<sup>4</sup> The Full Court dismissed the appeal by Andrew Dunn and the *Morning Bulletin Ltd.* of Rockhampton against Justice Brennan's order, holding that the order was not a judicial order against which an appeal could be made. Instead it was an administrative direction as to the method of reporting to be adopted in future in his court. One judge, R.J. Douglas, commented that he personally would not have made such an order.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Morning Bulletin*, 12 June 1931.
2. *The Queensland Law Reporter*, 29 January 1932, p. 8.
3. A. Dunn, letter to J.K. Armitage, 20 July 1954.
4. *Morning Bulletin*, 30 June, and 2 and 14 July 1931.
5. *Morning Bulletin*, 21 October 1931.

As a managing editor, Andrew Dunn jun. had a feel for the whole paper, which provided hours of reading for readers interested in the local scene (general news, sporting news, social jottings, and entertainment) as well as the national and international scenes. He even ran 'Children's Corner' in the *Bulletin* - under the nom de plume of Uncle Sam - and he 'used to read the whole paper'.<sup>1</sup> In August 1954 when he signalled his intention to retire, the family granted him a retiring allowance of 2000 pounds a year (including directors' fees) for life and bought him a home at Pialba, on Hervey Bay. Andrew jun. was still chairman of the family newspaper boards when he died at the age of seventy-five on 31 January 1956.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from Andrew jun., William Herbert Allan Dunn (1883-1961) made the biggest contribution to building and maintaining the Dunn newspaper chain. As managing director and editor, he oversaw the mergers in Warwick of two tri-weeklies in 1919 and in Toowoomba of two dailies in 1922. His contribution at board meetings and family meetings is evident from the minutes books. Herbie, as he was known, joined the literary staff of the *Maryborough Chronicle* in 1901 but left the family's employment to gain wider experience, serving for about six years on the *Bundaberg Mail* and the *Brisbane Courier*. He returned to the family's payroll in 1911 when the Dunns bought the majority interest in the *Morning Bulletin*. Herbie was made chief of staff.<sup>3</sup>

After three years at Rockhampton, Herbie, aged thirty, was deployed to Warwick in 1914 to take charge of the *Argus*, and in 1922 to Toowoomba to take charge of the *Chronicle*. In both cities the Dunns merged long-competing publications as part of a pre-determined policy. Herbie would serve as editor and managing director of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* for twenty-nine years.<sup>4</sup> A.T. (Bert) Hinchliffe, who worked alongside Herbie Dunn for five years and who edited the *Chronicle* from 1951-69, said Dunn was an expert shorthand writer, a fast, accurate

1. Edward Lucas Dunn, telephone interview with author, 25 May 1992; *Morning Bulletin*, 4 October 1935, p. 14.

2. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 5 August 1954; *Morning Bulletin*, 2 Feb. 1956.

3. Kirkpatrick in *ADB*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-372.

4. Kirkpatrick in *ADB*; and Kirkpatrick in Hinchliffe, ed., *They Meant Business*, pp. 48-50, 62.

typist, a witty paragraphist, a capable sub-editor and an editor who set high standards of writing, accuracy and fairness.<sup>1</sup>

Herbie Dunn laid down a policy of strong support for 'all that was worthy', particularly for causes and institutions that had for their objectives the welfare and advancement of Toowoomba and the Darling Downs, the *Chronicle* editorialist said. This is examined in Chapter 4. Herbie Dunn 'decreed, on the other hand, that the *Chronicle* should take an unequivocal stand against that which was evil, and detrimental to the district's progress, and while encouraging the allocation of space for wholesome and important news, he denied prominence to the trivial and sensational.'<sup>2</sup> He was officially managing editor of the *Chronicle* till 1951, although for the final four years of that period A.T. Hinchliffe (1901-1993) was editor in all but name. Herbie had moved to Brisbane because of his wife's illness. He died at Sandgate on 4 April 1961, aged seventy-seven, leaving his estate, valued at 98,133 pounds, to his family.<sup>3</sup>

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Andrew Dunn sen. sowed the seeds of his newspaper dynasty in the years of 'distress'. The Dunns' Scottish frugality came to the fore in the depressions of the 1890s and the early 1930s and in the wake of deaths within the family, as shown in this chapter. The Dunns were able to eke out an existence and even expand while many businesses went to the wall. The trend toward amalgamation in Australian newspapers in the 1920s and 1930s has been outlined. The Dunns were catalysts of this trend in provincial Queensland: they were active agents of amalgamation in an era when competition between newspapers in provincial cities and towns was dying. They could see the economic rationale for amalgamation in centres close to Brisbane as speedier transport brought the capital city's

1. A.T. Hinchliffe, typescript comments prepared for author, March 1977.

2. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 5 April 1961, p. 2.

3. Kirkpatrick in *ADB*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-372.



daily newspapers to country towns before breakfast, but felt the situation in more distant centres, such as Rockhampton, was different. Hence, they merged the tri-weeklies in Warwick (1919), helped talk the competing daily out of existence in Maryborough (1919), and amalgamated the two Toowoomba dailies (1922), yet they allowed competition to survive in Rockhampton until the stringencies of World War II dealt the *Evening News* its death blow.

The Dunns' perspective on provincial newspapers extended much more broadly than their own newspapers. They played key roles in the Queensland Country Press Association, formed in 1907. Andrew Dunn sen. served as its president from 1908 to 1910, and was on its executive committee from its formation till his death in 1934. He was chairman of directors of the business operations, known then as the Queensland Country Press Ltd., for the three years before his death. In addition, he set the example for the family when it came to close personal involvement in the community.

The second generation of the Dunn family, as this chapter has shown, included a mixture of both the talented managers and editors, such as Andrew jun. and Herbie, and those who would not have held positions of power but for the dynasty. What they did exhibit was unity of purpose and a fundamental loyalty to the vision and the ethos of the patriarch of the dynasty, as Chapter 4 will show in greater detail.

Devoting their lives to a cause:

The Dunns shape a dynasty

*My sons, you are like seven sticks. Each single stick can be very easily broken. But together you can resist whatever forces may be brought to bear against you. It is my resolution to see you so united as to ensure your invincibility.*

-- Meyer Guggenheim to his seven sons.<sup>1</sup>

Family enterprises have been common in overseas and Australian newspaper publishing; dynasties have been less common. It is harder to pass on, through successive generations, the talent and drive and business skills – and the ethos that keeps it all together – of the initiator of the enterprise than the wealth created by the family newspaper. And even if sufficient interest and skills are passed on from generation to generation, the dynasty will face pressures from without and pressures from within. In Queensland, the Dunn and Manning dynasties survived three generations in control of their newspapers, and the Irwins four, but, even though some family members, such as James and Simon Irwin and Bruce Manning, still manage newspapers, the families no longer control newspapers. Yet in Tasmania the Harrises have endured five generations at Burnie's *Advocate*, and in New South Wales the Westons have endured five at Kiama's *Independent* and the Motts three at Albury's *Border Mail*, and they continue strongly. This chapter places the Dunn dynasty of Queensland, whose narrative background was provided in Chapter 2, within a national dynastic context. Comparisons are drawn between the ethos, style and demise of Australian newspaper dynasties and those of the Dunn dynasty. Internationally, comparisons are also drawn with the Ochs-Sulzberger dynasty at the *New York Times*.

1. Cited in Gavin Souter, *Heralds & Angels*, p. 5.

Dynasties, unlike deities, do not go on forever, as the Dunns (Queensland, 1891-1988) and the Fairfaxes (New South Wales, 1841-1990) have demonstrated. Dynasties dysfunction, disintegrate, dissipate, diffuse – or they may simply disappear because there is no family member talented enough or interested enough to continue the business. Newspaper dynasties are often fragile institutions caught in a web of family intrigue. They have to survive in a fiercely competitive and predatory business environment, and so they face enormous pressures from *within* and *without*. Their destruction can be plotted through circulation battles – which are, in effect, battles for a bigger share of advertising revenue; in sharemarket jousts if their companies are publicly listed; or they can be devoured in takeover deals wrung out, or merely announced, over long lunches, as the Dunn, Manning and Irwin dynasties – the core of Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. – were to discover.

Family enterprises are common in any business. Three-quarters of Australia's 800,000 registered companies in 1993 were family businesses, employing fifty per cent of the total workforce.<sup>1</sup> In newspaper publishing, family enterprises used to provide the labour-intensive industry with a ready means of obtaining economies of scale. A proprietor often called on his children to work long hours in the business, as did William Henry Darwen (1872-1931) at the bi-weekly *Bowen Independent*, Queensland, from 1903. Jim Darwen and his six brothers worked in the newspaper office (viz. Appendix 2). They took it in turn taking the smoko billy up to the office at night, and 'flying' the paper on Monday and Friday nights (taking the printed sheet from the cylinder of the printing press as each was printed – 400 to 500 each issue) usually at some time between midnight and dawn. At daylight it was time to deliver the papers around the town, after making an early delivery of several bundles to the post office. It took one of the Darwen boys anything from an hour to three hours to do his run, depending on its length. The boy on the big round inevitably

1. Bina Brown, 'Family ties', The Australian, 14 January 1994, p. 21.

arrived late at school, but usually missed out on the cane because W.H. Darwen was chairman of the School Committee.<sup>1</sup>

Andrew Alfred McFadden (1864-1923) followed the same principle at Nambour after becoming a partner in the town's *Chronicle* in October 1905. McFadden and his three sons, Cecil, Victor and Bert began a family interest in the *Chronicle* that would endure for sixteen months short of half a century (viz. Appendix 2). Cecil edited the *Chronicle* for thirty-four years; Vic managed it for forty-one years; and Bert was at times editor, advertising manager, linotype operator, and everything else at the newspaper for nigh on fifty years.<sup>2</sup> At Maryborough, adopting the same principles as W.H. Darwen and A.A. McFadden, Andrew Dunn (1854-1934) made sure his six sons grew up in a newspaper environment in the 1890s and early 1900s and knew what made the *Chronicle* office tick. Over time they learned the business from the back room, with its Linotypes and flatbed press, to the front office. William Henry Groom followed the same course at Toowoomba's *Chronicle* with four sons in the 1880s and 1890s, as did Samuel John Irwin at Warwick's *Examiner and Times*, at the same period, with three sons, including Samuel Boyd (a later editor of the *Warwick Daily News*), who recalled having written editorials when he was seventeen.<sup>3</sup> At Warwick's other paper, the *Argus*, in the late 1860s, proprietor and politician James Morgan (1816-1878) had his son, Arthur, a future Premier of Queensland, learning the newspaper trade early. Arthur Morgan was managing the paper when he was eighteen and became joint-proprietor and editor when twenty-one.<sup>4</sup> By contrast, at Temora, New South Wales, in the 1920s, John Arthur Bradley (1874-1945) sent his two sons away to Sydney to board at Newington College for the final years of their secondary schooling before they joined him on the *Temora Independent* and Arthur even had twelve months' work on a daily,

1. Douglas James Darwen, interview with author, Bowen, 18 July 1981.

2. *Nambour Chronicle*, 20 September 1973, and 1 August 1978.

3. Kirkpatrick in *They Meant Business*, p. 59; and Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 218.

4. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 213; Kirkpatrick in *ADB*, Vol. 10, p. 584.

the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, before he started in the family business. Arthur, when home on school holidays, always had a notebook in his pocket and would volunteer his services as a reporter when observing even the most mildly newsworthy event.<sup>1</sup>

Starting and running a family business is one thing; establishing a dynasty is another. Even though people who make fortunes usually dream of passing that wealth down to their children and their descendants, sons and daughters and their offspring rarely show the same business skills as the originators of the wealth. It seems, as the Dunns demonstrated, and as Chapter 4 will show, that an ethos must be developed, a sense of purpose and destiny, a loyalty to the enterprise and to the principles on which it was established. Those not involved in the business like to get their hands on the inheritance to use it for their own purposes.<sup>2</sup> Dynasties become increasingly fragile from the third generation onwards. A national survey conducted in Australia found that only thirty per cent of family businesses survive to the second generation, fifteen per cent to the third and three per cent to the fourth generation and beyond.<sup>3</sup> By the third and fourth generation, individual shareholdings have become diluted and loyalty to the company has often weakened. In October 1992 when the American food giant, the Campbell Soup Company, began its successful takeover bid for the Australian-owned biscuit manufacturer, Arnott's, the loyalties of the more than one-hundred survivors of the family spawned by William Arnott and his seven sons were sorely tested. The family members held between twenty and twenty-five per cent of the company's shares. One member said: 'The family regards its shares as family jewels that are not for sale, but are to be passed on from generation to generation.' Another said: 'The talk among the younger members is - how high will the share prices go?' Some of the shareholders

1. Keith Bradley, *'Naked Nellie has a rag at last': A History of the Bradley Family and NSW Country Newspapers 1889-1990* (Queanbeyan: Keith Bradley, 1990), pp. 33-34.

2. Robert Gottlieb, 'Ten years on, the stayers show what it takes', *Business Review Weekly [BRW]*, 22 May 1992, p. 54.

3. BDO Nelson Parkhill and Victoria University of Technology, 'Characteristics of Australian Family Business: Second Survey' (Melbourne, 1993), pp. 17-18; viz also 'Family ties', *The Australian*, 14 January 1994, p. 21.

were seventh-generation descendants of the Scottish baker who founded the firm.<sup>1</sup>

In North America, families have clung to control of great newspapers like the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* and of widely based publishing empires like Thomson Newspapers and Hearst Corporation. But family tensions have divided the ownership of others. In Louisville, the Bingham family's differences seemed so irreconcilable that their parents decided to sell their inheritance, the *Courier-Journal* and the *Louisville Times*. Joseph Pulitzer's family sold his great legacy, the *New York World*, to Scripps-Howard in 1931, only twenty years after he died. Generations later, the Pulitzers were under strain again: at the *St Louis Post Dispatch*, the family split under hostile takeover pressure in 1986 and three grandsons of the founder bought out the dissident family members who had wanted to sell to an outsider. The Pulitzer split had some similarities with subsequent events at Fairfax. In most of these newspaper companies the dynasties had lasted no longer than three generations; the *Los Angeles Times* was the exception, with the fourth generation now in charge. In 1987 in Australia, the Fairfax family was in the hands of the fifth generation and performing more strongly than ever, till December that year when Warwick Fairfax completed several months of precarious financial dealings to buy back John Fairfax Ltd. with borrowings – of more than \$2 billion – that would have been unthinkable thirty years previously.<sup>2</sup>

One of the dilemmas confronting newspaper families arises when they face the business imperative of grow or die. Outside shareholders can provide the capital for growth but, if they have votes, they also erode control. In England, the great newspaper empires of the Berry Brothers (Lords Camrose and Kemsley) and of

1. Anna Bernasek, Sally Loane and John Seviar, 'Predator at the gate: the fight for Arnott's', *Sydney Morning Herald* [SMH], 24 October 1992, p. 39.

2. V.J. Carroll, *The Man Who Couldn't Wait* (Melbourne: William Heinemann Australia, 1990), p. 33.

Lord Beaverbrook, were built substantially on capital raised by issuing non-voting shares to the public, while keeping the voting shares in the family. Camrose took the added precaution of building into his company's Articles of Association a provision that he would be chairman and editor-in-chief for life if he wanted. The greatest of them all, Alfred Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe), was so successful from the start with his magazines and the *Daily Mail* that he could fund his later ventures, including resuscitation of the *Times*, from his accumulated wealth. His brother, Lord Rothermere, devised protective capital structures as the group grew more diverse. Nobody was in any doubt about who controlled Northcliffe newspapers.<sup>1</sup>

Non-voting ordinary shares, which substantially financed companies like Beaverbrook's Daily Express Newspapers Ltd. and the Graham family's *Washington Post*, while the family held the much smaller voting stock, were frowned upon in Australia. Ezra Norton at Truth and Sportsman Ltd. had followed the British pattern and relied on public issues of preference shares in which shareholders surrendered voting power in exchange for a fixed dividend taken from the profits before any ordinary dividend.

Frank Packer had relied on a complex company structure that included preference shares. The Fairfaxes toyed with a plan for a public preference share issues in the 1940s but dropped it. Later they let the public in with full-voting ordinary shares, which made the problem of maintaining the family's control increasingly acute. A proposal for a much more complex preference share issue in 1984 divided the family and played a part in precipitating young Warwick's bid for control in 1987. For less conservative companies the problem of financing growth while retaining ownership and control was substantially solved in the 1970s and 1980s by the great liquidity of the banking and financial systems. Rupert Murdoch was able to finance the growth

1. Carroll, p. 33.

of News Corporation Ltd., from being a small Adelaide owner of one and a half newspapers to one of the biggest media groups in the world, largely on borrowed money while maintaining his family's equity in the company.<sup>1</sup>

A family split destroyed the Fairfax proprietorship of the *Sydney Morning Herald* only two months short of 150 years. It was the world's oldest continuously owned newspaper proprietorship. The faithfulness and service of the five generations counted for little when one member of that fifth generation, Warwick Fairfax jun., managed to wreck in three years what had taken nearly a century and a half to build. The rest of the family had watched over and helped to build an organisation which, within the Australian community, had been loved, feared, despised, but, always, John B. Fairfax believes, respected.

Each generation of our family developed the company cautiously and conservatively, recognising the honour of being charged with such a great responsibility. Sanctimonious as this sounds, we have, with the occasional blemish, devoted our lives to a cause and a course embarked upon by John Fairfax in 1841.<sup>2</sup>

The proprietorship began when the first John Fairfax, who emigrated to Australia in 1838, bought the *Sydney Herald* for ten thousand pounds in depressed times, on 8 February 1841, in conjunction with the paper's court and parliamentary reporter, Charles Kemp. In 1853 Fairfax bought out Kemp. The *Herald* established itself as the authoritative morning newspaper of New South Wales.<sup>3</sup> 'Granny' *Herald* set her face against certain inevitable changes for what seemed to her, and to most of her readers, good and sufficient reason. To liberals and radicals she seemed to display the fussiness and selfishness that sometimes accompany old age. But to those of her own persuasion (and there were many of them) her staunch upholding of Protestant Christianity, British monarchy, the rule of law, middle-class

1. Carroll, p. 33.

2. Souter, *Herald & Angels*, p. v.

3. Trevor Sykes, *Operation Dynasty* (Elwood Vic.: Greenhouse Publications, 1989), p. 2.



values, private property and free-enterprise capitalism seemed rather to provide the comforting reassurance of a wise old grandmother.<sup>1</sup> The Dunn newspapers of the 1920-1940 period could easily have been mistaken for products of this Fairfax ethos.

In Melbourne, the Syme family maintained effective control of *The Age* for 128 years, but the dynasty dissipated, especially in the wake of poor investment decisions by fourth-generation member, Ranald Macdonald, as managing director of David Syme and Co. in the late 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>2</sup> Syme control began in 1856 when Ebenezer Syme (1826-1860), already the paper's editor, and David, his gold-prospecting, road-building younger brother, bought the struggling two-year-old publication for two thousand pounds. David Syme (1827-1908) became a full-time newspaper man by accident: primarily because of Ebenezer's premature death, from consumption, at the age of thirty-four on 13 March 1860.<sup>3</sup>

When David Syme himself died on 14 February 1908, he had become, in the span of half a century, a legendary figure who dominated the newspaper industry of Australia and who helped to shape, in a broad and permanent way, so much of the early history of Victoria. He was a radical fighter of nineteenth century Australia. The instrument of his personal vigour and power was *The Age*. This newspaper was controlled by his descendants as a public company until September 1983 and continues to be notable for its independence and freedom from political and commercial entanglements.<sup>4</sup> In 1979, the board of David Syme and Co. Ltd. comprised three members of the Syme family [including managing director Ranald Macdonald, a great-grandson of David Syme], two Fairfax directors and the general manager of John Fairfax Ltd.

1. H. Mayer, p. 153.

2. James O. Fairfax, pp. 126-142, 393.

3. Sayers, p. 1; Stuart Macintyre, 'The rise and rise of David Syme and the *Age*', *Australian Society*, January-February 1991, p. 32.

4. *SMH*, 17 October 1979, p. 7.

David Syme ruled *The Age* during his lifetime, but fettered it for forty years after his death. The terms of his will placed the paper in the hands of a family trust until the deaths of his five sons, and denied it the opportunity to increase its capital for expansion and renovation. Its survival was due mainly to its firm hold on classified advertising. It remained Melbourne's public marketplace. The turn-about began after a court order in 1948 varied the terms of the will, and it accelerated in the 1950s and 1960s, culminating in the partnership with John Fairfax and Sons Ltd.<sup>1</sup> The most significant differences between the Syme and Fairfax companies in the mid-sixties lay in ownership: whereas control of John Fairfax was still vested in the shareholdings of only three members of the Fairfax family, ownership of David Syme was scattered, and in a most peculiar way, among no fewer than nineteen members of the Syme family. Such fragmentation was made to order for a takeover bid.<sup>2</sup>

So many dynasties begin strongly and taper off with the second and third generations. The Murdoch dynasty has become virtually the antithesis of the Dunn dynasty, both in its aggressively commercial newspaper ethos and in the scope of its operations. Rupert Murdoch is a hard-headed businessman who has been thinking on an international scale for nearly thirty years. Keith Arthur Murdoch (1886-1952), a disciple of Lord Northcliffe, as described in Chapter 1, initiated major changes in popularising Australian newspapers. Murdoch, later knighted, moved into managerial roles in the late 1920s and was instrumental in expanding the Herald & Weekly Times (HWT) empire from its Melbourne base with takeovers of the major dailies in Perth and Adelaide.<sup>3</sup> Keith Rupert Murdoch (1931- ), Sir Keith's only son, resolved never to work for anyone but himself. Rupert and his mother sold the family's inherited interest in Queensland Newspapers to HWT to pay the duties on his father's estate and avoid debt. In September 1953, at the age of twenty-two, Rupert returned from his Oxford university studies in England to take over the

1. Carlyon, p. 81.

2. Souter, *Company of Heralds*, p. 413.

3. V.J. Carroll, 'Isn't that the ex-Geelong Grammar chap?', *The Independent Monthly*, November 1992, p. 12.

remaining half of his father's estate, the News, Adelaide's afternoon newspaper.<sup>1</sup>

In 1987, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation controlled more than sixty per cent of Australia's national and daily newspaper circulation, but this was only the tip of a global media empire matched by no one now or at any time. For instance, he owned five English newspapers – *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Sun*, *The News of the World* and *Today* – William Collins Publishing and fifty per cent of BSkyB, the satellite television channel. Apart from extensive media interests in the United States – he became an American citizen on 4 September 1985 – he has extensive business interests in Hong Kong, Switzerland, New Zealand and the Bahamas. Murdoch is a pragmatic, commercially minded, often ruthless proprietor but also, in Shawcross's judgment, 'a brilliant businessman, touched with genius'.<sup>2</sup> If Rupert Murdoch dies in the next few years, his second wife, Anna (1944- ), thirteen years his junior and a board member of News Corporation since 1990, will chair News Corporation. Of his three children by Anna, daughter Elisabeth (1968- ), a journalist who became a programming executive in her father's Twentieth Century Fox studios in Los Angeles, shows the most promise of and interest in carrying on the dynasty.<sup>3</sup> One small point of similarity that the Murdochs have with the Dunns is a Presbyterian heritage: Keith Murdoch's father, Patrick, and grandfather, James, were Presbyterian ministers. The Dunns were certainly true, in the main, to their Presbyterian heritage, as was Sir Keith Murdoch. Rupert Murdoch has been less so, but still admits it as an influence on his life.<sup>4</sup>

1. Carroll, *The Independent Monthly*, November 1992, p. 12.

2. John O'Neill, 'Examined: Murdoch's Adelaide media monopoly', *The Independent Monthly*, November 1992, p. 18; Susan Wyndham, 'Putting pen to the paper man', *Weekend Australian*, 3-4 October 1992, Weekend Review 3; Sally Jackson, 'News severs last link with Hong Kong papers', *Weekend Australian*, 23-24 April 1994, p. 35; 'News plans TV network for India', *The Courier-Mail*, 12 February 1994, p. 42; George Munster, *A Paper Prince*, (Ringwood, Vic.: Penguin, 1987), p. 28; and William Shawcross, *Rupert Murdoch: Ringmaster of the Information Circus* (Sydney: Random House, 1992), p. 323.

3. Shawcross, pp. 123, 481, 483; David Hay, 'Murdoch's daughter', *AFR*, 3 June 1994, Weekend Review, pp. 1, 11.

4. Shawcross, pp. 20-21.

Overseas, the newspaper dynasty that most closely resembles the Fairfaxes and that offers some insights into the Dunns has been the continuing Ochs-Sulzberger dynasty of the *New York Times*. It has not self-destructed. Adolph Ochs (1858-1935) ran the *Times* not merely for profit but somewhat along the business lines of a great church, gilding the wealth with virtue. The *Times* would go on indefinitely, he hoped, towering over all individuals and groups in its employ, and his family would work together, repressing any personal animosity for the greater good, and, if possible, choose mates in marriage who would also be wed to the *Times*. Ochs took over the declining newspaper in 1896, when it was in a parlous financial state, and revived it. He was both cautious and optimistic, sentimental and tough. He was a modest organiser of grand designs, possessing a sure insight into human nature and into what would sell, and still he was dedicated to the old verities that, in another age, would mark him as 'square'.<sup>1</sup>

Ochs continued his nepotistic appointments, a policy he had begun at the *Chattanooga Times* soon after acquiring it in 1878 with a loan. He appointed his father, Julius, treasurer of that newspaper. He brought the husbands of his two married sisters into the business; and then there were cousins, nephews, family friends: Ochs's dynasty had begun. Other family members worked for him when he bought the *New York Times* – Gay Talese would one day describe the newspaper as a 'towering totem of nepotism' – or on the paper he owned in Philadelphia for more than a decade from 1901.<sup>2</sup>

Ochs's ultimate dream was that the *New York Times* would, upon his death, be controlled only by his immediate family, and in turn by their families, and it would be the responsibility of them all

1. Gay Talese, *The Kingdom and the Power* (New York: World Publishing Co., 1969), pp. 14, 73, 85, 160.

2. Talese, pp. 86, 88.

to govern during their lifetime with the same dedication that he had during his. At the *New York Times* Ochs's genius had been not only in the type of newspaper he created – a newspaper, not a gazette of opinion, or showcase for star writers, or a champion of the underdog or topdog, or a crusader for political or social reform – but also in making such a newspaper pay. The news was to be reliable and unsoiled and not deviously inspired.<sup>1</sup> Ochs's influence continued long after his death. His only daughter, Iphigene, in 1917 married Arthur Hays Sulzberger, but only after her father had obtained an agreement from the groom-to-be that, once his war service was over, he would submit himself to training at the *Times*. Sulzberger proceeded to adapt successfully to the Ochsian vision, undergoing training in different branches of the newspaper, exhibiting the required enthusiasm, developing the required values. In the years ahead Iphigene was hardly ever seen in the newsroom and her visits to the *Times* building were usually limited to social calls to her husband's office or to meetings of the *Times's* board of directors. And yet the impression was shared by nearly all *Times* executives and journalists that Iphigene, in her gentle way, her friendly hints and reminders, in her very existence as Ochs's only offspring and the direct heir to his fortune, exerted a tremendous influence on the character of the *Times* and on the three men who had followed her father to the top – her husband Arthur Hays Sulzberger, her son-in-law Orville Dryfoos (1922-1963), and her son Arthur Ochs Sulzberger (1926- ). Ochs Sulzberger was the publisher 1963-92 and became chairman and chief executive in 1992. She was the living link in their lives with the spirit of Ochs. Her grandson, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger (1951- ), a member of the fourth generation of the Ochs-Sulzberger dynasty, was appointed publisher in 1992 of the *New York Times* which still saw its principal role as being to publish 'all the news that's fit to print'.<sup>2</sup>

1. Talese, pp. 12, 86.

2. Talese, pp. 11, 15; Editor & Publisher International Year Book 1993 (New York: Editor & Publisher, 1993), p. 1-255.

Across the North American continent, four generations of the Otis-Chandler dynasty have controlled the destiny of the *Los Angeles Times* since Harris Gray Otis launched it on 4 December 1881. They have been: Harrison Gray Otis (in executive control 1882-1917); Harry Chandler (1917-1944); Norman Chandler (1944-1960); and Otis Chandler (1960-1980), who remained in 1993 the 'highly active controlling shareholder of the \$3.8 billion Times Mirror Corporation'.<sup>1</sup> Harrison Gray Otis worked closely with his wife, Eliza, who was virtually the editorial staff. Their daughters took up duty as clerks in the business office when they came of age. One of them, Marian, in 1894 married another staffer, Harry Chandler, who had begun as a clerk before becoming circulation manager and then business manager. Nepotism had little to do with his upward mobility, but the second branch of the dynasty had begun.<sup>2</sup> The enterprise became a joint venture of the two strong-willed men, Chandler specialising in business and Otis in policy. When Otis, in failing health, sensed his own mortality, he took pen in gnarled fist and scrawled a 'Declaratory' to son-in-law Harry and daughter Marian Otis Chandler. Dated 12 November 1914, the missive embodied a deed to the *Times* and 'fundamental injunctions' on how the co-heirs should assume the 'high trust and valuable property'.<sup>3</sup> The dynasty continues to this day. In 1980, as the *Los Angeles Times* celebrated its centenary, it had become three times more profitable than the *Washington Post* and seven times more profitable than the *New York Times*.<sup>4</sup>

1. Nicholas Coleridge, Paper Tigers: The latest, greatest newspaper tycoons and how they won the world (London, Heinemann, 1993), p. 155.

2. Marshall Berges, The Life and Times of Los Angeles: A Newspaper, a Family and a City (New York: Atheneum, 1984), pp. 5, 18.

3. Berges, p. 32.

4. Berges, pp. 78, 80, 291; Who's Who in America 1992-93 (47th ed.; New Providence, New Jersey: Reed Reference, 1993), Vol. 2, p. 575; Editor & Publisher International Year Book 1993, p. 1-33; Coleridge, p. 163.

Dynasties have long dotted the Australian provincial press landscape. The Dunn newspaper dynasty, of Queensland, had some significant similarities, especially in ethos, with the Fairfaxes, of Sydney, the Ochs-Sulzbergers, of New York, the Harrises, of Burnie, and the Motts, of Albury, as this thesis will demonstrate. The question of why the Motts and Harrises, for instance, have survived and the Dunns have not will be examined later in this thesis. The provincial press dynasties have included the families listed in Table 3.

A select sample of these dynasties is examined in closer detail. The Shakespeares, of Canberra, are examined because the patriarch of that dynasty had a vision, like Andrew Dunn, of what could be achieved and set about preparing his family to achieve it. The Motts, of Albury, and the Harrises, of Burnie, are examined because those dynasties have survived, whereas the Dunn dynasty and the dynasties established by the five other Queensland families that joined together to form Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. in 1968, have not. The day the Irish, in the form of Haswell Pty. Ltd., took over Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd., or PNQ - 26 July 1988 - effectively marked the end of these dynasties, each boasting at least three generations of control, dating back as far as 1861.<sup>1</sup> They had worked together harmoniously and profitably for nigh on a generation, something to be wondered at when the fragility of one dynasty in its third generation is considered, let alone six. The principal family in the PNQ Group was the Dunn Family, which established the foundation of its chain of newspapers in Maryborough in 1891 when Andrew Dunn (1854-1934) became the major shareholder and chairman of the Maryborough Newspaper Co. Ltd. How the Dunns joined forces with five other family news companies, bringing together six dailies and a weekly from 1 April 1968, will be described in detail in Chapter 6. By 1988 they had built their enterprise to nine dailies in Queensland and four in New South Wales, as well as a string of less frequently published newspapers, as is shown in Chapter 9.<sup>2</sup>

1. Michael O'Meara. 'PNQ directors take up Haswell offer', Australian Financial Review, 27 July 1988.  
 2. Morris. 'Notes on PNQ', pp. 13-15; PNQ News-Print, No. 3, 1988, p. 15.

Table 3

## Selected Australian provincial newspaper dynasties in four states

### Queensland

- BOWEN: the Darwens (1903-1985);<sup>1</sup>
- GLADSTONE: the Macfarlans (1922-1968);<sup>2</sup>
- GYMPIE: the Ramseys (1876-1976);<sup>3</sup>
- IPSWICH: the Parkinsons (1861-1976), the Stephensons (1861-1974) and the Kippens (1862-1980);<sup>4</sup>
- MACKAY: the Mannings (1890-1988), also of Gladstone;<sup>5</sup>
- NAMBOUR; the McFaddens (1805-1964);<sup>6</sup>
- ROCKHAMPTON: the Dunns (1891-1988), also of Maryborough, Toowoomba, Warwick, Allora and Nambour;<sup>7</sup>
- TOOWOOMBA; the Grooms (1876-1922);<sup>8</sup>
- WARWICK (1): the Irwins (1867-1988);<sup>9</sup>
- WARWICK (2): the Morgans (1868-1914).<sup>10</sup>

1. Rod Kirkpatrick, Sworn, pp. 292-297; Ross Devine, letter to author, 9 November 1993.
2. Kirkpatrick, Sworn, pp. 313-314.
3. Gympie Times, Centenary Issue, 15 Feb 1968, 4 September 1976, p. 1, and 6 September 1988, p. 5; Terry Ramsey, letters to author, 30 January, 20 February and 18 April 1980; Douglas Lockwood (ed.), A Brief History of the Regional Dailies of Australia Limited (Melbourne: Regional Dailies of Australia, 1981), pp. 34-35.
4. Kirkpatrick, Sworn, p. 45; Queensland Times, Jubilee Supplement, 7 October 1911.
5. Kirkpatrick, Sworn, pp. 273-277; Juanita Phillips, 'End of the country dynasties', The Courier-Mail, 16 March 1989, p. 9.
6. Kirkpatrick, Sworn, pp. 297-298.
7. Kirkpatrick, Sworn, pp. 236-241.
8. Kirkpatrick, They Meant Business, pp. 55-62.
9. Kirkpatrick, Sworn, pp. 216-219.
10. Kirkpatrick, Sworn, pp. 212-215.

### Victoria

- MILDURA: the Lanyons (1920-present), also of other north-eastern Victorian centres;<sup>1</sup>
- SHEPPARTON: the McPhersons (1888-present).<sup>2</sup>

1. Sunraysia Daily, 15 April 1988, pp. 1, 5; Lockwood, pp. 52-53
2. Lockwood, p. 62; Shepparton News, Centenary Souvenir Edition, pp. 22-23.

### Tasmania

- BURNIE: the Harrises (1890-present);<sup>1</sup>
- LAUNCESTON: the Rolphs (1877-1990).<sup>2</sup>

1. Kerry Pink, And Wealth for Toil (Burnie: Burnie Advocate Marketing Services, 1990), pp. 348-375; Nicholas Way, 'A Tasmanian tortoise wins the paper chase', Business Review Weekly [BRW], 22 May 1992, pp. 44-46; Lockwood, pp. 22-23.
2. Lockwood, pp. 38-39; Way, BRW, 22 May 1992, pp. 44-46.



Table 3 (cont.)

## New South Wales/A.C.T.

- ALBURY: the Motts (1903-present);<sup>1</sup>
- CANBERRA: the Shakespeares (1894-1964), also of Condobolin, Grafton, Richmond and Queanbeyan;<sup>2</sup>
- COOTAMUNDRA: the Pinkstones (1877-1963);<sup>3</sup>
- COROWA: the Lesliees (1875-1980);<sup>4</sup>
- DUBBO (1): the Irvines (1906-1949);<sup>5</sup>
- DUBBO (2): the Armatis (1949-present), and numerous other NSW country centres;<sup>6</sup>
- GLEN INNES: the Sommerlads (1918-1981), also of Inverell and Armidale;<sup>7</sup>
- GLOUCESTER: the Ryes (1906-1963);<sup>8</sup>
- HAY: the Johnstons (1888-present);<sup>9</sup>
- KIAMA: the Westons (1863-present);<sup>10</sup>
- MAITLAND: the Tuckers (1843-1972, intermittent).<sup>11</sup>
- SINGLETON: the Robinsons (1886-1973);<sup>12</sup>
- TAREE: the Boyces (1886-1961);<sup>13</sup>
- TEMORA: the Bradleys (1907-1990), also of Young, Cooma, Bega, Cootamundra, Harden-Murrumburrah, Boorowa and Henty, at various times.<sup>14</sup>

1. Gordon Beavan, 'Increased size - increased speed: The Border Mail, a Regional Newspaper History'. M. Litt. thesis, University of New England, Armidale, 1991.

2. Heather Shakespeare's article, Canberra Times, 50th Anniversary Souvenir Issue, 3 Sept. 1976, pp. 1, 4.

3. Cootamundra Herald, Centenary Issue, 29 July 1977.

4. Corowa Free Press, 31 January 1980, pp. 4, 5.

5. Lockwood, pp. 28-29.

6. PANFA Bulletin, December 1986, p. 19, July 1992, p. 23, and November 1992, p. 17.

7. Kirkpatrick in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol. 12, p. 16; ; 'The Rural Press Story,' inserted in Hawkesbury Gazette, 27 November 1985, p. 33; Ron F. Robinson, letter to author, 10 November 1993.

8. Reg C. Pogonoksi article, 'Stories of the press', Gloucester District Historical Society Journal, No. 3, 1968; Gloucester Advocate, 7th Anniversary Supplement, 8 July 1980, pp. 1, 5.

9. Riverine Grazier, 30 Oct. 1973, and The NSW Farmer, October 1987, p. 13; David Sommerlad, letter to author, 9 November 1993; Gavin Johnston, letter to author, 14 January 1994 (the Johnston interest was reduced from 100 to 50 per cent at the end of March 1991, with the Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga, taking up the other 50 per cent).

10. Narissa Morrissey, telephone interview with author, 22 December 1993.

11. Maitland Mercury, Supplement to 140th Anniversary Souvenir Issue, 18 August 1983.

12. Singleton Argus, Centenary Feature, 15 July 1974, pp. 2-3; Singleton Argus, 10 December 1973, p. 3; and Edwina Mason, letter to author, 14 December, 1993.

13. Manning River Times centenary issue, 25 June 1969, p. 66.

14. Keith Bradley, Naked Nellie has a rag at last: A History of the Bradley Family and NSW Country Newspapers, pp. 9, 110.

In the newly defined Federal Capital Territory of Australia, on 12 March 1913, Thomas Mitchell Shakespeare (1873-1938) attended the ceremony for the official naming of Canberra. On his return to Sydney he gathered together his four sons and two daughters, none of them yet out of school, and told them of his plans. 'They would establish a National newspaper in the National Capital, to serve it and the Nation.' Shakespeare, a newspaper man since becoming an apprentice compositor on the *Forbes and Parkes Gazette* in 1887 at the age of fourteen, had been the manager of the Country Press Co-operative Company Ltd. and secretary of the New South Wales Country Press Association since 1904. He had already launched one newspaper and owned another. At Condobolin in 1894, Shakespeare established *The Lachlander* on 26 July, the day after his twenty-first birthday. He married Ann Forster, of Forbes, two years later. In 1897, despite Ann's pregnancy, they sold their home so they could pay the cost of fighting a libel action. They were living in three rooms partitioned off from the newspaper offices, and their first son, Arthur Thomas, was born there on 27 September 1897. T.M. Shakespeare won the libel action, *The Lachlander* prospered and a new home was built. Shakespeare sold *The Lachlander* in 1902 and bought the *Grafton Argus*.<sup>1</sup>

In 1926, the year before Parliament began sitting in Canberra, the four Shakespeare sons were ready when it was time to realise the promise T.M. Shakespeare had made to his family thirteen years earlier. A.T. (Arthur) had already gained ten years' journalistic experience with the *Sydney Morning Herald*; J.W. (Bill) and C.J. (Jack) had become the proprietors of the *Hawkesbury Herald* at Richmond and had learned much about printing, advertising and newspaper management; and C.E. (Clarrie) had trained on newspapers at Katoomba and Richmond. Bill and Jack sold the *Hawkesbury Herald* in May 1926, and Jack went to Canberra to install the machinery for the new paper to

1. Heather Shakespeare, 'Half a century of struggles and triumphs: a family's fight to fulfil a dream', *Canberra Times*, 50th Anniversary Souvenir Issue, 3 September 1976, p. 1; Heather Shakespeare, telephone interview with author, 6 November 1993.

serve the national capital. Arthur resigned from the *Sydney Morning Herald* ready to become managing editor of the new paper. C.E. joined the reporting staff in 1926 (only to die in August 1927, aged twenty-three) and Bill joined as secretary/accountant in October 1927. A.E. (Alf) Shakespeare, a cousin of T.M.'s, also joined the reporting staff. 'It was,' said A.T.'s second wife Heather, who worked at the *Canberra Times* for thirty-three years, 'truly a family enterprise.'<sup>1</sup>

On 3 September 1926, the first issue of the *Canberra Times*, a sixteen-page weekly newspaper, rolled off the presses and 1,800 copies were sold. It became a daily in 1928, ahead of the expected shifting of government departments from Melbourne to Canberra. But government spending was cut, the Depression arrived, and the newspaper struggled grimly for survival for more than a decade. The Shakespeare newspaper dynasty chose the time for its own demise. In June 1964, it was time for the Shakespeare family to sell to the Fairfaxes when Rupert Murdoch launched, in Canberra, a truly national paper, *The Australian*, which also faced a struggle to survive, and did not return News Ltd. a profit for twenty years. A.T. Shakespeare retired as managing editor of the *Canberra Times* in July 1964 and Jack as advertising manager, both having served thirty-eight years in those roles.<sup>2</sup>

At Albury-Wodonga, straddling the New South Wales-Victorian border, and at Burnie, in north-west Tasmania, the *Border Mail* (established 1903) and the *Advocate* (1890), respectively, provide examples of newspapers controlled by the one family throughout their existence. The Mott family established what was then the *Border Morning Mail* as a daily and the Harris family launched as a bi-weekly the forerunner of today's *Burnie Advocate*, calling it the *Wellington Times*.<sup>3</sup> Both families have withstood not only

1. Shakespeare, *Canberra Times*, 3 September 1976, p. 1.

2. Shakespeare, *Canberra Times*, 3 September 1976, p. 4.

3. *The Advocate*, Burnie, 1 October 1990, p. 1.

the economic vagaries of two world wars and the Great Depression but the harsh takeover climate of the 1980s when media ownership changed dramatically, especially in the wake of the changes to broadcasting ownership legislation in 1987. The two families have also managed to stay at the forefront of technological changes in newspaper production and maintain steadily rising circulations. The *Border Morning Mail* installed in 1948 a Crabtree press whose speed and capacity took the newspaper beyond the physical restrictions of a country town paper and made it possible for it to become 'a truly regional publication', according to Gordon Beavan.<sup>1</sup> In 1928, the *Burnie Advocate* bought a new full rotary single width letterpress pressline and a stereotyping plant from America and claimed to have the first wholly electrified newspaper plant in Australia. The *Advocate* was the first Australian daily newspaper to switch to offset printing, doing so in 1968, two years ahead of Bundaberg's *News-Mail*, the first Queensland daily to make the change.<sup>2</sup> At Albury, the third generation of Motts is in control, and at Burnie, the fifth generation of Harrises.

Albury was regarded as one of the front-runners among the sites being considered for the national capital when Hamilton Charnock Mott (1871-1963) and a brother, Decimus Horace Mott (1873-1947), founded the *Border Morning Mail* on 24 October 1903. Their father, George Henry Mott (1831-1906), London-born, had established Albury's first journal, the *Border Post*, in 1856, and was later involved in two Victorian newspapers and the distribution agency, Gordon and Gotch. Three of his sons, including Hamilton and Decimus, joined the rush to the West Australian gold fields, starting newspapers in Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie. At Albury, Decimus's sons, Walter and George, worked at the *Mail* alongside Hamilton's second and third sons, Tennyson and Clifton. First-son Milton (1904-1961) did not work at the *Mail* till 1950.

1. G.R. Beavan, 'Increased size - increased speed: The Border Mail, a Regional Newspaper History', M. Litt. thesis, University of New England, Armidale, 1991, p. 37.

2. Pink, *And Wealth for Toil*, pp. 369, 371; Beavan thesis, p. 37.

Hamilton's three daughters, Haidee (1903-1991), Thalia (1907-1977) and Aglaia (1912- ), worked for the *Mail* at different times.<sup>1</sup> The partnership between the two Mott brothers ended in 1924 when Decimus sold his interest in the *Mail* to Hamilton. Decimus moved to Melbourne with his family and founded *Leader Newspapers*, which became a major chain of suburban newspapers. By the 1980s *Leader* controlled over forty per cent of Melbourne's suburbans. It is now part of the News Ltd. dominance of suburbans in Australia, having been taken over by the *Herald & Weekly Times* in 1986 and then by Murdoch in 1987.<sup>2</sup>

In 1924 H.C. Mott bought and closed Albury's afternoon newspaper, *Daily News*. H.C. Mott continued in daily executive control of the newspaper until 1932 when Gordon Davidson, his son-in-law, took over as the newspaper's first general manager. However, H.C. Mott retained then and for the rest of his life the ultimate control of all major corporate decisions. Davidson, who had been an accountant at the local branch of the Commonwealth Bank, joined the *Mail* in 1924 after marrying Haidee Mott.<sup>3</sup> Haidee worked as a court reporter at the *Mail*. After World War II, three of H.C. Mott's sons returned to the *Mail* ready for executive roles. Gordon Davidson stepped aside as general manager and went off to Sydney to establish a suburban paper. Melbourne Mott (1915- ) took over as general manager of the *Mail*, Clifton Mott (1908- ) as editor and Tennyson Mott (1906- ) as chief of staff.<sup>4</sup>

In 1993, all members of the board were descendants of H.C. Mott, with the exception of Douglas Keith Milham, a public accountant – who had married Diana, eldest daughter of Gordon Davidson and Haidee (nee Mott). The other board members were Robert Mott, the only son of Melbourne Mott (chairman); Melbourne Mott, deputy

1. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 10, pp. 599-600.

2. Beavan thesis, p. 18. *Leader Newspapers* was sold in 1987 to the *Herald and Weekly Times Ltd.* for \$57 million and other considerations; Chadwick, p. xlii.

3. Beavan thesis, pp. 18, 31.

4. Beavan thesis, p. 35.

chairman; Peter Mott, son of Tennyson Mott; Hugh Hamilton, son of Aglaia Hamilton (nee Mott); Aglaia Hamilton; Jonathan Mott, son of Clifton Mott; and Tennyson Mott. In November 1992, when Melbourne Mott, founding chairman in 1961, relinquished the chairmanship, and became deputy chairman, his son Robert took over as chairman.<sup>1</sup>

At Burnie, on 1 October 1890, Robert Harris, sixty and a printer or newspaperman for forty-five years, and his sons, Robert Day and Charles James, published the first issue of what is now known as *The Advocate*. It began as the *Wellington Times*, a bi-weekly, the settlement's first newspaper. After a number of name changes, it became the *Advocate* on 2 December 1918.<sup>2</sup> It had been published daily since 1899. In April 1902 Charles James Harris succeeded his ageing father as proprietor of the newspaper. His brother, Robert Day Harris, had died in 1898, and the father died in 1904. Charles, during his twenty-three years at the helm, laid for the family newspaper and commercial printing business the solid foundations on which future generations of the Harris family were able to build.<sup>3</sup> Charles Harris was managing director till his death from heart failure at the age of forty-nine on 6 December 1913. He left four sons, one of whom, Russell, assumed the managing directorship at the age of twenty-two.<sup>4</sup> Russell, too, died before he reached fifty: on 4 April 1935, aged forty-three. He was succeeded as managing director by a brother, Leonard Burnie Harris, who was born on 12 October 1890, eleven days after the paper's own birth. Len served from 1935 to 1963 as managing director.<sup>5</sup>

A younger brother Selby Upton Harris, born in 1894, who joined the company in 1908 as a printer's devil, became the company's general manager in 1946. Both Leonard and Selby retired in

1. G.R. Beavan, Albury, letters to author, 1, 7 and 21 September 1993.
2. Pink, pp. 348, 351.
3. Pink, p. 354.
4. Pink, p. 357.
5. Pink, pp. 360-361.

1963 to hand over direction of the company to the fourth generation Geoffrey Philip (son of Selby); and Charles Ian, Lloyd John and Warren James (sons of Leonard). Both Len and Selby died at the age of seventy-three, on 4 July 1964 and 25 February 1967, respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Other members of the Harris family involved long term at an executive level in the business have included: Ian Harris and Lloyd Harris. Ian, Len's eldest son, joined the company at fifteen, in 1932, and managed the Devonport company 1947-68. He was a director 1952-80. Lloyd Harris, B.Sc., worked for the company for precisely forty years till the end of 1986. He was the manager from 1963-86 and has been a director since 1952. In 1990 there were three fifth-generation descendants of Robert Harris working with Harris and Co. Ltd.: Paul Harris, company secretary and finance director (who became managing director in 1991); Russell Jarvis, deputy chief day sub-editor; and Nigel Harris, promotions manager.<sup>2</sup>

The Harrises have engendered loyalty amongst other families, not merely their own. For instance, three generations of the Cherry family sat in the editor's chair for eighty-seven years, and the 'reign' was brought to an end only when the third generation Cherry accepted a promotion to general manager. Philip James Cherry served as editor from 1902 till his death on 30 December 1942. His eldest son, Jack, succeeded him, from 1943 till his own death in 1968. Jack's own eldest son, David, edited the *Advocate* from 1968 till his appointment as general manager in 1989.<sup>3</sup> David Cherry said:

There have been many examples of sons and daughters following one, or both, their parents in working for the company. They tend to stay, too. More than fifty have completed twenty years' service, entitling them to membership of Harris and Co. Ltd.'s 20-Year Club. They represent a fifth of the full-time staff. Twelve of them have completed more than forty years.

1. Pink, pp. 361-365.

2. Pink, pp. 368-369, 374.

3. Pink, p. 355.

Cherry gave the example of the Robson family which had four members employed by Harris and Co.<sup>1</sup>

Both the Mott and Harris families have withstood great pressures since World War II, pressures that could easily have spelt *finis* for their dynasties. For the Motts the pressures came principally from within, and for the Harrises from without. At Albury, on 6 December 1949 the original company of H.C. Mott and Co., became The Border Morning Mail Pty. Ltd. when H.C. Mott, then aged seventy-seven, made over his shares equally to his children in exchange for an annuity. This well-intentioned act led to several years of upheaval at the *Mail*, and especially within the Mott family. One of the beneficiaries of H.C. Mott's action was Milton Mott, who, unlike his brothers and sisters, had never worked at the *Mail*. On 6 December 1949, Melbourne Mott became managing director and the other directors appointed were Aglaia Hamilton (nee Mott), Haidee Davidson (nee Mott) and Tennyson Mott.<sup>2</sup>

When Milton Mott (1904-61) returned to Albury after an absence of thirty years, he was a dejected man. He was ill and his marriage had broken down. In 1950 Milton began work at the *Mail* and was soon appointed advertising manager. Melbourne (1915- ), by then the managing director, and Milton had only met as children. The family turmoil resulting from Milton's return was intense – possibly as intense as that which, some would say, led to the end of Sydney's Fairfax newspaper dynasty after five generations. In 1951, soon after Milton's appointment, Melbourne Mott resigned as managing director and moved to Melbourne where he bought a newsagency, but, at his father's behest, he became deputy chairman of the *Mail* and agreed to become chairman for ten years upon the death of H.C. Mott. Clifton Mott resigned as editor, sold his shares within the family and moved to Alexandria, Victoria, where he began to farm. In 1952, Tennyson Mott resigned as chief of staff to become a dairy farmer, but remained a director of the *Mail*.

1. Pink, pp. 372-374.

2. Beavan thesis, p. 41.



During that year, Milton Mott was appointed managing director and his father, H.C. Mott, resigned as governing director for medical reasons. Milton's sister, Haidee Davidson, took over that role, 'as a counterweight to Milton', but the decisions were made by Melbourne Mott as deputy chairman. Restored to health, H.C. Mott resumed his dominant role.<sup>1</sup>

Somehow, the family still pulled together, rather than apart (like the Fairfaxes did), and when Milton Mott died on 4 November 1961, the *Mail's* circulation had been steadily increasing during his nine years in executive control. It increased from 11,718 in 1950 to 15,373 in 1960. Total paging grew from a daily average of 17.48 in May 1950 to 22.15 in May 1960. With Milton Mott's death, Gordon Dowling became the first non-family general manager, and Melbourne Mott became the first chairman of the board. Before that there had been a system of a governing director, whose vote was worth more than every other vote on the board combined, and a managing director, Milton Mott. Dowling was general manager for twenty-one years till the end of 1982 when the present general manager, Gordon Beavan, was appointed.<sup>2</sup>

At Burnie, the pressures for the Harrises from without came from another family, the Rolphs, of Launceston's *Examiner*, but principally a latecomer to that family: Edmund Rouse, who married into it in 1952 and inherited the mantle of managing director of the ENT group (which published the *Examiner*) in 1969. Rouse made no secret of the scorn for the Harris family. Such were the relations between the two companies that Rouse once admitted that the Harris family 'would sell to the Devil before they'd sell to us'. Another time, when asked whether the Harris family posed a threat to ENT, Rouse said: 'They wouldn't have the balls and they wouldn't have the brass.' To Rouse, the Harrises must have appeared a conservative, inward looking company, ripe for the

1. Beavan thesis, pp. 41-42; G.R. Beavan, letters to author, 21 September 1993 and 6 May 1994; Douglas K. Milham, letter to Melbourne L. Mott, 25 June 1958.

2. Beavan thesis, pp. 42, 67; G.R. Beavan, letter to author, 7 September 1993.

picking and he devoted many thousands of dollars pushing the *Examiner* into the *Advocate's* market along the north-west coast. The strategy was to win the circulation battle and force the Harrises to sell the *Advocate*.<sup>1</sup> Harris and Co.'s chairman Geoff Harris said in 1990 the company had always faced competition from the other two Tasmanian dailies, but in 1967 the *Examiner* had claimed publicly that it 'intended to capture half our market and become the dominant print medium in our traditional North-West and West Coast area of circulation'.

They tried, with no expense spared, but they failed. Our employees were more than prepared to meet the challenge head-on, and our readers and advertisers stuck with us.<sup>2</sup>

In the event, it was a flawed strategy, according to Nicholas Way because it assumed that the *Advocate's* readers would desert their local newspaper. Rouse chose either to forget or ignore the parochialism that splits Tasmania into three geographic regions: the south, north and north-west. Earlier, in the fifties, Rouse had fought off a challenge from the Hobart *Mercury* by tapping Launceston's parochialism. He had made a prophetic statement: 'No paper produced outside a region can displace a good local paper.' He was correct, but such was his arrogance that he thought it did not apply to his paper.<sup>3</sup> At its peak, the *Examiner* had only 4,000 buyers west of Deloraine, the unofficial dividing line between the north and north-west. The *Advocate* had 27,000. Jim Harris, former general manager of the *Advocate* and a present director, now admits that Rouse's push along the coast in the mid-1960s and early 1970s, 'shook us up a bit'.

We started selling subscriptions door to door to ensure we didn't lose circulation. With hindsight, I think we all rather enjoyed that episode and it proved our belief that local communities will remain loyal to a good local newspaper and that outsiders cannot muscle in...<sup>4</sup>

1. Nicholas Way, 'A Tasmanian tortoise wins the paper chase', *BRW*, 22 May 1992, p. 45.
2. Pink, p. 370.
3. Lloyd Harris, letter to author, 2 December 1993.
4. Way, *BRW*, 22 May 1992, p. 45.

Geoff Harris provided another insight into the Rouse invasion. 'We noticed that every time the *Examiner* made a push along the coast we would pick up circulation. To some degree, Edmund was doing our job for us.' Harris said the *Advocate's* circulation growth during the 'war' was ten times that of its rival.<sup>1</sup>

With that bitter struggle behind them, the Harrises must have found it sweet indeed to take a forty per cent interest, alongside Rural Press Ltd.'s sixty per cent, in the takeover of the *Examiner* in August 1990. Four months earlier, Rouse had fallen foul of the justice system, if not the democratic system. He pleaded guilty to a charge of attempting to bribe the newly elected Tasmanian Labor Parliamentarian Jim Cox to cross sides and so maintain government for the Liberals. Rouse served eighteen months of a three-year sentence.<sup>2</sup>

Harris and Co.'s secretary and finance director, Paul Harris, a fifth-generation member of the family, masterminded the strategy to acquire forty per cent of the *Examiner* without having to worry about a raid on the company's share register. An economics graduate of the Universities of Tasmania and Queensland, Paul spent hours poring over ENT's balance sheets, of looking for weaknesses in its corporate structure. Yet, in the end, ENT's most vulnerable point, being publicly listed, highlighted Harris & Co.'s greatest strength - private company status (50,000 six per cent cumulative preference shares are the only capital issued to the public). It enabled Harris & Co. to acquire slowly shares in ENT whenever the price weakened, giving it leverage in any corporate duel.<sup>3</sup> The Harris family could remain a private company for the simple reason that the desire for growth was always tempered by a distrust of debt, with conservative balance sheets the order of the day (in the 1976 accounts, property was based on 1952 valuations). Even the acquisition of the forty per cent

1. Way, *BRW*, 22 May 1992, p. 45; Pink, p. 370.

2. *The Examiner*, Launceston, 7 November 1991.

3. Way, *BRW*, 22 May 1992, p. 44.

stake in the *Examiner*, which was worth \$11.2 million, was not debt financed.<sup>1</sup>

Paul Harris joined the company in 1975 and was appointed company secretary and finance director the following year. In 1991, when his father, Geoffrey Harris, who was seventy-four, relinquished the chief executive's position, Paul took over with his father remaining chairman. Geoff believes the company's greatest achievement in his time – an era of newspaper takeovers – has been to retain its independence.<sup>2</sup>

Assets in the balance sheet at 30 June 1991 were \$24.2 million and net assets were \$18.4 million. The masthead, as an intangible asset, was valued in 1987 at \$2.2 million. This rapid growth in the past fifteen years came from property, office supplies, business machines, printing and a bi-weekly free newspaper in Hobart called *Southern Star*.<sup>3</sup> From the small and tentative family company of a century ago, Harris and Company Limited, is now one of the oldest and most successful independent family-controlled unlisted public companies in Tasmania, with assets, including property investments, totalling about \$25 million. It has a staff of 250 permanent and 100 casual employees in the newspaper and commercial printing companies, and subsidiary companies in Burnie and Devonport, and operating offices in Ulverstone, Launceston and Hobart.<sup>4</sup> The Harris dynasty, fully aware of its past, is looking to the future with optimism – so much so that in March 1994 it became much more serious about its Hobart suburban venture, the *Southern Star*. Instead of distributing two issues a week through supermarkets, the family began producing four separate *Stars* – the *Glenorchy Star*, the *Bayside City Star*, the

1. Way, *BRW*, 22 May 1992, p. 44.

2. Pink, pp. 368, 374-375.

3. Way, *BRW*, 22 May 1992, p. 46.

4. Pink, p. 348.

*Kingsborough Star* and the *Eastern Shore Star* - targeted at different sections of Hobart. Hobart's *Mercury*, worried about an eroding advertising base, responded by launching their own letterboxed weekly, the *Community Express*.<sup>1</sup>

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Until at least the 1970s, in Australia and especially in country districts, family-run newspapers have been common, as Trevena's examination of the Victorian provincial press showed. Increasing concentration of ownership, coinciding with larger corporations taking an interest in buying country newspapers, has made it more difficult for the dynasties to survive even if the talent and will are there in the third or fourth generation. The Dunn newspaper dynasty was a product of its times, and it eventually dissipated because the third and fourth generations, with the notable exception of third-generation member Lex Dunn and, to a lesser extent, Rowley, Andrew and Peter Dunn, lost the vision that its patriarch had shared with his six sons. In New South Wales and Tasmania, the Motts and HARRISES, respectively, stand out because they have weathered the years, enduring pressures from within and without, being able to reject takeover bids, and maintaining private ownership of their newspaper enterprises. The Motts and the HARRISES have some significant similarities, especially in ethos, with Queensland's Dunn family, just as the Dunns do with the Fairfaxes, of Sydney, and the Ochs-Sulzbergers, of New York, as this thesis will demonstrate. Why the Motts and HARRISES have survived and the Dunns have not will be examined in Chapter 11.

1. Jack Beverley, 'Davies Bros & Harris Ltd start Hobart community paper war', *PANPA Bulletin*, April 1994, pp. 4-5.

**Security, stability and  
steady conservatism:**

**The Dunn newspaper ethos evolves**

*And so it is the steady conservative organ, the organ which tests and tries rather than simply rejects, each innovation, which endures.*

*-- Andrew Dunn jun., 1931.*

The Dunn family ethos of caution, conservatism, honesty, integrity, Presbyterian values, localism and personal involvement in the community evolved in the twenty years of struggle (1891-1911) which the patriarch Andrew Dunn, his second wife Jane and the six sons and two daughters endured in Maryborough when the Dunns controlled only one newspaper, the *Maryborough Chronicle*. Part of the nature of a newspaper's decisions or judgment about what to publish results from the ethos that the publication develops and part of it is the result of the societal context in which the newspaper operates - the very community processes which prevail. This has far-reaching implications for what the community will hear about, think about and talk about. This chapter examines how the administration of the Dunn newspapers evolved from family to corporate control, yet retained a strong family influence, and how the ethos mentioned above has influenced the style, tone and content of the newspapers which the family members have directed, managed and edited. In doing so, this chapter provides the backdrop for the ultimate merger of the Dunn family newspaper interests with those of other pioneering Queensland newspaper families. Lex Dunn is revealed as the key member of the third generation of the Dunns, a dynasty which was running out of impetus and enthusiasm.

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Their conservatism, their fundamental honesty, their religious faith, their essential optimism balanced by a deep-seated caution, their single-minded pursuit of goals, their professed humility, and their beliefs in hard work and nepotism would have drawn the Scot Andrew Dunn (1854-1934), the Englishman John Fairfax (1805-1877) and the Jew Adolph Ochs (1858-1935) to one another. Dunn was seen by his contemporaries as a man of simple tastes and direct methods. He learned above all things how 'to labour and to wait'.<sup>1</sup> W.H. Demaine, a political opposite for fifty years and yet a friend, said of Dunn:

He [was] a strong partisan, but he was a man you could agree to differ with and was markedly not bitter, though he missed no opportunity of forwarding the cause he believed in.<sup>2</sup>

John Fairfax was described by a contemporary as brave of heart, of sound and robust intelligence, transparently honest, and unswerving in obedience to a high moral principle. He believed that any young man might succeed if he chose. Fairfax would say, 'Let him be humble and learn, let him be willing to work and wait, let him show himself a man of integrity, let him be a true follower of Christ and God will not suffer his life to be a failure.'<sup>3</sup> Adolph Ochs was both cautious and optimistic, sentimental and tough, a short, dark-haired, blue-eyed little man who was very humble. He was a modest organiser of grand designs, possessing a sure insight into human nature and into what would sell, and still he was dedicated to the old verities that in another age would mark him as 'square'. But he truly believed that honesty was the best policy, and so he honoured his father and mother and was never blasphemous, and he was convinced that hard work would reap rewards.<sup>4</sup>

Dunn, Fairfax and Ochs initiated family businesses that, in their own community contexts, became business empires, and they themselves became the patriarchs of dynasties. Planning is crucial to any business, and the starting point of planning for a family business is the family meeting. This is the

1. Newspaper News, 2 September 1929.
2. W.H. Demaine, in The Alert, 4 May 1934, p. 10.
3. Souter, Heralds & Angels, p. 30.
4. Gay Talese, The Kingdom and the Power, p. 85.

mechanism through which most plans are made and the forum in which the family's future hopes and ideals are developed. Gaining consensus and opening discussion on critical family business issues are its valuable by-products. Family meetings can also help settle disputes and increase family members' awareness of the history of the business. They provide a vehicle to communicate any topic of general concern. As a result they make a vital contribution to keeping a family business healthy.<sup>1</sup> Different family businesses introduce family meetings at different stages. Those that hold them when the children are young, typically, discuss family matters only, such as the assignment of tasks. Families that begin to meet when their offspring are teenagers, and thus old enough to work in the business, have different agendas. They tend to discuss the history and the nature of the business. As offspring become adults, however, the nature and purpose of these meetings change. Now the 'children' are likely to begin actively considering careers in the family business. As a result, owners who had never before considered holding a family meeting may now convene one for the first time. But there are two schools of thought about who should attend: one says only those who are adults and blood relatives should attend; the other says all family members should attend because all are affected.<sup>2</sup>

For the forty-three years that Andrew Dunn sen. was a newspaper proprietor, the Dunn family operated with the loosest of organisational hierarchies because the patriarch was the decisionmaker. He chaired the board of each of the companies, but the meetings were really family discussions. It was a time when trust was firmly embedded in the family and a man's word was his bond. It was only in 1929, five years before Andrew Dunn sen. died, that the family began recording minutes of its meetings to discuss general issues related to their shareholdings. In the 1920s, keeping track of the affairs of newspaper companies at Maryborough, Rockhampton,

1. John L. Ward, Keeping the Family Business Healthy: How to Plan for Continuing Growth, Profitability, and Family Leadership (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987), p. 131.

2. Ward, pp. 131-132.



Warwick and Toowoomba had become an increasingly complex task, leading to the decision that the family enterprise should keep minutes of its meetings. Although there was a semi-autonomous board in each of the four towns where the Dunns owned newspapers, Andrew Dunn co-ordinated them all. Family meetings, sometimes held at the Pialba (Hervey Bay) holiday home of Andrew Dunn sen., discussed capital expenditure and the appointment of editors and other senior staff. The Dunn wills were written so that newspaper shares stayed within the family. A family bank account was opened in the 1920s, but, as will be detailed later, it was only in 1957 that a family holding company was incorporated.<sup>1</sup>

The first recorded family meeting was held in Maryborough on 30 and 31 May 1929, about six months after the return from overseas of the patriarch, Andrew Dunn, his second wife, Jane, and their two daughters, Flora (Armitage) and Ruth. Attending that meeting were Andrew and Jane, and six of his seven surviving children: three the product of his first marriage, to Kate, and four the product of his second, to Jane. The only absentee was Alex Dunn.<sup>2</sup>

Jim Dunn's death in 1925 at the age of forty-four - he was survived by a wife of five years and two infant sons - had produced irritating complications in maintaining family harmony and a strict balance of shareholdings among family members. Jim's widow, the highly educated Mary Elizabeth Dunn, did not fit smoothly into the extended family and did not readily agree to financial proposals. The family appointed Queensland Trustees Ltd. to act on her behalf, so they could pass the buck to the company and avoid the niggling direct dealings with her. Six members of the family bought the interest that Jim Dunn's estate held in the family undertakings. In the view of Andrew Dunn sen., this had 'disarranged and thrown out of gear the conditions under which each member of the family had an equal interest in all our undertakings'. Each of the six purchasers sold to the three

1. Kirkpatrick, in *ADE*, Vol. 8, pp. 371-372.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 29/30 May 1929.

non-purchasing members (the trustees) the proportion of their original holdings so that equality of interest was restored. The effect of the sale was backdated to 1 January 1929. It meant each of the nine family members now held a one-ninth total interest in each of the family's properties, with, however, Andrew Dunn sen. and his wife, Jane, each having one-ninth and so together they held a little more power than the others. This, incidentally, was not the end of niggling dealings with Mary E. Dunn, through Queensland Trustees, over the years.<sup>1</sup>

When the family met formally again, the focus began to shift down the generations - partly because of the death at fifty-nine of Jane Dunn, second wife of Andrew Dunn sen. In 1933 the Dunns met to discuss a family agreement to control shares. With some third-generation members of the newspaper family becoming adults, the family had begun to consider the implications for shareholdings and whether shares should be transferred to daughters. There was, however, something much more contentious occupying family members' minds that day. The air was electric in the meeting room at the Hotel Canberra, Brisbane, on 9 October. With family chairman Andrew Dunn absent through illness, his eldest son, Andrew, took the chair. The discussion focused on a matter of broken trust: the chairman had deceived them. The record of the meeting occupies more than eight B-5 pages of single-spaced typing.<sup>2</sup>

Members of the family had, in effect, been subsidising the purchase of a block of land by Andrew Dunn sen.'s third wife, Marcia. When she had been unable to complete the purchase of a block of land she was contracted to buy at Hamilton, Brisbane, her husband had paid over a 900-pound cheque, drawn on the family's account - which held about 500 pounds at that time. The other family members, for the first time, found they were guarantors whenever their chairman, their father, incurred an overdraft on the family account.<sup>3</sup> They discovered this when Andrew sen., who was ill, asked Andrew jun. to inquire into

1. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 29-30 May 1929. Note: Jane Dunn was only nine years older than the eldest of the second generation, Andrew jun.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 9 October 1933.

3. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 9 October 1933.

the processing of the cheque drawn on the Queensland National Bank, Maryborough. Andrew jun. learned from the manager that it had been arranged that when A. Dunn's account was in debit up to a limit of 1,500 pounds, and the family account in credit to a greater amount, no interest was to be charged to A. Dunn; and that, following 'the usual banking practice', the bank for its own protection was authorised to apply credits in the family account to satisfy A. Dunn's indebtedness in default. This arrangement dated back eleven years to a mortgage of shares drawn up in 1922. The effect of A. Dunn's overdrawing his private account was to mortgage the shares of the individual members of the family to the extent of the overdraft.<sup>1</sup> Despite being misled by their father, the shareholders patched up the problem satisfactorily and kept their eyes on the bigger game. Herbie Dunn obtained from Marcia Dunn a voluntary verbal undertaking to lodge the deeds of the Hamilton property as security for the overdraft required to complete the purchase. The sons and daughters of the patriarch pledged themselves individually not to borrow on the security of their shares for their own purposes except with the consent of a three-fourths majority of members of the family. To cover the overdraft they faced, they gave permission to their father to borrow up to 400 pounds on his shares if he wished.<sup>2</sup>

After World War II, the family's thoughts turned towards maintaining the dynasty. Stronger moves were made to encourage third-generation involvement in the family's businesses, but no haste was exhibited. The Toowoomba board, discussing the company's long-term directions, moved to place more responsibility on 'the sons of members of the board fully employed by the company'. And so it asked Andrew Dunn, grandson of the patriarch, to report to the next annual meeting on the various activities of the literary department after working in each branch. Rowley Dunn was appointed production supervisor.<sup>3</sup> At a family meeting, senior members

1. This was within five weeks of taking a majority interest in the Toowoomba Chronicle and shortly before buying out the Darling Downs Gazette and merging it with the Chronicle.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 9 October 1933.

3. Minutes of the Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 26 February 1945.

approved in principle a proposal to appoint junior members of the family as directors of the various companies.<sup>1</sup> At that stage the prominent third-generation members were Andrew (son of Andrew jun.); Rowley (son of Herbie); and James Cran (son of Andrew jun.). Lex Dunn was soon to be discharged from the Navy and would return to Brisbane to practise as a solicitor.

Alan Dunn, one of the best and brightest of the third generation, had died after illness in 1942 at the age of thirty-two when sub-editor of the *Toowoomba Chronicle*. He was being groomed to replace his father, Herbie, as editor.<sup>2</sup> David and Hugh, sons of James McIntyre Dunn, were intellectually brilliant, but maintained only a distant interest in the newspapers. David became a barrister and was appointed to the Bench of the Queensland Supreme Court in 1974. Hugh, a Rhodes Scholar, became a lecturer and later served Australia in a number of countries, including the People's Republic of China, as an ambassador. Early in his career he transmitted occasional newspaper articles to the Dunn papers from Canada in return for assistance he had received in establishing himself as a lecturer at Toronto University.<sup>3</sup> In 1954 the family discussed how to encourage the younger members of the family to take a greater interest in the conduct and affairs of the family's undertakings.<sup>4</sup> But the loyalty, drive and interest that the second-generation members had exhibited was not present to the same degree in some of the third-generation members, with Lex Dunn a notable exception. Andrew Dunn would like to be classed in the same category, but he was never keen about accepting enduring responsibility. The Dunn family looked up to him at board level, but he 'wasn't a terribly good decision-maker', one senior colleague said.<sup>5</sup>

1. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 5 September 1945.

2. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 12 March 1942, p. 4.

4. Hugh A. Dunn, telephone interview with author, 13 March 1992; minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 27 July 1953.

4. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 29 July 1954.

5. Non-attributable section of interview with author.

No event signified the advent of the third-generation as the key factor in the Dunn family newspapers more than the death of the chairman of each of their boards, Andrew Dunn jun., on 31 January 1956. He had been chairman for twenty-one years nine months since his father's death, yet he was remembered more for his role as head of the family, especially by those directors and shareholders outside the immediate family circle. In that role, he had tactfully solved problems, such as the Globe printery crisis of the 1920s-1930s that involved different branches of the Dunn families through marriage. Although second-generation member Herbie Dunn took over as chairman - and was, in turn, succeeded by brothers Hector and Alex, third-generation member Lex Dunn assumed the mantle of the visionary and became the first real activist since the patriarch, Andrew Dunn sen.<sup>1</sup>

After Andrew Dunn sen. died in 1934, the family took thirteen years to begin talking seriously about formalising their organisational base, and another ten years to do something about it.<sup>2</sup> It was only with the advent at family meetings of the legal mind of Lex Dunn, through his role as the new manager of the Rockhampton newspaper, that the family's thoughts were focused afresh on the untidy organisational base. In Lex's view, the meetings were conducted 'very informally and a bit irregularly'.<sup>3</sup> Legally, procedures were sometimes not 'entirely acceptable'. Lex made his presence felt from the start. In 1935 he graduated in Arts at the University of Queensland and in August 1938 he became the first graduate from the University's T.C. Beirne Law School to be admitted to the Bar. He served as Associate to the Chief Justice of Queensland, then Sir James Blair, who retired in May 1940. After naval service from 1941-45 in the war, Lex practised as a solicitor in Brisbane for ten years, firstly for a group and then in solo practice. At the first Dunn family meeting Lex attended, in 1956, the members decided

1. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 7 and 29 February 1956.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 5 September 1947 and 1 November 1948.

3. L.S. Dunn, interview with author, 12 February 1992.



Yengarie Cricket Club, premiers in the Maryborough competition, 1902. Back row: G. Cran, H. Dunn, J. Forbes, D. Cran, J. Dunn, H. Hart, P. Mahoney, A. Dunn. Middle row: W. Gordon, L.J. Cran, J.R.D. Mahoney (capt.), Bert Gordon, A.R. Gordon. Front row: T. Thompson, B.J. Mahoney, J.P. Mahoney.



Lex Dunn (1913-1993)

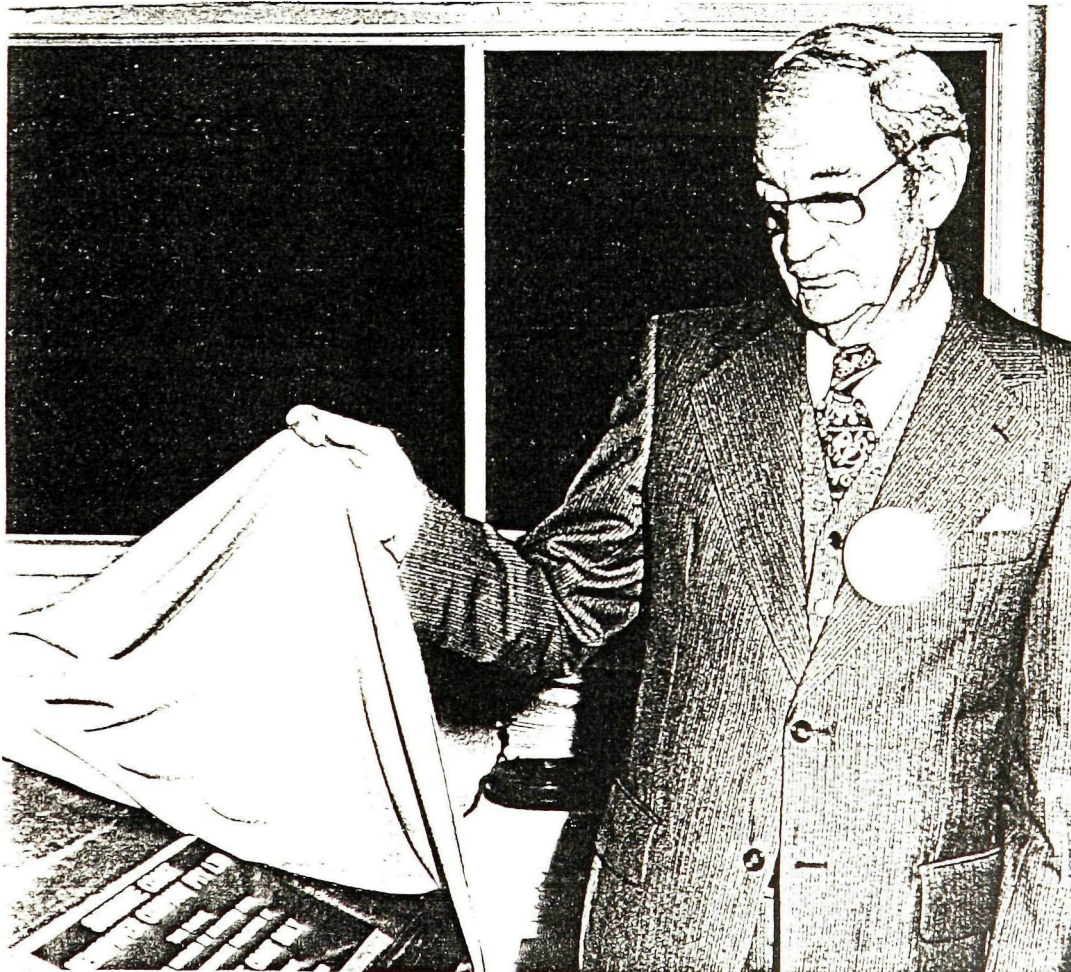


Rowley Dunn (1911-1971)



ABOVE: Chief Justice Blair (right) and his Associate, Lex Dunn, 1940.

BELOW: Andrew Dunn (1910-1994) at the launch of the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, July 1980.



against acting on a proposal that the family newspaper organisation be listed as a public company. Instead they asked Lex to prepare a report on the proposal.<sup>1</sup>

Five months later, in March 1957, Lex Dunn proposed a full holding company. The family asked him to tidy up any loose ends with its solicitors and to have the documents prepared. Three weeks later the family met again, rubber-stamping Lex's actions. On 7 June 1957 A. Dunn and Company Pty. Limited was incorporated. On 1 July it acquired all the shares in the family's three newspaper companies at Maryborough, Rockhampton and Toowoomba. Lex Dunn was appointed secretary and served in that position (for all but one year when G.P. Dunn was secretary) until the merger in 1968 that created Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. Lex reflected later:

The importance of the fact that I was a solicitor was that they thought they had to behave themselves. It led to the easing of the way [for the holding company] - well, Butts [the family's solicitor] and I did all the work - they just said yes to everything I wanted to do.<sup>2</sup>

Lex Dunn must be regarded as the architect of A. Dunn and Company.

A balance of regional interests was achieved from Day 1 of incorporation in 1957. Herbie Dunn, Toowoomba's managing director for twenty-nine years to 1951, was elected chairman. His deputy was younger brother Hector, Maryborough's managing director since 1934. Rockhampton, with its manager, Lex Dunn, serving as secretary of the holding company, became the base for the organisation.

One of the first actions of the new company's board revealed that jealousy existed about long-preserved power at the local level. The directors and the managers had become accustomed to

1. L.S. Dunn, interviews with author, Brisbane, 16 March 1977 and 21 February 1992; minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 24 October 1956; undated Brisbane newspaper cutting, circa 1939.

2. L.S. Dunn, interview, 12 February 1992.



a high level of regional autonomy. The issue that was seen as the thin end of the wedge was the management and business advisory scheme proposed by Lex Dunn at the holding company's first board meeting. The board empowered him to arrange for these services to be provided to each of the three newspaper companies. But the unusual scheme - under which the top executives of each company, and some of the retired directors, would, technically, be employed by the holding company which would charge the individual newspaper companies for their services - was little loved and short lived. It ended on 30 June 1961. Initially the monthly fees were: Maryborough 600 pounds, Toowoomba 900 pounds and Rockhampton 1000 pounds. Soon the Toowoomba and Rockhampton fees were brought into line and rose to 1100 pounds in 1960 and 1200 in 1961, but the Maryborough fee remained at 600 pounds throughout the scheme.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the managerial executives saw the scheme as unwieldy and unnecessary. Dissent of this nature was unheard of in the years when the patriarch Andrew Dunn was head of the family and dictated what happened in the newspapers. In 1958 *Maryborough Chronicle* manager George English, in a personal note to *Toowoomba Chronicle* manager Walter Bruce, said that he had spoken to the Maryborough company auditors about how to list the expenditure on the management service.

In our case, the outlay will appear in our (financial) Statements as Administrative Expenses. No other information will be given except on the details attached to final statements - 'Administrative expenses paid to A. Dunn and Co. Pty Limited'. In view of the increase in outlay by the separate companies for Management services since the advent of A. Dunn and Company, it is considered likely that further information will be sought by the Taxation Department. It is thought that the enquiry may be to A. Dunn and Company. Presumably Lex would have anticipated that taxation angle in the first place.

1. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 1 August 1957, 31 October/1 November 1957, and 14 February 1961.

The advice we received is to await any further possible enquiry when the three companies should, in consultation with A. Dunn and Company, be in a position to give a consistent and if possible directed (from A. Dunn and Company) explanation.<sup>1</sup>

An incident in 1959 reflected partly the niggling sensitivity to the power question and partly the underlying friction between brothers Andrew and Lex Dunn. Andrew tendered his resignation as editorial consultant and reconstruction supervisor at Maryborough. The board accepted the resignation, but Flora Connal, supported by James Cran Dunn, sought a way out of the tangle of family tensions enmeshing Andrew and Lex Dunn. They successfully proposed that Andrew be re-appointed as editorial consultant at a salary of thirty-six pounds a week; Lex was the lone dissenter.<sup>2</sup>

Lex Dunn decided the tensions created by the management scheme were not worth the trouble. In Maryborough in November 1960, he gave notice of a proposal to end the scheme and the board scrapped it when it met in Toowoomba in February 1961. The scheme formally ended on 30 June 1961. Under the new arrangements, Maryborough paid ten per cent of the administrative costs of the holding company and both Toowoomba and Rockhampton paid forty-five per cent.<sup>3</sup> Lex Dunn doubted whether the managers and other executives had understood what the scheme was all about.

I tried to explain it, but they didn't like it because they had to run to me too much for this or that. And so, in the end, they said so many mistakes were being made - no point. The whole thing was that they were supposed to record things and make minutes.

Dunn told the managers and his fellow directors he would scrap it if it were not working.

1. G. English, letter to W. Bruce, 21 July 1958 (held by author).

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 24 November 1959.

3. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 21 November 1960, and 14 February 1961.

I never saw any of my suggestions so overwhelmingly disapproved, so I just cancelled it... A book entry cancelled it. I was not 100 per cent in favour of it but our solicitor seemed to favour it. It was meant to put all the managers on the same salary but otherwise I didn't see any great advantages.<sup>1</sup>

In 1957, with the loose family organisation a thing of the past, the holding company moved swiftly to exert its influence on the administration of the three newspaper companies. On 1 August, the directors dropped the axe on long-serving Maryborough editor George Wilson. They wanted him retired from the end of the year, as will be shown in Chapter 5. They centralised non-newspaper investment by the group by instructing that all investments in outside companies not strictly connected with newspaper publication were to be made by A. Dunn and Company Pty. Limited and not by the individual newspaper companies. They centralised control of expenditure by directing the boards of the newspaper companies that no purchase of plant, or expenditure on buildings, exceeding 500 pounds was to be made without the express consent of the holding company until otherwise determined by its board. They decided to standardise, as far as possible, the balance sheets and reports of all companies directly or indirectly controlled by the Dunn board.<sup>2</sup> Three months later the board decided to establish a capital reserve fund as part of a four-year financial policy, dating from 1 January 1958. A four-year ceiling of 110,000 pounds was set on capital improvements and this was reviewed regularly. The family was not forgotten, however; the board decided to employ four of its directors during their lifetimes: chairman Herbie Dunn, Hector Dunn, Alex Dunn and Flora Armitage.<sup>3</sup>

1. L.S. Dunn, interview with the author, 21 February 1992.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co. 1 August 1957.

3. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 31 October/1 November 1957.

One of Andrew Dunn's grandsons, himself called Andrew, expressed the fundamental editorial philosophy of the Dunn newspapers when he addressed a journalism seminar on the Sunshine Coast in 1977. Andrew Dunn (1910-1994) saw the role of a newspaper in a community as being to inform, to protect and to lead. He said that, within the constraints of available space, legal limits and social sanctions, a newspaper's role was to publish those items which it believed the community would be interested to know or which the paper believed it was in the community's interests to make known.<sup>1</sup> What Dunn was advocating was reminiscent of the Ochs era at the *New York Times* when dullness had been no sin. Better to be dull than to dazzle and distort, the thinking went.<sup>2</sup>

Andrew Dunn contended that to protect its reading community, the newspaper had to be the champion of persons great and small. Readers had to be left in no doubt that they had been presented with both sides of the case, fairly, without colour, and to such an extent that the involved parties themselves could find no added comfort from the record. In leading, Dunn said a newspaper should not be over hasty in declaring a point of view.

Better to allow a little time so that the pros and cons can be better defined... In the matter of leadership, the knowledge that that paper does not habitually go off half-cocked can temper the tone of controversy without damaging vigour - something that certainly is not wanted, much less encouraged.<sup>3</sup>

In politics, the Dunn family supported the conservative parties, just as Andrew Dunn sen. had represented the conservative forces as a Nationalist Member of the Legislative Council (1914-22). In the State elections of 11 May 1929 and 11 June 1932, and the Federal elections of 12 October 1929 and 19 December 1931, Andrew Dunn jun. and Herbie Dunn unashamedly

1. A. Dunn, Sunshine Coast Newspapers Pty. Ltd. seminar, Alexandra Headlands, 6 August 1977: this Andrew Dunn died shortly after the original thesis was submitted - viz. Appendix 2.

2. Talese, pp. 6-7.

3. A. Dunn, Sunshine Coast Newspapers Pty. Ltd. seminar, Alexandra Headlands, 6 August 1977.

used the *Morning Bulletin* and the *Toowoomba Chronicle* respectively as organs to advocate the election of the conservative parties, even going to the extent of running boxed endorsements of candidates in advertisement-form, as is shown in Table 4 and in Appendix 5. In 1929, through the *Chronicle*, Herbie Dunn said the State Labor Government had demonstrated how 'the unfit to govern can make the lot of the governed practically intolerable'.<sup>1</sup> At Rockhampton, elder brother Andrew looked at the Labor Government for 'the temper and firmness of statesmen' and saw instead 'a gang of sordid hucksters whose extravagances have left no borrowing reserve, no margin of tax beyond which it would be safe to go, and a weakened will and determination of the people to develop honestly their heritage'.<sup>2</sup> At Maryborough, the Dunns' editor, George Wilson, concluded that in fourteen years Labor had fallen infinitely short of the dream it had presented to the people. Disappointment and disillusionment had been the result. 'The country ought to change the Government that lets it down,' Wilson wrote.<sup>3</sup> In 1931 Herbie Dunn suggested it had not been 'sanity' that had removed conservative leader Stanley Bruce from Federal Parliament two years earlier, but 'we believe sanity will put him in the one to be elected'.<sup>4</sup> Andrew Dunn's *Bulletin* editorial suggested Labor candidate Frank Forde was 'doomed to political extinction' if his record were used as a basis on which Rockhampton electors determined their vote.<sup>5</sup>

Ponderously putting the case for tossing out the Scullin Labor Government, the *Maryborough Chronicle* contended that a party which did not enjoy the confidence of a large section of its own members had no acceptable claim upon the suffrage of the

1. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 11 May 1929, p. 6.
2. *Morning Bulletin*, 10 May 1929, p. 8.
3. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 9 May 1929, p. 6.
4. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 19 December 1931, p. 6.
5. *Morning Bulletin*, 19 December 1931.

## Table 4

The Dunn policy:  
in practice, 1929

and Gals, and you will be suc-

**ANGMEAD & GILBERT,**  
TAILORS,  
Y CLEANING SPECIALISTS.

## FUNERAL NOTICE.

THE Friends of the deceased **ARTHUR BROGAN** are invited to attend the funeral of the late **ARTHUR BROGAN**, of the Branch, to move from St. Patrick's Cathedral THIS (Thursday) AFTERNOON at 2 o'clock to the Toowoomba Crematorium.

## HEAD ROLL SOCIETY.

MEMBERS and Members of the above Society are requested to attend in a procession to the funeral of the late **ARTHUR BROGAN**, of the Branch, to move from St. Patrick's Cathedral THIS (Thursday) AFTERNOON at 2 o'clock to the Toowoomba Crematorium.

**George Seaton & Sons, Ltd.,**  
-TS.

and Day or Night.  
DESIGNS for all or  
on Shortest Notice, by expert  
Artists.

**C. ZIEGLER & SONS,**  
MONUMENTAL MASONS,  
TRIVEN STREET, and at  
CEMETERY GATES.  
Artificial Wreaths.

**Toowoomba Chronicle.**

And

**DARLING DOWNS GAZETTE.**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1929.**

## LAND SETTLEMENT.

annual report of the Land Administration Board, which was recently presented to Parliament, should have more than a passing interest for the general public. It is the end of a system of land administration that has prevailed for fourteen years, and that passes with scant regret by any one who appreciates the value of the land as a factor in the production of national wealth. In the fourteen years of Labour rule in Queensland, the only good thing it did was the removal of the commission to give into the condition of the orchardists engaged in the production of wood. Out of that inquiry came the recognition of the need to raise the areas of grazing home-

workers in the cities whose means of living are so largely dependent upon the production of wealth from the soil, should not think over these figures for a long time, and absorb in full the meaning they have for them. We should lay ourselves open to the charge of not presenting these figures in their true perspective if it were not also added that the population of Queensland was 660,158 in 1914, and 916,689 in the year ending June 30, 1929. The population increased by 38.8 per cent., and land settlement decreased by 63.7 per cent. A set of irrefutable facts is here presented to electors. One can shut one's eyes to them, but the facts remain and must be seen as soon as the eyes are opened. There is nothing to be gained by refusing to acknowledge them, but a great deal is gained by their acceptance by intelligent men and women. So great a loss was made by the Labour Party over the alienation of land, that the individual who was not in possession of the facts of land settlement might be excused for believing that unborn generations were likely to lose their patrimony. The land cannot run away. It will be here to greet the unborn generations. And if it be well used by this and the next succeeding few generations it will be a finer heritage for those who come after them. But let us make a concrete case of the fuss that has been raised in the past few years about the alienation of land. The territorial area of Queensland is approximately 429,120,000 acres of which 18,171,909 acres have been alienated by deed of grant, or 4.21 per cent. of the whole State. There are in process of alienation 6,307,783 acres, or 1.47 per cent. of the whole State. There still remains nearly 94 per cent. of land unalienated. We are now passing back to land settlement legislation very much like it was when the destroying hand of the Labour Party touched it. Before the old 4 per cent. is alienated ten or more years will have passed, but then a change will be made in the use of the land by the orchardist the grower of grain, and the dairyman, that will render Queensland a much more attractive land for the home-maker. We have been told that if a man be given a barren rock, and if it be impressed upon him that it is his personal property which he may transmit to his heirs, he will by great and continuous toil convert it into a beautiful garden. The most modern examples of the

## A DISFRANCHISED CONSTITUENCY.

## POINTS FOR ELECTORS TO CONSIDER.

Sir Littleton Groom, throughout the present campaign, has devoted much attention to the practice of the House of Commons in regard to the Speakership.

It has been clearly shown, however, that the English practice of abstention from voting has not been established in Australia. The reason is that it involves the complete disfranchisement of the constituency represented by the Speaker.

Erskine May, the recognised authority on British parliamentary procedure, says: "The Speaker's constituents do not go to the poll; they cannot call on their representative to vote either for or against any measure. As the Speaker never meets his constituents to discuss politics one of the chief means of present-day political education is lost to them. Political organisation is suspended in a Speaker's constituency."

In 1926, while occupying the office of Speaker, Sir Littleton Groom toured the electorate and addressed many meetings on an important political issue. Did he then degrade his high office by violating British traditions? His constituents did not think so. Even his opponents raised no voice against this departure from the practice of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

No constituency in Australia will put itself in a position that will deprive it of any voice in Parliament.

Sir Littleton Groom by his refusal to vote with the Leader of his party on the Maritime Industries Bill in committee, not only disfranchised the Darling Downs; but prevented the Chairman of Committees from giving a casting vote in favour of the Government, thereby disfranchising the Oxley electorate.

This meant that one-fifth of the electors of Queensland had no voice in Parliament.

Electors of the Darling Downs should avoid all risk of anything of a like nature recurring. Their interests demand that they shall have a representative who will raise his voice in support of those interests in Parliament and out of Parliament, at party meetings and in public.

Place the figures on your ballot paper in the following order:—

- 2 GROOM  
3 LLEWELYN  
1 MORGAN

(W. H. A. Dunn, "Chronicle" Office).

electors of Australia. 'In the face of imminent danger it is always wiser to take a risk to secure safety than to take none at all.'<sup>1</sup> In 1932 Herbie Dunn appealed to the Toowoomba electors to do all that lay in their power to ensure the return of the Moore conservative Government.<sup>2</sup>

The Dunn family newspapers gave money to the conservative parties – for example, in 1928, 1932 and 1957 – but they did not easily give space for Labor to promote its cause. At the end of 1929, when the secretary of Federal Labor Party enclosed the first of a series of articles from his party, he was informed by the Maryborough board of the problems of finding space for such material. It would be difficult, he was told, to find room for party letters from all the different parties in Federal and State politics as well as publishing the individual speeches of district parliamentary representatives, but that the articles would be dealt with by the editor as he deemed fit. In the lead-up to the 1958 Federal elections, A. Dunn and Co. decided that while, as a general principle, the policies of the subsidiaries should support the Liberal-Country Party, the nature and amount of such support would be a matter for each subsidiary to deal with locally.<sup>3</sup>

The conservative political philosophy of the Dunns was confirmed in a 1966 document. The Dunn family committed to writing its view of the policy and function of its newspapers – a view passed on in earlier years, no doubt, by osmosis, by percolation of values from proprietor to manager to editor to reporter. The document stated that the general policy of the newspapers of A. Dunn and Company Pty. Ltd. was to support 'free enterprise and the liberty of the individual, where such principles were exercised within the law'.

1. Maryborough Chronicle, 18 December 1931, p. 6.

2. Toowoomba Chronicle, 11 June 1932.

3. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co. Ltd., 19 December 1928, 5 December 1929 and 9 May 1932; minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd., 11 June 1957; minutes of A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd., 7/8 October 1958.

The group's newspapers are not, and are not to seem to be, committed by editorial expression to any particular political party. The policy direction politically is to the Right. Support on an issue may be given to the Country Party and/or Liberal Party but such support arises from their identification with the Right as opposed to the Left and not from the fact of their existence as political organisations. It does not necessarily follow from this, however, that the group's newspapers agree with and commend all political statements and acts of the Right parties. If such statements and/or acts appear to give an unfair sectional advantage, or if they appear unjust or vindictive, they are to be opposed.

The statement said that the Dunn newspapers did not support Labor policy where it appeared to have 'a socialistic flavour', or where it appeared that the policy, though innocent in itself, could be carried to lengths damaging to the free-enterprise and liberty-of-the individual principles referred to in the outline of general policy.

The policy of the group's newspapers is not 'anti-Labor' (although it is inevitable that Labor supporters will label it so). More correctly, the policy would be described as 'non-Labor'.<sup>1</sup>

It could be read from this, the policy statement said, that Labor could be given support with some reservations. The group's newspapers would, for instance, support many Labor points on humanitarian grounds and for the furtherance of social justice, but not because they were Labor policy points.

In support of political candidates, the first requirement should be the character of the man or woman; the second, his or her probable capacity to give adequate representation. The group's newspapers could be expected to support the views of any party or person which appear most likely to advance the general interests of their respective areas.<sup>2</sup>

1. A. Dunn and Company Pty. Ltd, policy statement, 1 April 1966 (copy held by author).  
2. A. Dunn and Co., policy statement.



Such a definitive statement of policy is unusual in the newspaper world where, for instance, Warren Breed found in a contemporary American study of social control in the newsroom that policy was never written down. Instead, policy was made clear through such means as the make-up of the paper, which was, in effect, 'a policy order'. Breed said the process of learning policy crystallised into a process of social control in which deviations were punished (usually gently) by reprimand, cuts in a story, the withholding of friendly comment by an executive. This process of social control was based far more on negative concepts of what could not be done than on positive understanding of what could be done.<sup>1</sup>

Unusual though written statements of policy might have been in the United States, the Fairfaxes did in Sydney what the Dunns had done in Queensland. After extensive consultation within the group, the Fairfax board adopted in 1984 a statement of principles on the tradition and policy of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, largely written by Sir Warwick Fairfax. The memorandum, which coincided with the appointment of a new editor-in-chief of the *Herald*, marked no significant departure from the principles and standards of the past, but it restated them in a form that would be helpful, in practice, to directors, executives and editors, James Fairfax (chairman, 1977-87) has written. It dealt specifically with the *Herald* — although it would be a touchstone for the other Fairfax papers — and began with four principles dealing with the Christianity, support of the British monarchy, the public-service role of newspapers and the need for accuracy and impartiality. The *Herald* supported a free enterprise society because of its superiority over other forms of society in producing prosperity and welfare.

The degree of socialism, government control or regulation is to be judged by its results. For this reason the *Herald* has never attached itself to any particular political party... The *Herald* supports whichever party it believes is acting in the national interest.<sup>2</sup>

The Dunns would have been happy with the Fairfax statement.

1. Warren Breed, 'Social Control in the Newsroom', in Wilbur Schramm, ed., Mass Communications (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), 2nd ed., pp. 178-194.  
2. James Fairfax, My Regards to Broadway, pp. 183-184.

In Canberra, A.T Shakespeare, managing editor of the *Canberra Times* for thirty-eight years, shared a similar editorial philosophy as he demonstrated ultimately by selling his newspaper to the Fairfaxes in 1964. He did not know how an editor could satisfy himself that he was completely independent in editorial expression if he accepted membership of a political party, a condition of which is loyalty to a platform which is formulated by other members of the party.

It is a better thing to espouse principles and programs which one believes are sound and to influence their acceptance by others than to choose to be bound to accept principles and programs which the editor may not himself have formulated.<sup>1</sup>

The professed honesty of the *Morning Bulletin* of the 1930s and the 'fair, clean and truthful news' of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* of the same era lived on in the early 1970s in the Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. [PNQ] mission statement. In 1973, the PNQ board saw one of its local and community objectives as being to provide news cover for local readers in all the group's papers and produce a paper that was considered to be in 'good taste'. Another objective was to establish the reputation of being a 'progressive, ethical leader of the media industry'. The group also set out to:

- Provide a balanced view of news events.
- Promote the local areas throughout the paper, by encouraging staff participation in local activities and through direct local investment and expenditure consistent with Group profit criteria.<sup>2</sup>

When corporate development consultants reviewed PNQ's organisation in 1983, they sought to isolate distinctive aspects of the group's corporate culture. The obvious ones, Strategies Pty. Ltd. said, were that PNQ was an amalgamation of separate 'strategic business units' (SBUs) which were geographically decentralised, operated within clearly definable geographical boundaries, were all pretty much in the

1. A.T. Shakespeare, 'The manager and the editor', in *Provincial Journalism Seminar*, University of New England, Armidale, May 1965, p. 8; *Canberra Times*, 50th Anniversary Souvenir Issue, 3 September 1976, p. 1.

2. Strategies Pty. Ltd., Brisbane, 'Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd.: Current Strategy and Overview', a 34-page report prepared by J.A. Mills, Managing Partner, Strategies Pty. Ltd., 30 August 1983, pp. 5-6.

same business, and used much the same technologies. PNQ people tended to identify very closely with the communities in which they lived and which their newspapers served. There tended to be relatively little interchange of people between subsidiaries. In summary, the consultants said the group's 'current' strategy on organisation and skills could be stated as being:

- To allow managers of PNQ the maximum practical discretion, within the limits prescribed by group policies, to produce highly profitable newspapers highly respected by the communities which they serve.
- To maintain a head office which is as small as possible, consistent with the group's needs to provide leadership in and co-ordination of key activities.<sup>1</sup>

The ethos or culture of the family business is supremely important to its performance and its survival, as corporate leaders and researchers found in the 1970s and 1980s as they developed valuable insights into what planning actually involves and how it leads to business success. These insights are based largely on three propositions about business behaviour and performance.

1. Most businesses follow predictable, evolutionary life cycles.
2. It is possible to learn a great deal from the experiences of other businesses and families.
3. The culture of the family business - its leadership and its organisation - influences the achievements of the business more than any other factor.

After studying the corporate cultures of Cadbury's and Jaguar, Dellheim observed that:

whatever the origins of the fascination with corporate cultures, scholarly and popular writers agree that the ethos of an organisation, far from being peripheral to its performance, directly influences its success or failure. Culture counts: however, vague, imprecise, and manipulative the concept may be, it affects productivity by shaping the use of human resources.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Strategies*, pp. 19-20.

2. Cited in Peter Donovan, 'Looking back to the future', Australian Historical Association Bulletin, Number 63, August 1990, p. 17.

Peters and Waterman have said that, while it is true that many good companies have superb analytical skills, 'we believe that their major decisions are shaped more by their values than by their dexterity with numbers'.<sup>1</sup> This was certainly the case with the Dunns -- an example was their delay in taking legal action against the McGowns, with whom they were related by marriage and with whom they were partners in the Globe Printery in Brisbane from the 1920s to 1940s. One of the sources of dissension was that the McGowns had been obtaining unauthorised personal overdrafts on the company's account and failing to pay interest.<sup>2</sup>

The close identification of PNQ people with their communities, identified by Strategies, was a natural consequence of the intimate personal involvement in the community exhibited for more than three-quarters of a century by Dunn family members. It was a central part of the family ethos that had developed. Keith McDonald said that as a PNQ director he had been:

... aware of the fact that we were dealing with companies that had a long history of family control. From my point of view, I rather thought that was a good thing and one that was perhaps to be preserved rather than lost. That deep stake in the community they're serving has got to be good, hasn't it?<sup>3</sup>

Morris Janowitz could have been writing about the Dunns when he observed of the Chicago community press:

... the integration of the local paper with the political party, business interests and the dominant churches spells success or failure for the paper, and the community editors speak for and to the leaders of these [community] groups.<sup>4</sup>

Taking up a similar theme, a representative of Express and Independent Newspapers Ltd. told the 1947 British Royal Commission on the Press:

1. Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies (New York: Warner Books, 1982), p. 51.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 2 July and 22 November 1932, 9 October 1933, 25 November 1934, 2 August 1942 and 4 September 1945; minutes of the Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 23 April, 7 May, 23 November and 14 December 1932, and 6 January, 8 June and 9 September 1933.

3. K.H. McDonald, interview with author, 20 August 1992.

4. Morris Janowitz, p. 85.

So far as local newspapers are concerned, local knowledge and experience and a sense of responsibility to local institutions and local 'feeling' are essential to successful management, editorial and otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

Localism and conservatism are the bread and butter of *The Advocate*, at Burnie, Tasmania. Since its establishment in 1890, *The Advocate* has been run by five generations of the Harris family whose members are regarded as 'innately conservative', from their lifestyles to their approach to business. So financially conservative were they that in 1975 the company's net assets stood at only \$846,409 and a net profit of \$55,692 was recorded. *The Advocate* reflects the conservative values of the mining and farming community that stretches from Deloraine in the east to the mining communities of the west coast. Part of this conservatism stems from a strong streak of fundamental Christianity in this area of Tasmania, and these values permeate the paper. Editorially, it also supports industry development against the often strident views of Tasmania's influential environmental lobby. In this it has the support of the trade union movement. But in most other areas the paper's conservatism has often found itself pitted against organised labor.<sup>2</sup>

The newspapers that the Dunns published have been, in the main, survivors, as Table 5 and Appendix 3 show. The only papers the Dunns closed were the *Evening News*, a Rockhampton daily which they added to their stable in 1929 and shut down in 1941; and weeklies in Allora, Maryborough and Rockhampton. Their principal publications, Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin*, Toowoomba's *Chronicle* and Maryborough's *Chronicle*, have each been advancing the social and material interests of their towns and districts for more than 130 years – as is shown in Appendix 6. In 1936, after seventy-five years of maintaining 'intimate touch' with every phase of Rockhampton district activity, the *Bulletin* reflected that it had achieved 'the status of a district institution'. But it preferred to take a humble view of its efforts on behalf of the community.

1. Nicholas Way, *BRW*, 22 May 1992, p. 45-46.

2. Ian Jackson, *The Provincial Press and the Community* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971), p. 43.

Table 5

**The Dunn family newspapers:  
purchases, mergers, sales, closures**

1891	Bought: <i>Maryborough Chronicle</i> (daily) and <i>The Colonist</i> (weekly)
1911	Bought: <i>Morning Bulletin</i> (daily), Rockhampton, and <i>The Capricornian</i> (weekly)
1914	Bought: <i>Warwick Argus</i> (tri-weekly) from the Morgan family
1919	Merged: <i>Warwick Argus</i> with the Irwin family's tri-weekly <i>Examiner &amp; Times</i> to produce the <i>Warwick Daily News</i>
1921	Bought: <i>Allora Guardian</i> (weekly)
1922	Bought: <i>Toowoomba Chronicle</i> in June (daily)
1922	Merged: <i>Toowoomba Chronicle</i> with <i>Darling Downs Gazette</i> in October (daily)
1929	Bought: <i>Evening News</i> (daily), Rockhampton, and <i>The Artesian</i> (weekly)
1930	Merged: <i>The Capricornian</i> and <i>The Artesian</i> to produce the <i>Central Queensland Herald</i> (weekly)
1934	Closed: <i>Allora Guardian</i> (weekly)
1936	Sold: <i>Warwick Daily News</i> to Irwin family
1941	Closed: <i>Evening News</i> (daily), Rockhampton
1952	Closed: <i>The Colonist</i> (weekly), Maryborough
1956	Closed: <i>Central Queensland Herald</i> (weekly)
1961	Bought: <i>Bundaberg News-Mail</i> (daily) in partnership with seven other regional dailies
1964	Bought: <i>Nambour Chronicle</i> (bi-weekly) from the McFaddens
1968	Merged: A. Dunn and Company merges with the Manning, Irwin and Ipswich families to form Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd., controlling dailies at Maryborough, Rockhampton, Mackay, Toowoomba, Bundaberg, Ipswich and Warwick

It recognises that no newspaper can function as an organ of popular opinion and be popular. It must oppose too many projects dear to the heart of someone, refuse too many personal favours. The most an honest newspaper can expect is to have its opinions respected ...

Managing editor Andrew Dunn jun. suggested the *Bulletin* was a humbler version of the *Manchester Guardian*, which had been 'a magnificent example of honesty', and had never served a cause which it had thought mean and had never failed to serve a cause which it had thought honourable.<sup>1</sup> In 1931, when reflecting on the centenary of Australia's oldest newspaper, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Bulletin* made plain its belief in steady conservatism. There was a deep and lasting human instinct which sought security and stability above all else.

Relatively few are those who can face all developments with a broad-minded tolerance, and fewer still are those who can retain confidence in the various radical viewpoints that seem to lead them continuously to bump against a brick wall, and the viewpoints of the liberal and the radical, of their very nature, lack, if not the certainty, then the continuity, definiteness and simplicity of those who hold, with Browning, that

All that is, at all  
Last ever, past recall;  
Earth changes, but thy  
soul and God stand sure.

And so it is the steady conservative organ, the organ which tests and tries rather than simply rejects, each innovation, which endures while the radical voice of opinion, however brilliant, leads a more limited and effervescent existence.<sup>2</sup>

Andrew Dunn jun. had seen radical newspapers in Queensland, typically, rise up, shine brightly for a few months or a few years, and fade and die. He had been familiar in Maryborough with, first, the *Patriot* (launched in Maryborough on 23 July 1892, but shifted to Bundaberg in June 1898) and, second, the *Alert* (launched on 18 November 1899). Queensland's Labor press emerged and grew as he was nearing his teens. From small

1. *Morning Bulletin*. 9 July 1936. p. 17.

2. *Morning Bulletin*. 7 May 1931. p. 6.

beginnings in the late 1880s at Charters Towers, Croydon and Georgetown, it spread to Maryborough, Rockhampton and Roma (1892), Bundaberg and Townsville (1893), Cooktown (1894), Toowoomba (1895), Gympie and Ipswich (1896), and Cairns (1897).<sup>1</sup> The 'effervescent existence' of which Dunn wrote in 1931 was exemplified by the *Australian Republican*, a radical journal launched by the Australian Republican Association in Charters Towers, on 28 June 1890.<sup>2</sup> On 21 February 1891, its editor, Frederic Charles Burleigh Vosper, published the infamous 'Bread or Blood' editorial that led to his being charged with seditious libel and to his resignation on 1 March 1891. The paper ceased publication on 8 August 1891, and, in October, Vosper was found not guilty, at his second trial, of attempting to incite others to disorder and violence.<sup>3</sup> Another 'effervescent', radical newspaper was the *Eagle*, also published in Charters Towers, from 18 February 1893 to 16 September 1899.<sup>4</sup>

The first daily in Cairns provided another example of what Dunn was suggesting. The *Cairns Daily Times* lost its editor three weeks before the first issue appeared on 11 October 1899, and suffered the ignominy of having its replacement editor found guilty of assaulting a policeman. The paper ceased publication on 20 February 1900.<sup>5</sup>

In 1910, with the Dunns in charge, the fifty-year-old *Maryborough Chronicle* said it had always acted in the belief that 'our own interests as a newspaper were bound up in the service of the people'. The *Chronicle* had never found that policy to fail it.<sup>6</sup> At Toowoomba, in the 1930s, another *Chronicle* was making its aim 'fair, clean and truthful news'. Its policy was to publish all the news that was news; to give everybody concerned in the news a fair deal; to give an

1. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 132-134.

2. The first extant issue of the *Australian Republican* is Vol. 1, No. 4, 9 August 1890.

3. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 132-134; Glenn A. Davies, "'A time of perceived rebellion': a comparison of the Charters Towers and Rockhampton showcase trials of 1891", *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 38, 1 (1992), pp. 27-40.

4. Index of Queensland newspapers, compiled and held by the author.

5. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 291.

6. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 21 November 1910.



unbiased report of happenings; to give both sides of the story.<sup>1</sup> The *Chronicle's* managing editor, Herbie Dunn, laid down a policy of strong support for all that was worthy, and in particular for causes and institutions that had for their objectives the welfare and advancement of Toowoomba and the Darling Downs. He decreed, on the other hand, that the *Chronicle* should take an unequivocal stand against that which was evil, and detrimental to the district's progress, and while encouraging the allocation of space for wholesome and important news, he denied prominence to the trivial and sensational. A senior colleague said:

As an editor, [W.H.A. Dunn] set high standards of writing, accuracy and fairness. He made it a policy to ensure that space was provided for both sides to every controversial question. He did not seek public office and he shunned publicity, but he championed every good cause and actively supported every movement aimed at the development of Toowoomba and the Darling Downs.<sup>2</sup>

In 1928, when the *Toowoomba Chronicle* shifted from the southern to the northern side of Margaret Street, it shared what it saw as the secrets of the paper's popularity. Among them were:

Its fairness in dealing with Federal, State, and Local Government politics  
 Its enterprise in the collection of news  
 Its careful attention to State and local interests  
 Its perfect adaptation to the family circle<sup>3</sup>

A study of the files shows that the *Chronicle* - with its pages for women and for children, its sober presentation of news and careful avoidance of the sensational and titillating - was perfectly adaptable to the family circle, but it certainly wore its conservative political heart on its sleeve when it came to politics. In the 1920s and 1930s, however, it is hard to locate specific issues in the news columns where the paper's reporting staff demonstrated initiative in pursuing community causes. Nor did the editorials reflect a

1. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 13 January 1933, p. 12, advert.

2. A.T. Hinchliffe, typescript notes, prepared for author and received 1 March 1977.

3. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 22 November 1928, p. 13.

continuing issue of concern, except that of advocating a conservative vote at elections.<sup>1</sup> By 1992 Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd., publisher of *The Chronicle*, was working to a mission statement which set objectives such as:

- To maintain the undoubted reputation of its newspapers as the principal media for the dissemination of information (news and advertising) in the circulation area of *The Chronicle* and distribution areas of the *Downs Star* and *Chronicle Country*.
- To provide a service to the community through its products' news and advertising columns which no competitor can match in quality and performance.<sup>2</sup>

A 'sense of responsibility to local institutions' does, it has been suggested in a British context, assist in defining the local newspaper's value system; it reflects institutional values in many types of news reporting and, by and large, will be disposed to endorse them in its expression of opinion. In theory, the necessary condition for such an endorsement will be that the institutions are acting in the best interests of the community as a whole, and are not in conflict with 'family values'. Complications arise when two or more institutions are in a state of conflict, but here again (theoretically) the welfare of the community at large should afford the yardstick for assessment. Thus, in the course of their evidence to the 1947 Royal Commission on the Press, Home Counties Newspapers Ltd. saw their 'paramount concern' as 'the good of the community'; the Kentish District Times Co. Ltd. stated that editorial comment in their newspapers was offered from their 'point of view of the general weal, and not from any party-political or sectarian viewpoint'.<sup>3</sup> The Dunn ethos reflected this belief, not only through the family's statements from time to time (such as in leading articles or at annual meetings), but also in the personal involvement of the Dunns and their key managers in the community. The exemplar of the Dunn family's community involvement was Andrew Dunn sen. who, with his second wife, Jane, maintained a close involvement in the Maryborough community for forty years, as was demonstrated

1. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 10 and 11 May 1929; 11 and 12 May and 9 and 11 June 1932.

2. Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd. Mission Statement, received by author from Bruce Manning, 14 December 1992.

3. Jackson, p. 45.

in Chapter 2. After moving from town to town early in their careers to gain wide experience, the second-generation Dunns became a part of the community they served through their newspaper. Almost without fail, they married within their communities – as is shown in Appendix 2. The commercial, civic and Presbyterian church circles within which the younger Dunns and even the non-family newspaper managers moved reflected the example set by the senior Dunns.

Andrew Dunn jun., who lived in Rockhampton from 1905 till his retirement in 1954, married Ivy Adeline Mary Lucas, one of fourteen children of a Rockhampton department store proprietor, Edward Seymour Lucas, and his wife, Martha. E.S. Lucas later served as a director on the board of the *Morning Bulletin Ltd.* under the Dunn ownership. In his younger days Andrew jun. was a keen footballer and cricketer. He played for the famous Yengarie cricket club when it, so legend goes, comprised four Crans, four Mahoneys and three Dunns – but the author was unable to locate a scorecard that resembled such a line-up.<sup>1</sup> James McIntyre Dunn was beginning to put roots deep into the Rockhampton community when he died at the age of forty-four after managing the *Morning Bulletin* for six years. He, too, was a member of the Yengarie cricket club, playing principally as a batsman, although he was said to be a fair change bowler. His weekly comments on cricket in the *Maryborough Chronicle* under the pseudonym of 'Rumour' were said to have revealed an intimate knowledge of the game and a rare sense of humour. In 1915 he enlisted with the A.I.F. and sailed with reinforcements of the 9th Battalion. After being wounded he was allotted to duties in England, visited members of the extended Dunn and Macintyre families in Scotland and married one of them, a cousin, Mary Elizabeth Miller, in Maryborough on 10 June 1920.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 1 Feb 1956, p. 2.

2. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 18 November 1925.

W.H.A. 'Herbie' Dunn (1883-1961), who lived in Toowoomba for twenty-five years, was closely involved with his wife, Agnes Jesse, in the St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church. One son, Hector Lockhart, became a Presbyterian minister and the only daughter, Agnes Mary, married Reginald T. Joughin, a Presbyterian minister.<sup>1</sup> Hector Dunn (1888-1971) lived in Maryborough, his birthplace, for much of his eighty-three years, apart from about seven years gaining newspaper production experience in various cities in Australia and New Zealand. He had a close association with St Stephen's Presbyterian Church, serving both on the committee of management and for many years as an Elder. He was deputy mayor of Maryborough (1940-43 and 1949-52) and an alderman (1946-49). He stood unsuccessfully for mayor in 1952.<sup>2</sup> Hector married Lillias Fairlie, daughter of the late James Fairlie, sawmiller, of Maryborough. In later life, he played bowls at Doon Villa club.<sup>3</sup>

Of the third-generation family members, Rowland James Dunn (1911-71) was an exemplar. He was managing director of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* 1957-1968, served Toowoomba as an alderman for more than three years, having been elected twice. He was a Rotarian, a member of Fairholme College Council, an Elder of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church and a member of Services Memorial (Masonic) Lodge. He took a keen interest in hockey, swimming and cricket and was patron and life member of Toowoomba Hockey Association, a life member of Queensland Amateur Swimming Association, and a former president of Toowoomba District Amateur Swimming Association. He was also a life member of the Royal Agricultural Society. For more than twenty years he was a counsellor for Fairholme College and he was one of the senior trustees of Toowoomba Grammar School.<sup>4</sup>

1. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 4 April 1961 and 26 February 1971; Joan Dunn, telephone interview with author, 8 May 1992; Hector Lockhart Dunn, interview with author, Bribie Island, 24 June 1992.

2. Maryborough City Council, letter to author, 19 May 1992.

3. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 2 April 1971, p. 1; *Maryborough Chronicle*, 24 June 1918, p. 2

4. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 25 and 26 October 1971.

Of the Dunn managers and editors, Len Cran, nearly thirty years manager of the Dunn's Rockhampton newspapers, lived out the Dunn ethos when it came to personal involvement in the community. Cran was an active member of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Rockhampton, and held office in various church organisations. He served a period as chairman of the board of trustees of Rockhampton Grammar School and was closely associated with masonic activities for many years. He was a Past Master of his lodge. During World War II he was a member of the Rockhampton Patriotic Fund. As he grew older bowls replaced cricket as his main source of sporting fulfilment and he was a long-time member of Athelstane Bowls Club, winning the A grade singles championship in 1921 and 1922.<sup>1</sup>

Bill Eadie, for thirty years manager of the *Maryborough Chronicle*, was associated with the Presbyterian Church from his boyhood. He served for thirty years on the management committee of St. Stephen's, Maryborough, and was deputy chairman for a long period. He was a founder of St. Stephen's Hospital, was chairman of the finance board and a trustee. He served as president of the Chamber of Commerce and was a member for twenty years. He was a member of the Patriotic Committee throughout the war and of the Recruiting Committee and the Commonwealth War Loan Committee. He was a founding member of the Maryborough Rotary Club in October 1931 and remained a member till his death.<sup>2</sup> Walter Bruce, for twenty years manager of the *Toowoomba Chronicle*, served as a lay preacher in the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales and Queensland for thirty-seven years and his wife, Harriet, was an enthusiastic worker for church and missionary groups. He was a foundation member of the Blue Nursing Committee in Toowoomba and served as chairman of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Board (Toowoomba).<sup>3</sup>

1. P.G. Cran, letter to author, 9 April 1992, and telephone interview with author, 31 March 1992; *Morning Bulletin*, 30 September 1955.

2. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 22 October 1948, p. 2.

3. Kirkpatrick in Hinchliffe (ed.), *They Meant Business*, p. 74.

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The Dunn family set about developing and maintaining an ethos of caution, conservatism, honesty, integrity, localism and personal involvement in the community, as is demonstrated in this chapter. The family ethos has influenced the style, tone and content of the newspapers the family members have directed, managed and edited. A strong family influence was maintained in the Dunn newspapers as control evolved from family to corporation. At the level of the family meeting, the Dunns demonstrated astuteness in managing their affairs to ensure continuity of the dynasty and to prevent minor rifts from becoming major divisions. The family had a sufficiently clear concept of the perspective it wanted reflected in its newspapers to put down in writing a statement of policy. The Dunns realised that, inevitably, their policy would be seen as anti-Labor, but they preferred to label it 'non-Labor'. It unashamedly supported policies which reflected the political thinking of the Right. Despite espousing strongly conservative views, the Dunn newspapers still provided a balanced news coverage overall. The family sought to encourage third-generation involvement in its newspaper businesses, but only at a middle level. The second generation clung to executive power too long and generally placed a barrier in the way of the third generation becoming a vibrant, visionary administration. Despite this, one third-generation member, Lex Dunn, overcame opposition to his managerial appointment in Rockhampton and brought to the business a new perspective and a willingness to grapple with problems. His legal training and sharp mind helped make him the first real visionary and activist since Andrew Dunn sen.

Living in loyalty,  
dying in harness:

Choosing managers who reflected the family's values

*Mr Eadie died as he would have wished to have died,  
in harness.*

– Directors of the Maryborough Newspaper  
Co. Pty. Ltd., 30 October 1948.

The Dunns' newspaper business steered a steady course because the family appointed managers and editors who shared the family's values. Nepotism was the first consideration, but if a Dunn family member were not suitable for executive office, then the family chose a man who would reflect and even enhance the Dunn ethos of honesty, integrity, caution, conservatism, localism and Presbyterian values. The Dunns treated their executive staff well, even generously, and the latter responded with loyal service, even to the extent of working themselves into an early grave. Sometimes, however, the ordinary employees were dealt a different card by the Dunns. In all, however, the Dunns kept their eye on survival and on making enough profits to ensure a satisfactory return was obtained. Apart from the aberration of the industrial turmoil at Rockhampton, from 1973-1980 in particular, the Dunn newspapers were generally industrially harmonious and the employees served long and loyally.

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Day to day in the Dunn newspaper companies at Maryborough, Rockhampton and Toowoomba, the decisions which reflected the Dunn ethos, all the while refining it, were often taken by managers or editors who were not Dunns. Some, however, were connected to the Dunns through their own marriage or through that of one of their brothers or sisters. Others were Dunns in all but name because they reflected the Dunns so faithfully either in their ethics, values and beliefs or in their

enthusiasm to be loyal servants of a financially successful and highly ethical master – initially, no doubt, perceived as the patriarch, but, after his death, more generally seen as the Dunn Family. The non-Dunn managers were generally allocated one share in the company whose affairs they managed and were appointed to the board of directors, filling the role of company secretary. Thus, they became party to the inner workings of the family's business thinking, as well as having to report to the family and receive direct signals – explicit and implicit – about their managerial performance. In the office, the non-Dunn managers and editors were generally confronted by Dunn family members on a daily basis, because, for significant periods, Dunns held key positions in each of the newspapers: at Rockhampton, Andrew Dunn jun. was managing director and editor from 1911 to 1954; at Maryborough, Hector Dunn was managing director from 1934 to 1969; and at Toowoomba, Herbie Dunn was managing director and editor from 1922 to 1951. Andrew Dunn (1910- ) was the odd man out, seeming to exert power but never quite wanting to shoulder the executive responsibility (other than on a short-term basis) that went with it – as, for example, in 1958 and 1960 when he could so easily have staked his claim for the editorship of the *Maryborough Chronicle*, as the latter part of this chapter will show.

Arthur Thomas Shakespeare (1897-1975), who was managing editor of the *Canberra Times* for thirty-eight years, once argued that, although editorial independence must be assured, it could not be within 'ivory towers of detachment from practical considerations'. It was possible to establish lines of demarcation in a newspaper office of the spheres in which management and editorship operated, but it was impossible to



divorce them. Proprietorship must in the final result have overriding decision in the purposes of the newspaper.<sup>1</sup> At the Dunn family newspapers, the proprietorial wish reigned supreme, but this generally provided no problems because the supremacy was for many years implicit rather than explicit and because the Dunns appointed managers and editors who, as a rule, became so much a part of the organisation that their loyalty to it was never in question. They served faithfully until retirement, sometimes in their seventies. Long-serving managers and editors who absorbed the Dunn ethos and enhanced it included Len Cran and George Westacott (Rockhampton), William Eadie and George Wilson (Maryborough), and Walter Bruce and Bert Hinchliffe (Toowoomba).

Nepotism in a business context can probably be described best as 'undue favouritism to one's relations and close friends', undue to the degree that family values override business values to the detriment of the profitability or continuity of the business.<sup>2</sup> Such nepotism was seen in Dunn managerial appointments. It helped, too, if the prospective appointee were Presbyterian. At Rockhampton, as Table 6 shows, the Dunns or a close relative administered the business side of the newspaper company from 1919 till 1980. The only non-Dunn manager during that period was Leonard John Cran (1881-1969), who was a brother of Andrew Dunn's second and most enduring wife, Jane, as well as being a staunch Presbyterian. At Maryborough (viz. Table 6), the manager from 1918-1948, William Eadie, and the editor from 1925-1958, George Wilson, were both practising Presbyterians and faithful Dunn servants. At Toowoomba (viz. Table 6), a son-in-law of Andrew Dunn sen. was appointed business manager within a month of the family's having taken over the *Chronicle*. Toowoomba has had only three editors since 1922: W.H.A. Dunn, his faithful lieutenant Bert Hinchliffe, and Bert's son, Bruce.

1. A.T. Shakespeare, 'The manager and the editor', in *Provincial Journalism Seminar*, University of New England, Armidale, May 1965, pp. 8-9; *Canberra Times*, 50th Anniversary Souvenir Issue, 3 September 1976, p. 1.

2. *The Chambers Dictionary* (Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap, 1993), p. 1131.

Table 6

**Editors and managers of the Dunns'  
three main daily newspapers**

Morning Bulletin:

**Editors**

Andrew Dunn	1911-1954
George Westacott	1954-1964
Peter Dunn	1964-1980
Frank Sanderson	1980-1981
Barry Bransdon	1981-1990
Steve Gibbons	1990-1993
Glenis Green	1993-present

**Managers**

James McIntyre Dunn	1919-1925
Len Cran	1926-1955
Lex Dunn	1955-1970
Peter Dunn and Jim Dunn (joint)	1970-1973
Peter Dunn	1973-1980
Gordon Beavan	1980-1982
Robert Geraghty	1983-1984
Mike McCarthy	1984-1990
Cameron O'Reilly	1991-1992
Claude Olive	1992-present

SOURCE: Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd., 1911-1959; Kym Shearer, executive secretary, Morning Bulletin, letter to author, 19 August 1993.

## Table 6 (cont.)

Maryborough Chronicle:

## Editors

George Leslie Wilson	1925-1958
Don Tate	1958-1960
Michael James O'Donohue	1960-1973
Andy Anderson	1973-1986
Col McClelland	1986-1988
Nancy Bates	1988-present

## Managers

William Eadie	1919-1948
George English	1948-1977
Colin Nelson	1977-1981
Mike McCarthy	1982-1984
Peter Manning	1984-1986
Colin Francis	1986-1987
Laurie Corcoran	1987-1989
John Jones	1989-1991
Martin Simons	1992-1994
Terry Kirkland	1994-present

SOURCE: Minutes of the Maryborough Newspaper Co.; Martin Simons, letter to author, 15 January 1993; 'David Lonsdale appointed GM of APN's Tweed-based papers', PANPA Bulletin, February 1994, p. 9.

Toowoomba Chronicle:

## Editors

Herbie Dunn	1922-1951
Bert Hinchliffe	1951-1969
Bruce Hinchliffe	1969-present

## Business managers

Jack Armitage	1922-1943
William McLelland	1943-1949
Walter Bruce	1949-1969
Murray Noble	1969-1973
Bruce Manning	1973-present

SOURCE: Minutes of the Toowoomba Newspaper Co.; Rod Kirkpatrick in Bruce Hinchliffe (ed.), *They Meant Business*, pp. 448-82.

If Len Cran had the advantage of being a brother-in-law of Andrew Dunn sen. and of being Presbyterian, he was also in the right place at the right time. He was the auditor of the Rockhampton company in 1925 when James McIntyre (Jim) Dunn, business manager of the Morning Bulletin Ltd. since 1919, died at the age of forty-four. Jim, the second son of the patriarch and his first wife Kate, was one of the best and brightest of the Dunns. A former school-teacher and intellectually brilliant, he had contracted a debilitating illness about March 1925 and died in November. The day after Jim's death, the Dunns not only buried him, but also took the first steps to appoint his successor. The Dunns decided to offer the position to Cran, who was based in Rockhampton as the Central Queensland manager for the New Zealand Insurance Company.<sup>1</sup> Len was only one of several of the ten Cran children who became involved with the Dunns at one level or another. Apart from Jane and Len, Oswald became a proof reader at *Morning Bulletin* till 1949; Jessie spent all her working life in the front office of the *Maryborough Chronicle*; and three children of Margaret Ellen (Forbes) worked for either the Maryborough or Rockhampton newspapers.<sup>2</sup> No one had any doubts that nepotism was alive and well at the Dunn newspapers. In Maryborough, Len Cran had come into contact with the Dunns through family gatherings, through the Presbyterian church, and through cricket (Jim, Hector and Andrew jun. played). Len was a brilliant batsman and slips fieldsman, and a good change bowler, and played for the Maryborough representative team that defeated a Brisbane team in 1907.<sup>3</sup>

1. Minutes of the Morning Bulletin Ltd., 18 November 1925.

2. Bert Cran, letter to author, 26 May 1992, telephone interview with author, 28 March and 7 April 1992, and interview with author, Maryborough, 20 April 1992; John Cran, telephone interview with author, 5 July 1992; W.G. Rendall, telephone interview with author, 3 June 1992.

3. Maryborough Cricket Association booklet, 1908, pp. 12, 15, 78 and 81; P.G. Cran, letter to author, 9 April 1992, and telephone interview with author, 23 December 1992.

When Len Cran married in 1914, Jim Dunn, soon to go off to war, was best man. One of the Cran's two children, Percival Gordon (1918- ) became a journalist, serving his cadetship on the Rockhampton papers, but, wanting to prove himself on his own merits, joined the Australian Broadcasting Commission in 1947 as Central Queensland regional journalist and went further afield in later years.<sup>1</sup> Len Cran had been auditing the books of The Morning Bulletin Ltd. for six years when Jim Dunn died. The Dunns made Cran an offer he could not refuse: fourteen pounds a week salary, a commission of ten per cent on all the increased profits of the newspaper, printing and process business over average profits of the two years ending 30 June 1925 (the average was 11,868 pounds), with a guarantee that the amount due under this heading should not be less than fifty pounds a year. The company set limits, retaining the right to review the commission when profits jumped well above average.<sup>2</sup> Cran accepted the offer, his appointment was confirmed and he began duties in February 1926.<sup>3</sup> Cran's commission, listed in the company records as a 'bonus', was paid faithfully. The commissions were the equivalent of anything from six to twelve weeks' salary.<sup>4</sup> This generosity was not typical of how the Dunns treated some of their employees over the years, as the latter part of this chapter will demonstrate. The more senior you were and the more closely aligned or related, the more chance you had of generosity being accorded you. Nepotism played its part.

When Cran retired as general manager of the Rockhampton company, he was nearly seventy-four. In a more fiercely competitive environment, he would have either been asked to, or have wished to, retire earlier. He finished in the office on 31 August 1955, but was paid one month's holiday leave, three months' long service leave and, later, 'in recognition

1. P.G. Cran, letters to author, 5 May 1992 and 22 January 1993.
2. Minutes of The Morning Bulletin Ltd., 20 November 1925.
3. Minutes of The Morning Bulletin Ltd., 10 December 1925.
4. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 30 October 1948.

of his long term of service with the Company', a lump sum of 7000 pounds, a payment that generated some questioning from third-generation Dunns. In July 1956 the board authorised the new manager, Lex Dunn, to withdraw all or part of the Provident Fund to recoup the payment of Cran's 7000-pound retiring allowance.<sup>1</sup>

At a staff function to farewell Cran, George Westacott, editor of the *Morning Bulletin*, said that nothing was taken more for granted than that the business side of a newspaper could be successfully managed, yet few important industries were more vulnerable to wars, shipping strikes, financial crises, import restrictions, etc. These things made great headline stuff and were relished by editors and sub-editors, but they were a headache to the business manager who was thinking of his newsprint supplies fifteen months ahead. No better testimony to Cran's management for thirty years need be cited than that, through two wars, a severe depression, countless shipping strikes and many financial crises, the Rockhampton papers had not missed one issue from these causes.<sup>2</sup> Cran was so good at maintaining a stockpile of newsprint during the severe rationing in force during World War II that he was able to help out other papers, such as *The Courier-Mail*.<sup>3</sup> The Rockhampton directors were told in August 1940 that 'prices of newsprint and all other materials had increased sharply and unsettled conditions throughout the world had seriously affected the regular flow of business'.<sup>4</sup> It was unlikely the 'present scale of profits' would continue, because of newsprint rationing, smaller papers and limits on how much advertising could be accepted. By the end of 1940 Cran had arranged a long-term newsprint order, split equally between

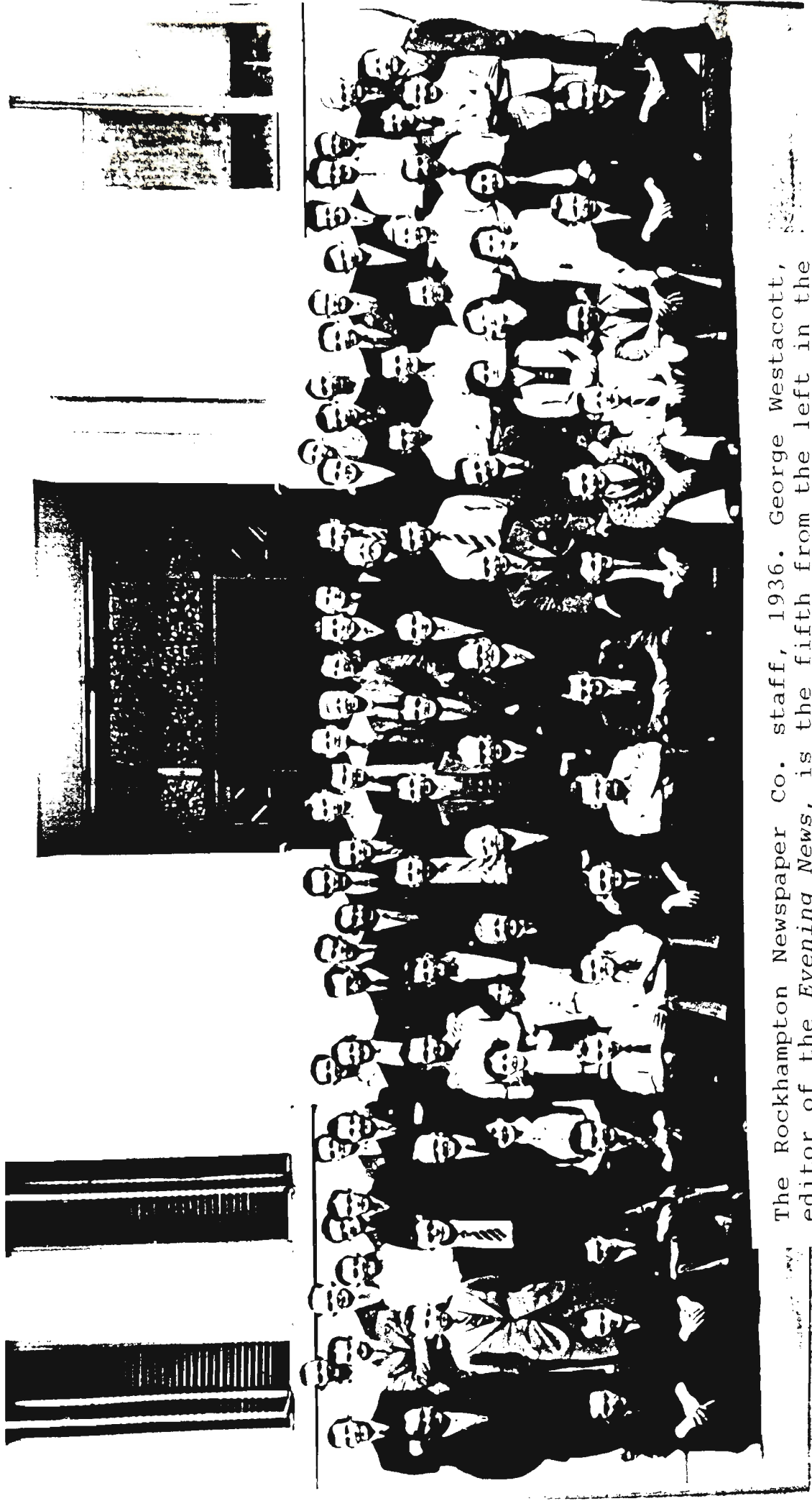
1. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 29 August 1955 and 6 July 1956.

2. *Morning Bulletin*, 30 September 1955.

3. P.G. Cran, letter to author, 9 April 1992.

4. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 6 August 1940.

TO COMMEMORATE THE 75 TH. ANNIVERSARY OF  
"THE MORNING BULLETIN"  
JULY 9<sup>TH</sup> 1936



The Rockhampton Newspaper Co. staff, 1936. George Westacott, editor of the *Evening News*, is the fifth from the left in the second row of seated people. On the right of him are: L.J. Cran, general manager, and Andrew Dunn jun., editor of the *Morning Bulletin*.

Gordon & Gotch and Bowaters, covering supplies from July 1941 till December 1945.<sup>1</sup> Cran, who admitted he knew little about newspapers when he became manager of the *Morning Bulletin*, was 'a good listener, firm, but never raised his voice', according to son Gordon. Nevertheless, he achieved the desired result. 'He was not out in the limelight; he was more of a doer than a parader.'<sup>2</sup> Len Cran was an active member of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church and was closely involved in the community, as was seen in Chapter 4.<sup>3</sup>

At Maryborough, Andrew Dunn sen. found in William Eadie (1890-1948) a man who reflected his own values in business, family, community and church life. Dunn, the son of a Scottish grocer, took a liking to Eadie, who was working in his father's Newtown grocery in Maryborough and attending the same Presbyterian church as the Dunns, and offered him a clerical job at the *Maryborough Chronicle* office in 1911 when he was twenty-one. In 1918, as a newly-wed twenty-eight-year-old, Eadie was appointed business manager of the Maryborough Newspaper Company. He was said to be the youngest newspaper manager in Queensland at the time. He served the Dunn family faithfully for thirty years in that capacity.<sup>4</sup>

The Dunn family held Eadie in high regard: in 1932 the directors of the Maryborough company wrote to him expressing their appreciation of his 'good work for the company'; and in 1937 they placed on record their appreciation of 'the good services to the company of the general manager [Eadie], the editor and the foreman'.<sup>5</sup> They expressed their thanks in tangible ways, too. For example, they paid him bonuses of forty-five pounds in 1931 and 1932 despite the depression, fifty pounds in 1933; seventy-five pounds in 1934; and 100 pounds in 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938. His widow, Lily, would

1. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 27 November 1940.

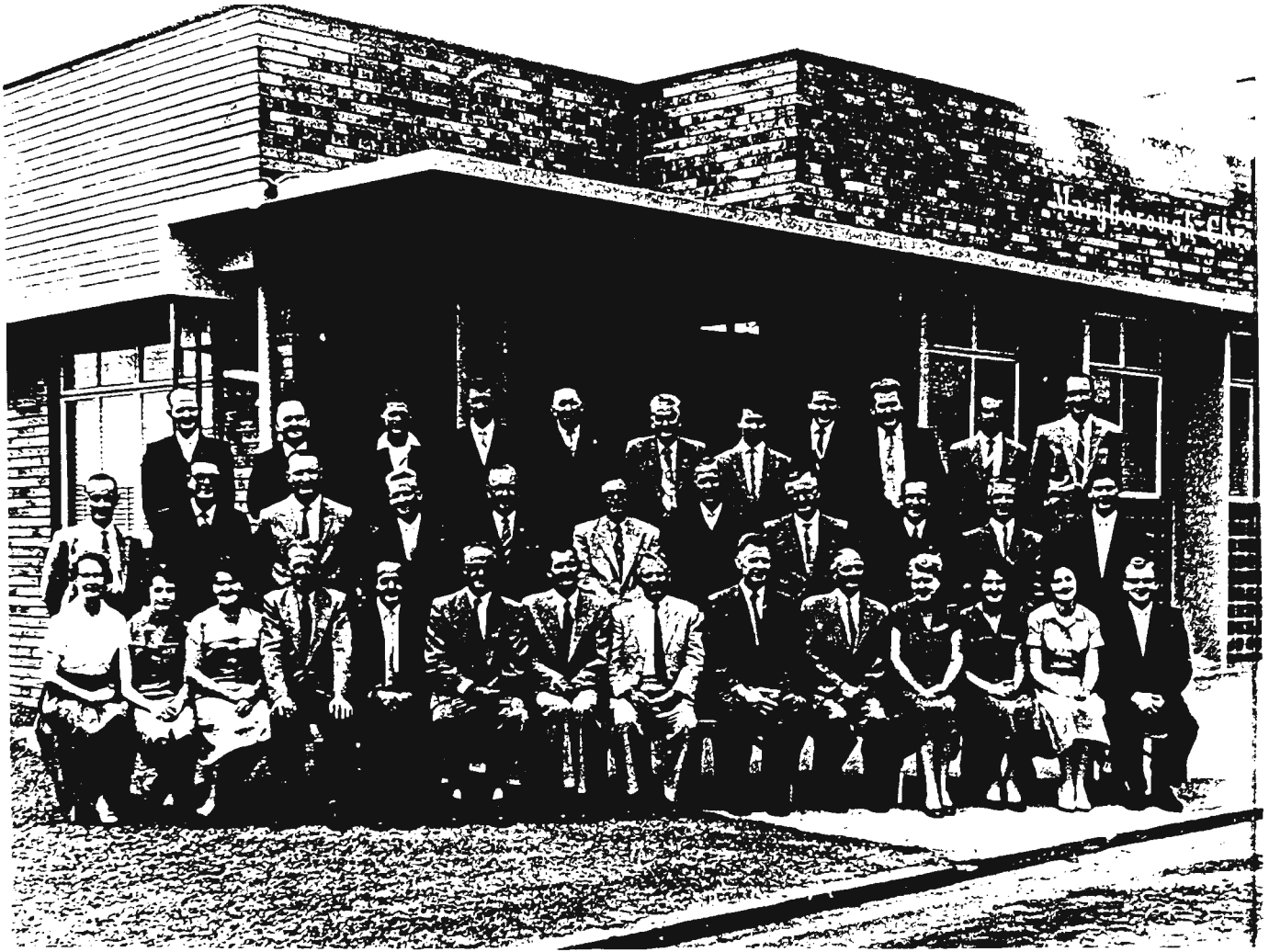
2. *Morning Bulletin*, 30 September 1955; P.G. Cran, letter to author, 9 April 1992.

3. *Morning Bulletin*, 5 June 1969, p. 3; *Maryborough Chronicle*, 10 June 1969; P.G. Cran, telephone interviews with author, 31 March and 6 April 1992.

4. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 22 October 1948, p. 2.

5. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 29 July 1932 and 31 July 1937.





The *Maryborough Chronicle* staff, 1960.

Back row (l to r): K. Collishaw, W. Scougall, K. Wegener, L. Ammenhauser, J. Shannon, W. Roberts, D. Blair, D. Cooper, J. Stevenson, G. Adams and J. Jones.

Centre row: R. Bauer, C.V. Roberts (engineer), G. Bartholomew, W. Kidd, H. Andrews, G. Brandon, W.G. Rendall, H. Pulsford, W. Bolderrow, G. Duffill and D. Nielsen.

Front row: Mrs H. Walker (social writer), Miss J. McNamara, Mrs S. Melksham, Messrs. L. Lewis (day foreman), A.H. White (night foreman), G. English (manager), A. Dunn (director), H. Dunn (chairman of directors), M.J. O'Donohue (editor), R. Foster (sub-editor), Misses B. Teitzel, R. Kuskie and J. Loft, and Mr C. Walker.

Absent: Mrs E. Winterflood, Miss J. Rogers, Messrs. R. McDowell, R. Daniel, B. Larsen, W.J. Howard, L. Hassed, M. Harrison, E. Howard and F. Saunderson.

say he was 'too conscientious; he lived for the *Chronicle* and his family'.<sup>1</sup> As was Len Cran in Rockhampton, Eadie was closely involved with the Presbyterian church, serving for thirty years on the management committee of St. Stephen's Church; Chapter 4 detailed his other community involvement. William Eadie 'keeled over and died' at his desk in the company's office on 21 October 1948 while talking to Maryborough businessman William Boys.<sup>2</sup> 'Mr Eadie,' the directors recorded, 'died as he would have wished to have died, in harness.'<sup>3</sup> The Reverend J. McPhail said Eadie had held three simple faiths: faith in the *Chronicle*; faith in Maryborough; and faith in the Church.<sup>4</sup> The Dunns *could* not have asked for more, and *would* not have asked for less.

On the business side of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* during the years when Herbie Dunn was managing director and editor, affairs generally ran smoothly. Jack Armitage, of Maryborough, was installed as business manager upon the Dunn takeover. In the same month he married Flora Margaret Dunn, the elder daughter of Andrew Dunn sen. and Jane - on 24 July 1922. Armitage demonstrated a capacity to run the business affairs effectively, but he had one weakness: women. It led to trouble for him under the style of paternalistic rule exerted by the Dunns. Armitage was granted three months' leave from 1 August 1942 to sort out his affairs, and, having failed to do so, he submitted his resignation in December 1942. If he had not resigned, he would have been peremptorily dismissed from 31 December. He had breached the code of behaviour and honour implicitly expected of all Dunn managers, and, even more so, of Dunn family members. His place at board meetings had already been taken by his wife, Flora, and he arranged, without quibble, for the transfer to her of his fifty shares in the company.<sup>5</sup> Armitage concluded his affairs at the

1. Minutes of the Maryborough Newspaper Co. annual meetings for those years; Lily Williams, interview with author, 10 January 1980.

2. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 22 October 1948, p. 2; W.G. Rendall, interview with author, Brisbane, 24 December 1992.

3. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 30 October 1948.

4. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 22 October 1948, p. 2.

5. Minutes of Toowoomba Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd., 19 November 1942, 12 December 1942, and 19 January 1943 (with report, dated 24 December 1942, from W.H.A. Dunn, attached).

*Chronicle* on Christmas Eve 1942, handing over to William McLennan (1889-1981), who had acted as business manager for much of the year. Jack Wilfred Armitage and Flora Margaret Armitage (nee Dunn) were divorced in Brisbane on 10 September 1943 (viz. Appendix 2).

As the 1940s petered out, the *Toowoomba Chronicle* imperceptibly changed managerial and editorial control, appointing faithful adherents to the Dunn ethos. The changes provided stability of leadership for another twenty years. Walter Bruce (1898-1980), who had been general manager of the *Queensland Times*, Ipswich, for eight years, began duties at the *Chronicle* office on 5 December 1949 to prepare to take over from McLennan as manager from 1 January 1950. Albert Thomas Hinchliffe (1901-1993), who had joined the *Chronicle* as sub-editor in October 1942, was formally appointed editor on 11 June 1951. Bruce and Hinchliffe both retired on 30 August 1969, having enhanced the Dunn ethos of fairness, good taste, honesty and community service.

Walter Bruce was a man cast in the same mould as Len Cran and William Eadie, and was not a leap into the unknown for the Dunns. A staunch Presbyterian, a conservative, a sound businessman, a man deeply involved in his community, as was shown in Chapter 4, he was also known to the Dunns through the Queensland Country Press Association and through the Josephs. At Tamworth, New South Wales, Bruce worked for twelve years as secretary and accountant for the *Northern Daily Leader* whose managing director, Albert Joseph, was the brother of Abraham Edgar Joseph - secretary of the Queensland Country Press Association for twenty-eight years till his death in 1938 and best man in 1932 at the third wedding of Andrew Dunn sen. (viz. Appendix 2).<sup>1</sup> Bruce replaced A.E. Joseph as general manager of Queensland Country Press Ltd. and secretary of the QCPA, serving in those capacities for three years from January

1. The Chronicle, 29 July 1980, p. 4.

1939, before becoming general manager of the *Queensland Times* for a month short of eight years.<sup>1</sup> When Bruce joined the *Toowoomba Chronicle* in December 1949, he was in the second of his two terms as president of the Queensland Country Press Association. Bruce was seen by some as too ready to cave in to opposition to his proposals.<sup>2</sup> In 1966 the Toowoomba Newspaper Co. board decided to pay both Bruce and Rowley Dunn, the managing director, a yearly benefit, equal to half their respective salaries on retirement, for each of the five years after they retired. Bruce was able to enjoy that benefit; Dunn did not live to enjoy his.<sup>3</sup>

Bert Hinchliffe was another who fitted easily into the Dunn mould, although he was a practising Anglican, and another who was not a leap into the unknown. Andrew Dunn, grandson of the patriarch, regarded him as a top-grade journalist.<sup>4</sup> He was effectively editor of the *Chronicle* for twenty-three years, for he was *de facto* editor for five years before his formal appointment in 1951 as editor. From 1946, managing editor Herbie Dunn rarely visited the office and in May 1947 informed the board of directors that he would henceforth be living in Brisbane. At their request he agreed to continue as managing director and editor. It was not until Dunn's retirement that Hinchliffe was formally appointed editor. He had joined the *Chronicle* in October 1942 as sub-editor when associate editor Martin Luther Reading, who was seventy-three, was nearing retirement.<sup>5</sup>

Bert Hinchliffe's appointment as editor was a break from tradition for the *Chronicle*. For a few weeks short of ninety years, ultimate editorial oversight of the paper had been the responsibility of the proprietor or a member of the proprietor's family. The retirement of Herbie Dunn, and the

1. *Queensland Times*, 16 January 1942, p. 2.

2. Andrew Dunn, letter to author, 30 November 1993.

3. Minutes of Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 6 September 1966.

4. Andrew Dunn, letter, 30 November 1993.

5. *Newspaper News*, 1 December 1943, p. 12; Bertram E. Pottinger, interview with author, Toowoomba, 6 September 1978; *The Chronicle*, 29 July 1980, p. 4; A.T. Hinchliffe, typescript recollections, undated but circa 1978.

recognition, at last, of Hinchliffe's editorial leadership, at the age of forty-nine, signalled at the *Chronicle* an era of editorial appointments by merit. Hinchliffe, born at Rockhampton, was educated at Rockhampton State School and later studied several tertiary subjects under private tuition. He worked as a reporter on the *Daily Record* (which became the *Evening News* in 1922) for nearly ten years. In 1930, about a year after the Dunns bought the *News*, Hinchliffe was appointed chief of staff of the *Morning Bulletin*. In October 1942 he was transferred to Toowoomba to replace Alan Dunn, first son of Herbie Dunn, who had died on 11 March 1942, leaving the sub-editor's position vacant. In November 1943 Hinchliffe became associate editor and in 1951 he was officially appointed editor.<sup>1</sup>

As editor of the *Chronicle*, Hinchliffe carried on the policy of Herbie Dunn, with whom he had established a close relationship. He continued to follow the news policy detailed in the *Chronicle* in 1933: to publish 'all the news that is news; to give everybody concerned in the news a fair deal'.<sup>2</sup> He provided a balance of international, national, state and local news, as the author's study of the *Chronicle* in the late 1940s and in the 1950s reveals. The vast broadsheet front page was like a bulletin board for much of this period. It was bespattered with anything up to thirty-nine stories, but generally about twenty-five stories, distributed on the basis of about sixty-five per cent national, twenty-five per cent international and ten per cent local news. Inside the paper, local news, including 'social' and sport, featured strongly. It was generally about eighty per cent local and twenty per cent national and international. The *Chronicle* reported extensively on district agricultural shows, local government, including even Allora Shire; and a regular feature was the Dalby District Traders' Directory and District News. Page 3 was devoted generally to news labelled as being of interest to

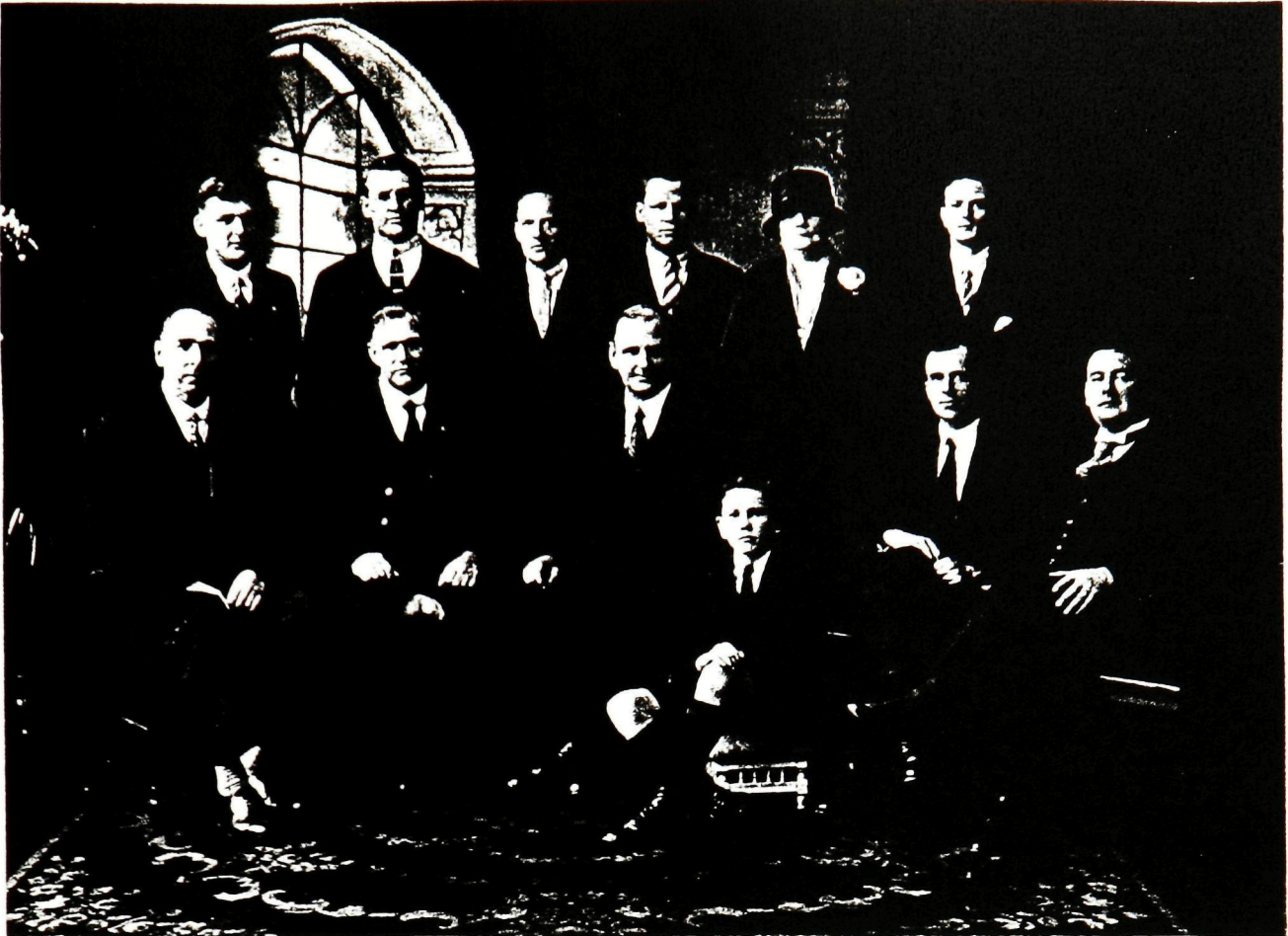
1. A.T. Hinchliffe, typescript recollections.  
 2. Toowoomba Chronicle, 13 January 1933, p. 12.

women, and to a serialised story (such as 'The Span of Time' by J.T. Bell Nicoll or 'Rose's Last Summer' by Margaret Millar). Either Page 4 or 6 would carry an editorial statement of opinion. There was a range of features such as the Canberra Letter, 'The Children's Corner' with Aunt Georgina, letters to the editor and reports on events such as the harvest festival at the Salvation Army, the Chinchilla butter factory's monthly output, Pittsworth Hospital Auxiliary's annual meeting, a weekly entertainment guide to music, theatre, films, radio and books conducted by 'Overture'; Ruby Borrowdale's page of women's interest items such as cooking, fashion, beauty hints, social activities, new styles in wool. The policy was clearly to present the *Chronicle* as the only newspaper Toowoomba people need buy each day to obtain a full news coverage. Even the leading articles ranged widely from local issues to national and international, as a study of them in 1953, 1954, 1956 and 1957 demonstrated. They dealt with issues ranging from industrial relations, politics, liquor laws and 'the betting shop evil' to the 'true import of Mother's Day', the Coral Sea battle, 'Communism on the march', and 'the move for disarmament'.<sup>1</sup>

Hinchliffe tempered the policy of publishing 'all the news that is news' policy with the qualification that there were times when a report might not be published because publication would have caused needless grief and suffering to innocent people. 'I believe there are some things that are better left unsaid,' he said at the close of his career. Sometimes publication would not have been 'in the interests of the community', he said, without giving specific examples.<sup>2</sup> On another occasion when under pressure, as editor in 1966, to suppress criticism of the Toowoomba Development Board, Hinchliffe said:

1. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 12 February and 10 March 1948; 1 and 28 June, 28 July and 19 August 1949; 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9 March and 7, 8 and 9 April 1953; 2, 3, 24 and 28 July, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11 August, 1, 3, 4, 5, 23 and 24 November 1954; 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 May 1956; and 8, 9 and 10 July, 2 August 1957

2. A.T. Hinchliffe, typescript recollections.



ABOVE: The *Toowoomba Chronicle* literary staff, c. 1928. Back row (l to r): Alan Dunn, Thomas Thompson, Arthur Turner, Vic Anderson, Miss E.G. Hely, Bert Pottinger. Front row: W. Heeney, A.B. Lee, W.H.A. Dunn (managing editor), Frank Hobbins (not literary department), Hector Dinning, W.T. Cunningham.

BELOW: The *Toowoomba Chronicle* administrative staff, 1950. Walter Bruce is second from left in the front row and W.H.A. Dunn is on the right of him. R.J. Dunn is eighth from the left in the back row.



The policy of the *Chronicle* has always been to publish both sides of every case. We have supported the Development Board in a leading article; we have supported it by giving it great prominence in the news columns; and we have supported it by providing blocks for the brochure. But to suggest that we should suppress letters or criticism of the proposal would be quite wrong. It would be almost the same as suggesting that the magistrate should hear the plaintiff and not the defendant.

Hinchliffe said the *Chronicle* would immediately lose public confidence if it decided to suppress criticism of the City Council or the Chamber of Commerce, or the government, or any other body or organisation. 'The fact that we at the *Chronicle* do not agree with what a correspondent may say in a letter is all the more reason why we should publish it.'<sup>1</sup> Hinchliffe believed the regional newspaper would always be indispensable because no other medium could give the essential, intimate service it provided. Paraphrasing Rebecca West, he said a regional community needed a regional newspaper for the same reason that a person needed eyes. 'It has to see where it is going.'<sup>2</sup>

In the 1980s, the *Chronicle's* (tabloid) front-page carried far fewer stories than the old broadsheet of the 1950s. The author's study of *Chronicle* issues in March in both 1984 and 1989 revealed an average of two front-page stories, generally one a local story and the other either the major Queensland story of the day or the major national story. By 1989, Pages 2 to 5 were labelled 'Community' and carried only local news, whereas in 1984 they carried a mix of local, State and national news.

When Andrew Dunn jun. retired from the *Morning Bulletin* in 1954 after being managing director and editor for forty-three years, he anointed Godfrey (George) Westacott (1888-1977) as

1. A.T. Hinchliffe, typescript of file note, 14 April 1966.  
2. A.T. Hinchliffe, typescript recollections.



his editorial successor. It was a decision based on more than thirty years of observation and experience. Even though Westacott was sixty-six-years-old, Dunn regarded him as the obvious choice. Dunn's faith was not misplaced: Westacott served the *Bulletin* well as editor for ten years. He often quoted C.P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*: 'Comment is free, but the facts are sacred.' He was a fair, fearless but careful writer and never once did he land his paper in court. 'Better to be dull than dangerous', he used to say. He was never dull - or dangerous. As editor of the *Evening News* and later the *Morning Bulletin*, Westacott was guided by two maxims which fitted neatly into the Dunn ethos:

1. to present a good newspaper which would attract public appreciation, prestige, circulation and advertising; and
2. to allow the correspondence column to be a forum for all matters of public concern.<sup>1</sup>

Judging from the letters that did appear, Westacott stuck to his word. In January 1959, in what students of news would expect to be a 'quiet' month, the *Morning Bulletin* published forty-one letters - as many as four in one issue - ranging in topics from the need for improved library services, an issue splitting the Rockhampton Jockey Club, the city's meat supply, the label of 'cow town' for Rockhampton, to road hazards, new states, female gem-cutters, wedge-tail eagles, overpopulation and the Springsure centenary.<sup>2</sup> What percentage of letters received was published is unknown, but the range of letters published in the issues studied in 1959 and 1963 suggest that it was a high proportion. The issues ranged from those of national importance or interest (Federal politicians voting themselves a salary increase, 4 April 1959) to the trivial (the loss of a pocket book, 4 September 1963).<sup>3</sup>

Westacott's active part in promoting district affairs was the

1. Hinchliffe, typescript recollections.

2. *Morning Bulletin*, 3, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31 January 1959.

3. *Morning Bulletin*, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 April, 14 and 23 May, and 11 and 16 June 1959; 4, 10, 16 and 21 September, and 17, 19 and 29 October 1963.

sort of thing that delighted the Dunns because it fitted neatly into the localism part of their ethos. Westacott was largely instrumental in forming the Central Queensland Advancement League. In 1949, on behalf of the League, he compiled a booklet outlining the pastoral, agricultural and mining resources of Central Queensland and its scenic and tourist attractions.<sup>1</sup>

In retirement Westacott continued to write the whimsical local-interest column which, over fifty-four years, helped win him accolades such as this one from another colleague, Denis Butler: 'If ever there was a bloke who managed to touch the funnybone of a whole city, it was George Westacott.'<sup>2</sup> Butler had been so impressed with what Westacott was doing at the *Bulletin* that he had written asking if a position were available for him; no vacancy had been advertised. Of the decision by Andrew Dunn jun. to appoint Westacott, Butler said:

It was a brilliant choice to put that old man in as editor because, old as he was, he was as fit as hell. He could eat nails, that man. He was always there, never sick, even though he did totter around on a stick and even though his eyes flexed and he looked vaguely like a Down syndrome baby. He was so much on top of his words.<sup>3</sup>

George Leslie Wilson (1888-1975) edited the *Maryborough Chronicle* from 1925 till 1958, spanning three eras of control of the Dunn newspapers: patriarchal control which ended in 1934; the more shared control that followed with Andrew Dunn jun. as chairman; and then the chairmanship of Herbie Dunn, by then in his declining years. Wilson joined the *Chronicle* in June 1911 after a brilliant scholastic career Maryborough Grammar School and three years of teaching in one-teacher

1. *Morning Bulletin*, 11 January 1977, p. 3; Godfrey Westacott, Central Queensland: its pastoral and agricultural wealth, mining and agricultural resources and tourist and scenic attractions (Rockhampton: Queensland Government Tourist Bureau in conjunction with the Central Queensland Advancement League), 136pp.

2. Denis Butler, interview with author, Toowoomba, 24 April 1979. Butler, by then working for the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, was named in 1976 as the first winner of the Graham Perkin Memorial Award for Australian Journalist of the Year.

3. Butler, interview with author.

schools – the only period he lived outside Maryborough. In 1924 he became the sub-editor and on 20 December 1925 the editor.<sup>1</sup> He plodded along faithfully, not doing anything brilliant, and not doing anything disastrous, for thirty-two years. In August 1957, the directors resolved that Wilson be retired as editor from 31 March 1958 and be paid three months long service leave plus holidays due at that date and a gratuity of seven pounds a week.<sup>2</sup> The Dunns turned away the good old horse that had served them many days and, this time, made a leap into the unknown, one they were quickly to regret. Andrew Dunn interviewed those on the short list drawn up from the twenty-three people who had applied for the editor's job and, on his recommendation, Don Tate, of the *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, was appointed from 30 June 1958, but, good journalist though he was, 'he liked his liquor too much, and spent freely on this and other "luxury items"'.<sup>3</sup> In February 1960, Tate resigned after having been summoned to a meeting of the board of directors. He left Maryborough three days later.<sup>4</sup> In mid-March, Hector Dunn, managing director of the Maryborough company, wrote to nephew Rowley, managing director of the Toowoomba company:

So far we have not seen our former editor. His wife, married daughter and two children are still here. His creditors are waiting for his return.<sup>5</sup>

In March 1960, Andrew Dunn, who was acting as editor, flew to Brisbane, this time with manager George English, to interview applicants for the newly vacant editorship. They appointed Michael O'Donohue, a sub-editor on the *Telegraph*, Brisbane. O'Donohue provided strong editorial leadership for the *Chronicle* for fourteen years.<sup>6</sup>

1. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 19 May 1975, p. 2.

2. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 25 October 1956 and 7 August 1957.

3. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 26 Feb and 21 March 1958; Andrew Dunn, letter to author, 30 November 1993.

4. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 10 May 1960.

5. Hector Dunn, letter to R.J. Dunn, 18 March 1960.

6. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 10 May 1960; Michael O'Donohue, interview with author, Hervey Bay, 18 August 1979.

From Len Cran in Rockhampton to Walter Bruce in Toowoomba and Bill Eadie in Maryborough, the key Dunn newspaper appointees reflected the family's values, practised their ethos, often attended the same church. They were sons of the patriarch in a sense as real as Andrew Dunn himself could have wished, and Kate and Jane would have approved. Within the confines of the family's general adherence to Presbyterian values, political conservatism, and honesty and integrity in reporting the news – sometimes withholding 'news' for what was seen as the public good – managers such as these and editors such as the incisive and witty George Westacott and the precise, community-minded Bert Hinchliffe and the eloquent and bold Michael O'Donohue found sufficient room to develop individual editorial styles that contrasted greatly but still won the approval of the family and a wide cross-section of readers. A former *Maryborough Chronicle* journalist compared O'Donohue's style with that of Wilson.

If Wilson were asked to write an editorial on a certain subject, he would oblige; O'Donohue would refuse point blank. Wilson's editorials were of little interest to the general public, whereas O'Donohue's often hard-hitting editorials were frequently commented upon.<sup>1</sup>

The Dunn family could be benevolent employers, but, at times, they were certainly perceived as being just a little 'Scottish'. Sometimes they were tight with the pennies when it came to rewarding employees, although managers such as Len Cran and Bill Eadie were endowed with generous bonuses year after year. For instance, Cran received bonuses of 350 pounds in 1945, 200 pounds in 1949 and 250 pounds in 1951.<sup>2</sup> The Dunn newspaper companies paid some generous bonuses on special occasions, such as the end of the war, the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth and the centenary of one of their newspapers. The Rockhampton and Toowoomba companies paid in June 1946 an

1. W.G. Rendall, letter to author, 11 October 1979.

2. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., various dates but especially 28 September 1949. [On 28 June 1923 the Rockhampton board voted a bonus of 1,000 pounds to managing director and editor Andrew Dunn Jun. and business manager and company secretary James McIntyre Dunn.] Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co. annual meetings 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938. Note: Eadie's bonuses were mentioned above.

extra two weeks' wages to all staff members as a Victory Day bonus, and the Maryborough company paid an unspecified bonus, apparently on a selective basis - members of the literary staff did not receive it.<sup>1</sup> In mid-1949, the Rockhampton company paid each member of the staff a bonus to allow them to 'share in the improved results'. It paid those who had served at least six months an extra week's wages at day rates and those with less than six months' service an extra half a week's wages, except that minors were paid in full. The company paid a similar bonus at Christmas 1949.<sup>2</sup> On 29 May 1953 - four days before the Coronation - each member of staff of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* received two envelopes: their usual pay envelope, and another containing a full extra week's salary as 'a gesture of goodwill by the management on the important and historic occasion of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and as a measure of thanks for the spirit of co-operation manifested by the various staffs throughout the year'. The gesture cost the company more than 1000 pounds.<sup>3</sup> For the *Maryborough Chronicle's* centenary celebrations in 1960, a centenary bonus, equivalent to half a week's salary, was paid to each member of the staff.<sup>4</sup>

The Dunns as directors were ready to intrude into the day-to-day running of their papers in small detail, largely because they were heavily involved in just about every area of newspaper operation at one or other of their publications. For instance, in 1932 the Maryborough board decided to warn its printer, in writing, that 'unless an improvement was shown and maintained in the printing of the paper, the company would make inquiries for another man to take his place'. A few months later, the editor, George Wilson, was issued not a warning but some suggestions. Among them were:

1. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 14 June 1946; minutes of the Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 28 May and 22 July 1946; minutes of the Maryborough Newspaper Co., 24 August 1946; W.G. Rendall, telephone interview with author, 5 January 1994; J.S. Readdy, telephone interview with author, 21 January 1994.
2. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 17 June 1949.
3. *The Courier-Mail*, undated cutting, but c. June 1953.
4. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 25 November 1960.

That he advise the proof reader to obtain each night a proof of the standing type of country correspondence to ensure no news of forthcoming events is published after they had taken place.

That he cut down country correspondence, where possible, to save space.

That letters to the editor be reduced to about 400 words each.

That the leading article occupy about three-quarters or two-thirds of a column and that it deal more often with local or State subjects.<sup>1</sup>

Two months later the board instructed the editor and sub-editor to exercise 'special care against the publication of libellous matter'. Where matter was doubtful, it should be held over and submitted to the directors, Wilson was told.

The Dunns faced up to economic realities and took the hard decisions accordingly. In November 1937, the directors asked management to report to the next meeting on how to produce the company's papers more cheaply. In April 1938, the Maryborough company decided that to economise it would drop the Bridge notes and Radio columns. And on 13 September 1939, with World War II just starting, the company resolved to stop paying sporting contributors. Instead, the permanent literary staff was instructed to collect the results of all sporting events. Country news was curtailed and the size of the paper reduced whenever possible.<sup>2</sup>

Sometimes key staff were not replaced. Instead more was asked of those holding positions of responsibility. In July 1952 the Rockhampton board decided not to replace composing room foreman H. MacDonald, who had resigned. James Cran Dunn and E. Linde were each paid four pounds a week to compensate them for extra duties and overtime until such time as staff conditions

1. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 7 March and 27 September 1932 (University of Queensland. Fryer Library: UQFL187/13).

2. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 27 November 1937, 1 April 1938 and 13 September 1939.

improved. The arrangement was kept under review by the management.<sup>1</sup>

Industrial relations became an issue nationally during World War II. In 1941 Arthur Thomas Shakespeare resigned as secretary of the Australian Provincial Press Association. At a Queensland Provincial Newspapers meeting in mid-1941, the principle of appointing a federal industrial officer was affirmed. In February 1942 the Maryborough board learned that Frederick James Meacham, manager of the *Queensland Times*, had been appointed industrial officer and secretary of the Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd. Each member newspaper contributed to the cost annually, and Maryborough's contribution was set at fifty pounds.

Overall, however, industrial harmony prevailed at the Dunn newspapers. A minor example of the tensions that can arise came in 1945 when the Maryborough chairman reported that owing to the unsatisfactory working arrangements between the literary and mechanical staffs, erection of a second storey to the back portion of the building was needed.<sup>2</sup> It was not until the 1970s that the Dunns, by then part of a wider newspaper organisation, faced the damaging nature of industrial strife, as is shown in Chapter 8.

Long-serving printers and journalists generally did not fare so well. John Dobbs was given little reward for about sixty years' service with the Rockhampton company. In April 1926 Dobbs, a seventy-two-year-old compositor, applied to be allowed to work half a shift only each day. He was finding a whole day's work too much for him. The directors agreed to his request, so long as he obtained the necessary permit from an Industrial Magistrate. He would be paid three pounds a week. Within a month, however, the board decided to retire Dobbs

1. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 1 July 1952.

2. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 16 February 1942 and 26 August 1945.

and, in view of his 'long and faithful service', to pay him twenty-five pounds. The same year when F. Crow voluntarily retired after thirty-four years' service, the directors decided to write him a letter of appreciation and pay him ten guineas (\$21) so he could buy himself 'any suitable reminder of his association with the firm'.<sup>1</sup>

Each of the three papers – the Toowoomba and Maryborough *Chronicles* and the *Morning Bulletin* – provides evidence that the Dunns received long service from their employees. In 1994, twenty-three Toowoomba *Chronicle* employees had worked at the paper for more than twenty-five years. Another employee had worked with PNQ newspapers for thirty years.<sup>2</sup> The longest serving employee was the editor, Bruce Hinchliffe, who began working for the company on 21 December 1951 and who has worked there since, apart from about twenty months with the *Courier-Mail* and with a Hong Kong newspaper in 1967-68. A composing room employee, G.A. Hooper, had forty-one years' unbroken service.<sup>3</sup> At the *Morning Bulletin*, two reporters who never became editors were Dunn employees for more than fifty years: Henry William Francis, known as 'Skipper', served fifty-six years (1913-1969) and Reg Birch, fifty-one years (1929-1980).<sup>4</sup> When the *Bulletin* celebrated its centenary in 1961, it noted that twenty-two of its eighty-six staff members had appeared in the staff photograph taken to mark the paper's seventy-fifth anniversary.<sup>5</sup> At the *Maryborough Chronicle*, George Leslie Wilson, a reporter who became editor, was a Dunn employee for

1. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 8 April and 10 May 1926.

2. Bruce Manning, letter to author, 3 May 1994.

3. Bruce Hinchliffe, letter to author, 14 December 1992.

4. H.W. Francis, interview with author, Rockhampton, 20 May 1979; Reg Birch, interview with author, Rockhampton, 18 May 1979; *Morning Bulletin*, 3 December 1981, and 125th Anniversary Supplement, 9 July 1986, p. 13.

5. *Morning Bulletin*, Centenary Issue, 8 July 1961, p. 47.



forty-seven years (1911-1958), and William McWatters, who became the production foreman at the age of nineteen, served the *Chronicle* for fifty-three years (1878-1931) – forty of those with the Dunns.<sup>1</sup>

The family companies sometimes paid long-serving employees sick pay for far longer than required by any industrial award. In 1956 the Rockhampton board decided to pay a senior composing room employee, E. Linde, five pounds a week during his absence because of blood poisoning (for up to six months) – 'in view of his loyal service to the company for many years'. In February 1957, the Rockhampton board paid an extra week's wages to L.J. Forbes, E. Linde and G. Chillingworth for extra work carried out in the changeover to tabloid production on 1 January 1957. The directors also gave ten pounds to advertising sales representative Len Sutherland who was getting married.<sup>2</sup> In 1958 the Rockhampton board supplied the female office staff members with three uniforms of an approved design as a trial. It was really compensation for excluding the women from the superannuation scheme and, in addition, was intended to stem any request for reduced hours or wage margins.<sup>3</sup> But the family companies could be tough on those who transgressed the law. In 1959, the Maryborough manager dismissed the assistant printer and two juniors in the press room after they were convicted on various charges of theft.<sup>4</sup>

Among the Dunn newspaper companies, Toowoomba took the lead in actually discussing a proposal for a staff retirement or superannuation scheme. In August 1939, the Toowoomba directors

1. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 19 May 1975, p. 2, and 22 May 1948, p. 2.
2. *Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co.*, 29 February 1956, and 26 February 1957.
3. *Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co.*, 4 April 1958
4. *Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co.*, 4 March 1959.

discussed a proposed a staff retirement insurance scheme submitted by the A.M.P. Society, but decided 'the proposal be not entertained'.<sup>1</sup> Rockhampton discussed, in 1944, a proposal for an employees' provident fund or a profit sharing scheme. But it was eleven years before the company introduced a staff superannuation scheme. In 1945, and again at different times later in the 1940s, superannuation-type proposals, including profit-sharing schemes and provident funds, were discussed.<sup>2</sup> In 1953 when various specific submissions from life-insurance companies were again discussed, the directors still hesitated, but, as a stop-gap measure, decided to set aside at least 1000 pounds from each year's profits to establish a Provident Fund from which calls might be made on retirement of members of the staff.<sup>3</sup> In April 1954, Alex Dunn introduced 'the question of staff both upstairs and down and suggested that the matter of replacing or preparing for the day when older members must retire be given full consideration'. All eligible members of the Rockhampton staff were invited to attend a meeting in November to hear about the proposed company superannuation scheme. By March 1955 fifty per cent of the eligible staff had agreed to contribute. In May, the directors decided to place the business with the Australian Mutual Provident Society. From 8 July 1955, employees contributed 2.5 per cent of their weekly wage and the company matched this amount. In addition, the company made a contribution based on years of service given by the employee.<sup>4</sup> In 1956 the company introduced a qualifying period of six months before an employee could join the superannuation scheme.<sup>5</sup>

One insight into the slowness with which the Dunn family newspapers moved into superannuation was provided by a long-serving Toowoomba journalist who said, after his retirement,

1. Minutes of Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 9 August 1939.
2. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 28 September 1949.
3. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 14 May 1953.
4. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 15 August 1955.
5. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 19 June 1956.

that his only regret with having thrown in his lot with the *Chronicle* all his life was the poor superannuation he had received. He had not been in a superannuation scheme till he was fifty-four, although he had joined the *Chronicle* when twenty. He had received a pittance when he officially retired.<sup>1</sup> At Maryborough, a journalist who had worked for the *Chronicle* from 1936 to 1974 received his basic superannuation cheque only after firing off numerous letters. He certainly received no retirement allowance based on the number of years he had worked, although A. Dunn and Co. had decided in 1959 that non-executive employees who gave 'loyal service exceeding twenty years' would be paid the equivalent of 'not less than twenty per cent of their wages on retirement for the same period'.<sup>2</sup>

If you were family, it was different. For a number of years the Dunn Family organisation made ex gratia payments to Margaret Cran (mother of Andrew Dunn's second wife, Jane), Jessie McGown (Jane's aunt), and Louisa and Jessie Cran (Jane's sisters). Over a period of about fifteen years the Dunn newspapers contributed in one way or another to the medical treatment and/or financial support of Mary Elizabeth Dunn, widow of Jim Dunn (1881-1925). In 1941 they decided to help pay for medical treatment that would perhaps extend over a long period. In 1951 and 1953 they paid a gratuity of 100 pounds to be made available to her at the absolute discretion of her son, James, who was to make advances as required. Mary Dunn had no knowledge whatever of this arrangement. In 1953 the family lent Hugh Alexander Dunn, son of the late Jim Dunn, 1250 pounds to enable him to take up lectureship at Toronto University, Canada. It was accepted practice that the family paid the widow of a deceased director the equivalent of what would have been a full year's salary at his death.<sup>3</sup> In all, the

1. Bertram E. Pottinger, interview, 26 July 1978; *The Chronicle*, 10 and 13 January 1984.

2. William George Rendall, letter to author, 9 March 1992; minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 3/4 February 1959.

3. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 22 November 1932, 9 October 1933, 25 November 1934, 24 July 1953.

Dunns sought to be fair and compassionate in how they managed people, and often they succeeded, but nepotism cast an ever-present shadow and those on whom it failed to fall often missed out on generous treatment. Sometimes the harsh reality of the cash register clanged, and employees were left wondering what their loyalty had been worth.

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This chapter has demonstrated that the Dunns were as cautious in their appointments as they were when it came to other big decisions, such as large capital expenditure. They rarely gambled with the choice of a manager, or even an editor. They appointed either members of their own family or men whom they knew would reflect and even enhance the Dunn ethos – men such as George Westacott, George Leslie Wilson, Bert Hinchliffe and Walter Bruce. The ethos was reflected in the pages of their newspapers, as this chapter and the previous show. Nepotism inevitably meant that some of the appointments were not the wisest, but the dynasty survived. There was a tendency to persevere for too long with a valued manager, such as Len Cran, himself a nepotistic appointment, albeit one with merit. He was not retired until he was seventy-four. This was hardly surprising, however, for his superior, Andrew Dunn. jun. was a year older. The Dunns as directors were prepared to intrude into the day-to-day running of their newspapers in small detail largely because they were heavily involved in just about every area of newspaper operation at one or other of their publications. This heavy involvement possibly contributed to the disparity in treatment handed out to executive and ordinary staff.

Predator at the gate:  
seeking strength in numbers

The Dunns trigger a large-scale merger

*... you've got to have ink under your fingernails to run newspapers properly.*

— Muriel H. Barton, c. 1961

The beginning of the television era in Australia was the catalyst for a period of volatility in media ownership. Metropolitan newspaper proprietors who won the television licences found that they had, almost, a licence to print money, and this allowed them to indulge far more freely their predatorial instincts. The Dunns were sensitive to the changing environment. With the benefit of a model — the purchase of the *Bundaberg News-Mail* in conjunction with other Queensland provincial daily newspapers through a holding company in 1961 — the Dunns and five other pioneering Queensland provincial press families joined together in a merger in April 1968 to ward off perceived threats of takeover from the metropolitan press, especially Rupert Murdoch and Sir Frank Packer. The amalgamation resulted in the formation of a holding company called Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. Another aim of the merger was to enable listing of the company's shares on the Stock Exchange. This would provide finance for capital expansion, technological updating and the opportunity for shareholders, many of them the third successive generation to be involved in their newspapers, to sell outside of the families. The merger would also, in its own way, be a significant step on the path to the demise of each of the dynasties. The old order would pass as business

became increasingly complex and ferocious. This chapter draws in the other families that, with the Dunns, formed PNQ, providing an insight into the ethos that each family had developed at its newspaper. The marked similarities with the Dunn ethos suggest why, finally, the Dunns were prepared to link with these other families' newspapers in an amalgamation on a more co-operative scale than the mergers of the twenties and thirties when competition was, in effect, abolished in centres such as Warwick, Maryborough, Charters Towers and Toowoomba.

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As 1960 dawned, the media predators were on the prowl. Cheque book in hand, they pawed at the gate of any worthwhile media property. A decade into the post-war Menzies era (1949-1966), and three years into the television era, political stability and media volatility were juxtaposed in Australia. Metropolitan newspaper companies had become the major shareholders in the companies winning from the Australian Broadcasting Control Board the licences to operate television stations in the state capitals. These were regarded as 'licences to print money', but they posed complications because they demanded large financial resources initially for establishing, equipping and staffing television studios. These resources were thus not available for newspaper expansionary moves. Another complication: in 1958, the John Fairfax group, through a shelf company, bought Ezra Norton's controlling stock in Truth and Sportsman Ltd., publisher of the *Daily Mirror*, an afternoon paper, and *Sunday Mirror*. John Fairfax guaranteed a loan of 885,150 pounds to the shelf company, O'Connell Pty. Ltd., and separately paid Norton 500,000 pounds for an undertaking not to start another daily in Sydney. An amalgamation of Fairfax's afternoon *Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* would have been simpler, but that might have encouraged the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd., Frank Packer's company or some

other company to start a second evening paper in Sydney. In the event, the tortuous arrangement by which O'Connell Pty. Ltd. competed with John Fairfax allowed Rupert Murdoch to thrust himself into Sydney.<sup>1</sup>

From Adelaide, Murdoch, aged twenty-eight, sniffed the wind and pounced on Sydney twice in 1960, in February and in May. In February, he bought Earl White's Cumberland Newspapers Ltd., which published twenty-four 'free' newspapers in the booming northern and western suburbs of Sydney. White, a former Fairfax reporter, had started Cumberland thirty years earlier and was reputed to be making a profit of about 70,000 pounds a year. White, like Ezra Norton two years earlier, had been thinking of retirement and had put out feelers in several directions. When Murdoch heard of these approaches, he chose John Glass, a Sydney businessman, to act for him. White extracted one million pounds from Glass, a good deal more than anyone had offered. A few days after signing the deal, he realised why so large a multiple of profits had been paid: the buyer was disclosed as Rupert Murdoch, who wanted a toehold in Sydney.<sup>2</sup> Three months later, on 21 May, Murdoch converted his toehold into a foothold when he snapped up the *Daily* and *Sunday Mirrors* from Fairfax. Discouraged by the performance of the two papers and with his eyes firmly on the need to finance Fairfax's Sydney television interests, Fairfax managing director Rupert Henderson completed a deal with Murdoch, without the knowledge of Sir Warwick Fairfax who was overseas and known to be against any such sale. The price, however, was not cheap - 1,928,342 pounds - and included, later, a stake in one of the Brisbane television licensees.<sup>3</sup>

1. George Munster, A Paper Prince, pp. 57-58.

2. Munster, p. 58.

3. Munster, p. 58; Souter, Company of Heralds, pp. 344-346; in 1988 Murdoch's Mirror won the Sydney afternoon newspaper war when Fairfax's Sun closed (14 March).

In Queensland, two commercial television stations had begun broadcasting in Brisbane in August and November 1959, and regional television was just around the corner. Commercial television transmission began in Canberra and twelve of the more populous country regions throughout Australia by 1964 and twenty smaller country regions received it from 1964-68.<sup>1</sup> Commercial television licensees began transmitting in Toowoomba in July 1962, Rockhampton in September 1962 and Maryborough in April 1965.<sup>2</sup> At the 1961 Census, the local government area of Rockhampton City had a population of 44,128; Maryborough City, 19,126; and Toowoomba City, 50,134. In 1961, Queensland had ten provincial dailies, two tri-weeklies, six bi-weeklies and thirty-three weeklies and one fortnightly.<sup>3</sup> During the sixties, step by step, the Dunns and five other major pioneering Queensland provincial press families moved towards amalgamation on a grander, friendlier scale than the mergers of a generation earlier.

When the Dunns expanded from their Maryborough base by buying interests in Rockhampton (in 1911 and 1929), Warwick (1914 and 1919) and Toowoomba (twice in 1922), they found that they had created new dynamics for their original organisation as well as for its component parts. This would also be true when they moved into Bundaberg in 1961, albeit as part of a combination of eight companies, and Nambour in 1964, on their own. In the late fifties, an ageing widow, Muriel Hooper Barton, who had become involved in the *Bundaberg News-Mail* only upon the death on 6 September 1931 of her husband, Sidney Howard Barton – its dynamic forty-four-year-old managing editor – decided it was

1. Sandra Hall in *Australian Encyclopedia* (5th ed.: Sydney: Australian Geographic Society, 1988), p. 530.

2. R.M. Barton, deputy general manager, Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations, letter to author, 18 November 1993.

3. Mayer, p. 33; viz. also Appendix 3.



time to explore life outside newspapers.<sup>1</sup> By December 1958 she had approached A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd. to determine whether it was interested in buying the 51.8 per cent controlling interest she held with her daughter, Betty Young.<sup>2</sup> Barton, who owned 56.4 per cent of the family's 12,714 shares (against Young's 43.6 per cent) was not prepared to sell to one of her directors, Bundaberg businessman Carl Nielson, who held a twenty per cent interest. Nielson said in 1992 he still did not know the full reason for Barton's refusal to sell to him, but part of the reason was possibly that he was 'not from the industry'.

She had picked up the idea from Jack Manning at the Country Press conferences that you've got to have ink under your fingernails to run newspapers properly.<sup>3</sup>

Nielson ran an electrical retail business in Bundaberg and had been one of the biggest advertisers with the *News-Mail* when he was invited to join the board (viz. Appendix 2). On Mrs Barton's departure, the *News-Mail* commented:

Realisation of the responsibility which the newspaper bore to the community of Bundaberg impelled Mrs Barton to ensure that when she made the decision to retire from the company's administration and to relinquish her financial interests in the firm, those interests would be transferred to persons who were fully cogniscent [sic] of the needs of such an important provincial city like Bundaberg. This has been achieved, because the company which has acquired those interests has established over many years an intimate association with Queensland's newspaper profession.<sup>4</sup>

Barton had been managing director of the Bundaberg company since the death on 2 December 1950 of Jack Cecil Brady, who had taken on that role in 1931 when Sid Barton died.<sup>5</sup>

1. Bundaberg Daily News and Mail, 7 September 1931.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co.

3. C.A.F. Nielson, telephone interview with author, Bundaberg, 17 November 1992.

4. Bundaberg News-Mail, 26 January 1961, p. 4.

5. Bundaberg News-Mail, 4 December 1950.

When the Dunn board met in February 1959, some members reported on discussions and negotiations for acquiring an interest in the *News-Mail*. The directors hesitated, but Barton approached Jack Manning, the chairman of the Queensland Division of the Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd. (viz. Appendix 4), suggesting member newspapers might be interested in combining to buy the Barton family interest in the *News-Mail*.<sup>1</sup> Manning persuaded Lex Dunn, and on 28 October 1960 the Dunns decided that its three subsidiary newspaper companies would participate with the *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay (of which Manning was chairman), the *Queensland Times*, Ipswich (Kippens, Parkinsons and Stephensons), the *Warwick Daily News* (Irwins), and the *Cairns Post* to buy the Barton interest in the *News-Mail*. Central to the scheme was formation of a holding company – Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd. – in which the eight dailies would have equal interests. In acquiring the Barton interest, Provincial Investments paid 100,000 pounds.<sup>2</sup>

The Bundaberg daily had taken its gross profit from 12,165 pounds in 1955-56 to 33,177 pounds in 1959-60 and its net profit from 8520 pounds to 22,066 pounds. When L.W.H. Butts, a member of the legal firm of Morris, Fletcher and Cross, and a leading authority on company law and promotion, was asked by Jack Manning to study the Bundaberg balance sheet, his advice was: 'Accept the offer.' Only once previously in his experience, Butts told Manning, had he seen anything so attractive.<sup>3</sup> At this stage, the Dunns must have been kicking themselves. With a little foresight, they could have acquired a controlling interest in Bundaberg on their own. It could have been the first step to becoming big enough not to have to

1. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 3-4 February 1959; C.A.F. Nielson, telephone interview, 17 November 1992.

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co.; H.J. Manning, letter to W. Bruce, 9 November 1960; A.D. Morris, letter to W. Bruce, 23 January 1961.

3. H.J. Manning, letter to W. Bruce, 9 November 1960.

link up with the other families later, big enough to survive on their own even through the turbulence of the late 1980s triggered by Rupert Murdoch's takeover of the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd.

Ten months after taking part in the purchase of a controlling interest in the Bundaberg daily, the Dunns decided to investigate the possibility of buying a weekly, the *Monto Herald*. Nothing came of it; in fact, Beronia O'Connor, now the widow of Gerald Francis O'Connor (1911-1974) the man who then owned the *Herald*, felt it was not a fully fledged offer<sup>1</sup>, but in 1964, at Nambour, a sugar-cane and pineapple growing town on the still-sleepy Sunshine Coast, the product of another investigation was much sweeter. The Dunn board asked Andrew Dunn, Rowley Dunn and Walter Bruce, on 25 February 1964, to visit Nambour to investigate the possibility of buying the *Nambour Chronicle*. The three directors reported favourably on 20 March. The board decided to offer a price not exceeding 90,142 pounds to the two McFadden brothers surviving from the trio who had run the paper since the death of their father, Andrew Alfred McFadden, in 1923 (viz. Appendix 2). A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd. took over from the McFaddens at the *Nambour Chronicle* on 1 July 1964 – as is shown in Table 7. This was the first step in establishing the most successful new Queensland provincial daily newspaper – the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, launched at Maroochydore on 7 July 1980 – since the first decade of the century (viz. Appendices 10 and 11).<sup>2</sup>

Although somebody as esteemed in Queensland provincial newspapers as Clarrie Manning, a former chairman of the Queensland Division of the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd., has scoffed at the idea that Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd.

1. Beronia O'Connor, telephone interview with author, 12 October 1993; *Monto Herald*, 18 April 1974, p. 1.  
 2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 25 February, 20 March and 5 June 1964; Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 297-298; *Sunshine Coast Daily*, 7 July 1980.

## Table 7

## The lead-up to PNQ, 1961-68

1961, 20 Jan.:

Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd. buys 52 per cent of the *Bundaberg-News Mail* from Muriel Hooper Barton and daughter Betty Young.

1964, 1 July:

A. Dunn and Company Pty. Ltd. buys *Nambour Chronicle* from the McFaddens (and uses it as the springboard for the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, Maroochydore).

1965, April:

Formation of a PNQ-type holding company is proposed.

1965, 26 Nov.:

Queensland Press Ltd. buys the *Cairns Post*.

1966, 28 June:

Name change: A. Dunn and Company Pty. Ltd. becomes Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Pty. Ltd.

1968, 1 April:

Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. formed as the result of the merging of the interests of principally the Dunn, Manning, Irwin and Ipswich newspaper families.

provided some sort of a model and inspiration for the eventual formation of PNQ, there seems little doubt that the holding company for the Bundaberg operation planted the seed of an idea in the fertile minds of newspaper proprietors eager to protect their investments from the predatory metropolitan media. Certainly Carl Nielson, a Bundaberg director, suggested this was so.<sup>1</sup> And Don Morris agreed. Morris believed the eventual decision to have serious discussions about a holding company 'was enhanced by the successful Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd.'. Each of the companies in the proposed merger, together with Townsville and Cairns, had an equal shareholding in Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd. (viz. Appendix 4).<sup>2</sup>

From 1963 to 1968 the Dunns, who had practised amalgamation ruthlessly in the period between the two world wars, contemplated a merger on far more co-operative scale. As early as October 1963 the Dunn board had decided to send Peter Dunn and Walter Bruce north to find out from *Townsville Daily Bulletin* manager Bill Ellis whether that company was prepared to amalgamate with the Dunn newspapers, in view of the threat from the metropolitan Press.<sup>3</sup> In April 1965 the Dunns took part in informal discussions about establishing a holding company to protect the interests of various independent provincial newspaper companies. On 24 May 1965 stockbroker Alban A. Hale, of Corser, Henderson & Hale, suggested to *Toowoomba Chronicle* manager Walter Bruce that Brian Sanderson, of Groom, Sanderson & Co., Chartered Accountants, be appointed investigating accountant for the project. The investigators sought to determine 'the financial strength of all companies, and the asset strength'. Discussing the proposed holding company the following day, the Dunn directors were visited by the ghost of caution and refused to supply balance sheets and accounts for

1. C.A.F. Nielson, telephone interview, 17 November 1992; C.M. Manning, telephone interview with author, Brisbane, 17 November 1992.

2. A.D. Morris, 'Notes on P.N.Q.' (typescript), p. 8.

3. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 8 October 1963 and 25 February 1964.

the previous two years.<sup>1</sup> No action on the proposal followed for some months, but soon after Queensland Press Ltd. chairman D.S. Sherman announced, on 26 November 1965, that it had bought the *Cairns Post* through an exchange of shares, there was plenty of talk and, within two months, some action.<sup>2</sup>

At Bundaberg, Carl Nielson was worried by the Cairns takeover and wrote on 5 December 1965 to Walter Bruce and Mackay Mercury chairman Jack Manning. He sent the letter to Bruce, asking him to add his comments before forwarding it to Manning.

Haven't heard anything from you or Jack on the Cairns debacle. The more I think of the deal, the more urgent some action is indicated. Don't you think that the following suggestion could be a starting point?

Nielson proposed endeavouring to float a public company of the remaining independent provincial newspapers. He offered to drive to Brisbane to discuss the matter. Nielson said Rupert Murdoch had told him at a yacht race during Easter 1965 that he hoped to 'break into Queensland'. 'By inference,' Nielson wrote, 'I got the impression he was thinking of Townsville.'<sup>3</sup> Nineteen years later, Murdoch did buy the North Queensland Newspaper Co. Ltd (publishers of the *Townsville Bulletin*), after a protracted tussle with Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd. News Ltd. directors were appointed to the board of North Queensland Newspaper Co. on 27 January 1984.<sup>4</sup>

Walter Bruce was unenthusiastic about Nielson's proposal and told him so:

I would rather not send your letter and my comments to Jack [Manning]. The Australian Provincial Daily Press [Ltd.] in Queensland has entered into an era of apathy and complacency and until it receives a much needed 'shot in the arm' I am afraid that we are not competent to encourage takeovers.<sup>5</sup>

1. W. Bruce, letters to A.D. Morris, Secretary of Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd. 28 April, 6 May and 28 May 1965.
2. *The Courier-Mail*, 27 November 1965, p. 1.
3. C.A.F. Nielson, letter to W. Bruce, 5 December 1965.
4. Ross Devine, letter to author, 8 November 1993; Bruce Grundy, 'The fight moves north', *Australian Journalism Review*, 6, 1 (January 1984), pp. 77-78.
5. W. Bruce, letter to C.A.F. Nielson, 14 December 1965.

On the same day he wrote to tell *Bundaberg News-Mail* general manager Roy Theodore of Nielson's letter. Bruce said Nielson's ideas had been:

attempted twelve months ago but when it came to submitting Balance Sheets and Supporting Accounts to ascertain our combined strength, the majority of our members (including Cairns) decided against the proposal.

Bruce foresaw a new era:

The old order appears to be passing and I think big newspaper companies are in a better position than A.P.D.P. [Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd.] members to encourage takeovers. In any case, my opinion is that A.P.D.P. has not kept pace with the progress of this age.<sup>1</sup>

Despite Bruce's views, the sale of the *Cairns Post* prodded Don Morris into action. Morris, the secretary of Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd., re-opened discussion of the holding company proposal after informal talks between interested parties in his office on 26 January 1966. Those who backed the holding-company proposal saw the basic objectives as being, as far as possible, to preserve both the existing independence of the provincial press and the status quo in regard to families, etc.; and to provide for early listing on the Stock Exchange.<sup>2</sup> For some time before the eventual merger, the shareholders in each of the companies had been concerned with the difficulties that arose when shares were to be transferred because of death or other circumstances - difficulties such as share valuations for duty purposes and sale purposes; finding suitable buyers, able and willing to pay a fair market price for the shares (both these would be overcome by Stock Exchange listing); and weaknesses when operating as separate units in industrial, political, marketing and administrative matters. The Dunn interests had previously considered the listing of the A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd. shares to overcome some of these difficulties. All the companies were represented at the first

1. W. Bruce, letter to R. Theodore, 14 December 1965.

2. A.D. Morris, letter to W. Bruce, 8 February 1966.

formal meeting of those interested in the merger, but this soon changed. 'Gympie, Townsville and Cairns decided not to take part in the merger negotiations.'<sup>1</sup>

Lex Dunn, making good use of his legal training and experience, was the architect of what became Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd., just as he had been the architect of the incorporation of what had been, for forty-six years, a loose Dunn family newspaper organisation. He was courageous enough to set his ideas down on paper, something which distinguished him from most of the other players. For instance, when outlining a proposal to form a holding company to acquire the capital of nine newspapers, he said one option was for existing shareholders to exchange their shares for shares in the holding company. To have an equitable basis for the exchange, each company would have to have its assets revalued and its own capital structure adjusted at a given date. Its shares would be valued and its accounts adjusted accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

Lex Dunn was treading unknown waters, and this was reflected in the tentative nature of the options he presented. He did his utmost to ensure that the parties to the proposal could see that their present powers and privileges would be affected as little as possible. One option was for an independent valuer to be appointed to value each company's assets and another valuer to value each company's shares so that all companies were placed on a similar basis. Under this option, each company could be run as they were then, subject to general overall control by the holding company which would appoint local boards of directors. Dunn saw the proposed holding company as 'a very powerful organisation [that] could be the means of resisting takeover bids by outside interests

1. Morris, 'Notes on P.N.Q.', p. 8.

2. Chairman's address to Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. annual meeting, Brisbane, 18 October 1985; L.S. Dunn, typescript document, undated but circa May 1965 (held by author).



for the existing companies'. He saw numerous administrative advantages in areas such as: staffing; financial assistance; buying; promotion schemes; possible tax savings; presenting a united front in industrial disputes; general administration in view of possible use of computers for accounting and other services, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Lex Dunn presented an updated proposal, this time officially on behalf of the board of directors of A. Dunn and Co., to representatives of the North Queensland Newspaper Company Limited; the Mackay Printing & Publishing Co. (Pty.) Ltd.; the Queensland Times Pty. Ltd.; and the Warwick Newspaper Pty. Ltd. At that stage the Dunns, forever cautious, had not made their shareholders aware of the move and were not guaranteeing the shareholders would ultimately support the holding company proposal.<sup>2</sup>

Momentum was gathering, but nothing was rushed. The Dunns were innately cautious, and so were several of the family companies with which they were negotiating. Lex Dunn warned that it was important to have a vision of what the holding company should be and to make sure that vision became a reality. He warned against taking the approach of:

let's see how it works; things will sort themselves out in due course... Its functions must be planned from the start and all involved must be able to see quite clearly how the company will work. In effect, it must be their ideal of a holding company.<sup>3</sup>

A formal newspaper investigation group was established and met five times between March and August 1966. The group agreed that if the holding company were formed it should have all the powers required for stable and profitable operation of its subsidiaries. They agreed, too, that the existing family

1. L.S. Dunn, undated typescript No. 1.

2. L.S. Dunn, second undated document, but circa March 1966 (held by author).

3. L.S. Dunn, letter and memoranda, to A.D. Morris, 21 April 1966.

appointments, salaries, allowances, etc., and the status and benefits of younger working directors would remain 'no less advantageous' than at 1 June 1966, pending the introduction of a new scheme. The painstaking caution continued. The group appointed E.W. Savage, of Cooper Brothers Savage & Co., a Brisbane firm of chartered accountants, to value shares now issued by the interested companies. At a meeting on 1 August Savage outlined how he proposed to value the shares.<sup>1</sup> It was decided that a merger would be desirable, possibly on a share exchange basis. Cautious as always, the group adopted the code name 'Aston Syndicate' for security reasons. Aston was the name of the street where Savage lived. This code name was the forerunner of many others - such as 'Madam' in 1977 for the proposed purchase of the South Burnett Times Pty. Ltd. from Alice Lefroy Adams, and 'Eagle' in 1971 for the project to gain listing on the Stock Exchange - used by the merged company. Coopers & Lybrand submitted their basis of merger, which provided that the shares issued by Mackay, Ipswich and Warwick would be exchanged for shares in Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Pty. Ltd. Aston syndicate gave its backing and so did the shareholders in the companies concerned.<sup>2</sup> One of the most important reasons for the merger was to obtain Stock Exchange listing of the company's shares as soon as possible.<sup>3</sup>

Shareholdings in the various companies interested in taking part in the holding company negotiations at September 1966 were:

Mackay	9 holdings	nom. value	\$146,686
Warwick	7 holdings	nom. value	\$33,000
Ipswich	25 holdings	nom. value	\$124,728
PNQ Pty. Ltd.	37 holdings	nom. value	\$938,676
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$1,243,090</b> <sup>4</sup>

1. Morris, 'Notes on P.N.Q', p. 9.

2. Minutes of meeting of Newspaper Investigation Group, 28 June 1966; minutes of P.N.Q., 8 February 1971; Queensland Provincial Newspapers file (University of Queensland: Fryer Library, UQFL 187/13).

3. A.D. Morris, letter to W. Bruce, 6 September 1966.

4. L.S. Dunn, letter to secretary, Queensland Times Ltd., Ipswich, 14 November 1966.

With the process under way, the Dunn directors still worried that moves towards establishing a holding company were in danger of lapsing into too general a consideration of values with a consequential 'bogging-down' of all negotiations. They wanted to direct investigations towards considering a specific proposal. Dunn successfully proposed a board of twelve, comprising the seven existing members of PNQ Pty. Ltd. (the Dunns), two nominated by the Ipswich board (the Stephensons, Parkinsons and Kippens), two from Mackay (the Mannings), and one from Warwick (the Irwins).<sup>1</sup>

By December 1966 the Warwick Newspaper Pty. Ltd. - the Irwin family, with roots deeply planted in the Warwick press - was happy to go ahead.<sup>2</sup> Seven months later the Newspaper Investigation Group, having studied the profits of the proposed partners, as shown in Table 8, concluded that the share breakdown in the holding company would be:

Dunns	59.9pc
Mackay	18.7pc
Ipswich	15.0pc
Warwick	6.4pc <sup>3</sup>

It was agreed that the simplest and cheapest method of achieving the merger was one which resulted in PNQ Pty. Ltd. (formerly A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd.) becoming the holding company of the group because this (a) saved the formation of another company with attendant costs involved; (b) meant that fewer shares had to be transferred; and (c) incurred less stamp duty.<sup>4</sup> In effect, the resultant holding company was the third title for A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd. Technically, the Dunns - whose newspapers were dominant, as is shown in the circulation figures provided in Table 9 - bought out the

1. W. Bruce, letter to A.D. Morris, 1 December 1966.

2. Cooper Brothers Savage & Co., letter to Newspaper Investigation Group, 25 July 1967 (held by author).

3. Morris Fletcher and Co., letter to A.D. Morris, 26 July 1967 (held by author).

4. Minutes of Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. [PNQ]. (University of Queensland: Fryer Library, UQFL 187/20).

Table 8

## Profits of the three partners joining the Dunns

Year	Mackay*	Ipswich**	Warwick***
1962	\$ 48,780		
1963	\$ 56,320	\$ 64,702	\$27,545
1964	\$ 82,106	\$ 88,407	\$39,141
1965	\$102,100	\$102,646	\$35,594
1966	\$ 97,903 <sup>1</sup>	\$104,573	\$42,191
1967		\$120,996 <sup>2</sup>	\$48,559 <sup>3</sup>

\* Net profit before tax.  
\*\* Gross profit.  
\*\*\* Gross profit before tax.

1. C.M. Manning, letter to L.S. Dunn, 18 April 1968 (this letter and the two below are held by University of Queensland: Fryer Library, UQFL 187/20).

2. G.S. Stephenson, letter to L.S. Dunn, 11 April 1968.

3. E. Hollingworth, letter to L.S. Dunn, 19 April 1968.

Table 9

## Circulation of fully-owned daily newspapers at entry to PNQ

Newspaper	Circulation	Percentage of group circulation
Maryborough	7,902	10.62
Rockhampton	19,136	25.72
Toowoomba	17,872	24.03
<u>Dunn sub-total</u>	<u>44,910</u>	<u>60.37</u>
Mackay	10,796	14.52
Ipswich	12,837	17.25
Warwick	5,853	7.86
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74,396</b>	<b>100.00<sup>2</sup></b>

SOURCE: Table held in Queensland provincial newspapers file (University of Queensland. Fryer Library, UQFL187/20).

other companies, having first changed the name of their company.<sup>1</sup>

On 25 March 1968, at the offices of Arthur J. Morris & Co. in Queen Street, Brisbane, the holding company's board met for the first time, appointing as additional directors C.M. Manning (of Mackay), G.S. Stephenson and C.W.N. Aylward (of Ipswich), and E. Hollingworth (Warwick). They tabled offers from all the shareholders of Mackay, Ipswich and Warwick to transfer to PNQ all the shares in their companies in exchange for shares in PNQ. These offers were formally accepted and arrangements for a dinner on the evening of 1 April were confirmed. At the next directors' meeting, on Monday, 1 April 1968, Alexander Gordon Dunn, a son of the patriarch Andrew Dunn, resigned as chairman and the third-generation took over: Rowland James Dunn. When the celebration dinner was held that evening at the old Lennon's Hotel in George Street, Brisbane, the guests were shareholders and their spouses, and those associated with the merger. One shareholder remarked: 'Queensland newspaper history has been made today.'<sup>2</sup>

The six families were hardly unknown to one another. They had been working together at state and national Country Press level for more than half a century, and the Dunns and Irwins had experienced nearly eighteen years of working side by side, on the *Warwick Daily News* (1919-1936). Lex Dunn and Clarrie Manning, certainly did not enter the merger blindly. They had discussed newspapers and had found they shared similar ideas.<sup>3</sup> Each of the families shared a commitment to advancing the community through the pages of the newspaper and enhancing the community through their own personal involvement. Two members of the families had served as parliamentarians for a total of sixteen years, four members had served as mayors of their

1. James Kavanagh Armitage, telephone interview with author, 5 March 1994.

2. Morris, 'Notes on PNQ', pp. 8-10.

3. C.M. Manning, interview with author, Brisbane, 5 March 1992.

cities for a total of twenty-three years, and six had served as aldermen for a total of more than eighty years. The families also shared, to a greater or lesser degree, involvement with their church and adherence to the ethics of honesty, integrity, sobriety and a concern for the underdog.<sup>1</sup> Now the pioneering provincial press families had come together in larger numbers and corporately to stand united against the foe: the various metropolitan media barons, especially Rupert Murdoch and Sir Frank Packer. The Ipswich families – the Stephensons, Parkinsons and Kippens – had been in partnership since 1877 and third-generation members were now serving on the board and working on the *Queensland Times*. Both the Mannings and the Irwins were under daily executive control of third-generation members of their respective dynasties, and the Mackay board was chaired by a second-generation Manning. The Mannings had run newspapers at Gladstone (twenty years) and Mackay (fifty-eight years) since 1890, and the Irwins went back even further at Warwick: to 1867. And the Dunns, as detailed in Chapter 2, had been newspaper proprietors for seventy-seven years, in Maryborough (1891), Rockhampton (1911), Warwick (1914-1936) and Toowoomba (1922). The Dunn, Manning and Irwin families, in that order, would provide the three chief executives of PNQ, from 1968 to 1988.<sup>2</sup>

On 1 April 1878, precisely ninety years before the PNQ merger, William Joseph Manning (1864-1943) unwillingly began an apprenticeship as a printer at the *Gympie Times*. He, of all the members of the three major Queensland newspaper dynasties that merged on 1 April 1968, would become possibly the most

1. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 213, 216-219, 273-277.

2. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 45, 216-219, 273-277.

dynamic all-round newspaperman. In Gladstone and Mackay he turned struggling newspaper enterprises into profitable concerns with lively editorial content – the Mackay paper was in receivership when he became managing editor. He knew what was good for newspapers, and knew what sort of news content was needed,' grandson Clarence said.<sup>1</sup> W.J., as he was known, married in Brisbane in 1888, and moved to Gladstone in 1889 to become managing editor of the *Gladstone Observer*. His first son, Henry John, who would be involved in newspapers for seventy years, was born in Gladstone that year. In 1890, Manning bought the *Gladstone Observer* from William Peel Mellefont's widow and brother, and ran it profitably till 1910. He developed a strong ethos of personal involvement in the community and of advancing the interests of the community through the columns of his newspaper – a weekly at first and then a bi-weekly. Manning was mayor of Gladstone in 1897, 1898 and 1901; was chairman at times of both the Progress Association and the Hospital Committee; and was officially associated with the foundation of Gladstone meatworks and the Port Curtis Dairy Association. In April 1910 Manning sold the *Observer* to John Henry Kessell (1870-1933) and moved to Mackay to take up 2,200 shares in the *Daily Mercury* and to become managing editor.<sup>2</sup>

Less than a year later he was managing director and in 1917 he became chairman of directors. In 1924 the Manning family became the proprietors and this was the signal for major changes. Manning increased the volume of news in the *Mercury* and he plunged all his savings and his faith into it and the Mackay district.

1. C.M. Manning, interview with author, Mackay, 23 May 1979.

2. H.J. Manning, interview with author, Buderim, 19 January 1977; Kirkpatrick, *SWORN*, pp. 273-275.

Through his editorials, he threw himself into the cause for a better, bigger and brighter Mackay. His patriotism to the city and district surpassed all other considerations.<sup>1</sup>

After initially opposing the so-called Love Scheme for an outer harbour at Mackay, he swung the *Mercury* behind the campaign when the local member, William Forgan Smith, became the Premier and promised a 250,000 pound grant and a one million pound loan at five per cent over forty years. Manning took a role in numerous Mackay organisations, both at the community level and in the wider sphere. He was a foundation member of the Queensland Country Press Association, an executive member of the Australian Provincial Press Association, a member of the Institute of International Affairs, and a member of the Royal Geographic Society, and he took an active interest in the Mackay Chamber of Commerce, the Red Cross and patriotic institutions, and was 'a pillar of the Presbyterian Church in Mackay'. He edited the *Mercury* from 1910-41, was chairman of the board from 1917-42 and was senior proprietor 1924-43.<sup>2</sup>

On the death of W.J. Manning in 1943, Henry John Manning (1889-1978), always called Jack, took over as chairman of directors and chief executive of the Mackay Printing and Publishing Company (Pty) Limited. He had been the business manager since 1918, but he only ever dabbled on the editorial side. He never served as editor. It was left to H.J.'s son, Clarence Morcom Manning (1917- ), to fill those dual roles again. Clarence edited the *Mercury* from 27 August 1949, became managing editor in April 1968 and held that position till 31 December 1980 when he moved to Brisbane to become executive chairman of PNQ.<sup>3</sup> Jack Manning served the Mackay community and

1. *Daily Mercury* (Mackay), 26 April 1943, p. 2, and Centenary Supplement, 4 April 1966, p. 5.

2. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 273, 276.

3. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 277.





ABOVE: H.J. Manning (left), Sir Gordon Rolph and F.J. Meacham: discussing Australian Provincial Daily Press business.

BELOW: C.M. Manning (1917- ) as managing editor of the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, 1979.



played an important role in the wider press sphere. In the community, he was chairman of the ambulance brigade for more than thirteen years, foundation secretary of Mackay Rotary Club and president one year, and a president of Mackay Bowling Club. In the wider press sphere, he took his father's place on the board of the Queensland Country Press Co-operative Ltd. in 1919 and from 1934 till September 1977 chaired that board. He served for forty-one years on the national board of Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd.<sup>1</sup>

The Mannings developed and preserved a strong ethic of fairness in their news columns, regardless of the views they presented in their editorials. A cause could be berated in the editorial columns, but its protagonists had the democratic right of reply in the news columns. In W.J. Manning's day, vehemence in the editorial section was not flavoured by personalities; it was based purely on policies.<sup>2</sup> Succeeding editors, Harry Moore (editor, 1941-49) and Clarrie Manning (1949-1980) adhered to this principle. Manning proudly tells of the compliments he received from the Labor Party after writing an editorial marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Mackay branch of the A.L.P.<sup>3</sup>

At the merger, the *Queensland Times*, Ipswich, was controlled by the third generation of each of three families - the Stephensons, Parkinsons and Kippens - that had links with the paper going back more than a century. Hugh Parkinson, Josiah Bowring Sloman and Francis Kidner were working on the *North Australian* at Ipswich in 1861 when the opportunity arose for them to buy the rival newspaper, the *Ipswich Herald*. They took control on 8 October 1861 and renamed it the *Queensland Times*. Parkinson (1828-1909), who had been the foreman printer on the

1. *The Chronicle* (Toowoomba), 12 October 1978, p. 13. Note: The Country Press board was known, from 1969, as the Queensland Division of the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd., and R.D.A. was previously the Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd. - viz. Appendix 4.

2. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 275.

3. *Daily Mercury*, 16 July 1971; Edmund Casey, letter to C.M. Manning, 22 July 1971.

*North Australian*, was the senior partner in the new firm. He took most of his former staff with him when he switched journals. Even the editor, J.C. Thompson, switched sides. Alfred John Stephenson (1846-1914), a composing room employee who was part of the exodus, became managing director of the *Queensland Times* more than forty-five years later. He was mayor of Ipswich in 1907, and his son, Alfred Tully Stephenson (1872-1938), who worked at the newspaper all his life, principally as an accountant, was mayor in 1912, 1914, 1921-29, and 1933-38. A son, Graham Selwyn Stephenson (1909-1986), who began working as an apprentice printer at the newspaper in 1924, was managing director from 1963 till June 1974. His son, Gregory (1944- ), was editor of the paper from 1970-1975, resigning because of his disagreements with general manager Geoff Smith. Stephenson's resignation marked the end of his family's continuous representation on the staff since 1861.<sup>1</sup>

The Parkinsons maintained direct representation in the partnership from 1861 till the PNQ merger and direct employment links till 1976. William Sinclair Parkinson (1909-1965), a grandson of the original senior partner, died of cancer in March 1965, aged fifty-six, while chairman of directors of the newspaper's board. A director since 1934 and chairman since 1954, he would no doubt have become a PNQ director. The new Parkinson family director was Bruce Moulton, husband of W.S. Parkinson's only child, Judy, and the new chairman was Cecil William Norman Aylward (1907-1979), a dentist who had been a director of the newspaper company since 1954. Norman Aylward was the first grandchild of William Kippen (1850-1940) who began working at the paper as a run boy in 1862. The twelve-year-old Scot delivered papers for some months, became the printer's devil, and in 1877 he became a

1. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 45; *Queensland Times*, 10 June 1909; G.S. Stephenson, interview with author, Springwood, 5 March 1980; *Queensland Times*, 8 February 1986, p. 2; Gregory Stephenson, interview with author, Karalee, 2 December 1993.

partner in the firm. From 1914-1938 he was chairman of directors. The Kippens were employed on the *Queensland Times* from 1862-1980, the family link being broken with the retirement on 27 November 1980 of Norol Devon Kippen (1915- ) as deputy editor. Upon the merger, Norman Aylward and Selwyn Stephenson became the Ipswich directors on the first board of PNQ.<sup>1</sup>

The Irwins brought to PNQ 101 years of involvement in the Warwick press, spread over three generations but beginning with Samuel John Irwin's partnership with Richard Appleby Cowton in the *Examiner & Times* in 1867. The partnership endured till Cowton's death in 1891, and Irwin (1838-1909) spent some years of that period tending his grape vines at Ipswich, producing fine wines rather than a fine newspaper. He returned to Warwick to run the business side of the *Examiner* after the death of his partner and he bought out the Cowton interest at the close of 1899. Three Irwin sons - Samuel Boyd (1879-1933), William John Boyd (1885-1958) and James (1887-1966) - gradually took the reins, with Samuel jun. becoming associate editor to Henry Sterne (1870-1954), William taking charge of the business management, and James running the commercial printing section. The Dunns, who moved into Warwick by buying the competing tri-weekly, the *Argus*, in 1914, persuaded the Irwins to merge the *Examiner* with the *Argus* in 1919 to form the *Warwick Daily News*. The Irwins worked with the Dunns till 1936 when they bought back the Dunns' controlling interest for 7,500 pounds. Second-generation control of the *Daily News* ceased in 1966 with the death of company chairman W.J.B. Irwin, and the third generation was already in place, with Lyle Irwin (1914-1972) in the editor's chair, and Edwin Hollingworth (1913-1991), son-in-law of William, the manager director (he had been business manager since 1946).

1. *Queensland Times*, 22 March 1965 and 7 May 1979; Norol Devon Kippen, interview with author, Ipswich, 17 April, 1979; N.D. Kippen, telephone interview with author, 12 November 1993; N.D. Kippen, letter to author, 21 January 1980; Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 45.



The *Warwick Daily News* staff, c. 1927. Seated on bench (front left): Miss Vera Redgwell, Miss N. Rooney, James Irwin, William James Boyd Irwin (managing editor), Fred Holmes (sub-editor), Miss Ellen Irwin, Miss Rae Houghton. In front (on floor): Thomas Henry Mullins, on far right. He worked for the paper for more than fifty years. He was a compositor until 20 September 1977.

Hollingworth, who took the Irwin seat on the PNQ board, was managing director from 1962 till his son, Robert Paul Hollingworth (1947- ) took over the managerial reins in September 1979. This fourth-generation Irwin would become, in September 1987, the third and final chief executive of PNQ.<sup>1</sup>

The reaction of members of the Manning and Irwin families to the merger was mixed. Clarence Manning, who would serve as chairman of the PNQ board 1970-89, did not feel there had been any negative initial reaction to the PNQ merger from the directors in Mackay. He paused, and then said, 'We weren't opposed to it. We didn't know much about the corporate world in those days.' Had there ever been any moves in Mackay to expand and buy into other papers? 'No. It was shortly after the Depression, then the war hit us: we were all working too hard.'<sup>2</sup> But Bruce Manning (1936- ), a third-generation member, felt differently from his uncle. Bruce, who has managed Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd. since 1973 and been managing director since 1975, said:

I suppose my initial disappointment was where we had through necessity, through commercial necessity, had to merge with other papers. I don't think any of the families... if they'd have had their choice, they probably all would have preferred to have stayed separate, but it was commercially not viable in the long term and commercially not in the best interests of everybody not to do that.<sup>3</sup>

At Ipswich, Gregory Stephenson says he was the only member of the three *Queensland Times* families to oppose the merger.

I was very much against PNQ. I could see what was going to happen. We got a raw deal on share allocation as we found out when it became clear what a mess some of the other papers were in. I was the only one who voted against it.<sup>4</sup>

The Irwin family welcomed the merger because their *Warwick Daily News* was the smallest of the Queensland dailies and was

1. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 216-219; *Warwick Daily News*, 22 November 1991, p. 5; R.P. Hollingworth, Curriculum Vitae.

2. C.M. Manning, interview, 5 March 1992.

3. Bruce Manning, interview with author, Toowoomba, 12 June 1992.

4. Gregory B. Stephenson, telephone interview with author, 12 November 1993.

struggling to make a profit. John Irwin (1929- ), PNQ group production co-ordinator 1984-88, said of the merger:

We were quite happy with it. The families were very much in favour of it because of what had happened. Nobody wanted a monopoly like the Murdoch organisation or Packer to take over all those provincial dailies.<sup>1</sup>

Irwin said some members of the families conceded it would be beneficial, financially, to the smaller companies that could have been struggling.

It made an impact on the *Warwick Daily News* because soon after PNQ was formed there were several meetings to analyse the production situation in the smaller newspapers and see if they could be improved. Warwick had antiquated machinery, old Linotypes and a very old Battle Creek, Michigan, flatbed printing press, bought from the *Melbourne Argus*. Its maximum speed was around about 1100 copies an hour and maximum size was eight broadsheet pages. Irwin recalls:

If you had to go to twelve pages, the printing press staff had to come in at about 10 o'clock [instead of midnight] and print the first run of four pages, and change everything over and print the next run of eight pages, and insert [by hand] the four into the eight.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of the investigations, the first paper that PNQ converted from letterpress printing to offset was Bundaberg's *News-Mail*, in 1970, and the second, *Warwick's Daily News*, in 1971. Warwick changed from letterpress to offset, from hot-metal to photo-composition, and from broadsheet to tabloid production all on the night of 11 October 1971 so that Warwick people were greeted by an entirely different *Daily News* on 12 October. John Irwin recalls that attempting all those changeovers at once was 'horrific'.

1. A.J. Irwin, interview with author, Cleveland, 13 October 1993.  
2. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.

We started in the morning [of 11th] and I was still there at 7 o'clock the next morning, wrapping papers because we were late and everything. We got the paper out, but it was very slow.

The Battle Creek letterpress had been replaced by a Cottrell three-unit web offset press with a maximum speed of 15,000 copies an hour of a twenty-four-page tabloid newspaper, or sixteen pages of black and white and eight of colour.<sup>1</sup>

The *Daily News* publicly acknowledged that it could not have attempted this major technological conversion without the 'support and financial assistance of the Holding Company' - PNQ. The support included the close involvement of James Cran Dunn, the *Morning Bulletin's* joint managing director (production).<sup>2</sup> One of the anticipated benefits of the families becoming a group was that they could share expertise. And they could provide staff with the opportunity to gain a range of experience on the different newspapers; they could offer a career path to ambitious employees. Also, with the advent of computerised typesetting and office equipment, they could provide back-up facilities when one company's computer system 'crashed', as in 1985 when Ipswich's Atex system broke down and the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, Maroochydore, provided the back-up.<sup>3</sup>

In 1971, the Irwins found themselves on the threshold of a new era, for the veritable technological revolution that had occurred under their roof opened up unforeseen opportunities in the commercial printing sphere and in printing newspapers for outside companies, helping lift the small company out of the financial doldrums (viz. Table 10). Among the publications the Warwick operation found itself printing were a four-colour supplement for the retailers Pigott's; a 40,000-circulation fortnightly forty-page newspaper for Triangle Publications on

1. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993; *Warwick Daily News*, 11 and 12 October 1971.

2. E. Hollingworth, 'Stage one completed in one operation', *Warwick Daily News*, Web Offset Supplement, 19 November 1971, p. 2; A.J. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.

3. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.



the Gold Coast; *The Cattleman* for the Cattlemen's Union of Australian; a Mount Gravatt suburban paper; and *Semper Floreat* for the University of Queensland Union. The Irwins added an extra unit and two more reel stands to its press in December 1977, enabling it to produce thirty-two pages in a single colour or twenty-four in two colours; and then another two units were added in 1984, doubling its 1971 capacity.<sup>1</sup>

The six families that had banded together to form PNQ received a swift reminder that the predator was, indeed, pawing at the gate. On 14 May 1968, within six weeks of the merger, Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd. bought the bi-weekly *Gladstone Observer* from the Macfarlan interests. Margaret Ethel Macfarlan (1903-), the second wife of Colin William Buchanan Macfarlan (1887-1947), proprietor of the *Observer* for twenty-five years from 1922, had managed and edited the paper since his death in 1947. In 1959, her son-in-law and daughter, Colin and Carmel Brown, became working partners in the business. Murdoch beat several other contenders for the *Observer*, including PNQ and the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. Macfarlan asked a high price and refused to budge. 'They approached me,' she says. 'I did not go seeking bids. If they wanted to buy, they had to be prepared to pay my price.' Murdoch was the only one who was. Macfarlan refused to divulge the price Murdoch paid, but one bidder suggested it was \$200,000. Colin Brown, who became a long-serving mayor of Gladstone - he was elected for five successive three-year terms from 1979 but did not seek re-election in 1994 - stayed on for six months to manage the newspaper for News Ltd.<sup>2</sup>

1. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993, and telephone interview with author, 11 November 1993; *Warwick Daily News*, 14 December 1977.

2. Margaret Ethel Macfarlan, interview with author, Gladstone, 14 May 1980, and telephone interview with author, 27 June 1993; Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 313-315; Colin Brown, letter to author, 19 November 1993; Ruth Palmer, 'Mayor to resign', *Gladstone Observer*, 12 February 1994, p. 1; n.b. Colin Brown died 22 Aug. 1994.

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The six pioneering press families merged their newspaper interests in 1968 because of concern about a possible takeover by metropolitan interests and the fear that such a takeover would result in the provincial press becoming completely subservient to the metropolitan press. The model for the holding company that resulted from the merger was provided by the purchasing vehicle used in 1961 by various provincial dailies to acquire the Barton family interests in the *Bundaberg News-Mail*, but the catalyst for the merger was the takeover of the daily *Cairns Post* by Queensland Press Ltd. in 1965. The families were satisfied they could work together because of the similarity of ethos amongst their newspaper businesses. They also saw in the merger the chance to seek listing on the Stock Exchange so that shareholders who wanted to sell their interests had greater opportunity to do so. The combination of the interests also provided access to greater funds and the opportunity for technological redevelopment that would otherwise have been impossible. In choosing a protective device against takeover, ultimately the families exposed themselves to bigger predators and a takeover where their hands were tied, as the concluding chapters of this thesis will demonstrate. If the Dunns had had sufficient initiative and foresight, they would have bought the Barton family's Bundaberg interest on their own and the dynasty might have survived to the 1990s.

## Chapter 7

# Telling and selling the whole story of local endeavour:

## Content, circulation and the community

*It would appear that the most important factor for healthy print runs is an ability by editorial staff to stay in touch with the concerns of their readers.*

-- Trevor Sykes, 'Squeeze on the rural press', *The Bulletin*, 15 December 1992, p. 71.

Newspaper 'penetration' - the proportion of newspapers sold per head of population - has declined in Australia, as it has in the United States and the United Kingdom, since the 1950s or 1960s. Concurrently, fewer newspapers have been sold per household. Ownership of newspapers has become more concentrated, as was demonstrated in Chapter 1, and the number of mastheads has dwindled. Within this context, the daily newspapers which the Dunns published in Queensland, were survivors, and so contributed to the natural history of the Australian provincial newspaper. Their ethos of localism and integrity reflected the desires of their communities and won the loyalty of subscribers. The Dunns knew their communities, were involved in them, and this was reflected in the pages of their newspapers and in the steadily growing circulations and edition sizes. Yet each of the dailies served regional communities which differed in such aspects as geography and population size. Factors such as industrial relations also played their part in affecting circulation, especially in the case of Rockhampton, as will be shown more specifically in Chapter 8. Circulation comparisons are drawn with 'yardstick' newspapers published in roughly comparable regional communities. In the fiercely competitive media age of the 1990s, circulation promotions are seen as necessary, but this chapter shows that strong local news content has always been vital to a solid circulation base for a provincial daily newspaper. It shows, too, that, since the eighties, regional newspapers have seen the need to promote themselves constantly by means of explicit involvement in community activities

through sponsorship and programs designed to retain old readers and win new ones.

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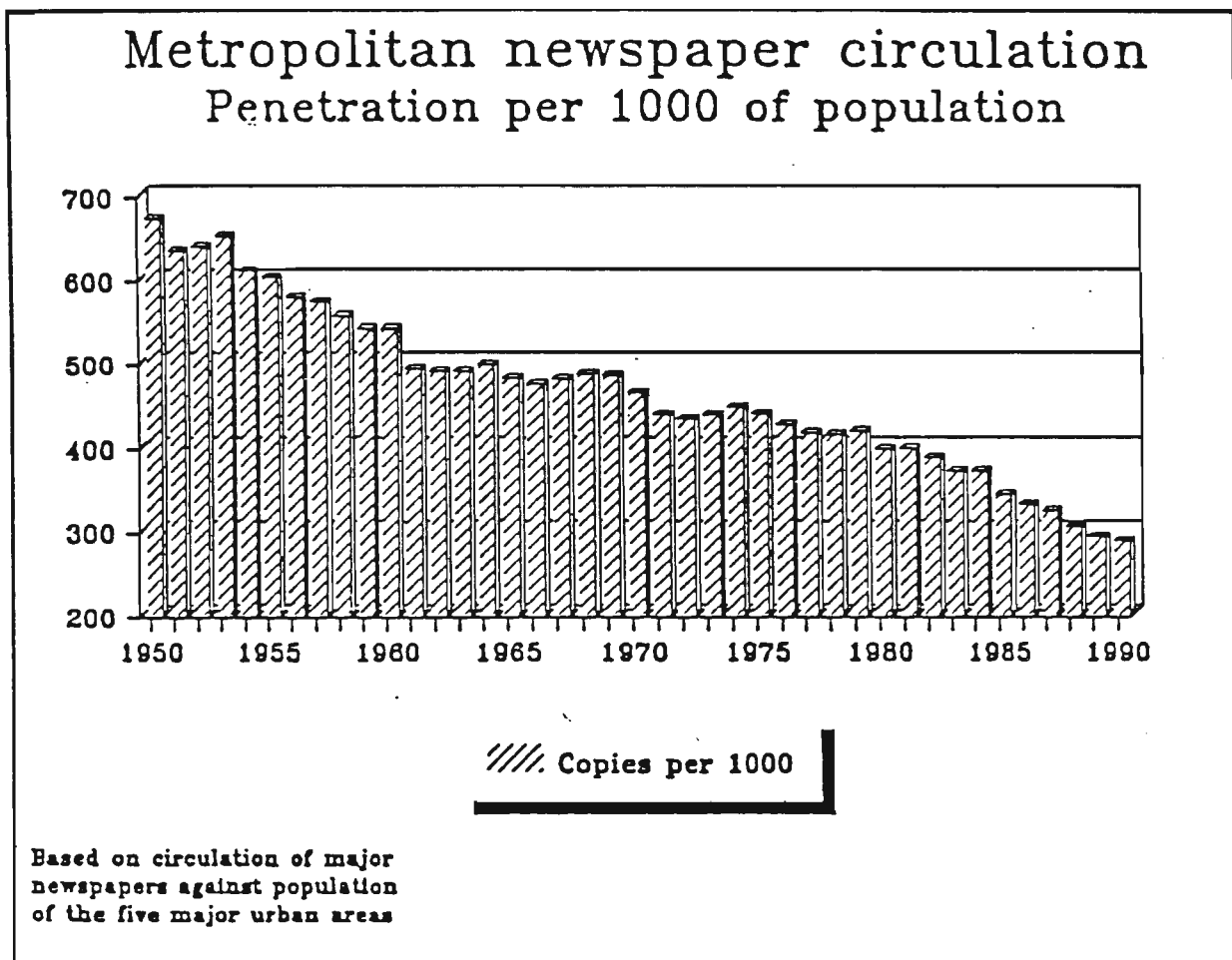
Although Australia, in common with the United States and the United Kingdom, has experienced a decline in so-called newspaper 'penetration' in the past forty to fifty years, as Table 10 shows, as well as a decline in newspaper titles, the Dunn newspapers have been survivors.<sup>1</sup> Their circulation grew steadily from 1930 to 1975, and since then, while the Maryborough and Rockhampton dailies have not made significant circulation gains, the Toowoomba daily has. The three newspapers were still profitable enterprises as the 1990s dawned.

The trend common to western countries since the 1950s or 1960s – but not to India – has been for fewer newspapers to be sold per household, for circulation increases to fail to match population increases.<sup>2</sup> In Australia, this trend has been much less evident in some non-metropolitan areas and so, as will be shown in this chapter, the Dunns' Rockhampton and Toowoomba newspapers, at different times, have performed strongly in circulation and in paging growth. In the United States, rates of daily newspaper circulation per household for the period 1850-1986 followed an S-shaped 'curve of diffusion', as is shown in Table 11. This curve is more or less typical of growth patterns followed by a variety of cultural innovations as these are adopted by a given population. Newspapers had been accepted by only a small proportion of the American population up to about 1870. Between 1880 and 1890, however,

1. Viz. Appendix 7 for Gordon Beavan's discounting of the importance of 'penetration'.

2. Robin Jeffrey, 'Press gangs curry favour', *Good Weekend*, 29 January 1994, pp. 36-40. Jeffrey says circulation of Indian newspapers increased by 150 per cent between 1976 and 1993: the proportion of Indians who buy a daily newspaper nearly doubled in less than twenty years.

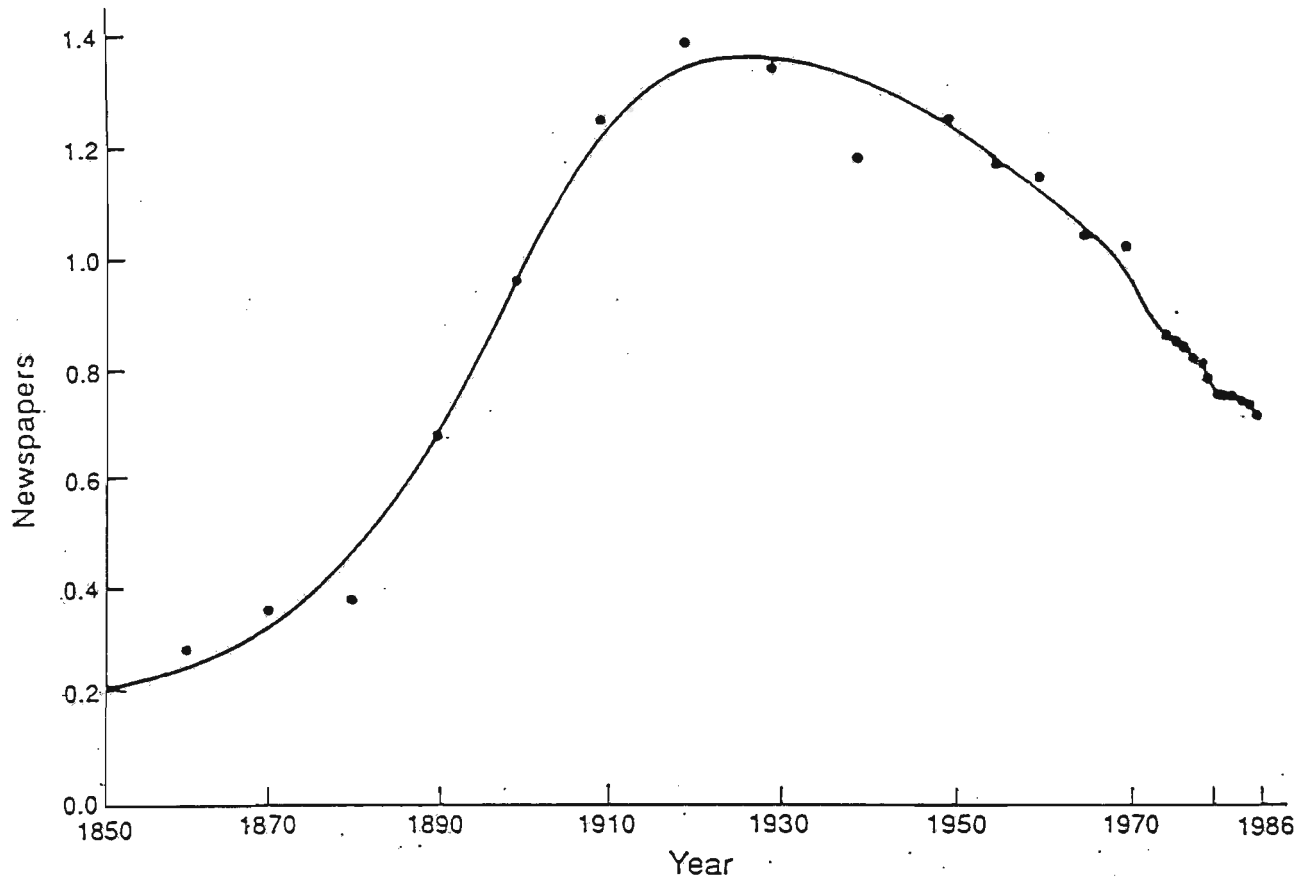
Table 10



SOURCE: The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *News & Fair Facts: Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee on the Print Media, March 1994* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1992), p. 134.

Table 11

Cumulative diffusion curve for daily newspapers;  
subscriptions per household  
in the United States, 1850-1986



SOURCE: Melvin L. De Fleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach, *Theories of Mass Communication* (5th ed.; New York: Longman, 1983), p. 60.

the newspaper swept rapidly through the American population to a point of near saturation by the end of the century. Improved press technology, better transportation, and spreading literacy contributed significantly to this sudden change. By 1910, there was more than one newspaper circulated daily for every household. Increases in circulation slowed after 1910, and since 1920 the newspaper has suffered a steady decline. Even though more newspapers are sold today in an absolute sense, they have not kept pace with increases in the number of American households.<sup>1</sup>

Much the same picture is evident in Australia where, between 1933 and 1976, the number of people over fourteen years of age doubled to 10.2 million, but the circulation of capital-city dailies increased almost threefold. These circulation increases, however, were much less than changes in population in comparable areas. Since the 1950s, the nation's population and the circulation of metropolitan dailies have generally moved in opposite directions. The picture is different for provincial or regional dailies, as will be shown in this chapter. For metropolitan dailies, World War II and the immediate postwar period were the years of greatest circulation growth. The lowest growth rate, as is shown in Table 12, was posted from 1954-1961, a period marked more by contraction than expansion in the business cycle. Whereas the demand for television sets, refrigerators, air-conditioners and power lawn-mowers leapt ahead, the growth in demand for newspapers, radios and vacuum cleaners tapered off.<sup>2</sup>

While circulation of capital-city dailies continually grew till the mid seventies, circulation relative to the population of newspaper buying age has, since the mid fifties, continually fallen. In 1933 approximately thirty papers were sold for every one hundred people aged fifteen or more.

1. Melvin L. De Fleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach, Theories of Mass Communication (4th ed.; New York: Longman Inc., 1982) p. 39.

2. Murray Goot, Newspaper Circulation in Australia 1932-1977: Media Centre Paper No. 11 (Bundoora, Victoria: Centre for the Study of Educational and Communication Media, La Trobe University, 1979), pp. 4, 7.

Table 12

**Percentage Changes in Circulation of Dailies  
by State, 1933-1991**

Year	NSW	Vic.	Qld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.
1933 is base year of 100 for each state*						
1933	100	100	100	100	100	100
1940	117	128	143	116	144	141
1947	218	177	271	172	226	194
1954	220	211	362	206	308	247
1961	205	221	376	226	327	276
1966	223	238	389	252	351	294
1971	232	255	421	271	448	318
1976	252	246	444	297	474	329
1980	215	231	407	295	481	329
1986	229	186	451	278	435	324
1991	173	156	341	237	342	312

SOURCE: The percentages are calculated on circulation figures in figures obtained from Goot, p. 7; Audit Bureau of Circulations; John Blackwell, Australian Financial Review circulations manager, telephone interview with author, 7 December 1993.

\* Actual circulations (in thousands) for base year:

1933	560	547	104	133	77	17
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Between the mid forties and the mid fifties this rose to fifty-eight, dropped to fifty-four by 1958, and declined to be forty in 1982 and thirty-nine in 1991. The turning point was remarkably similar to that for British national dailies.<sup>1</sup> In Australia in the decade from 1979, there was a 5.8 per cent decline in the total circulation of metropolitan morning dailies and forty-two per cent for afternoon dailies. Population growth in the capitals was seventeen per cent.<sup>2</sup>

The trend in the 1980s was for a distinct flattening out of circulation of weekday sales of metropolitan dailies and in the 1990s this has become a steady decline. The Audit Bureau of Circulations began issuing in the September semester 1990 three sets of circulation figures for metropolitan dailies: the Monday-to-Friday figures; the Saturday figures; and the usual overall average net paid circulation, Monday to Saturday. The contrasting factor has been the increasing circulation of weekend editions of the dailies and of Sunday newspapers and magazines. For instance, in three years from September 1990, the circulation of the Saturday edition of the quality broadsheet, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, climbed from 376,339 to 395,801 (5.17 per cent), while its weekday editions fell from 239,515 to 236,081 (1.43 per cent). Brisbane's *Courier-Mail*, which can be regarded as a 'tabloid' broadsheet, went slightly against the national trend: its Saturday edition climbed from 317,733 to 337,493 (6.22 per cent), and weekday average circulation was up from 233,666 to 236,085 (1.04 per cent). This meant the *Herald's* Saturday sales were 67.65 per cent greater than its average weekday sales, and *The Courier-Mail's* Saturday sales were 42.95 per cent greater than its weekday sales. Even with the strengthening Saturday factor, as is shown in Table 13, the *Herald* was able to increase its circulation by only 4,592 (1.78 per cent) from 1980 to 1990. Its tabloid morning rival, the *Daily Telegraph* slipped back by

1. Goot, p. 8; Allan Brown, *Commercial Media in Australia*, p. 45; Audit Bureau of Circulations figures, September 1991; Ian Castles, *Social Indicators, Number 5* (Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1991), p. 11.

2. *PANPA Bulletin*, December 1989, pp. 15-18.

Table 13

**Selected metropolitan daily  
newspaper circulations in 1980s**

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1990</u>
S.M. Herald	258,175	258,685	255,745	263,741	262,767
D. Telegraph	308,801	281,053	267,093	285,499	283,388
The Age	243,367	241,089	235,954	235,036	230,100
The Sun	629,381	591,684	556,297	571,449	556,130
Courier-Mail	269,588	232,958	216,314	257,171	248,336
Advertiser	227,708	215,956	212,168	209,779	211,738
West Aust.	252,603	242,902	235,377	252,088	255,003

SOURCE: Audit Bureau of Circulation figures, 1980-1990.

by more than 25,000 (8.2 per cent). Nowadays the advertising volume and overall size of the weekend editions of the dailies invariably dwarf their weekday editions.<sup>1</sup>

While their morning counterparts either made small gains or small losses in the circulation stakes in the eighties, the afternoon dailies ceased publication one after the other because their circulations (and, consequently, their attractiveness to advertisers) slipped precariously, as is shown in Table 14. In 1988, Brisbane's *Telegraph*, with its circulation down to 110,000, closed in February, and Sydney's *Sun* (dropping by 130,000 over six years to 230,000), closed in March. The momentum gathered, as Table 15 shows, and Australia's first twenty-four-hour papers were introduced in Sydney and Melbourne when News Ltd. merged its morning and afternoon mastheads to produce the *Telegraph Mirror* and *Herald Sun*, respectively – in the midst of the most severe financial crisis that had ever struck Murdoch's empire.<sup>2</sup> When Adelaide's *News*, with circulation dipping below 90,000, closed on 27 March 1992, the television age had written the epitaph of each of the country's afternoon dailies, as Table 17 shows.<sup>3</sup>

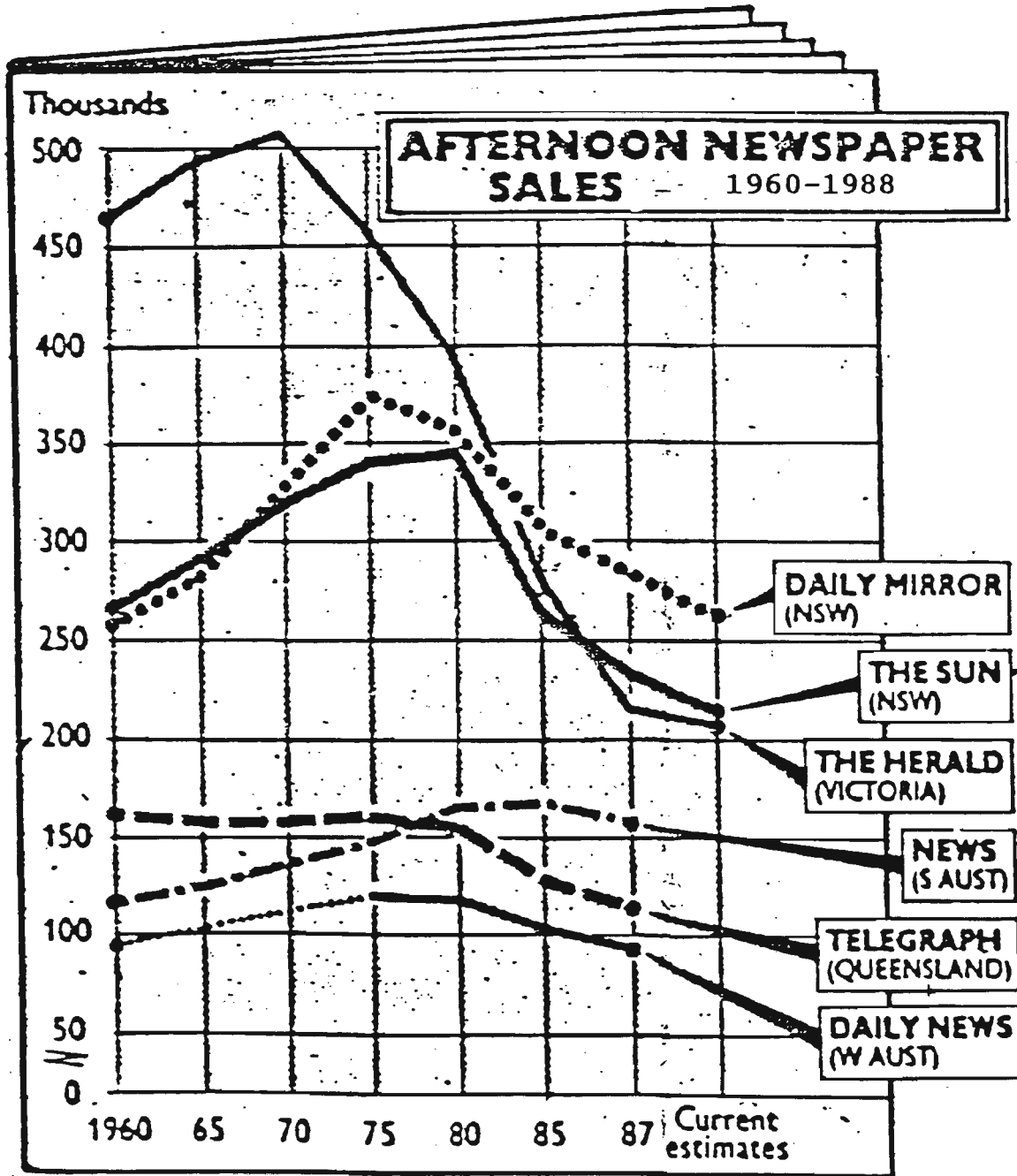
The decline of the American newspaper has been attributed to other media forms that are meeting needs in the population similar to those formerly served by newspapers. Radio was first in the 1920s and weekly news magazines were next, beginning to gain mass acceptance in the 1930s. Even film played a part. By the late 1940s and during the 1950s, television swept through the American society. To a greater or lesser extent, each of these functional alternatives to the newspaper has eaten into the circulation of the daily press. Each, in some sense or other, provides news, information, or

1. Audit Bureau of Circulations figures (with percentages calculated by author); Greg Earl, 'Drift continues to magazines, weekends', *Australian Financial Review*, 28 May 1993, p. 12; Paul Best, 'Weekend sales of newspapers continue to grow', *The Australian*, 28 May 1993, p. 26; viz. also *The Australian*, 29 May 1992, pp. 19, 21, and 27 November 1992, p. 20.

2. William Shawcross, *Rupert Murdoch*, pp. 1-18; Richard Belfield, Christopher Hird and Sharon Kelly, *Murdoch: The Great Escape* (London: Warner Books, 1994), pp. 288-308.

3. *Communications Update*, May 1992, p. 5; *PANFA Bulletin*, April 1988, pp. 3-4, 31-32; *Weekend Australian*, 28-29 March, 1992, p. 12; Malcolm Brown, 'The Sun sets as Fairfax cuts its losses', *SMH*, 15 March 1988, p. 1.

Table 14



SOURCE: Sydney Morning Herald, 15 March 1988, p. 6.

entertainment in a way that was once the exclusive province of the newspaper.<sup>1</sup> In Australia, the emergence of television and radio did not have the same *immediate* impact on newspapers, as in the United States, but the long-term result has been the same. Firmly established newspaper-reading habits died slowly. Since the late seventies, however, the impact has been felt markedly. As Table 10 shows, although the first low in the growth of Australian newspaper circulation after the thirties (1954-61) coincided roughly with the introduction of television and the second (1971-76) with the introduction of colour television, it was difficult to see immediately how the fortunes of these media were related. A falling away in the growth of newspaper sales was evident as early as 1954 – again, as shown in Table 10 – two years ahead of the arrival of television in 1956. Even in 1959, when there were half a million household television licences, these were held almost exclusively in New South Wales and Victoria. The distribution of colour television, state by state, was much more even, but it arrived on 1 March 1975 and newspaper circulations in 1976 were greater than those of 1971.<sup>2</sup>

Since the arrival of television, the edition sizes of metropolitan newspapers have increased dramatically and of regional dailies less dramatically, presenting another facet of newspaper growth, as Chapter 8 will demonstrate. Briefly, between 1948 and 1990, *The Courier-Mail* grew in paging, or edition size, nine times; and Melbourne's *Sun* grew four times and its *Age* seven times. Regional daily newspapers have increased markedly in paging, too. The *Toowoomba Chronicle*, for instance, more than doubled its paging between 1930 and

1. De Fleur, pp. 39-40.

2. Goot, p. 25.

Table 15

**Major newspaper closures  
in Australia, 1987-1992**

	<u>Opened</u>	<u>Closed</u>
<i>Business Daily</i>	6 July 1987	18 August 1987
<i>Western Mail</i> Perth	8 Nov. 1980	31 Dec. 1987
<i>Telegraph</i> Brisbane	1 Oct. 1872	5 Feb. 1988
<i>Times on Sunday</i> (formerly <i>National Times</i> )	7 Feb. 1971	13 Mar. 1988
<i>The Sun</i> Sydney	1910	14 Mar. 1988
<i>Sunday Observer</i> Melbourne	1969	11 June 1989
<i>Sunday Press</i> Melbourne	9 Sept. 1973	13 Aug. 1989
<i>Daily News</i> Perth	1840	11 Sept. 1990
<i>Daily Mirror</i> Sydney	1941	5 Oct. 1990
<i>The Herald</i> Melbourne	1840	5 Oct. 1990
<i>Sunday Herald</i> Melbourne	20 Aug. 1989	31 Mar. 1991
<i>Sun</i> (formerly <i>Daily Sun</i> ) Brisbane	2 August 1982	10 Dec. 1991
<i>The News</i> Adelaide	24 July 1923	27 Mar. 1992
<i>Sunday Sun</i> Brisbane (called <i>Truth</i> till 5/9/71)	21 Jan. 1900	12 April 1992

SOURCE: Communications Update, May 1992, p. 5.

1980, and Albury's *Border Mail* increased its paging fourfold from 1948-90.<sup>1</sup>

Radio, not the press, has felt television's weight more directly than newspapers, Goot has argued, not altogether convincingly, and free-to-air television is expected to bear the brunt of the introduction of pay television services.<sup>2</sup> Radio lost its large evening audiences to television, but clung to the morning market.<sup>3</sup> What has become evident since his 1977 study is that newspapers have lost their evening audience to television and their morning audience has continued to be eroded as capital-city transport patterns change and as large, one-stop regional retail centres alter shopping and lifestyle patterns. These centres have become the major source of advertising revenue for local suburban free newspapers.

When the Audit Bureau of Circulations (A.B.C.) was established in Australia in 1931 - to standardise and bring credence to the circulation statements of publisher members - most country papers, fearing that their small circulations would count against them, were reluctant to join it. Gradually, the country dailies, aware that national advertisers particularly desired to know sales figures, changed their minds.<sup>4</sup> In 1936 the Australian Provincial Press Association, with a strong Queensland representation, including the Dunn newspapers, and in 1937 the Country Press Association of New South Wales lifted all objections to their members joining the A.B.C.<sup>5</sup>

1. Beavan thesis, pp. 33, 43, 56, 69, 90, 103; and Chapter 8, Table 8, compiled by author.

2. Catherine Fox, 'TV to feel the pinch', *Australian Financial Review*, 23 November 1993, p. 58.

3. Goot, p. 25.

4. Walker, Vol. 2, p. 172; *Newspaper News*, 1 December 1931, p. 1.

5. *Newspaper News*, 1 July 1938, p. 17.

Another factor that had slowed country acceptance of the A.B.C. was the marketing advantage provincial dailies had gained by forming such groupings as the Associated Press of Queensland in 1910 – the Dunns were key members of this grouping which was absorbed in 1918 by the Queensland Country Press Association – and, in New South Wales, the Associated Northern Dailies in 1923 to push for a bigger share of state and national advertising. Both groups acted independently of their state's Country Press Co-operative Ltd., an agency used by most of the country papers, in seeking advertisements.<sup>1</sup>

By 1938, when provincial newspapers first submitted themselves for A.B.C. audit, Toowoomba's *Chronicle* had been operating its own circulation audit for eleven years. In March 1933 it provided a certificated guarantee that its average net daily sale was 13,121 and a year later that it was 13,251. In 1935, it claimed that each audit had disclosed a substantial increase in circulation, a total of thirty-four per cent over eight years.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of A.B.C. statistics, the *Toowoomba Chronicle* (13,372) was about 4,500 average net paid daily sales ahead of Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin* (8,817), as Table 16 shows. Rockhampton, however, had two dailies, for the Dunns also published the *Evening News* which they had bought in 1929. During the war, the *Chronicle* increased its circulation by only 1,000 whereas the *Bulletin* shot up by about 2,300, no doubt largely because the Dunns closed the *Evening News* in 1941. But the *Bulletin* kept up a higher rate

1. Minutes of the Associated Press of Queensland, 1910-1918 [Fryer Library, University of Queensland. Provincial Newspapers Collection. UQFL 187/22]; Walker, Vol. 2, p. 172.

2. *Newspaper News*, 11 November 1932, p. 2, 1 May 1933, p. 2, 1 January 1935, p. 2, 1 June 1935, p. 7; minutes of Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 3 May 1934.



Table 16

**Net paid circulation of Dunn  
daily morning newspapers:  
Maryborough, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, 1938-1990**

		<i>Maryborough</i>	<i>Rockhampton</i>	<i>Toowoomba</i>
31 Mar.	1938	4150	8817	13,372
30 Sept	1940	4357	9992	14,045
30 Sept	1945	5502	12,355	15,072
30 Sept	1950	6776	14,270	16,390
30 Sept	1955	6898	15,460	16,490
30 Sept	1960	7375	17,326	17,216
30 Sept	1965	7846	18,964	17,747
30 Sept	1970	8143	21,275	17,865
30 Sept	1975	8871	21,476	21,335
30 Sept	1980	8757	22,443	24,344
30 Sept	1985	8873	22,084	27,626
30 Sept	1990	9551	22,781	30,219

SOURCE: Audit Bureau of Circulations figures, 1938-1990.

of increase than the *Chronicle* in the immediate postwar decade, jumping by 3,100 to the *Chronicle's* 1,300. In 1955, with the *Downs Star* entering the Toowoomba market, the *Chronicle* faced daily competition for the first time since 1922. By 1960, the Rockhampton daily, with Lex Dunn in managerial control, had overtaken the Toowoomba *Chronicle* and it cleared away in the sixties to be 3,400 ahead in 1970. In October that year the *Chronicle* and *Downs Star* interests were merged. From 1970-75 the *Morning Bulletin*, with Dunn's managerial focus now the PNQ holding company, marked time, gaining only 200, while Toowoomba's *Chronicle*, under younger editorial and managerial control and freed of the *Downs Star* tussle, virtually caught up with its Rockhampton cousin, increasing its circulation by 3,400. In the next five years the *Chronicle* maintained its improvement (up 3,000) and the *Bulletin* still struggled (up 1,000). This trend continued throughout the eighties, so that at 1990 the *Chronicle* was 7,400 ahead of the *Bulletin*. The Rockhampton increase, as Table 17 shows, slackened in the seventies and the figures have remained virtually static since, whereas Toowoomba began a steady rate of increase in the seventies, as shown by Table 18, and has maintained that pattern. At 1990, Toowoomba's *Chronicle* (30,219) had increased circulation by sixty-nine per cent in the twenty years from 1970, whereas Rockhampton's *Bulletin* (22,781) had increased by only seven per cent, despite experimenting with separate editions for the Central Highlands and the Capricorn Coast at various times in the 1980s.<sup>1</sup>

The most obvious causes of the *Morning Bulletin's* poor circulation performance 1970-1990 were twofold, both internal: the 1970s was the period of the weakest managerial control

1. Audit Bureau of Circulation figures; Geoffrey Palmer, telephone interview, 3 February 1994.

Table 17

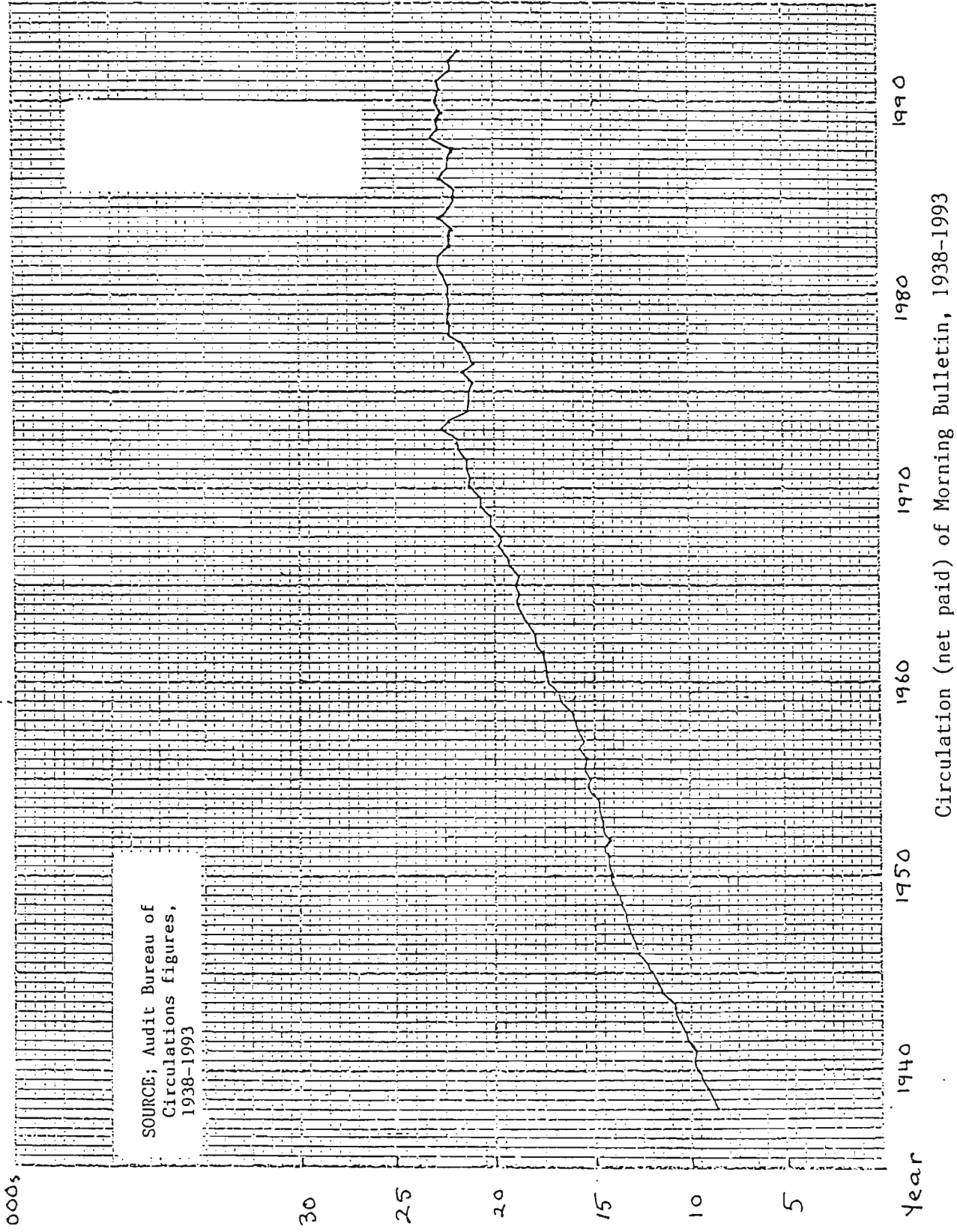
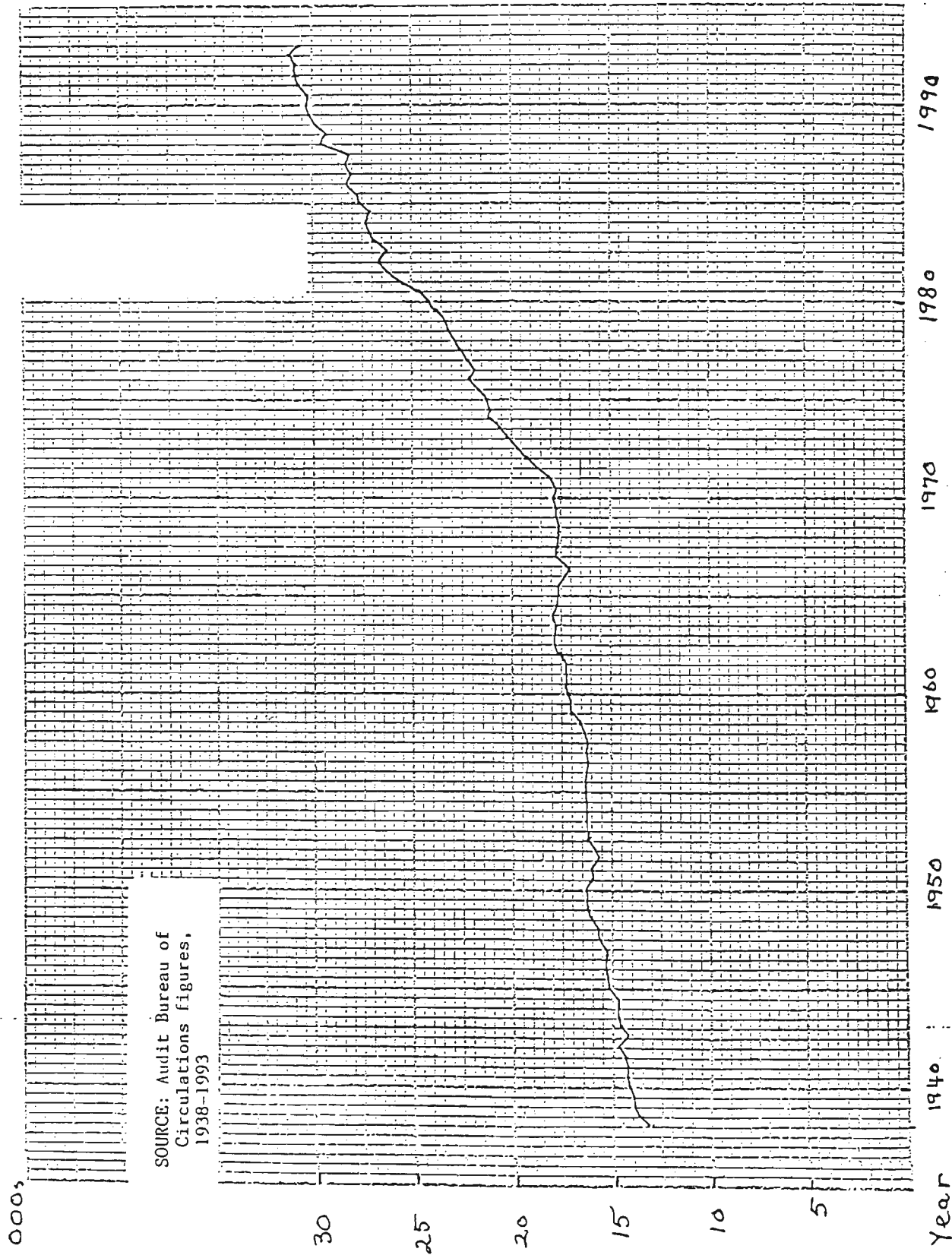


Table 18



the *Morning Bulletin* has experienced this century; concurrently, there developed an industrial situation where the printers, with about eight recalcitrant activists, dictated production-related procedures and practices at the *Morning Bulletin*, as will be shown in Chapter 8. This often delayed production and, hence, distribution, interfering with sales. The disputes often caused short stoppages which prevented production of the newspaper. On occasions, such as in 1976 and 1985, the *Bulletin* was not published for weeks on end because of printers' strikes.<sup>1</sup>

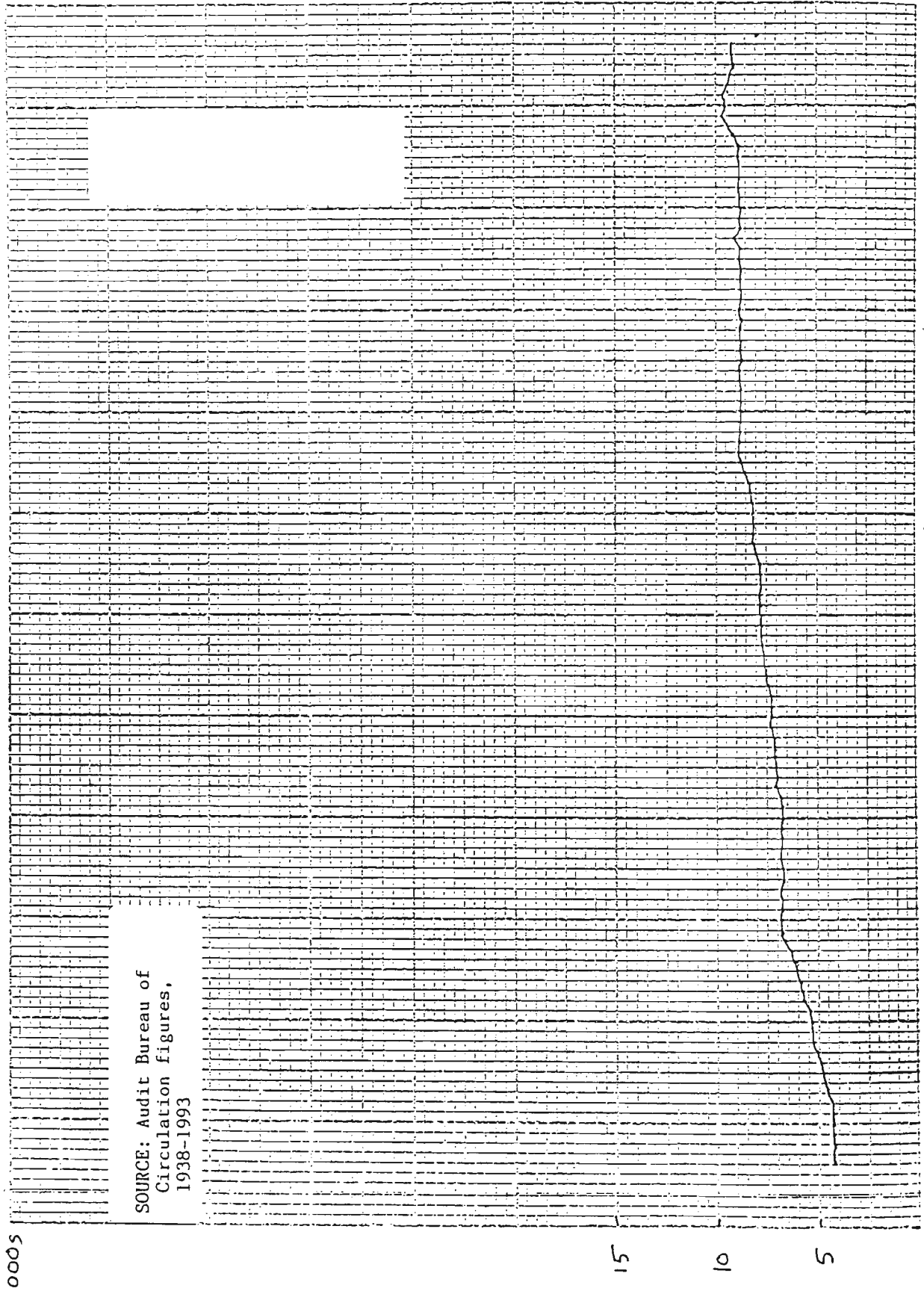
From 1938-1990, the *Maryborough Chronicle's* circulation climbed from 4,150 to 9,551, as Table 19 shows, with steadiness being the hallmark until 1975. At that point, the paper seemed to strike a circulation ceiling, despite specifically targeting the fast-growing conglomerate of centres forming Hervey Bay. Since 1981, it has developed a split personality, with repeated changes in its masthead suggesting it is confused about its primary audience. Is it a Maryborough paper, a Hervey Bay paper, a mixture, or a regional paper that tries to cash in on the growing popularity of Fraser Island and other tourist resorts in its coastal district? After being merely the *Chronicle*, Maryborough, it called itself the *Maryborough-Hervey Bay Chronicle* from 23 October 1981 until 29 October 1988 when it reverted to its earlier masthead. It introduced a separate Hervey Bay edition when it renamed itself the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* on 19 April 1993.<sup>2</sup> The fairly static circulation was blamed on declining coverage of local news by one former *Chronicle* journalist who has lived in Maryborough since his birth in 1908.<sup>3</sup> This judgment was supported by the author's study of the *Chronicle* files over the years.

1. Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. files on the PKIU/McCamley Case [University of Queensland. Fryer Library. UQFL187/20].

2. Audit Bureau of Circulation figures: *Chronicle*, Maryborough, 22 October 1981; *Maryborough-Hervey Bay Chronicle*, 23 October 1981 and 29 October 1988; *The Chronicle*, Maryborough, 31 October 1988; *Fraser Coast Chronicle*, 19 April 1993; and Martin Simons, letter to author, 1 December 1993.

3. William George Rendall, letters to author, 19 December 1982, 28 June 1986, 11 December 1987 and 21 December 1992.

Table 19



Tables 20 and 21 provide yardsticks against which to measure the circulation performance of the Toowoomba Rockhampton and Maryborough dailies. They provide comparisons between roughly similar sized newspapers in communities with fairly similar geographical and circulation constraints. The 'yardstick' newspapers have been selected, deliberately, from three different states so that different competitive environments come into play. The *Geelong Advertiser*, Victoria, is used as a point of comparison with Toowoomba's *Chronicle* because both are well placed for strong metropolitan daily newspaper incursion into their markets. Toowoomba's population was 50,134 at the 1961 Census and 75,990 at the 1991 Census; and Geelong's was 91,777 (1961) and 126,306 (1991), but a significant proportion of Geelong people either work in Melbourne or grew up in Melbourne, and so have allegiances to Melbourne newspapers. The *Townsville Bulletin* is used as a yardstick for Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin*. Both are Queensland coastal cities that are distant from the capital and its lone daily newspaper, with Townsville (pop. 51,143 in 1961 and 101,398 in 1991), having become quite clearly the population leader in the north. It is the steady plodder in terms of residential and industrial expansion as against Cairns's massive tourism expansion. Rockhampton's population was 44,128 in 1961 and 55,768 in 1991. Grafton's *Daily Examiner*, about an hour's drive from the beaches of the New South Wales north coast, is used as a point of comparison with the *Maryborough Chronicle*, less than half an hour's drive from the coast at Hervey Bay. In both instances, the industrial or commercial/tourism development of centres such as Coffs Harbour and Bundaberg has eluded them, and both those outside centres have faster growing daily newspapers. Maryborough's population was 19,126 (1961) and 20,790 (1991) and Grafton's was 15,526 (1961) and 16,642 (1991).

Table 20

Yardstick circulation comparison  
of Dunn regional daily newspapers

	(Net Paid)			
	<u>Sept.</u> <u>1960</u>	<u>Sept.</u> <u>1970</u>	<u>Sept.</u> <u>1980</u>	<u>Sept.</u> <u>1990</u>
<i>Maryborough Chronicle</i>	7,375	8,143	8,757	9,551
Daily Examiner, Grafton	6,232	6,633	6,890	7,949
<i>Morning Bulletin,</i> <i>Rockhampton</i>	17,236	21,275	22,443	22,781
Townsville Bulletin	18,297	22,677	24,822	26,607
<i>The Chronicle,</i> <i>Toowoomba</i>	17,216*	17,865*	24,344	30,219
Geelong Advertiser	18,842	24,720	29,566	32,650

\* The Toowoomba Chronicle faced competition from the Downs Star, firstly a paid daily and later a free daily, from July 1955 till 1970 - a period broken by its appearance less frequently (from July 1959 till February 1960 it was issued weekly and later twice a week; it resumed daily publication, as a 'free', on 1 March 1960 and merged with The Chronicle on 1 October 1970).

SOURCE: Audit Bureau of Circulation figures 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990.



Table 21 compares the circulation of the 'yardstick' newspapers each decade from 1960 to 1990, using Audit Bureau of Circulations figures. It shows that the percentage increases over the thirty years were:

Table 21

**Yardstick circulation comparison  
of regional daily newspapers:  
percentage increases, 1960-1990**

<i>The Chronicle, Toowoomba</i>	75.53
<i>Geelong Advertiser</i>	73.28
<i>Morning Bulletin, Rockhampton</i>	32.17
<i>Townsville Bulletin</i>	45.42
<i>Maryborough Chronicle</i>	29.51
<i>Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	27.55

SOURCE: Audit Bureau of circulations figures, 1960-1990.

**Percentage of circulation  
home-delivered**

<i>The Chronicle, Toowoomba</i>	50 <sup>1</sup>
<i>Geelong Advertiser</i>	46 <sup>2</sup>
<i>Morning Bulletin</i>	45 <sup>3</sup>
<i>Townsville Bulletin</i>	45 <sup>4</sup>
<i>Maryborough Chronicle</i>	45 <sup>5</sup>
<i>Daily Examiner, Grafton</i>	46 <sup>6</sup>

1. Phil Hartnett, telephone interview with author, 7 July 1993.
2. Barry Carter, telephone interview with author, 21 December 1993.
3. David Stretton, letter to author, 7 July 1993.
4. Ray Dickson, letter to author, 20 July 1993.
5. Toni Jones, letter to author, 15 July 1993.
6. Warren Lentfer, letter to author, 27 August 1993.

By comparison, in the capitals, the *Sydney Morning Herald* circulation fell by 11.78 per cent in the thirty years; *The Courier-Mail* rose by 5.98 per cent; and *The Age* rose by 37.72 per cent. The gap between the circulation performance of the *Morning Bulletin* and its yardstick newspaper was far greater than that between any of the other comparisons made. The *Morning Bulletin* result was more than thirteen percentage points behind the *Townsville Bulletin* for the thirty years, whereas the gap between the *Chronicles* of Maryborough and Toowoomba and their yardstick publications was only about two percentage points, and in both cases the *Chronicles* were in front. This reinforces the contention that the Rockhampton paper had performed more poorly than its Toowoomba counterpart, for the reasons suggested above.

It is widely acknowledged that the most important factor for healthy print runs is an ability by editorial staff to stay in touch with the concerns of their readers.<sup>1</sup> Or, as *Border Mail* manager Gordon Beavan has put it: 'The significant quality that sells a newspaper is the vitality and relevance of its content, and that mostly comes from its journalists.'<sup>2</sup> The Dunn family believed that to obtain results you had to produce a good newspaper. So did the Mannings of the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, where W.J. Manning (editor, 1910-1941, and chairman of the board, 1917-1942) demanded:

accuracy and high standards from his journalists. He knew what was good for newspapers and what sort of news content was needed. He modernised the plant, put money into the newspaper and got the right people.<sup>3</sup>

In 1934, when the Dunn family members directing the fortunes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. were told that several new contracts had increased the *Central Queensland Herald's* advertising revenue considerably, they decided some improvement was essential if they were to hold this revenue

1. Trevor Sykes, 'Squeeze on the rural press', *The Bulletin*, 15 December 1992, p. 71.

2. Beavan, *ESANZ Bulletin*, p. 14.

3. C.M. Manning, interview with the author, Mackay, 23 May 1979.

and give subscribers and advertisers a better service. They decided to provide an eight-page illustrated section and a good-class coloured cover – so long as trials produced satisfactory results.<sup>1</sup>

The author's study of the content of the three major Dunn newspapers in March 1931, when the family owned five dailies and two weeklies, demonstrated that the principal emphasis in the editorial content was localism with a special effort being made to target all members of the community's families.<sup>2</sup> Regular features were directed at women, children, girls, motorists and gardeners, as well as those interested in sport, social events and the cinema, and those living in outlying communities. In the *Morning Bulletin* in 1931, regular editorial content included: previews of what was screening at Earl's Court, Rockhampton's 'marvellous open air talkie theatre', or at Tivoli Talkies; sport; cable news, both national and international; a weekly leading article on a poet or a literary topic (e.g. the Celtic spirit in literature – 21 March); Girls' Club each Tuesday; fashion jottings; Motor Notes each Thursday; Children's Corner each Friday; From the Capital, a column of political comment from Canberra, each Saturday; Garden Notes each Saturday; extensive coverage of local government. The *Toowoomba Chronicle's* regular features included a wide range of national news; the Children's Page (Tuesdays); previews of the talkies; church news; social jottings; sporting coverage; and extensive reports on agricultural shows, such as Warwick and Toowoomba itself, and local government meetings, such as Clifton, Crow's Nest and Charleville. In the *Maryborough Chronicle*, Domain of Woman by 'Eve' appeared each Saturday, as did Children's Corner by 'Aunty Betty'. The *Toowoomba Chronicle's* major news at the

1. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 13 August 1934.

2. *Morning Bulletin*, *Toowoomba Chronicle* and *Maryborough Chronicle*, 2-31 March 1931.

beginning of March 1931 dealt with the opening and blessing of Downlands College. It set the tone for the localism that featured so much during the month studied. Another example was the extensive coverage given to the eighth annual conference of the southern division of the Queensland Country Women's Association (11-13 March). Daily a 'Local & General' column, studded with local news items of about fifty to 100 words, occupied one and a half to two columns, and was probably the best-read section in the newspaper. At Maryborough, the *Chronicle*, too, featured extensive coverage of local items, in a 'General' column that ranged from two to three columns in most editions and also featured extensive local government coverage. Church news appeared regularly. A well-displayed three-page feature extolled the virtues of Hervey Bay as a seaside resort (e.g. 'White Wings Afloat on Hervey Bay', 28 March, p. 3).

Each of the three newspapers relied heavily on district correspondents to provide 'local news' for its more scattered readers, and to give the publication a wider appeal for the town-based reader. The *Toowoomba Chronicle* had district correspondents garnering news in centres such as Clifton, Pinelands, Leyburn, Warra, Pittsworth, Haden, Kooroongarra, Millmerran, Nangwee, Crow's Nest, Dalby, Umbiram, Chinchilla, Southbrook, Charleville, Pilton, Grantham and Gatton. The *Morning Bulletin* drew district news from correspondents at centres such as Alton Downs, Ambrose, Archer, Biloela, Blackall, Calliope, Comet, Goovigen, Miriam Vale, Mount Perry, Pheasant Creek, Rannes, Richmond and Thangool. The *Maryborough Chronicle's* district correspondents were based in centres such as Wondai, Kingaroy, Goomeri, Eidsvold, Booyal, Mondure, Murgon, Pialba, Childers, Dundowran, Dallarnil, Mundubbera, Gayndah, Monto and Kilkivan. In the leading articles, the Maryborough, Toowoomba and Rockhampton editors looked often to the national scene, providing constant conservative comment on the worsening financial affairs which led to the defeat of the Scullin Labor Government later that year. The *Morning Bulletin* leading articles focused less on politics than the other two.

In 1930 the *Maryborough Chronicle* published special issues in April focusing on the communities of Wondai, Biggenden and Goomeri, leading the newspaper board's acting chairman, Andrew Dunn jun., to conclude that these issues had shown that the people conducting the paper were able and willing to do good service to the community. The Wondai feature, covering sixteen pages, focused on the district's evolution from grazing to dairying and dealt with the general history of the town and district and the key people serving it. Advertisers supported the feature generously. The Biggenden feature covered only five pages and promoted the district's 'pedigreed [dairying] studs with statewide reputations' and the rich mineral deposits that awaited development. The Biggenden Bakery, offering motor delivery throughout the district, was one of many small advertisers. The Goomeri feature won more generous support and its nine pages promoted the district as a 'prosperous agricultural community' with fertile lands producing world-famed lucerne and amazing wealth coming from the district's pine forests.<sup>1</sup> In the first half of 1932, when the *Chronicle* suffered a circulation decline, mainly in the South Burnett, the advice issued was: 'Continue to produce a good paper.' *The Colonist's* special section for Mundubbera and district (Biggenden, Gayndah, Eidsvold, Mulgildie and Monto) in 1934 - sometimes as big as twenty pages - was credited with helping boost the circulation of the weekly from 810 on 30 June 1933 to 970 on 11 August 1934. The *Chronicle*, too, promoted its interest in Mundubbera in 1934 through a four-page feature headed 'Mundubbera: flourishing and ever progressive'.<sup>2</sup> In 1947 the directors continued publishing the ailing *Colonist* because it was 'a good thing to keep readers

1. *Maryborough Chronicle*, 5, 16 and 30 April 1930; minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 30 April 1930.  
 2. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 9 May 1932 and 13 August 1934; *The Colonist*, 21 and 28 July 1934; *Maryborough Chronicle*, 21 July 1934, pp. 5-8.

in our hinterland - Gayndah to Monto - in touch with the district's development'. The paper carried extracts of the main Maryborough news from the *Chronicle* as well as columns of news from district correspondents. It was not labour-intensive, being virtually put together by a compositor.<sup>1</sup>

The *Toowoomba Chronicle* moved its offices and plant from one side of the street to the other in 1928 so that it could upgrade its equipment and provide a better service for readers and advertisers. Boasting that it had improved its contents commensurately with the improved production facilities, it said 'every event of public interest finds record in our columns'. There was extensive coverage of the minutiae of the district's affairs, but the author's study of the files suggested the promotion of community causes and the pursuit of larger issues - aside from those strictly aligned with political motivations - was rare. The *Chronicle's* circulation area had extended to cover practically the whole of south-western Queensland from Laidley (eighty-five kilometres west of Brisbane) west and south to the borders of the neighbouring states.<sup>2</sup>

After World War II, with radio grabbing an increasing share of the advertising cake, the format of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* changed a great deal. New layouts and improved types were introduced, and there were more action shots in the pictorial coverage. The stringencies of World War II taught journalists some good lessons. When newsprint was rationed during the war, space had to be saved by condensing reports, restricting headlines, and making extensive use of small type. When rationing was lifted, headings, pictures and type became bigger, but the journalists had learned the lesson of condensation and never reverted to long reports of meetings,

1. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 6 September 1947; W.G. Rendall, telephone interview with author, 30 April 1993. In 1994 the South Burnett Times Pty. Ltd. was allowing compositors virtually to put together, without editorial layouts, the Blackall, Biggenden and Charleville weeklies, the author found when he visited Kingaroy on 27 May 1994.

2. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 22 November 1928, p. 13.

speeches, court cases, sporting events and so on.<sup>1</sup> These changes were not peculiar to the *Chronicle*. They applied almost universally to the Australian press scene. The journalists were encouraged to follow a more personalised form of reporting but without undue resort to trivia.

At the *Gympie Times*, Terry Ramsey (editor, 1952-1976) said the pendulum had swung between localism and broader coverage over the years, according to threats to that paper's circulation. In the twenties and thirties, localism was strongly to the fore, with the main focus being on mining, the growth of agriculture and farming, and local government. Considerable space was always given to meetings of the four district councils covered by the paper's circulation - the Gympie, Widgee, Noosa and Kilkivan councils - so much so that practically every letter that came before council meetings was summarised and the answer (or debate) fully dealt with. 'In this regard alone the paper was looked on as the ratepayers' watchdog.' The introduction and rapidly increased use of radio for news dissemination dictated the expansion of the *Gympie Times's* coverage of state, interstate and world news and the presentation gradually swung to a more general spread of local, district and 'outside' news. This more balanced coverage was more necessary for the *Times* than some of the other regional papers because *The Courier-Mail*, by using 'fast motor transport', was in the area early in the morning and often was being delivered by newsagents at the same time as the local paper. In some other areas more distant from Brisbane, *The Courier-Mail* was carried by aeroplane and did not arrive until after the local paper was on the street.

1. Bert Hinchliffe, typescript notes on 'Provincial Journalism' prepared for author, 5 November 1976.

The fact that the *Times* and *The Courier-Mail* were reaching the reader at the same time on our publishing days also spurred us to carrying later state and overseas news, wherever possible, than appeared in *The Courier-Mail*. The country edition of *The Courier-Mail* went to press about 11pm, whereas we had contact with the Country Press (news agency) up to 1.30am on publishing mornings; thus we were able to pride ourselves with a later news cover.

Gradually the pendulum swung once more to playing up local news stories each day to keep up circulation in view of the wide cover of 'outside' news by *The Courier-Mail* and the fact that that paper was arriving even earlier, despite a later publication time for the country edition. It was realised at the same time that local news was the lifeblood of a 'local' paper if it were to attract more local advertising.<sup>1</sup>

Any development that threatens to erode a regional newspaper's established circulation must be treated seriously. When the *Toowoomba Chronicle* was confronted by competition from *The Courier-Mail* in 1936, the *Chronicle* met it head on. The Brisbane daily had been making strenuous efforts to increase its circulation in the *Chronicle's* territory since the merger of the *Courier* and the *Mail* on 28 August 1933.<sup>2</sup> On the morning of Saturday, 8 February 1936, *The Courier-Mail* furtively began daily early morning road delivery services to Pittsworth and Millmerran, and to Crows Nest, Goombungee and Haden, and planned to introduce another along the southern railway route to Stanthorpe on 10 February. From one source, *Chronicle* manager Armitage learned that *The Courier-Mail* representative had asked the newsagent not to intimate in any way to the *Chronicle* that the new service had been arranged. The representative had told one newsagent that it was his company's intention to arrange early delivery services 'right through the *Chronicle's* territory'. Learning this, the *Chronicle's* local directors arranged for road delivery services to start immediately to all the centres covered by *The Courier-Mail's* new campaign, except that on the southern railway route the *Chronicle* would deliver by road only as far

1. Terry Ramsey, letter to author, 30 January 1980.

2. *The Courier-Mail*, 28 August 1933; minutes of the Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 3 May 1934.



as Allora (it was clearly *Warwick Daily News* territory after that). On the Monday morning, 10 February, the *Chronicle* served all southern line towns as far as Allora with a truck delivery, with Pittsworth, Southbrook, Brookstead and Millmerran supplies being dropped off at Wyreema, where another car delivered to Southbrook and Pittsworth. At Pittsworth, a third car collected deliveries for Brookstead and Millmerran. A motor-cycle delivery service to Crows Nest, Haden and Goombungee, etc., was also introduced on Monday morning. On the Tuesday morning another road delivery service to Helidon, Grantham and Gatton was introduced. The cost of the road services was high - thirty pounds a week - but the local directors felt the new competition had to be met head-on immediately. Late in the afternoon of Monday, 10 February, Walter Sewell Buzacott, representing *The Courier-Mail*, called on Herbie Dunn and Jack Armitage to offer an assurance that the new campaign was not antagonistic to the *Chronicle*.<sup>1</sup> The head-to-head duel continued for five weeks until the two newspapers decided to operate a joint motor-delivery service, sharing the costs and, shortly afterwards, introducing a new service from Dalby to Jandowae, Bell and Kaimkillenbun. In 1936 these country delivery services were costing the *Chronicle* nearly twenty-two pounds a week, for a daily average sale of 2,167 papers (or forty per cent of its country circulation).<sup>2</sup>

At the *Queensland Times*, Ipswich, Gregory Bevis Stephenson, a fourth-generation member of the pioneering newspaper family, strengthened the local news content of the paper when he was editor, 1970-1975. He established a country roundsman, Con Smith, provided him with a car and told him:

'I don't want to see you. Come in once a week; ring me once a day.' He went from Boonah right through up to Esk. We got some tremendous stories out of that. Sometimes the country section of the paper was bigger than the Ipswich section. We had a guy selling ads for the country section, too, at a

1. Minutes of Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 12 February 1936.

2. Typescript report of the Directors of Toowoomba Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. for year ended 30 June 1936 (held by author). In 1948 the *Morning Bulletin* shared with *The Courier-Mail* and the *Telegraph* car delivery of newspapers to Gladstone and stations in between.

special rate. He worked in conjunction with Con Smith and brought in a lot of money to the paper. It was marvellous.

Stephenson would have liked eventually to have eliminated the Australian Associated Press wire service and to have made the *Queensland Times* a strictly local paper.<sup>1</sup> The circulation of the paper, which had risen only 0.65 per cent (from 12,200 to 12,279) in the five years leading up to his editorship, jumped 3.5 per cent from September 1971 to 1972, 5.06 per cent the next year and 5.03 per cent the year after. In round figures he contributed to a 2,000 increase in circulation in four years, taking it past the 14,000-mark.<sup>2</sup> Clarence Manning, chairman of the PNQ board 1970-87, shared Stephenson's perception of Ipswich as a distinctive local market and not merely as a satellite of Brisbane. While editing the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, Manning insisted always that local news take precedence.

If something had to go out, it wasn't local. I remember a mate of mine, Tucker, who was down at Maitland [at the *Mercury*]. He said: 'If somebody pisses crooked here, we want to know about it.' It's a bit raw, but it says a lot. He was dead right, of course. You want to know everything that's happening in your own town, and your readers do. If you don't do that, you're history.<sup>3</sup>

Local news, as the Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Maryborough, Gympie, Ipswich, Maitland and Mackay experiences suggest, is the lifeblood of regional dailies and of less-frequently published provincial publications. Within their pages should be encapsulated 'the whole story of local endeavour'; they should mirror the local life.<sup>4</sup> They should set out to be 'purposely parochial', as Emerald's *Central Queensland News* did and does.<sup>5</sup>

1. Gregory Stephenson, interview with author, Karalee, 2 December 1993.

2. Audit Bureau of Circulations figures.

3. C.M. Manning, interview with author, Brisbane, 5 March 1992.

4. Ernest Christian Sommerlad, address to the Millions Club, Sydney, 13 May 1936.

5. Margaret Jean Gibson, interview with author, Emerald, 17 May 1980; Simon K. Irwin, interview with author, Brisbane, 29 November 1993; 'Family era ends at country newspaper', *The Courier-Mail*, 2 February 1985.

Regional newspapers in the seventies and eighties found it increasingly necessary to express their attachment to their communities through more than just their news columns and the personal involvement of key staff members in community organisations and/or local government. The newspapers have become heavily involved in organising and or sponsoring community events, especially related to sports, entertainment, community welfare and education. They are concerned that if they fail to support these events financially, other media will quickly fill the vacuum and gain valuable publicity and goodwill. The daily newspapers at Toowoomba, Rockhampton and Maryborough follow this pattern. By 1986, the *Morning Bulletin* was contributing about \$100,000 to sporting and community organisations and by 1993 it was spending 'substantially more than that'.<sup>1</sup> At Toowoomba, *The Chronicle* has directly sponsored the Home Gardens section of the city's Carnival of Flowers since that festival's inception in 1950. Since 1969 it has also sponsored the Exhibition Gardens, which have become so much a feature of the carnival. From 1980 to 1991, the paper sponsored regular Free Entertainments in the Park (called FREEPS). *The Chronicle* has also become involved in:

- a road safety campaign ('Survive This Drive') in 1981;
- literary lunches and literary dinners (authors such as Sara Henderson, David Malouf, Bryce Courtenay as guest speakers);
- sports sponsorships including a golf classic and an annual pro-celebrity tennis tournament; and
- a Christmas toy appeal.

It has also run various competitions with prizes as big as a car or an overseas holiday.<sup>2</sup>

At Rockhampton, the *Morning Bulletin's* policy in 1993 was to provide significant and widespread support for major community events - for example, Carnival Week in June, which includes the city's agricultural show and horse-racing meetings. It sponsored the small agricultural shows, too, such as at

1. *Morning Bulletin*, 125th Anniversary Supplement, 9 July 1986, p. 2; David Stretton, telephone interview with author, 20 December 1993.

2. Phil Hartnett, letter to author, 7 December 1993; *PNO News*, May 1981, p. 4; and *PNO News-Print*, No. 5, 1986, p. 8.

Marlborough, Biloela and Wowan. The *Bulletin* sponsored the Bauhinia Arts Award Festival, carrying one of the biggest art prizes in Queensland, and was 'very heavily into sponsoring junior Rugby League and bowls carnivals'.<sup>1</sup> At Maryborough, the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* in 1993 continued to be a major sponsor of the annual agricultural show, part of the sponsorship being to publish a lift-out show feature that is promoted widely in advance to ensure maximum publicity for the event. The *Chronicle* has been sponsoring the two-day Fraser Coast Boat and Leisure Show, which attracted 22,000 people in 1993. It also runs each year a contest to encourage private homes and businesses to decorate and light up for Christmas.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from localism, a number of other major factors affect circulation. One is deadlines. The Dunn Family newspapers would have gone out of business long before the predators came pawing at their gate in the 1960s if they had produced a product that people wanted to buy but could not obtain until it was too late. Urgency is just as much a part of newspaper production and distribution as of journalism. The production and distribution teams, too, live by deadlines. The use-by date for news passes swiftly. A newspaper is not merely printed. It is circulated and read. Otherwise it is not a newspaper. The struggle for existence, in the case of the newspaper, has been a struggle for circulation. The newspaper that is not read ceases to be an influence in the community. The power of the press may be roughly measured by the number of people who read it.<sup>3</sup> The circulation manager of a Victorian regional daily newspaper has said: 'If the circulation and distribution of a newspaper fails, the newspaper itself will surely fail.'<sup>4</sup> A newspaper that provides high readership and penetration, that stands for something and gives leadership to its community, is not on the way to becoming a curio, a relic, a remembrance of things past.<sup>5</sup>

1. Stretton, interview, 20 December 1993.

2. Toni Jones, letter to author, 20 December 1993.

3. Robert E. Park in Schramm, p. 9.

4. Barry Carter, address to Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. seminar, Brisbane, 20 November 1993.

5. Florida Press Association, 'The 10 "commandments" of circulation', *Ideas*, December 1992, p. 15.

As many as one in four people want to read their local newspaper before they leave for work in the morning, and others want to buy it on the way to work.<sup>1</sup> For the former, reliable home delivery at a time that suits them is crucial to gaining and keeping their custom; for the latter, having newspapers on the newsagency counter by a specified time is the key. 'The only bad paper is a late paper,' says the general manager of one regional daily.<sup>2</sup> At Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin*, the managers have acknowledged that deadlines are central to newspaper circulation, survival and, indeed, growth.

It's all about deadlines. Unlike other factories, where any shortfall on nuts and bolts, cars, clothing or furniture can be made up the following day, the newspaper must come out. And it must come out on time if it is to get to outlying centres such as Marlborough, Blackwater, Emerald, Theodore, Middlemount, Dysart, Mount Larcom, Gladstone, Miriam Vale and Biloela before readers go to work.<sup>3</sup>

But a paper that is on time can still be unwanted because it lacks local news content that will directly interest the readers. It has forgotten how to be constructively and purposely parochial.

For a newspaper, a deadline is both temporal and physical, and it is affected by geography and technology as much as by newsgathering. The temporal aspect of deadlines is obvious, the physical less so but it includes geography (covering location, distance, terrain and the density of population) and technology (or production capabilities, such as the speed and capacity of the newspaper company's pressline - i.e. the combination of press units).<sup>4</sup> Distance limits circulation in a number of ways. It determines a newspaper's prime circulation area (PCA), which, for a regional daily, is best described as a geographical area the newspaper can dominate, the area within which the primary reading audience lives, the area

1. John Sellars, address to Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. annual conference, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, 20-21 October 1993.

2. G.R. Beavan, letter to author, 29 September 1993.

3. *Morning Bulletin*, 125th Anniversary Supplement, 9 July 1986, p. 32.

4. G.R. Beavan, letter to author, 6 September 1993.

containing the 'market' the advertiser wants to reach. The PCA is subject to the physical limitations of distance, and time, from the point of printing. This PCA is the focus of local news gathering and advertising sales activities, as well as of circulation. The reciprocal geographical qualification to this notion of a regional PCA is that advertisers waste money by advertising in newspapers whose readers do not shop in the town that is the centre of the PCA. A regional newspaper's PCA is thus narrowed by its readers' shopping habits.<sup>1</sup>

Whereas a metropolitan daily's PCA can be based on demography – on targeting particular sections of the population – as much as geography, a regional daily's PCA is based on geography. It has to target the entire potential audience. It cannot hope to be selective and so there is not one dual or multi regional daily in Australia: they are all based on a single central focus, such as Bundaberg, Ballarat, Dubbo or Townsville. Bundaberg's *News-Mail* does not attempt to serve Maryborough, the *Ballarat Courier* does not bid for Bendigo readers, Dubbo's *Daily Liberal* does not fill its columns with news for Orange readers, and the *Townsville Bulletin* keeps its regional focus on its hinterland rather than straying north to Cairns. When Launceston's *Examiner* made a concerted foray into the territory of Burnie's *Advocate* in the sixties and seventies, it failed to make more than marginal gains, as was demonstrated in Chapter 3. Geography, thus, not only constrains circulation growth, but also helps determine the advertising rates, because those rates are usually based on circulation.<sup>2</sup> But geography can both limit and expand a regional daily's PCA. Examples of where it has been used to expand the PCA are Toowoomba, with its *Chronicle* reaching out so far into south-west Queensland (e.g. west to Charleville), and Townsville and Cairns with the *Bulletin* and the *Post* having vast regions to dominate. In each of these three cases the newspaper is published from the focal shopping point of

1. Gordon Beavan, 'A critique of newspaper history', *Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin* [BSANZ Bulletin], 17, 1, 1993, p. 11; Allan Brown, *Commercial Media in Australia* (St. Lucia, Qld.: University of Queensland Press Scholars' Library, 1986), pp. 4-5.

2. Beavan, *BSANZ Bulletin*, 17, 1, 1993, pp. 11-12.

the region, a shopping centre with no real competition in this era of one-stop convenience shopping in huge air-conditioned regional centres that offer the same chain stores and specialty shops as found in the capital cities and often with undercover parking. Small country towns simply cannot compete and shopping has become an all-day excursion – a pleasurable day out – for many country people.<sup>1</sup>

Another factor that has affected the thinking, if not the actual circulation, of regional daily newspapers in Australia since the 1970s has been the 'free' newspapers, generally weeklies, but sometimes bi-weeklies. In 1971 PNQ discussed a report on free newspapers from one of its directors, Edwin Hollingworth and it was looking harder at free newspapers in 1979 when it instructed its subsidiaries not to print such newspapers for outside companies without obtaining board approval.<sup>2</sup> In a bid to stifle existing or potential competition from free newspapers, most regional dailies began publishing free weeklies in their own areas by the end of the seventies, hoping to soak up any surplus advertising, and to take advantage of economies of scale in any 'war' with a publisher issuing only a weekly. In 1981, largely because of the growing Hervey Bay area, Maryborough's *Chronicle* was issuing the bi-weekly *Sun* in competition with two free weeklies, the *Maryborough Times* and the *Hervey Bay Observer*.<sup>3</sup> At Rockhampton, the *Morning Bulletin* published a weekly, the *Capricorn Community*, which aimed at an advertising content of seventy per cent.<sup>4</sup> At Toowoomba, the *Chronicle* continued to publish the former daily, the *Downs Star*, as a free weekly, primarily to block the entry of another weekly.<sup>5</sup> At Bundaberg from the close of 1976, the *News-Mail* faced a threat to its share of advertising revenue from a rival publication, the weekly *Opinion*, launched by Robton Pty. Ltd., whose principal shareholder was Donald Cyril McInnes, who had been a car

1. Clem Martin, telephone interview with author, 25 October 1993. Martin was general manager of Western Newspapers Ltd., 1979-1987; the company published the Central Western Daily, Orange, the Lithgow Mercury, the Forbes Advocate, the Parkes Champion-Post and the Blue Mountains Echo, Katoomba.

2. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 28 June 1971 and 30 July 1979.

3. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 31 May 1981; Maryborough Times, 18 March 1981; W.G. Rendall, letter to author, 22 September 1980.

4. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 31 May 1981.

5. Kirkpatrick in They Meant Business, p. 77.

dealer for twenty years. So the *News-Mail* began publishing *The Drum*, a free weekly, in April 1977. The *Opinion* was placed in the hands of the receivers at the end of 1978.<sup>1</sup> From its Maroochydore plant, the *Sunshine Coast Daily* published a wide range of weeklies at different times in the first half of the eighties: the *Nambour and District Chronicle*, the *Sunshine Coast Advertiser*, and five other editions of the *Advertiser*. By 1984, it had rationalised to three the number of weeklies it published in its prime circulation area: the *Sunshine Coast Weekly*, Maroochydore and Caloundra; the *Noosa News* (bi-weekly from 31 March 1987); and the *Near North Coast News*, Caboolture.<sup>2</sup> Free newspapers have two big selling points for advertisers: they provide readers with a grassroots level type of reporting often lacking in the dailies; and they are delivered to every home. 'A lot of people get their world news via the telly and their local news in their free newspaper.'<sup>3</sup>

Clinging to existing readers and gaining new readers are key aspects of newspaper survival. For even though actual sales contribute only twenty to thirty-five per cent of a newspaper's revenue, the sixty-five to eighty per cent gained from selling advertising space is based on those sales, but also, increasingly, on actual audience size, as determined by six-monthly readership studies, and on demographics – the age, education standard, employment, income, interests, and so on, of the reader. Newspaper managers have generally regarded high levels of sales by home delivery, as opposed to over-the-counter, as desirable. In 1989 John Sellars, promotional director for the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd., told regional daily managers that newspapers 'must build home delivery, but don't make it hard for the single-copy purchaser'.<sup>4</sup> Home delivery, running at forty to fifty per cent of circulation for weekday issues of metropolitan and regional

1. Minutes of PNO board meeting, 23 May 1977; Scott Nicol, telephone interview with author, 9 March 1992; Colin McInnes, 24 January 1994; Roy Theodore, letter to author, 17 May 1979.

2. J. Jones, letter to author, 12 July 1984; J. Jones, typescript summary of Sunshine Coast Newspaper Co. publications, undated but circa 1988.

3. Barry Carter, telephone interview with author, 21 December 1993.

4. John Sellars, 'Challenges lie ahead for regional dailies', *PANPA Bulletin*, April 1989, p. 76.



dailies, lies at the centre of a continuing debate, as will be shown in this chapter, on how to increase circulation.<sup>1</sup> For home delivery, a circulation area is physically circumscribed by distance in two ways.

1. Distance from newspaper office to newsagent: under the tied newsagency system – which faced challenge in late 1993 – the newspapers must be delivered in bulk two or three hours before 7am.
2. Distance from newsagent to reader.

Both sets of distance translate to transport time, which must be added to printing time. This helps determine news copy deadlines for the journalists producing 'history in a hurry'.<sup>2</sup> When Beavan was the general manager of the *Morning Bulletin*, he found that if 'the press started later than the time the postal and bread runs left the city, we would have missed the circulation at Blackwater and Emerald'.<sup>3</sup> At Toowoomba, for instance, delivery of newspapers to far-flung western centres has a bearing on copy and production deadlines. In 1993 the press run had to begin in time for the first 3,000 *Chronicles* printed to be packed on to the western truck that left the Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd. building at 2am, delivering to Oakey at 2.30, Dalby about 3.15, Chinchilla about 4.15, Miles about 5.15 and the westernmost point of the run, Charleville (which sold about 120 *Chronicles* daily), about 10.30. Both Oakey and Dalby newsagents home-delivered *The Chronicle*.<sup>4</sup>

Anecdotal evidence suggests that home delivery rates have dropped because of the tied newsagency system which gives each newsagent a monopoly over a specific delivery area. The argument is that newsagents want 'shop traffic' in order to sell their other lines of merchandise, and so do little to encourage home delivery. Publishers argue that newsagents actively discourage home delivery so that people who come into their shop to buy newspapers make additional purchases at that

1. Newspaper Advertising Bureau of Australia Ltd., 'How Australians buy and read their newspapers' (market report, March 1991), pp. 6, 16; John Fairfax Holdings Limited Annual Report 1993, p. 18, says the *Sydney Morning Herald* home-delivers forty per cent of its circulation, *The Age* forty-one per cent, and the *Australian Financial Review*, fifty per cent.

2. Harry Gordon, *An Eyewitness History of Australia* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1976), p. 9.

3. Beavan, letter to author, 6 September 1993; Fred Brenchley, 'Capital coup at the Times', *Australian Financial Review*, 27 September 1993, pp. 46-47; Anne Davies, 'Times starts a trend by delivering the news', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 October 1993, p. 36; *PANPA Bulletin*, September 1993, p. 17, October, 1993, pp. 3-4, 6, and November 1993, pp. 8-9.

4. Phil Hartnett, telephone interviews with author, 7 July, and 22 and 23 November 1993; also viz. 'The Page 4 Column', *The Chronicle*, 7 May 1981, p. 4.

time. This argument seemed to reach its peak as scratch tickets, Soccer Pools, Lotto and Tattersalls tickets became available. Most commentators in the field of newspaper management, from a newspaper publisher's point of view, suggest that home delivery six days a week is the best type of circulation. Conversely, most newsagents claim that they make a loss from home delivery sales. Beavan has observed that the belief that home delivery is best is 'one of the great myths of circulation management, although trying to convince a group of circulation managers that this belief is erroneous is very difficult'.<sup>1</sup> In the United Kingdom, Nottingham's *Evening Post* has demonstrated that a campaign designed to increase home-delivery levels can also increase total average daily sale. The *Post* took its home-delivery proportion from fifty-nine per cent in 1983 to seventy-six per cent in 1987 with a two-tiered pricing policy that favoured buyers who had the paper home-delivered. Circulation rose by 4,500 copies in the second year.<sup>2</sup>

Demonstrating their faith in home delivery sales as opposed to over-the-counter sales, various Australian newspapers have tried different strategies to persuade over-the-counter buyers and non-buyers to have the paper home-delivered daily. Melbourne's *Herald Sun*, formerly *The Sun News-Pictorial*, has for years offered free life insurance for readers who sign up for six or seven days a week home delivery.<sup>3</sup> At Maryborough and Hervey Bay, the two localised editions of the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* (formerly the *Maryborough Chronicle*) publish a weekly 'Friendly Neighbour' advertisement encouraging readers to nominate 'new neighbours' for two weeks' free home delivery of the *Chronicle*. The 'new neighbours' receive two weeks' free home delivery and, after the two weeks, are encouraged to continue with a paid subscription.<sup>4</sup> In Victoria, Shepparton's *News*, since switching from afternoon to morning publication on 6 August 1990, has introduced discount deals for people taking home deliveries and also for over-the-counter buyers paying in advance. The *News* also introduced a Reader Club. The two

1. Beavan, letter, 6 September 1993.

2. David Teague, address at Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. seminar, 1987.

3. Beavan, letter, 6 September 1993.

4. Toni Jones, letter to author, 15 July 1993; Martin Simons, letter to author, 1 December 1993.

strategies led to an increase of more than thirty per cent in committed purchasers by the end of the September semester audit in 1993.<sup>1</sup> At Townsville and Geelong, the *Bulletin* and the *Advertiser*, respectively canvassed door-to-door in 1992 and 1993, offering discounts to new home-delivery subscribers. For the *Townsville Bulletin*, this contributed to a 2.7 per cent circulation increase to 30 September 1992 over the corresponding six months in 1991 and 2.5 per cent to March 1993.<sup>2</sup> At Geelong, the *Advertiser's* circulation department has operated a continual door-to-door canvass of newsagents' areas in the daylight saving months of the year since 1985 (it canvasses by telephone the rest of the year), offering those householders not receiving home delivery a thirteen-week discount offer. Approximately twenty-five per cent of non-subscribers accept the offer and more than twenty-five per cent of those continue at normal rates after the discount period ends.<sup>3</sup> *Advertiser* circulation manager Barry Carter told a Brisbane newspaper seminar on 20 November 1993 that the retention rate, initially twenty per cent, had reached thirty-five per cent.

In Queensland, Toowoomba's *Chronicle* is the only newspaper that has established its own home delivery service (newsagency deliveries are not available) - within the Toowoomba City local government boundaries on 2 July 1951, something the *Canberra Times* began partly emulating forty-two years later: on 27 September 1993 (newsagency deliveries of the *Times* are still available).<sup>4</sup> When the Toowoomba service began, it used three vehicles; in 1993 it used ten. In the April-September audit period in 1992, 40.6 per cent of *The Chronicle's* total circulation of 30,037 was home-delivered in Toowoomba alone by the company. This excluded home deliveries by newsagents at places such as Pittsworth, Clifton, Oakey, Dalby, and so on. (In 1976, for a comparable period, the percentage of home deliveries was 42.6 per cent.) More than 11,000 *Chronicles*

1. Judith McMillan, telephone interviews with author, 15 July and 25 November 1993, and letter to author, 15 July 1993.

2. Ray Dickson, letter to author, 20 July 1993.

3. Barry Carter, letter to author, 10 August 1993.

4. *The Chronicle*, 4 July 1986, p. 12; Brenchley, *Australian Financial Review*, 27 September 1993; Ian Meikle, address to PANPA annual conference, Gold Coast, 20 April 1994, and 'How *The Canberra Times* revolutionised its distribution system to boost business', *PANPA Bulletin*, June 1994, pp. 58-63.

(including 'outside' home deliveries made by country-town newsagents) were sold outside Toowoomba City daily in the 200,000 square kilometre circulation area. In all, fifty per cent of *Chronicles* were home-delivered.<sup>1</sup> Each of the dailies published at Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Maryborough, and their 'yardstick' comparisons, had a home-delivery rate in 1993 of between forty-five and fifty-one per cent, as Table 21 (Page 220) shows.

In the late seventies, provincial newspapers took the lead in Australia in another area of promoting increased circulation: Newspapers in Education (NIE), initially known as Newspapers in the Classroom. This concept was introduced in the United States in the early 1950s in response to television's perceived threat to the newspaper circulations. It was a bold grab for the young readers who were eluding newspapers. There was little concern at that time about the older readers, whose reading loyalties were thought to be fixed. By 1983 there were well over 600 NIE programs in the U.S. and Canada.<sup>2</sup> With a little prodding from the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd., NIE was introduced to Australia in 1979 by Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. with the *Maryborough Chronicle* undertaking the pilot scheme. Supervising it was Barbara Manson Reye, grand-daughter of the Dunn Family newspaper patriarch and daughter of Hugh Hector Harold Dunn, of Maryborough.<sup>3</sup> The American NIE guru, Barbara Edwards, an educational consultant from Hawaii, addressed teachers in Maryborough in April 1979. Under NIE, the participating newspaper provides copies of its publication to schools, either free or at reduced rates, for students to use in classroom exercises which can vary from algebra to current affairs. A common response from children beginning the NIE program has been that they have not read newspapers previously. NIE lists a major aim as being to promote the use

1. Phil Hartnett, telephone interview with author, 7 July 1993.

2. John McFarland, 'Rapid spread of NIE wins (little) hearts and minds', *PANPA Bulletin*, December 1983, p. 23; *PNO News*, August 1981, p. 6.

3. Sellars, address, 20-21 October 1993; *Maryborough Chronicle*, 19 April and 24 July 1979; Barbara Manson Reye, telephone interview with author, 6 December 1993.

of newspapers as a teaching and education medium in the community, but its primary aim is newspaper survival. It seeks to 'ensure the future of the press as a medium of mass communication by encouraging children and students to develop the newspaper reading habit as part of their enriched reading diet'.<sup>1</sup> By 1981, with the co-operation of the Queensland Education Department, 100 state schools and some independent schools were using PNQ newspapers as a teaching aid. The success of PNQ's NIE program attracted interest from outside. In 1983 PNQ conducted seminars for teachers in Whyalla, South Australia, and at Burnie and Launceston, in Tasmania. In Queensland, Ipswich and district schools took part in Australia's first Newspapers in Education Week in August 1983. Nicola Fulton Kennedy (now Anderson) took over as NIE project director in 1983 with Barbara Reye continuing as project consultant. PNQ appointed for each subsidiary newspaper an NIE co-ordinator, generally a former school teacher.<sup>2</sup> By the end of 1988, thirteen papers in the Australian Provincial Newspapers Ltd. group, which encompassed the former PNQ newspapers, had NIE programs.<sup>3</sup> Since 1985, the Pacific Area Newspaper Publishers Association (PANPA), with headquarters in Sydney, has held an annual NIE conference. At the 1993 conference, PANPA announced it was funding and organising a major research project investigating teen-aged reading habits in Australian schools.

We want to find out what children around the fourth year in high school – about sixteen years old – are reading, whether they are reading newspapers or not.<sup>4</sup>

1. A.P.N. Executive Summary 1989; Reye, interview, 6 December 1993.

2. A.D. Morris, 'Notes on P.N.Q.', p. 22.

3. 'Newspapers in Education: 10th Annual Report', Australian Provincial Newspapers Ltd., 1988.

4. 'PANPA to fund major research into young readers' preferences', PANPA Bulletin, December 1993, pp. 3, 6.

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The growth of the Dunn newspapers has been placed within three specific contexts: dwindling metropolitan newspaper circulations, the death of the afternoon newspaper in Australia, and a comparative context drawing upon regional daily newspapers serving communities with some notable similarities to Rockhampton, Maryborough and Toowoomba. Regional dailies in general are more healthy than their capital-city counterparts. One reason for this, especially when considering the Dunn newspapers, has been that their ethos of localism and integrity has reflected the desires of their communities and won the loyalty of subscribers. The Dunns knew their communities intimately through personal involvement in their institutions. This was reflected in what they published in the pages of their newspapers and in the steadily growing circulations and edition sizes. The author's case study shows that strong local news content is important if a provincial daily newspaper is to build and maintain a solid circulation base. Paging will be presented in Chapter 8 as another aspect of growth to consider along with the conventional reference to circulation. It has also been shown in this chapter that newspapers can no longer afford to rest on their circulation laurels. They have to promote themselves constantly by becoming explicitly involved in community activities through sponsorship of, for instance, sporting events and through initiating other programs designed to retain established readers and win new ones, especially young ones. Regional newspapers have to keep an eye not only on maintaining their own readership, but also on the emergence of competitors, especially in the 'free-distribution' newspaper market. It has been shown that the general technique adopted by entrenched newspaper interests is to produce a weekly publication from the daily newspaper's stable to discourage potential competitors.

## Death rattle heralds life surge:

### The PNQ families respond to the technological challenge

*Printers collectively enjoyed considerable bargaining strength in negotiations over wages and conditions and commanded the power, if necessary, to prevent or seriously impede newspaper production.*

*— Industrial Relations and Industrial Democracy in the Printing and Newspaper Publishing Industries, p. 28.*

A profound revolution has swept over Australian newspapers since the mid-sixties. The change from hot-metal typesetting to photo-composition and the shift to web offset printing have represented more than revolutionary changes in speed and technology. The new electronics has changed all the relationships of which the newspaper industry is composed, and subtly reshaped the whole culture of journalism. Where typesetting and presswork used to be the heart and lungs of the newspaper, today the newsroom is. Greater onus in the production process now rests on journalists. The technological changes – and the opportunities they provide to break out of the double bind of falling revenues and rising costs and to break into higher-quality printing, including exciting use of colour – have been grasped readily in some newspapers, and with grudging resignation in others. This chapter highlights some of the problems that have demanded improved technological efficiency in the newspapers comprising Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. and some of the technology-related industrial problems that have arisen through nepotism in PNQ managerial appointments. Paging is presented as another aspect of growth apart from circulation. It will be shown that, even though ownership of Australian newspapers became far more concentrated in the period under review, and the number of mastheads dwindled (viz. Chapter 7), some survivors, especially amongst the regional dailies, are healthy and growing – in paging, or edition size. Such growth forces re-evaluation of the technology used to produce the newspaper.

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Greeks break plates. Compositors rattle galleys – well, they used to until the silent, sterile world of photocomposition made galleys obsolete. When the compositors – the old printing tradesmen, steeped in tradition – banged their galleys, or tin type trays, against the steel trolleys and steel-topped benches that held heavy pages of lead type, they produced an ear-piercing sound that drowned out the high-pitched clatter of the battery of Linotype machines.<sup>1</sup> For the Greeks, breaking plates is a celebration; for the printers, rattling galleys could be celebration or mourning. It might mark the end of an apprenticeship, the retirement of a colleague, the closure of a newspaper as in 1957 for Melbourne's 111-year-old *Argus*.<sup>2</sup> John Kiely was there:

Sixty or so compositors took up galleys ... and began to flail them against metal benches. The din echoed out into the darkness of Elizabeth Street; a death rattle if ever there was one. We all wept.<sup>3</sup>

On Sunday night, 25 March 1984, in the composing rooms at Sydney's John Fairfax Ltd., the printers rattled their galleys loudly and long. After 152 years, the Gutenberg era had finally ended for Australia's oldest newspaper, the *Sydney Morning Herald*. On 27 March 1984, the *Herald* boasted that every story in that morning's paper had been produced 'without "hot metal", the raised lead letters which, until today, have linked this paper to a technology 500 years old'. In the typesetting room, rows of Linotype machines, clanking monsters which cast slugs of type and pumped clouds of lead fumes into the air, were still. Next door, the once hot, noisy, untidy composing room was silent.<sup>4</sup> Newspaper composing rooms had few of the ordered rhythms of an industrial environment dominated by an assembly line. The unifying element was that of craft skill, with the total production process dependent on and, in the final analysis, reducible to, the experience and dexterity of the individual tradesman. Printers exercised a strong

1. John Kiely, 'Tears from a stone', *The Age*, 11 May 1979, p. 7. N.B. The occasional newspaper, such as the *Fassifern Guardian*, Boonah, Qld, is still produced by hot-metal technology.

2. Greek Community Centre, Brisbane, telephone interview with author, 3 December 1993; Kenneth Sans, interview with author, Brisbane, 24 November 1993.

3. David Austin, 'Cold from the press', *The Age*, 19 July 1983, p. 11.

4. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 March 1984, p. 1.



measure of jealously-guarded control and autonomy in this world of metal. Tradesmen alone were permitted to produce and manipulate metal and there were no exceptions to this rule. Printers collectively enjoyed considerable bargaining strength in negotiations over wages and conditions and commanded the power, if necessary, to prevent or seriously impede newspaper production.<sup>1</sup> Australia's regional dailies, with much smaller printing operations and circulations, had converted to cold type as much as fourteen years before the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

The vibrations of the death rattle that echoed out into the darkness of Melbourne's heart in 1957 to mark the closure of the *Argus* were felt in Rockhampton. The *Morning Bulletin* bought the *Argus's* Hoe press in 1959 after having discussed for nearly a decade from 1946 what it should do to replace its own Hoe Press. It made a short-lived change, from 1 January 1957 to July 1959, from broadsheet to tabloid production with the Koenig and Bauer press that had been used by the *Evening News*, the paper the Dunns closed in 1941.<sup>2</sup> The *Bulletin* switched back to broadsheet production from 1 August 1959 when four units of the former *Argus* press began thundering out the *Bulletins* each morning. On top of the thirty thousand pounds purchase price – plus freight, packing and erection charges – it cost approximately twenty thousand pounds to house the new press.<sup>3</sup> The *Bulletin's* former Hoe Press, a double-decker, had printed the paper for forty years, but had to be replaced because it was no longer fast enough and, with each increase in the size of editions, the output became slower. It could not meet the deadlines. The temporary solution of the Koenig and Bauer press posed its problems, too. This press could

1. Working Environment Branch, Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, Industrial Relations and Industrial Democracy in the Printing and Newspaper Publishing Industries (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 1986), p. 4.

2. Minutes of the Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 28 May 1946, 28 July 1956, and 6 January 1959.

3. *Morning Bulletin*, 1 August 1959, p. 1; minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 7/8 October 1958.

produce only thirty-two tabloid pages in a single run, a factor which caused difficulties when a larger paper was required. Further expansion in edition sizes led to the decision to buy the *Argus's* press in 1959.<sup>1</sup> It was a production imperative if distribution deadlines were to be met and circulation maintained.

If photocomposition was one arm of the newspaper production revolution of the sixties and seventies, offset printing was the other. Smaller newspapers in Australia had been deserting the old letterpress process of printing and converting to the cleaner, higher-resolution web offset printing method since as early as 1964. The differences between the two methods are explained in Table 22. The first Goss Community web offset press sold in Australia was bought by Rotor Press in Sydney in 1964.<sup>2</sup> The first Australian daily newspaper to install an offset press was *The Advocate*, published in Burnie and circulated throughout north-west Tasmania, and the first Queensland daily to go offset was the *Bundaberg News-Mail*, partly owned by PNQ, in 1970. Newspaper management is notoriously slow to adopt change, and making the switch to web offset printing was no exception. Lloyd Harris, who was general manager of *The Advocate* at the time, said the Launceston *Examiner* bought a new press in 1966 and stuck to letterpress, a decision it was soon to regret. At Burnie, however, the Harrises 'made our decision at just the right time - twelve months earlier and we would not have considered offset'.

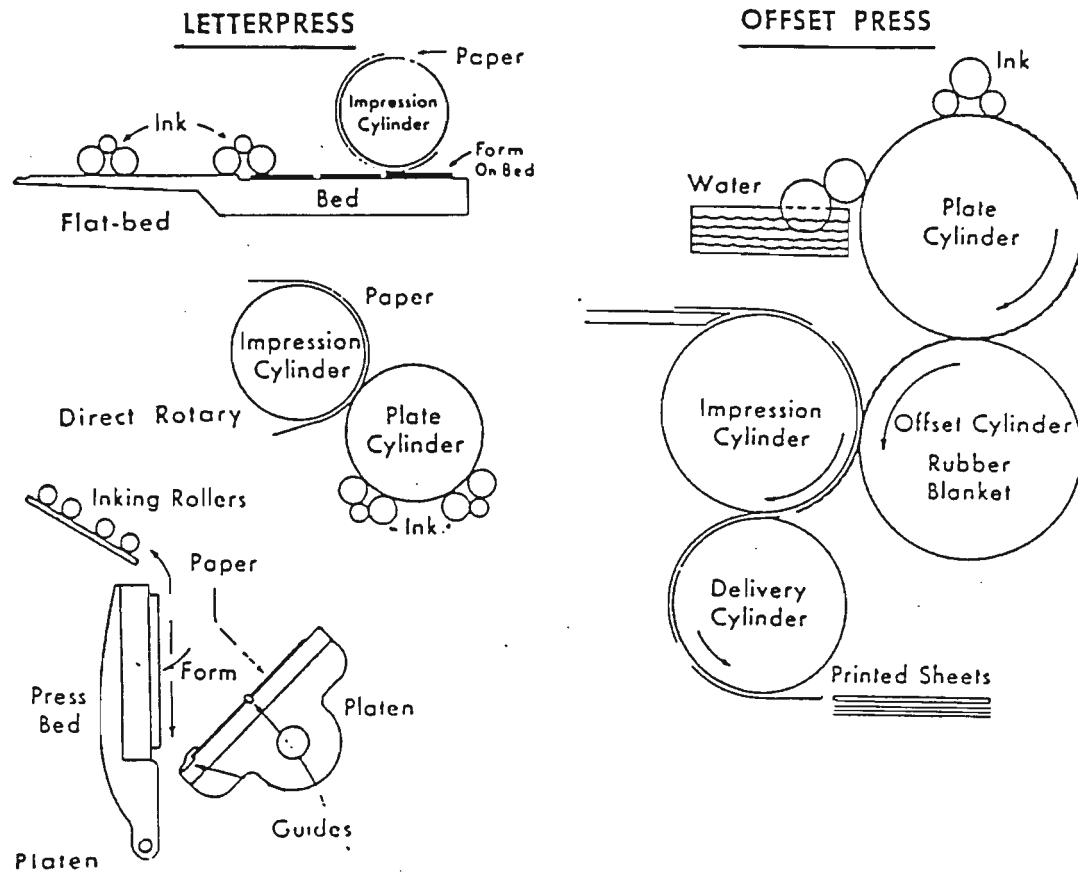
Harris had visited New Zealand in 1967 and seen that the alleged problems of offset printing - such as getting the

1. *Morning Bulletin*, 1 August 1959, p. 1.
2. *PANPA Bulletin*, November 1993, p. 62.

Table 22

Letterpress and offset press operating  
principles compared

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Letterpress, or relief printing, transfers the impression to the paper from a raised, inked metal surface. One major advantage of letterpress printing for newspapers is flexibility, especially for quick changes. Offset printing transfers (or 'offsets') the printing-ink image from a rubber press blanket on which the image has been deposited by the printing plate. The plate has been produced by photochemical procedures derived from the earlier art of lithography. The resiliency of the rubber surface on which they are printed makes it possible to print finer details on rougher textures of paper than is possible with letterpress. Newsprint paper is well adapted to offset, and finer details in printing permit the use of finer halftone screens, thus broadening the newspaper's use of photographs. The application of photography to platemaking permits the use of any kind of writing, typing, lettering or composition that can be copied with the camera.<sup>1</sup>

1. H.L. Williams. Newspaper Organization and Management (5th ed.; Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1978), pp. 48-49.

oil/water mix right – were being solved daily by a newspaper there. He was converted and *The Advocate* moved forward to be at the vanguard of a revolution. Discarding its Battle Creek duplex, the Burnie paper virtually leapt from the nineteenth century to the late twentieth century overnight on 27 August 1968. It gave *The Advocate* an advantage – especially in the use of colour – in the long circulation war initiated by the *Examiner*, as described in Chapter 3.<sup>1</sup>

The *Sydney Morning Herald's* 1984 galley rattle sounded when the company switched to a computerised production system using advanced input and photo-setting devices, as shown in Table 23. The change was as much a revolution to printing as the jet engine was to aviation. By reducing the labour content of production, it offered newspapers throughout the world an opportunity to break out of the double bind of falling revenues and rising costs. Although gaining momentum in the late 1970s, this extraordinary revolution had started in the 1960s. It coincided with the rapid improvement of web-feeding processes for newsprint, leading to web offset becoming universal for periodical publications through the world. It also coincided with the first tentative steps the pioneering Queensland provincial press families were taking towards the amalgamation that eventuated in 1968, as Chapter 6 shows.<sup>2</sup>

Important changes had preceded the demise of hot metal typesetting – changes that the newspaper manager should have been studying closely because of the implications for speed and economy in producing his product. A hand compositor working from a case of type in the nineteenth century had been able to set approximately 2,000 individual metal letters,

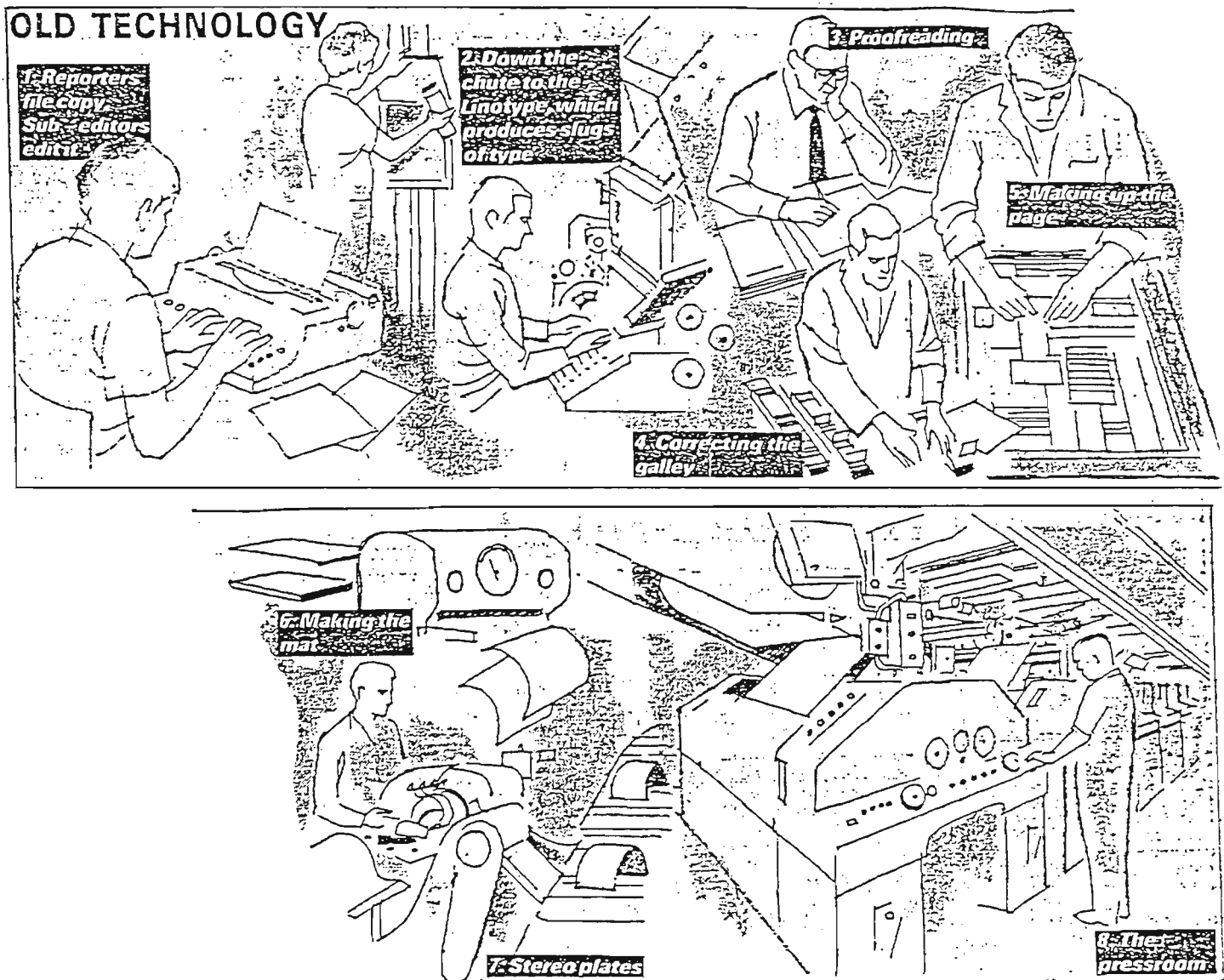
1. *PANPA Bulletin*, December 1986, p. 12; Lloyd Harris, telephone interview with author, 3 November 1993.

2. Smith, *Goodbye Gutenberg*, p. 92.

Table 23

Page 2 The Sydney Morning Herald, Friday, March 27, 1984

# How the Herald was produced ... and how we do it now



**THE OLD NEWSPAPER:** Journalists' copy is edited by sub-editors and sent to "the cage" (named after the forest of pneumatic tubes that deliver copy to it) where it is sorted by printers.

The copy is set by a Linotype operator. Often several Linotype operators set only a few lines each of the same story, so that a long story can be typeset rapidly. A good operator can set five and a half lines a minute. The Linotype machine produces a metal "slug" of type for each line, with raised lettering that reads like mirror writing, using "matrices" or moulds for each letter stored in the machine. Molten printer's metal is poured against the matrices to form the slug.

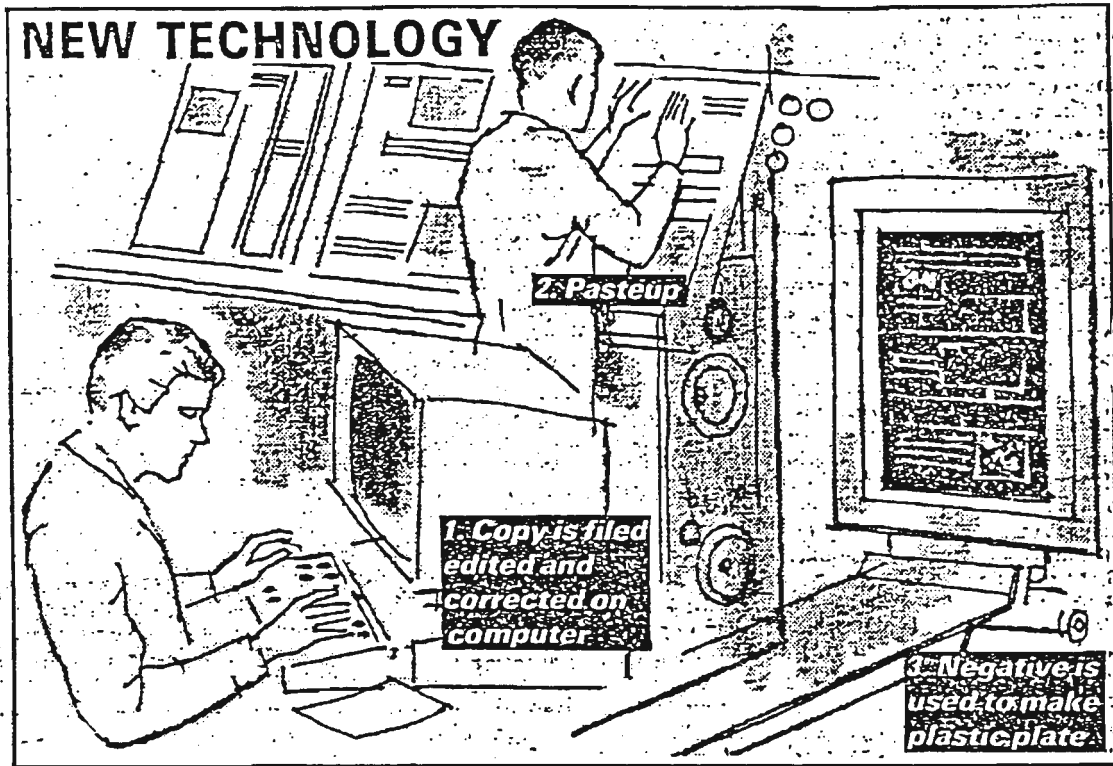
Slugs are assembled to form a "galley" or column of type. This galley is inked and a proof is taken, which is sent to the reading room, where a reader and an assistant check the proof. Mistakes are marked on the proof and the corrections set by a Linotype operator. A hot metal compositor uses the proof to insert the corrected slugs into the galley.

Pages of type are assembled by compositors who slot the type into a flat steel "forme", following layouts supplied by sub-editors, then lock it in firmly. The forme is sent to the stereotyping department, where the lead type is pressed against a papiermache "mat". The impressions made by the type can be read normally on the mat.

The flexible mat is curved to fit the presses, and molten lead is used to cast printing plates against the mats. The curved plate has raised type once more, which reads in reverse. The plates are fitted to presses, and printing begins.

(cont.)

Table 23 (cont.)



**THE NEW NEWSPAPER:** Journalists write their stories on visual display units. Sub-editors check, proofread and typeset the copy, using the computer system. Galleys of type produced by the computers are assembled into pages by photo-compositors.

Photographic negatives are made of each completed page, and are used to make a "direct printing" plate. The plate goes directly to the pressroom. From the camera room where the negatives are made to the pressroom takes about 15 minutes. To make the old fashioned stereo plates took 40 minutes.

figures and punctuation marks an hour. He then spent almost as long filing the characters back in the composing case after use. A machine compositor, operating a keyboard Linotype of the kind first used at the *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, in August 1898 and at the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1903, was able to set about 10,000 characters an hour. That figure was more than doubled by tele-typesetting (TTS), which was introduced at the *Herald* in 1957. A Linotype or some other kind of linecaster worked by perforated TTS tape was able to produce 25,000 characters an hour.<sup>1</sup> For all its additional speed, TTS was still a hot metal process restricted by the action of mechanical movement, the carrying of heavy type and the melting and casting of metal.

Whereas TTS had broken the sound barrier, the new processes were limited only by the speed of light. Photocomposing, or 'cold' type as the process was called to contrast it with hot-metal, dated back to the 1890s when typefaces were first introduced optically by the projection of characters on to film or photo-sensitive paper. It was, however, not until the development of film-setting machines in tandem with electronic computers during the 1960s that the full significance of cold type emerged. With subsequent improvements, a computer-operated photo-composing machine could produce not 25,000 but up to eight million characters an hour. The change was almost too great to comprehend, but Table 24 provides a diagrammatic explanation. To produce a single broadsheet page of text might have taken one hand compositor twenty-two hours, a machine compositor five and a half hours, and a TTS linecaster eighty minutes. Now a computer-controlled photo-composer could do the job in about eighty seconds.<sup>2</sup>

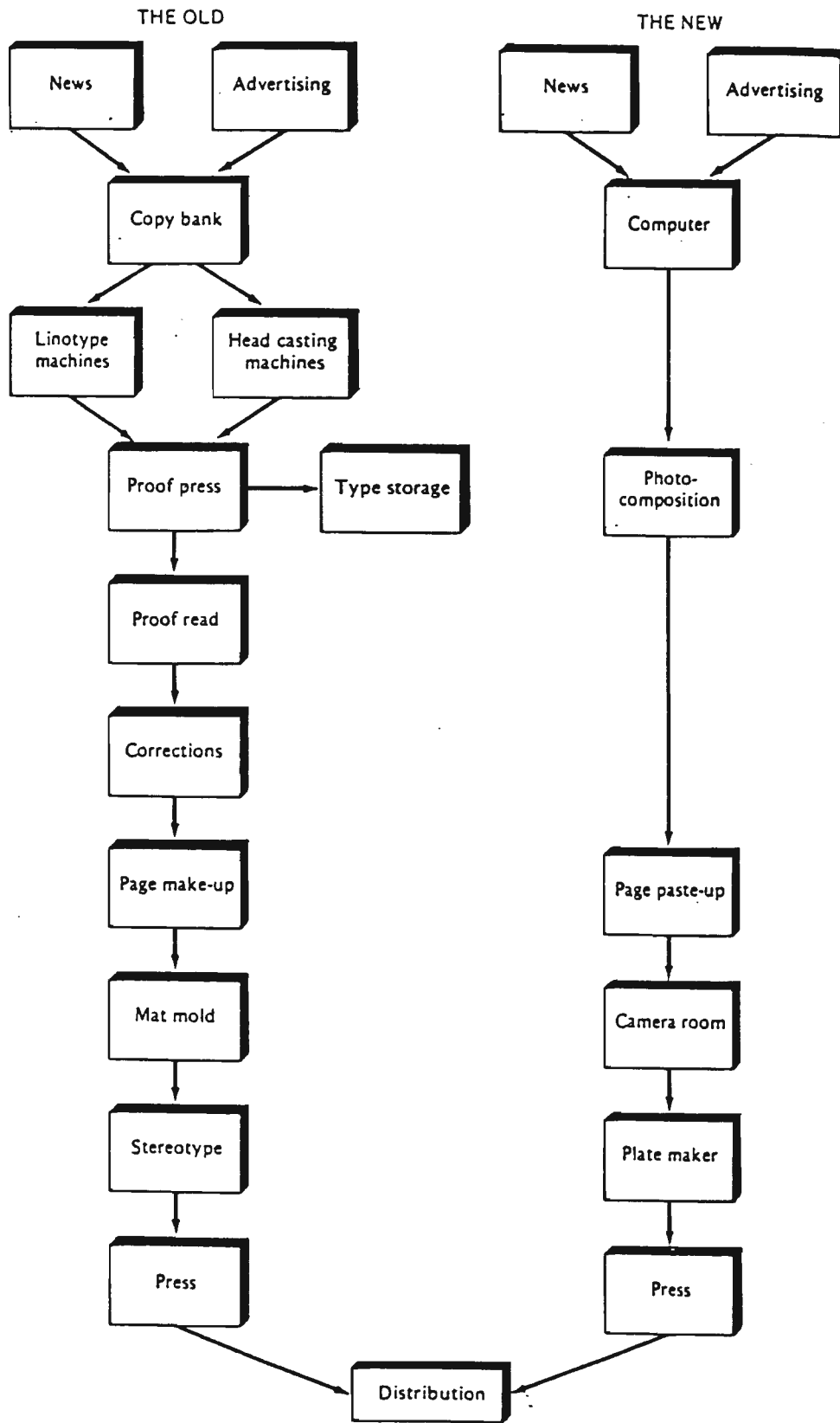
The newspaper managers had to take in their stride, too, the dramatic improvements in available printing technology. Typesetting and presswork were the heart and lungs of the

1. *Morning Bulletin*, 8 July 1961, p. 45; Souter, *Company of Heraldsg*, p. 557.

2. Souter, *Company of Heraldsg*, p. 558.

Table 24

THE OLD (hot metal composition) AND THE NEW (photocomposition)



Source: Anthony Smith, Goodbye Gutenberg, p. 82.



newspaper. Today the newsroom has finally come to the fore because it, more directly than in the past, commands the production operation, in conjunction with the advertising department (another input department).<sup>1</sup> By the late 1970s, offset printing had largely superseded letterpress printing in the commercial sheetfed area. This change was generated partly by the demand for the new technology but even more so by a shift in manufacturing. From the late 1960s, Heidelberg, the largest sheetfed manufacturer in the world, stopped producing letterpresses and produced only offset presses. The manufacture of the Cox-O-Type finished in 1964 and of the Cossar in 1967. By the early 1970s, the last linecasting machine had been made in North America and the only letterpress machines still being manufactured by Rockwell (Goss) were the largest double-width presses, the Headliner Mark II and Mark V.<sup>2</sup>

At *The Times*, London, in the nineteenth century – specifically from 1803 to 1885 – John Walter (1776-1847) and his son, John (1818-1894), showed the way for the twentieth-century newspaper manager by sponsoring inventions that increased by at least 50,000 per cent the efficiency of the printing press. The activities of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation during the final decades of the twentieth century, in Australia and around the world, bear at least one similarity with the Walters: they attest that to gain an understanding of the technology of newspaper production is an obsession of all successful newspaper owners and managers. The rewards of such knowledge were great for the Walters generation of newspaper managers, and are possibly even greater for the Murdoch generation.<sup>3</sup> Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. recognised this in part and moved swiftly on the technological front when the six families had merged their newspaper interests, stretching

1. Smith, *Goodbye Gutenberg*, pp.90-91.

2. Beavan thesis, p. 83.

3. Gordon Beavan, 'A critique of newspaper history', *Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand Bulletin [BSANZ Bulletin]*, 17 (1), 1993, p. 8; Dennis Griffiths (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the British Press*, pp. 579-580.

from Warwick to Mackay, in 1968. One of the stated reasons for the PNQ merger was to provide funds for capital expenditure on plant equipment, new premises and expansion when and where necessary.<sup>1</sup> Soon after the merger, several meetings were held to analyse the equipment situation in the smaller newspapers to decide whether they could be improved. Warwick was the smallest and had antiquated machinery.<sup>2</sup> PNQ decided to re-equip its partly-owned *Bundaberg News-Mail* first and Warwick's *Daily News* second. Unlike Burnie's *Advocate*, both the Queensland newspapers made a dual change, ditching letterpress and hot metal overnight, the *News-Mail* on 27 July 1970 and the *Daily News* on 12 October 1971.<sup>3</sup> Mackay's *Daily Mercury* moved to offset in November 1975, Ipswich's *Queensland Times* and Maryborough's *Chronicle* in July and November 1977, and Toowoomba's *Chronicle* and Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin* in May and September 1979.<sup>4</sup> Where PNQ fell short of grasping the technological nettle firmly was in the executive appointments it made at the *Morning Bulletin* in the early seventies. It allowed nepotism to overrule wisdom, and had approximately fifteen years to rue the decision, as the final part of this chapter will demonstrate.

Among the objectives PNQ had in making the technological changes were to obtain the capacity to produce bigger newspapers more quickly; to cut costs through single keyboarding of copy; to obtain cleaner, easier-to-read type and better reproduction of photographs; to achieve versatility and flexibility for editorial work and for advertisers; and to open the way for use of colour.<sup>5</sup> Albury's *Border Mail* provided an example of the urgency of the need for increased production capacity and speed to cope with the bigger edition sizes. Between 1948 and 1990 its paging more than trebled. In edition terms the largest *Border Mail* in May 1948 had thirty-two

1. A.D. Morris, 'Notes on P.N.Q.', p. 11.

2. A.J. Irwin, interview with author, Cleveland, 13 October 1993.

3. *Bundaberg News-Mail*, 27 July 1970, p. 1; *Warwick Daily News*, 11 and 12 October 1971, p. 1.

4. *Daily Mercury*, 24 November 1975, p. 22; *Queensland Times*, 25 July 1977, p.1; *Maryborough Chronicle*, Offset Feature, 9 November 1977, p. 3; *The Chronicle*, 22 May 1979, pp. 16-17; *Morning Bulletin*, 25 September 1979.

5. *Bundaberg News-Mail*, 27 July 1970, p. 1; *Warwick Daily News*, Web Offset Supplement, 19 November 1971.

pages, with a probable print run of 11,000 copies, and took between seven and eight hours to print. In May 1990 the largest paper of 104 pages, with a print run of 35,805, took two hours and twenty-five minutes to print. Put another way, typesetting and plate-making capacity for the *Mail's* largest editions had more than trebled between 1948 and 1990. In the pressroom, paging capacity had increased seven times and running speed had increased at least six times. A thorough assessment of growth in newspaper production shows a massive increase in printing and typesetting capacities alone, far greater than the increase shown by plain circulation figures. It can be regarded as a 'latent history of newspaper growth'.<sup>1</sup>

For a large regional daily newspaper, both the edition size, or paging, and the size of the print run can vary greatly from day to day. The dilemma for publishers working within industrial agreements that are often inflexible has been to have enough staff – and the right equipment – to handle the peaks of production, but not too many on the payroll to send the paper broke in the troughs.

The general disproportionate advertising concentration in Saturday's edition, at the expense of the other days, is probably the most difficult marketing and production problem Australian newspaper publishers have yet had to face.<sup>2</sup>

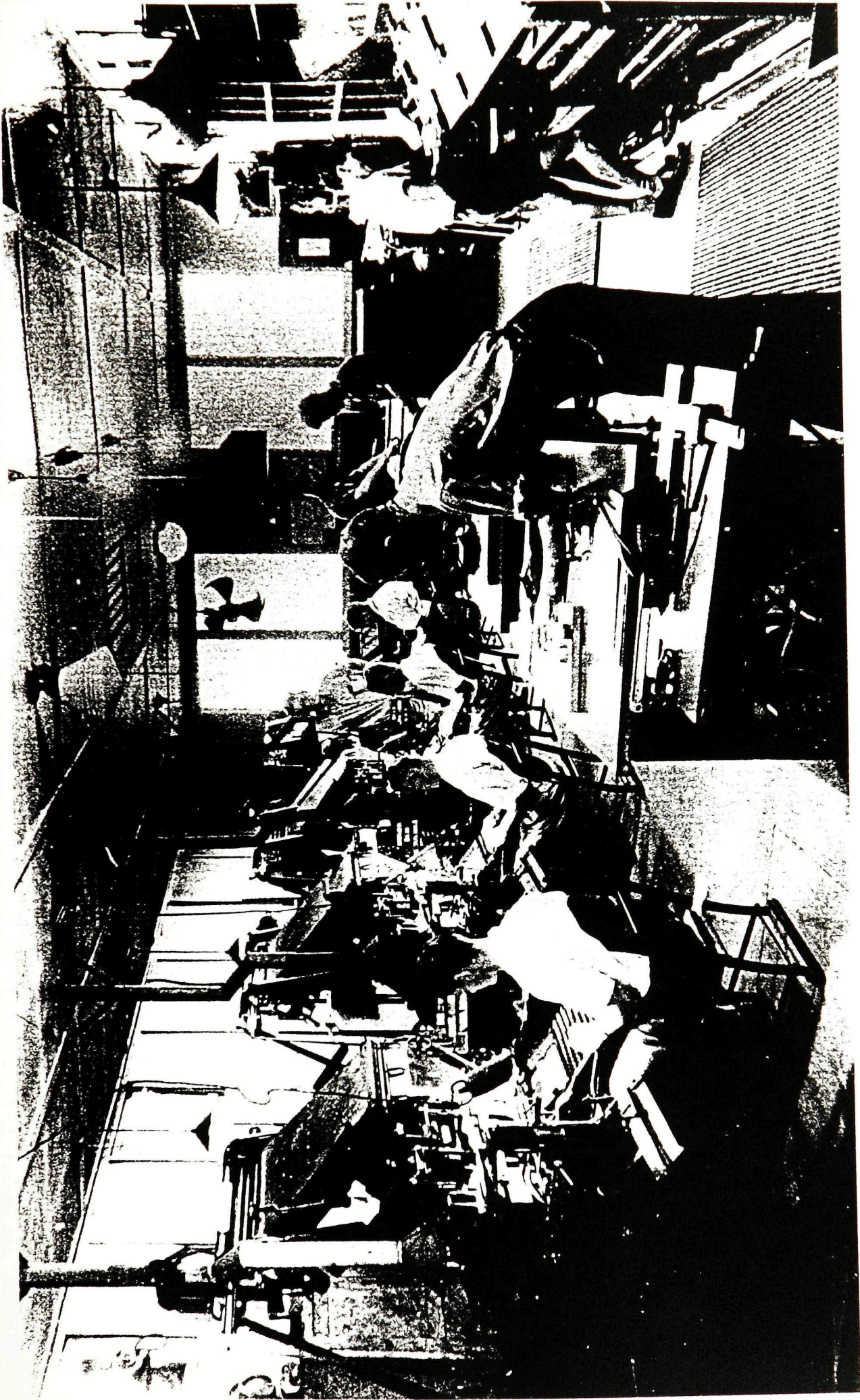
The *Border Mail's* circulation in August 1993 was 10,500 greater on Saturdays than on Thursdays, normally its lowest weekday sale.<sup>3</sup> This meant the *Mail* printed anything up to four times as many pages for Saturdays as for Thursdays. In November 1993, the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Saturday edition contained anything up to four times as many broadsheet pages (as well as the pre-printed colour magazine, *Good Weekend*) as the smallest weekday edition. With Saturday circulations sixty-eight per cent greater than weekday circulations, the *Herald* production volume for Saturdays was six-and-a-half times greater than for the smallest weekday edition.<sup>4</sup> In May 1986 the *Toowoomba Chronicle's* Saturday issues averaged 62.4 pages, or 30.54 per cent bigger than the weekday average of

1. Beavan, *ESANZ Bulletin*, p. 10.

2. Beavan, thesis, p. 95.

3. Author's calculation based on circulation and paging figures.

4. G.R. Beavan, letter to author, 6 September 1993.



Hot-metal days at the Maryborough Chronicle.

47.82; by May 1991, Saturday issues averaged eighty-four pages, 39.4 per cent bigger than the weekday average of 50.87.<sup>1</sup>

At Burnie, *The Advocate* has tackled the peaks-and-troughs problem in the nineties by negotiating flexible working hours with its production employees. *The Advocate's* production peaks in 1993 occurred on Saturdays, with a print run of 32,000 and an average size of fifty pages, and the trough on Tuesdays with 26,500 and twenty-eight pages. This meant producing 1,600,000 tabloid pages on Saturdays, and 742,000 on Tuesdays.<sup>2</sup> Central to the industrial relations deal *The Advocate* has negotiated are a nine-day working fortnight and shifts that generally vary from seven to nine hours, but can range from three to eleven. The tradition at *The Advocate* was for a clear distinction between day and night production – day compositors handled advertising and night compositors handled the news and classifieds. Entrenched practices made it impossible to combine people into a day/night shift. *The Advocate* was about to install new computers in 1993 to enable it to introduce page output, and it wanted to reduce production staffing. Friday's edition had become the biggest of the week.

It was ridiculous having staff spread through the week in such a way that we could not hope to meet the demands of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Because of the increased workload on those days, we were being forced to pay large amounts of overtime, while at the same time production people were standing around with little or nothing to do on Monday and Tuesday.

The production employees signed a house agreement that, from 10 March 1993, gave them a 4.5 per cent pay increase in return for concessions to management on the inputting of copy, handling of hard copy generated by the art department, flexible use of equipment and redeployment and redundancy. The rostered hours for day production workers are seven hours on Monday and Tuesday and nine hours on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.<sup>3</sup>

1. *The Chronicle* (Toowoomba), 1-31 May 1986 and 1-31 May 1991.

2. Henry Catchpole, letter to author, 16 December 1993.

3. David Cherry, address to Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. annual conference, Kalgoorlie, October 1993; Cherry, letter to author, 20 December 1993.

During the recessionary times of 1992-93, Australia's perfume manufacturers made fewer sales but laughed all the way to the bank. Although their unit sales were down, demand for perfume pushed the annual value of their market in Australia to more than \$400 million. Growth in perfume sales in dollar terms outstripped the percentage gain in overall retail figures.<sup>1</sup> Arguing on similar principles, Beavan has said newspapers cannot be judged to be in decline simply on the basis of fewer mastheads and of circulations failing to keep up with population increases (i.e. of fewer 'brand names' and 'unit sales'). Yet the size of newspapers has increased dramatically in the past forty years, as Table 25 shows. The average edition of the *Sydney Morning Herald* grew by 125 per cent from 1962 to 1992.<sup>2</sup> The volume of newsprint consumption testifies to the increased size: 350,000 tonnes of newsprint consumed in Australia in 1964, 625,000 tonnes in 1990.<sup>3</sup> And increased size has often meant increased staffing and the need for much faster and more efficient equipment. Combining circulation and paging figures gives a truer growth factor. Beavan provided a combined analysis of circulation for the 'September semester' (the six months from April to September) and paging in May for a number of newspapers over forty-two years. *The Border Mail*, for example, had a daily net circulation of 10,146 in 1948, and 27,383 in 1990. Accepted methodology for measuring this growth would give a growth rate multiplier of 2.7. However, the number of tabloid pages (paging) published in May increased from 332 in 1948 to 1364 in 1990, a further growth multiplier of 4.1, making a total of 11.07.<sup>4</sup> In the instance of the *Mail*, it is revealed in the first part of Table 25.

Beavan has argued that all departments of a newspaper grow as the paging size of the newspaper grows. 'It almost always means extra staff, machinery and even land.'<sup>5</sup> Some regional daily newspapers, however, provide evidence to the contrary when it comes to staffing. The evidence suggests that the main departments growing are the editorial and advertising depart-

1. Christine Hogan, 'The smell of money,' *Good Weekend*, 2 October 1993, p. 18.

2. *PANPA Bulletin*, December 1993, p. 63.

3. Beavan, *BSANZ Bulletin*, p. 5; Goot, p. 28.

4. Beavan, *BSANZ Bulletin*, p. 9; Beavan acknowledges that there are still traps. Page dimensions have become smaller, but so have gutters, margins and the sizes of typefaces; copy is now well packed into a page to save paper. The conventional circulation calculations have always ignored those changes as well. The above figures exclude pre-printed inserts.

5. Beavan, *BSANZ Bulletin*, p. 5.

Table 25

**Growth Factor for Selected  
Metropolitan and Regional Dailies**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Circulation</u>	<u>Paging</u>	
<b><i>Border Morning Mail (Albury)</i></b>			
1948	10,146	332	
1990	27,383	1,364	
G.F.	2.7	4.1	<b>Total G.F. 11.07</b>
<small>(Key: G.F. = Growth Factor.)</small>			
<b><i>The Sun (Melbourne)</i></b>			
1948	393,477	392	
1990	556,130	2,352	
G.F.	1.4	4.2	<b>Total G.F. 5.9</b>
<b><i>The Courier-Mail (Brisbane)</i></b>			
1948	170,000	170	
1990	246,653	1,563	
G.F.	1.45	9.2	<b>Total G.F. 13.34</b>
<b><i>The Age (Melbourne)</i></b>			
1948	119,024	256	
1990	230,100	1,938	
G.F.	1.93	7.57	<b>Total G.F. 14.6</b>
<b><i>The Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton)</i></b>			
1944	11,890	156b	
1990	22,781	1072t	
G.F.	1.92	3.44	<b>Total G.F. 6.6</b>
<b><i>The Chronicle (Toowoomba)</i></b>			
1944	14,842	150b	
1990	30,219	1472t	
G.F.	2.04	4.91	<b>Total G.F. 10.02</b>
<b><i>The Fraser Coast Chronicle (Maryborough and Hervey Bay)</i></b>			
1944	5,398	128b	
1990	9,551	674t	
G.F.	1.77	2.63	<b>Total G.F. 4.66</b>

SOURCE: Compiled by the author partly from Beavan's figures and partly from figures compiled by the author from Audit Bureau of Circulation figures and from paging figures obtained by studying the newspapers on microfilm.

ment as they become the 'heart and lungs' of the newspaper. At Toowoomba's *Chronicle*, despite the average paging more than doubling from 1960 to 1990, the staffing in the production areas, such as composing and the press room, remained fairly static at approximately fifty for that period. At the same time the number of editorial and photographic employees rose from twenty-four full-timers in 1960 to thirty-seven full-timers, as well as eight casuals, in 1990. In the advertising department, the staffing rose from seven full-timers in 1970 to twenty-nine full-timers and fifteen casuals in 1990.<sup>1</sup> At the *Morning Bulletin*, the number of production employees had risen from thirty-nine in 1959 to forty-eight in 1983 only to fall to forty in 1990, but editorial employees rose from nineteen in 1959 to thirty-four in 1990. There were twenty-eight in the advertising department in 1990; no separate figure was given in 1959.<sup>2</sup> At Burnie's *Advocate*, the trend was much the same: it had approximately fifty production employees in 1963, thirty-two in 1993, but the twenty-five journalists in 1963 had jumped to forty-five in 1993. In 1993 the advertising department employed thirty-six full-timers and nine casuals.<sup>3</sup> At Geelong's *Advertiser*, 'very significant changes in levels of service and technology' between 1970 and 1990 resulted in advertising staff numbers growing by several times and production numbers being halved with the introduction of front-end computerised production systems.<sup>4</sup> At Maryborough's *Chronicle*, total staffing rose slowly from sixty-one in 1960 (twenty-three in production, and nine in editorial) to seventy-nine in 1980, and then more sharply to ninety-five in 1985 and 102 in 1992 (fifty-five in production, and twenty in editorial/photographic), but the increase in the eighties reflected the growth in the Hervey Bay market. Paging in 1990 was the same as in 1975.<sup>5</sup>

1. Bruce Manning, letters to author, 21 September and 11 October 1993; in 1960, no separate figure was provided for the advertising employees because they were in the 'business department'.

2. Quarterly report for the Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd, January to March 1959 (copy held by author); Sandra Morris, telephone interview with author, 31 December 1993.

3. Lloyd Harris, letter to author, 2 December 1993; Henry Catchpole, letter to author, 16 December 1993.

4. Barry Carter, letter to author, 6 September 1993.

5. Maryborough Newspaper Co., report for quarter ended 31 December 1959; Martin Simons, letter to author, 13 September 1993; Toni Jones, letter to author, 28 February 1994.



Producing more pages in each edition does not, however, necessarily mean employing more full-time staff. Giant groups can achieve economies of scale, even in producing editorial copy – as the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. demonstrated when, from its vast national and international resources, it supplied feature articles and photographs in twice-weekly parcels to the *Central Western Daily*, Orange, after buying that paper from Kerry Packer's Australian Consolidated Press Ltd. in November 1985.<sup>1</sup> The efficiency and speed of the newspaper technology of the late 1980s and early 1990s have helped overcome the labour cost problems created by the production troughs and peaks seen in the contrasts between weekday and Saturday production volumes for the *Border Mail* and *Sydney Morning Herald* earlier in this chapter. Newspapers employ many more casuals now than ten or twenty years ago. Toowoomba's *Chronicle* has made increasing use of casual labour since 1975, as the gap between the average paging of its weekday and Saturday issues has widened. It employed ten casuals in the composing room in 1975 and none in other departments, except as inserters (people who insert pre-printed supplements and brochures into the newspaper as it comes off the press). In 1980, after making a dual conversion to offset printing and photocomposition, *The Chronicle*, for example, employed casuals widely throughout its departments, with five working in advertising and six in circulation. The trend towards using more casual labour has continued, as Table 26 demonstrates.<sup>2</sup> The *Morning Bulletin* employed eight editorial casuals, nine advertising casuals and thirty-eight production casuals (mainly inserters) at the end of 1990. Maryborough's *Fraser Coast Chronicle* employed twenty-nine production casuals and five editorial casuals at June 1992.<sup>3</sup>

The single keyboarding of copy, made possible by photocomposition, has provided for much greater flexibility in

1. Clem Martin, telephone interview with author, 25 October 1993.

2. Manning, letters, 21 September and 11 October 1993.

3. Morris, interview, 31 December 1993; Toni Jones, letter to author, 28 February 1994.

Table 26

## The (Toowoomba) Chronicle's staffing:

*Letterpress/hot metal*

Department	1970	1975
Advertising	7p	11p
Circulation & Distribution	5	5
Editorial	21	15
Photographic		2
Composing	35	10p 10c
Plate Press Publishing	15	15
Inserters	*	
Administration & Office	12	12
General (Maintenance, Building, etc.)	4	2

*Offset/photocomposition*

Department	1980	1985	1990
Advertising	16p 5c	24p 12c	29p 15c
Circulation & Distribution	6p 6c	5p 9c	4p 13c
Editorial	20p 2c	28p 5c	33p 6c
Photographic	2p 1c	3p 1c	4p 2c
Composing	38p 2c	38p 3c	37pc 9c
Plate Press Publishing	15p 5c	18p 10c	10p 10c
Inserters	*		
Administration & Office	13p 4c	17p 5c	22p 4c
General (Maintenance, Building, etc.)	1c	1p	1p

\* Casual inserters are engaged as the need arises.

SOURCE: Bruce Manning, letters to author, 21 September and 11 October 1993.

handling peaks and troughs in typesetting. In many newspapers, the practice of compositors pasting up pages is being made obsolete. Journalists are laying out pages on computer screens and transmitting the pages camera-ready for plates to be made. Perhaps it was a sense of doom for the 'craft exclusiveness' that printers had cherished for centuries that led the compositors employed by newspaper companies such as John Fairfax and Sons Ltd. and the Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. to seek to frustrate the conversion to cold type in the mid-seventies and to make a last-ditch stand for survival.<sup>1</sup> When Fairfax announced its Sydney cold type automation plans in December 1975, it became the first major metropolitan group to do so. Industrial difficulties were compounded by demarcation disputes concerning the use of visual display terminals (VDTs) among the main unions involved in the industry - namely, the Printing and Kindred Industries Union (PKIU), the Federated Clerks Union of Australia, and the Australian Journalists' Association. These problems culminated in a sixty-day strike by Fairfax employees at the Sydney plant of the company between October and December 1976. In April 1977 the Fairfax disputes came before Justice Cahill in the New South Wales Industrial Commission and what became known as the Cahill Decision was handed down on 3 August. Cahill decided that (a) journalists should have direct use of VDTs for preparing their own materials; (b) the taking of classified advertisements over the telephone was the responsibility of clerical workers; and (c) the printing union should be granted exclusive jurisdiction over all other aspects of VDT usage - namely, the entry into the system of display advertisements, classified advertisements arriving over the counter, and contributed editorial material arriving at the newspaper office type-written or handwritten. Overnight, the machine compositor had lost seventy per cent of the work that used to be his exclusive province. The general principles of the Cahill Decision became the basis for the introduction of cold type across the nation.<sup>2</sup>

1. Working Environment Branch, Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, Industrial Relations and Industrial Democracy, p. 4.

2. Allan Brown, Commercial Media in Australia, pp. 41-42; Beavan, thesis, pp. 76-77.

Even as the technological revolution was being acknowledged and acted upon by PNQ in the early seventies, the seeds of a different type of revolution were being sown at one PNQ establishment: Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin*. The printing staff set out on a campaign that developed into a revolt of sorts. They, or their ring-leaders, instituted a campaign of converting industry-wide standards into 'house agreements', seeking special conditions, clauses, loadings and leave arrangements and generally challenging the authority of management. One of their goals was to preserve every production job at the *Bulletin*.<sup>1</sup> The management was weak enough, and confused enough, as will be shown, to allow this campaign to gain momentum. In 1974, Lex Dunn as managing director of PNQ, said of the Rockhampton situation:

I feel that the union has been allowed over the years to obtain too strong a foot-hold in the running of the newspaper...<sup>2</sup>

The foot-hold became a stronghold and was not broken until a showdown in 1985. Some of the problems that arose in 1974 centred on the phased-in conversion from hot-metal to 'cold type', or photocomposition. PKIU members, for example, refused to co-operate in training for the conversion. After forty-eight hours of training in setting 'cold type', Linotype operators had failed to reach the speed equivalent of 12,000 key strokes an hour, the level agreed to between union and management.<sup>3</sup> Gradually, the printers took over the company in the sense that journalists operated to printer-initiated rules, and procedures and deadlines were all subservient to what the printers wanted or would say. The printers were prepared to down tools even for non-industrial causes, such as when a patron of the adjacent Hotel Criterion parked a vehicle in the *Morning Bulletin* car park.

1. G.R. Beavan, letter to author, 15 December 1993.

2. L.S. Dunn, letter to G.P. Dunn, 8 August 1974 (University of Queensland. Fryer Library, UQFL 187/20.)

3. Minutes of staff meeting of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 9 May 1974; G.P. Dunn, memorandum to L.S. Dunn, 22 October 1974.

What was happening at the *Morning Bulletin* was that the unions were starting to really take over the place because they were forceful and management was not forceful in fighting against them. Management at that particular time was too inclined to say if anything had to be done, the union had to be asked first.

In the composing room, there was a line of demarcation that prevented the journalists from entering until they had sought permission from the union representative. They were not permitted to cross a white line marked on the floor.<sup>1</sup> For years the chapel maintained control over rosters within the plant, and refused to allow any flexibility of duties without unworkable penalties.<sup>2</sup> In all, the ring leaders of the PKIU sub-branch in Rockhampton took an approach that could be described as sheer bloody-mindedness, and a senior unionist who acknowledged as much said he would deny such a statement if challenged.

The seeds of this revolution were sown in the early 1970s as Lex Dunn changed roles from managing the Rockhampton newspaper and serving as secretary of the PNQ holding company, to focusing his energies entirely on the increasingly demanding PNQ role. As chief executive, he shifted to Brisbane in January 1974. The Dunns, through PNQ, made a nepotistic decision that helped open the way for the strife at Rockhampton. In 1970, when they should have been casting their nets widely for a manager who was abreast of the newspaper management and production requirements and changes described earlier in this chapter – a manager who would be obsessed with gaining an understanding of the technology of newspaper production – they again confused family values with business values and looked no further than their own family. They appointed Gordon Peter Dunn (1929- ), who had been the editor since 1964, and James Cran Dunn (1917-1973), who had been the production manager for sixteen years, as joint managers, although the two cousins 'did not get on one little bit'.<sup>3</sup> Peter Dunn said the dual roles 'worked quite well for the most

1. A.J. Irwin, interview with author, Cleveland, 13 October 1993.

2. *PANPA Bulletin*, December 1983, p. 4.

3. Denis Butler, interview with author, Toowoomba, 24 April 1979.

part', but admitted that there were times when one would forget to tell the other something. 'There might be some friction.' That understated the situation greatly, as events showed, for when Jim Dunn died prematurely he left Peter with an industrial mess based on handshake deals that were not recorded.

Jim Dunn had worked on the production staff at Rockhampton for thirty-seven years and knew the printing and composing trades backwards.

He had nothing of the managerial strain in him, and nothing of the journalistic strain. He was the best compositor I ever met. He was a tremendous man who could do anything in that comp. room better than any of the operators.<sup>1</sup>

Jim was an alcoholic and this apparently contributed to his unexplained death in a Hong Kong hospital in January 1973 while returning from a holiday trip to Japan where he also examined new printing technology.<sup>2</sup> G.P. Dunn, always known as Peter, was appointed managing editor. As a manager, he lacked strength and organisational ability, and was not known for his drive. 'He liked to build a fence around himself.' This perception could have arisen because of the difficulties he was having with the printers, all of whom had been his friends, some of them his colleagues for thirty years. As a journalist, he 'just had no concept of what was news' and was unable to judge journalists.<sup>3</sup> It was during the seven years (1973-80) that Peter Dunn was sole manager that the printing strife festered and became a running sore for all of Rockhampton to see. It was also during this period that the *Morning Bulletin's* circulation flattened out while in Toowoomba, under the strong but conservative management of Bruce Manning, *The Chronicle's* circulation climbed steadily and began to leave the *Morning Bulletin* in its wake, as was shown in Chapter 7.

1. Butler, interview, 24 April 1979.

2. *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba, 29 January 1973; *Maryborough Chronicle*, 29 January 1973, p. 2.

3. Butler, interview, 24 April 1979; T.S. Burton, telephone interview with author, 14 December 1993.

Peter Dunn tried vainly to solve the problems that his printers posed for profitability and effective distribution of the *Morning Bulletin*. In October 1973, he cancelled all house agreements - 'sweetheart agreements' that had been won over the years by the recalcitrant printers. The printers, through the *Morning Bulletin* Chapel, promptly submitted a list of twenty-five requests which became the subject of discussions over more than nine months.<sup>1</sup> In March 1974 five of the six 'suggestions' that the Chapel placed before the management would have meant variations to the industrial agreement between the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. (the body representing regional daily newspapers throughout Australia) and the PKIU. One of the 'suggestions' was for the printers to be paid time and a half if they worked public holidays, as well as receiving a day off in lieu. Another was for them to be paid penalty rates for Saturday morning and Sunday night work. What the Chapel wanted were more 'sweetheart agreements', but management said the five suggestions that were part of the RDA/PKIU agreement could be varied only by agreement between all the newspapers and the union. The Chapel responded with a message scribbled on a torn piece of notepaper. It was a copy of the motion they had just passed:

That no member of this Chapel will make himself available for work on a public holiday.

The printers planned to stop at midnight preceding each public holiday and resume only at midnight the day after the public holiday (i.e. stopping for forty-eight hours).<sup>2</sup>

In April when Peter Dunn notified both the *Morning Bulletin* Chapel and the State branch of the PKIU that the newspaper would change, stage by stage, from hot metal to photo-composition over approximately the next two years, it was the beginning of what became a long and bitter campaign of

1. Notes on *Morning Bulletin* management discussions for Industrial Commission conference, 31 July 1974.  
2. Notes on *Morning Bulletin* management discussions for Industrial Commission conference, 31 July 1974.

obstruction.<sup>1</sup> Dunn had not consulted with the Chapel first. He showed during the conversion period that he lacked the experience and training, and even the innate ability, to handle militant unionists. The PKIU's immediate response was opposition to the changes and a determination to frustrate them through failure to co-operate. It instituted a 'go-slow' that, initially, lasted a month. The State branch of the PKIU told Dunn:

No PKIU member employed at Rockhampton will offer himself for retraining in any new technique until such time as proper discussions have been held between the Queensland branch of the union, the Rockhampton sub-branch and the *Morning Bulletin* Chapel.<sup>2</sup>

At a meeting in May with management, the PKIU made it clear it would tolerate no redundancies caused by the conversion to cold type.

A measure of Peter Dunn's lack of managerial authority was that the 'sweetheart agreements' supposedly cancelled in October 1973 continued so far as the printers were concerned. This confusion led to sackings, a strike and reinstatements in July 1974. Seven machine compositors had been rostered for duty on the night of Sunday, 21 July, but one of them had been injured at work early the previous week (after the roster had been posted) and was off duty. Because the size of the paper to be produced on the Sunday night had been reduced from fourteen pages to ten, management decided that only six machine compositors could comfortably set the paper during their rostered hours. The injured man was not replaced, but the six refused to begin duties unless an additional man was brought in on overtime for work. Management refused this request and, as the six machine compositors still refused duty, they were dismissed at approximately 10.15 that night.

1. G.P. Dunn, memorandum to L.S. Dunn, 5 April 1974.  
2. T.S. Burton, letter to G.P. Dunn, 26 April 1974.



The remaining staff working at the time walked off the job in protest.<sup>1</sup> At a compulsory conference in Brisbane the next day, Industrial Commissioner E.J.L. Clarke persuaded the company to withdraw the notices of dismissal and the union to lift all bans and strikes.

If it is necessary to change the number of employees on the roster there should be prior consultation between the parties, but this does not mean that the roster can only be altered by agreement between the parties.

The men resumed work on the 8am shift on 23 July after halting two issues of the *Bulletin*.<sup>2</sup>

The notes that PNQ representatives prepared for the conference on 31 July with Commissioner Clarke reveal just how touchy the industrial situation was. Among the questions they posed were:

- Why cannot the stereo-plating department staff operate the banding machine as well as hand-wrapping and tying as long as they remain on the same stereo rates?
- A man working night shift being asked to work the day after his night off claims double time overtime. Is this correct?
- How binding is custom and practice established by previous staff officers?<sup>3</sup>

After attending that conference, Lex Dunn suggested that, fundamentally, the Rockhampton production procedures and practices differed little from those carried out in other newspapers, except that they appeared to have been allowed to become 'house agreements' which could not be varied without union approval. In all other newspapers there was a standard manning scale for shifts, according to normal output.

Over the years what was merely a standard has in Rockhampton been allowed to take the form of a minimum manning scale that cannot be varied without union approval.

1. K.A. Hunter, letter to Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission of Queensland, 22 July 1974.

2. K.A. Hunter, confidential memorandum to Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd., 23 July 1974; *Morning Bulletin*, 24 July 1974.

3. Notes on *Morning Bulletin* management discussions for Industrial Commission conference, 31 July 1974. The stereo department produced semi-circular metal impressions of the pages for strapping to the press.

The Industrial Commission did not concede to the union full control over the manning of shifts. Lex Dunn suggested that the Rockhampton management must seek to remove as many as possible of the so-called house agreements back into the field of full management control, but he acknowledged this was easier said than done. He wanted PNQ policy directed towards restoring the proper balance between union input and management control.

Unfortunately, having got so far in, the union will resist all attempts to dislodge them and will seek to move in further. We must stop resolutely any advance of the union into management.<sup>1</sup>

Peter Dunn reflects on the episodes with great sadness:

It was a very difficult time, management wise, very difficult. And I suppose some blame falls on me and some blame falls on the union, as well as the men themselves for that situation. They used to suddenly bring up a new house rule that I knew nothing about. It got to such a stage that I said I wanted to know what all these house rules were. I had no record of them. I couldn't find anything in Jim's records at all. Of course, that led to a strike. And there were a couple of other stoppages. They were doing some strange things, too. There was a lot of drinking going on. One of the foremen wasn't doing his job properly.<sup>2</sup>

The Chapel continued to obstruct the conversion to photocomposition. Its executive met regularly with Peter Dunn, but delayed providing answers to questions posed by management. In everything the Chapel adopted tactics that delayed and provoked. Training for the changeover to the new methods virtually ceased for a week when the Chapel was asked to consider its night-shift members having two three-hour training sessions a week instead of two periods of two and a half hours. Dunn told the Chapel that some operators had received approximately forty-eight hours' training and that some were still far from competent. At least four operators had shown only a token interest in training. The union wanted senior operators taken over to photocomposition first, but

1. L.S. Dunn, letter to G.P. Dunn, 8 August 1974.

2. G.P. Dunn, interview with author, Kenmore, 20 January 1994.

Dunn, without explanation, said management did not recognise seniority. The Chapel said the men felt confident they could change over at once. Dunn expressed strong doubts about this, but decided to 'take the bull by the horns' and stated that everybody would move in immediately and that management expected that the bulk of the *Bulletin* to be processed by photocomposition within three weeks from 14 October.<sup>1</sup>

With partial photocomposition under way, the obstructionism increased to a level where confrontation was deliberately sought and a strike seemed inevitable. Dunn believed the Chapel executive that met him regularly was either failing to convey decisions to their members, or distorting the decisions and discussions. Following are two examples of how the PKIU members obstructed the conversion.

1. Typesetters refused to head each take of copy with their bell code, despite this being part of the union/management agreement.

For some reason they fear they will be victimised for lack of ability. We had Derek Granger, of Gollins, carry out tests and I see why they didn't want their names on the material.

2. An unofficial overtime ban was imposed by a large section of the composing room staff. They adopted go-slow tactics at least once a week so that the setting was not completed by the usual finishing time. With pages incomplete and copy still to be set, the majority of operators, compositors and readers went home, asserting that overtime was not compulsory. Those that stayed did not have 'a hope in hell' of finishing without helping and other men had to be called in. The company had to pay two hours call plus the overtime to those brought in, plus overtime for those who stayed.

1. G.P.Dunn, memorandum to L.S. Dunn, 22 October 1974; interviews by author with various journalists and printers who worked at the Morning Bulletin at the time.

The pages are late to press and here again a further hold-up occurs when the press staff stops at 5am for half-hour 'lunch' break. However, if they do not stop, then they claim a meal allowance even though they could have had a meal break before starting the press because they were well aware of the late work in the composing room. It doesn't take much to see how much this costs us - not only in overtime payments, but in lost sales.

The *Morning Bulletin's* circulation woes had begun, even though Dunn had employed four temporary operators to assist in the cold-type conversion period. Under the circumstances, he felt there was a deliberate campaign to hold back the conversion to cold-type production, simultaneously extracting as much overtime as possible.<sup>1</sup>

When John Irwin, the production manager at the *Warwick Daily News* and the PNQ group production co-ordinator since January 1974, was sent to Rockhampton in 1974 to investigate why the production process was so slow and why the paper was often late off the press, the PKIU members walked out when he arrived.

I was asked where my O.K. card was and fortunately I was a member of the union and had the card and they all went and sat down again. They weren't even advised by management that I was coming.

Irwin recommended that there be more negotiations between union and management and that production manager John Carter 'forget about his ego and join the union'. Carter's non-membership provoked anger amongst the PKIU members. He was handling equipment and doing work there that really was union-orientated. The members took strong objection to it, but Carter flatly refused to join the PKIU, and Dunn lacked the wisdom to instruct or persuade him to do so.<sup>2</sup>

Irwin found some production practices at Rockhampton 'just unbelievable'. If a PKIU member became ill, and another person had to be called in, the union award said two hours 'call money' had to be paid, on top of normal wages. They were paid

1. G.P. Dunn, memorandum to L.S. Dunn, 7 November 1974.

2. A.J. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.

call money because they were called in from their home at an unusual hour.

One printer took sick and was sent to hospital, and a fellow was called in and the union acted on his behalf to ensure that he was paid call money every time that he came in till that other person came out of hospital. He was getting call money for about three weeks.

The PKIU leaders were almost in charge. Their word ruled. They prevented members from talking to management unless they went through the union secretary. If anyone was seen talking to management, they were taken into a little room and given the third degree by the union representative. Contrary to the award, apprentices were required to contribute to their strike fund.<sup>1</sup>

The inevitable strike came on 11 November 1974 and the cause provided another example of how determinedly militant the printing unionists had become. Production manager Carter investigated why two Linotype machines were idle. A mechanic was working on No. 2 machine. Carter asked operator Harold McCamley, described by a PKIU official as a 'mad militant', to cast a line so that he could see what was happening. The operator did so and the left-hand vice jaw stopped before completing its full stroke. The mechanic pushed the lever operating the vice jaw until the jaw completed its stroke. Carter said:

I put my hand on the top of the vice jaw and wriggled it to see if it had the necessary free play. It had free play. I told the mechanic I thought the problem was dirt on the vice cap and asked him to wash it out with white spirits. McCamley told me I was not to touch the machine under any circumstances. I told him I thought it was ridiculous as I was not working on the machine.

The printers declared the machine 'black' after McCamley had told the father of the Chapel, Ron Gudgeon. Carter asked

1. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993; author's interviews with various journalists during visit to Morning Bulletin offices, 18 May 1979.

McCamley several times to resume operating No. 2 machine, the final time in the presence of the commercial manager, Fred Sandell. Carter dismissed McCamley and his colleagues went out on strike.<sup>1</sup> The printers raised issues related to cold-type conversion in connection with the strike, but Lex Dunn sent a message loud and clear from Brisbane: 'I reiterate that under no circumstances will we agree to a return to work conditional on the black ban remaining.'<sup>2</sup> Three issues of the *Bulletin* were missed: 12-14 November 1974.<sup>3</sup>

In 1976, printers employed at eleven of the twelve Queensland regional dailies went on strike over the failure, despite a four-day conference in the Industrial Commission, of the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. (Queensland Division) to grant an extra week's annual leave to printers to restore the balance between such shift-workers expected to work public holidays and the general workforce. The PKIU described the resulting strike as 'the lengthiest and most bitter dispute ever' in Queensland's regional dailies. It ended only because of 'a complete division developed in the ranks of the members', mainly in southern Queensland, but certainly not at Rockhampton. Four conferences before Commission D.R. Birch had been aborted with the employers remaining solid in refusing to grant an extra week's leave. In defiance of a state executive recommendation, PKIU members returned to work at Warwick and Ipswich (all returned), Bundaberg and Gladstone (all except the sub-branch secretaries), and Toowoomba (a complete division: nine stayed out, including the sub-branch secretary). At Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton and Maryborough, the PKIU members remained on strike for five and a half weeks.<sup>4</sup> And so, the Townsville and Rockhampton *Bulletins* missed thirty-three issues, whereas *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba, missed sixteen issues, and the *Warwick Daily News*, six.<sup>5</sup>

1. L.S. Dunn, notes from telephone conversation with John Carter, 13 November 1974.

2. L.S. Dunn, memorandum, 13 November 1974.

3. *Morning Bulletin*, 15 November 1974; 'G.W.'s Column', *Morning Bulletin*, 16 November 1974, p. 4.

4. *Printing and Kindred Industries Union, Queensland Branch, Annual Report, 1976*, pp. 7-8; *The Courier-Mail*, 10 November 1976, p. 15.

5. Rod Kirkpatrick, 'Missing the newspaper', *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba, 14 March 1977, p. 4.

By mid-1978 the annual leave issue still had not been settled and the *Morning Bulletin* became the newspaper which brought it to a head. The discontented printers refused to work the night before the Rockhampton Show Day – the night preceding a public holiday was classified as the holiday under their award; i.e. it attracted double time and one-half payment. The management deducted a day's wages from them, which it was entitled to do under industrial law. The *Bulletin* was not published on Show Day. The dispute simmered the rest of the year and agreement was not reached until December. Permanent night-shift printers gained an extra week's annual leave.<sup>1</sup>

By 1980, the PNQ directors were fed up with the situation at the *Bulletin*. In March they instructed Peter Dunn to 'take immediate action' to resolve the industrial disorder that had festered at Rockhampton for seven years.<sup>2</sup> When he failed, suffering a nervous breakdown in the attempt, he was shifted sideways – to a newly created position as the group's director of news and research at head office, Brisbane. He was given a few months' leave to recuperate, but was on the head office payroll from 1 July 1980, receiving precisely the same salary package as he had in Rockhampton.<sup>3</sup>

Dunn's recollection of the industrial problems in Rockhampton is piecemeal.

My memory on those industrial things has sort of gone blank, on purpose, because it was such a soul-destroying period in my life. I think I've automatically cancelled it out. I sometimes suddenly remember things. Well, there's no doubt I did have a breakdown in '79, no '80. There was an industrial problem then, too. That day the paper was late, again, and I think that was it. That was it. I just folded up that day. I haven't been back there since – well, I have been back there since, but I didn't sit in the chair again. At the time, Lex was there and the industrial fellow (Rick Sinclair) was there. Burton was there from the union. We had talks at the Leichhardt Hotel. I thought it was going quite well.

1. Printing and Kindred Industries Union, Queensland Branch, Annual Report, 1978, p. 8.

2. Minutes of Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. (PNQ) board meeting, 7 March 1980.

3. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 2 June 1980; The Chronicle, Toowoomba, 30 July 1980, p. 7.

I'd gone home, but there was no paper. Nobody had rung to say why it was late, which they generally did. The bloody thing never turned up till about eight o'clock. (Pause) And that was it. I didn't even, as I said, I didn't go back to work. I think it was also April Fool's Day or something like that (laughter). So as a result of that I just sort of cancelled out my period of industrial advocacy. It was an area which I wasn't trained in. It was also an area in which I had little knowledge of local procedures because Jim had handled that. And, as Lex said to me one day, several years afterwards, he said, 'I've thought about it for years, the problems in Rockhampton, and I put it down to Jim, because he used to make these decisions and they weren't conveyed to other people and he left you with a legacy, you know, that was just too much.'

Peter Dunn does not hold a grudge against Jim. 'It was unfortunate because, I mean, he didn't expect to die either, I don't suppose.'<sup>1</sup>

In replacing Peter Dunn in Rockhampton, PNQ ignored nepotism and appointed a technological expert, Gordon Beavan, who had been involved with sixty installations of presses at newspapers over the previous twelve years.<sup>2</sup> Beavan began duties in August 1980 and seven months later his report to PNQ resulted in the dismissal of Frank Sanderson, who had replaced Dunn in the editor's chair.<sup>3</sup> Beavan believed the production area was overmanned because of management practices up to that time. He found the *Bulletin* Chapel 'extremely militant' and said it 'fought very hard, with very little conscience, to save every job they could'.<sup>4</sup> Beavan removed one dissident from the composing section at Rockhampton by appointing H.J. McCamley circulation manager on 6 April 1981; he continued in that position till his retirement, after forty-two years at the *Bulletin*, on 29 July 1989.<sup>5</sup> In 1982, forty-eight members of the PKIU at the *Bulletin* went on strike on 11 March and the paper did not appear from 12-25 March. Neither did the *Gladstone Observer* which the *Bulletin* was printing by then.<sup>6</sup> At

1. G.P. Dunn, interview, 20 January 1994.

2. *PANPA Bulletin*, December 1982, p. 4; minutes of PNQ board meeting, 28 July 1980.

3. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 9 March 1981.

4. G.R. Beavan, letter to author, 15 December 1993.

5. Sandra Morris, letter to author, 15 February 1994; *PNQ News-Print*, No. 2, 1987.

6. *The Courier-Mail*, 25 March 1982; *Morning Bulletin* 11 and 26 March 1982. N.B. PNQ bought the *Gladstone Observer* from News Ltd. in 1975.



the end of 1982, Beavan grasped the chance to shift to Albury to manage the *Border Mail*.<sup>1</sup>

After Beavan's departure, Robert Geraghty, general manager of the magazine firm, Murray Publishers, was appointed general manager at Rockhampton, but the printing strife drove him out in thirteen months, even though he appeared to win an early victory with resolute leadership in late 1983. There were two strikes, one for three days in October, the other for three weeks in November. Forty-seven members of the PKIU went on strike on 5 October after management had sacked the forty-eighth member for refusing to work until the normal finishing time of 5pm. The Chapel had made a unilateral decision to change shift working hours. The PKIU members resumed work on Sunday, 9 October, when the sacked worker was reinstated.<sup>2</sup> As a result of this dispute, Geraghty recommended to the PNQ board that all PKIU staff should be dismissed and re-appointed only on the company's conditions. The directors agreed that a solution could be achieved only through 'drastic action'. They decided to hold a special meeting with the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. executive officer, Rick Sinclair, and also to seek legal advice.<sup>3</sup> As a result of this action, and with PNQ approval, the *Bulletin* management initiated a showdown by issuing letters to PKIU members warning of disciplinary action, including dismissal, unless the Arbitration Commissioner's recommendations regarding the company's rights of work allocation and job flexibility were accepted.<sup>4</sup> The PKIU members walked off the job, putting the *Bulletin* out of action for nineteen publishing days and costing PNQ \$350,000 in lost sales and advertising revenue. The Chapel on three occasions voted not to follow the recommendation of the Arbitration Commissioner to return to work under conditions proposed by the company. After failing to appear from 3-24 November, the *Bulletin* declared in a banner above the masthead in its first post-strike issue: 'It's great to be back!'<sup>5</sup> PNQ acted swiftly

1. *PANPA Bulletin*, December 1982, p. 4.

2. *Morning Bulletin*, 10 October 1983, p. 2.

3. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 21 October 1983.

4. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 24 October 1983.

5. *PANPA Bulletin*, December 1983, p. 4; *Morning Bulletin*, 25 November 1983, p. 1.

to cut further losses from the industrial turmoil at the *Bulletin*. With the approval of the State branch of the PKIU, it shifted permanently the printing of the *Gladstone Observer* from Rockhampton to the *Bundaberg News-Mail* plant.<sup>1</sup>

Mike McCarthy, who took over as general manager from Geraghty in February 1984 and served till May 1990, had the satisfaction of helping to heal the running industrial sore at Rockhampton. The most direct role, however, was played by his deputy, Fred Sandell, who misunderstood a direction from PNQ. Sandell was fed up with the situation of a PKIU-run newspaper. In early 1985 when Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, as Premier, sacked striking members of the Electrical Trades Union, employed by the South-East Queensland Electricity Board, the Government wanted to place in all Queensland newspapers full-page advertisements seeking replacements. The Queensland branch of the PKIU directed all members in metropolitan and regional newspapers that they could refuse to have anything to do with any such advertisement. The PNQ managers met in Brisbane and decided, with the executive's approval, that if a PKIU member refused to handle an advertisement about the ETU replacements, he was to be sacked immediately. In Rockhampton, Sandell, who was acting as manager during McCarthy's absence, misconstrued the directive. When the Government's ETU advertisement was sent out to the composing room on 19 February 1985, the PKIU representative told the production manager the members refused to handle it. Sandell, mistakenly thinking that PNQ wanted to take the same action as Geraghty had recommended in October 1983, sacked all forty-nine PKIU members, even those on leave.

He arranged all their long service leave to be paid out, everything. Any annual leave that had accrued, he fixed up the whole lot.<sup>2</sup>

Before they were dismissed, the members had been offered their jobs back if they accepted a new directive from the State branch of the PKIU, negating the previous directive, but they refused. Letters confirming their dismissals were then sent to the members.<sup>3</sup>

1. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 5 December 1983.

2. A.J. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.

3. *Morning Bulletin*, 12 March 1985, p. 1.

While the State Conciliation and Arbitration Commission tried to resolve the matter, the *Morning Bulletin* did not appear for three weeks from 19 February. Terms for the reinstatement of the sacked employees appeared to have been reached on 5 March, and they did resume, for six hours, on 11 March before walking off the job for an unstated reason. The *Bulletin* was ready, and staff labour produced the newspaper that day and, with some assistance from the Brisbane office of PNQ, for the next five weeks. The *Bulletin* made a front-page declaration on 12 March:

The *Morning Bulletin* does not like bypassing trade unionists. It has taken this action on only a handful of occasions, despite the history of strikes that has become almost a by-word in ... this city.

The *Bulletin* said it had made it clear all along that it would publish on 12 March, with or without the PKIU. It told its readers and advertisers:

You are the people who have suffered most from the troubles that have plagued us in recent years. We cannot, and will not, accept censorship by trade unions. We cannot, and will not, abdicate our right to manage.<sup>1</sup>

John Irwin, who had been based in Brisbane since April 1984 as PNQ group production co-ordinator, was asked to go to Rockhampton to help maintain publication of the paper. He and a team of staff labour from the *Bulletin* and various sections of PNQ produced six newspapers a week - generally thirty-two-page editions, some with colour - without a break from 12 March to 22 April 1985. At the Industrial Commission's suggestion, Irwin resigned from the PKIU to remove another point of confrontation. Irwin and the other Brisbane-based PNQ people taking part in the determined bid to put management back in control at the *Bulletin* used to fly to Rockhampton on Sunday mornings and return to Brisbane late Friday night. A few times their wives were flown to Rockhampton for the weekend. The *Bulletin* building was picketed. The people producing the paper ate all their meals inside the building. The Brisbane people stayed at a hotel where some of the domestics were wives of the sacked PKIU members. The domestics

1. *Morning Bulletin*, 12 March 1985, p. 1.

ignored the PNQ people and sometimes short-sheeted their beds.<sup>1</sup>

On 15 March 1985, Commissioner J.E. McDonnell ruled that the *Bulletin* should re-employ all dismissed PKIU members who applied within one month for their former jobs. He set two important conditions: that the applicants should agree to accept lawful instructions given by the company; and that all agreements which had been made outside the Printing Trade Industrial Agreement should become null and void.<sup>2</sup> The 'sweetheart agreements' that Peter Dunn tried to cancel in 1973 were finally abolished. By 10 April most of the dismissed members had applied for re-employment and were about to be interviewed. After only one interview, however, the interview process broke down. A hostile group of former employees greeted the management representative with cries of 'scab' when he arrived to conduct the interviews in the presence of the Industrial Inspector. The first and only PKIU member interviewed claimed the management had misinterpreted one of the clauses in the order given by Commissioner McDonnell.<sup>3</sup> On 22 April forty-one of the forty-nine dismissed production employees resumed work.<sup>4</sup> They had to repay their long-service leave payout, but their long service credits continued as previously. The same applied to annual leave. Some of the PKIU members had already spent the three or four thousand dollars that they had received, but the management allowed them to pay back small amounts from each pay until it was all back in the company's pool.<sup>5</sup>

Among the eight dismissed employees who did not seek re-employment were the ring leaders in the strife that dated back to at least 1973.

They knew that they'd lost and they knew what would happen if they got back, so they didn't even front again...

1. A.J. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.
2. *Morning Bulletin*, 11 April 1985, p. 1.
3. *Morning Bulletin*, 11 April 1985, p. 1.
4. *Morning Bulletin*, 22 April 1985, p. 1.
5. A.J. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.

There was a great amount of relief amongst the production staff and the union people because they were being ruled by these eight, there was one very, very bad one there - oh he was ruthless.<sup>1</sup>

PKIU state secretary Burton said:

To say the least, this was a long and bitter struggle by members of the PKIU employed at the *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin*.

On Burton's insistence, a document was drawn up and signed by all parties so that in the future both the management and the Chapel would be aware of all existing agreements operating at the *Morning Bulletin*.<sup>2</sup> The *Bulletin* has been strife-free since. John Irwin looks back with relish on the whole exercise.

It was something really exciting in a sort of a way. It was the best thing that ever happened to the Rockhampton paper because the thing had been going on for so long and the union were practically running the whole show... It was a time of my life that I will never ever forget.

When victory was theirs, the executives of the *Bulletin* staged a grand party on Great Keppel Island, taking all the troubleshooters across to the island via catamaran. That night there was the management equivalent of a galley rattle - a celebratory one.<sup>3</sup> The last vestiges of the entrenched hot-metal era practices and 'sweetheart deals' had gone, nearly five years after Peter Dunn had left Rockhampton behind and shifted to yet another post inspired by nepotism.

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Technology has played its part in newspaper growth and change. One facet of this is that paging has been shown to be a criterion for newspaper growth to consider along with circulation. For paging increases reflect a much greater volume of advertising, which is by far the most important source of revenue for a newspaper. Increased paging can mean the newspaper needs a printing press with greater capacity and sometimes increased staff. The peaks and troughs of production from day to day - arising from variable print runs and variable edition sizes (largely the result of high demand for advertising space on particular days) - provide big problems for newspaper

1. A.J. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.

2. Tom Burton, 'Queensland Branch Report', *Printing Trades Journal*, June 1985, pp 71-72.

3. A.J. Irwin, interview, 13 October 1993.

managers, but it has been shown that, if management install the appropriate technology and if it can negotiate flexible working hours and employ more casual labour, these problems can be diminished.

The death rattle for hot metal heralded a new era of growth for newspapers, an era when the editorial and advertising departments have rightfully become the heart and lungs of the newspaper. In 1970, at the *Bundaberg News-Mail*, and in 1971 at the *Warwick Daily News*, the PNQ group, with the Dunns as majority shareholders, were in the vanguard in Queensland of conversion to photocomposition and web offset printing methods. Elsewhere, the conversion was later - for example, the *Townsville Bulletin* did not switch to photocomposition until 1977 and the *Cairns Post* converted in 1978, although the *North-West Star*, Mount Isa, converted in March 1973. The technological changes have emphasised the need for newspaper companies to appoint managers who are obsessed with staying abreast of the production technology, so great are the rewards. For PNQ, however, nepotism in key appointments, especially at Rockhampton, diluted the benefits of being in the vanguard of technological change. The nepotism cost the *Morning Bulletin* dearly because it resulted in a chaotic industrial-relations situation at the Rockhampton office and costly delays in the technological conversion. Even more costly was the damage done to reliable distribution of the newspaper to its customers. The trust was broken, and the circulation began to struggle to maintain the status quo, let alone increase at anywhere near the level of population growth.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the industrial strife at Rockhampton was an aberration from the Dunns' record of harmonious industrial relations.

1. *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, Centenary Souvenir Supplement, 5 September 1981, p. 61; W. Augustis, letter to author, 24 February 1994; *Cairns Post*, 5 October 1978; K. Fairbairn, letter to author, 18 January 1994.

## Chapter 9

### Getting on with the job from a strong base:

#### PNQ and the corporate domain

*They went about it in a very meticulous way, logical in a sense, yet not street-wise or market-wise... They didn't cover themselves with any glory.*

— Keith McDonald

The Dunns, with their ethos of caution and localism, as demonstrated in Chapters 4, 5 and 7, ran profitable newspapers and, in the 1960s, even dabbled in a little expansion – sharing in the purchase of the *Bundaberg News-Mail* and buying outright the *Nambour Chronicle*, as described in Chapter 6. They closed down unprofitable titles and sold out of Warwick when they could not practise their localism ethos to the full.

This chapter will explore the various economies of scale which affect newspapers. The economies provide an impetus towards single-newspaper markets. There are also economies of group ownership and these were different for the Dunns as a family; the Dunns as a company; and for PNQ, in which the Dunns held the major family interest. One of the major benefits of the merger in 1968 of the family newspaper companies was that they developed a Group perspective on management and editorial matters. They planned a program of technological improvement, as was shown in Chapter 8. They had a corporate plan drawn up in 1973 and, as a result, established headquarters in Brisbane. Another advantage was that wider comparison of the performance of individual papers sharpened the competitive edge for each. The stronger financial base provided by the group made expansion much more a prospect, and PNQ made significant gains over the years, none more so than through the small weeklies that it bought on the Sunshine Coast as it moved towards establishing a new daily newspaper in that region. The Group traded profitably and paid good dividends.

The desired goal of listing on the Stock Exchange achieved in 1976, PNQ then found itself more vulnerable to takeover. The very protective device to which it readily acquiesced - a stopper interest from Queensland Press Ltd. (forty per cent owned by the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd.) - would one day open the gate to the most feared predator, Rupert Murdoch. In the seventies and eighties there was a changing of the guard as the three key families, in turn, provided the chief executive of PNQ. They failed to be sufficiently sensitive to the changing business environment that mocked nepotism as the principal criterion for appointment. Among the results of the nepotism were: the long-running printing strife in Rockhampton; the retaining of only a fifty per cent interest in *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba; the purchase of the Express Group of Brisbane suburban newspapers; and some blunders in the 'free' newspaper market on the fringes of Brisbane.

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If society, technology and the economy had become locked in a time warp in the 1930s or 1940s, the Dunn newspaper dynasty could have continued forever. Tough times induced by such events as depression or war seemed to draw out the Dunns' inherent Scottish hardiness and caution - their survival instinct. This was reflected in the minutes of the board meetings of the family's newspaper enterprises during such periods - the cliché was: 'a satisfactory result in view of



the conditions' – and in the measures taken to maintain profitability. When the going got tough, the Dunns made the tough decisions, ranging from cutting back on contributors to closing newspapers. In 1934, as the national economy recovered, they closed the *Allora Guardian*, which they had bought in 1921, and on 31 July 1941 they closed the unprofitable *Evening News* at Rockhampton when wartime newsprint rationing gave them a good excuse. They had bought it in 1929, as outlined in Chapter 2.<sup>1</sup> In 1936, they sold their controlling interest in the *Warwick Daily News* to the minority shareholders, the Irwins, when the Dunns could not practise their localism ethos to the full by having a Dunn based in Warwick.<sup>2</sup> Rarely did the Dunns lose money on one of their enterprises: extant records indicate that the Maryborough Newspaper Company lost 749 pounds in 1906-07 and eleven pounds in 1941-42, but traded profitably in all other years under the Dunns' control. The Rockhampton and Toowoomba companies at no time lost money with the Dunns in control. The Warwick newspaper enterprise performed moderately well.<sup>3</sup>

An examination of the financial performance of the three major companies from 1930 to 1950 shows that the Dunns survived the lean years, even excelled in them. There was none of the complacency that seemed to creep in during the years of

1. Minutes of A. Dunn and Family, 25 November 1934; minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 25 July 1929.  
 2. Minutes of The Warwick Newspaper Pty. Ltd., 25 November 1934 and 18 September 1936.  
 3. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 186-187; minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 1888-1957; minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 1911-1957; minutes of Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 1922-1957; minutes of The Warwick Newspaper Pty. Ltd., 1919-36.

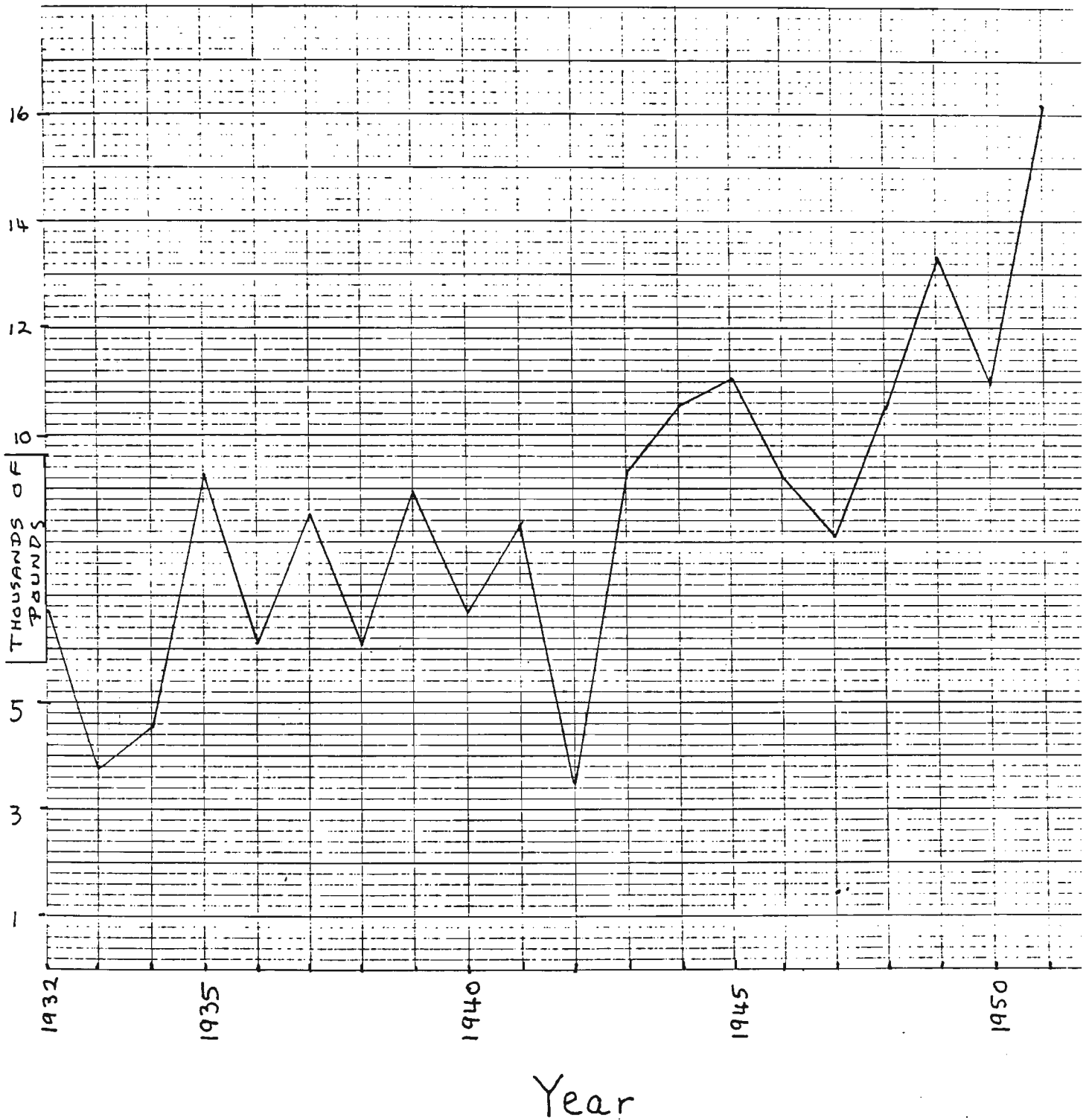
plenty. The Rockhampton and Toowoomba newspaper operations traded without extreme difficulty during the Depression, but the Maryborough operation struggled. In 1932-33 the Maryborough company recorded its 'smallest profit for many years because of depression, drought and low prices for farm produce', but did not provide a precise figure in the minutes of its annual meeting.<sup>1</sup> The Toowoomba company continued to perform strongly throughout the thirties and forties, as Table 27 shows. Even during the Depression, Toowoomba recorded impressive profits, such as 6,770 pounds in 1931-32; this fell to 3,890 pounds the following year, before starting to climb again with a profit of 4,574 pounds in 1933-34.<sup>2</sup> In 1931-32 the *Morning Bulletin* declared a dividend of 3,000 pounds from profits.<sup>3</sup> During World War II each of the papers was hit by newsprint rationing and by the sharply increasing prices for that product. One effect was the inability to accept all the advertising that was available because smaller publications had to be produced; another was to force the closure of some publications, such as the *Evening News*, mentioned above. During the war, rationing of other goods reduced the demand for advertising space - for example, at Maryborough in 1942-43 when retail traders, merchant stores and radio and motor firms cancelled a large volume of advertising bookings with the *Chronicle* because rationing had cut their stocks.<sup>4</sup>

Newsprint dictated the economy of newspapers for a decade or more, from a few years before World War II until a few years after it. In 1938, with the threat of war looming, newsprint was such a crucial issue that at Maryborough the company used all its surplus cash to build up a stockpile only to find that once war was a reality, the size of stockpiles was regulated.<sup>5</sup> Repeated cuts in the quantities of available newsprint forced

1. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., annual meeting, 1933.
2. Annual financial reports of Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 1932-33, 1933-34 and 1934-35.
3. Minutes of The Morning Bulletin Ltd., annual meeting, 1932.
4. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 24 August 1943.
5. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 10 August 1938.

Table 27

**Net profits of  
Toowoomba Chronicle  
1932-1951**



SOURCE: Toowoomba Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. annual financial statements, 1932-33 to 1950-51

newspapers to cut edition sizes during the war, as illustrated in Table 28. From July 1940, the *Maryborough Chronicle* appeared each week in three eight-page issues, two ten-page issues and one twelve-page issue – a total of fifty-six pages, compared with an average weekly paging total of seventy-two in March 1938. The reduced production volume meant two permanent staff members became casuals. In a token effort to use newsprint more effectively, the board instructed the editor to reduce the amount of space devoted to religious contributions.<sup>1</sup> In July 1941, there was a second cut in newsprint and the *Chronicle* published six-page issues on Mondays and eight-page issues on the other days, with a ten-page issue on Saturdays when necessary – generally forty-six pages a week. In February 1942 the *Chronicle* obtained permission from the Deputy Prices Commissioner to reduce the width of news and advertising columns in certain conditions. In August 1942 the directors instructed that the leading article in the *Chronicle* be set in a smaller type size, seven point, and limited to about three-quarters of a column, with single line headings only used.<sup>2</sup> By March 1944, the *Chronicle's* average weekly paging was twenty-six – almost one-third what it had been six years earlier, as Table 28 shows – and its cover price had risen from a penny halfpenny to twopence on 1 April 1943.<sup>3</sup> A year after the end of the war, the *Chronicle* was a considerably bigger publication – its average weekly paging was forty-eight in August 1946 – which meant additional staff in all sections. Its circulation had risen to more than 6,000 daily, from little more than 4,000 when the war began. Despite big industrial disturbances in Australia, Maryborough escaped lightly, being involved only in a timber strike. Rural industries had been hit by a combination of one of the worst droughts in the district's memory and a very severe winter. Although the company's revenue had increased by 4,441 pounds over previous year, to a total of 30,249 pounds, costs of production – mainly wages and salaries, and paper and ink –

1. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 18 June and 6 August 1940; author's study of *Maryborough Chronicle* files for March 1938.

2. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 3 August 1942.

3. *Maryborough Chronicle* issues of March 1944; minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 24 August 1943.

Table 28

**Paging decline of Dunn daily newspapers  
in World War II**

<u>Newspaper</u>	<u>Average Weekly Paging (in March)</u>	
	1938	1944
Maryborough Chronicle	72	26
Morning Bulletin	84	32
Toowoomba Chronicle	78	31

SOURCE: Maryborough Chronicle, Toowoomba Chronicle and Morning Bulletin, March 1938 and March 1944.

had exceeded the increased revenue by 501 pounds.<sup>1</sup> Table 29, which provides a comparison between the profitability of the Maryborough Newspaper Co. and the Toowoomba Newspaper Co. from 1935-36 until 1949-50, shows that the Toowoomba company's one bad year during the war (1941-42) equated with the Maryborough company's best year (1944-45).

At the *Morning Bulletin*, the newsprint rationing hit so hard that in 1947-48 the Prices Commission authorised the *Bulletin* to increase from nine to ten the number of columns per page. This allowed it to publish more advertisements than would otherwise have been possible, yet charging just as much for the narrower advertisements. The newspaper's profit was still, however, less than the previous year entirely because newsprint rationing prevented it from accepting the volume of advertising on offer.<sup>2</sup> It was the only year between 1945 and 1955 when advertising revenue failed to increase at the *Bulletin*. In 1953-54 the company achieved a record profit to that date.<sup>3</sup>

In the years before PNQ, the Dunns' Toowoomba and Rockhampton newspaper operations each generally returned about forty to forty-five per cent of the family's profits, and the Maryborough operation returned ten to fifteen per cent, as the profit comparison between Toowoomba and Maryborough provided in Table 29 suggests. Specific Rockhampton figures are not available. It was only with the advent of incorporation in 1957 that a system of quarterly reports was introduced. These required information under specific headings from each subsidiary, as is shown in Appendix 7.

This performance ratio was maintained in the 1950s – for example, in the October-December quarters of 1957 and 1958. Appendix 7, with the October-December 1958 figures, draws a

1. Minutes of Maryborough Newspaper Co., 24 August 1946; *Maryborough Chronicle*, 1-31 August 1946.  
 2. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 30 October 1948.  
 3. Minutes of Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 21 October 1954.

Table 29

**Profit Comparison, 1935-36 to 1949-50:  
Maryborough and Toowoomba Chronicles**

Year	Maryborough	Toowoomba
1935-36	992	6,087
1936-37	1,314	8,477
1937-38	888	6,023
1938-39	1,054	8,989
1939-40	638	6,687
1940-41	n.a. <sup>1</sup>	8,316
1941-42	-- 11 <sup>2</sup>	3,472
1942-43	271	9,292
1943-44	3,460	10,568
1944-45	3,827	11,040
1945-46	n.a.	9,224
1946-47	2,949	8,102
1947-48	2,617	10,575
1948-49	3,314	13,300
1949-50	4,155	10,969

1. Not Available
2. Loss.

SOURCE: Maryborough Newspaper Company annual reports contained in company minutes book; Toowoomba Newspaper Company annual reports, included with financial statements.

typical contrast between the performance and size of the three newspaper enterprises, and also suggests the economies of scale that accrue as a newspaper's circulation increases. At the time the Maryborough paper sold 7,000 copies daily, the Rockhampton paper 16,000, and the Toowoomba paper 16,500. Economies of scale are associated with both the overhead and production costs of newspaper enterprises. The fixed overhead costs of a newspaper relate mainly to premises and plant and to the salaries and expenses of management. These costs increase with the size of the newspaper's circulation, but less than proportionately. Therefore, the greater number of copies sold, the lower the overhead cost per unit of output.

Increases in circulation thus provide a larger base over which the overhead expenses of the newspaper firm can be spread.<sup>1</sup> Another contrast between the size and performance of the Maryborough company and the other two companies was provided by the dividends which the three subsidiaries paid to A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd.: in 1958-59, Maryborough paid 3,717 pounds, (one shilling and sixpence a share); Rockhampton paid 18,787 pounds (two shillings and sixpence); and Toowoomba paid 18,952 pounds (three shillings and sixpence). Only in Toowoomba was there competition: the *Chronicle* competed with the *Downs Star*. In 1966-67, Maryborough paid 18,000 pounds, Rockhampton 75,801 and Toowoomba 47,000. In all, the performance figures of the three papers in the 1950s and 1960s reflected something more, too: the quality of the management at the Maryborough Newspaper Co. in the years since, first, Andrew Dunn, the patriarch (1891-1934), and, second, Bill Eadie (1934-1948) were key managerial figures. The Maryborough manager from 1948 till 1977 was George English, who was a charming man but an ineffective newspaper manager.

1. Allan Brown, Commercial Media in Australia (St. Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Scholars' Press, 1986), p. 3.



One of the benefits the Dunn Family newspaper enterprises enjoyed from 1891 onwards derived from the economies of scale, mentioned above. These economies have fundamental implications for the structure of the newspaper industry and are primarily responsible for the tendency toward single-title newspaper markets throughout the Western world. Direct competition among a number of newspapers for the same readers and advertisers is generally characterised by unstable market conditions which usually result in smaller papers ceasing to publish, or being swallowed up in a merger with the largest circulation paper in their respective markets. Because scale economies give the highest circulation title in a market a cost advantage over its rivals in the production of both newspaper products – newspaper copies for sale and advertising space for sale – it is able to reduce its cover price and, especially, its advertising rate and so increase its market share for both products. And the cost advantage of the largest publication over its rivals is likely to increase progressively. As the major paper enlarges its share of the circulation and advertising markets, its unit costs will decline further. Simultaneously, the decrease in the relative market share of its rivals will cause their unit costs to increase.<sup>1</sup> In Maryborough, the economies the Dunns' daily *Chronicle* and weekly *Colonist* enjoyed over the daily *Wide Bay and Burnett News* eventually forced the latter publication out of business in 1919. In Warwick, the circulation advantage the Dunn's *Argus* enjoyed over the Irwins' *Examiner* enabled the Dunns to take the dominant shareholding in the *Warwick Daily News*, which resulted from the merger in 1919 between the two tri-weeklies.<sup>2</sup>

The Dunn Family's daily newspapers at Toowoomba, Rockhampton and Maryborough were profitable concerns, but were they, as

1. Brown, pp. 3-4.

2. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, pp. 212, 218.

Lex Dunn asked, 'enormously profitable'? In 1960 some of the family members used the terms 'enormous profits', 'huge profits' and 'excessive profit' when the board of A. Dunn and Company Pty. Ltd. was discussing its objectives. Company secretary Lex Dunn said there was general agreement that the company did not seek such profits, but no-one attempted to define what constituted excessive profits. Dunn noted that the company's issued capital was 469,338 pounds and therefore the payment of a dividend of ten per cent on such capital involved 46,933.8 pounds, for instance. For such a dividend, he suggested a gross profit of 107,000 pounds, allowing 33,000 pounds for tax and 27,000 pounds for retention, and for a fifteen per cent dividend a profit of 161,000 pounds.<sup>1</sup> In its first four years of operation the family's holding company made the following profits before tax (viz. also Table 30):

1957-58	33,176 pounds
1958-59	49,031 pounds
1959-60	43,377 pounds
1960-61	50,933 pounds <sup>2</sup>

Peter Dunn said the general principle the Dunns followed was to pay moderate dividends and to plough the rest of the profits back into the company. 'None of the Dunns became a millionaire.'<sup>3</sup>

On the expenditure side of the balance sheet, the two major day-to-day items for newspapers this century have been newsprint and labour. On the revenue side, the two major items have been, obviously, advertising and subscriptions. Newsprint and labour have generally comprised fifty to sixty per cent of the total daily running costs of a newspaper enterprise. Advertising generally provides anything from sixty to eighty per cent of the revenue. For the Dunn newspapers, newsprint and labour constituted 'the bulk of expenditure each month'.<sup>4</sup> For example, at the *Toowoomba Chronicle* fifty to sixty-three per cent of expenditure was consumed by these items over the

1. L.S. Dunn, 'Profit objectives', undated typescript but circa mid-1960, copy sent to Walter Bruce (held by author).

2. Minutes of A. Dunn and Co., 30 May 1961.

3. G.P. Dunn, interview with author, Kenmore, 20 January 1994.

4. L.S. Dunn, letter to Walter Bruce, 10 September 1957.

Table 30

**Comparison of the three Dunn newspapers  
October-December 1958**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Maryborough Chronicle</b>	<b>Rockhampton Bulletin</b>	<b>Toowoomba Chronicle</b>
Advertising revenue	15,798 pounds	45,128	49,337
Total staff	63	79	97
Wages	11,987 pounds	21,542	22,647
Newsprint usage	40.80 tons	143.61	143.75

SOURCES: Quarterly reports by managers of the Maryborough Chronicle, the Morning Bulletin and the Toowoomba Chronicle, October-December 1958, to A. Dunn and Co. Pty. Ltd.

years as is shown in Tables 31 and 32. The exception was 1941-42, with newsprint rationing in full swing, when the percentage fell to forty-two per cent.

Apart from advertising and circulation, newspaper revenue, up to twelve per cent, comes from investments, commercial printing, stationery sales and sales of newsprint off-cuts. The *Toowoomba Chronicle*, again, reflected these general principles, as is shown in Tables 31 and 32. For PNQ, from 1982-83 to 1986-87, eighty-three to eighty-five per cent of revenue came from advertising and circulation (about sixty-six per cent and eighteen per cent respectively). Commercial printing provided between eleven and thirteen per cent and 'other', three to six per cent.<sup>1</sup> In Australia, newspaper advertising grew by precisely sixty-six per cent (from \$497.2 million to \$825.2 million) between 1971 and 1982, despite dropping in the first three years of that period. The proportion of total advertising spent on the newspaper medium declined slightly throughout the twelve-year period, from 39.8 per cent in 1971 to 38.2 per cent in 1982, but had risen to 40.7 per cent by 1989-90. The proportion of newspaper advertising spent on regional dailies and provincial non-dailies increased from 20.3 per cent in 1971 to 24.3 per cent in 1982, and fell to 18.9 per cent in 1989-90. In 1989-90, \$258,947,000 was spent on advertising in regional dailies, and \$117,187 in provincial non-dailies, out of a total of \$2,001,077,000 spent on advertising in all Australian newspapers and \$4,925,319,000 on all media advertising.<sup>2</sup> Table 33, which lists the advertising revenue of *Toowoomba's Chronicle* over twenty years from 1970, provides an example of the growth experienced in a successful PNQ publication.

One of the trends in regional newspapers in Australia in the 1970s and 1980s – and even earlier in Victoria, according to Bill Trevena – was a reduction in the number of printing plants.<sup>3</sup> It is now common for smaller country papers to be printed on a press located somewhere other than the town which

1. Strategies report, p. 11; *Provincial Newspapers (Old.) Ltd. Annual Report 1987*, p. 25.

2. Brown, pp. 46-48; Commercial Economic Advisory Service of Australia (1989-90 table provided by the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd.).

3. Bill Trevena, 'Country newspaper people: A select biographical dictionary of country newspaper men and women working in Victoria between 1840 and 1980,' M.A. thesis, University of Melbourne, 1986.

Table 31

**Toowoomba Chronicle  
Expenditure and Revenue  
Comparison, 1922-88**

*All amounts in dollars*

Year	Major expenditure items		Major revenue sources	
	Paper, ink, etc.	Wages, salaries, directors' fees, etc.	Advertising	Newspaper sales
1921-22	14,632	12,176	26,092	9810
1926-27	12,296	24,832	69,214	22,226
1931-32	23,434	24,902	71,078	24,130
1936-37	18,304	35,880	81,996	26,456
1941-42	16,602	35,874	63,772	28,836
1946-47	35,760	53,932	98,214	46,772
1951-52	25,550	114,190	193,980	110,882
1956-57	103,796	182,002	178,191	125,086
1987-88	2,236,648	4,247,950	7,907,000	2,900,000*

SOURCE: Financial statements of Toowoomba Chronicle, 1921-22 to 1956-57; and Bruce Manning, letter to author, 12 December 1992.

\* Calculated on percentages provided and treating total expenditure as total revenue.

Table 32

**Toowoomba Chronicle  
Expenditure and Revenue  
Comparison, 1922-88**

*Percentages*

Year	Major expenditure items		Major revenue sources	
	Paper, ink, etc.	Wages, salaries, directors' fees, etc.	Advertising	Newspaper sales
1921-22	28.20%	28.37%	74.46%	25.19%
1926-27	13.48%	27.22%	75.88%	22.18%
1931-32	24.31%	25.84%	73.76%	25.04%
1936-37	17.61%	32.73%	74.79%	24.13%
1941-42	17.62%	24.52%	67.69%	30.61%
1946-47	24.26%	36.58%	66.62%	31.72%
1951-52	26.11%	37.19%	63.17%	36.11%
1956-57	21.02%	36.86%	72.18%	27.36%
1987-88	18.84%	35.77%	66.02%	24.62%

SOURCE: Financial statements of Toowoomba Chronicle, 1921-22 to 1956-57; and Bruce Manning, letter to author, 12 December 1992.

Table 33

**The Chronicle, Toowoomba:  
Advertising Revenue, 1971-90**

1970-71:	\$ 512,000 (rounded off)
1971-72:	\$ 672,000
1972-73:	\$ 757,000
1973-74:	\$ 930,000
1974-75:	\$1,237,000
1975-76:	\$1,575,000
1976-77:	\$1,933,000
1977-78:	\$2,367,000
1978-79:	\$2,669,000
1979-80:	\$3,226,000
1980-81:	\$3,917,000
1981-82:	\$4,730,000
1982-83:	\$5,460,000
1983-84:	\$6,560,000
1984-85:	\$7,245,000
1985-86:	\$7,154,000
1986-87:	\$7,582,000
1987-88:	\$7,907,000
1988-89:	\$9,280,000
1989-90:	\$10,084,000

SOURCE: Bruce Manning, managing director of Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd., letter to author, 14 December 1992.

is the centre of their prime circulation area. In 1970 when the Gibsons, the publishers of the *Central Queensland News*, Emerald, bought the *Peak Downs Telegram*, they re-named it the *Clermont Telegram* and rationalised their printing operations by printing the *Telegram* at Emerald from 7 November 1970 until they incorporated it in the *News* from 13 May 1981.<sup>1</sup> In south-western Queensland, the *Chinchilla News* has been printed in Toowoomba by *The Chronicle* since 1980. In 1993, the South Burnett Times Pty. Ltd. owned and printed, at Kingaroy, separate newspapers for the following centres and their surrounding districts: Kingaroy (the bi-weekly *South Burnett Times*), Mundubbera/Monto (the weekly *Central and North Burnett Times*), Biggenden (the weekly *Biggenden News*), Charleville (the weekly *Western Times*) and Blackall (the weekly *Blackall Leader*).<sup>2</sup> In NSW, Taree's *Manning River Times* was printed on the presses of Maitland's *Mercury* from April 1975 until 1992 when the Port Macquarie *News* presses took over the job, and Hay's *Riverine Grazier* has been printed at Griffith's Area News plant since 1975.<sup>3</sup> In 1988, PNQ group production co-ordinator John Irwin studied the feasibility of printing three regional daily newspapers on the one plant: the *Gladstone Observer*, the *Maryborough Chronicle* and the *Bundaberg News-Mail* on the Bundaberg press, but no action was taken because of the takeover of PNQ. Similar studies were in train in 1993-94 at Australian Provincial Newspapers Holdings Ltd., the enlarged and renamed PNQ.<sup>4</sup> This trend towards regional newspaper printeries has emerged because, just as the fixed overhead costs of a publishing firm are spread over a wider base when the circulation of a newspaper increases, so these overheads can be spread more widely and the unit costs lowered even further if the firm produces additional newspaper titles from its plant. A newspaper firm producing only one publication will generally experience considerable excess capacity in its operations. Because of the nature of newspaper

1. *Clermont Telegram*, 7 November 1970 and 6 May 1981; *Central Queensland News*, 13 May 1981.

2. David Fuller, interview with author, Chinchilla, 11 April 1980; Doug Collyer, letter to author, 18 January 1994, and letter to Queensland Country Press Association, 5 August 1993.

3. John Doust, letter to author, 20 January 1994; *Manning River Times*, 125th Anniversary Feature, 13 May 1994, p. 3; *Riverine Grazier*, Johnston Family Centenary Edition, June 1988, p. 2.

4. A.J. Irwin, interview with author, 13 October 1993; *Fraser Coast Chronicle*, 12 November 1993.



publishing – with the need for the editing, printing and distribution functions to be carried out in sequence – the assets and (to a lesser extent) staff of a single publication firm will not be used to the full for a significant period of time throughout the day.<sup>1</sup> This excess capacity can be reduced and greater productivity achieved if a firm makes fuller use of its building, plant and its management and production staff by publishing additional titles. Consequently, in a situation of direct competition between two newspapers, the title produced by a firm which publishes other papers in the same market area will, other things being equal, have a cost advantage over its rival.

A far more prevalent form of ownership concentration in the newspaper industry is the one which has inspired this study: chain ownership of publications serving different audiences, especially when those audiences are geographically isolated from one another. The Kingaroy-based South Burnett Times Pty. Ltd., mentioned earlier, provided an example of a small version of this type of group – until it was taken over itself by APN in March 1994. After seeking a sale to PNQ in 1977, the company grew slowly but surely. In July 1981 it bought the *Burnett Herald*, Monto, and merged it with its own *Central Burnett Times* to make it the *Central and North Burnett Times*; in November 1986 it bought the *Biggenden Weekly*; in January 1991 it bought the *Western Times*, Charleville; and in October 1992 it bought the *Blackall Leader*. It also progressively acquired in 1987 and 1988 a seventy-eight per cent interest in Kingaroy radio station, 4SB.<sup>2</sup> PNQ, as was shown in Chapter 6, was a larger example of this type of ownership concentration.

Four types of economic factors encourage the concentration of ownership within any national newspaper industry. Firstly, a firm publishing newspapers in different markets can make more intensive use of its managerial resources – for example, by centralising certain decision-making, accounting and legal functions. Secondly, the editorial costs for each commonly owned newspaper can be reduced by syndicating articles written

1. Brown, p. 8.

2. 'Tony takes his Times', *The Australian*, 3 March 1994, p. 32; 'APN buys publisher', *The Courier-Mail*, 3 March 1994, p. 23; A.C.D. Collyer, letters to author, 19 August 1993 and 21 March 1994.

by members of the group's own staff, and by a combined subscription to national and international news agencies. Thirdly, some economies in the sale of national advertising may be achieved by operating a central advertising sales division to supplement those of the individual publications. And, fourthly, in common with other large corporations, newspaper chains can make use of their buying power to arrange discounts from suppliers for the purchase of many of their needs - vehicles, newsprint, inks, office supplies and so on.<sup>1</sup>

Even though economies of scale have apparently contributed to the growth of newspaper groups, they do not appear as big an advantage as scale economies within a local market.<sup>2</sup> It would seem that the factor most responsible for the group ownership of newspaper titles in different markets is simply the 'drive towards growth' by publishing firms and their proprietors. It has been established in the economic literature that there is no optimum size for a firm. Since the efficiency of firms need not be impaired as they grow and as they change in organisational form, there appears to be no absolute limit to the size of individual corporations.<sup>3</sup>

With the merger in April 1968 of the newspaper interests of the Dunn, Manning, Irwin and the three Ipswich-based families, as described in Chapter 6, the different families were able to begin to share their expertise through the holding company, Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd., or PNQ. They were able to start thinking as a group, to begin developing a corporate culture, although, in 1983, part of this culture would be seen as isolating:

PNQ people tend to identify very closely with the communities in which they live and which their newspapers serve. There tends to be relatively little interchange of PNQ people between subsidiaries.<sup>4</sup>

1. Brown, p. 8.

2. Walter S. Johnson et al, Concentration of Mass Media Ownership: Assessing the State of Current Knowledge (Saint Monica: Rand, 1974), cited in Brown, p. 9

3. Edith T. Penrose, The Theory of the Growth of the Firm (Oxford: Blackwell, 1959) and Robin Marris, The Economic Theory of 'Managerial' Capitalism (London: Macmillan, 1966), cited in Brown, p. 9.

4. Strategies Pty. Ltd., 'Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd.: Current Strategy and Overview', 30 August 1983, p. 20.

One of the first things PNQ did was to plan a program of technological improvement, as outlined in Chapter 8. They had a corporate plan drawn up in 1973 and acted swiftly on one of its recommendations: that the group establish its headquarters in Brisbane, the state's political and commercial hub, rather than continuing to operate from Rockhampton purely because that was where the company secretary, Lex Dunn, happened to be based when PNQ became a reality. Another of the recommendations implemented was the appointment of a group finance manager. Murray Noble, managing director of *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba (1969-73), was appointed. He died on 29 September 1975, aged forty-seven. He was replaced by John Sadleir (1976-86), who listed the establishment of the *Sunshine Coast Daily* - described later in this chapter - as one of the most satisfying projects in which he was involved.<sup>1</sup> Sadleir himself was seen as a significant force for change and for high achievement in the PNQ Group and but for the incapacities that led to his early retirement and eventual suicide he would have been ideally suited for consideration as a chief executive.<sup>2</sup>

Although firms can grow by either internal expansion (extending their own production and sales activities) or external expansion (acquiring or merging with other businesses), their rate of growth will usually be greater if they adopt the latter strategy. Because mergers and takeovers can be expected to play a greater role in determining the pattern of ownership in the press, as demonstrated earlier in this chapter, the takeover of existing titles from small publishers is frequently the most convenient means for a newspaper chain to expand. Conversely, the proprietors of existing newspaper chains with experience in the industry and access to capital are the obvious contenders for taking over independent papers which become available for acquisition. The drive towards growth experienced by publishing firms and their proprietors, therefore, is a major cause of ownership concentration within the newspaper industry.<sup>3</sup> PNQ, with its

1. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 2 February and 20 August 1973, and 4 March 1974; A.D. Morris, 'Notes on PNQ', p. 20; *The Chronicle*, 30 September 1975; *PNQ News-Print*, 4 (1986), p. 1.

2. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994; *PNQ News-Print*, 4 (1986), p. 1.

3. Brown, pp. 8-9.

stronger financial base, experienced this drive for growth much more so than the smaller Dunn group had. Lex Dunn said early listing on the Stock Exchange was a major objective because 'you cannot generate enough cash in a group if there is no growth factor'.<sup>1</sup> The 1973 corporate plan identified twelve different potential mergers and acquisitions for PNQ. Five of those were completed by 1988.<sup>2</sup>

The formation of PNQ was inspired at least partly by the desire to keep metropolitan media predators at bay, as was demonstrated in Chapter 6. Three years after the PNQ merger, Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd. entered the fray again. News had leaked out that PNQ was to seek listing on the Stock Exchange. Queensland Press Ltd. (forty per cent owned by the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd.) made a written offer to buy up to 491,000 PNQ shares – approximately thirty per cent of the PNQ capital – at \$3.50 a share. Murdoch countered with a similar offer. On 21 July 1971 PNQ chairman Clarrie Manning told directors that 'Mr Murdoch and/or his representatives had telephoned a number of shareholders, offering to purchase their shares at \$3.50 each'. The board sent a telegram to all shareholders advising them to 'TAKE NO ACTION – REPEAT TAKE NO ACTION' on the Murdoch offer. A letter of explanation followed. The directors can hardly have endeared themselves to Murdoch by writing to tell him that next time they would prefer that he approach them direct.<sup>3</sup> After all, he had demonstrated his readiness to enter through the back door: his representatives had made offers by telephone to people whom they believed were non-Dunn, non-Manning and non-Irwin shareholders. But the secretive ring-around had burst into the open when they had telephoned Mary Hollingworth, little realising she was an Irwin. On 8 November 1941 she had married Edwin Hollingworth, who became business manager of the *Warwick Daily News* in 1946, managing director (1962-79) and a director of PNQ (1968-85).<sup>4</sup>

Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd., a wholly-owned Queensland

1. L.S. Dunn, interview with author, Brisbane, 16 March 1977.

2. Cited in Strategies Pty. Ltd., 'Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd.: Current Strategy and Overview', 30 August 1983, p. 7.

3. L.S. Dunn, interview, 16 March 1977; minutes of PNQ board meeting, 21 July 1971; Richard A. Edwards, telephone interview with author, 13 January 1994.

4. L.S. Dunn, interview, 16 March 1977; A.J. Irwin, interview with author, 13 October 1993; A.J. Irwin, Irwin family history typescript supplied to author.

Press Ltd. subsidiary, offered \$3.50 a share in July 1971, and then \$4 a share, for up to thirty per cent of any shareholder's holdings. It told PNQ directors it wanted to help keep Queensland provincial papers in Queensland hands. During a special PNQ board meeting on 24 July 1971, Ken May, 'Murdoch's right-hand man', telephoned and advised PNQ chairman Clarrie Manning that 'they had acceptances for 240,000 of our shares at \$3.50 and that they had prospects of obtaining 250,000 shares'. The board decided to accept in principle the Queensland Press offer.<sup>1</sup> A third party entered the bidding on 6 August: Sir Frank Packer. He failed to get his figures correct before he telegraphed PNQ:

I understand Melbourne *Herald* Group [Queensland Press was forty per cent owned by HWT] has offered \$1.97 per share for thirty per cent of the issued capital of your company. Australian Consolidated Press is prepared to offer \$2.15 per share for a total of 600,000 shares. I will arrange a discussion at a time and place to suit your convenience.

The directors felt the Packer offer was 'too indecisive' and chose to ignore it unless he put a firm proposition in writing to the board. They accepted the Queensland Press Ltd. offer, despite some wrangling over which company should amend its interests in television licensees to comply with the Broadcasting and Television Act.<sup>2</sup> Queensland Press guaranteed it would not make a takeover offer, and it never did.<sup>3</sup> Yet the protective device that PNQ employed at this time was to become the gate which opened the way for the ultimate enemy, Murdoch, to enter their share listings with a dominant stake, as will be shown in Chapter 10.

In 1971, though, the general feeling was one of relief that Big Brother, in the form of the premier newspaper publisher in Queensland, was on side. At the PNQ annual meeting that year, chairman Clarrie Manning reassured shareholders:

It has been a matter of some concern to your board that shareholders may gain the impression that control of the company may be passing to other hands and that we had lost sight of one of the main objects of our original amalgamation, which was to maintain our independence.

1. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 24 July 1971.

2. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 24 August and 9 September 1971.

3. L.S. Dunn, interview, 16 March 1977.

This was far from the case. The directors retained 'the same pride of ownership' and had lost none of its enthusiasm and determination to see that the company continued to prosper. To three generations of successful newspaper operation, the board had added:

the offer of the assistance of the very considerable knowhow and expertise of Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd. at any time and in any area in which we feel it is needed. We believe, therefore, we are now in a very secure position to get on with the job from a strong base, both as regards knowledge and funds. Our objective will continue to be the improvement of PNQ's profitability and dividend rate.<sup>1</sup>

In 1976 PNQ achieved one of the stated objectives of the merger: listing on the Stock Exchange. Yet even this would help erode the dynasties that had formed PNQ, as will be shown in Chapter 10. In preparation for the listing, PNQ appointed a representative of its major shareholders, Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd., to the board from 30 July 1976. The representative was Keith Henry McDonald, the chief executive (1968-91), whom Rupert Murdoch would later appoint to News Corporation's international board.<sup>2</sup> McDonald said Queensland Newspapers played a non-intrusive role before gaining representation on the board and generally 'saw [the PNQ directors] only once a year - at the annual meeting'.

We regarded them as people with whom we'd had business contacts for many, many years, glad to see them running their own businesses as they saw fit, and for the most part running them profitably... Help was here if they wanted it.

McDonald's appointment to the board changed board procedures little, except that he saw the key family members more frequently. He explained the gradual build-up of the Queensland Newspapers' interest in PNQ. A company which had as small a capitalisation as PNQ and which was listed publicly 'needed to have somebody there regularly supporting that market'.

1. Chairman's address to the annual general meeting of PNQ shareholders, 8 December 1971.

2. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 30 July 1976; Keith Henry McDonald, interview with author, Brisbane, 20 August 1992; Who's Who in Business in Australia (Melbourne: Information Australia, 1992), p. 352.

We just stood there in the market, absorbing any shares that were offered. That's how our stake in the company grew. We weren't aggressively buying. We thought that strategically it was the right investment for us to take, to take our interest in the regional areas of Queensland via that company rather than trying to produce newspapers in the south-east corner of a very large State and ship them at vast expense to be on sale at Cairns and Townsville and Mount Isa in time for breakfast, which we continue to do [but not too aggressively].

In April 1978, Queensland Press Ltd. bought 4,200 more shares in PNQ.<sup>1</sup>

When Rupert Murdoch made his unsuccessful bid for the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. on 20 November 1979, PNQ was 29.95 per cent owned by the Queensland Press Group, in which HWT had a forty per cent interest. The Murdoch bid failed within forty-eight hours.<sup>2</sup> On 3 December, PNQ checked its own 'vulnerability' and found that 74.06 per cent of its shares were owned by 'Friends', but it listed the Queensland Press Group's shareholding as friendly, even though it could have provided Murdoch with access to a major role on PNQ, as is shown in the list of 'friendly' interests below:

Dunn Family	24.48 per cent
Manning Family	9.92
Irwin Family	4.17
Queensland Press Group	29.95
Friends	4.53

By July 1982 the Dunn, Manning and Irwin Family shareholdings had eroded from 39.75 per cent (as above) to 34.72 per cent. The board decided to increase the company's capital from \$5 million to \$10 million.<sup>3</sup>

During its twenty-year existence, PNQ had only three chief executives - one from each of the principal families at the merger in 1968. They were Lex Seymour Dunn (1968-80); Clarence Morcom Manning (1981-87); and Robert Paul Hollingworth (1987-88), an Irwin descendant.<sup>4</sup> The Lex Dunn era was one of development and integration of the group; the Clarrie Manning

1. *Australian Financial Review*, 10 April 1978, p. 3.

2. Les Carlyon, *Paper Chase: The Press Under Examination* (Melbourne: Herald & Weekly Times Ltd., 1982), pp. 26-34, but espec. pp. 27, 34.

3. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 3 December 1979 and 13 August 1982.

4. A.D. Morris, 'Notes on PNQ', p. 20.

era was one of consolidation and expansion; and the brevity of the Rob Hollingworth era gave him little chance to stamp his own style on the Group.<sup>1</sup>

Lex Dunn served initially as PNQ company secretary, until 1970 when he was accorded the title of managing director and relieved of his duties as manager of the Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. In January 1974 he moved from Rockhampton to Brisbane to set up PNQ's new head office. His successor, Clarrie Manning, regarded Dunn as a good manager who applied good management principles.

The company prospered when he was there. It did when I was there. We had a similar sort of approach to management... we were old friends. We didn't always agree, mind you. But it didn't cause any friction.

Manning said Dunn had 'a very good mind, very clear - sometimes you wouldn't think so because of his speech problem, but anything he put on paper you had to look at'.<sup>2</sup> Dunn truncated words and his speech was hard to comprehend at times. Peter Dunn explained it:

Lex always thought faster than he spoke, so he'd chop himself off in a sentence and go on to something else and leave people hanging in mid air, trying to work out what he was saying. This annoyed some people. In fact, I'm sure it annoyed the Townsville people and that's why they didn't amalgamate with us... I'm sure of it.<sup>3</sup>

Keith McDonald remembered Dunn as a well-rounded newspaper man, 'a legal man... in some ways a bit of a logical chopper, but he had a good mind'.<sup>4</sup> The PNQ board met three or four times a year to receive and discuss the reports of the various subsidiaries. Dunn had power to call meetings at will. 'I'd often get agreement over the 'phone and get it confirmed at meetings.'<sup>5</sup> Some PNQ directors had difficulty coming to terms with Lex's concept of what the PNQ Group should be.

They were still in sections; they couldn't see it as an overall company. We had a board of twelve at one stage. Quite a massive thing. Unwieldy. And the people ... the variation in age, outlook and attitude, was quite noticeable. But it was Lex, of course, again who trimmed that back to what it finally was [eight]. He did a remarkable job, Lex.<sup>6</sup>

1. Richard A. Edwards, interview with author, Brisbane, 24 March 1992.
2. C.M. Manning, interview with author, Brisbane, 5 March 1992.
3. G.P. Dunn, interview with author, 20 January 1994.
4. McDonald, interview, 20 August 1992.
5. L.S. Dunn, interview with author, Brisbane, 12 February 1992.
6. G.P. Dunn, interview, 20 January 1994.



Manning, who served as chairman of the PNQ board from 1970-88, took on the dual role of chairman and chief executive from 1981-87. At the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, where he was editor from 1949-61 and managing editor 1961-80, he had established 'proper control procedures' and a better approach to selling advertising. His management philosophy was to maximise profit. He was always very keen on management training and development. PNQ used to fly a New Zealand expert to Queensland each year to tell its managers how to manage until it appointed its own management training officer in 1986.<sup>1</sup> McDonald regarded Manning as a well-rounded newspaperman who was more inclined to think like an editorial person than Lex Dunn was.<sup>2</sup>

Robert Paul Hollingworth (1947- ) was group general manager of PNQ from 1987-89. Hollingworth, a fourth-generation member of the Warwick newspaper Irwins, was general manager of The Warwick Newspaper Pty. Ltd. 1979-85, and then moved to Brisbane to serve as assistant chief executive, PNQ, 1985-86, and group operations manager, PNQ, 1986-87, as he was groomed for the top job. Hollingworth's appointment was widely regarded as deriving almost solely from nepotism. In fact, he was described as 'a compromise selection' whose appointment would prevent major dissension with the families. One manager saw him as ineffective: he took a year to approve expenditure of \$40,000 that would save the group \$80,000 a year.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from PNQ's progressive acquisition of small newspapers on the Sunshine Coast, detailed later in this chapter, the Group did not begin serious expansion until 1975 – as is shown in Table 36 – when it bought the *Gladstone Observer* and the weekly *Callide-Dawson News* from Murdoch's News Ltd. It assumed control on 1 January 1975 but was not able to settle the purchase – at \$314,718 after earlier offering \$225,000 – until 15 May after the Trade Practices Commission had approved the purchase.<sup>4</sup> In seven years Murdoch had converted the *Observer* from bi-weekly to five-days-a-week publication.<sup>5</sup> In 1977 PNQ

1. C.M. Manning, interview with author, Brisbane, 5 March 1992; PNQ News-Print, No. 3, 1986, p. 14.
2. K.H. McDonald, interview with author, Brisbane, 20 August 1992.
3. John Jones, interview with author, Brisbane, 4 June 1992.
4. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 16 September 1974 and 18 May 1975.
5. *Gladstone Observer*, 5 August 1969, 6 June 1970 and 3 July 1973.

examined seriously the possible purchase of Kingaroy's *South Burnett Times* after an approach on 7 April 1977 from Alice Lefroy Adams, who had become the principal shareholder upon the death of her husband, James Leslie Adams, on 26 February 1976 (viz. Appendix 2). Alice Adams told Dunn that Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, then the Premier, had said it was 'okay for PNQ to make an offer'. In whimsical style, PNQ managing director Lex Dunn called the project, 'Operation Madam'. In PNQ's view, the asking price of about \$500,000 - \$15 a share for 33,313 shares - was double what the business was worth.<sup>1</sup>

The expansionary regime continued, albeit slowly, as is shown in Table 34. From 31 March 1978, PNQ increased to 100 per cent its interest in both Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd. and the Bundaberg Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. This meant Townsville's *Bulletin* and Cairns's *Post* no longer had an interest in the Bundaberg paper.<sup>2</sup> In 1980, PNQ's attention was absorbed by the launch of the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, as detailed later in this chapter, and a change of chief executive. In February 1985 PNQ bought the *Central Queensland News* from the Gibson family, sole owners since 1941, and in January 1986 it bought the *Central Telegraph*, Biloela, from P. Bates and others, trading as the *Central Telegraph Pty. Ltd.*<sup>3</sup> But PNQ rejected the opportunity to buy *The Local*, Caloundra, for \$500,000 in 1984 and the *Bowen Independent* from the Darwen family in 1985 for \$1.5 million, including \$1.2 million goodwill.<sup>4</sup> The Mannings exhibited the same inherent caution for which the Dunns were known.<sup>5</sup> In 1987, in the midst of frantic changes in media ownership throughout Australia, PNQ - with Murdoch now the dominant shareholder - bought the former Northern Star Holdings newspapers for \$80 million (principally the *Northern Star*, Lismore, the *Tweed Daily*, the *Coffs Harbour Advocate*, and the *Daily Examiner*, Grafton); the *Chinchilla News* from David and Dorothy Fuller; and the business of the *Coral Coaster*, a free monthly publication with a circulation of

1. L.S. Dunn, telephone interview with author, 19 March 1992; L.S. Dunn, memorandum to directors, 11 May 1977; L.S. Dunn, memoranda to Group Finance Manager, 1 and 19 July 1977; L.S. Dunn, letter to A.L. Adams, 28 July 1977.

2. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 25 September 1978.

3. *Central Queensland News*, 1 February 1985, pp. 1, 2 and 4; *The Courier-Mail*, 2 February 1985; Margaret Gibson, interview with author, Emerald, 18 May 1980; *Central Telegraph*, 22 January 1986.

4. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 20 July 1984 and 17 October 1985.

5. Chairman's remarks, PNQ annual meeting, 2 December 1974.

Table 34

## PNQ chronology, 1968-88

1968, 1 April:

Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. is formed as the result of the merging of the interests of principally the Dunn, Manning, Irwin and Ipswich newspaper interests. Lex Dunn is secretary.

1970, 1 Oct.:

PNQ merges *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba, with Western Publishers' *Downs Star* on 50/50 basis.

1970:

PNQ buys *Sunshine Coast and Weekly Advertiser*, Caloundra, from the Whittles.

1971, 9 Sept.:

Queensland Press Ltd. acquires a 29 per cent interest in PNQ.

1973:

PNQ assigns Cooper Brothers and Co. to prepare a corporate plan for PNQ.

PNQ buys controlling interest in *Near North Coast News*, Caboolture.

1974:

PNQ shifts its headquarters to Brisbane as a result of the corporate plan recommendations.

PNQ buys *Noosa News* for \$100,000.

1975, 1 Jan.:

PNQ buys *Gladstone Observer* and the *Callide-Dawson News* from Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd.

1976, 9 Dec.:

PNQ is listed on Stock Exchange.

## Table 34 (cont.)

1978, 31 March:

PNQ increases to 100 per cent its interests in the Bundaberg Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. and Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd.

1979:

PNQ buys Express Group of Brisbane suburban papers. Unprofitable move.

1980, 7 July:

PNQ launches *Sunshine Coast Daily*.

1985, 1 Feb.:

PNQ buys *Central Queensland News*, Emerald, from the Gibson family.

1985, April:

PNQ wins the long battle against the Rockhampton printers.

1986, 23 Jan.:

PNQ buys *Central Telegraph*, Biloela, from P. Bates et al, trading as the Central Telegraph Pty. Ltd.

1987, Feb.:

Rupert Murdoch obtains effective control of PNQ through News Ltd.'s takeover of the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd.

1987, Oct:

PNQ buys the former Northern Star Holdings newspapers (Lismore, Tweed, Coffs Harbour, Grafton).

1987, 1 Nov.:

PNQ buys *Chinchilla News* from David and Dorothy Fuller.

1987:

Coral Coaster: During 1987 PNQ acquired the business of the *Coral Coaster* in the Whitsunday tourist area north of Cairns. Free monthly publication with a circulation of 35,000 and is printed by Mackay.

## Table 34 (cont.)

1988, March:

PNQ acquires Press Etching Qld. Pty. Ltd., a long-established Brisbane-based colour-separation and typesetting business.

1988, 26 July:

Haswell Pty. Ltd. takes over PNQ.

1988, 13 Aug.:

Haswell Pty. Ltd.'s takeover offer for PNQ expires .

1988, 2 Nov:

PNQ is renamed, by its new owners, as Australian Provincial Newspapers Ltd.

35,000 in the Whitsunday tourist area of north Queensland. In March 1988 PNQ bought Press Etching Qld. Pty. Ltd., a long-established Brisbane-based colour separation and typesetting business.<sup>1</sup> PNQ's expansion gathered increasing momentum from the mid 1980s - after a steady program of buying both new plant and buildings at Ipswich, Warwick, Maroochydore, Toowoomba and Mackay and new plant only at Rockhampton, Maryborough and Gladstone.<sup>2</sup> Generally, however, there was until 1987 a reticence as reflected in a 1974 statement by the chairman, Clarrie Manning, that he saw the fight as 'one for economic survival rather than to create opportunities for improvement, expansion and development'.

In its twenty years, PNQ celebrated successes, probably the boldest and most significant being the launch of the *Sunshine Coast Daily* in 1980, and regretted failures, the most significant being the merger of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* interests with the *Downs Star* in 1970 and the purchase of the Express Group of Brisbane suburban newspapers in 1979. Their success with the Sunshine Coast enterprise reflected a doggedness and vision generally not perceived in their other projects. Their failures with the *Downs Star* and the Express Group, as will be shown, suggested that the families were accustomed to country ways and country wisdom - the ghost of caution hovered - and not to the head-to-head confrontation normally indulged in by metropolitan media proprietors. They were not street-wise and market-wise and ready to take the plunge at a moment's notice. PNQ's caution was illustrated by the fact that its long-term borrowings were insignificant. It was the Group's practice to minimise the demand for investment funds by undertaking one major project at a time. The Group was prepared to use bank finance, secured by mortgage, to fund the purchase of real estate, and to use leasing finance to fund the purchase of major plant items. It used retained reserves to finance other capital expenditure. Its ratio (i.e. current assets divided by current liabilities) was 1.66 at 30 June 1982.<sup>3</sup> PNQ displayed a readiness to look to the future in

1. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 14 August and 7 December 1987; A.D. Morris, 'Notes on PNQ', pp. 14-16; *Chinchilla News*, 5 November 1987.  
 2. A.D. Morris, 'Notes on PNQ', p. 11  
 3. Strategies report, p. 21.

the Sunshine Coast venture, but lacked nous and vision in strategic decisions about free newspapers, especially in the Brisbane market.

It was explained earlier how economies of scale are largely responsible for single publications gaining control of newspaper markets. These economies also provide a strong barrier against the entry of potential competitors into newspaper markets. When a local newspaper is launched, it is likely to obtain only a small share of the market for both copies and advertising, and will thus be faced with high unit production costs compared with those of the major paper. Therefore, in addition to the considerable outlays involved in hiring management, editorial and production staff, and in setting up premises, plant and a distribution system, the establishment costs facing a new entrant into newspaper publishing will usually incur substantial trading losses incurred before it is able (if indeed it is able) to attain dominance in the market.<sup>1</sup> Both the *Downs Star* in Toowoomba (a non-Dunn, non-PNQ newspaper at its inception) and the *Sunshine Coast Daily* at Maroochydore (a PNQ publication) faced these realities, with the qualifications that the latter was establishing in what was perceived as an emerging market and was producing a number of established titles. The Sunshine Coast was growing much faster than the average population centre, as this chapter will show.

For the reasons given earlier, most established monopoly papers are quite secure against challenges to their position. In the lead-up to the establishment of the *Downs Star*, as a daily evening newspaper, in Toowoomba on 11 July 1955, forecasts of doom whizzed back and forth among the Dunn newspapers. Six months before the launch, Hector Dunn wrote: 'It will be an expensive undertaking to start an evening daily. If it does come off it should not worry the *Chronicle* much.' The complacent, yet nervous, tone changed little in the months that followed: the general tenor was that the *Chronicle* was a good newspaper and so had little to fear.<sup>2</sup> The Dunns knew

1. Brown, p. 4.

2. H.H.H. Dunn, letters to Walter Bruce, 25 January, 9 February and 25 May 1955; Walter Bruce, letter to Alex Dunn, 24 June 1955.

that the *Star* would not have access to news services made available to other country dailies. The *Star* had upset Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd. by luring away some of its talented staff, and the Regional News Service, operated by the Queensland Division of the Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd., was not available to the *Star*.<sup>1</sup> The Dunns received a jolt when five members of the *Chronicle's* staff deserted to join the *Star* at the beginning.<sup>2</sup> The new daily did strike all the problems expected, but it persevered and fifteen years later had the last laugh when the proprietor since 1959, J. Rowe and Son, gained a fifty per cent interest in the *Toowoomba Chronicle* upon the merger of the interests of the two papers.

The *Downs Star* was launched by Western Publishers Pty. Ltd., which had bought the *Western Star*, Roma, in 1948. A major shareholder was William Manson Ewan, who represented Roma for the Country Party in the Queensland Parliament 1950-53 and 1957-67.<sup>3</sup> Poor reproduction in the first issue of the *Downs Star* led some advertisers to cancel contracts before the first day was out.<sup>4</sup> In June 1956, the Saturday edition was discontinued. Net paid circulation of the *Downs Star* was given as 10,582 for the six months to 30 September 1956 (the *Chronicle's* was 16,404) and 11,600 two years later (*Chronicle*, c. 16,500).<sup>5</sup> In 1959 two Sydney publishers, the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Telegraph*, made tentative inquiries to take over Western Publishers Pty. Ltd. Before any firm arrangements were made, the company was acquired after the issue of 3 July 1959 by Toowoomba furniture and electrical retailer, J. Rowe and Son, which had been the biggest advertiser in the *Star* since the first issue. The principal was Allan Tregithew Frank (Treg) Rowe, whose grandfather, Josiah Rowe, founded the family firm in 1892.<sup>6</sup> Rowes spent four thousand pounds a year on advertising in the *Chronicle* till the advent of the *Star*, and nil after that.

1. Rae Pennycuick, 'The Downs Star: the history of a free newspaper' in Maurice French (ed.), Darling Downs Studies (Toowoomba: Darling Downs Institute Press, 1978), p. 21.

2. Walter Bruce, letter to Alex Dunn, 24 June 1955.

3. Walter Bruce, letter to H.H.H. Dunn, 2 February 1955; D.B. Waterson and John Arnold, Biographical Register of the Queensland Parliament 1930-1980 (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1982), p. 29.

4. Pennycuick, p. 24.

5. Audit Bureau of Circulations figures.

6. *Downs Star*, 11 July 1955; *The Chronicle*, 16 February 1987.



Treg Rowe fiddled with the dials, trying to adjust the publication frequency of the *Star* to the correct pitch for the Toowoomba market. He changed from daily to weekly publication from 9 July 1959 and added the *Week End Star* from 28 November 1959. During February 1960, the *Star* was bi-weekly and the *Week End Star* and *Star Weekly* were also published. The *Week End Star* was discontinued in mid 1960. From 1 March 1960, the *Star* became a free daily. The *Star Weekly* was discontinued in the second half of 1964. One thing was constant: J. Rowe and son provided up to seventy-eight per cent of the *Star's* advertising each month.<sup>1</sup> Before the merger in 1970, the *Downs Star* was 'killing' the *Chronicle*, according to Greg Stephenson, who was editor of the *Queensland Times*, Ipswich, 1970-75.<sup>2</sup> Other sources failed to confirm this.

The mere presence of the *Star* provided a thorn in the side for the *Chronicle* and ultimately, when PNQ was formed, action was taken to end the pain. The bitterness that had developed led Treg Rowe to refuse, however, to negotiate with any of the Dunns, even though Lex Dunn was managing director of PNQ and Rowley Dunn was managing director of the *Chronicle*. Rowley reciprocated Rowe's feelings: 'Rowley Dunn wouldn't touch Rowe with a forty-foot pole.' Lex long regretted his failure to insist that he be on the delegation to discuss a possible merger with Rowe's Western Publishers. What was meant to be a preliminary discussion in August 1970 turned into full-scale negotiations and the PNQ board was presented with almost a *fait accompli*: a proposal that 'Rowe come for a half interest in the *Toowoomba Chronicle* and bring in his paper'. Dunn voted against the proposal, but the board decided on a merger which gave Rowe a fifty per cent interest in a highly profitable regional daily newspaper in a fast-growing provincial city. PNQ had two directors on the board of the new company, Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd., as did Rowe, but PNQ had the casting vote. Lex Dunn, board chairman from 1970-80, said:

I only had to use it once, and when I used it, Rowe walked out of the meeting. We still had a quorum, so we could pass the motion.<sup>3</sup>

1. Pennycuik, p. 26; Toowoomba Newspaper Co. document, 1964.

2. Gregory Bevis Stephenson, interview with author, Karalee, 2 December 1993.

3. L.S. Dunn, interview with author, Brisbane, 12 Feb. 1992. Rowe ignored requests for an interview.

When PNQ was swallowed whole in a takeover in 1988, senior executives of the new company, Australian Provincial Newspapers Ltd., were left scratching their heads about the Toowoomba 'fiasco' which meant only half the profits of the *Chronicle* came to headquarters.<sup>1</sup> Lex Dunn summed it up: 'Treg Rowe got a beautiful proposition.'<sup>2</sup> His readiness to stick to his demands has not diminished over the years, as he demonstrated when he provided so many obstacles for the relocation of the *Chronicle* from antiquated premises in Margaret Street to modern premises in Ruthven Street for the technological changeover in May 1979. Eventually, the site was bought by another PNQ subsidiary company, Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd., and not by Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd.<sup>3</sup> His objections apparently related to the terms of the original agreement between PNQ and Western Publishers and whether that agreement provided for the merged company to undertake publication of titles other than the *Chronicle* and the *Star*.<sup>4</sup> Repeated PNQ attempts to buy back Rowe's fifty per cent interest in Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd. failed, but his family company, Kincaid Pty. Ltd. sold the *Gatton, Lockyer and Brisbane Valley Star* (a free weekly, established in 1956) and the *Western Star, Roma* (a paid bi-weekly), to Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd. in August 1992. This meant Rowe retained a fifty per cent interest in them.<sup>5</sup>

PNQ's purchase in October 1979 of the Express Group of Brisbane suburban newspapers provided another example of the provincial press group's lack of street-wise operators. It made the purchase despite a warning from a PNQ director that some capable people, including Rupert Murdoch, had had a go at the Brisbane suburban market previously and had retired hurt. PNQ closed the Express papers a year later, dismissing

1. Brian Stead, interview with author, Brisbane, 4 June 1992.

2. L.S. Dunn, interview, 12 February 1992.

3. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 27 September 1976, 23 May 1977, and 28 April 1978.

4. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 28 April 1978; Treg Rowe failed to respond to repeated written requests for an interview; the author made the initial request during casual contact after a funeral.

5. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 28 April 1978; Strategies report, p. 7; Millie Euler, interview with author, Capalaba, 17 January 1994; *PANPA Bulletin*, September 1992, p. 13; *The Chronicle*, 4 August 1992, p. 12.

approximately seventy-five journalists, photographers, artists, and office and clerical staff because of a 'lack of response in the market place'.<sup>1</sup> Keith McDonald had warned the board of the inherent dangers.

They went about it in a very meticulous way, logical in a sense, yet not street-wise or market-wise. They divided Brisbane, as I recall it, into seven zones [comprising three city council electorates each]. This was pretty good for getting statistics and data out, but didn't pay too much attention to where the retail action was. The boundaries were after all boundaries of local government, and bore no relationship to where the catchment areas were for local shopping centres. I think that's what brought them down... They didn't cover themselves with any glory.<sup>2</sup>

Probably as significant as its failure with the Express Group was its closure on 24 June 1981 of the two *Records* which PNQ had launched as one, through its Sunshine Coast company, in November 1975. The papers were launched as the *Pine and Peninsula Record* to serve the growing Pine Shire and the more established Redcliffe Peninsula in northern Brisbane. They were split into separate editions, the *Pine Record* and the *Peninsula Record*, but became a casualty of a rigorous cost review nine months after the launch of the *Sunshine Coast Daily*.<sup>3</sup> In PNQ's determination to persevere with the *Daily* on the growing Sunshine Coast, it discarded established publications in an even faster growing area: the burgeoning northernmost suburbs of Brisbane. One former PNQ director believes the *Records* could have become the basis by the 1990s of a 'free' daily, such as the *Manly Daily* in Sydney.<sup>4</sup> In Ipswich, PNQ blundered again in the 'free' newspaper market. It bought an opposition 'free' paper, the *West Moreton Mirror*, in 1972, to prevent *The Courier-Mail* from buying it, but refused to allocate *Queensland Times* editor Greg Stephenson

1. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 19 October 1979, 15 and 23 September 1980; *The Courier-Mail*, 1 November 1979, p. 28; *B&T Weekly*, 27 November 1980.

2. McDonald, interview, 20 August 1992.

3. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 31 May 1981; John Jones, letter to author, 12 July 1984.

4. G.P. Dunn, interview with author, Kenmore, 20 January 1994.

any extra staff to produce it. PNQ closed the *Mirror* on 9 December 1974, unwisely leaving a gap in the market for a weekly. On 15 February 1978 an opposition 'free', the *Advertiser*, was launched by Bruce and Judy Moulton, who had strong family links with the *Queensland Times*, and Dave Handyside who had been circulation manager of the paper. Judy Moulton was the daughter of William Sinclair Parkinson, chairman of the newspaper's board from 1954 till his death on 21 March 1965. Bruce Moulton had replaced his father-in-law on the *Queensland Times* board and served on it till 1973. He was the *Queensland Times's* advertising manager for three years until 20 February 1976 when he left to go into business. Instead of treating the *Advertiser* seriously by resurrecting the *Mirror*, the *Queensland Times* scoffed at the new rival and forecast its demise within two weeks, six weeks, six months. Sixteen years later it was still going. The Moultons sold it to Rural Press Ltd. on 1 February 1986.<sup>1</sup> Greg Stephenson found it 'terribly, terribly hard' to convince the *Queensland Times* local board and the PNQ board of the soundness of schemes to expand into the fringe areas of Brisbane. 'We could have been in there ahead of Quest.'<sup>2</sup> Quest Newspapers, now owned by News Ltd., was publishing eighteen free suburban newspapers, including one bi-weekly, in Brisbane in January 1994.<sup>3</sup>

'Project 41' - the plan to launch on the Sunshine Coast a daily newspaper - did bring glory to PNQ. In 1968, the Dunns brought with them to the PNQ Group the bi-weekly *Nambour Chronicle*, which was to become the foundational block for building a regional daily newspaper on the Sunshine Coast. In 1970 PNQ took the next step in the Sunshine Coast expansion program by buying Caloundra's *Sunshine Coast and Weekly*

1. *Queensland Times*, 22 March 1965; Graham Selwyn Stephenson, interview with author, Springwood, 5 March 1980; minutes of PNQ board meeting, 2 December 1974; Norol D. Kippen, letter to author, 2 January 1980; Greg Stephenson, interview with author, Karalee, 2 December 1993; Dave Handyside, telephone interview with author, 24 January 1994; Ross Hallett, letter to author, 11 February 1994.

2. Greg Stephenson, interview, 2 December 1993.

3. Paul O'Rourke, telephone interview with author, 24 January 1994.

Advertiser for \$50,000. In 1973 PNQ took control of North Coast News Co. Pty. Ltd. and in 1974 it bought the *Noosa News* for \$100,000 – these two enterprises were listed as numbers one and two in the 1973 corporate plan acquisition list.<sup>1</sup> In early 1975, it had appointed John Jones, widely experienced in managing country newspapers in New South Wales, as general manager of the developing Sunshine Coast Newspaper Company and in 1976 he lured from the editorship of the daily *Illawarra Mercury*, Wollongong, one of his former editors, David Lonsdale, to help plan, shape, launch and run the emerging regional daily. Jones later commented that 'having the right people' was the key to the success of the *Daily*.<sup>2</sup>

Even before Jones came on the scene, the editor of the *Nambour Chronicle*, Peter Richardson, suggested in 1974 that 'a preliminary study be made of the feasibility of converting the *Chronicle* to a daily'.<sup>3</sup> In November 1977 a PNQ committee recommended that PNQ introduce a daily morning newspaper, published Monday to Saturday, supported by three weeklies: one for Nambour and district; one for Maroochydore/Caloundra; and one for Noosa/Tewantin. The Sunshine Coast was growing three times as fast as the average population centre. The population was projected to increase from 62,662 at the 1976 Census to 77,000 three years later. Primary production in the region, shown on the map which forms Table 35, was estimated at \$30 million to \$40 million and there were 223 factories on the coast employing 1,868 people.<sup>4</sup> PNQ accepted the recommendation for a daily newspaper, but there was a major problem: the Sunshine Coast operation lacked a building big enough to cope with producing a daily newspaper. The company began a major redevelopment in 1979 only to find, midway through 1980, that it should bring forward its planning for the *Daily*.

We didn't have a date. But we realised we needed to make the move before somebody else did.

1. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 20 July 1970, 20 August and 23 November 1973, 4 March and 8 July 1974, and 17 October 1975; *Nambour Chronicle*, 9 and 13 September 1966.

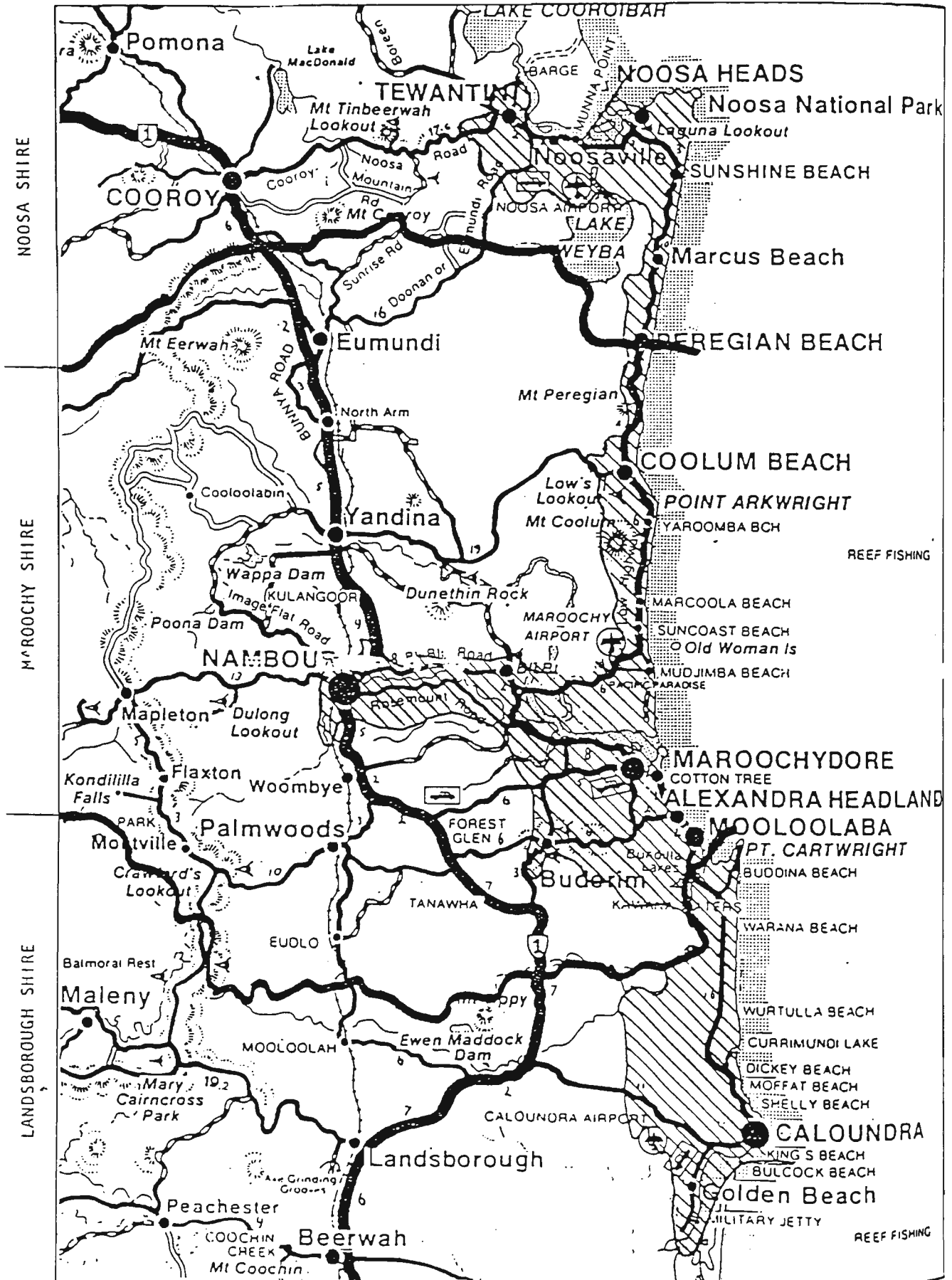
2. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 18 May 1975; John Jones, interview with author, Brisbane, 4 June 1992.

3. Peter Richardson, internal memorandum, 5 April 1974.

4. Group Finance Manager. PNQ. 'Sunshine Coast Feasibility Study' report, 7 November 1977, p. 1.

Table 35

Sunshine Coast Statistical District



SC.2



Defined area of the Sunshine Coast Statistical District

The Sunshine Coast management was worried that Project 41 would be beaten out of the starting blocks by the *Gympie Times*, established in 1868 and by 1980 publishing four times a week - it would have been so easy to produce a Gympie edition and a Sunshine Coast edition - or a newspaper enterprise new to the region.

Lex Dunn came up and said I'll give you two days to convince me (or otherwise). By morning tea time [on the first day], he said I'm convinced. I'll take it back to the board and get approval. From that, approval was given - on 23 April 1980. We launched 7 July 1980... But the building was only half finished. So in the midst of a million-dollar building project we in fact launched a daily paper.<sup>1</sup>

Some staff members do not have happy memories of working while a building was erected over them.

I'll never forget the experience of having the *Sunshine Coast Daily* office built around us as we attempted to work, cooped up in the tiny original building, half a dozen journalists, sweltering, bricks dropping on the roof, the presses pounding away, with the ever excitable and legendary John Keenan exploding from time to time, as our various telephones and conversations entangled.<sup>2</sup>

The building was finished eight months after the *Daily* was launched.<sup>3</sup>

After nine weeks, the *Daily* was 'going pretty badly': its circulation was about half the early target of 13,000 and advertising revenue was well below budget. The paper carried only thirty-four per cent advertising. The primary objective of launching a daily newspaper for the Sunshine Coast, supported by four community newspapers, had been achieved, but 'the degree of success has been much lower than anticipated, with the financial fortunes of the subsidiary taking a battering'. Production overtime in the composing section for the early weeks of the project was high because of the high

1. Jones, interview, 4 June 1992.

2. Paul Dobbyn, letter to author, 11 June 1992.

3. Strategies Pty. Ltd., 'Sunshine Coast Newspaper Company Pty. Ltd.: Corporate Plan', 30 September 1983, p. 4; *PNO News*, April 1981, p. 1.



A PNQ committee in action: (from left) John Sadleir, John Jones, Lex Dunn, Clarrrie Manning, Geoff Smith.



volume of setting and the inability of typesetting equipment to handle the load, and consequent machine break-downs. Overall, the problems echoed those which faced Toowoomba's *Downs Star* in its early days: too little revenue, excessive costs.<sup>1</sup> The Sunshine Coast initiative was costly in the first three years.

I always say that the first year cost the company a million dollars: the difference between what we [had been] making and what we'd lost by the end of the first financial year. So it was a million dollar investment and fortunately they stuck with it. The PNQ board decided they would stay with it; they didn't panic. They just absorbed the losses until we got it right.<sup>2</sup>

The PNQ board established a Sunshine Coast committee which received monthly reports on the *Daily's* performance and had the power to call a board meeting at short notice if it felt the situation warranted it. Weekly reports were provided to all directors. After nine months, specific advertising targets were set for the *Daily* (fifty per cent) and the weeklies. In 1982 PNQ ordered more regular board meetings to keep an even closer eye on the Sunshine Coast operation 'in an attempt to correct the profitability of this subsidiary'. In January 1983, the Sunshine Coast profit for the month was \$4,896 was \$100,937 below budget and about \$86,000 below that obtained for the corresponding period in 1982. The profit for 1982-83 was \$130,232 lower than the previous year, as is shown in Table 36 which compares the company's performance from 1976-77 to 1982-83.<sup>3</sup> PNQ called on management consultants to audit the Sunshine Coast operation and improvement began when the consultants' recommendations, especially about marketing management, were implemented.<sup>4</sup>

Circulation was always going to be the primary gauge of the paper's success, for without the sales the paper would not attract sufficient advertising revenue to make it profitable.

1. J. Jones, 'Sunshine Coast Daily: The First Nine Weeks', September 1980, p. 2.

2. Jones, interview, 4 June 1992.

3. Minutes of PNQ board meeting, 15 September 1980, 31 May 1981, 13 August 1982, and 10 March 1983.

4. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994.

Table 36

## SUNSHINE COAST - PERFORMANCE TRENDS - 1977/1983 NEWSPAPER &amp; COMMERCIAL PRINTING

	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
1. Revenue \$m	2.31	2.64	3.44	4.56	5.42	6.70	6.73
2. Revenue - Index	100.0	114.3	148.9	197.4	234.6	290.0	291.0
3. Profit before tax - \$m	130,969	248,641	446,856	579,124	(246,994)	446,905	189,170
4. PBT % Revenue	5.7	9.4	13.0	12.7	(4.6)	6.7	2.8
5. PBT % Revenue - Index	100.0	164.9	228.1	222.8	(136.2)	245.6	58.2
6. PBT - Change on previous year %	-	89.9	79.7	29.6	(142.6)	280.9	(57.7)
7. PBT - Index	100.0	189.9	341.2	442.2	(242.6)	341.2	144.4
8. Income Tax \$m	51,980	103,956	190,949	231,665	(126,868)	199,073	19,041
9. Operating Profit (Profit After Tax)	78,989	144,685	255,907	347,459	(120,126)	247,832	117,600
10. PAT % Revenue	3.4	5.5	7.4	7.6	(2.2)	3.7	1.8
11. Equity - \$m	53,303	53,303	53,303	53,303	53,303	60,000	60,000
12. Shareholders' Funds - \$m							
13. Shareholders' Funds - Index							
14. Operating Profit % of Shareholders' Funds							
15. Assets - \$m							
16. Assets - Index							
17. PBT % of Assets							
18. CPI - Brisbane June 1977 = 100	100.0	108.2	117.0	129.7	141.7	156.9	172.6

In August 1981, thirteen months after it began publication, the *Sunshine Coast Daily* achieved a daily average net paid circulation of 13,000: the initial target.<sup>1</sup> The circulation for its first six-month audit (to 31 March 1981) was 9,304, and this had jumped to 15,248 a year later. But 'a bad economic period on the Coast' hit the circulation over the next three years, as Table 37 shows. It dropped below the 15,000-mark and did not climb above it again till the September semester 1985. The most dramatic increase in circulation came after the *Daily* introduced free home delivery for six-day subscribers in June 1988 – an initiative that came shortly before the departure of John Jones, general manager from 1975 until March 1988. Circulation jumped 14.4 per cent in 1988 and 15.6 per cent in 1989. For the six months to 30 September 1990 the *Daily's* circulation was 20,986.<sup>2</sup> As important as free home delivery was to the fortunes of the *Daily*, Jones, however, attributes the success of the paper to 'getting the right people', especially editor David Lonsdale.<sup>3</sup>

By 1993 the population of the Sunshine Coast was 125,396 and it was regarded as Australia's twelfth largest city.<sup>4</sup> The continued population growth in the region was reflected in the launch of *Sunday*, the Sunshine Coast company's Sunday edition, on 14 June 1992, two months after the *Sunday Sun* had ceased publication in Brisbane – an event followed by the serious entry to the south-east Queensland market of the high-circulating Sydney-based Sunday newspapers, the *Sun-Herald* and *Sunday Telegraph* (both Sydney-based papers discontinued their south Queensland editions in May 1994, as is shown in Appendix 1). In November 1994 the Sunshine Coast Newspaper Company expects to move into its new \$3 million headquarters on a 1.6 hectare site on an industrial estate close to the Sunshine Coast Motorway and away from the traffic snarls of the commercial heart of Maroochydore. The company's staff had grown from 170 (including approximately fifty part-timers and

1. Minutes of PNQ board meetings, 31 May, 10 August and 14 September 1981, 13 March 1982, 10 March 1983.

2. Audit Bureau of Circulations figures; 'Readers' judgment given in circulation', *Sunshine Coast Daily*, 10th Birthday Feature, 6 July 1990, p. 26.

3. Jones, interview, 4 June 1992.

4. Coopers and Lybrand Consultants, cited in *The Bulletin*, 16 November 1993, p. 24.

Table 37

**Sunshine Coast Daily  
circulation figures,  
1980-1990**

Mar. 1981	9,304
Sept. 1981	12,333
Mar. 1982	15,248
Sept. 1982	15,053
Mar. 1983	14,408
Sept. 1983	14,338
Mar. 1984	14,317
Sept. 1984	14,102
Mar. 1985	14,764
Sept. 1985	15,110
Mar. 1986	15,627
Sept. 1986	15,420
Mar. 1987	15,862
Sept. 1987	16,355
Mar. 1988	17,478
Sept. 1988	18,997
Mar. 1989	20,294
Sept. 1989	20,443
Mar. 1990	20,625
Sept. 1990	20,986

SOURCE: Audit Bureau of Circulations.

casuals) in 1980 to 230 full-timers and casuals in 1990 and to 266 full-time and permanent part-time employees in 1994.<sup>1</sup>

If the *Sunshine Coast Daily* was a particular success for PNQ, overall profitability during two decades reflected general success for the Group. PNQ's annual net profit increased from \$317,000 in 1968 to \$681,000 in 1975, \$1,919,000 in 1980, \$4,510,000 in 1985, and \$4 million in 1988, as is shown in Table 38.<sup>2</sup> Revenue reserves were built from \$4.42 million in 1978 to \$10.067 million at 30 June 1982, and \$21.227 million at 30 June 1987.<sup>3</sup> A Sydney Stock Exchange research study ranked PNQ 266th in a list of Australian public companies according to market capitalisation as at 30 June 1983. It ranked twelfth in a list of media specialist companies. Its capitalisation was \$20,378,000, its capital and reserves amounted to \$18,428,000 and its total assets to \$27,857,000.<sup>4</sup> By 1983, PNQ had 'significantly exceeded the financial objectives and targets established in the 1973 Corporate Plan'.<sup>5</sup> The only measure of performance which trailed Consumer Price Index movements was the return on sales, as is shown in Table 39. The return on shareholders' funds exceeded twenty per cent in five of the seven years between 1976-77 and 1982-83 (viz. Table 40). The share price had increased to \$5.10, with a 5.1 per cent yield, as at 30 August 1983.<sup>6</sup> A \$1,000 investment in PNQ in June 1982 would have been worth \$7,368 at 30 June 1987, as is shown in Table 39. In 1982-83 the percentage of Group profit contributed by the former Dunn subsidiaries totalled thirty-seven per cent:

Toowoomba	25pc
Rockhampton	10pc
Maryborough	2pc

By comparison, the former Manning paper, the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, contributed twenty-two per cent; the *Queensland Times*, Ipswich, eighteen per cent; the *Bundaberg News-Mail*, eleven per cent; the *Gladstone Observer*, four per cent; the *Sunshine*

1. Sunshine Coast Newspaper Company, telephone interview with author, 24 January 1994; *Sunshine Coast Daily*, 10th Birthday Issue, 6 July 1990, p. 27; Peter Owen, telephone interview with author, 18 January 1994, and interview with author, St. Lucia, 3 June 1994.

2. A.D. Morris, 'Notes on PNQ', p. 16; Geoff Moffett (ed.), *Australia's Top 500 Companies, 1992-93* (Sydney: Riddell Information Services Pty. Ltd., 1992), p. 85.

3. Strategies report, p. 21; *Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. Annual Report 1987*, p. 17.

4. Strategies report, p. 22.

5. Strategies report, p. 24.

6. Strategies report, p. 23.

Table 38

## PNQ net profits, 1968-1988

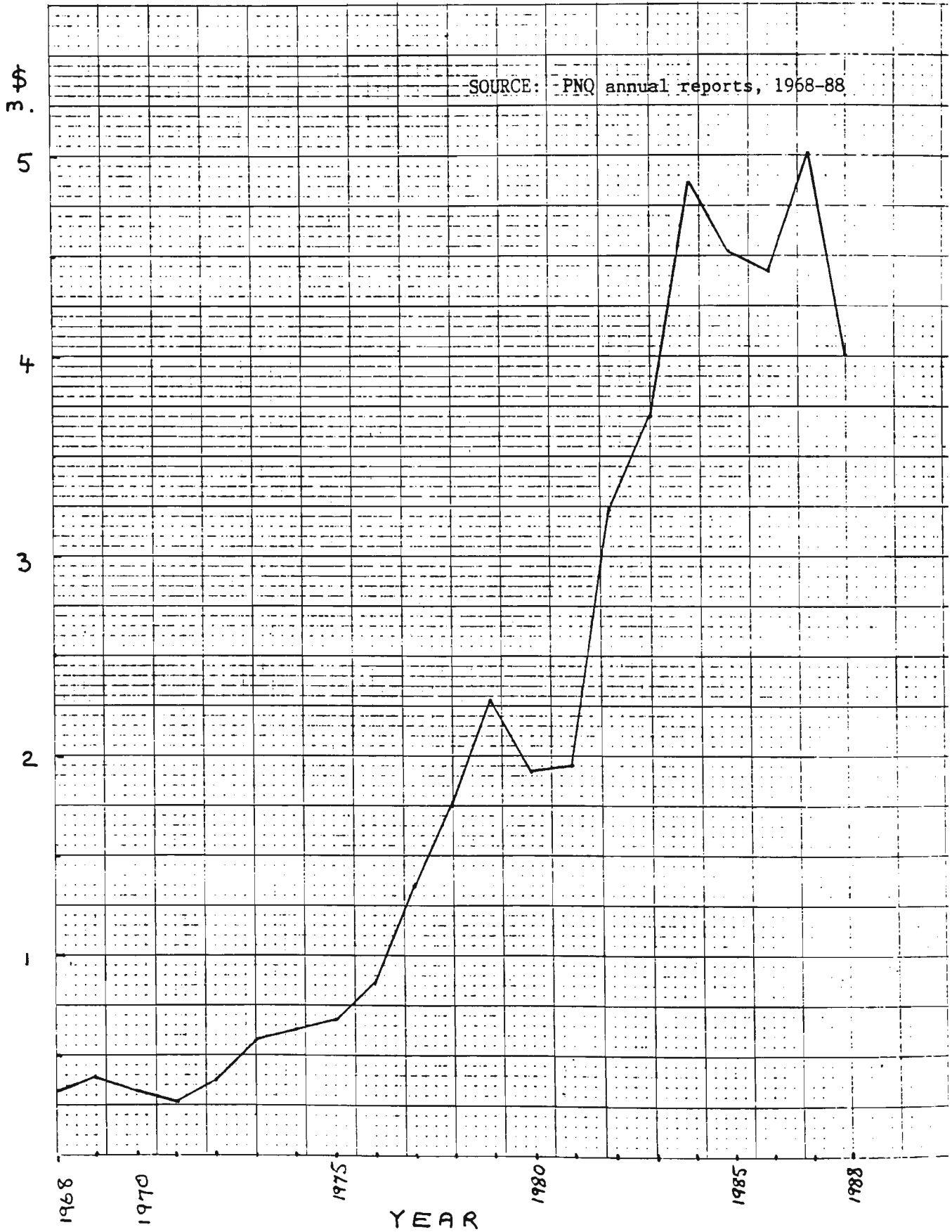
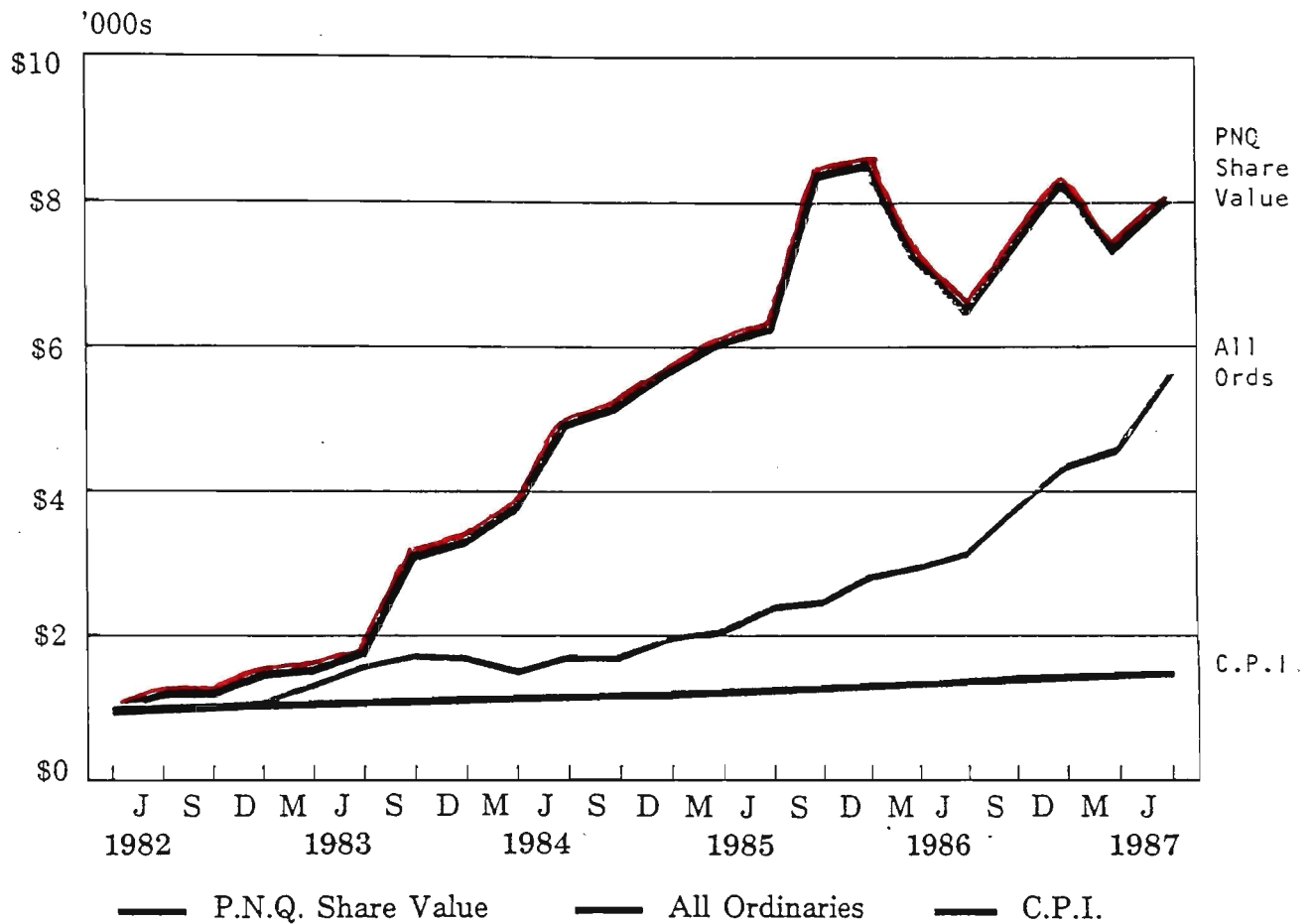


Table 39



COMPARATIVE INVESTMENT GRAPH

PROVINCIAL NEWSPAPERS (QLD.) LTD.



THE red index on this graph follows the total return on an investment of \$1,000 in this company's ordinary shares in June, 1982 assuming that all dividends and proceeds from the sale of rights have been reinvested in the company's shares.

The \$1,000 investment would have been worth \$7,368 on 30th June, 1987.

A similar method is used to calculate the Australian Stock Exchange's all ordinary accumulation index which is also shown on this graph.

The graph compares the total return shown by these indices with the rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

All data used in this graph was produced by Stock Exchange Research Pty. Ltd., Sydney.

SOURCE: Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. Annual Report, 1987, p. 27.

Table 40

PNQ performance trends, 1977-1983

	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983 Provisional
1. Revenue \$m	15.961	19.386	22.783	27.882	33.038	38.859	43.073
2. Revenue - Index	100.00	121.5	143.3	174.7	207.0	243.5	270.0
3. Profit Before Tax - \$m	2.217	3.083	3.738	3.197	3.374	5.867	6.635
4. FBT % Revenue	13.9	15.9	16.4	11.5	10.2	15.1	15.4
5. FBT % Revenue - Index	100.00	114.4	118.0	82.7	73.4	108.9	110.8
6. FBT - Change on previous year %	-	39.1	21.2	(14.5)	5.5	73.9	13.1
7. FBT - Index	100.00	139.1	168.6	144.2	152.2	264.6	299.3
8. Income Tax \$m	0.857	1.351	1.408	1.278	1.423	2.627	2.867
9. Operating Profit (Profit After Tax)	1.350	1.752	2.330	1.919	1.951	3.240	3.769
10. FAT % Revenue	8.5	9.0	10.2	6.9	5.9	8.3	8.8
11. Equity - \$m	2.310	2.717	2.717	2.717	2.717	2.717	4.076
12. Shareholders' Funds - \$m	6.650	8.425	9.754	10.779	11.813	13.906	16.428
13. Shareholders' Funds - Index	100.00	126.7	146.7	162.1	177.6	209.1	277.1
14. Operating Profit % of Shareholders' Funds	20.3	20.8	23.9	17.8	16.5	23.2	20.5
15. Assets - \$m	10.784	12.429	15.441	17.924	18.959	22.399	27.857
16. Assets - Index	100.00	115.3	143.2	166.2	175.8	207.7	258.3
17. FBT % of Assets	20.6	24.8	24.2	17.8	17.8	26.2	23.8
18. CFI - Brisbane June 1977 = 100	100.00	105.2	117.0	129.7	141.7	156.9	172.6

Source: PNO Annual Report 1981/82 - ABS Cat. No. 6401.0 (Item 18)



Coast Daily, three per cent; the Warwick Daily News, 1.5 per cent; and 'other', 3.35 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

PNQ's performance improved steadily, assisted by the gradual expansion detailed earlier in this chapter and by the installation of improved technology as described in Chapter 8, from 1982 until its takeover in 1988 by Irish-Australian interests. It experienced a difficult trading year in 1982-1983, with profit rising from \$3,240 million in 1981-82 to \$3,701 million only because cost increases were kept down to 10.4 per cent through 'prudent management and with the assistance of the wage pause'.<sup>2</sup> In 1983-84 profit climbed by twenty-nine per cent to \$4.196 million from a trading turnover of \$47.7 million.<sup>3</sup> In 1984-85 adverse economic factors hit PNQ's performance in the second half of the year after a favourable first half. Total revenue was \$53,069,195. Profit dropped to \$3,800,000 mainly because of downturns in sugar and coal.<sup>4</sup> In 1985-86, PNQ's total revenue was \$57,182,133, up only 7.7 per cent after the Group had experienced 'one of its most difficult trading years'. PNQ finished with an after-tax profit of \$5,247,000, eleven per cent better than previous year. During the year PNQ sold its shares in Wide Bay TV Ltd.<sup>5</sup> In 1986-87 trading was again difficult, but a 'creditable' profit of \$6,818,000 was recorded - up thirty per cent on the previous year. Total group revenue was \$61,968,000. During the year, Mackay Television, in which PNQ was a shareholder, was taken over by Universal Telecasters, Brisbane. As a result of this and the sale of other investments by the company, PNQ profit for the year was boosted by a capital profit of \$2.371 million.<sup>6</sup> With its acquisition in October 1987 of the former Northern Star Holdings newspapers, as detailed earlier in this chapter, PNQ's 1987-88, profit was \$4 million. PNQ soon found that in a fiercely competitive business environment, nepotism - or the adherence to family values when business values should take precedence - eventually incurs a penalty. In PNQ's

1. Strategies report, p. 24.

2. Chairman's address to PNQ annual meeting, 21 October 1983.

3. Chairman's address to PNQ annual meeting, 19 October 1984.

4. Chairman's address to PNQ annual meeting, 18 October 1985.

5. John C. Wilson and Russell J. Findlay (eds.) Australia's Top 500 Companies, 1987-88 (2nd ed.: Sydney: R.G. Riddell Pty. Ltd., 1987), p. 413; chairman's address to PNQ annual meeting, 17 October 1986.

6. Chairman's address to PNQ annual meeting, 16 October 1987; Provincial Newspapers (Old.) Ltd. Annual Report 1987, p. 6.

case, the penalty was the loss of an inheritance handed down by the patriarchs of six Queensland newspaper dynasties that had extended at least into the third generation, as was shown in Chapter 6: Andrew Dunn (1854-1934), Samuel John Irwin (1838-1909), William Joseph Manning (1864-1943), Alfred John Stephenson (1846-1914), Hugh Parkinson (1828-1909) and William Kippen (1850-1940).

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The Dunn Family newspapers were profitable enterprises, yet never exploitative; they were solid performers, yet never aggressively brilliant. PNQ, in its own way, was as cautious, as this chapter shows, as the Dunn Family newspaper enterprises that formed the core of the Group when the merger took place in 1968. The Mannings and the Irwins had remained in business through adopting the same cautious business ethos as the Dunns and through practising the same localism in their news coverage and community involvement. This chapter has demonstrated that economies of scale in the newspaper industry provide an impetus towards single-newspaper markets and ultimately towards chain ownership. The Dunns exploited these economies through building up a chain of newspapers and moving, where possible and where advantageous, to single-newspaper markets. The economies of group ownership were different for the Dunns as a family; the Dunns as a company; and for PNQ, in which the Dunns were the major family interest. One of the major benefits of the merger in 1968 of the family newspaper companies was that they started *thinking* as a Group. The stronger financial base provided by the merger opened windows of opportunity for expansion that had previously been closed. It has been shown that, despite two failures, PNQ made significant gains over the years, none more so than through the small weeklies that it bought on the Sunshine Coast as it moved towards establishing a new daily newspaper in that region. PNQ performed beyond expectations in profitability, but developments were occurring that would one day expose PNQ to takeover in one fell swoop. One development was PNQ's acceptance of a 'stopper' interest by Queensland

Press Ltd. when PNQ was under threat from Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd in 1971; another was attaining the goal in 1976 of listing on the Stock Exchange. The way was open for the events which would end the Dunn, Manning and Irwin dynasties.

## Shaking the PNQ assets loose:

### The end of the six dynasties

*Government intervention has had virtually no part to play in the determination of the ownership and control of Australian newspapers. The industry has, in fact, been shaped by financial and economic forces which have been almost entirely unhampered by government regulation.*

*- Allan Brown, Commercial Media in Australia, p. 37.*

Allan Brown expressed the above view before the Keating-inspired cross-media Regulations amending the Broadcasting and Television Act passed into law in 1987. The Regulations could be described as political intervention to change a thirty-year-old pattern of media ownership that did not suit the government of the day. Yet, technically, Brown's statement still stood the test, for when the Government, through the Foreign Investment Review Board and the Trade Practices Commission, could have intervened actively to halt the Murdoch takeover of the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd., it did not. This chapter will demonstrate that the demise of PNQ can be traced partly to this political power play by Paul Keating, partly to the lack of will by the Government to intervene in a takeover that was going to create an intensely concentrated ownership picture for Australian newspapers, and in large part to the protective devices that the pioneering provincial press families of Queensland employed when threatened by corporate predators. The merger they chose and the welcoming of a 'friendly' shareholding from Queensland Press Ltd. left the way open, ultimately, for the takeover in 1988 by Irish-Australian newspaper interests. Other factors contributing to the demise were nepotism in managerial appointments, a decided lack of firmness in wielding the axe when appointments failed to meet expectations, a caution that obstructed an aggressive, adventurous management style, and the advent of the fourth-generation family members in the share lists.

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Paul Keating, individually as Federal Treasurer, and the Hawke-Keating Government, as a whole, played parts that contributed indirectly to the demise of the six PNQ dynasties. The Federal Communications Minister, Michael Duffy, announced on 27 November 1986 that new restrictions would be imposed on cross-ownership of newspaper and television interests. These would prevent a company with a 'prescribed interest' in a television licence from holding a 'prescribed interest' in a newspaper that had more than fifty per cent of its circulation in the station's viewing area. A 'prescribed interest' in a newspaper was set at fifteen per cent of the votes, shares or financial interests, and in a television licensee it was set at five per cent (later amended to fifteen per cent). A reverse restriction would apply to newspaper owners in relation to holding a prescribed interest in a television licensee. The Federal Government decided, also, to discard the old two-station limit for television owners and replace it with a rule that enabled television licensees to own enough stations to reach a maximum of seventy-five per cent of the potential national audience (the legislative amendments ultimately set the audience-reach limit at sixty per cent).<sup>1</sup> Keating, however, was the architect of the new media ownership rules and it was he who made it clear, with his typically colourful turn of phrase, that, in future, media barons would have to choose between being 'princes of print' and 'queens of the screen': they would have to choose between controlling newspapers and controlling television. Keating, who had been deeply embroiled in the Cabinet debate, had consulted two major media owners, Rupert Murdoch and Kerry Packer, about what was to come, but had failed to accord the same courtesy to the proprietors of the other two major Australian media companies, John Fairfax and Sons Ltd. and the Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. (HWT). Keating went so far as to indicate to Murdoch in September 1986 that if he were to make a takeover bid for HWT, government authorities would not block

1. Paul Chadwick, *Media Mates*, pp. 18-20; *AFR*, 11 January 1988; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 December 1986; Lenore Taylor, 'Packer accuses Fairfax media of "big lie" campaign', *The Australian*, 24 October 1991, pp. 1-2; The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *News & Fair Facts: Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee on the Print Media*, March 1994 (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1992), p. 75.

it.<sup>1</sup> It was clear the changes would increase the vulnerability to takeover of HWT, Australia's largest newspaper group. Because of Keating's selective consultation process, Murdoch was ready to pounce. Employing the element of surprise to the full, he caught HWT napping.

For Murdoch, 1986 had begun on a quiet note on the Australian scene: on 1 January 1986, News Ltd. - using the North Queensland Newspaper Co. (principally the *Townsville Bulletin*), which it had taken over two years earlier - acquired the *Bowen Independent* which the Darwen family had owned and operated for eighty-three years. On 3 December, Murdoch launched his takeover bid for HWT and changed the face of the Australian media forever. It took Murdoch two months to clinch the deal, because so many other players entered the field, belatedly, but clinch it he did on 6 February 1987.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, Kerry Packer set out to enlarge his television network to take advantage of the proposed 'seventy-five per cent' rule but, instead, sold it, as outlined in Chapter 3.<sup>3</sup> Just about every media property in Australia changed hands at least once in 1987 in what became known as the Great Media Shakeout.<sup>4</sup>

Even though the PNQ dynasties were only provincial princes of print, Keating's plan ended their rule. The man who became the Grand Pooh-Bah of Print ensured that: Rupert Murdoch turned Keating's thinking on its head by selling his television interests and expanding his newspaper ones. Keating had believed that diversity of ownership in newspapers would result from the new media ownership rules because media owners would divest their newspaper properties in the scramble to acquire the more lucrative earners, television stations.<sup>5</sup> In deciding to be a prince of print, rather than a queen of the

1. James Fairfax, *My Regards to Broadway*, p. 395; Chadwick, pp. 19-20; Fred Brenchley, 'Flawed policy shows cracks', *AFR*, 8 March 1994, p. 39; Allan Brown, 'Newspaper ownership and the Australian print media inquiry: bad news and some spurious facts', *Current Affairs Bulletin*, December 1992, p. 17.

2. Chadwick, p. xliii.

3. Chadwick, p. 113.

4. Chadwick, pp. xlii-xlv.

5. Peter Bowers, 'Citizen Murdoch seals Keating's grand plan', *SMH*, 6 December 1986, p. 29.

screen, Murdoch effectively determined the pecking order in the Australian newspaper world because HWT, which he purchased, had so many subsidiary interests, including, ultimately, PNQ. At the time of the Murdoch takeover, HWT held 48.3 per cent of the shareholding of Queensland Press Ltd.<sup>1</sup> In turn, Queensland Press Ltd. held, through Telegraph Investment Co. Pty. Ltd., 42.033 per cent of PNQ.<sup>2</sup> Murdoch's other interests in PNQ, through North Queensland Newspapers Ltd. and Cruden Investments Ltd., totalled another six per cent.

The Hawke-Keating Government had the power but lacked the will to prevent the largest consolidation of media ownership in the western world. There were three strong reasons for the Australian public to have expected Murdoch's 1986-87 takeover bid for HWT to be blocked federally. Through their policies, both the Labor Government and the Liberal Opposition were committed to diversity of media ownership; Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) guidelines did not favour foreign investment in Australian newspapers (Murdoch having taken out American citizenship in 1985); and the takeover proposal was subject to the approval of the Trade Practices Commission (TPC), which would have to decide whether the acquisition contravened Section 50 prohibiting mergers that would place an individual corporation in a position to 'control or dominate a market for goods and services'.<sup>3</sup> The cries heard against the takeover were loudest from the conservative side of politics, mainly from Ian Macphie, who was the communications shadow minister, but only the Australian Democrats were united and persistent in their opposition to Murdoch's bid. The TPC decided to take a state-by-state view of the newspaper markets and to ignore, as chairman Bob McComas put it, 'the power of the press to shape public opinion'.

We are not looking at how the mind can be bent, or how social behaviour can be affected, because that is not part of the game as far as we are concerned.

1. Fairfax, p. 196.

2. PNO Annual Report, 1987, p. 6.

3. Allan Brown, 'Saying yes to Rupert: the regulation of press take-overs', Australian Journalism Review, Vol. 9, Nos. 1 & 2 (January-December 1987), pp. 12.

Our decision will be based on commercial and economic factors.

The 'moral or philosophical side' did not enter into it, McComas said. 'I am not a crusader.'<sup>1</sup> His explanation of why the TPC took a state rather than national approach to the issue of Australian newspaper markets failed to satisfy media ownership analysts such as Allan Brown and Paul Chadwick. McComas said:

Whether judged according to the behaviour of participants in the newspaper industry, or according to the economic concept of identifying the field of close competition between participants in the newspaper industry, the commission took the view that State markets should be considered. [This was done] without disregarding the fact that, in the important revenue earning segments of newspapers' advertising, national advertisers do exist. However, in the main, advertising in the daily press is intended to, and does, have a primary impact in the area of circulation of the journal concerned.<sup>2</sup>

The 'narrow view' of the TPC in looking only at individual markets and disregarding national implications ignored the development of the Australian newspaper industry towards increased integration, with the extensive 'networking' of both editorial matter and advertising.

No longer do the various metropolitan dailies operate independently of each other, and Murdoch's take-over of HWT, giving him daily publications in each of the metropolitan markets, except Perth, can be expected only to accelerate this trend.<sup>3</sup>

One press commentator wrote in August 1987: 'What has happened in the past eight months is nothing short of an industry revolution.'<sup>4</sup> Even McComas himself acknowledged in 1988 that the cross-media ownership prohibitions had 'evoked some quite extraordinary changes in the television industry which were to have their impact upon the newspaper industry'.<sup>5</sup> Ian Macphee said that all the evidence indicated that Australia now had the least competitive, most highly concentrated, privately owned newspaper industry in the world.<sup>6</sup>

1. Brown, Australian Journalism Review, p. 13.

2. Bob McComas, 'Newspapers and the law', PANPA Bulletin, June 1988, pp. 33.

3. Brown, Australian Journalism Review, p. 14; viz. also Sheryle Bagwell, 'Media chiefs waiting for the next move', AFR, 9 October 1987, p. 12.

4. John Durie, AFR, 11 August 1987, pp. 1, 55.

5. McComas, p. 34.

6. Ian Macphee, 'How media laws threaten freedom of speech', Australian Journalism Review, 9 (1987), pp. 20-24.



Rupert Murdoch's successful sloop on HWT meant that the very device that the pioneering Queensland provincial press families had employed in 1971 to protect themselves against a takeover by, principally, Murdoch, ultimately opened the way for just such a takeover. Queensland Press Ltd. had taken a 'friendly' shareholding in PNQ, initially of twenty-nine per cent, as was shown in Chapter 9, and had promised it would never make a takeover bid.<sup>1</sup> It kept its promise, but, ultimately, other forces subsumed the good intentions. Even though Murdoch's interest in PNQ lasted only slightly less than eighteen months and was not regarded by News Ltd. as a 'controlling' one, it provided the foot in the door for Irish newspaper interests, via the O'Reilly family, to grab the attractive regional newspaper property.

The TPC called a halt in 1987 to Rupert Murdoch's acquisition of every Queensland daily newspaper, apart from the *North-West Star*, Mount Isa, and the *Gympie Times*. The deals became intricate when both News Ltd. and PNQ, in which News Ltd. by then held a 48.6 per cent interest, were buyers for different parts of the Northern Star Holdings regional newspaper empire, and then Northern Star emerged as a possible major stakeholder in PNQ. Northern Star was required to divest because of its shift into metropolitan television and Brisbane and Adelaide daily newspapers. PNQ paid \$80 million for the regional daily newspapers and smaller publications serving, principally, the Tweed, Lismore, Grafton and Coffs Harbour (although Murdoch's tentacles were originally around Coffs). In addition, News Ltd. took from fifty to 100 per cent its interest in Quest Newspapers, publishers of the *Gold Coast Bulletin* and a chain of Brisbane suburban papers. The TPC examined the acquisitions and asked News Ltd. to dispose of all its shareholdings in PNQ. News Ltd. provided formal undertakings that it would do so.<sup>2</sup> TPC assistant commissioner Frank Blockley said the TPC

1. *The Chronicle* (Toowoomba), 10 September 1971.

2. News Ltd./Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd./Northern Star Holdings Ltd.: (Trade Practices Commission, 'Submission to the House of Representatives Select Committee Inquiry into the Print Media', September 1991, p. 19); David Fagan, 'News offers PNQ stake for grabs', *The Courier-Mail*, 22 September 1987, p. 23.

was determined to obtain a buyer who was able to compete in the state successfully. 'There's no point for News to sell its shares to someone who hasn't a hope in hell of competing.' Clarrie Manning, who was PNQ's chairman of directors, said at the time: 'We certainly don't want to be taken over by anybody. We'd prefer it if the [News Ltd.] parcel was split up.'<sup>1</sup> But Blockley said he was not sure whether placements to institutions would be acceptable because in such a case 'it's hard to say for certain just who controls the shares'.<sup>2</sup> On 21 September 1987 News Ltd. managing director Ken Cowley announced News Group (through News Ltd. and Queensland Press Ltd.) had decided to sell its 48.6 per cent stake in PNQ (worth about \$42 million).<sup>3</sup> Cowley said the company wanted to concentrate its efforts on managing the publishing operations it controlled. 'We are not passive investors and because we do not have any say in running PNQ, we felt the sale was appropriate.'

PNQ appointed Wardley Australia to find buyers for the Murdoch/News Ltd. parcel, knowing that the TPC was taking 'a keen interest in the eventual ownership of PNQ, being concerned that the company will be an effective rival for its regional newspaper competitors'.<sup>4</sup> The so-called competitors were principally the newspapers of the Rural Press Ltd. group, controlled by John B. Fairfax. Few of the Rural Press non-dailies competed directly with PNQ's papers, and none of the dailies did. Buyers were sought as far afield as England, but the search for a 'white knight' to come to the rescue was conducted in vain.<sup>5</sup> One possible buyer was Rural Press Ltd., at the time forty-five per cent owned by John Fairfax Ltd., but the Fairfax directors had other things on their minds: young Warwick Fairfax's bid to privatise that company, launched on 31 August 1987.<sup>6</sup> Later, when John B. Fairfax, had taken a con-

1. Alan Deans, 'Northern Star poised for Provincial stake', *SMH*, 24 September 1987.

2. Rowan Callick, 'TPC wants say over buyer of stake in PNQ', *AFR*, 24 September 1987.

3. *Daily Sun*, 22 September 1987; *The Age*, 22 September 1987; David Fagan, 'News offers PNQ stake for grabs', *The Courier-Mail*, 22 September 1987, p. 23.

4. Deans, *SMH*, 24 September 1987.

5. Richard A. Edwards, interview with author, Brisbane, 24 March 1992; John Jones, interview with author, Brisbane, 4 June 1992; A.J. Irwin, interview with author, Cleveland, 13 October 1993.

6. V.J. Carroll, p. 423; Chadwick, p. xliiv.

trolling interest in Rural Press, PNQ hoped he would 'come in with us'.<sup>1</sup> At the end of November 1987 Dr Tony O'Reilly, the Pittsburgh-based president, chairman and chief executive of Heinz Foods, arrived in Australia, ostensibly on Heinz business, but expressing an interest in buying, on behalf of Independent Newspapers Plc, of Ireland, 'either radio stations or large regional newspapers in Australia'.<sup>2</sup>

O'Reilly was the principal shareholder in the Irish newspaper group, which published in Dublin three of the city's six daily newspapers and two of its four Sunday newspapers.<sup>3</sup> Within days, Independent Newspapers Plc had emerged as a potential buyer for Murdoch's stake in PNQ.<sup>4</sup> It was not until about five months later, however, that Tony O'Reilly became ostensibly serious. During that period, various directors of PNQ indicate, Murdoch did a deal with O'Reilly to facilitate the takeover. In April 1988, O'Reilly and two of his senior Irish newspaper executives, Liam Healy and John Meagher, took PNQ chairman Clarence Manning to lunch at Michael's Riverside Restaurant, Brisbane. O'Reilly told him, 'I'm going to take you over'. Manning told O'Reilly that PNQ did not want to be taken over by O'Reilly or anybody else. O'Reilly said, 'I've got the money and I want you.'<sup>5</sup> Meagher said: 'We'll have you by August.'<sup>6</sup>

When Manning returned to the office that afternoon, he asked his personal assistant, Millie Euler, if she wanted to 'hear a good Irish joke'. He told her the joke, she laughed and said, 'Where did you get that from?' Manning said he had just had lunch with three Irishmen, and showed Euler a prospectus of Independent Newspapers Plc.

Next day [the story of the proposed takeover] was in *The Sun*. And I said to Mr Manning: what do you think

1. Rowan Callick, 'Rural Press may bid for Provincial Newspapers', *AER*, 23 September 1987; C.M. Manning, interview with author, Brisbane, 5 March 1992.
2. Danielle Robinson, 'Heinz chief here to "buy bargains"', *The Australian*, 1 December 1987, p. 18.
3. Paul McGeough, 'Tony O'Reilly: Irish eyes on Fairfax', *SMH*, 11 May 1991, p. 43.
4. Alex Pollak, 'Irish group offered AFR', *SMH*, 4 December 1987, p. 25.
5. C.M. Manning, interview, 5 March 1992.
6. Millie K. Euler, interview with author, Capalaba, 17 January 1994.



Dr A.J.F. (Tony) O'Reilly, the Irish businessman who indirectly controls Australian Provincial Newspaper Holdings Ltd. through the family trust established in the names of his six children, who each hold Australian passports.

-- Credit: Published with the permission of Mirror Australian Telegraph Publications.

of your Irish joke now? He said don't talk to me about Irish jokes.<sup>1</sup>

The Irish had soon obtained a 19.9 per cent in PNQ, through Murdoch and possibly funded by Murdoch. O'Reilly negotiated the deal over dinner, buying as great an interest as permitted at that stage. O'Reilly recalled the next stage of his bid:

I can tell you it was well contested. At one stage it looked like that Chinese newspaper proprietor, Sally Aw from Hong Kong, was going to join the bidding. But unluckily for her she doesn't have six children with Australian passports so that rather undermined her credibility with the Foreign Investment Review Board.<sup>2</sup>

O'Reilly, who does have six children with Australian passports, soon obtained the balance of the 48.6 per cent and left the PNQ board with 'nowhere to go but to recommend it'. Murdoch and O'Reilly did a deal, Manning said.

We don't know what it was, but probably something to do with advertising. That's purely speculation on my part, but it was a deal. There's no question about that. Because we put an offer to them - we tried very hard to retain the company by putting together a proposition.

Manning said the directors certainly negotiated the highest price they could: \$7.75 a share.<sup>3</sup> This meant PNQ was sold for \$130 million, or thirty times its latest net profit of \$4.4 million.<sup>4</sup> O'Reilly's version, which lacks precision in relation to figures, was:

I think we pitched it at a fine price. It looked at the time like a multiple of thirteen times operating income, which seemed very high. Now it looks as if we got it relatively cheap because at twenty-seven-and-a-half-million dollars annual profit for a \$150 million purchase it's a rather good deal.<sup>5</sup>

Manning said the PNQ shareholders had received good bonus issues and been paid a good dividend each year.

The shareholders should have been ... quite happy. The only people who weren't happy when we [left it were those who] lost their heritage. But once you

1. Euler, interview, 17 January 1994.

2. Nicholas Coleridge, Paper Tigers: The latest, greatest newspaper tycoons and how they won the world (London, Heinemann, 1993), p. 468.

3. C.M. Manning, interview with author, Auchenflower, 5 March 1992.

4. Graeme Adamson, 'Making more than a paper profit', AFR, 17 December 1992, p. 18.

5. Coleridge, pp. 468-469.

get on to the Stock Exchange, that's the risk you take. Anyone who's got enough money, they'll take you.<sup>1</sup>

PNQ probably could have done little to maintain family ownership, in the view of Keith McDonald, a PNQ board member for eleven years.

... you had a situation where, by order of the Trade Practices Commission, Queensland Press had to withdraw from PNQ. I think [Queensland Press] had about 6.5 million shares, or just over forty per cent. That's a big line of stock. And it would have been after the market crash, which was October 1987. You know, it's not easy to offload an investment of that magnitude at a time when the equity markets have taken a bit of a shock.

It was not accomplished for about six to eight months. O'Reilly bought because he had 'the wit to see that it was a really unusually good property'. One of the strengths of PNQ from an investor's point of view was its 'marvellous geographical spread', particularly with the acquisition of the Northern Rivers newspapers in New South Wales.

The most desirable part of Australia. And think of the spread of the industrial risk you've got. I mean there's a couple of sugar towns in that, a couple of resort towns, grain growing towns, a beef town like Rockhampton. You're not dependent on the one industry. They're not likely to be all going bad together. From the spread of industrial and geographic risk, it's a marvellous little organisation. I think O'Reilly had the wit to see that. And he's certainly done well out of it.<sup>2</sup>

PNQ, however, had been warned five years earlier by Strategies Pty. Ltd. of the company's vulnerability to takeover.

Meagher was correct; the Irish did have PNQ by August. On 26 July 1988, Haswell Pty. Ltd. took over PNQ after the group was able to satisfy Australia's foreign investment rules by establishing a family trust in which the beneficiaries were the six children of Dr Anthony John Francis O'Reilly, the principal shareholder of Independent Newspapers Plc, of Ireland, and his first wife, Susan, an Australian. The

1. C.M. Manning, interview, 5 March 1992.

2. Keith Henry McDonald, interview with author, Brisbane, 20 August 1992.

children had Australian passports. The family trust, called Ligon Pty. Ltd., held an 85.05 per cent interest in Haswell Pty. Ltd., the purchasing vehicle. The remaining interest was held by Independent Newspapers Plc of Ireland.<sup>1</sup> On 3 November 1988 PNQ was renamed Australian Provincial Newspapers Ltd. (APN) to recognise that the company's newspaper interests extended into New South Wales and would probably extend into other states in the years ahead.<sup>2</sup> When the Irish took charge, the PNQ board comprised two Mannings, three Dunns and two Irwins: Clarrie Manning, as chairman, and Bruce Manning as a director; G.P. Dunn, J.K. Armitage and Mrs Barbara Reye as directors; and A.J. Irwin and group general manager R.P. Hollingworth as directors.<sup>3</sup> The PNQ head-office staff – about forty-seven at the time, according to O'Reilly, but actually thirty – was generally regarded in newspaper circles as 'top heavy'; the organisation chart at 15 August 1988 is shown in Table 41.<sup>4</sup> One newspaper general manager, formerly employed by PNQ, said:

In the later years of PNQ, it was no secret that it became a huge bureaucracy. When I mentioned to the last chief executive of PNQ at a meeting in Shepparton, just after the takeover by APN, that there would be sweeping changes, I can remember him retorting that PNQ was the most efficiently run group in the newspaper industry in Australia. I think it was about four months after that that APN [virtually] closed down the whole of the head office operation ... without any appreciable change in efficiency but with a very marked change to the bottom line in the balance sheet.<sup>5</sup>

A fourth-generation member of one of the families, Simon K. Irwin, himself an APN manager, said the PNQ board had had

1. Paul Keating, press statement as Treasurer, 10 June 1988. In February 1994, the O'Reilly family trust held 54 per cent of APN and other O'Reilly family interests had a 25 per cent, the maximum allowable then under the foreign ownership guidelines for the print media, Cameron O'Reilly told the Senate inquiry into the rights and obligations of the print media.

2. Michael O'Meara, 'PNQ directors take up Haswell offer', *AFR*, 27 July 1988; Ian Verrinder, 'News accepts offer for PNQ', *SMH*, 27 July 1988; 'A corporate name change', *APN News-Print*, No. 4, 1988, p. 1. In January 1994 APN bought the Victorian newspaper group, Peter Isaacson Publications, publisher of more than forty titles, including the *Daily Commercial News* and a chain of Melbourne suburban newspapers.

3. *PNQ News-Print*, No. 3, 1988, p. 14; viz. Appendix 12 for APN board of directors in 1990.

4. Coleridge, p. 469; Millie K. Euler, telephone interview, 25 March 1994; Brian Stead, telephone interview with author, 12 April 1994.

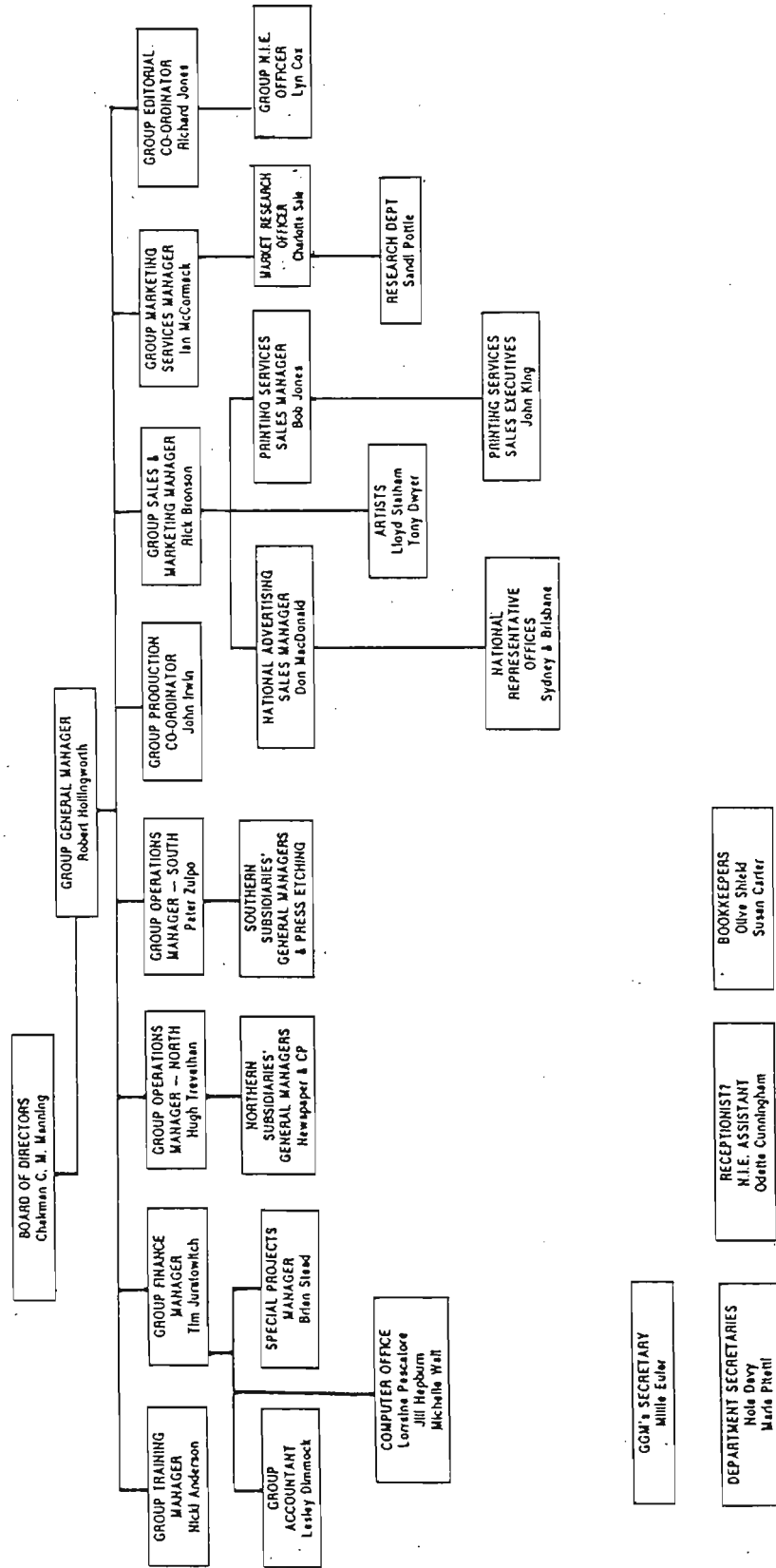
5. G.R. Beavan, letter to author, 29 September 1993.

Table 41

# Provincial Newspapers (Qld) Ltd

## ORGANISATIONAL CHART

(As at 15/8/88)



SOURCE: PNQ News-Print,  
3 (1988), p. 14.



all the money in the bank and had over-managed; it had very complicated management systems - group operations managers, etc. There was a lot of fat up the top of it, which was a traditional way of doing things... I think the company now has trimmed the management structure to be very workable so that the people you see around you here are the head office staff; there's not a lot of them, about ten or a dozen here.<sup>1</sup>

Tony O'Reilly said: 'Essentially we disestablished a large central overhead in Brisbane... for a series of essentially autonomous daily newspapers.'<sup>2</sup> The views of Simon Irwin, Gordon Beavan and John Jones, who had been PNQ managers at different times, coincided with the view expressed by Peters and Waterman:

We have watched too many line managers who simply want to get on with their job but are deflated by central staffs that can always find a way to 'prove' something won't work... The central staff plays it safe by taking the negative view...<sup>3</sup>

When the Irish wielded the axe at APN's head office, it was the first step to slashing the Brisbane-based managerial staff of thirty to eleven.<sup>4</sup> In the seven years since Lex Dunn's departure as chief executive of PNQ, Clarrie Manning and then Rob Hollingworth had more than doubled the size of the Brisbane staff so that, in August 1988, there were eight group managers, including a group editorial co-ordinator, reporting to group general manager Hollingworth. One of the head-office departments that APN disbanded was the market research department, which included in 1988 a manager (Ian McCormack, later appointed editor of the *Tweed Daily*), a market research officer and a market research assistant. The department fed information to PNQ newspapers and national sales representatives for them to use in persuading 'advertisers and potential advertisers of the value of advertising in our products'. A secondary but increasing role was to 'assist the

1. Simon K. Irwin, interview with author, APN headquarters, Brisbane, 29 November 1994.

2. Coleridge, p. 469.

3. Peters and Waterman, p. 31.

4. APN News-Print, May 1989, p. 11; Stead, interview, 12 April 1994.

newspapers in understanding the markets in which they operate and to help them tailor their products to match more closely the market needs' (both advertisers and readers). The department gathered data from PNQ's own McNair Anderson research, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, government departments and private companies.

From this we are able to build profiles of who our newspapers reach, where, when and how often. This information is important to advertisers and agencies when deciding where they are going to spend their advertising dollars.<sup>1</sup>

Clarrie Manning, as chief executive at the *Daily Mercury* and at PNQ, had laid great emphasis on management training.

We were doing annual assessments of managers and supervisors and so on against their job specifications. We were much better equipped to handle interviews for appointments. That was part of the management training... When we took over the Northern Star Holdings newspapers, we exposed them to this program; they were delighted. They said, oh, this is what we've been looking for for years.<sup>2</sup>

When PNQ was obviously facing takeover, with Murdoch holding effective control, the board unwisely proceeded with the appointment as group general manager of Rob Hollingworth. It would have been messy to do otherwise, but it was messier to continue, in the sense that the future of the company was left in the hands of somebody who, in the view of experts, lacked the skills to give it the best chance of surviving. Nepotism, often an aid to a dynasty's survival, obstructed it in this case. Hollingworth took over the chief executive role from Clarrie Manning on 1 September 1987 even as the TPC was instructing Murdoch to sell his interest in PNQ. Manning, seventy when he stood down, had been chief executive since January 1981. He continued as chairman, a role he had filled since 1970. Hollingworth was a compromise choice when some members of the PNQ board would have supported a Manning nominee and others a Dunn nominee.<sup>3</sup> Hollingworth, in the view of several newspaper managers and close observers of PNQ,

1. *PNQ News-Print*, No. 1, 1988, p. 12.

2. C.M. Manning, interview, 5 March 1992.

3. G.P. Dunn, interview with author, Kenmore, 20 January 1994.

lacked the degree of hard-headed business skills and nous to cope with the situation that confronted him when PNQ was trying to extricate itself from the clutches of Murdoch without being swallowed in one gulp. One manager questioned seriously Hollingworth's suitability for the role of PNQ chief executive.<sup>1</sup>

If nepotism obstructed survival, so did an apparent blind spot in PNQ's corporate perception. PNQ's directors, lulled into a sense of false security by oft-repeated assurances from Queensland Press Ltd. that it was 'only a passive investor', refused to believe they were vulnerable to takeover, and so ignored the recommendations for contingency plans. It would be harsh to blame only Hollingworth, as the chief executive of the time, for not saving PNQ from takeover. Instead, members of the board over the previous decade must accept blame for its inability, or refusal, to think seriously about the potential business opportunities confronting them. They did not seem able to grapple with the recommendations of the 1983 corporate plan because the plan was painted on a much larger canvas than the directors were accustomed to viewing. They did not have a clear and consensual view of what business they were operating. They knew they were producing newspapers, but they had never taken the view that they were in the 'media business', and then examined the wider potential of where the best opportunities for profit were in that business.<sup>2</sup> The PNQ directors exhibited the characteristic noted by Andrew Pettigrew in a British study of the politics of strategic decision making. Pettigrew showed that:

companies often hold on to flagrantly faulty assumptions about their world for as long as a decade, despite overwhelming evidence that the world has changed and they probably should, too.<sup>3</sup>

Initially, when the Irish took over PNQ, they handled the employees with kid gloves. They dealt with staff relations

1. John Jones, telephone interview with author, 6 April 1992.

2. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994 (the source requested anonymity for ethical reasons, granting the interview only on the basis that it would not be attributable).

3. Peters and Waterman, p. 7.

very agreeably', Hollingworth said. In the months after the takeover, the Independent Newspapers Plc chief executive, Liam Healy, and some of his Dublin staff were often in Brisbane, checking the books and keeping an eye on how the group was faring.<sup>1</sup> For Hollingworth, the day of dismissal came out of the blue, even though Gordon Beavan had warned him such a day would come. Hollingworth demonstrated to Beavan and other observers that he suffered from denial syndrome. 'He couldn't believe it. Everybody else could.'<sup>2</sup> Upon being dismissed, Hollingworth went so far as to issue a writ against APN claiming damages for breach of contract and for defamation, as well as interest and costs.<sup>3</sup> The matter was settled out of court 'on satisfactory terms', Hollingworth said.<sup>4</sup> Hollingworth was ill equipped to be group general manager, at least partly because he lacked confidence in his own decision-making ability, as was detailed in Chapter 9.

The day the knives came out was Friday, 3 March 1989. Liam Healy dismissed, without notice, group general manager Hollingworth, group finance manager Tim Juratowitch, and group operations manager (north) Hugh Trevethan, as well as board chairman Clarrie Manning. Group NIE (Newspapers in Education) officer Lyn Cox was given two months' notice and group training manager Nicki Anderson was told her position had been abolished and that she could have a marketing position elsewhere in the group. She chose to leave. The original PNQ directors agreed to retire from the board. Peter Manning, son of Clarrie, was dismissed as general manager of the *Queensland Times* in a move described by colleagues as a 'political execution'. The only thing which stopped the Irish from dealing similarly with Bruce Manning, managing director of Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd. since 1975, was the fact that the Toowoomba furniture and electrical retailer, Treg Rowe,

1. R.P. Hollingworth, interview with author, Brisbane, 25 May 1992.
2. Millie Euler, telephone interview with author, 25 October 1993.
3. *The Courier-Mail*, 22 March 1989.
4. R.P. Hollingworth, telephone interview with author, 18 October 1993.

had a fifty per cent interest in that company, as was explained in Chapter 9.<sup>1</sup> Healy himself took on the role of acting chief executive of APN and shared his time between Dublin (five weeks) and Brisbane (four weeks) in rotation for thirteen months.<sup>2</sup>

Nepotism is not always bad, but there needs to be a proper balance between business values and family values. The question of succession is one of the most difficult the owner of a family business confronts. Far too many owners hang onto their business control into senility; in Queensland, the second generation of the Dunns could be accused of hanging on too long (viz. Chapter 4), as could the second-generation Manning leader, Jack, in some industry roles that he filled (viz. Chapter 6) – and by the time they begin thinking about succession, their heirs may no longer be interested in continuing the company, or may lack the competence, says Danco.

The family business must have an heir. The responsibility for choosing an heir is up to Dad. He is the king and must accept this duty to choose his successor.

Danco argues that nepotism is the only way an owner-managed business will survive. 'It just depends on who is designated the nepot.' Sons-in-law make good potential heirs. They do not grow up believing they are going to inherit the business so they may really prepare themselves to 'work for a living'.<sup>3</sup> At PNQ, nepotism often had positive results. It was a significant achievement for six provincial newspaper families, including such independently-minded families as the Dunns and Mannings, to have merged their interests in 1968. The group recorded significant growth and achievements over twenty years, as is shown in Table 40 (viz. Chapter 9). Lex Dunn and Clarrie Manning were competent chief executives who managed effective-

1. Nicki Anderson, telephone interview with author, 25 October 1993; Millie Euler, telephone interviews with author, 25 and 27 October 1993.

2. Euler, interview, 17 January 1994.

3. Leon A. Danco, Beyond Survival: A Business Owner's Guide for Success (Reston, Virginia: Reston Publishing Co., 1975), p. 145.

ly the inter-play of dynastic relationships, while running a profitable enterprise. Of Manning's performance from 1981 to 1987, a corporate observer said: 'Nobody could have pulled it together other than him. He did a bloody good job.'<sup>1</sup>

The negative side of the nepotism coin was revealed in some of the appointments PNQ made, as already demonstrated in this chapter in the appointment of Rob Hollingworth as group general manager and in Chapter 8 in the various appointments of Peter Dunn: firstly, as joint managing director of the Rockhampton company (1970-73); secondly, as managing editor at Rockhampton (1973-80); and, thirdly, as PNQ director of news and research (1980-87). In none of the positions did Dunn sit comfortably. He was not seen as 'a force for constructive change'. Some observers struggled to understand his competence, qualifications and commitment.<sup>2</sup> In blindly following the course of nepotism, PNQ failed to abide by one of the management objectives stated in its 1973 corporate plan: 'to build up a professional management team whose members will be chosen on the basis of their merit'.<sup>3</sup> At the next level down the hierarchy, some of the general managers of PNQ newspapers were appointed for nepotistic reasons. Peter Manning, general manager of the *Maryborough Chronicle* and later of the *Queensland Times*, was accused of lacking 'people skills, communication skills, knowledge of how to produce a newspaper'. This was the view of John Jones for whom Manning was the accountant at the Sunshine Coast Newspaper Company in the early eighties. Jones said Manning was 'a good accountant, a good businessman, but because he was Clarrie's son, he got the general manager's job at Maryborough'. Some of the loyal, long-serving employees became virtually part of the family. One was Laurie Corcoran, who joined the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, in 1964 when Clarrie Manning was managing editor. His appointment as *Maryborough Chronicle* manager was seen as a

1. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994.

2. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994.

3. Cited in *Strategies* report, p. 6.

case of 'nepotism' when it was really misplaced loyalty. Corcoran, who had been production manager at Mackay, was promoted to the Maryborough managerial position. Clarrie Manning can take the blame for that appointment which, in the view of one manager, was one of a number that 'did the company a great disservice'. Corcoran was a good production manager, but not general management material.<sup>1</sup> APN shifted Corcoran to Toowoomba as production manager where he was said to be 'doing a good job'. Jones himself transferred to Maryborough in March 1989, at APN's behest, as regional manager for the central region, as well as taking over from Corcoran as general manager of the *Chronicle*.<sup>2</sup> Beavan, too, perceived a feeling at PNQ that:

if you were one of the original families, by right there was a job waiting for you at PNQ. This meant that there was a potential for people of lesser talent to be employed in jobs that would not have happened if the families had been debarred from taking executive positions within the newspapers.<sup>3</sup>

Nepotism in the Dunn newspapers had been perceived by Denis Butler, who, in 1976, was named Australian Journalist of the Year some years after leaving the *Morning Bulletin*. Butler had been attracted to the Rockhampton paper by the witty, whimsical writing of George Westacott, *Bulletin* editor 1954-64. Butler held Andrew Dunn (1880-1956) in high esteem, too, as an editor and as a 'man of journalistic probity'. He was particularly impressed with the stand-up row editor Dunn had with a Central Queensland Supreme Court judge, Frank Brennan, in 1931, as outlined in Chapter 2.

It really is a wonderful story of a newspaper determined to fight for its rights... that whole fight, it really did impress me. It was a marvellous piece of work by someone who was dedicated to journalism. Now that dedication didn't carry through.<sup>4</sup>

1. John Jones, interview with author, Brisbane, 4 June 1992.

2. Jones, interview, 4 June 1992.

3. Gordon Beavan, letter to author, 29 September 1993.

4. Denis Butler, interview with author, Toowoomba, 24 April 1979; *Morning Bulletin*, 11, 12, 17, 23, 24 and 30 June, 2 and 14 July, 20, 21 and 23 October 1931. Brennan was a former Labor MP and fathered (Sir) Gerard Brennan, appointed Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia from 21 April 1995.

Combined with nepotism in appointments were both a lack of resolution to put things right when appointments went wrong and extreme caution when it came to spending money. PNQ was slow to intervene and shift people who had been inappropriately placed.

They were too soft. They swept things under the carpet and did not sack or shift people who should have been dealt with like that.<sup>1</sup>

Geoff Smith was general manager of the *Queensland Times* from 1974 until 1986 although PNQ had long been unhappy with his level of involvement in the community, his attendance at the office, and his relations with the staff.<sup>2</sup> Smith had not worked on a newspaper before his *Queensland Times* appointment.

He was a former RAAF bloke who started selling press equipment in South-East Asia. Top salesman, but not the general manager of a family/community newspaper... He upset a tremendous number of local businessmen and they refused to advertise.<sup>3</sup>

Smith's competence as a manager impressed others, however, and, after he left PNQ, he became general manager of Quest Community Newspapers, News Ltd.'s expanding Brisbane suburban group.<sup>4</sup> This suggests that executive effectiveness can be 'situational', as one observer has put it. A manager, for instance, can be effective in one situation, but not necessarily in another. Another example of PNQ's slowness to correct an obviously deteriorating management situation was seen in Rockhampton when Peter Dunn was in sole control from 1973-80 (viz. Chapter 8). And the Maryborough company performed only moderately for many years under an ageing manager, George English, who should have been replaced.

Although the PNQ board was 'overall a very conscientious group of people who really wanted to see the advancement of the papers', they might have been too cautious for the group's own good. A bolder approach to expansion in the 1980s could have seen PNQ well placed to respond aggressively to the new cross-

1. Millie Euler, interview, 17 January 1994.

2. Minutes of Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd., 25 July 1986.

3. Gregory B. Stephenson, interview with author, Karalee, 2 December 1993.

4. Geoff Smith, telephone interview with author, 31 March 1994.



media ownership rules and the resultant upheaval in the Australian media industry in 1987. Two regional media groups, Darling Downs Television Ltd. and Northern Star Holdings Ltd., both responded aggressively, possibly too aggressively, for they struck difficulties in the newly volatile market and became linked in ownership. Northern Star made short-lived purchases of the Brisbane and Adelaide afternoon daily newspapers and also bought the Rupert Murdoch Channel 10 television licences in Sydney and Melbourne and the Kerry Stokes licences in Canberra and Adelaide and in Western Australia. In its first year as a television operator, Northern Star made a profit of \$45.1 million.<sup>1</sup> Darling Downs made what was to be a short-lived acquisition of Universal Telecasters' television station, Channel 10, Brisbane, for \$123 million. It sold to Northern Star Holdings Ltd. for \$91.5 million in mid-1989.<sup>2</sup> It also bought Northern Rivers Television Ltd., formerly owned by Northern Star Holdings, which it eventually sold to a consortium comprising Telecasters North Queensland Ltd., Perth businessman Kerry Stokes and Hungry Jack's owner, Jack Cowin. In September 1990 nineteen staff were retrenched at Darling Downs TV's Toowoomba station and on 31 December that year the company sold the station to TWT Holdings on the eve of aggregation. On 1 May 1991 DDQ Television ends when it became part of WIN-TV. Trading in Darling Downs shares was suspended for about six weeks in September-October 1992 as a prelude to the company's reporting a loss of \$41 million for 1991-92. Shares fell to 5c in June 1991 and to 2.5c in August 1992 when it owed \$41 million.<sup>3</sup> PNQ, by contrast, continued profitably and continued looking inwards rather than outwards. It had not seen the broader canvas. It had always paid a good dividend, Peter Dunn reflected.

1. Chadwick, pp. 102, 117; 'Diary of the big media shakeout', The Courier-Mail, 1 September 1987; Alan Deans, 'Northern Star earns \$45m in first year as TV operator', The Age, 26 August 1988.

2. Lea Wright, 'Darling Downs buys TV0', and Sue Lecky, 'A bush league player joins the big game', SMH, 18 September 1987; The Chronicle (Toowoomba), 15 June 1989, p. 1.

3. Ian McIlwraith, 'Darling Downs structure under review', AFR, 12 August 1992, p. 22, and 'Darling Downs back', 29 October 1992; The Chronicle (Toowoomba), 7 October 1992, p. 6; Michael O'Meara, '\$18.5m for Northern Rivers TV', AFR, 17 January 1994.

It had been a Dunn trait, of course, not so much paying a good dividend, because it didn't pay a good dividend in the days of the Dunns ... because it had been the old man's attitude and even Andrew junior's attitude that you didn't make excess profits. You sold your product at a good price and you did a good job, and ... after your urgent or major needs were met, the rest went back into the company. That was his attitude. I think it was the right thing. There were no millionaires, for instance, among the Dunns.<sup>1</sup>

PNQ's caution was seen in its attitude that producing an 'adequate' income for shareholders and providing job opportunities for family members was good enough. It was seen in the smallness of its long-term borrowings, as was demonstrated in Chapter 9. It minimised the demand for investment funds by undertaking one major project at a time. 'They were pretty risk-averse.'<sup>2</sup> PNQ displayed a readiness to look to the future in the Sunshine Coast venture, but did not apply itself seriously and consistently to strategic decisions about free newspapers, especially in the Brisbane market. It should have made a bid for Northern Star Holdings' group of four dailies long before Murdoch's virtual control of PNQ. The northern NSW group had been listed as a potential acquisition or merger in PNQ's 1973 strategic plan.<sup>3</sup>

Caution started at the top. Clarrie Manning, chairman for seventeen years and chief executive for seven, was as cautious as any of the Dunns. One colleague, who admitted he liked Manning, still described him as a stick-in-the-mud.

He wasn't adventurous in any way. He had a great saying, 'Let's stick to our knitting; let's stick to our knitting.' Even when we did a second corporate plan and it indicated that we should make a try for the Northern Rivers papers. Oh no, we couldn't do that. No, no, no.... He didn't want to rock the boat too much. But he liked to make a good profit. He liked to see the shekels.<sup>4</sup>

In 1974, as PNQ chairman, Clarrie Manning, saw the fight as 'one for economic survival rather than to create opportunities

1. G.P. Dunn, interview, 20 January 1994.
2. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994.
3. Strategies report, p. 7.
4. G.P. Dunn, interview, 20 January 1994.

for improvement, expansion and development', as was detailed in Chapter 9. Another PNQ director, Andrew Dunn (1910- ), did not like committing the group to a course of action.<sup>1</sup>

Even before the Irish dismantled PNQ, the Dunn, Manning and Irwin dynasties had lost their grip on the company. The dedication of the first and second generations – of Andrew Dunn (1854-1934), Andrew Dunn (1880-1956) and Herbie Dunn (1883-1961), for instance – had not carried through to the third and fourth generations, with isolated exceptions. Premature death, it should be noted, had hit three of the third-generation Dunn newspaper participants: Alan Dunn, of Toowoomba, at the age of thirty-two; James Cran Dunn, of Rockhampton, at the age of fifty-five; and Rowland James Dunn, of Toowoomba, at the age of sixty. By the late 1970s, the unity of the family had disintegrated. Clarrie Manning saw the listing of PNQ on the Stock Exchange as 'our first step to losing the company'. But he also saw it as inevitable that the fourth generation of the families would bring greater instability to the control of the company.

The further they get away from the company, the less their loyalty tends to stabilise. They tend to look for their money.<sup>2</sup>

Only three per cent of Australian family-owned businesses survive to the fourth generation.<sup>3</sup>

Lex Dunn, who in 1975 had declared that the control of PNQ still lay in the hands of the pioneering Queensland provincial newspaper families, said that by 1988 the original families had long ceased to be a controlling factor in PNQ.<sup>4</sup>

With any reasonable offer for shares, they were happy to sell out. It was a breaking up. What we needed was a strong shareholder. But [Murdoch] was for himself. What we needed was to have to sell out and get somebody else to take thirty per cent or something like it. But we had nobody in our sight for that.

1. G.P. Dunn, interview, 20 January 1994.

2. C.M. Manning, interview, 5 March 1992.

3. BDO Nelson Parkhill and Victoria University of Technology, 'Characteristics of Australian Family Business: Second Survey', pp. 17-18; also viz. Bina Brown, 'Family ties', *The Australian*, 14 January 1994, p. 21.

4. L.S. Dunn, letter to editor, *The Journalist*, August 1975, p. 8.

Dunn, the architect of PNQ and its longest-serving chief executive, was himself no longer a shareholder when the O'Reillys took over PNQ. He had seen the writing on the wall and had sold some months before to the Murdoch-owned North Queensland Newspaper Co. for a price that the shares never reached on the open market. One scheme that Dunn thought could have been tried was for PNQ to make a reverse takeover bid for *The Courier-Mail*.<sup>1</sup>

Part of the reason the 'dedication didn't carry through' was that the vision of Andrew Dunn, the patriarch, of training his sons in all aspects of newspaper work became blurred along the way as the newspaper industry changed from a craft-based enterprise to one of complex technology. Gordon Beavan perceived a shift away from an understanding of the total operation of a newspaper among members of the third and/or fourth generations of the Dunns, especially, but also among the Mannings and Irwins. He considered the most technologically able of the three families in more recent years had been John Irwin, who was PNQ's full-time group production co-ordinator from 1984 to 1988.

However, with the exception of John, the generation that would now be in their forties and fifties in all of those families, never came to grips with the technology. Some of them graduated in law, others in accounting, but apart from John Irwin I do not think any of them really understood technology at the most senior level of newspaper management.

In Victoria, the Lanyon family sent its male members, destined for newspaper employment, to university to graduate in accounting rather than in some newspaper related-discipline.

This is not to say there are not good accountants in newspapers, just that it is not a discipline related to the technology of newspapers. Gradually the Lanyons have lost managerial control of their newspapers and now they have sole control only of the *Sunraysia Daily*, which is a very small daily newspaper indeed.<sup>2</sup>

1. L.S. Dunn, interview with author, Indooroopilly, 12 February 1992.  
2. Gordon Beavan, letter to author, 29 September 1993.

Family businesses fail because they allow themselves to be destroyed, slowly but surely, by the action - or more accurately, the inaction of their owner/managers.

The businesses fail because, more often than not, these people never make the decisions needed to ensure the vitality of their companies in an ever-changing, ever more complex world. Why? Because family business owners typically fail to recognise the needs of the future in managing their businesses. Instead they prefer the comfort of past visions, the safety of old routines. They enjoy the fixed power of their positions. And when it comes to the future they choose the refuge of ambiguity - instead of the risk of a new plan, purpose, or review.<sup>1</sup>

Even though PNQ succumbed to external forces, internally the financial interests of the families in the company had steadily been eroded over the years.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the family members of the third generation failed to recognise the needs of the future in making proper managerial appointments as the family moved into the fourth generation. The fourth-generation members seemed to lack the interest in being involved in newspapers and the drive and dynamism that the first, second and (some of the) third generation Dunns, Mannings, Irwins and Ipswich families had exhibited. In a 1975 American study of family businesses, thirty-five per cent of all companies sold cited lack of management depth or successors as a key reason for selling out. Many families abandon the effort at succession because they feel it will destroy the family.<sup>3</sup> PNQ was confronted with just such a potential problem, but did not acknowledge it. It finally paid the price for the nepotism that had long been evident in key executive appointments.

In some minds, the disintegration of PNQ is traced as far back as the formation of PNQ. Bruce Manning, PNQ director 1985-88 and a third-generation member of the Mackay Mannings, recalled that when the PNQ merger was first being recommended to the family companies, he had discussed it with Henry John Manning,

1. Ward, p. xix.

2. Minutes of Provincial Newspapers [Qld.] Ltd. board meetings, 3 December 1979 and 13 August 1982.

3. Ward, p. 3.

his 'uncle Jack'. Jack Manning had propounded the advantages of the merger.

... one of those was said to be the - well, it would stop the individual newspapers being picked off by the metropolitans; in other words to stop ourselves being taken over. I said to him well don't you think by putting ourselves all together like this we might become just a vehicle for a one-off takeover, and his comment to me was: 'No, too big, too big, son.'<sup>1</sup>

With that, Bruce Manning laughed nervously. In those days the group was regarded as being too big to take over.

That's really where ... I suppose my initial disappointment was where we had through necessity, through commercial necessity, had to merge with other papers. I don't think any of the families, if they'd have had their choice, they probably all would have preferred to have stayed separate, but it was commercially not viable in the long term and commercially not in the best interests of everybody not to do that.<sup>2</sup>

That sense of inevitability, of almost helplessness before the volatile commercial forces that operated, prevailed. A leading American businessman has said: 'The majority of businessmen are incapable of original thought because they are unable to escape from the tyranny of reason.'<sup>3</sup> In 1987, PNQ directors could not comprehend the 'foment in media acquisitions' in 1987, let alone scheme creatively about exploiting it to their own ends. 'They did not understand the broader scene at all.'<sup>4</sup> Neither the Dunns nor the Mannings was 'terribly hungry' for growth and all that accompanied it. The ghost of caution hovered; the web of denial was spun. Yet, some families do manage the business of succession and survival, from generation to generation, as effectively as they manage their businesses from day to day and year to year. In Australian provincial newspapers, three generations of the Motts, of Albury, and five generations of both the Westons, of Kiama,

1. Bruce Manning, interview with author, Toowoomba, 12 June 1992.  
 2. Bruce Manning, interview, 12 June 1992.  
 3. Cited in Peters and Waterman, p. 40.  
 4. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994.

and the Harrises, of Burnie, have demonstrated this, as was shown in Chapter 3. They have remained private companies and have clung to family control of their newspapers.

One of the specific attitudes that Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman found in their study of sixty-two leading American businesses in the early 1980s is that companies that 'do branch out (whether by acquisition or internal diversification) but stick very close to their knitting outperform the others'.<sup>1</sup> Richard Rumelt found in a 1970s study of a broad sample of large American firms that those businesses with 'dominant-constrained' and 'related-constrained' diversification strategies (two out of eight categories) were 'unquestionably the best overall performers'. Both strategies are based on the concept of controlled diversity.

These companies have strategies of entering only those businesses that build on, draw strength from, and enlarge some central strength of competence. While such firms frequently develop new products and enter new businesses, they are loath to invest in areas that are unfamiliar to management.

Organisations that branch out somewhat, yet still stick close to their central skill, outperform all others. His analyses do not suggest that 'simple is better'. An overly simple business - one that depends on a single, vertically integrated combine - is, in fact, invariably a poor performer. Peters and Waterman concluded that businesses that pursued some diversification - a basis for stability through adaptation - yet stuck close to their knitting, tended to be the superior performers.<sup>2</sup> PNQ stuck very closely to its knitting, acquiring significant interests in regional television licensee companies, but failed to take a broad enough view of what its knitting really was, what its strengths really were.

Ultimately, the Scottish ghost of caution that led the Dunns to amalgamate with the Manning, Irwin and triumvirate of

1. Peters and Waterman, pp. 294-295.

2. Peters and Waterman, pp. 294-295.

Ipswich families and led those six families, as a group, to admit Queensland Press Ltd. to their share lists succumbed to Rupert Murdoch, prince of print, and Tony O'Reilly, baron of baby-foods. That 'deep stake in the community' that the Dunn newspapers established, in common with the newspapers of the other eventual PNQ families, was not enough to prevent their being uprooted by brash newcomers to the Australian newspaper field.<sup>1</sup> The pioneering families found truth in the maxim that the late Robert Holmes a Court had been accustomed to propounding: 'There's a price at which you can shake any assets loose.'<sup>2</sup>

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When the demise of the PNQ group came, it was no surprise. Many of the factors that work against the continuation of family businesses into the third or fourth generation were present. The most complicating factor of all was that the businesses of six families – and not just one – were involved. The families did not handle well the matter of who should succeed Clarrie Manning as chief executive of PNQ. A compromise appointment was chosen – at a time when the company's future hung in the balance. This chapter has shown how the demise can be traced partly to the new regime of cross-media ownership regulation in Australia, partly to a lack of intervention by the Government, and in large part to the caution and the protective devices the pioneering provincial press families of Queensland employed when threatened by corporate predators. Nepotism in key managerial appointments became a blanket rule where family members were available, and the directors showed a decided lack of firmness in wielding the axe when appointments failed to meet expectations. As the generations became more distant from the founders of the dynasties – Andrew Dunn (1854-1934), W.J. Manning (1864-1943), Samuel John Irwin (1837-1909), Hugh Parkinson (1828-1909), Alfred John Stephenson (1846-1914), and William Kippen (1850-1940) – the dedication became less intense, the shareholdings more widely distributed (the Dunn

1. Keith H. McDonald, interview, 20 August 1992.

2. Keith H. McDonald, interview, 20 August 1992.



Manning and Irwin holdings fell, for instance, from more than fifty per cent in 1975 to less than thirty-five per cent seven years later) and the vision more blurred.<sup>1</sup> When PNQ faded out, the fourth-generation family members, as a rule, no longer grasped the patriarchal goals. The six provincial newspaper dynasties, dating back to 1861, had dissipated and disintegrated. 'The dynasties died because they were dynasties.'<sup>2</sup> They were unable to cope with the volatility of the Australian marketplace in the late eighties.

1. L.S. Dunn, letter to editor, The Journalist, August 1975, p. 8; and minutes of PNQ board meetings, 3 December 1979 and 13 August 1982.
2. John Jones, telephone interview with author, 4 June 1992.

Stopping short of  
the known world's edge:

Conclusion

*On a bicycle I travelled over the known world's edge, and the ground held. I was seven.*

— Annie Dillard, *An American Childhood*  
(London: Pan, 1989), p. 42.

In 1930 Queensland had fourteen provincial daily newspapers and sixty-three non-dailies, predominantly weeklies (forty-eight). In 1990 there were still fourteen dailies in provincial Queensland, although only nine of these had been dailies in 1930. Two of the five new dailies served the Gold and Sunshine Coasts, part of the fast-developing south-east Queensland conurbation. Only one of the five dailies that had died was still published, as a bi-weekly: the *Northern Miner*, Charters Towers. In 1990 there were seventy-three non-dailies in Queensland provincial centres (viz. Appendix 3). Some of these — such as the *Hervey Bay Observer*, the *Downs Star*, Toowoomba, and *The Midweek*, Mackay — were weekly 'frees' published by the company owning the daily newspaper in that region. In 1930 there were billboards but radio was only then emerging in Australia and did not yet pose a threat to the advertising revenue that newspapers regarded as theirs. Magazines were in the embryo stage. In 1990, television, radio, magazines, the cinema, billboards, direct mail and a multiplicity of other means of advertising — including on the sides of buses — jostled with newspapers for a share of the advertising cake.

In this vastly different social, political, commercial and mass-media environment, few country newspapers in Queensland are now run by the second or third generation of a family business. No country daily is. The country newspaper dynasties are, indeed, dying, as *The Courier-Mail* noted in headlines — END OF THE COUNTRY DYNASTIES — when the Dunns, Mannings and Irwins were forced to resign from the Australian Provincial

Newspapers Ltd. board in March 1989.<sup>1</sup> Even though Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. no longer existed in name by then, it still existed in personalities and thinking. The chairman of APN was the former chairman of PNQ; the chief executive was unchanged. The dismissal of the chief executive on 3 March 1989 and the installation of an APN board devoid of the family members who had controlled Queensland provincial newspapers for nearly 130 years signalled the end of an era, the end of an ethos. The APN corporate culture does not value so highly the conservatism, honesty, integrity and localism found pre-eminent in the Dunn family newspapers and, as a rule, the PNQ papers. For APN, the bottom line, or profit, is the top consideration; the group follows a decentralised but hard-headed, tight-fisted, commercial style of management that requires managers to submit weekly financial reports.<sup>2</sup>

This thesis has described the dynamics and ethos of the Dunn dynasty, whose newspapers provided the core of, and inspiration for, PNQ. It has shown how the Dunn ethos evolved and was practised and how it shaped the content of their newspapers. And it has demonstrated that country newspapers are entities distinct from metropolitan newspapers. Andrew Dunn, who mixed boldness and caution in a way that his children and grandchildren – with Lex Dunn as the exception – did not, has been revealed as a man who was willing to tread unknown territory and who had the perseverance to achieve much out of little. Inspired by the success of Queensland newspaper families such as the Buzacotts, the Grooms, and the Morgans, Dunn envisaged a family newspaper business that would endure. He had his sons trained in various facets of the newspaper industry and they were ready to serve the family enterprise when called. The Duns outperformed the Buzacotts, Groom and Morgans in their ability to produce profitable newspapers in

1. The Courier-Mail, 16 March 1989, p. 9.

2. John Jones, interview with author, 4 June 1992.

different regions simultaneously and the Dunn dynasty outlasted those three dynasties, too. None of the dynasties that inspired Andrew Dunn survived into the third generation.

Dunn was a member of a Scottish family that knew how to turn a profit. When his father died in 1894, the mother, who had lived in Greenock all her life, kept herself by 'doing jerseys' for the shipping companies. They sent her bales of 'Navy blue jerseys' and she employed women to hand-embroider the name of the ship across the front. She paid the women a halfpenny per letter, half of what the companies paid her.<sup>1</sup> In Queensland, Andrew Dunn demonstrated that he, too, knew how to turn a profit, but he did not set out simply to make money from newspapers. He saw them as a public service, a public trust, and he inculcated this belief into his sons. Andrew Dunn jun. believed his primary function was to produce a good newspaper. 'If you produce a good newspaper, you deserve some reward. If you use cheap, slapdash methods, then you don't deserve to succeed.'<sup>2</sup> Andrew senior and Andrew junior had shared an attitude that did not encourage excess profits. After a reasonable dividend was paid, the rest went back into the company.<sup>3</sup> This helps explain how the Dunns survived the years of distress so well. Andrew Dunn sen. learned, above all things, 'how to labour and to wait', and the Dunns certainly kept their eyes on the long term.<sup>4</sup> Caution became firmly embedded in the evolving Dunn family ethos.

The family ethos influenced the style, tone and content of the newspapers the family members directed, managed and edited. They steered away from the sensational, focusing on a staid presentation of community issues. 'Fair, clean and truthful news' was the aim of the *Toowoomba Chronicle* in 1933, and it remained the aim while the Dunns were in charge.<sup>5</sup> A strong family influence was maintained in the Dunn newspapers as control evolved from family to corporation and, to a lesser

1. Jessie B. Kirk, letter to author, 8 February 1994.
2. Kirkpatrick, *Sworn*, p. 238.
3. Peter Dunn, interview with author, 20 January 1994.
4. *Newspaper News*, 2 September 1929.
5. *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 13 January 1933.

extent, from corporation to group. Despite espousing strongly conservative views, the Dunn newspapers still provided, overall, a balanced news coverage. The Dunns appointed to key roles people they knew would reflect and even enhance the family ethos. The Dunns treated their executive staff well, even generously, and the executives responded with loyal service. Sometimes, however, the ordinary employees were treated less generously, less compassionately. Yet, overall, the Dunn newspapers were industrially harmonious and the employees served long and loyally.

The ethos or culture of the family business is supremely important to its performance and its survival. Far from being peripheral to its performance, the ethos directly influences its success or failure. 'Culture counts: however, vague, imprecise, and manipulative the concept may be, it affects productivity by shaping the use of human resources.'<sup>1</sup> This was true in the Dunn newspapers. The 'human resources' employed by the Dunns were led by long-serving executives who reflected the family's ethos and even enhanced it. The newspapers knew where they were going, financially and editorially - Andrew Dunn sen. had provided such a firm hand at the helm - and, eventually, in 1966, the policy of the family newspapers was spelt out in writing. The general policy of the group's newspapers was 'the support of free enterprise and the liberty of the individual, where such principles are exercised within the law'.<sup>2</sup>

Another facet of the Dunn ethos was localism. Andrew Dunn's emphasis on localism in his newspapers reflected a modern-day truism: that regional newspapers are much closer to their communities than metropolitan newspapers are. Regional newspapers reflect the community's values more closely and are subject to pressures, generally subtle, from community opinion leaders. The Dunns knew their communities intimately through personal involvement in their institutions. This was reflected in what they published in the pages of their newspapers and in

1. Cited in Peter Donovan, 'Looking back to the future', Australian Historical Association Bulletin, Number 63, August 1990, p. 17.

2. A. Dunn and Co., 'Outline of Policy and Function', typescript, 1 April 1966.

the steadily growing circulations and edition sizes. Strong local news content is important as a solid circulation base for a provincial daily newspaper. In turn, readers, quite apart from their influence on the nature and level of news and feature content, are perceived as the ultimate determinants of the overall network of values and of the ideals to which provincial newspapers subscribe. Readers constitute a permanent 'pressure group' demanding reliability and accuracy. The Dunn newspapers grew while metropolitan newspaper circulations dwindled and the afternoon newspapers died. Regional dailies in general are more healthy, in terms of circulation trends, than their capital-city counterparts. One reason for this, especially when considering the Dunn newspapers, was that their ethos of localism and integrity reflected the desires of their communities and won the loyalty of subscribers.

The Dunns' localism was not simply a convenient marketing tool for their newspapers. They practised it in terms of putting down roots in communities and becoming involved there. Andrew Dunn sen. was the exemplar. He lived in Maryborough from 1885 until 1932. He sowed the seeds of his newspaper dynasty in the years of 'distress'. His Scottish frugality, perseverance and caution came to the fore in the depressions of the 1890s and the early 1930s. The family was able to eke out an existence and even expand when many businesses went to the wall. The second generation of the Dunn family included a mixture of both the talented managers and editors, such as Andrew jun. and Herbie, and those who would not have held positions of power but for the dynasty. What they did exhibit was unity of purpose and a fundamental loyalty to the vision and the ethos of the patriarch of the dynasty. This ethos had evolved in the twenty years of struggle (1891-1911) which the patriarch Andrew Dunn, his second wife Jane and the six sons endured in Maryborough when the Dunns controlled only one newspaper, the *Maryborough Chronicle*. The Dunns saw depressed times as windows of opportunity for expansion, merger or closure, as well as for introducing new technology in news-gathering, such as the dictaphone in the 1930s.

Andrew Dunn sen. had belonged to a family that, as a rule, did not stop short of the known world's edge. He had gone to sea as a young man and had become a clerk in a tea merchant's office in Calcutta. After having returned to Scotland and having married, he had emigrated to Australia with his bride. Two of his brothers, James and Peter, became seafaring captains and his father left Scotland to fight in the American Civil War. Sister Jessie lived in the Marquesas Islands to serve as housekeeper to brother, Peter; then she went to Australia and married. But the ghost of caution haunted later generations of the Dunns, just as it hovered in the Ochsian corridors of the *New York Times*. Caution emerged as the crucial factor in many decisions that were turning points for the Dunn newspapers and those that joined them to become PNQ. In the late 1950s, caution kept the Dunns from acquiring, on their own, a majority interest in the highly profitable *Bundaberg News-Mail*. The purchase could have provided the stepping stone for surviving as a private company and the means of avoiding the need, later, to link up with the other families. Instead, the Dunns hesitated, failed to investigate properly Mrs Barton's offer to sell, and eventually joined with five other newspaper companies to acquire the Barton interest in the Bundaberg paper.

In 1968, the Dunn newspaper dynasty, through a merger with five other family newspaper businesses, stopped short of the known world's edge. The dynasty was seventy-seven years old. The ground held, initially, but later gave way. Steeped in caution, each of the six dynasties supported the others in continuing in caution. Yet the families could not, ultimately, hold the unknown at bay; it refused to be denied. When it confronted them, in the form of new cross-media ownership rules and of trade practice provisions that opened the way for a takeover by a foreign company, the families had no contingency plans. They lacked the curiosity and boldness of youth and so had not dealt with the prospect of entering unknown territory.

The Dunns and the other PNQ families demonstrated naivete in

the corporate domain, especially early in the life of the holding company. In 1971, in cautious wisdom, they allowed Queensland Press Ltd. to take a 'stopper' interest in PNQ rather than face the possibility of takeover by a metropolitan media group. Then, as though drugged by oft-repeated assurances from Queensland Press Ltd. that it was 'only a passive investor', the PNQ families refused to believe they were vulnerable to takeover. In addition, they found the recommendations of the 1983 corporate plan beyond their comprehension because the plan was painted on a much larger canvas than the directors were accustomed to viewing. For them the known world was much narrower. They did not have a clear and consensual view of what business they were operating. They knew they were producing regional newspapers, but they had never taken the view that they were in the 'media business', and hence examined the wider potential of where the best national or international opportunities for profit were in that business which, after all, was their central strength or competence. In a sense, their countrymindedness blinkered their perception of the corporate domain.

This narrowness of perception can have advantages. One of the specific attitudes discovered in the Peters-Waterman study of American businesses in the early 1980s is that companies that 'do branch out (whether by acquisition or internal diversification) but stick very close to their knitting outperform the others'.<sup>1</sup> A 1970s study of a broad sample of large American firms found that those businesses with 'dominant-constrained' and 'related-constrained' diversification strategies (two out of eight categories) were 'unquestionably the best overall performers. Businesses that pursue *some* diversification - a basis for stability through adaptation - yet stick close to their knitting, tend to be the superior performers.'<sup>2</sup> Clarrie Manning, PNQ chairman for seventeen years and chief executive for seven, constantly

1. Peters and Waterman, In Search of Excellence, p. 293.

2. Peters and Waterman, pp. 294-295.



urged PNQ directors: 'Let's stick to our knitting.'<sup>1</sup> But PNQ's perception of its 'knitting' was extremely narrow. Manning saw PNQ's business as producing newspapers that served regional Queensland. While others were eager to take PNQ south of the border, or even into the more general media business, neither the Dunns nor the Mannings were 'terribly hungry' for expansion or bigger profits, and this 'adequacy' mentality operated against PNQ in the 1980s when expansion was a necessary precursor to maximising profits.<sup>2</sup> Failure to expand left a public company vulnerable to takeover. At PNQ, however, the main objective seemed to be producing an adequate income for shareholders and providing job opportunities for those members of the family who wanted to work in newspapers. 'They were pretty risk-averse.'<sup>3</sup> PNQ was not particularly worried so long as the 'knitting' turned a moderate profit. It was almost as though the families were 'doing jerseys', although not on a fifty per cent margin like Andrew Dunn's mother in the 1890s. Keith McDonald, who was a PNQ director, accepted 'the fact that we had there a company that had a strong family connection [and] that maybe it wasn't as efficient as it might have been'.<sup>4</sup>

Family business have strengths as well as weaknesses. Until at least the 1970s, in Australia and especially in country districts, family-run newspapers were common. The economies of scale and the 'drive towards growth', described in Chapter 9, have contributed significantly to an increasing concentration of ownership. With larger corporations taking an interest in buying country newspapers, it has become more difficult for the dynasties to survive even if the talent and will are there in the third or fourth generation. The Dunn newspaper dynasty was a product of its times, and it eventually dissipated because the third and fourth generations, with the notable exception of Lex Dunn (1913-1993) and, to a lesser extent, Rowley (1911-1971), Andrew (1910- ) and Peter Dunn (1929- ),

1. G.P. Dunn, interview, 20 January 1994.

2. 'Expand or die' was already the watchword of Rupert Murdoch, by age twenty-five, says Shawcross, p. 89.

3. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994.

4. Keith H. McDonald, interview, 20 August 1992.

generations) and Harrises (five), respectively, stand out lost the vision that its patriarch had shared with his six sons. In New South Wales and Tasmania, the Motts (three because they have weathered all the striding years, enduring pressures from within and without, being able to reject takeover bids, and maintaining private ownership of their newspaper enterprises.

Planning is an area in which many family businesses are deficient. Often they acknowledge the importance of planning, but find it harder to practise what they preach. Family businesses generally fail because they allow themselves to be destroyed, slowly but surely, by the action - or more accurately, the inaction - of their owner/managers. Family business owners typically fail to plan properly, preferring 'the comfort of past visions, the safety of old routines'. They hold back from exploring territory beyond the known world's edge. Caution prevails over boldness. Even though a national survey of Australian family business in 1993 showed that seventy per cent of such enterprises use outside advisers to assist in developing their short-term planning and more than sixty-seven per cent use them for long-term planning, only sixty-four per cent have in place a business plan. Yet it is acknowledged that short and longer term planning are critical to the success of any organisation. Some family companies experience conflict and a lack of understanding about where family and business objectives begin and end.

In some cases the family mission is either not in existence, or not clearly articulated, therefore any strategic plan can be in conflict with the individual objectives of the family members.<sup>1</sup>

PNQ had corporate plans drawn up in 1973 and 1983, but they had little apparent impact on the thinking at board level. PNQ's directors lacked a clear sense of goals and corporate direction.<sup>2</sup> It was in the area of technological planning that PNQ demonstrated its greatest awareness of the need to plan. Thinking long-term as hot metal was phased out and photocomp-

1. BDO Nelson Parkhill and Victoria University of Technology, p. 29.

2. Non-attributable interview, 5 April 1994.

osition was introduced was an imperative for such a group. Even in this process, it allowed industrial problems in Rockhampton to become a running sore for a decade and to affect adversely profitability and circulation.

Many of the factors that work against the continuation of family businesses into the third or fourth generation were present when the demise of the PNQ group came. A complicating factor was that the businesses of six families - and not just one - were involved. The new regime of cross-media ownership regulation in Australia contributed to the outcome, but this was symptomatic of a failure by the company to keep on top of changes in the increasingly complex commercial world of the 1980s. The hard-headed business approach necessary for survival was not evident. Instead there was, at times, naivete in the corporate domain. As the generations became more distant from the founders of the dynasties, the dedication became less intense, the shareholdings more widely distributed and the vision more blurred. Part of the reason the 'dedication didn't carry through' was that the vision of Andrew Dunn, the patriarch, of training his sons in all aspects of newspaper work lost its sharpness along the way as the newspaper industry changed from a craft-based enterprise to a complex amalgam of a modern creative service industry, a hi-tech communications industry and a mass-production manufacturing industry.<sup>1</sup> There was a shift away from an understanding of the total operation of a newspaper among members of the third and/or fourth generations of the Dunns, especially, but also among the Mannings and Irwins.

Even though PNQ succumbed to external forces, internally the financial interests which the families held in the company had steadily been eroded over the years, as was shown. In addition, the family members of the third generation failed to recognise the needs of the future in making proper managerial appointments as the family moved into the fourth generation. The fourth-generation members seemed to lack the interest in

1. Peter Robinson, 'Newspaper transactions: the buying and selling of a team with few assets', Australian Financial Review, 9 February 1988, p. 12.

being involved in newspapers and the drive and dynamism that the first, second and (some of the) third generation Dunns, Mannings, Irwins and Ipswich families had exhibited. In a 1975 American study of family businesses, thirty-five per cent of all companies that had been sold cited lack of management depth or of successors as a key reason for selling out. Many families abandon the effort at succession because they feel it will destroy the family. In PNQ's case, such feelings or fears led to the compromise selection of Rob Hollingworth as the replacement for Clarrie Manning as chief executive. Bruce Manning offered a much deeper well of newspaper management experience at the top level to draw on, but he was overlooked. One of the main mistakes that family businesses make is to promote family members who lack the necessary business skills or training.<sup>1</sup> PNQ made that mistake on a number of occasions.

Another problem of succession is that far too many owners hang on to their business control into senility. This can produce possibly the most frustrating and stressful circumstance for a family business: a successor stalled behind a parent uninterested in relinquishing control.<sup>2</sup> At the *Los Angeles Times*, as part of the Otis-Chandler dynasty (1881-present), Norman Chandler was stalled behind his father, Harry, who did not relinquish full authority until his death at the age of eighty, in 1944.<sup>3</sup> The Dunns did not manage succession intelligently. At Toowoomba, Herbie Dunn held the editorial reins for at least five years longer than he should have, implicitly cramping the style of Bert Hinchliffe who was his subordinate. At Rockhampton, Andrew Dunn jun. was managing director and editor of the *Morning Bulletin* until the age of seventy-four and allowed his contemporary, Len Cran, to continue as business manager there until he was seventy-three. There was a failure to plan properly for the transition. When Andrew jun. died only sixteen months after his own retirement and only five months after the retirement of Cran, Lex Dunn, aged forty-three, as manager, was still learning the newspaper

1. BDO Nelson Parkhill and VUT, p. 30.

2. Danco p. 143; Ward, p. 191.

3. Marshall Berges, The Life and Times of Los Angeles: A Newspaper, a Family and a City (New York: Atheneum, 1984). p. 77.

ropes at the *Morning Bulletin* and was certainly not seen by other family members as being equipped to assume leadership of the family companies. Lex, the first visionary, the first real activist in the family since the patriarch, should have been brought into the family business years earlier. Yet Andrew Dunn jun. had simply followed the pattern set by his father who, in a mellower age, had clung to the reins of control until his death in 1934 at the age of seventy-nine. This meant that Andrew jun. did not take the reins until he was fifty-three, and when he died twenty-two years later, he was succeeded as chairman of the boards of the family's newspapers by, in turn, three of his brothers: Herbie, 1956-57, as family chairman, and 1957-59 as company chairman; Hector, 1959-62; and Alex, 1962-68. It was only with the advent of PNQ in 1968, seventy-seven years after the Dunns became newspaper proprietors, that leadership passed to the third-generation. Rowland James Dunn was fifty-eight when he became the foundation chairman of PNQ's board and he was dead two years later. Lex served as full-time chief executive of PNQ for a decade, but he, too, was in his late fifties when he assumed this high office. The Dunns and PNQ squandered youth.

Economies of scale in the newspaper industry provide an impetus towards single-newspaper markets and ultimately towards chain ownership. The economies of group ownership were different for the Dunns as a family; the Dunns as a company; and for PNQ, in which the Dunns were the major family interest. One of the major benefits of the merger in 1968 of the family newspaper companies was that they started *thinking* overall as a group. The stronger financial base provided by the merger opened windows of opportunity that had previously been closed. PNQ made significant gains over the years, none more so than through the small weeklies that it bought on the Sunshine Coast as it moved towards establishing, in 1980, a new daily newspaper in that region. The *Sunshine Coast Daily*, after several years of hanging by a thread, became one of the success stories of new newspaper ventures in Australia in the past two decades. At the same time, among the actions or decisions that reflect less than favourably on PNQ were the purchase of the Express group of free suburban newspapers in

Brisbane in 1979; the closure of the Ipswich *Mirror* and of the Pine and Peninsula *Records*; the merger of Toowoomba's *Chronicle* with Treg Rowe's *Downs Star* and the later failure to buy out the fifty per cent Rowe interest in *The Chronicle*.

While profitability during PNQ's two decades reflected general success for the Group, the 'squandering of youth', referred to above, doubtless contributed directly or indirectly to the dissipation of shareholdings amongst family members and the blurring of the vision of the patriarchs. This, combined with the consistent adherence to nepotism in key appointments, as well as Australia's increasingly competitive business environment and the vastly different media ownership and trade practices rules contributed to the ultimate demise of the major Queensland country newspaper dynasties. In the long run, PNQ's failure to stave off the corporate predators and to survive as a separate entity meant that it provided a study of a newspaper species that is almost extinct - the family-run country daily newspaper. The provincial daily newspaper has changed from the 1930s broadsheets crammed with stories varying from the interminable reports of meetings or disasters to tiny local and general items, with small headlines, few pictures and virtually no feature articles or human-interest stories, and with, in most dailies, no front-page news; to the 1990s tabloids with colour splashed on the front page, big pictures, big headlines, and stories varying from the medium-sized (about 200 to 400 words) to 'briefs' of about fifty words and human-interest and feature articles of anywhere from 200 to 1000 words. This thesis became, in reality, an account of the 'natural history' of a number of Queensland provincial daily newspapers which have grown in unforeseen ways: they have been born, evolved in the ways indicated above, grown as a rule in circulation, profitability and paging, and, in some cases, died. They have certainly developed characters different from their metropolitan cousins. The newspapers that have survived are not 'the wilful product of any little group of living men [but] the outcome of an historic process in which many individuals participated without foreseeing what

the ultimate product of their labours was to be'.<sup>1</sup> Andrew Dunn sen. and his sons certainly did not foresee the style of newspaper that existed when the O'Reillys grabbed PNQ in 1988. This thesis has presented an analytical account of the conditions - especially the available technology and the prevailing social structure - under which most of the existing Queensland regional daily newspapers have grown up and taken form.

1. Park, pp. 8-9.

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**Oral History**

Interviews conducted by the author:

Key: p = by telephone

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>
Adams, Alice L.	26 Aug. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Kingaroy
	16 Apr. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Kingaroy
Anderson, Adrian	22 Apr. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Adelaide
Anderson, Nicki	25 Oct. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
Armitage, Geraldine	4 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Maryborough
Armitage, James K.	5 Mar. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Sydney
	22 Apr. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Sydney
Bancroft, Marion F.	15 Jan. 1980	Toowoomba
Birch, Reginald	18 May 1979	Rockhampton
Blackwell, John	7 Dec. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Sydney
Bransdon, Mark	10 Aug. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Emerald
Burton, T.S.	14 Dec. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
Butler, Denis	24 Apr. 1979	Toowoomba
Carter, Barry	20 Aug. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Geelong
	21 Dec. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Geelong
Cook, Vic	12 Mar. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	New Brighton, NSW
Cooper, Betty	17 Dec. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Bundaberg
Cran, Bert	19 Apr. 1992	Maryborough
	13 May 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Maryborough
Cran, P. Gordon	31 Mar. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Wyongah, NSW
	6 Apr. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Wyongah, NSW
	23 Dec. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Wyongah, NSW
Craven, Lisa	24 Nov. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Cairns
Darracott, Stephen L.	31 Mar. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Toowoomba
Darwen, Douglas James	18 July 1981	Bowen
Darwen, Henry W.	17 July 1981	Bowen

Dunn, Ailsa L.	19 May 1979	Rockhampton
	9 Mar. 1992	Jindalee
Dunn, Andrew	20 Jan. 1977	Caloundra
	21 Feb. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Caloundra
Dunn, Gordon Peter	18 May 1979	Rockhampton
	20 Jan. 1994	Kenmore
	5 Feb. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Kenmore
	14 Feb. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Kenmore
Dunn, Hector L.	24 June 1992	Bribie Island
	15 Apr. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Bribie Island
	12 May 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Bribie Island
	11 Nov. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Bribie Island
	16 Dec. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Bribie Island
Dunn, Joan	8 May 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Bribie Island
Dunn, Lex Seymour	16 Mar. 1977	Brisbane
	21 July 1978	Brisbane
	31 Oct. 1978	Brisbane
	14/15 May 1980	Gladstone
	12 Feb. 1992	Indooroopilly
	21 Feb. 1992	Indooroopilly
	19 Mar. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Indooroopilly
Edwards, Richard A.	24 Mar. 1992	Brisbane
Euler, Millie K.	17 Jan. 1994	Capalaba
	25 Oct. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Capalaba
	27 Oct. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Capalaba
	19 Jan. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Capalaba
	20 Jan. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Capalaba
	25 Mar. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Capalaba
Everingham, Douglas N.	21 May 1979	Rockhampton
Francis, Henry W.	20 May 1979	Rockhampton
Fuller, David John	11 Apr. 1980	Chinchilla
	18 Apr. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Chinchilla
Geertsma, Angela	12 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	East Ipswich
Gibson, Margaret J.	17 May 1980	Emerald
	24 Feb. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Gold Coast
Greek Community Centre	3 Dec. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
Groom, W.H. George	23 Aug. 1979 <sup>P</sup>	Innisfail
	22 July 1981	Innisfail
Harris, Lloyd	3 Nov. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Burnie, Tas.
Hartnett, Phil	7 July 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Toowoomba
	22 Nov. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Toowoomba
	23 Nov. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Toowoomba
Harvey, Philip W. J.	10 Mar. 1992	Everton Park
Harvey, Ronald Stuart	16 May 1979	Bundaberg
Hinchliffe, Bruce D.	21 Oct. 1975	Toowoomba
	14 Dec. 1992	Toowoomba
Hollingworth, Edwin	21 Sept. 1977	Warwick
	10 Jan. 1979	Warwick
Hollingworth, Mary	10 Jan. 1979	Warwick
Hollingworth, R.P	25 May 1992	Brisbane
Irwin, A.J. (John)	3 July 1979	Warwick
	13 Oct. 1993	Cleveland
	11 Oct. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Cleveland
Irwin, Simon K.	29 Nov. 1993	Brisbane
Jones, John A.	4 June 1992	Brisbane
Kippen, Norol D.	17 Apr. 1979	Ipswich
	12 Nov. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Ipswich



Layton, Eleanor S.	9 Jan. 1980	Yandina
Layton, Peter	7 Mar. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Ipswich
McDonald, Keith H.	20 Aug. 1992	Brisbane
McFadden, Elsie	22 Apr. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Burrum Heads
Macfarlan, Margaret E.	14 May 1980	Gladstone
	27 June 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Gladstone
	15 Feb. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Gladstone
	27 Feb. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Gladstone
McInnes, Colin	24 Jan. 1994	Brisbane
McMillan, Judith	15 July 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Shepparton
Manning, Bruce	14 Oct. 1978	Toowoomba
	12 June 1992	Toowoomba
	14 Dec. 1992	Toowoomba
	15 Oct. 1993	Toowoomba
Manning, Clarence M. and Henry John	19 Jan. 1977	Buderim
Manning, Clarence M.	23 May 1979	Mackay
	5 Mar. 1992	Auchenflower
	24 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Auchenflower
Manning, Noel	14 Oct. 1978	Toowoomba
Manning, Peter	19 Mar. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Toowong
Martin, Clem	25 Oct. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Sydney
Meacham, Donald C.	22 Mar. 1979	Drayton
	27 Sept. 1979	Drayton
	11 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Gold Coast
Moore, Harry A.	12 June 1979	Kenmore
Morley, George	3 July 1979	Warwick
Morris, Sandra	31 Dec. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Rockhampton
Morrissey, Narissa	22 Dec. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Kiama, NSW
Murtagh-Scott, Anne	19 May 1979	Rockhampton
Nicol, Scott	9 Mar. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
Nielson, Carl F.	16 May 1979	Bundaberg
	17 Nov. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Bundaberg
O'Connor, Beronia	12 Oct. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Monto
O'Donohue, Michael J.	18 Aug. 1979	Hervey Bay
	6 Mar. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Alexandra Hills
	28 Aug. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Alexandra Hills
O'Rourke, Paul	24 Jan. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
Owen, Peter John	18 Jan. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Maroochydore
	3 June 1994	St. Lucia
Palmer, Geoffrey	3 Feb. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Rockhampton
Pottinger, Bertram E.	26 July 1978	Toowoomba
Readdy, J.S.	21 Jan. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
Rendall, William G.	15 May 1979	Maryborough
	20 Apr. 1992	Maryborough
	24 Dec. 1992	Brisbane
	5 Jan. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Maryborough
Reye, Barbara M.	20 May 1992	Highgate Hill
	23 Mar. 1992 <sup>P</sup>	Highgate Hill
	10 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Highgate Hill
	12 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Highgate Hill
	30 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Highgate Hill
Reynolds, John C.	21 Jan. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
Shakespeare, Heather	6 Nov. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Canberra
Skerman, Helen	10 Mar. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Kholo
Smith, Alison L.	10 Dec. 1979	Yeronga
Smith, Geoff.	31 Mar. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane

Stead, Brian M.	4 June 1992	Brisbane
	12 Apr. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
Stephenson, George S.	5 Mar. 1980	Springwood
Stephenson, Gregory B.	12 Nov. 1993 <sup>P</sup>	Brisbane
	2 Dec. 1993	Karalee
Sutherland, A.L.	5 Apr. 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Gladstone
Thompson, Jeffrey D.	15 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	Toowoomba
Thompson, Neil James	15 May 1994 <sup>P</sup>	St. Lucia
Williams, Lily	10 Jan. 1980	Maryborough

Key: p = by telephone

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# **Appendices**

## Appendix 1

**An Australian media chronology, 1854-1994,  
but principally of the Dunn family's  
emergence and demise as the owner  
of a chain of Queensland newspapers**

The following chronology incorporates major events in the life of the Dunn family and its purchase of newspapers, its amalgamation of its newspapers interests with those of five other families in 1968, and the eventual demise of that group, as well as key events in the turbulent changeovers in media ownership in Australia in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

**1854**

- 24 May: Birth: Andrew Dunn, at Greenock, Renfrewshire, Scotland, to Andrew Dunn and Ann Anderson; the first of four sons and three daughters
- 31 Jul: Birth: Katharine Macintyre (first wife of Andrew Dunn), at Campbelltown, Argyllshire, Scotland, to Dugald Macintyre and Jennet McKinlay

**1860**

- 21 Nov: *Maryborough Chronicle (M.C.)* begins publication

**1870**

- 2 Jul: *Wide Bay News*, Maryborough, begins publication

**1871**

- 8 Mar: Birth of Jane Cran (second wife of Andrew Dunn)

**1879**

- 4 Nov: Marriage (1): Andrew Dunn/Katharine Macintyre at Greenock, Renfrewshire, Scotland

**1880**

- 22 Feb: Andrew and Kate Dunn arrive in Queensland  
 1 Mar: Kate Dunn begins duties as head teacher at Toowoomba's Middle Girls and Infants School (Andrew's occupation is listed as a Shopman)  
 7 May: Birth in Toowoomba: Andrew, first son of Andrew and Kate Dunn

**1881**

- 7 Jun: Birth in Toowoomba: James Macintyre, second son of Andrew and Kate Dunn

**1882**

- 15 May: *Maryborough Chronicle* begins daily publication

**1883**

- 1 Jan: Kate Dunn begins duties as head teacher at Toowoomba South Girls School  
 11 Sep: Birth in Toowoomba: William Herbert Alan, third son of Andrew and Kate Dunn

**1884**

- 29 Mar: *The Colonist*, Maryborough, begins publication; weekly offshoot of M.C.

**1885**

- 1 Jan: Kate Dunn begins duties as Head Teacher of Maryborough Central Girls School  
 15 Jan: Mrs Dunn, servant and family (4) arrive in Maryborough by steamer 'Corea'

**1887**

A. Dunn becomes employee of Maryborough Newspaper Company

**1888**

- Jan: Maryborough Newspaper Co becomes limited liability company  
 22 Jan: Birth: Hugh Hector Harold, fourth son of Andrew and Kate Dunn  
 20 Jun: J.S. Woodyatt retires as editor, M.C.; St. Quintin Hill new editor  
 9 Aug: Maryborough Newspaper Co. directors decide to deduct a bonus of ten pounds per shareholder for 'Mr A. Dunn, business manager of the company, for his sedulous attention to its affairs'  
 12 Oct: Letter from A. Dunn offering to buy 25 shares in the Maryborough Newspaper Co.

**1889**

- 8 Jan: A. Dunn becomes owner of 24 shares in Maryborough Newspaper Co. and becomes secretary
- 15 Feb: A. Dunn elected director in place of John Woodyatt
- 4 Apr: Birth: Lorne Islay Macintyre, fifth son of Andrew and Kate Dunn
- 5 Jul: Death: Kate Dunn in Maryborough
- 21 Jul: Fire destroys the Tooley Street, Maryborough, home rented by the Dunns

**1890**

- 4 Oct: Death: Lorne Islay Dunn at Grosvenor Terrace, 36 Mearns Street, Greenock (home of his grandmother, Ann Dunn). Age: 18 months.

**1891**

- 23 Jan: G.I. Roberts is added to Maryborough Newspaper Co. directorate
- 24 Jan: Andrew Dunn becomes chairman of Maryborough Newspaper Co.
- 24 Jul: A. Dunn's first meeting as chairman of Maryborough Newspaper Co.
- 12 Sep: Final St Quintin Hill imprint in M.C.
- 12 Sep: St Quintin Hill puts up for sale 'Stanway', at the end of a week in which he relinquished control of M.C.
- 14 Sep: George Illidge Roberts becomes editor, M.C.; and Charles Henry Johnson, publisher; Johnson's imprint began appearing in M.C.
- 13 Oct: Banquet tendered to St Quintin Hill
- 27 Oct: 'Stanway' is offered at auction
- 6 Nov: St Quintin Hill's household furniture and effects auctioned
- 18 Nov: Marriage (2): Andrew Dunn marries Jane Cran at 'Loudon', Yengarie

**1892**

- 5 Oct: Birth: Robert Cran, first son of Andrew and Jane Dunn - at 'Stanway', Maryborough

**1895**

- 5 Sep: Birth: Flora Margaret, first daughter of Andrew and Jane Dunn at 'Stanway'

**1898**

5 Jan: Birth: Alexander Gordon, second son of Andrew and Jane Dunn

**1900**

12 Jul: Jane Dunn becomes owner of 'Stanway'

**1903**

A. Dunn serves term as Mayor of Maryborough

**1904**

21 Sep: Birth: Ruth Anderson, second daughter of Andrew and Jane Dunn

**1911**

11 Mar: Dunn family buys *Morning Bulletin* and *The Capricornian*, Rockhampton

**1914**

A. Dunn, Mayor of Maryborough

31 Mar: Dunn Family buys *Warwick Argus*

**1918**

William Eadie becomes manager of M.C. (age 28)

**1919**

1 Feb: Dunn family merges *Warwick Argus* and *Examiner & Times*: *Warwick Daily News* takes their place

4 Jul: James McIntyre Dunn becomes manager and secretary of the *Morning Bulletin Ltd* and L.J. Cran appointed auditor

29 Nov: *Wide Bay News*, Maryborough, ceases publication

**1920**

10 Jun: Marriage: J.M. Dunn/Mary E. Miller, 'Stanway'

**1921**

Dunns buy *Allora Guardian*

**1922**

June: Dunn family buys the *Toowoomba Chronicle*

24 Jul: Marriage: Flora Margaret Dunn/Jack Wilfred Armitage, at 'Stanway'

**1924**

29 Jan: George Illidge Roberts resigns as M.C. editor and as a director of the *Maryborough Newspaper Co.*

July: R.C. Dunn appointed a director of *Maryborough Newspaper Co.*

**1925**

- 17 Nov: Death in Rockhampton: James McIntyre Dunn  
 19 Dec: E.J. Hatton resigns as M.C. editor; George Leslie Wilson becomes editor

**1928**

- c. 3 Apr: Andrew, Jane and Ruth Dunn and Flora Armitage leave for visit to England, Scotland and Continent (away till Christmas)  
 22 Oct: Meeting: Maryborough Newspaper Co (rejects approach for purchase of M.C.: company is asked whether it would put a price on its papers for sale on a walk-in, walk-out basis).  
 late Dec: Andrew, Jane, Flora, Ruth arrive home from visit to United Kingdom and Continent

**1929**

- 30-31 May: First recorded meeting of A. Dunn and Family  
 12 Jul: Dunn family buys *Evening News*, Rockhampton, from Purcells, etc; sacks Ainge Johnson over fraudulent circulation figures

**1930**

- 14 Aug: Death of Jane Dunn, second wife of Andrew, in Toowoomba

**1931**

- 2 Jan: Meeting of A. Dunn and Family  
 12 Jan: Radio 4MK Mackay begins broadcasting.  
 25 Oct: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1932**

- 8-9 Feb: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family  
 23 Feb: Marriage (3): Andrew Dunn marries Marcia Foote in Sydney  
 2 Jul: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family  
 15 Jul: 'Stanway' formally transferred from ownership of estate of Jane Dunn to Andrew Dunn sen. and Andrew Dunn jun.  
 22 Nov: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1933**

- late Jan: 'Stanway' advertised for sale  
 9 Oct: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

## 1934

- Dunns close *Allora Guardian*
- 23 Feb: W.H.A. Dunn files Supreme Court petition for the winding up of the Globe Printing Company Pty. Ltd.
- 31 Mar: M.C. ceases to make quarterly payments to G.I. Roberts, former editor and director; son of former chairman
- 27 Apr: The Dunn's Supreme Court action for the winding up of the Globe is dismissed by Justice H.H. Henschman
- 29 Apr: Death: Andrew Dunn sen.
- Nov: The Dunn family, in grateful memory of their parents, the late Andrew and Jane Dunn, donate 500 pounds to St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Maryborough
- 25 Nov: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

## 1935

- 19 Dec: Final issue of the *Cairns Daily Times*.

## 1936

- 18 Sept: W.H.A. Dunn informs meeting of Warwick directors that the Dunn family will accept the 7500-pound offer from the Irwins for the Dunn interest in the *Warwick Daily News*

## 1937

- 29 Jul: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

## 1938

- 11 Feb: 'Stanway' title passes from Dunns to Charles Edward Schwarzrock and Katherine Alice Schwarzrock
- 10 Aug: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

## 1940

- 13 Apr: Final issue of the *Evening Star*, Townsville
- 31 Jul: Final issue of the *Evening News*, Rockhampton
- 18 Aug: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

## 1942

- 11 Mar: Death: Herbert Alan Dunn, heir apparent to editorship of the *Toowoomba Chronicle*
- 2 Aug: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

## 1943

- 10 Sep: Divorce: Flora Margaret (nee Dunn) and Jack Wilfred Armitage

## 1944

- 27 Aug: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family



**1945**

- 5 Sep: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family  
 10 Dec: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1946**

- 24 Aug: Resumed meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1947**

- 5 Sep: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1948**

- 21 Oct: Death 'in harness' of M.C. manager W. Eadie; George English is new manager.  
 1 Nov: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1952**

- 31 Oct: *The Colonist* ceases publication (after 68 years)

**1953**

- 8 Jun: Death: Robert Cran Dunn in Maryborough  
 24 Jul: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family  
 23 Oct: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1954**

- 29 Jul: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1956**

- 31 Jan: Death: Andrew Dunn jun.  
 24 Oct: Meeting of A. Dunn & Family

**1957**

- 21 Mar: Final meeting of A. Dunn & Family  
 7 Jun: Incorporation: A. Dunn and Company Pty. Limited

**1958**

- 29 Mar: George Leslie Wilson retires as editor, M.C. after 32 years three months  
 28 Apr: M.C. published from its new premises in Bazaar Street, Maryborough  
 30 Jun: D.L. Tate, of *Daily Telegraph*, becomes editor, M.C.

**1960**

- 12 Feb: *Bundaberg News-Mail* goes tabloid.  
 19 Feb: D.L. Tate resigns as editor, M.C. after being summoned to a meeting of directors; left Maryborough on 22 Feb.  
 8 Aug: Mike O'Donohue becomes editor of M.C. (served till 3 Feb 1973)  
 21 Nov: Centenary of *Maryborough Chronicle*

## 1961

- 20 Jan: Provincial Investments Pty Ltd buys 52.6 per cent interest in *Bundaberg-News Mail* (Mrs M.H. Barton and daughter Mrs Betty Young sell)
- 4 Apr: Death: William Herbert Allan Dunn
- 4 Jul: Centenary of *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba
- 9 Jul: Centenary of *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton

## 1962

- July: DDQ-10, Toowoomba, commercial television transmission begins
- Sept: RTQ-7, Rockhampton, commercial television transmission begins

## 1964

- 1 Jul: A. Dunn & Co. buys *Nambour Chronicle* from the McFaddens

## 1965

- April: WBQ-8, Maryborough, commercial television transmission begins
- April: Formation of a PNQ-type holding company is proposed at APDP (Qld.) level
- 26 Nov: *Cairns Post* sold to Queensland Press Ltd.

## 1966

- 28 Jun: A. Dunn and Company Pty. Ltd. decides to become Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Pty Ltd.

## 1967

- 15 Feb: Death in Adelaide: Ruth Anderson Anderson (nee Dunn)

## 1968

- 1 Apr: Merger takes place of the newspaper interests of the Dunn family and the Manning, Irwin and Ipswich families; L.S. Dunn first chief executive based initially in Rockhampton
- 14 May: Macfarlans sell *Gladstone Observer* to Murdoch
- 27 Aug: *The Advocate*, Burnie, becomes the first Australian daily to switch from letterpress to web offset printing

## 1970

- 27 Jul: *Bundaberg News-Mail* becomes first Queensland daily to switch to web offset printing; also photocomposition at same time
- 23 Nov: C.M. Manning becomes Chairman of PNQ Board

## 1971

- 1 Apr: Death: Hugh Hector Harold Dunn
- 12 Oct: *Warwick Daily News* switches from letterpress to web offset printing and from hot metal to photo-composition

## 1973

- 3 Feb: M.J. O'Donohue retires as Editor, M.C.
- 1973-86: Andy Anderson editor of *Maryborough Chronicle*

## 1974

- March: PNQ headquarters move to Brisbane (T&G Building, Albert Street); move was delayed by January 1974 Brisbane floods
- 24 Dec: Murdoch sells *Gladstone Observer* to PNQ (ownership change from 1 Jan 1975)

## 1976

- 30 Jul: K.H. McDonald appointed a PNQ director
- 27 Oct: PNQ issues prospectus
- 9 Dec: PNQ publicly listed on Stock Exchange

## 1977

- 25 Jul: *Queensland Times* goes offset
- 9 Nov: *Maryborough Chronicle* goes offset

## 1978

- 5 Oct: *Cairns Post* first cold-type issue: switches to photo-composition.

## 1980

- 7 Jul: First issue of the *Sunshine Coast Daily*
- 31 Dec: L.S. Dunn retires as chief executive of PNQ; C. M. Manning becomes chief executive as well as continuing as chairman

## 1982

- January: *Chronicle, Maryborough,* becomes the *Maryborough-Hervey Bay Chronicle.*
- 2 Aug: First issue of Brisbane's *Daily Sun* by

**1984**

- 27 Jan: News Ltd. takes over the North Queensland Newspaper Co. Ltd (flagship: *Townsville Bulletin*)
- 9 May: First issue of *The Northern Leader*, Bowen. Tri-weekly. Founder: Asher Joel Media group. Survived a week less than 13 months

**1985**

- 31 May: Final issue of *Northern Leader*, Bowen

**1986**

- 1 Jan: News Ltd., via North Queensland Newspaper Co., takes over *Bowen Independent* from Darwen family
- 3 Dec: Rupert Murdoch launches takeover bid for HWT
- 20 Dec: *The Herald*, Melbourne, publishes its final **Saturday** issue (it was Australia's last Saturday evening paper)

**1987**

- 14 Jan: Sir Warwick Fairfax dies
- 20 Jan: Kerry Packer sells GTV9 Melbourne and TCN9 Sydney and some radio stations (to Alan Bond for nearly \$1.05 bn)
- 6 Feb: Murdoch wins HWT
- 4 Jun: Broadcasting Act amendments passed by Parliament on final sitting day before election. Needing National Party support in Senate, Prime Minister Bob Hawke agrees to reduce ownership limit from 75 to 60 per cent
- 6 Jul: *Business Daily* launched
- 11 Jul: Federal election: Hawke re-elected; Gareth Evans replaces Michael Duffy as Communications Minister
- 7 Aug: Northern Star Holdings says it will sell the titles of the *Brisbane Daily Sun* and *Sunday Sun* and the *Adelaide News* to the managements in each city, who will buy with help from Westfield, Northern Star's parent; News Corporation will still print and distribute its 'competitor'
- 18 Aug: *Business Daily* closes
- 31 Aug: Warwick Fairfax, 26-year-old son of Sir Warwick and Lady Mary, launches takeover bid for Fairfax
- 31 Aug: C.M. Manning retires as chief executive of PNQ; continues as chairman
- 1 Sep: Robert Paul Hollingworth becomes PNQ group general manager

- 24 Sep: Communications Minister Evans confirms that a majority of TV operators in all four regional markets in eastern Australia have opted to aggregate; Evans says aggregation planned for WA and SA
- 1 Nov: PNQ buys *Chinchilla News* from David and Dorothy Fuller
- 7 Dec: Warwick Fairfax formally takes over as proprietor of Fairfax. Chairman James Fairfax, deputy chairman John B. Fairfax, Sir Vincent Fairfax and rest of board resign
- 31 Dec: *Western Mail*, Perth, closes
- 1988**
- 5 Feb: Closure of the *Telegraph*, Brisbane (began 1 Oct 1872)
- 13 Mar: Final issue of the *Times on Sunday* (formerly the *National Times*; it began 7 Feb 1971)
- 14 Mar: Closure of *The Sun*, Sydney (began 1910)
- 26 Jul: O'Reilly family trust takes over PNQ
- 13 Aug: Haswell Pty. Ltd.'s takeover offer for PNQ expires
- 2 Nov: PNQ becomes APN (Australian Provincial Newspapers Ltd.)
- 1989**
- 3 Mar: Haswell sacks senior PNQ staff from pre-takeover days; Rob Hollingworth finished as Group GM that day
- 1990**
- 10 Feb: APN buys *Dalby Herald* from Flower family via Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd.
- 11 Sep: Final issue of *Daily News*, Perth
- 5 Oct: Final issues of *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mirror* (Sydney) and *Sun News-Pictorial* and *Herald* (Melbourne) - *Herald* began 1840.
- 8 Oct: Birth of the 24-hour papers replacing the above: *Daily Telegraph-Mirror* (Sydney); *Herald-Sun* (Melbourne)
- 1991**
- Protracted battle throughout the year for Fairfax empire, in receivership
- 31 Mar: Closure of *Sunday Herald*, Melbourne (began 20 Aug 1989)
- 16 Dec: Conrad Black's Tourang consortium wins Fairfax empire

**1992**

- 27 Mar: Final issue of *The News*, Adelaide (afternoon)
- 25 Mar: Release of Report of the Print Media Inquiry
- 29 Mar: *Sunday Mail* (Brisbane) goes tabloid
- 14 Apr: Closure of *Sunday Sun*, Brisbane, announced; *Sunday Telegraph* and *Sun-Herald* begin publishing south-east Queensland editions
- 31 Jul: APN takes over *Gatton Star* and *Western Star*

**1993**

- 25 Feb: Death of Lex Dunn, architect of the incorporation of the Dunn family newspaper interests and of Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd.
- 19 Apr: *Fraser Coast Chronicle* is new masthead for *Maryborough-Hervey Bay Chronicle*, which had dropped the Maryborough-Hervey Bay section of the masthead and had been running as *The Chronicle: Today's Fraser Coast News*. Separate editions for Maryborough and Hervey Bay
- 9 Oct: First issue of *Brisbane Weekend Times* (80c). Proprietor: Michael Hawke, who sold the (free) *City News* in July to Rupert Murdoch for \$1.5 million, reportedly
- 20 Nov: Final issue of *Brisbane Weekend Times*
- 22 Dec: APN takes over Peter Isaacson Publications, Melbourne, publisher of more than 40 titles including the *Daily Commercial News*

**1994**

- 4 Feb: APN takes 75 per cent interest in the *Border Post*, Stanthorpe
- 1 Mar: APN buys South Burnett Times Pty. Ltd. (publisher of the *South Burnett Times*, the *Central and North Burnett Times*, the *Biggenden News*, the *Blackall Leader* and the *Western Times*, Charleville) from Adams family interests
- 8 May: Final edition of south-east Queensland edition of *Sunday Telegraph*
- 15 May: Final edition of south-east Queensland edition of *Sun-Herald*

## Appendix 2

### Biographical Register

This register is intended principally to provide biographical information on members of key Queensland provincial newspaper families and other selected Australian provincial press families. It aims to extend the dynastic theme of the thesis. Thus, entries have been grouped according to family connections, despite changes of name because of marriage. Immediately below, preceding the register itself, appears an alphabetical list of entries. Following each name is an indication of the family name under which the person's biographical entry is to be found. If the entry is not listed by family grouping, it is classified as Miscellaneous (Misc.), starting at Page 44.

For the entries in this register, the following initials and abbreviations are used to denote:

APDP	Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd.
APN	Australian Provincial Newspapers Holdings Ltd.
APPA	Australian Provincial Press Association
Assn.	Association
NIE	Newspapers in Education
NSW	New South Wales
PNQ	Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd.
QCPA	Queensland Country Press Association
RDA	Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd.
Uni.	University

## Alphabetical list of entries

ADAMS, Alice Lefroy (1911- ): Viz. Adams family.  
 ADAMS, James Leslie (1909-76): Adams.  
 ANDERSON, Ruth Anderson (1904-1967): Dunn.  
 ARMITAGE, Jack Wilfred (1895-1968): Dunn.  
 ARMITAGE, James Kavanagh (1929- ): Dunn.  
 AYLWARD, Cecil William Norman (1907-79): Ipswich (Kippen).  
 BARTON, Muriel Hooper [nee Webb] (1887-1972): Barton.  
 BARTON, Sidney Howard (1887-1931): Barton.  
 BIRKETT, Thomas (1867-1952): Birkett-Fuller.  
 BRANSDON, Barry Dare (1936-1990): Misc.  
 BROWN, Colin Fidelis (1927-1994): Macfarlan.  
 BRUCE, Walter (1897-1980): Misc.  
 CARVOLTH, Neil Vincent (1932- ): Darwen.  
 CHAMBERLIN, Gregory Thomas (1944- ): Misc.  
 COLLYER, Alan Charles Douglas (1945- ): Adams.  
 CONNAL, Flora Margaret (1895-1973): Dunn.  
 COOK, Clem (1887-1967): Misc.  
 COWTON, Richard Appleby (1834-1891): Misc.  
 CRAN, Leonard John (1881-1969): Dunn.  
 DARRACOTT, Stephen (1943- ): Misc.  
 DARWEN, Claude Leslie (1909- ): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, Douglas James (1906-88): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, Henry William (1913-94): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, James (1934- ): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, Ronald (1902-50): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, Roy Edward (1908-93): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, Stephen Henry (1956- ): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, Victor (1900-57): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, William Henry (1872-1931): Darwen.  
 DARWEN, William Leslie (1949- ): Darwen.  
 DUNN, Alexander Gordon (1898-1972): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Andrew (1854-1934): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Andrew (1880-1956): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Andrew (1910-1994): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Gordon Peter (1929- ): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Herbert Allan (1909-1942): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Hugh Hector Harold (1888-1971): Dunn.  
 DUNN, James Cran (1917-73): Dunn.  
 DUNN, James McIntyre (1881-1925): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Jane (1871-1930): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Katharine (1854-1889): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Lex Seymour (1913-93): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Lorne Islay Macintyre (1889-90): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Robert Cran (1892-1953): Dunn.  
 DUNN, Rowland James (1911-1971): Dunn.  
 DUNN, William Herbert Allan (1883-1961): Dunn.  
 EADIE, William (1890-1948): Misc.  
 ENGLISH, George (1914- ): Misc.



FULLER, Charles Harvey (1915- ): Birkett-Fuller.  
 FULLER, David John (1941- ): Birkett-Fuller.  
 FULLER, Dorothy Margaret (1944- ): Birkett-Fuller.  
 FULLER, Francis Birkett (1913- ): Birkett-Fuller.  
 GIBSON, Margaret (1923- ): Gibson.  
 GIBSON, Norman Linedale (1922- ): Gibson.  
 GIBSON, Vera (1898-1976): Gibson.  
 GROOM, Henry Littleton (1860-1926): Groom.  
 GROOM, William Henry George (1900-1984): Groom.  
 HARVEY, Ronald Stuart (1916-88): Misc.  
 HINCHLIFFE, Albert Thomas (1901-93): Misc.  
 HINCHLIFFE, Bruce Daniel (1935- ): Misc.  
 HINCHLIFFE, Mark (1957- ): Misc.  
 HOLLINGWORTH, Edwin (1913-91): Irwin.  
 HOLLINGWORTH, Mary (1920- ): Irwin.  
 HOLLINGWORTH, Robert Paul (1947- ): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, Alexander John (1929- ): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, Angus Kirke (1964- ): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, Boyd (1928- ): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, James (1887-1966): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, James (1932- ): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, Lyle (1914-1972): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, Samuel Boyd (1879-1933): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, Samuel John (1838-1909): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, Simon Kirke (1962- ): Irwin.  
 IRWIN, William John Boyd (1885-1958): Irwin.  
 JONES, John A. (1936- ): Misc.  
 JOSEPH, Albert Edgar (1870-1938): Misc.  
 KESSELL, John Henry (1870-1933): Misc.  
 KIPPEN, James William Joseph (1879-1955): Ipswich (Kippen).  
 KIPPEN, Norman Leonard (1886-1946): Ipswich (Kippen).  
 KIPPEN, Norol Devon (1915- ): Ipswich (Kippen).  
 KIPPEN, William (1850-1940): Ipswich (Kippen).  
 LONSDALE, David (1944- ): Misc.  
 McDONALD, Keith Henry (1916- ): Misc.  
 McFADDEN, Andrew Alfred (1864-1923): McFadden.  
 McFADDEN, Cecil Leeman Alfred (1888-1961): McFadden.  
 McFADDEN, Thomas Bert (1901-65): McFadden.  
 McFADDEN, Victor Edwin (1897-1979): McFadden.  
 MacFARLAN, Colin William Buchanan (1887-1947): Macfarlan.  
 MacFARLAN, Margaret Ethel (1903- ): Macfarlan.  
 MANNING, Bruce (1936- ): Manning.  
 MANNING, Clarence Morcom (1917- ): Manning.  
 MANNING, Henry John (1889-1978): Manning.  
 MANNING, Lilian Beatrice (1892-1974): Manning.  
 MANNING, Peter Eric (1950- ): Manning.  
 MANNING, William Joseph (1864-1943): Manning.  
 MEACHAM, Frederick James (1892-1968): Misc.  
 MORGAN, Sir Arthur (1856-1916): Morgan.  
 MORGAN, James (1816-1878): Morgan.  
 NIELSON, Carl Andrew Freeman (1909- ): Misc.

O'DONOHUE, Michael James (1909- ): Misc.  
O'REILLY, Anthony John Francis (1936- ): Misc.  
OWEN, Peter (1949- ): Misc.  
PARKINSON, Hugh (1828-1909): Ipswich (Parkinson).  
PARKINSON, Hugh (1876-1938): Ipswich (Parkinson).  
PARKINSON, William (1873-1914): Ipswich (Parkinson).  
PARKINSON, William Sinclair (1909-1965): Ipswich (Parkinson).  
REYE, Barbara Manson (1923- ): Dunn.  
REYNOLDS, John Cyril (1943- ): Misc.  
ROWE, Allan Tregithew Frank (c.1932- ): Misc.  
SHAKESPEARE, Arthur Thomas (1897-1975): Shakespeare.  
SHAKESPEARE, Thomas Mitchell (1873-1938): Shakespeare.  
SINCLAIR, Richard William (1932- ): Misc.  
SOMMERLAD, David John Ross (1929- ): Sommerlad.  
SOMMERLAD, Ernest Christian (1886-1952): Sommerlad.  
SOMMERLAD, Ernest Lloyd (1919- ): Sommerlad.  
STEPHENSON, Alfred John (1846-1914): Ipswich (Stephenson).  
STEPHENSON, Alfred Tully (1872-1938): Ipswich (Stephenson).  
STEPHENSON, Graham Selwyn (1909-1986): Ipswich (Stephenson).  
STEPHENSON, Gregory Bevis (1944- ): Ipswich (Stephenson).  
SUTHERLAND, Arthur Leonard (1933- ): Misc.  
THEODORE, Roy (1929- ): Misc.  
TOLMIE, James (1862-1939): Misc.  
WESTACOTT, Godfrey George (1888-1977): Misc.  
WILSON, George Leslie (1888-1975): Misc.

## Family entries

### ADAMS

#### The Adams family of the South Burnett

ADAMS, Alice Lefroy (1911- ): B. 28 Oct. 1911 Blackall; d. of Joshua Edward Whitell Powell and Jessie Alice McCulloch; m. 8 Feb. 1958 James Leslie Adams; no issue.

Worked in wool-broker's office, Blackall. Became joint partner in purchase of *South Burnett Times* with husband. Sole proprietor, 1976-79. Joint proprietor, director, 1979-1994.

ADAMS, James Leslie (1909-76): B. 9 Nov. 1909 Byron Bay; s. of Alexander Bernard Adams, station master, and Amelia Jane Adams; m. 8 Feb. 1958 Alice Lefroy Adams; no issue. D. 26 Feb. 1976.

Electrical engineer, Barron Falls, St. George and elsewhere. Bought *South Burnett Times*, Wondai, 1958 in partnership with wife; shifted paper to Kingaroy Dec. 1961. Managing director, *South Burnett Times Pty. Ltd.*, 1958-76. Launched *Central Burnett Times*, Mundubbera, 1968. Bought *Kingaroy Herald* masthead 1971; incorporated it in *South Burnett Times*. Bought *Burnett Advocate*, 1974; incorporated it in *Central Burnett Times*.

COLLYER, Alan Charles Douglas (1945- ): B. 20 May 1945 Blackall; s. of William Collyer, farmer, and Jessie Hope Powell; m. 27 June 1970 Helen Denise Cleaver; 1s, 1d.

Ed. Blackall State School, Anglican Church Grammar School, Brisbane; Uni. of Queensland, grad. B. Eng. Bonded scholarship with Harbours and Marine Dept., 1967-69, Brisbane. Design engineer with Sir William Halcrow and Partners, London; project manager, Leighton Contractors, 1971-79. Managing director, *The South Burnett Times Pty. Ltd.*, Kingaroy, 1979-94; company, already publishing two weeklies (the *South* and *Central Burnett Times*), acquired *Burnett Herald*, Monto, 1981 (*CB Times* absorbed it), *Biggenden Weekly*, 1986, *Western Times*, Charleville, 1991, *Blackall Leader*, 1992; issued the *SBT* bi-weekly from 6 Aug. 1991; also acquired a 78pc interest in Radio 4SB (now 1071AM), Nov. 1987-Feb. 1988; sold Adams-Collyer media interests to APN Holdings Ltd., 1 Mar. 1994. Continued as manager. President, QCPA, 1983-85, and 1991-93.

**BARTON****The Barton family of Bundaberg**

BARTON, Muriel Hooper (1887-1972): B. 22 May 1887; d. of Thomas William Webb and Emma Elizabeth Hooper; m. 22 May 1915 Sidney Howard Barton; ld. D. 19 Sept. 1972.

Secretary, director and office manager, *Bundaberg News-Mail*, 1931-50; managing director, 1950-61.

BARTON, Sidney Howard (1887-1931): B. 5 Feb 1887 Roma; s. of Howard Whitmore Barton and Elizabeth Mary Jarvis; m. 22 May 1915 Muriel Hooper Webb; ld. D. 6 Sept. 1931.

Ed. Ipswich Grammar School. Journalist, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, years; editor, *Wide Bay and Burnett News*, Maryborough, 1914-17; proprietor and editor, *Bundaberg Mail*, 1917-25; proprietor and editor, *Bundaberg News and Mail*, 1925-31.

**BIRKETT****The Birkett/Fuller family of Chinchilla**

BIRKETT, Thomas (1869-1952): B. 5 Jan. 1869; s. of James Birkett and Eliza Jane McGiffen; m. Charlotte; 5d. D. 13 Jan. 1952.

Apprentice compositor, *Darling Downs Gazette*, Toowoomba. Journalist. Owned *Allora Guardian* and *Dalby Leader*. Manager, *Dalby Record*, 1900-02; manager *Dalby Herald and Record*, 1902-1909. Bought *Chinchilla News* 1909; edited it till end of 1937, then leased it to grandsons Frank and Charles Fuller and to S.A. Blanchard; sold it a year later.

FULLER, Charles Harvey (1915- ): B. 17 July 1915 Toowoomba; s. of Ashbrook Peers Fuller, dentist, and Lillian Birkett; m. Kitty Gaske; 2d.

Ed. Southport Primary and Chinchilla State Primary schools; Scots College, Warwick. Joint partner/proprietor of *Chinchilla News*, 1938-79. Shire president, Chinchilla, 1968-81; shire councillor, 1961-81.

FULLER, David John (1941- ): B. 22 May 1941 Chinchilla; s. of Francis Birkett Fuller and Dorothy Joy Sinden; m. Dorothy Margaret Black; 1s, 3d.

Ed. Chinchilla State School and Brisbane Grammar. Apprentice printer, *Chinchilla News*, 1957-63; printer, Sydney, 1963; *Chinchilla News*, 1964-79; joint proprietor, 1980-87; manager, 1987-present.

FULLER, Dorothy Margaret (1944- ): B. 31 Jan. 1944 Kingaroy; d. of Arthur Kevin Black, farmer, and Eunice May Balderson; m. 11 Apr. 1964 David John Fuller; 1s, 3d.

Ed. Noola State School and Presbyterian Girls College, warwick. Clerk, *Chinchilla News*, 1960-64 and 1974-80; joint proprietor, 1980-87; office manager, 1987-present.

FULLER, Francis Birkett (1913- ): B. 29 Nov. 1913 Dalby; s. of Ashbrook Peers Fuller, dentist, and Lillian Birkett; m. Dorothy Joy Sinden in 1940; 2s, 1d.

Ed. Southport Primary and Chinchilla State Primary schools. Apprentice compositor, *Chinchilla News*, 1927-32; printer, 1932-37; joint partner/proprietor, 1938-79.

## DARWEN

### The Darwens of Bowen

CARVOLTH, Neil Vincent (1932- ): B. 21 Sept. 1932 Bowen; s. of Reginald Walter Carvolth, railway guard, and Mabel Darwen; m. 10 Mar. 1956 Jean Mary Harding; 2s.

Ed. Bowen State Primary and High Schools. Letterpress machinist, *Bowen Independent*, 1946-56; ran business in Cairns, 1956-58; manager, job printing department, *Bowen Independent*, 1958-present. Executive officer, Bowen cricket, tennis, golf and sailing clubs. Life member, Bowen Junior Cricket Assn. and Bowen Tennis Assn. Bowen citizens' award, 1987, for contribution to sport.

DARWEN, Claude Leslie (1909- ): B. 17 Dec. 1909 Bowen; s. of William Henry Darwen, newspaper proprietor, and Caroline Christofferson; m. July 1937 Mavis Dorothy Clarke; 1s, 1d.

Ed. Bowen State School. Manager, printing department, *Bowen Independent*, 1946-85. Founding member, Crippled Children's Association; Rotarian; Commodore and life member, Port Denison Sailing Club; Australian commodore for sixteen-foot skiffs, 1974. Raised \$52,000 for various charities over six years.

DARWEN, Douglas James (1906-88): B. 12 Apr. 1906 Bowen; s. of William Henry Darwen, newspaper proprietor, and Caroline Christofferson; m. (1) 1932 Mary Reynolds (dec. 1970); 1s, 1d; m. (2) 15 Dec. 1973 Glennie Brush. D. 17 Mar. 1988.

Compositor, *Bowen Independent*, 1920-30; editor, 1931-50; Linotype operator and senior production person, 1950-76. Alderman, Bowen Council. Playing member and president, Bowen Town Band. Member, Bowen Historical Society; Probus Club; Orchid and Foliage Society. Member and officer, Port Denison Sailing Club; founding member, North Queensland Cruising Yacht Club. Took up golf at age 79.



The Darwin family of Bowen (caption overleaf).

**Caption for picture on preceding page**

The Darwen family, of Bowen, c. 1924. The founder of the *Bowen Independent*, William Henry Darwen, sits with his wife Caroline and their thirteen children. Standing, from left: Henry, Madge, Jim, Ron, Vic, Mabel and Claude. Seated: Marjorie, Enid, Roy, Bob, Doris and Rene. This photograph, supplied by the family, hangs in the foyer of the new *Bowen Independent* building, opened on 16 July 1993.

-- Photograph supplied by Mary K. Darwen, of Bowen.

DARWEN, Henry William (1913- ): B. 29 Aug. 1913 Bowen; s. of William Henry Darwen, newspaper proprietor, and Caroline Christofferson; m. 22 Sept. 1945 Mary King Teitzel; 1s, 3d.

Ed. Bowen State School, All Souls, Charters Towers, Bowen High School. Reporter and linotype operator, *Bowen Independent*, 1928; served in 31/51 Battalion AIF World War II; editor-manager, *Independent* 1950-85. Alderman, Bowen Council, 11 years; deputy mayor. 1954-60; member, Bowen Harbour Board, 1952-85, and chairman, 1959-85; executive member, Queensland Harbour Boards Association; member, Bowen Regional Research Bureau; founder and life member, North Queensland Cruising Yacht Club, 1950; executive member and life member, Q. Country Press Association; active participant in Anglican Church, school, Red Cross, Legacy. Awarded OBE 1975. Life member, Bowen Air Sea Rescue Squad; hon. member, Bowen Band.

DARWEN, James (1934- ): B. 23 Mar. 1934; s. of Douglas James Darwen and Mary Reynolds; m. 25 Aug. 1962 Margaret Jean McMahon; 2s, 3d.

Ed. St. Mary's Convent, Bowen, and Nudgee College, Brisbane. Linotype operator, *Bowen Independent*, 1950-62; farmer, 1962-72; linotype operator and photographer, *Bowen Independent*, 1972-85.

DARWEN, Ronald (1902-50): B. 1 Apr. 1902 Bowen; s. of William Henry Darwen, newspaper proprietor, and Caroline Christofferson; not married. D. 2 Oct. 1950.

Ed. Bowen State School. Manager, *Bowen Independent*, 1931-50. Keen golfer and sailor.

DARWEN, Roy Edward (1918-93): B. 29 Sept. 1918; s. of William Henry Darwen, newspaper proprietor, and Caroline Christofferson; m. (1) 14 Feb. 1944; Lorna Dulcie Greenaway; 2d; m. (2) 20 Apr. 1985. D. 27 Jan. 1993.

Ed. Bowen State School. Worked on *Bowen Independent* before war. Served with 4th Field Ambulance, AIF. Owner-editor *Barcoo Independent*, Blackall, 1950-81. Councillor, Barcoo Shire, 1963-70; shire chairman, 1970-81. Member, Turf Club, Masonic Lodge, Legacy, RSL. Life member, Returned Services League.

DARWEN, Stephen Henry (1956- ): B. 28 Nov. 1956 Bowen; s. of Henry William Darwen, newspaper editor, and Mary King Teitzel; m. 20 Dec. 1980 Annette Marie Hillery; 1s, 2d.

Ed. Bowen State Primary and High Schools (to Year 12). Apprentice printer, *Bowen Independent*, 1974-78; assistant manager, 1990-present. Member, Port Denison Sailing Club; Bowen Air Sea Rescue; Bowen Chamber of Commerce and Tourism.

DARWEN, Victor (1900-57): B. 20 Mar. 1900 Bowen; s. of William Henry Darwen, newspaper proprietor, and Caroline Christofferson; m. Edith Duval; 3s, 2d. D. 19 June 1957.

Ed. Bowen State School. Worked at *Bowen Independent* till he launched the *Collinsville Star* and ran it, 1930-53.



DARWEN, William Henry (1872-1931): B. 14 June 1872 Bowen; s. of James Darwen, bushman and labourer, and Elizabeth Taylor; m. 1897 Caroline Christofferson; 7s, 7d. D. 12 Apr. 1931.

Ed. Bowen State School; baker's assistant; hotel work; apprentice compositor, *Port Denison Times*, 1887-1892. Butcher. Surveyor's assistant. Printer, *Bowen Advocate* (formerly *Mirror*). Bought *Bowen Record* 3 June 1903 for 85 pounds; changed title to *Bowen Independent*, 13 June 1903; published it while running a cycling agency, which gradually became a sideline; for three months, in 1909, the *Independent* was owned by the Bowen Newspaper Co. Ltd., but Darwen regained ownership in Oct. 1909; managing-editor, 1903-31. Mayor, 1911, 1917, 1918. Alderman, 1899-1929.

DARWEN, William Leslie (1949- ): B. 1 Oct. 1949 Bowen; s. of Claude Leslie Darwen and Mavis Dorothy Clarke; m. 1 Mar. 1980 Karen Joan Buschel; 1s, 1d.

Ed. Bowen State Primary and High Schools (to Year 12). Printing and stationery salesperson, *Bowen Independent*, 1967-72; newspaper printer, 1973-80; compositor, 1980-present. Member, State Emergency Service, 2 years in 1970s; captain, Bowen Golf Club, 1978, 1982, 1994.

## DUNN

The Dunn family of Maryborough, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, etc.

ANDERSON, Ruth Anderson (1904-1967): B. 21 Sept. 1904, Maryborough; d. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper proprietor, and Jane Cran, schoolteacher; m. 3 June 1931 Adrian Akhurst Anderson; 2s, 2d. D. 15 Feb. 1967.

Not involved in family newspapers, but her husband acted as an engineering consultants to the newspapers many times.

ARMITAGE, Jack Wilfred (1895-1968): B. 2 Dec. 1895.; s. of Edward Armitage, contractor, and Bridget Kavanagh; m. (1) 24 July 1922 Flora Margaret Dunn; 2s, 1d; div.; m. (2) 1943 Isabella Dorothy Loveday; no issue; m. (3) 1950 Alice Delahunty; 1d. D. 4 Aug. 1968.

Ed. Maryborough State School and Maryborough Grammar School. Enlisted as private in 42nd Battalion, AIF, 1915; sent to front 5 June 1916; rose to Sgt.-Major, A Company; sole survivor of A Company; transferred with remnant of his battalion to 15th Battalion. Business manager, Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 1922-42. Clerk in Brisbane.

ARMITAGE, James Kavanagh (1929- ): B. 1 Oct. 1929; s. of Jack Wilfred Armitage, newspaper manager, and Flora Margaret Dunn; m. 3 Dec. 1955 Rosemary Dorinda June Curtis; 3s.

Ed. Toowoomba Church of England Boys Preparatory School, Toowoomba Grammar School; Uni. of Queensland, LLB; BA, Uni. of Sydney. Lecturer in law, Uni. of Qld, 1956; solicitor, Morris Fletcher & Cross, Brisbane, 1957-60; partner, Blake Dawson and Waldron, Sydney law firm, 1960-present. Director, A. Dunn and Co., 1963-68; director, PNQ, 1968-88.

CONNAL, Flora Margaret (1895-1973): B. 5 Sept. 1895, Maryborough; d. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper proprietor, and Jane Cran, schoolteacher; m. (1) 24 July 1922 Jack Wilfred Armitage; 2s, 1d; div.; m. (2). 11 Dec. 1958 Norman Scott Connal (first headmaster of Toowoomba Church of England Preparatory School, 1929-59); no issue. D. 14 July 1973.

Director of Toowoomba Newspaper Co., 1943-69; chairman, 1961-62.

CRAN, Leonard John (1881-1969): B. 23 Nov. 1881 Yengarie; s. of James Cran, sugar miller, and Margaret McGown; m. 22 Apr. 1914 Ruby Gillhespy (dec. 1950); 1s, 1d. D. 3 June 1969.

Ed. Yengarie State School. Joined New Zealand Insurance Co. Ltd.; became Central Queensland branch manager at Rockhampton, c. 1911. General manager and secretary, Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 1926-55. Officer, various organisations of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church. Chairman, Board of Trustees, Rockhampton Grammar School. Member, Rockhampton Patriotic Fund, World War II. Brilliant batsman; played for Maryborough against Victor Trumper's XI; scored three successive first-grade centuries at North Rockhampton ground in 1912.

DUNN, Alexander Gordon (1898-1972): B. 5 Jan. 1898, Maryborough; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper prop., and Jane Cran, school teacher; m. Ailsa Lavinia Robertson (d. of the manager of Queensland National Bank's local branch), 25 July 1927; 1s, 1d. D. 31 Jan. 1972.

Ed. Maryborough Grammar School, University of Queensland and Sydney University. Began career as journalist with *Morning Bulletin*, 1923. Sub-editor and chief of staff, *Evening News*, Rockhampton. Chairman, Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 1956-1972. Chairman, A. Dunn and Co., 1962-68. Director of PNO, 1968-72. D. 31 Jan. 1972.

DUNN, Andrew (1854-1934): B. 24 May 1854 Greenock, Renfrew, Scotland; s. of Andrew Dunn, grocer, and Ann Anderson; m. (1) 4 Nov. 1879 Katharine Macintyre (dec. 1889); 5s; m (2). 18 Nov. 1891 Jane Cran (dec. 1930); 2s, 2d; m. (3) 23 Feb. 1932 Marcia Heller Foote; no issue. D. 29 Apr. 1934.

Ed. Greenock; sailor; clerk in tea merchant's office in Calcutta; cadet draughtsman in architect's office in Scotland; grocer in his father's shop at marriage; builder in Toowoomba, Qld; various jobs, Maryborough; business side of Maryborough Newspaper Co Ltd, becoming business manager; then bought into company 1889 and became proprietor at start of 1891. Built up a chain of five Qld provincial daily newspapers. Member of Legislative Council, 1914-22 (Nationalist). Mayor, Maryborough 1903, 1914; alderman, Maryborough City Council, 1904-13, 1915-16. Member Maryborough Chamber of Commerce, Harbour Board, A founder of QCPA; president 1908-10; chairman of Queensland Country Press Ltd.

DUNN, Andrew (1880-1956): B. 7 May 1880 Toowoomba; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper prop., and Katharine Macintyre, school head mistress; m. 16 June 1909 Ivy Adeline Mary Lucas (d. of Rockhampton department store proprietor, Edward Seymour Lucas, and Martha Killough); 5 s. 2d. D. 31 Jan. 1956.

Ed. Christian Brothers College, Maryborough, and Maryborough Grammar School. Apprentice compositor, journalist, Maryborough Chronicle. Journalist, *Daily Mail*, Brisbane 1903-05. Journalist, chief of staff, *Morning Bulletin*, 1905-11; managing director and editor, 1911-54. Chairman, Dunn family newspapers, 1934-56.

DUNN, Andrew (1910-94): B. 7 May 1910 Rockhampton; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper editor and manager, and Ivy Adeline Mary Lucas; m. (1) 27 May 1931 Greta Jane Crocker (dec. 1971); 2d.; m. (2). 30 Aug. 1976 Rosina Markwell, nee Aspland (dec. 1992); no issue. D. 30 July 1994.

Ed. Rockhampton State Primary School, Rockhampton Grammar School, Uni. of Queensland (Dip. Journalism). Reporter, chief of staff, editor, company director, 52 years. Acted as sub-editor of the *Evening News*, 1939. Worked as a journalist on the Rockhampton papers till late 1954 when he moved to Maryborough to become a resident director of the *Chronicle* (1955-66), and, initially, company secretary. Acted as editor on various occasions and generally held a senior editorial post. Director of A. Dunn and Co., 1957-68. Director, PNQ, 1971-81.

DUNN, Gordon Peter (1929- ): B. 12 June 1929; s. of Alexander Gordon Dunn, newspaper journalist and director, and Ailsa Lavinia Robertson; m. 13 Sept. 1955 Mfanwy Griffiths; 1s., 3d.

Cadet journalist, *Morning Bulletin*, 1946-50. Journalist, *Queensland Times*, 1950-51; *Morning Bulletin*, 1951-64; editor, 1964-80; joint manager, 1970-73; managing director, 1973-80. Director, news and research, PNQ, 1980-85. Director, Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 1954-68; A. Dunn and Co., 1957-68. Director, PNQ, 1968-88. Contested 1957 state election for Nationals.

DUNN, Herbert Allan (1909-1942): B. 18 Sept. 1909; s. of William Herbert Allan Dunn, newspaper editor, and Agnes Jessie Hill, schoolteacher; was engaged to marry Gladys Proposch, of Toowoomba but died ten days before planned marriage date. D. 11 March 1942.

Ed. Scots College, Warwick, and Toowoomba Grammar School. Gained senior university pass. Was being groomed to replace his father as editor of the *Toowoomba Chronicle*; chief of staff at death; worked nearly two years on *Maryborough Chronicle*. Member of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church and chairman of Junior Fellowship. President of Past Grammar Cricket Club and Past Grammar Rugby Union Football Club for many years. Vice-president of the Toowoomba Cricket Association at one time. President of Toowoomba Rugby Union.

DUNN, Hugh Hector Harold (1888-1971): B. 22 Jan. 1888, Maryborough; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper prop. and Katharine Macintyre, school head mistress; m. 26 June 1918 Lillias Fairlie; 3d. D. 1 Apr. 1971.

Spent seven years gaining newspaper production experience in various cities in Australia and New Zealand. Closely assoc. with St Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Maryborough, serving both on the committee of management and for many years as an Elder. Deputy mayor of Maryborough (1940-43 and 1949-52) and an alderman (1946-49). Stood unsuccessfully for mayor in 1952. Managing director, Maryborough Newspaper Co., 1934-1971. Chairman, A. Dunn and Co., 1959-62.

DUNN, James Cran (1917-73): B. 2 Dec. 1917, Rockhampton; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper editor, and Ivy Adeline Mary Lucas; m. Coral Kelly; 1s. 1d. D. 28 Jan. 1973 in a Hong Kong hospital while returning from a holiday trip to Japan.

Ed. Central Boys School and Rockhampton Grammar School. Began apprenticeship in the composing room at the *Morning Bulletin*. Served with Royal Australian Engineers in the Middle East and New Guinea in World War II. Returned to *Bulletin* as supervisor in the composing room, becoming production manager during the 1950s. Chairman of directors, Record printing Co., Rockhampton, 1970-73. Director, Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 1954-68; Nambour Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd, 1964-73; PNQ, 1968-73. Joint manager, *Morning Bulletin*, 1970-73. Director of PNQ and the Rockhampton Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd..

DUNN, James McIntyre [earlier spelling was Macintyre] (1881-1925): B. 7 June 1881 Toowoomba; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper prop., and Katharine Macintyre; m. 10 June 1920 Mary Elizabeth Miller (a daughter of a sister of his mother, Kate); 2s. D. 17 Nov. 1925.

Ed. Maryborough Grammar School. Intellectually brilliant. Teacher at state schools in Maryborough and Cairns, 1901-08. Sub-editor *Maryborough Chronicle*, 1908-14. Served in AIF in World War I. Business manager, *Morning Bulletin Ltd.*, 1919-25.

DUNN, Jane (1871-1930): B. 8 March 1871 Yengarie; d. of James Cran, sugar miller, and Margaret McGown; m. 18 Nov. 1891 Andrew Dunn; 2s, 2d. D. 15 Aug. 1930.

Ed. Yengarie State School. Pupil teacher, then teacher at that school. Became intimately involved in husband's newspaper business. Worked in front office at *Maryborough Chronicle*. Moulded family of first wife and her own family into one.

DUNN, Katharine (1854-1889): B. 30 July 1854 Campbelltown, Argyllshire, Scotland; d. of Dugald Macintyre, gamekeeper, and Jennet McKinlay; m. 4 Nov. 1879 Andrew Dunn; 5s. D. 5 July 1889.

Ed. Freechurch School, Greenock. Pupil teacher, teach, head mistress of St. Nicholas's Infants School, Whitehaven, Cumberland, 1873; headmistress of St. Andrew's Square School, Greenock, 1875-79. Offered position by Queensland Department of Public Instruction. Emigrated, arriving Brisbane 22 Feb 1880. Head mistress Middle State Girls and Infants School, Toowoomba, 180-83; head mistress, South State Girls School, Toowoomba, 1883-85; head mistress Central Girls School, Maryborough, 1886-89. Had poems and essays published in *Toowoomba Chronicle* and *Wide Bay and Burnett News*.

DUNN, Lex Seymour (1913-93): B. 19 July 1913 Rockhampton; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper editor, and Ivy Adeline Mary Lucas; m. 9 Apr. 1945 Audrey Amy Moss; 2s, 2d. D. 25 Feb. 1993.

Ed. Rockhampton Grammar School, Uni. of Qld. B.A., LLB., Uni. of Queensland. Admitted to Bar. Associate to Chief Justice of Queensland, Sir James Blair. Solicitor. Served with Royal Australian Naval Reserve in World War II, including combat in North Sea. Manager, Rockhampton Newspaper Co., 1955-70. Secretary of A. Dunn and Company Pty. Ltd. from its incorporation on 7 June 1957 till the merger that produced Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. on 1 April 1968. Secretary, PNQ, 1968-70, and managing director, 1970-80. Director, 1968-85. Largely responsible for reviving Rockhampton Chamber of Commerce in 1960s.

DUNN, Lorne Islay Macintyre (1889-90): B. 4 Apr. 1889 Maryborough; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper prop., and Katharine Macintyre, school head mistress. D. 4 Oct. 1890 at Greenock, Scotland (the five sons of Andrew and Kate Dunn were sent to Scotland and cared for at Greenock by their paternal grandmother shortly after Kate's own death on 5 July 1889).

DUNN, Robert Cran (1892-1953): B. 5 Oct. 1892, Maryborough; s. of Andrew Dunn, newspaper prop., and Jane Cran, school teacher; m. 4 June 1920 Irene May Bartholomew; no issue. D. 8 June 1953.

Ed. Maryborough Boys Central School and Maryborough Boys Grammar School. Apprentice hand compositor, *Maryborough Chronicle*, c. 1907-1912. Linotype operator, *Maryborough Chronicle* and *Warwick Argus*; press room foreman, *Chronicle*, 1923-53.

DUNN, Rowland James (1911-1971): B. 20 June 1911, Bundaberg; s. of William Herbert Allan Dunn and Agnes Jessie Hill; m. 12 May 1934 Alice Sanders; no issue, but adopted 2s, 2d. D. 23 Oct. 1971.

Ed. Scots College, Warwick, and Toowoomba Grammar School. Joined staff of *Toowoomba Chronicle* in 1926 as an apprentice compositor and linotype operator. Managing director of Chronicle Holdings Pty. Ltd. (formerly Toowoomba Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd.). 1 July 1957 to 31 March 1968. Chairman of directors, PNQ, 1968-71. Chairman of the board of Nambour Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd. A director of Darling Downs TV Ltd. Elected twice as alderman, Toowoomba City Council, years. Retired early in second term because of ill health. Rotarian, member of Fairholme College Council, Elder of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, member of Services Memorial (Masonic) Lodge. Patron and life member of Toowoomba Hockey Association, life member of Queensland Amateur Swimming Association, president of Toowoomba District Amateur Swimming Association, life member of the Royal Agricultural Society.

DUNN, William Herbert Alan (1883-1961): B. 11 Sept. 1883, Toowoomba; s. of Andrew Dunn and Katharine Macintyre; m. 5 Sept. 1908 Agnes Jessie Hill (cousin of his step-mother, Jane); 3s, 1d. D. 4 Apr. 1961.

Ed. Maryborough Grammar School. Journalist, *Maryborough Chronicle*, *Bundaberg Mail*, *Brisbane Courier*, 1900-11; chief of staff, *Morning Bulletin*, 1911-14; managing editor, *Warwick Argus*, 1914-19; *Warwick Daily News*, 1919-22; *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 1922-51. Chairman of A. Dunn and Family; 1956-57; and of A. Dunn and Co., 1957-59.

REYE, Barbara Manson (1923- ): B. 14 Aug. 1923 Maryborough; d. of Hugh Hector Harold Dunn, newspaper director, and Lillias Fairlie; m. 15 June 1946 Keith Reye; 1s, 2d; div. 1977.

Ed. Central State Primary and Maryborough State High Schools; Uni. of Queensland, grad. B.DSc, 1945; Dip Teaching, 1976, North Brisbane College of Adv. Educn. Director, Maryborough Newspaper Co.; later chairman, early 1970s. Director, A. Dunn and Co., 1967-68; PNQ, 1968-89. NIE co-ordinator, 1979-1984; consultant, 1983-89. Councillor, Kolan Shire, early 1973-74. Inaugural president, Gin Gin Kindergarten; president, Gin Gin P & C; member, CWA, Red Cross; president, Gin Gin Presbyterian Ladies Guild; member, South Brisbane Zonta Club.

## GIBSON

### The Gibson family of Emerald

GIBSON, Margaret Jean (1923- ): B. 18 Apr. 1923 Rockhampton; d. of Norman Keith Gibson and Vera Ridgway; unmarried.

Ed. Emerald State School, Toowoomba East State School and St Faith's, Yeppoon. Air hostess, Australian National Airways, 1947-56; publicity and travel organiser, Wells Organisation (USA church fund raising organisation), 1956-58; superintendent of air hostesses, Trans-Australia Airlines, Melbourne, 1958-63. Managing editor, *Central Queensland News*, Emerald, 1963-85; joint proprietor, 1947-85. *CQ News* bought *Clermont Telegram*, 1970; absorbed it into *News*, May 1981, converting the *News* to bi-weekly at same time; sold *News* to PNQ on 1 Feb. 1985.

Councillor, Emerald, Shire, 1970-79; deputy shire chairman, one term (1973-76). Member, Emerald Forum Club. Member of committees for Central Highlands Aged Person Home, Emerald Youth and National Fitness Centre, Central Highlands National Fitness Council, Emerald Pioneer Cottage, Central Highlands Easter Sunflower Festival, Emerald Centenary (1979), Emerald CWA. Secretary or president, Emerald Arts Council, 1967-84. President, QCPA, 1977-78; life member, 1992. Awarded M.B.E. 1981.

GIBSON, Norman Linedale (1922- ): B. 28 February 1922 Toowoomba; s. of Norman Keith Gibson and Vera Ridgway; m. 1955 Daphne Ella Mary Burgess; 2s, 1d.

Ed. Emerald State School and Queensland Agricultural College, Gatton. Apprentice hand and machine compositor, *Central Queensland News*; production manager, 1946-85. Joint proprietor, *CQ News*, 1947-85. Member, Emerald ambulance committee 33 years; treasurer, about 16 years. Foundation member, Emerald Rotary, 1960; president and Paul Harris Fellow. Active in Emerald theatre and Arts Council. Member, RSL committee; secretary, Emerald Diggers Race Club; foundation secretary, Rifle Club; later captain, patron; club champion five times and represented Queensland in Victoria, 1954; competed in the Queen's shoots in Townsville, Brisbane and Melbourne, winning two badges. Trustee of Emerald Golf Club for 25 years till it incorporated; served on committee as secretary, treasurer, captain, vice-president and president; won club championship seven times; founder of junior golf club, 1969. Member, Emerald Fire Brigade Board several years.

GIBSON, Vera (1898-1976): B. 30 Dec. 1898 Toowoomba; d. of George Ridgway Sarah Bell; m. 30 Mar. 1921 Norman Keith Gibson; 1s., 1d; divorced. D. 20 Dec. 1976.

Went to Emerald for health reasons in 1919; secretary to J Harold Loch, stock and station agent and garage proprietor. Launched *Central Queensland News*, Emerald, on 29 May 1937, with three partners (upon closure of *Leichhardt Weekly*); manager, 1937-63, and sole proprietor, 1940-47; joint proprietors with daughter and son, 1947-76. Foundation secretary, Emerald CWA, 1925, and sec. at various other times; secretary, Emerald Hospital Committee, 1925-46.

## GROOM

### The Groom family of Toowoomba and northern Queensland

GROOM, Henry Littleton (1860-1926): B. 4 Jan. 1860 Toowoomba; s. of William Henry Groom, politician and newspaper proprietor, and Grace Littleton; m. 30 Nov. 1898 Marion Flora Black; 2s, 2d. D. 4 Jan. 1926.

Ed. St. Mary's School, Ipswich, and Brisbane Grammar School. Office employee, *Toowoomba Chronicle*; business manager, 1884-1925, but also managing director (upon his father's death until takeover by Dunns), 1901-22; continued as business manager until June 1925. Member, Queensland Legislative Council, 12 July 1906-23 March 1922. President, QCPA, 1912-23.



GROOM, William Henry George (1900-84): B. 1 Sept. 1900 Toowoomba; s. of Henry Littleton Groom, newspaper proprietor and manager, and Marion Flora Black; unmarried. D. 1 July 1984.

Journalist, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 1918; *Maryborough Chronicle*, Daily Mail (Brisbane); promoter, Longreach Printing Co. Ltd. which purchased and consolidated all newspaper and printing businesses at Longreach and founded the *Longreach Leader*, 1922; acted as guide to Lord Northcliffe during his Queensland tour; journalist, *Melbourne Herald* during circulation 'war' with new daily, *The Sun News-Pictorial*; returned to Queensland upon his father's death in Jan. 1926 and directed assembly of plant and production preparations for *Daily Times*, Bundaberg, of which he was first managing editor, 1926; executive secretary to Keith Murdoch, managing director, Herald and Weekly Times Ltd., 1927; purchased the *Johnstone River Advocate* and *Northern Sportsman*, Innisfail, 1928 (owned and edited *Advocate* for 50 yrs; daily publication, 1940?-1974); purchased *Tableland Examiner*, *Barron Valley Advocate* and *Atherton News* and the *Herberton Times*, 1931, and consolidated them into one publication. Launched *Sunday Australian*, Cairns, 26 Feb. 1939; ceased 4 April 1952. Founder, Palmerston Province Development League. President, Federated Chambers of Commerce of Far North Queensland, 1936-37. Life member, Innisfail Chamber of Commerce; president, Innisfail Show Society; foundation president, Innisfail Rotary Club.

## IPSWICH

### The Ipswich families (the Kippens, Parkinsons and Stephenson)

AYLWARD, Cecil William Norman (1907-79): Dentist, newspaper company director. B. 1907 Ipswich; s. of Cecil Aylward and Beatrice Kippen; m. c. 1936 Jean Jackes; no issue. D. 6 May 1979.

Ed. Scotch College, Warwick, and Uni. of Queensland; grad. B. Dentistry. Director, Queensland Times Pty. Ltd., 1954-68; chairman, 1965-68. Director, PNQ, 1968-79. Member, Legacy; trustee, Ipswich Grammar School; president, Ipswich Club, 1957-63.

KIPPEN, James William Joseph (1879-1955): B. 19 June 1879 Ipswich; s. of William Kippen and Mary Ann Broughton; m. July 1905 Jeannie Law Arnott; 1s, 1d. D. 17 Sept. 1955.

Ed. Ipswich Grammar School. Began in business office at *Queensland Times*, 1892; apprentice hand compositor; Monoline operator; proof reader for about 40 years; retired from staff, 1946; director, 1938-1954; chairman, 1940-54.

KIPPEN, Norman Leonard (1886-1946): B. 14 Mar. 1886; s. of William Kippen and Mary Ann Broughton; m. 29 Oct. 1914 Olive May Sheppard; 1s, 1d. D. 30 June 1946.

Linotype operator and foreman, *Queensland Times*, for 40 years; retired 1945.

KIPPEN, Norol Devon (1915- ): B. 2 December 1915 Ipswich; s. of Norman Leonard Kippen, linotype operator, and Olive May Sheppard; m. 14 Feb. 1944 Esther Maxwell Williamson; 3s.

Ed. Ipswich Grammar School. Cadet journalist, *Queensland Times*, 1932-35; journalist, 1936-41; war service, 1941-45; returned to Q.T., sub-editor, chief of staff, 1966-76; deputy editor, 1976-80.

KIPPEN, William (1850-1940): B. 1850 Aberfeldy, Perthshire, Scotland; s. of James and Jane Kippen; m. 1878 Mary Ann Broughton; 2s, 2d. D. 31 Jan. 1940.

At 12, delivered newspapers for *Queensland Times*; became the printer's devil, worked as compositor, proof reader, make-up man and leader writer and became partner in the firm in 1877; chairman of directors, 1914-38. The Kippens were employed on the *Queensland Times* from 1862-1980.

PARKINSON, Hugh (1828-1909): B. 1828 Belfast, Antrim, Ireland; m. 28 Mar. 1871 Wilhelmina Sinclair; 2s, 1d. D. 9 June 1909.

Foreman printer, *North Australian*, Ipswich, 1856-1861. Became senior partner in firm that bought *Ipswich Herald* (other partners were Josiah Bowring Sloman and Francis Kidner, also of *North Australian*); took control on 8 Oct. 1861; renamed the *Herald* the *Queensland Times*. The Parkinsons maintained direct representation in the partnership from 1861 till the PNQ merger and direct employment links till 1976.

PARKINSON, Hugh (1875-1938): B. 18 Oct. 1875; s. of Hugh Parkinson, newspaper proprietor; m. Marian Simpson. D. 18 May 1938.

Apprentice compositor, printer and journalist at *Queensland Times*. Ran poultry farm at Labrador, 1917-21. Ran printery. Director, *Queensland Times Ltd.*, 1905-38. Staunch Anglican. Played bowls, cricket, tennis, golf. Secretary, Ipswich Tennis Club.

PARKINSON, William (1873-1914): B. 8 June 1873; s. of Hugh Parkinson and Wilhelmina Sinclair; m. 31 Jan. 1905 Alberta Florence McDonald Thomas; 1s, 2d. D. 3 Nov. 1914.

Ed. Ipswich Grammar School; dux, 1891. Secretary, *Queensland Times Ltd.*, 1905-14. Keen horseman, fisherman. Foundation member, Ipswich Bowls Club.

PARKINSON, William Sinclair (1907-1965): B. 20 May 1907 Ipswich; s. of William Parkinson and Alberta Florence McDonald Thomas; m. 1 Oct. 1935 Jessie Lauder Forsyth; ld. D. 21 March 1965.

Ed. Ipswich Grammar School; began studying medicine at Sydney Uni. Journalist, later photographer, on *Queensland Times*. Served in Royal Australian Navy Volunteer Reserve in World War II; became Lieut.-Commander. Director, *Queensland Times Pty. Ltd.*, 1934-65; chairman, 1954-65. As a Scout, awarded Royal Humane Certificate for bravery for saving a cubmaster from drowning. Queensland representative hockey player at national carnival, 1934, 1937.

STEPHENSON, Alfred John (1846-1914): B. 15 Nov. 1846 Pimlico, London; m. (1) 1867 Jane Graham Tully; 4s, 4d; (2) Charlotte Lee Smith, nee Haffner; no issue. D. 3 Dec. 1914.

Ed. private academy and Birkbeck School. Apprentice printer at *North Australian*, Ipswich; part of exodus from that paper in 1861 to the *Herald*, immediately renamed the *Queensland Times*. Managing director of the *Queensland Times*, 1906-14.

Member of Legislative Assembly, 1896-1902; Member of Legislative Council, 3 July-4 Dec. 1914. Alderman, Ipswich City Council, 1902-14; mayor, 1907. Member of board of management, Ipswich Hospital, 1889-1914. Director, Q. Woollen Co., Phoenix Engineering and Rolling Stock Co, Ipswich Building Society, and Q. Cotton Co.

STEPHENSON, Alfred Tully (1872-1938): B. 21 Apr. 1872 Ipswich; s. of Alfred John Stephenson and Jane Graham Tully; m. c. 1904 Ellen O'Brien; 2s, 2d. D. 29 Sept. 1938.

Ed. Ipswich Boys Central School and Ipswich Grammar School. Worked briefly for Bank of Australasia; then rest spent rest of working life at *Queensland Times* as an accountant. Director, *Queensland Times Pty. Ltd.*, 1915-38. Alderman, Ipswich City Council, 1910-38; mayor, 1912, 1914, 1921-29 and 1933-38.

STEPHENSON, Graham Selwyn (1909-1986): B. 15 June 1909 Ipswich; s. of Alfred Tully Stephenson, company directory, and Ellen Graham O'Brien; m. (1) Dorothy Holmes; 1d; m. (2) 26 July 1941 Florence Elaine Reason; 1s, 1d. D. 6 Feb. 1986.

Began working as an apprentice printer at the newspaper in 1924; Linotype operator and later clerk; office supervisor, c.1943-63; managing director, 1963-June 1974. Alderman, Ipswich City Council, 1945-1961. Foundation member, Ipswich Senior Citizens Club, Ipswich Police Youth Club, Ipswich Little Theatre, Ipswich Club, Ipswich Meals on Wheels; vice-president and president, Ipswich Show Society; director and chairman of directors, Ipswich & West Moreton Building Society; board member, Ipswich Fire Brigade; board member, RDA Ltd.; member, Ipswich Rotary; director, Radio 4IP and Toowoomba TV station, DDQ10; early member of Toc-H. Member, Ipswich Bowls and Golf Clubs.

STEPHENSON, Gregory (1944- ); B. 27 Mar. 1944 Ipswich, s. of Graham Selwyn Stephenson, newspaper manager, and Florence Elaine Reason; m. (1) May 1969 Christine Wright; 1s, 2d; divorced; m. (2) 10 Sept. 1977 Suzanne Eckhart; 2s.

Ed. Ipswich Grammar School and Kelvin Grove Teachers College. School teacher. Journalist, *Queensland Times*, 1964-67, and *The Advocate*, Burnie, 1967-69. Editor, *QT*, 1970-1975; journalist, Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd., 1976-78; manager, Ipswich office of Radio 4IP, 1981-82; public relations officer, Queensland Railways, 1983-84; self-employed; journalist, Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd., 1984-present.

## IRWIN

### The Irwin family of Warwick,

HOLLINGWORTH, Edwin (1913-91): B. 11 Aug. 1913 Brisbane; s. of William Alexander Hollingworth, Lands Department officer, and Maude Roberts; m. 8 Nov. 1941 Mary Irwin, d. of William John Boyd Irwin; 2s, 1d. D. 20 Nov. 1991.

Ed. Valley Primary School and Brisbane State High. Sales representative, ACRO Shirleys Fertilisers. Business manager/general manager, The Warwick Newspaper Pty. Ltd., 1946-62; managing director, 1962-79. Director, PNQ, 1968-85. President, Queensland Country Press Association, 1959-61.

HOLLINGWORTH, Robert Paul (1946- ): B. 21 Aug. 1946 Warwick; s. of Edwin Hollingworth, newspaper manager, and Mary Irwin; m. 4 May 1970 Marie Elizabeth Wright; 3s.

Ed. West Warwick Primary, Warwick High, Brisbane Boys College, Uni. of Qld; grad. B. Comm. Accountant. General manager, The Warwick Newspaper Pty. Ltd. 1979-85; assistant chief executive, PNQ, 1985-86; group operations manager, PNQ, 1986-87; group general manager, PNQ, from 1 Sept. 1987-3 March 89.

IRWIN, Alexander John (1929- ): B. 22 June 1929 Warwick; s. of William John Boyd Irwin and Elsie Alice McDonald; m. 11 Oct. 1952 Marian Margaret Becker; 3s, 1d.

Clerk, *Warwick Daily News*, 1945; apprentice compositor, 1945-50; journalist, 1950-54; composing room foreman and then production manager, 1954-84. Part-time group production coordinator, PNQ, 1974-84; full-time and in Brisbane, 1984-88. Director, PNQ, 1985-88.

IRWIN, Angus Kirke (1964- ): B. 28 May 1964 Warwick; s. of James Irwin and Jocelyn Kirke; m. 20 Aug. 1993 Gail Brian Dillon.

Ed. Warwick Central State School, Warwick High School, grad. B.Sc. Griffith Uni. Industrial chemist, Australian Laboratory Services, 1986-89; manager, various laboratory operations in Australia, Indonesia and New Zealand. Manager, *Central Queensland News*, Emerald, May 1994-present.

IRWIN, Boyd (1928- ): B. 11 Aug. 1928; s. of James Irwin and Kathleen Lyle; m. 4 Aug. 1970 Mary Eleanor Connolly; 1s.

Salesperson and administrator, commercial printing department, *Warwick Daily News*, 1945-72; department manager, 1972-83.

IRWIN, James (1887-1966): B. 8 Apr. 1887 Ipswich; s. of Samuel John Irwin and Matilda Jane Boyd; m. 10 Feb. 1915 Kathleen Lyle; 3s, 2d. D. 20 Oct. 1966.

Apprentice hand and machine compositor, *Warwick Daily News*; journalist; manager, commercial printing; chairman of directors, 1958-66. Foundation member, Warwick East and Coolangatta Bowls Clubs; member, Warwick Golf Club; active in the early years of administration of the Warwick Presbyterian colleges.

IRWIN, James (1932- ): B. 13 May 1932 Warwick; s. of James Irwin and Kathleen Lyle; m. 14 Nov. 1959 Jocelyn Kirke; 2s.m

Ed. Warwick East Primary School, Warwick Intermediate School and Brisbane Boys College. Advertising salesperson, *Warwick Daily News*, 1950-72; advertising manager (newly created position), 1972-85; general manager, 1985-present.

IRWIN, Lyle (1914-1972): B. 26 Feb. 1914 Warwick; s. of James Irwin and Kathleen Lyle; m. 1943 Jean Cooper Ragsdall; 1s, 3d. D. 14 Feb. 1972.

Ed. Scots College, Warwick. Spent working life in literary department of *Warwick Daily News*; editor, 1946-72. Served in RAAF in World War II; became a Flt Lieutenant. Wife served as social editor for years.

IRWIN, Mary (1920- ): B. 13 Apr. 1920 Warwick; d. of William John Boyd Irwin and Elsie Alice McDonald; m. 8 Nov. 1941 Edwin Hollingworth (dec. 1991); 2s, 1d.

IRWIN, Samuel Boyd (1879-1933): B. 9 Nov. 1879 Warwick; s. of Samuel John Irwin and Matilda Jane Boyd; m. 13 Apr. 1903 Sarah Edith Rachel Bishop; 2s, 1d. D. 30 Jan. 1933.

Editor, *Examiner & Times*, 1917-19; associate editor, *Warwick Daily News*, 1919-22; editor, 1922-26. Sub-editor, *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, 1926-33.

IRWIN, Samuel John (1838-1909): B. 3 Mar. 1838 Newtown, Limavady, Ireland; s. of Robert Irwin, flour miller, and Elizabeth Given; m. 23 Dec. 1878 Matilda Jane Boyd, school-teacher; 4s, 2d. D. 28 July 1909.

Family emigrated to United States c. 1845 where father became owner/operator of Roe flour mill Philadelphia. Served apprenticeship to Philadelphia printers; worked on government publications in Washington c. Civil War. Returned to Ireland. Emigrated to Australia. Employed as compositor in Warwick when *Examiner and Times* was launched, 15 Feb. 1867; entered partnership with Richard Appleby Cowton in the *Warwick Examiner & Times* in 1867. Ran vineyards at Ipswich, 1883-91. Returned to Warwick to run paper day-to-day when Cowton died 1891. Bought out Cowton family interest on 31 Dec. 1899.

IRWIN, Simon Kirke (1962- ): B. 17 June 1962 Warwick; s. of James Irwin and Jocelyn Kirke; m. 23 June 1990 Linda Nettlefield.

Ed. Central State School, Warwick State High School, University of Queensland and Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education. Auctioneer, 1982-87. Advertising sales rep., *Gladstone Observer* and *Bundaberg News-Mail*, 1987-90. General manager, *Central Queensland News*, Emerald, 1990-May 1994; assistant general manager, *Tweed Daily News*, Coolangatta, 1994-present.

IRWIN, William John Boyd (1885-1958): B. 23 July 1885 Ipswich; s. of Samuel John Irwin and Matilda Jane Boyd. (1) 23 July 1919 Elsie Alice McDonald (dec. 1934); 1s, 1d; (2) c. 1953 Jessie Agnes Gaven. D. 3 Nov. 1958.

Ed. Warwick West (now Central) School. Printing apprenticeship, *Examiner & Times*. Spent several years in Sydney gaining wider technical experience. Took over business section of *Examiner* in his early 20s; managing editor, *Warwick Daily News*, 1926-45; chairman of directors, 1936-58. Foundation member, Rotary Club of Warwick. Member, Warwick branch, Royal Automobile Club of Q.; Warwick Golf Club.

## **McfADDEN**

### **The McFaddens, of Nambour**

McfADDEN, Andrew Alfred (1864-1923): B. 22 Apr. 1864 Taroom; s. of Robert Leeman McFadden and Mary Anne MacCoy; m. 4 June 1887 Sabina Jane Latimer; 4s, 1d. D. 2 Sept. 1923.

Printer at Gympie, 1880s-1905, apart from period in Brisbane c. 1897; bought interest in *Nambour Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser* (est. 31 July 1903) in Oct. 1905. Joint proprietor with Luke Wilkinson, 1905-06; solicitor Alexander William Thynne bought Wilkinson's interest 31 Aug. 1906; Thynne-McFadden partnership endured till 28 Feb. 1923.

McfADDEN, Cecil Leeman Alfred (1888-1961): B. 15 Mar. 1888 Gympie; s. of Andrew Alfred McFadden, printer, and Sabina Jane Latimer; m. (1) Margaret Christina Webster (dec. 1953); no issue; m. (2) c.1955 Essie Webster. D. 1 May 1961.

Gained experience in Brisbane newspapers before returning to Nambour upon the exit of A.W. Thynne from the *Chronicle* partnership in March 1923; editor, 1923-57. President, QCPA, 1934-36.

McfADDEN, Thomas Bert (1901-65): B. 12 Jan. 1901 Gympie; s. of Andrew Alfred McFadden, printer, and Sabina Jane Latimer; m. 3 Apr. 1926 Gwendoline Paine; 1s, 1d. D. 23 July 1965.

Linotype operator and printer, *Nambour Chronicle*; all-rounder in newspaper office, doing everything from acting as advertising manager to proof-reader to writing and editing stories; worked at *Chronicle*, 1915-64. President, Q. Country Press Assn., 1954-56.



The McFadden family, of Nambour, circa 1923. Back row: Thomas Bert and his father Andrew Alfred. Front row: Victor, mother Sabina, and Cecil. Bert, Vic and Cecil were the three sons who became involved in the day-to-day running of the *Nambour Chronicle*.

-- Photograph supplied by Alan and Elsie McFadden, of Burrum Heads.

McFADDEN, Victor Edwin (1897-1979): B. 20 June 1897 East Brisbane; s. of Andrew Alfred McFadden, printer, and Sabina Jane Latimer; m. Jessie Rita Small (dec. 1978); no issue. D. 26 May 1979.

Printer; gained experience at Carmichael and Co., Sydney; returned to Nambour upon exit from *Chronicle* partnership of A.W. Thynne; general manager, *Nambour Chronicle*, 1923-64. President, Q. Country Press Assn., 1946-48. The McFaddens sold the *Chronicle* to A. Dunn and Co., July 1964. Foundation director, Sunshine Coast Broadcasters (licensee of Radio 4NA). President, Maroochy District Band; Nambour Amateur Theatrical Society.

## MacFARLAN

### The Macfarlans of Gladstone

BROWN, Colin Fidelis (1927-1994): B. 24 Apr. 1927 Toowoomba; s. of Herbert Frederick Brown, police sergeant, and Ellen Catherine O'Donohue; m. 14 Nov. 1953 Carmel Mary Macfarlan; 3s. Divorced 1988. D. 22 Aug. 1994 at Gladstone.

Ed. Langlo Crossing Primary School, Peranga Primary and St. Laurence's Christian Brothers College, Brisbane. Depositions clerk in magistrate's courts, Blackall, Emerald, Clermont, Gladstone, Warwick, Mitchell, 1943-59. Joined *Gladstone Observer* March 1959 during 15 weeks' long service leave. trial; then in June and with wife Carmel entered partnership with Margaret Ethel Macfarlan as proprietors of the *Observer*; became business manager till 1968. Operated a marine business 1969-78. Mayor, Gladstone, 1979-94. Member, Gladstone Area Promotion and Development Bureau; Gladstone Area Group Apprentices; Transaid Bus for transport of aged, infirm and disabled; Gladstone task force for facilitating and encouraging industry to employ local residents; Sports Foundation Trust, to assist sporting people chosen for state or national representation.

MacFARLAN, Colin William Buchanan (1887-1947): B. 13 Nov. 1887 Gourock, Scotland; s. of Dougal Macfarlan, educational administrator, Rosina Macintyre; m. (1) c. 1925 Marjorie Lillian Morgan (dec. 1931); no issue; m. (2) 9 July 1932 Margaret Ethel Booth; 1d. D. 4 June 1947.

Ed. at Gourock. Journalist on Capetown *Argus* and other South African newspapers. Emigrated to Australia, 1911, and worked as journalist on papers in Melbourne, Wollongong, Grafton, Broken Hill and various other NSW country centres, 1911-17. Editor and joint proprietor, *Gladstone Observer*, 1917-47; proprietor, 1922-47. Member, Gladstone Harbour Board, 1927-46; chairman, 1943-44.



MacFARLAN, Margaret Ethel (1903- ): B. 13 Dec. 1903 Warwick; d. of William John Booth, wheat farmer, and Mary Bridget Ryan; m. 9 July 1932 Colin William Buchanan Macfarlan; 1d.

Ed. Junabee, Lord John Swamp and Loch Lomond public schools on southern Darling Downs; Warwick Convent High School. Trainee nurse, Warwick General Hospital. Relieving nurse, Quilpie, and other western hospitals; acted as matron, Kanimbla Private Hospital, Warwick; theatre sister and acting matron, Gladstone Hospital, 1929-32. Sole proprietor, *Gladstone Observer*, 1947-59; joint proprietor (with daughter, Carmel, and her husband, Colin Brown), 1959-68. President, Gladstone Show Society 10yrs. Active in Gladstone Boy Scouts, National Fitness, Harbour Festival League. Made M.B.E. in 1970 for services to journalism and the community.

## MANNING

### The Mannings of Mackay

MANNING, Bruce (1936- ): B. 28 Jan. 1936 Mackay; s. of Noel Manning, sugar farmer and newspaper director, and Phyllis Doris Mathewson; m. 1 May 1965 Jean Nimmo; 2s, 2d.

Ed. Calen State School, Scots College, Warwick; Mackay Technical College. Studied accountancy part-time. Admitted as Associate of Australian Society of Accountants, 1965. Clerk, Mackay Printing and Publishing Co., 1954-62. Audit and tax clerk, C.E. Smith & Co., Chartered Accountants, Townsville, 1962-65. Accountant, Mackay Printing and Pub. Co., 1965; manager, commercial printing dept., 1966-68; business manager, 1968-73. General manager, Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd., 1973-75; managing director, 1975-present; chairman of directors, 1986-present; regional manager (western), APN Ltd., 1989-present. Director, Mackay Printing and Pub. Co., 1967-74; PNO, 1985-88; Mackay Television Ltd., 1986-87; Dalby Herald Pty. Ltd., 1990-present; Western Star Pty. Ltd. and Gatton Star Pty. Ltd., 1992-present; Pacific Area Newspaper Publishers Assn., 1977-83; president, 1982-83. Chairman, Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd (Qld. div.), 1985-86. Member, Mackay Rotary Club, 1970-73, Toowoomba Rotary Club, 1973-present; president, 1993-94. Member, Council of Fairholme College (Presbyterian-owned day and boarding school), Toowoomba, 1978-present; deputy chairman, 1979-present. Member, Rangeville Uniting Church Parish Council, Toowoomba, 1992-present.

MANNING, Clarence Morcom (1917- ): B. 18 April 1917 Albion; s. of Henry John Manning, newspaper manager, and Alison Morcom; m. 14 Oct 1943 Catherina Sheila Moray Murray; 2s, 3d.

Ed. Mackay State Boys School and Scots College, Warwick; University of Queensland, grad. B.A., Dip., Journalism. Clerk, briefly, then cadet journalist, *Daily Mercury*, from Jan. 1939. Journalist, *Courier-Mail*, 1946-48. Chief of staff *Daily Mercury*, 1948-49; editor, 1949-80, with managerial responsibilities, too, from 1961. Chief executive, PNQ, 1 Jan. 1981-31 August 1987. Director, PNQ, 1968-88; chairman, PNQ, 1970-88; chairman, APN, 1988-89; director, Mackay Television Limited, 1968; chairman, 1982-87. Member, Mackay Rotary Club, 1950-80; president, 1966-67; president, Mackay Legacy, 1959-60; awarded OBE, 1988, for services to regional newspapers.

MANNING, Henry John (1889-1978): B. 6 Aug. 1889 Gladstone; s. of William Joseph Manning, newspaper managing editor, and Charlotte Emma Black; m (1) 21 Mar. 1916 Alison Morcom (dec. 1956); 1s, 1d; m. (2) 20 Feb. 1958 Edith Lynch; no issue. D. 10 Oct. 1978 Nambour.

Ed. Gladstone State School and Normal State School, Brisbane. Served printing apprenticeship on *Gladstone Observer*. Journalist, *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, 1910-18. Business manager, Mackay Printing and Publishing Company (Pty) Limited, 1918-43; chairman of directors and chief executive, 1943-75. Chairman, Bundaberg Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd, 1961-78. Director, Queensland Country Press Ltd. (later RDA (Qld. Div.)), 1919-77; chairman, 1944-77. Director, RDA Ltd., 41 yrs. President, QCPA, 1928-30. Chairman, Mackay Ambulance Brigade, 13 yrs; foundation sec., Mackay Rotary Club; president, Rotary and Mackay Bowling Club. Awarded OBE, 1953, for services to Australia's provincial press.

MANNING, Lilian Beatrice (1892-1974): B. 14 Dec. 1892; d. of William Joseph Manning, newspaper editor and proprietor, and Charlotte Emma Black. D. 20 Dec. 1974.

Director, Mackay Printing and Publishing Co., 1939-69; company secretary, 1943-69.

MANNING, Peter Eric (1950- ): B. 25 June 1950 Mackay; s. of Clarence Morcom Manning, newspaper editor, and Catherine Sheila Moray Murray; m. 10 July 1993 Sybil Ann Bell.

Ed. Queensland University of Technology; grad. B. Business (Management). Accountant, various building societies, 1973-76; assistant to group financial controller, PNQ Investments Pty. Ltd., 1978-81; accountant, Sunshine Coast Newspaper Co., 1981-1984; general manager, Maryborough Newspaper Co., 1984-86; general manager, Queensland Times Pty. Ltd., 1986-90; teacher, trainer, consultant, TAFE, etc., 1992; business adviser, Queensland Small Business Corporation, 1993-present. President, Ipswich Rotary Club, 1990-91; secretary, Ipswich Central City Traders' Assn., 1987-88; member, Board of Advice, St. Andrew's Hospital, Ipswich, 1988-91.

MANNING, William Joseph (1864-1943): B. 31 May 1864 Eden, New South Wales; s. of Henry James Manning, gold miner, and Sarah S. Hodgson; m. 18 Sept. 1888 Charlotte Emma Black (dec. 1938); 3s, 3d. D. 24 April 1943.

Printing apprentice, *Gympie Times*, 1878. Worked at *Figaro*, Brisbane, 1885-89. Managing editor, *Gladstone Observer*, 1889-90; proprietor, 1890-1910. Sold the *Observer* Apr. 1910 to J.H. Kessell. Bought 2,200 shares in the *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, and became managing editor, 1910-41; managing director, 1911-17; chairman of directors, 1917-43; senior proprietor, 1924-43. Foundation member, QCPA; exec. member, APPA. Mayor, Gladstone, 1897, 1898 and 1901; chairman, Gladstone progress association, hospital committee; helped found Gladstone meatworks, Port Curtis Dairy Association. Member, Inst. of International Affairs, Royal Geographic Society. Active interest in Mackay Chamber of Commerce, Red Cross and patriotic institutions. Heavily involved in Presbyterian Church.

## MORGAN

### The Morgans of Warwick

MORGAN, Sir Arthur (1856-1916): B. 19 Sept. 1856 Rosenthal, Warwick; s. James Morgan and Kate Barton; m. 26 July 1880 Alice Augusta Clinton; 5s, 3d. D. 20 Dec. 1916.

Ed. Warwick state school; 1868 joined *Warwick Argus*; manager, 1874-78; editor, 1878-1907; proprietor, 1878-1910; chairman, *Warwick Argus Ltd.*, 1910-14. Alderman, Warwick, 1885; mayor 1886-90, and 1898; president, Q. National Assn., 1898. Knighted 1907. Lieut.-Governor of Queensland, 1908. MLA, Warwick, 1887-1896; 1898-1906; MLC, 1906-1916; chairman of committees, 1891-1893; Speaker, Leg. Assembly, 1899-1901; chief secretary (premier) and sec. railways, 1903-1906; president, Leg. Council, 1906-16. Publication: *The Discovery and Development of the Darling Downs*.

MORGAN, James (1816-1878): B. 29 Sept. 1816 Longford, County Longford, Ireland; s. of Michael, farmer; m. 1848 Kate Barton; 6s, 7d. D. 29 Nov. 1878.

Ed. Miss Edgeworth's private school; surveyor, Snowden, Wales, 1835-38; arrived Sydney, 1841; pastoral experience, Brisbane Water, NSW; manager for W.C. Wentworth, Namoi River, 1845-47; manager, Talgai Station, Darling Downs, 1849; leased Crows Nest run (unsuccessful), 1854-55; managed Fraser's Creek for Moffat, 1855; managed Rosenthal run, 1856; formed N. Toolburra for Massie, 1857; purchased Summerhill estate, Warwick, 1860; govt. sheep inspector, Darling Downs, until 1867; purchased *Warwick Argus*, 1868; editor until 1878, relinquishing to son Arthur. Alderman, Warwick, mayor 1867, 1868. MLA, Warwick, 1870-71, 1873-78; chairman of committees, 1874-78.

## SHAKESPEARE

### The Shakespeares, of Condobolin, etc., and Canberra

SHAKESPEARE, Arthur Thomas (1897-1975): B. 27 Sept. 1897 Condobolin; s. of Thomas Mitchell Shakespeare and Ann Forster; m. (1) 1927 Marjorie Patten (dec. c. 1961); 3d; m. (2) 12 Jan. 1963 Heather Cameron; no issue. D. 11 Oct. 1975.

Ed. Grafton, Annandale, Rose Bay public schools, Fort Street Boys High. Journalist, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1916-26; managing editor, *Canberra Times*, 1926-64; chairman of directors, Federal Capital Press of Australia Ltd., 1938-64. Secretary, APPA, 1929-31 and 1938-54; life member. Director, NSW Country Press Ltd., 1951-64; NSW dir., APDP Ltd., 1952-64; chairman, NSW board, 1959; Commonwealth Press Union member, 1938-64. President, NSW Country Press Assn., 1945-47; long-serving member of executive committee; life member. Started writing a history of the country press of NSW. Extensive community involvement.

SHAKESPEARE, Thomas Mitchell (1873-1938): B. 25 July 1873 Castlereagh, near Penrith, NSW; s. of Thomas Shakespeare, engineer, and Margaret Brown; m. 11 Nov. 1896 Ann Forster; 4s, 2d. D. 16 Sept. 1938.

Ed. Forbes public school; at 14 appointed compositor, *Forbes and Parkes Gazette*; estab. Condobolin *Lachlander* 1894, sold out 1902; proprietor, *Grafton Argus*, 1902-04; in conjunction with Thomas Temperley started Independent Cable Service; secretary, New South Wales Country Press Association, 1904-28; life member; general secretary, APPA, 1906-29 and 1931-38, and president, 1929-31; estab. *Canberra Times*, 1926; managing director, Federal Capital Press of Australia Ltd., 1929-38; member, Canberra Advisory Council, 1930-38; foundation member and vice-president, Federal Capital League; member, Federal Capital Territory Pastoral and Agricultural Assn.; Rotarian. Member, Legislative Council, NSW, Aug. 1923-Apr. 1934 (def.); cont. Namoi, 1904.

## SOMMERLAD

## The Sommerlads of the New England Tablelands, NSW

SOMMERLAD, David John Ross (1929- ): B. 29 Apr. 1929 Roseville, NSW; s. of Ernest Christian Sommerlad and Mildred Alice Vaughan; m. 21 May 1955 Joan Shirley Wilson; 2s, 3d.

Ed. Lindfield Public School, Sydney Grammar. Farm labourer, Temora, 1947-48; cadet journalist, *Newcastle Sun* (Newcastle and Sydney), 1948-51; journalist, *Yorkshire Observer*, Bradford, *Bradford Telegraph and Argus*, Westminster Press, London, 1951-52; returned home Sept. 1952 upon death of his father to become senior reporter, *Inverell Times*, 1952-53; managing editor, *Glen Innes Examiner*, 1953-55; managing editor, *Inverell Times*, 1955-71; general manager and editor-in-chief, *Inverell Times* and *Glen Innes Examiner*, 1971-77; managing director, Northern Newspapers Pty. Ltd., 1963-77; negotiated merger with The Armidale Newspaper Co., result being Nornews Ltd.; managing director and editor-in-chief, Nornews Ltd., Armidale, 1977-81; executive editor, Rural Press Ltd., 1982-88. Councillor, Country Press Assn. of NSW since 1958; member, management committee, APPA, 1980-86, Country Press Australia, 1986-88, president, 1987-88; executive director, Country Press Aust. and Country Press Assn. of NSW since 1988; member Aust. Press Council since 1983, Media Council of Australia, Commonwealth Press Union since 1987; National Printing Industry Training Council, NSW committee, 1982-94, national council, 1994- ; director, Television New England Ltd., 1962-88; Carillon Development Ltd., 1988-present; Australian Young Man of the Year, 1968. Rotarian, 1953-present. Member, New England Regional Council, 1972-75.

SOMMERLAD, Ernest Christian (1886-1952): B. 30 Jan. 1886 Tenterfield, NSW; s. of John Henry Sommerlad and Louisa Marsteller; m. 15 March 1913 Mildred Alice Vaughan; 2s, 2d. D. 6 Sept. 1952.

Ed. Leech's Gully public school, Newington College, Sydney, Methodist theological college. Ordained a Methodist minister, 1911. Missionary, Fiji, 1911, but had to leave ministry because of severe throat infection. Journalist, *Inverell Times*, 1912, and then *Inverell Argus*; editor, *Argus*, 1912-18; proprietor/editor, *Glen Innes Examiner* 1918-29; bought *Glen Innes Guardian*, 1924, and incorporated it in *Examiner*; bought *Inverell Times* and *Argus* 1927 and merged them; bought *Armidale Express* and *Chronicle* 1929 and merged them. General manager, NSW Country Press Ltd., 1929-32; managing director, 1932-52, as well as chairman of directors, 1948-52; president, NSW Country Press Assn., 1927-28; secretary, 1940-45; life member; also life member, APPA. Founding member, Country Party; chairman, NSW Branch, 1950-52; wrote much of the party's publicity material for elections from 1930s till 1952. Member, Legislative Council, NSW, 1932-52. First treasurer, New England New State Movement. Lay preacher. Trustee, Public

Library of NSW, and Mitchell Library. Author, *Twixt Tableland and Plain* (1917), a history of Inverell; *The Land of the Beardies: A History of Central New England* (1922), and *Mightier Than the Sword* (1950), a handbook on journalism.

SOMMERLAD, Ernest Lloyd (1919- ): B. 12 Apr. 1919. Tenterfield; s. of Ernest Christian Sommerlad and Mildred Alice Vaughan; m. 6 Feb. 1943 Mavis Dorothy Patterson; 1s, 2d. Ed. Sydney Grammar and University of Sydney; BA 1940, B Ec. 1947; served 2nd AIF 1941-45, instructor Light Anti-Aircraft school and operations Dutch New Guinea, captain; Fellow Aust. Institute of Management and of Advertising Institute of Aust; secretary, NSW Country Press Assn. 1945-61; gen. manager Country Press Ltd. 1951-61; staff member UNESCO secretariat, Paris, 1961-65 and from 1970; federal director, Federation of Aust. Commercial Broadcasters 1965-70; secretary, APPA, 1954-61; director, Northern Newspapers Pty. Ltd. 1952; Television New England Ltd. 1958-61, and Aust. United Press NSW branch 1953-61. Member Aust. Advisory Committee for UNESCO 1949-61 and 1965-70; editor *Honi Soit* 1939; NSW president, National Trust of Aust. 1960-61; author of *The Press in Developing Countries* (1966), *National Communications Systems - Some Policy Issues and Options* (1975); editor, *Press Directory of Australia and New Zealand* 1942-61.

## Miscellaneous entries

ANDERSON, Alfred George (1925- ): B. 30 May 1925 Collie, WA; s. of Alfred Ernest Anderson, newspaper manager, and Ellen Esther Pinnell; m. 14 Jan. 1956 Joyce Margaret Nielsen; 2s; div.

Ed. to Junior Certificate, WA. Cadet journalist, *West Australian*, 1942; joined RAN and served in South Pacific and Indian Ocean; rejoined *West Australian*; joined *Sydney Sun*, 1950; journalist, *Manning River Times*, Taree; editor, *Wyong Advertiser*; AUP cable service; managing editor, *Cootamundra Daily Herald*, 1953-60; managing editor, *Mudgee Guardian* group, 1961-62; journalist, *Moree Guardian*, 1962; PR consultant, Sydney; group publications editor, *Shipping News Ltd.*, 1961-69; editor, *Bowls in NSW* magazine, 1969-73; editor, *Maryborough Chronicle*, 1973-86. Alderman, Cootamundra, 1957-60; mayor, 1961; alderman, Maryborough, 1986-88. Actively involved in Surf Life Saving Assn., RSL, and numerous community groups in Cootamundra, Mudgee and Maryborough. President, Maryborough Chamber of Commerce, 1985; member, chamber executive, 13 years.

BRANDSON, Barry Dare (1936-90): B. 17 Aug. 1936 at Grenfell, NSW; s. of Dare Brandson, journalist, and Dera Dare; m. 21 June 1958 Rhonda Alison English; 1s, 2d. D. 23 Aug. 1990.

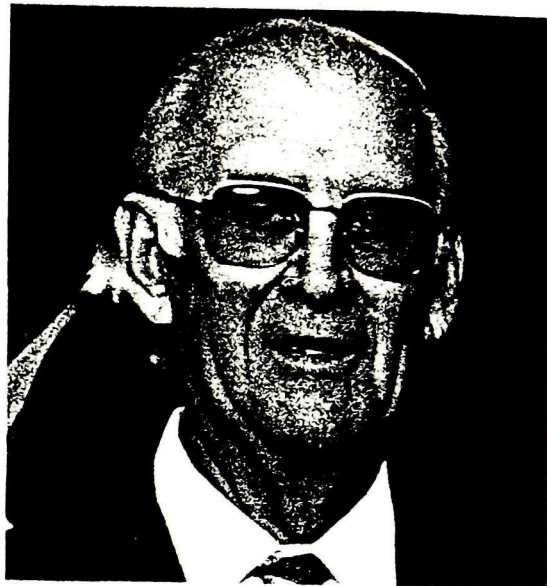
Cadet journalist, *Daily Advertiser*, Wagga Wagga, 1953-55, and Newcastle, 1955-56; journalist, Radio 2UE and 2UW, and *Daily Telegraph*, c. 10yrs; editor, *Mudgee Guardian*; *Carillon*, Bathurst; chief of staff, *Central Western Daily*, Orange, 1970-73; assistant editor, *Illawarra Mercury*, 1973-81; editor, *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, 1981-90. Rotarian; keen sailor.

BRUCE, Walter (1897-1980): B. 16 May 1897; s. of Peter Bruce and Catherine Montgomery; m. 18 Feb. 1918 Harriet Grace Carseldine; 1s. D. 28 July 1980.

Auctioneer, Toowoomba. Town Clerk, Dalby, 1923-26. Secretary and accountant, *Northern Daily Leader*, Tamworth, 1926-38. Secretary, QCPA, 1939-42. General manager, *Queensland Times Pty. Ltd.*, 1942-49; *Toowoomba Newspaper Co.*, 1950-69. Chairman, Darling Downs TV Ltd. Secretary, *Nambour Newspaper Co.*, 1964-69. Lay preacher, Presb. Church, NSW and Qld, 37yrs.

CHAMBERLIN, Gregory Thomas (1944- ): B. 26 Aug. 1944 Oakey; s. of Ralph Leslie Chamberlin, farmer, and Constance Heather Hart; m. 26 Dec. 1977 Helen Margaret Martinuzzi; 1s, 2d.

Ed. Gowrie Little Plain State School and Toowoomba Grammar. Cadet journalist and journalist, *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba, 1962-66; journalist, Melbourne *Herald* bureau of Canberra press gallery, 1966-69; editor, *News-Mail*, Bundaberg, 1981-85; chief of staff, *The Courier-Mail*, 1985-86; deputy editor, 1986-87; editor, 1987-91; managing editor, *Gold Coast Publications Pty. Ltd.*, May 1991-present. Awarded World Press Institute Fellowship to the U.S., 1969-70. Member, Bundaberg District Bicentennial Committee before Brisbane appointment.



CAPTIONS (clockwise from top left): Bruce Manning, Bruce Hinchliffe, A.T.F. (Treg) Rowe, George Wilson, William Eadie, and Walter Bruce.



COOK, Clem (1887-1967): B. 8 May 1887 Brisbane; s. of Frederick William Cook and Elizabeth Mary Ingledew; m. 4 June 1915 Isabella McLeary; 2s, 3d. D. 19 Apr. 1967.

Ed. Maroon State School. Grew up on farm at Cotswold, near Boonah. Journalist, *Fassifern Guardian*, Boonah. Journalist, *Queensland Times*, Ipswich, from 1913; became senior reporter, reporting State Parliament; sub-editor; editor, 1945-60. Chairman of committee appointed in 1928 to form Ipswich sub-district, Australian Journalists' Association; sub-district president, 1942-45.

COWTON, Richard Appleby (1834-1891): B. 15 Nov. 1834 Cowton, near Northallerton, Yorkshire; m. 1870 Elizabeth Barnes; 10 children. D. 12 Sept. 1891.

Joined Cathedral staff at York Minster as choir boy. Printing apprentice and trainee journalist, *Yorkshire Gazette*; Cowton family lost all its property in a law suit; emigrated Aust. 1866; printer, Brisbane; compositor, *Warwick Examiner & Times*, 1867; a few months later bought out founder in partnership with Samuel John Irwin, and ran paper, 1867-91; ran it in absence of other partner 1883-91.

DARRACOTT, Stephen Lynne (1943- ): B. 17 June 1943 Kingaroy; s. of Herbert Claude Darracott, army officer and farmer, Rita Maureen Groom; m. 24 Mar. 1967 Joan Mengel; 1s.

Ed. various primary schools throughout south-east Queensland; high school by correspondence; part B.A. Uni. of Qld. Cadet journalist, *Kingaroy Herald*; journalist Cumberland Newspapers., Nundah; news editor, *Kingaroy Herald*; *Courier-Mail*; editor, *Warwick Daily News*, 1974-84; ran own public relations business and worked as relief journalist and part-time journalism tutor, Uni. of Qld; journalist, then editorial manager, Western Publishers Group, Toowoomba, 1986-92; *Star Newspapers*, Toowoomba, 1992-present. Deputy controller, SES, Kingaroy; secretary, Road Safety Council branch, Kingaroy; Presbyterian church elder and local preacher, Kingaroy and Warwick; member, tourist assn.

EADIE, William (1890-1948): B. 23 July 1890 Maryborough; s. of Robert Eadie, grocer, and Elizabeth McMinn; m. 7 May 1918 Lily Bell; 1s., 1d. D. 21 Oct. 1948.

Ed. Newtown and Central State Schools; Silver Medallist of Newtown school. Worked in his father's Newtown grocery in Maryborough. Obtained clerical job at the *Maryborough Chronicle* office in 1911. Manager, *Chronicle*, 1918-1948. Served 30yrs on management committee of St. Stephen's and was deputy chairman for a long period. Founder of St. Stephen's Hospital, chairman of the finance board and a trustee. President, Chamber of Commerce, and member, 20yrs. During World War II, member, Patriotic Committee, Recruiting Committee, and Commonwealth War Loan Committee. Founding member, Maryborough Rotary Club, Oct. 1931; member till death.

ENGLISH, George (1914- ): B. 23 Feb. 1914 Chillagoe; s. of Walter Whitten English, marine engineer, and Marjorie Jane Walton; m. 4 Oct. 1944 Margaret Quelch; 3d. Freemason.

Ed. Maryborough Central State School, Maryborough Grammar. Trainee accountant, 1934. Book-keeper, Mulgildie, 1935. Cattle station worker, Nockatunga, west of Thargomindah, 1936-40. Public accountant, Maryborough, 1940-42. Served in Army, 1942-45. Accountant, *Maryborough Chronicle*, 1945-48; manager, 1948-77; director, Maryborough Newspaper Co., 1948-77; SEQ Channel 10 TV, 1970-80. Member and president, Maryborough Rotary Club. Member and treasurer, Maryborough Bowls Club. Member, Maryborough Golf Club.

HARVEY, Ronald Stuart (1916-88): B. 27 Feb. 1916 Bundaberg; s. of William James Harvey and Jessie Morrison Sinclair; m. 2 Feb. 1942 Shirley Vickers; 1s, 1d. D. 10 Mar. 1988.

Cadet journalist, *Daily Times*, Bundaberg, 1934-38; journalist, *Daily Examiner*, Grafton, 1938-39; *Hobart Mercury*, 1939-41; *Daily Examiner*, 1941-42; served as a corporal with 2/6th Australian Armoured Regiment, 1942-45, incl. active service; journalist, *Daily Examiner*, 1946-1960; editor, *Bundaberg News-Mail*, 1960-81.

HINCHLIFFE, Albert Thomas (1901-93): B. 19 Nov. 1901 Bouldercombe, Rockhampton; s. of Daniel Hinchliffe, timber-getter and farmer, and Margaret Insley; m. 1925 Ena Vivian Cross; 1s, 2d. D. 13 Oct. 1993.

Ed. Rockhampton State School. Worked as depositions clerk on railways. Entered journalism in Rockhampton at age 20; worked on *Evening News* till 1932; chief of staff *Morning Bulletin*, 1932-42. Sub-editor, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 1942-43; associate editor, 1943-51; editor, 1951-69. Member, Toowoomba Rotary Club, Cultural Co-ordinating Association, Road Safety Council, Toowoomba Art Society, Toowoomba branch of Royal Society of St. George, Toowoomba Orchid Society. Awarded OBE in 1964 for service to the press. Won Commonwealth prize for poetry in 1951.

HINCHLIFFE, Bruce Daniel (1935- ): B. 21 July 1935 Rockhampton; s. of Albert Thomas Hinchliffe, newspaper editor, and Ena Vivian Cross; m. c. 1955 Jocelyn Margaret Prouten; 2s.

Ed. Central Infants School, Rockhampton; Glennie Memorial School, Toowoomba; Toowoomba North State and Toowoomba State High. Cadet journalist, *Toowoomba Chronicle*, 1951. Awarded Commonwealth Press Union scholarship, 1964, to study undertake Thomson Foundation course at Cardiff, Wales. Sub-editor, *Hong Kong Star* and *Asian Weekend*, 1967. Sub-editor at *Courier-Mail*, 1967-68. Resumed at *The Chronicle*, August 1968, after 20-month absence; became editor on 1 Sept. 1969 upon resignation of his father (see above); still the editor in 1994. Worked on daily newspaper at The Bend, Oregon, USA, during leave in 1981.

HINCHLIFFE, Mark (1957- ): B. 4 Apr. 1957 Toowoomba; s. of Bruce Daniel Hinchliffe, newspaper editor, and Jocelyn Margaret Prouten; m. (1) 19 Nov. 1981 Jillian Junette Ray; divorced 6 Jan. 1985; m. (2) 4 Jan. 1986 Robern Elizabeth McLay; 2d.

Ed. Toowoomba East State School, New Farm State School, Toowoomba High, Uni. of Queensland. Cadet journalist, journalist, *The Chronicle*, Toowoomba, 1979-80; freelance journalist, England, 1980-81; journalist, *Telegraph*, Brisbane, 1981-82; research officer for politician, 1982-83; sub-editor, *Queensland Times*, 1983-86; chief of staff, 1986-92; editor, 1992-present.

JONES, John (1936- ): B. 7 July 1936 Maitland, NSW; married twice.

Junior clerk, *Maitland Mercury*; advertising salesperson, advertising manager; manager, *Manning River Times*, Taree, 1965-75; general manager Sunshine Coast Newspaper Company, 1975-89; planned and oversaw launch of *Sunshine Coast Daily*, Maroochydore, 7 July 1980; general manager, Maryborough Newspaper Co., and manager, central region, APN, 1989-91. Launched revamped *Hervey Bay Observer* as bi-weekly, 5 June 1991. President, APPA, 1979-81. Rotarian. Long-serving member, QCPA executive; member, Sunshine Coast Tourism and Development Board.

JOSEPH, Abraham Edgar (1870-1938): B. 17 May 1870 Gympie; s. of Henry Joseph and Rebecca Lyons; m. 17 June 1891 Nelly Marion Vasey; 3s, 1d. D. 2 Dec. 1938.

Ed. Gympie State and Grammar Schools. School teacher. Later appointed to staff of *Mackay Mercury*, under late Senator Chataway; reporter, *Golden Age*, Croydon, and *Northern Miner*, Charters Towers; sub-editor, *Gympie Times*; editor and manager, *Gympie Miner*; general manager, Queensland Country Press Ltd., 1917-38, and secretary, QCPA; 1912-38.

KESSELL, John Henry (1870-1933): B. 1870 Kadina, South Aust; s. of John Kessell, mining engineer, and Elizabeth Williams; m. 1904 Rose Watt; 1d. D. 15 Nov. 1933.

Ed. Bathurst State and High Schools. Clerk Aust. Journalists' Association; manager, Gladstone; 1912 with Worthington purchased Turkey Station, Gladstone; acquired *Gladstone Observer* April 1910 from W.J. Manning; returned Sydney; chairman of directors, Mt. Morgan Co. and Lone Head Gold Mining Co.; Q. director, Southern Assurance Co.; interests in motor trade. President, Queensland Country Press Assn. and Aust. Provincial Press Assn. MLA Port Curtis 1912-1915; contested Port Curtis 1918; Sth Brisbane 1923. Nationalist/United Party. Mayor of Gladstone, 1911-12, 1917-19, 1922-23. Chairman, Gladstone Harbour Board, 1919, 1922.

LONSDALE, David (1944- ): B. 22 Feb. 1944 Wallsend, NSW; s. of James Lonsdale and Freda Lillian Gilbert; m. c. 1980 Catherine Cullen; 2s, 1d.

Cadet journalist, *Maitland Mercury*, NSW, 1963-64; reporter, *Canberra Courier*, 1964-65; sub-editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1966-67; editor, *Manning River Times*, Taree, 1967-69; editor, *Illawarra Mercury*, Wollongong, 1970-76; editor, Sunshine Coast Newspaper Company, 1976-86 (incl. *Sunshine Coast Daily* from 1980); general manager, *Daily Mercury*, Mackay, 1986-1993, and regional manager, north, for APN Ltd., 1989-93; general manager, *Tweed Daily*, 1994-present and APN regional manager, south, 1994-present.

MCDONALD, Keith Henry (1926- ): B. 24 Feb. 1926 Biggenden; s. of A.N. McDonald, dairy farmer; m. Lorna, 11 June 1955; 4d.

Ed. Brisbane Boys' College, Uni. of Queensland; grad. B. Commerce, with 1st class hon in economics, 1949. Finance writer, *Courier-Mail*, 1946-47. Investment adviser, 1947-49. Finance editor, *Courier-Mail*, 1950; assistant manager, 1951; company secretary, Queensland Press Ltd., 1956-68; general manager, 1968-76; managing director, 1976--86; chief executive, 1986-91; chairman, 1986-present.

Director, The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd. since 1983; AAP Information Services Pty. Ltd., since 1986. OBE, 1989.

MEACHAM, Frederick James (1892-1968): B. 8 Oct. 1892 Lichfield, Staffs., England; s. of Frederick Meacham, blacksmith, and Frances (Fanny) Allport; m. 2 Apr. 1921 Phoebe Ada Elizabeth Cowton (dec. 1967); 2s, 2d. D. 13 Oct. 1968.

Ed. to junior certificate at King Edward VI Grammar School, Lichfield; University of Birmingham. Clerk in solicitor's office, Eng. Arrived Aust., May 1912; journalist, *Wide Bay News*, Maryborough; war service, 1916-19; journalist, *Wide Bay News*; editor, *Barcoo Independent*, Blackall, 1920; journalist, *Queensland Times*, 1920-22; editor, *Queensland Digger* (official journal of RSL), 1922; editor, *Queensland Times*, 1923-42; chairman of directors, *QT*, 1940-42. Managing director, secretary and industrial officer, APDP Ltd., 1942-65. President, QCPA, 1936-39; Q. Press Institute, 1940. Director, Q. Country Press Ltd., 1932-42. Foundation secretary, Provincial Press Accreditation Bureau, 1948-65. Honorary lecturer, Army Education Scheme, 1942. To honour his memory, the Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. introduced in 1969 the F.J. Meacham Award for Australia's outstanding regional daily newspaper; it has been awarded annually since.

NIELSON, Carl Andrew Freeman (1909- ): B. 30 Nov. 1909 Brisbane; s. of Charles Frederick Nielson, MLC, solicitor, and Ellen Horniblow; m. 17 June 1936 Ethel Ruth O'Brien; 1d.

Ed. East Bundaberg State School and Brisbane Grammar. Director, Bundaberg Newspaper Co.; resident director, PNQ; managing director, Carl Nielson Pty. Ltd., electrical, radio and music retailer; co-founder Wide Bay-Burnett TV (SEQ); foundation chairman, Capricorn Building Society. Member, Bundaberg Harbour Board, 25 yrs.

O'DONOHUE, Michael James (1909- ): B. 3 July 1909 Port Fairy, Victoria; s. of Michael James O'Donohue, journalist, and Mary Theresa Carlon; m. 24 June 1940 Iva Anne Langtree; 2s.

Educated various Victorian and NSW state schools. Composing room apprentice, *Dubbo Dispatch*, 1924-27; cadet journalist, *South Coast Bulletin*, 1927-31; journalist, *Johnstone River Advocate*, 1933-34; left to help father in successful attempt to farm tobacco; re-engaged by proprietor of Innisfail newspaper group to work as sole reporter on *Tableland Examiner*, Atherton; then to Cairns as journalist on fledgling *Sunday Australian* and to Innisfail in charge of production. Joined Army 1943 and served in Papua-New Guinea and Borneo; back to *Sunday Australian*. Native labour superintendent, oil search organisation, Papua-New Guinea. Sub-editor, *Brisbane Telegraph*, 1949-60; editor, *Maryborough Chronicle*, 1960-73.

O'REILLY, Anthony John Francis (1936- ): B. 7 May 1936 Dublin, Ireland; s. of John Patrick O'Reilly and Aileen O'Connor; m. (1) 5 May 1962 Susan Cameron (div.); 3s, 3d; m. (2) 14 Sept. 1991 Chryss Coulandris; no issue.

Ed. Belvedere College, Dublin, and Uni. College, Dublin; Wharton Business School Overseas, 1965. grad. in civil law with honours, Ind. State Uni.; PhD in agricultural marketing, Uni. of Bradford, Eng.

Industrial consultant, Weston Evans, 1958-62; personal asst. to chairman, Suttons Ltd., Cork, Ireland, 1960-62; lecturer, dept. of applied psychology, Uni. Coll., Cork, 1960-62; managing dir. An Bord Bainne/Irish Dairy Board, 1962-66; Joint managing director, Heinz-Erin Ltd., 1967-70; managing director, H.J. Heinz Co. Ltd., Eng., 1969-71; sen. vice-president, Nth America and Pacific H.J. Heinz Co., 1971-72; exec. vic-pres., chief operating officer, H.J. Heinz Co., Pittsburgh, 1972-73; president, chief operating officer, 1973-79; president, chief executive officer, 1979-present; also chairman, 1978-present. Chairman and controlling stockholder, Independent Newspapers Plc, Dublin; subsidiary, Buspak Sydney, Australian Provincial Newspapers Holdings Ltd. - joint venture between INP and O'Reilly family trust; Independent Newspapers Plc was one of three major bidders for Australia's John Fairfax newspaper group when it was in receivership in 1991. Named U.S. Chief Executive of the Year, 1990, by his peers. Chairman, Atlantic Resources (oil and gas exploration group); Fitzwilton Plc (\$1bn industrial holdings co.). Director, *Washington Post*, General Electric Corp., and Georgetown Uni.,

Washington DC. International rugby player at age 18; represented Ireland in 29 matches; scored record 38 tries for the combined British rugby team on tour of South Africa, Aust. and NZ in 1959; played ten Tests.

OWEN, Peter John (1949- ): B. 1 Sept. 1949 Melbourne; s. of Cecil Albert Owen and Joan Langhorne; m. Janelle Maree Comerford; 3s.

Ed. Cheltenham High and Mordialloc High, Vic.; University of Melbourne (part of Dip. Journalism); cadet journalist, *The Sun News-Pictorial*, Melbourne, 1967-69; journalist, *Stratford Express*, Eng., 1969-70; reporter, sub-editor, *The Star*, Hong Kong, 1970-73; editor, 1973-75; editor, *Queensland Times*, 1975-81; editor-in-chief, Rural Press Ltd. (Qld.), and managing editor, *Queensland Country Life*, 1981-86; independent publisher of books, magazines, etc., 1986-90; editor-in-chief, Sunshine Coast Newspaper Co., 1990-present.

REYNOLDS, John Cyril (1943- ): B. 5 Mar. 1943 Derbyshire, Eng.; s. of Cyril and Peggy Reynolds; m. Isabel Sotomayor.

Ed. Swanwick Hall Grammar School, Sheffield Uni., grad. B.Sc. (hons.); Cambridge Uni., Dip. Ed.; Leicester Polytechnic, B.Bus. Fellow of the Aust. Institute of Management. Settled Aust. 1970. Director, John P. Young & Assoc., 1970-75; secretary and exec. asst., Joondalup Devt. Corp., 1975-80; general manager, *Western Mail*, 1980-83; TVW Enterprises, 1983-86; personnel director, Bell Group, 1986-88; chief exec., 1988-90. Director, Pacific Area Newspaper Publishers Assn., 1991-present; RDA Ltd., 1990-present.

ROWE, Allan Tregithew Frank (c.1932- ): B. c.1932 Toowoomba; s. of Arthur Henry and Bertha Rowe; m. Auriel Dorothy Royal; 1s, 2d.

Proprietor, J. Rowe and Son, 1954-present (third generation of Rowe family to run the family business, started in 1892). Proprietor, Western Publishers Pty. Ltd., Toowoomba, 1959-93. Joint-proprietor, Toowoomba Newspapers Pty. Ltd., 1970-present; this arose from the merger of the *Downs Star*, which was being published as a free daily, with *The Chronicle*, on 1 Oct. 1970. Western Publishers continued to publish the *Western Star*, Roma, and the *Gatton Star*, until their sale to APN Holdings in Aug 1992.

SINCLAIR, Richard William (1932- ): B. 30 Nov. 1932 Melbourne; s. of H. Sinclair; m. 7 Sept. 1956 Patricia Griffiths; 1s.

Ed. Eltham High School. Started work as a cadet accountant at Gas and Fuel Co., 1947; accountant there till 1960. Asst. Fed. Sec., Printing and Allied Trades Employers' Federation of Australia, 1960-70; chief executive officer, Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd., 1970-present.

Member, Aust. Society of Accountants; Aust. Society of Association Executives (pres., 1975-77); Institute of Corporate Managers, Secretaries and Administrators. Director, National Printing Industry Training Council, 1980-present; National Publishers Environment Bureau, 1990. Member, Victoria Racing Club; Victorian Amateur Turf Club; Royal; Automobile Club of Victoria.

SMITH, Geoffrey Leonard (1938- ): B. 7 Dec. 1938 Willoughby, NSW; s. of Gerald Edgar Smith, accountant, and Edith May Threadgold; m. 24 Feb. 1962 Loretta Dawn Farrell; 4d.

Ed. NSW Intermediate Certificate; hand and machine composing apprenticeship. General manager, Queensland Times Pty. Ltd., Ipswich, 1974-86; general manager, Quest Community Newspapers, Brisbane, 1986-present.

SUTHERLAND, Arthur Leonard (1933- ): B. 18 May 1933 Warwick; s. of Arthur Gordon Sutherland and Valma Irene Ryan; m. 20 Apr. 1957 Beryl Hilda Proll; 2s, 1d.

Ed. Warwick Central, Corinda Primary, Sherwood and CPS Leichhardt Street, Brisbane; Brisbane State High School. Porter, Queensland Railways, 1948; clerk, 1950. Private enterprise, 1951. Book-keeper, Croydon cattle station, 1952-56. Advertising sales, *Morning Bulletin*, 1956; advertising manager, 1961; general manager, *Gladstone Observer*, 1975-90. Member, Rotary Club of Gladstone, 1975-present; president, 1980-81; member club's Red Shield Committee until 1990; District Governor, Rotary District 9570, 1992-93.

THEODORE, Roy (1929- ): B. 22 Oct. 1929 Wellington, NZ; s. of Hercules Theodorocatis (abbrev. to Harry Theodore), cafe proprietor, orchardist and winemaker, and Margaret Miller Hood; m. (1) 3 Aug. 1950 Petra Annette Skoien; 2s, 1d; divorced 1970; m. (2) 26 Mar. 1974 Betty Ellen Robertson; no issue.

Ed. Wairoa Primary School and District High School, NZ; one year, Auckland Uni. Journalist with *Napier Daily Telegraph*, *The Dominion* and the *Southern Cross* (both Wellington), 1947-50; ABC Radio, Melbourne, and *Launceston Examiner*, 1950-54; reporter, sub-editor, feature writer, *Brisbane Telegraph*, 1954-60; general manager, *Bundaberg News-Mail*, 1961-92; retired. Chairman, RDA (Qld.), 2 yrs, and RDA federal body, 2 yrs; RDA representative on Australian Press Council, 1990-92; has had short stories published in Australia, NZ, U.S.A. and Russia; still writing. Chairman, *Bundaberg Citizens' Advice Bureau*, 1976-79; president, *Bundaberg Bridge Club*, 1994.

TOLMIE, James (1862-1939): B. 23 July 1862 Registon, Moreton Bay; s. of Roderick Tolmie; unmarried. D. 5 Apr. 1939.

Ed. South Toowoomba State school; grocer's assistant, 1876; pupil teacher, South Toowoomba, 1877; teacher, Fortitude Valley, Greenmount, Watalla, Gowrie Creek State schools; with S.C.W. Robinson, bought *Darling Downs Gazette*, 1894; sold to Dunns 1922; principal leader writer for *Toowoomba Chronicle*, c. 1923-39. Troopship major, 1915-17. Alderman, Toowoomba; director, Darling Downs Building Society; captain, 4th Qld Regiment. MLA, Drayton and Toowoomba, 1901-07, 1909-12, Toowoomba, 1912-18; contested Drayton and Toowoomba, 1899, 1908, 1920. Secretary for Agric. and Stock, 1911-12; Sec., Public Lands, 1912-15; Leader of Opposition, 1915-18.

WESTACOTT, Godfrey George (1888-1977): B. 22 Aug. 1888 Brisbane; s. of William Westacott and Alice Jones. Unmarried. D. 9 January 1977.

Ed. Mount Morgan State School till age 12. Attended night classes in shorthand at the Technical College. Run boy for *Daily Record*, Rockhampton; apprentice compositor, *Mount Morgan Herald*, and later *Chronicle*; Mount Morgan correspondent for *Daily Record*. c. 1910: reporter, *Daily Record*; sub-editor; editor, 1929-41. Transferred to *Morning Bulletin*; editor, 1954-64.

WILSON, George Leslie (1888-1975): B. 24 July 1888; s. of John Wilson and Elizabeth Maria Hurford; m. 8 Aug. 1914 Jessie Sim; 1s, 1d. D. 17 May 1975.

Ed. Maryborough Grammar School. Brilliant scholar. Taught in one-teacher schools for three years. Joined *Maryborough Chronicle* in 1911; sub-editor 1924 and editor, 1926-58; changed its front page format from advertising to news in 1938. Life member of Maryborough Bowls Club. Staunch supporter of the Bush Children's Health Scheme. Member of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church and wrote its history for the centenary in 1963.



## Appendix 3

Queensland provincial newspapers  
1930-1990

1930

Dailies

Bundaberg	Bundaberg Daily News & Mail
Bundaberg	Daily Times <sup>1</sup>
Cairns	Cairns Daily Times <sup>2</sup>
Cairns	Cairns Post
Charters Towers	Northern Miner
Ipswich	Queensland Times
Mackay	Daily Mercury
Maryborough	Chronicle
Rockhampton	Morning Bulletin
Rockhampton	Evening News
Toowoomba	Toowoomba Chronicle
Townsville	Townsville Daily Bulletin
Townsville	Evening Star
Warwick	Warwick Daily News

Non-dailies

Allora	Allora Guardian
Atherton	Barron Valley Advocate
Atherton	Tableland Examiner
Ayr	Delta Advocate
Barcaldine	Western Champion
Beaudesert	Beaudesert Times
Beenleigh	Beenleigh News
Blackall	Barcoo Independent
Boonah	Fassifern Guardian
Bowen	Bowen Independent
Caboolture	North Coast and Stanley District News
Caboolture	Moreton Mail
Cairns	Northern Herald
Charleville	Charleville Times
Childers	Isis Recorder
Chinchilla	Chinchilla News
Clermont	Peak Downs Telegram
Cleveland	Redland Mercury
Clifton	Clifton Courier
Cloncurry	Cloncurry Advocate
Cloncurry	Cloncurry News and Mount Isa Record
Cooktown	Cooktown Independent
Crow's Nest	Crow's Nest Record
Cunnamulla	Cunnamulla Watchman

1930, non-dailies (cont.)

Dalby	Dalby Herald
Emerald	Leichhardt Chronicle
Esk	Esk Record
Gatton	Gatton Mail
Gayndah	Gayndah Gazette
Gladstone	Gladstone Observer
Goondiwindi	Goondiwindi Argus
Gympie	Gympie Times
Gympie	Gympie Truth
Herberton	Herberton Times
Home Hill	Home Hill Observer
Hughenden	Flinders Chronicle
Ingham	Herbert River Express
Innisfail	Johnstone River Advocate
Killarney	Border Record
Kingaroy	Kingaroy Herald
Laidley	Laidley Herald
Longreach	Longreach Leader
Maryborough	The Colonist
Maryborough	The Alert
Mitchell	Mitchell News
Nambour	Nambour Chronicle
Nanango	Nanango News
Oakey	Aubigny Argus
Pittsworth	Pittsworth Sentinel
Pomona	Noosa Advocate
Proserpine	Proserpine Guardian
Rockhampton	Central Queensland Herald
Rockhampton	The Critic
Roma	Western Star
Rosewood	Rosewood Register
Southport	South Coast Bulletin
St. George	Balonne Beacon
Stanthorpe	Border Post
Thargomindah	Thargomindah Herald
Toogoolawah	Brisbane Valley Advertiser
Townsville	North Queensland Register
Winton	Winton Herald
Wondai	South Burnett Times

## 1940

Dailies

Bundaberg	Bundaberg Daily News & Mail
Cairns	Cairns Post
Charters Towers	Northern Miner
Innisfail	Evening Advocate <sup>3</sup>
Ipswich	Queensland Times
Mackay	Daily Mercury
Maryborough	Chronicle
Rockhampton	Morning Bulletin
Rockhampton	Evening News <sup>4</sup>
Toowoomba	Toowoomba Chronicle
Townsville	Townsville Daily Bulletin
Townsville	Evening Star <sup>5</sup>
Warwick	Warwick Daily News

1. Ceased 12 Feb. 1938.

2. Ceased 19 Dec. 1935.

3. Launched 6 Dec. 1906 as Johnstone River Advocate (weekly); became daily in 1940.

4. Ceased 31 July 1941.

5. Ceased 13 Apr. 1940.

## 1950

Dailies

Bundaberg	Bundaberg News-Mail <sup>1</sup>
Cairns	Cairns Post
Charters Towers	Northern Miner <sup>2</sup>
Innisfail	Evening Advocate
Ipswich	Queensland Times
Mackay	Daily Mercury
Maryborough	Chronicle
Rockhampton	Morning Bulletin
Toowoomba	Toowoomba Chronicle
Townsville	Townsville Daily Bulletin
Warwick	Warwick Daily News

## 1960

Dailies

Bundaberg	Bundaberg News-Mail
Cairns	Cairns Post
Innisfail	Evening Advocate
Ipswich	Queensland Times
Mackay	Daily Mercury
Maryborough	Chronicle
Rockhampton	Morning Bulletin
Toowoomba	Toowoomba Chronicle
Toowoomba	Downs Star <sup>3</sup>
Townsville	Townsville Daily Bulletin
Warwick	Warwick Daily News

1. Changed title from 16 Nov. 1942.

2. Ceased daily publication 2 June 1951; became tri-weekly.

3. Launched as paid daily 11 July 1955; began 1960 as weekly, then bi-weekly; became a 'free' daily from 1 March 1960.

## 1970

Dailies

Bundaberg	Bundaberg News-Mail
Cairns	Cairns Post
Innisfail	Evening Advocate <sup>1</sup>
Ipswich	Queensland Times
Mackay	Daily Mercury
Maryborough	Chronicle
Mount Isa	North-West Star <sup>2</sup>
Rockhampton	Morning Bulletin
Toowoomba	The Chronicle
Toowoomba	Downs Star <sup>3</sup>
Townsville	Townsville Daily Bulletin
Warwick	Warwick Daily News

## 1980

Dailies

Bundaberg	Bundaberg News-Mail
Cairns	Cairns Post
Gladstone	Gladstone Observer <sup>4</sup>
Ipswich	Queensland Times
Mackay	Daily Mercury
Maroochydore	Sunshine Coast Daily <sup>5</sup>
Maryborough	Chronicle
Mount Isa	North-West Star
Rockhampton	Morning Bulletin
Southport	Gold Coast Bulletin <sup>6</sup>
Toowoomba	The Chronicle
Townsville	Townsville Daily Bulletin
Warwick	Warwick Daily News

1. Ceased daily publication 23 Dec. 1974; became tri-weekly.
2. Launched as a daily 12 May 1966.
3. Merged with The Chronicle, Toowoomba, on 1 Oct. 1970, and changed to weekly publication 14 July 1971.
4. Launched as weekly on 1 Dec. 1880; became daily (Tues. to Sat.) on 3 July 1973.
5. Began publication on 7 July 1980.
6. Launched as weekly 28 March 1885; became a daily (Tues. to Sat.) on 6 July 1974.

## 1990

Dailies

Bundaberg	News-Mail
Cairns	Cairns Post
Gladstone	Gladstone Observer
Gympie	Gympie Times <sup>1</sup>
Ipswich	Queensland Times
Mackay	Daily Mercury
Maroochydore	Sunshine Coast Daily
Maryborough	The Chronicle
Mount Isa	North-West Star
Rockhampton	Morning Bulletin
Southport	Gold Coast Bulletin
Toowoomba	The Chronicle
Townsville	Townsville Bulletin
Warwick	Daily News

1. Launched on 15 Feb. 1868; began daily publication (Tues.-Sat.) from 17 Sept. 1982.

1990 (cont.)

Non-dailies

Airlie Beach	Whitsunday Times
Atherton	The Tablelander
Ayr	Advocate
Beaudesert	Beaudesert Times
Biggenden	News
Biloela	Central Telegraph
Blackall	Blackall Leader
Blackwater	Blackwater Herald
Boonah	Fassifern Guardian
Bowen	Bowen Independent
Bribie Island	Bribie Weekly
Bribie Island	Island News
Bundaberg	The Drum
Caboolture	Caboolture Chronicle
Caboolture	Near North Coast News
Cairns	Cairns Sunday
Cairns	Pyramid News
Caloundra	Caloundra Observer
Caloundra	Sunshine Coast Citizen
Charleville	Western Times
Charters Towers	Northern Miner
Childers	Isis Town and Country
Chinchilla	Chinchilla News
Clifton	Clifton Courier
Cunnamulla	Western Sun
Dalby	Dalby Herald
Dalby	Northern Downs News
Emerald	Central Queensland News
Esk	Brisbane Valley-Kilcoy Sun
Gatton	Gatton, Lockyer and Brisbane Valley Star
Goondiwindi	Goondiwindi Argus
Hervey Bay	Hervey Bay Fraser Island Sun
Hervey Bay	Hervey Bay Independent
Hervey Bay	Hervey Bay Observer
Home Hill	Observer
Ingham	Herbert River Express
Innisfail	Innisfail Advocate
Ipswich	Ipswich Advertiser
Ipswich	Rural Times (monthly)
Kilcoy	Kilcoy Sentinel
Kingaroy	South Burnett Times
Longreach	Longreach Leader
Mackay	Pioneer Community News
Mackay	The Midweek
Mackay	Bush Telegraph (fortnightly)
Mareeba	Tablelands Advertiser
Maroochydore	Sunshine Coast News
Maryborough	The Heritage Herald

1990, non-dailies (cont.)

Moranbah	The Miners' Midweek
Mundubbera	Central and North Burnett Times
Nambour	Nambour and District Chronicle
Nerang	Hinterland Sun
Noosa	Noosa News
Noosa	Noosa Citizen
Pittsworth	Pittsworth Sentinel
Port Douglas	Douglas Times
Proserpine	Proserpine Guardian
Rockhampton	Capricorn Local News
Roma	Western Star
Sarina	Sarina Midweek
St. George	St. George Standard
St. George	Balonne Beacon
Southport	Gold Coast Sun
Southport	Gold Coast Mail
Stanthorpe	Border Post
Toowoomba	Chronicle Country (monthly)
Toowoomba	Downs Star
Townsville	Twin Cities Advertiser
Townsville	North Queensland Register
Tully	Island Coast and Tully Advertiser
Tully	Tully Times
Warwick	Bush Telegraph

SOURCES (for seven listings): Queensland provincial newspaper index compiled by the author and held by author and R.S. Kerr; also Australian and New Zealand Press Directory and Press Radio and TV Guide, various volumes, for the period covered; Audit Bureau of Circulations listings for 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990; Electoral and Administrative Review, Report on Review of Government and Media Information Services (Brisbane: Electoral and Administrative Review Commission, 1993), pp. D.2-D.3; and Rod Kirkpatrick, Sworn to No Master, pp. 328-330.

## Appendix 4

### Provincial newspaper groupings explained

#### Associated Northern Dailies:

Formed 1923. Grouping of proprietors of *Northern Daily Leader*, Tamworth, *Northern Star*, Lismore, *Daily Examiner*, Grafton, and *Tweed Daily*, Murwillumbah, dissatisfied with representation of their interests by the NSW Country Press Co-operative Ltd. In 1931 the *Daily Mercury*, Maitland joined the group.

#### Associated Press of Queensland:

Formed 1910; disbanded 1918. Absorbed by Queensland Country Press Co-operative Ltd. Grouping of proprietors of Queensland provincial daily newspapers who believed the Country Press organisation was not effectively representing the interests of the dailies.

#### Australian Provincial Daily Press Association (APPA):

Formed 17-18 October 1906 at a meeting in Sydney of 163 representatives of New South Wales, Queensland and Victorian country newspapers. Initially called the Australasian Press Association because it was to encompass New Zealand newspapers, too. New Zealand involvement ceased once World War I began. Objective was to 'promote the general interests of the members in relation to advertising rates, cable and telegraphic services, the laws relating to newspapers, and any other matters of mutual concern to the newspapers of Australasia'. Shared information and discussed industry-wide problems; presented a common front to government and industry. Thomas Mitchell Shakespeare was the first secretary (honorary position).<sup>1</sup>

#### Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd. (APDP):

Formed 1933 by proprietors of the provincial daily newspapers that felt their interests needed special representation.

#### New South Wales Country Press Association (NSWCPA):

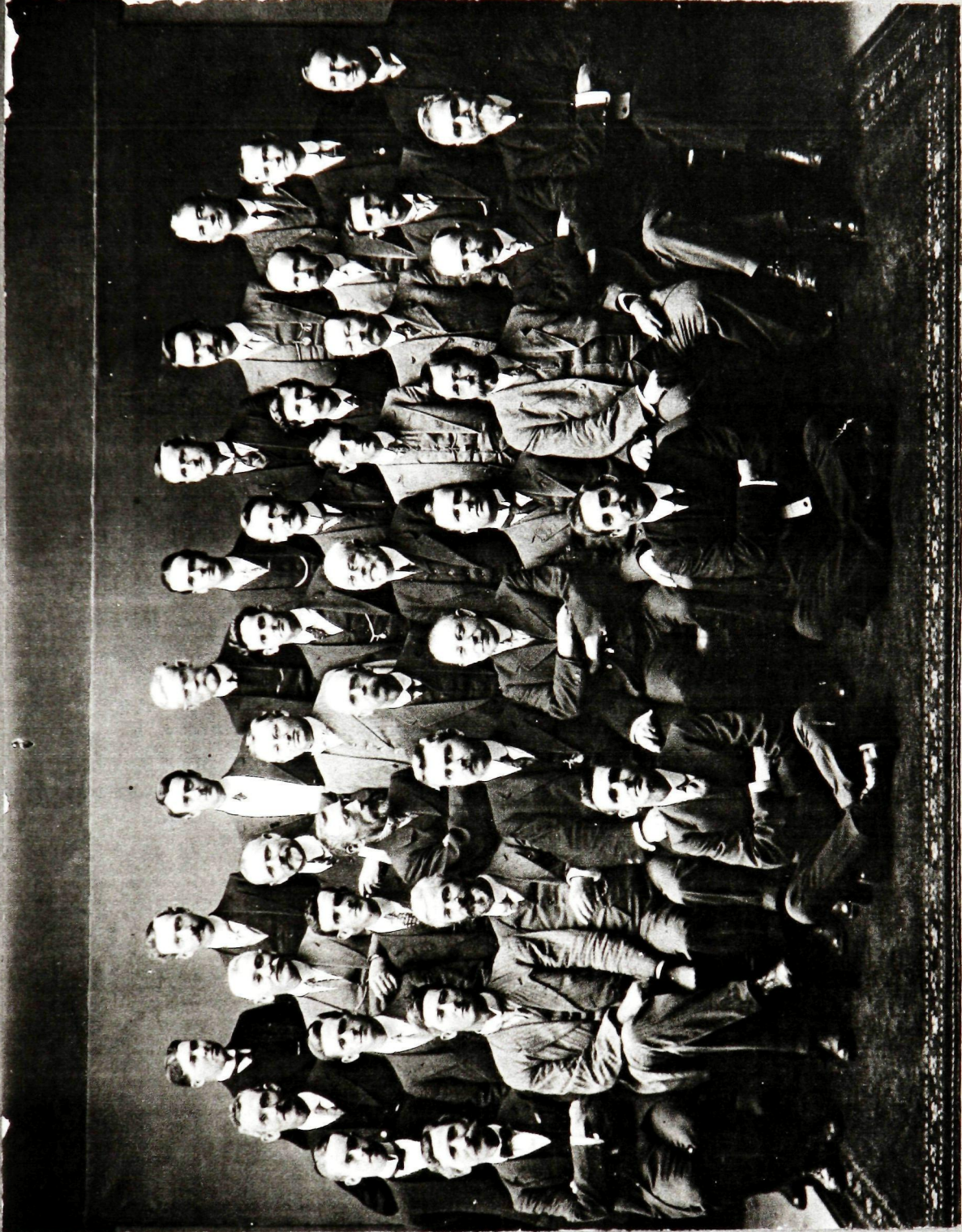
Formed 1900. Grouping of NSW country newspapers to share information and present a united front in dealings with government and industry.

1. A.T. Shakespeare, A Brief History of the Australian Provincial Press Association (Canberra: A.T. Shakespeare, 1956).



# QUEENSLAND COUNTRY PRESS ASSOCIATION

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 1915



Back Row—B. F. Lloyd F. A. Sellars J. E. Harvey W. J. Manning J. M. McLeod T. E. Flett W. E. Lingard E. Fass  
 Third Row—A. A. McFadden S. Walker W. Horsfall C. W. Kingston W. D. James F. R. Lloyd A. J. Raymond A. E. Jones R. H. Standley  
 Second Row—J. Irwin F. Hodgson M. Harris J. H. Lundager A. E. Joseph W. H. Wilkie J. H. Braddock J. L. Barclay P. H. Jovner A. J. Hunter  
 First Row—J. C. Thompson N. J. Mackinnon Chas. Briggs Hon. T. J. Ryan (Premier) Hon. H. L. Groom (President)  
 A. McArthur (President, N.S.W. Country Press Association) W. H. Lister A. Robinson R. C. Hensley  
 In Front—L. W. Wilkinson A. R. Gordon

**Caption for picture on preceding page**

Members of the Queensland Country Press Association at the annual conference in 1915. Back row (fourth row): B.F. Lloyd, F.A. Sellars, J.E. Harvey, W.J. Manning, J.M. McLeod, T.E. Flett, W.E. Lingard, E. Fass. Third row: A.A. McFadden, S. Walker, W. Horsfall, C.W. Kingston, W.D. James, F.R. Lloyd, A.J. Raymond, A.E. Jones, R.H. Standley. Second row: J. Irwin, F. Hodgson, M. Harris, J.H. Lundager, A.E. Joseph, W.H. Wilkie, J.H. Braddock, J.L. Barclay, P.H. Joyner, A.J. Hunter. First row: J.C. Thompson, N.J. Mackinnon, Chas. Briggs, Hon. T.J. Ryan (Premier), Hon. H.L. Groom (president), A. McArthur (president, NSW CPA), W.H. Lister, A. Robinson, R.C. Hensley. In front: L.W. Wilkinson, A.R. Gordon.



Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd. group, 1954. Back row: R. Woodlands (Maitland), F.J. Meacham (Melbourne), C. Lanyon (Mildura), B. Mundy (Bendigo), C.J. Hallowell (Warrnambool), J.V. Robertson (Ballarat), unknown, A.G. Dunn (Rockhampton), B. Mills (Ipswich), C.W.N. Aylward (Ipswich), W.S. Parkinson (Ipswich), Les T. Warrick (Lismore), Reg Curnew (Murwillumbah), E. Rouse (Launceston), L. Ward (Wagga Wagga). Second row: A.T. Shakespeare (Canberra), R.J. Dunn (Toowoomba), R. McKenzie (Geelong), Milton Mott (Albury), N.L. Roberts (Sydney), H. Joseph (Tamworth), E. Hollingworth (Warwick) and W.J.B. Irwin (Warwick). Front row: L. Harris (Burnie), H.J. Manning (Mackay), Mrs Elliott (Mildura), Sir Gordon Rolph (Launceston), Mrs M.H. Barton (Bundaberg), W. Johnson (Newcastle), Mrs B. Young (Bundaberg).

-- Photograph supplied by Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd.

**Appendix 4 (cont.)****New South Wales Country Press Ltd.:**

The commercial arm of the NSW Country Press Association.

**Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd. (PNQ):**

Holding company resulting from the merger on 1 April 1968 of the newspaper interests of the Dunn, Manning, Irwin and Ipswich families. Taken over by Haswell Pty. Ltd., 26 July 1988.

**Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Pty. Ltd.:**

Established 28 June 1966. New name for A. Dunn and Company Pty. Ltd. Upon the 1968 merger of the Dunn newspaper interests with those of the Manning, Irwin and three Ipswich families, this company became simply Provincial Newspapers (Qld.) Ltd.

**Queensland Country Press Association (QCPA):**

Grouping of Queensland country newspapers to share information and present a united front in dealings with government and industry.

**Queensland Country Press Ltd. (QCP):**

Commercial arm of the Queensland Country Press Association; mainly responsible for selling state and national advertising on a block basis.

**Regional Dailies of Australia Ltd. (RDA):**

Formed February 1969. Change of title for Australian Provincial Daily Press Ltd.

**Appendix 5****Toowoomba Chronicle unashamedly  
backs conservatives**

This Appendix features extracts from the Toowoomba Chronicle that illustrate the stated news policy of the newspaper under the managing editorship of W.H.A. (Herbie) Dunn and the unashamedly partisan approach he could take when an election was nigh.

TOowoomba Chronicle.

NO. 4

THE DARLING DOWNS GAZETTE.

NO. 10, OCTOBER 12, 1929.

FINAL WORD.

the platform the final this election has been by candidate and the who have been helping a opportunity is open to of the Commonwealth to ed word to the electors ng, and we are taking the v of giving a final word

It will be remembered we pon this election with an l, although with a feeling outment that Sir Littleton ad negatively helped to et an unnecessary general that he should be given a late his case we regarded The public held that has wn upon the screen at the uted that Sir Littleton d based his action upon edents established by

any industrial organisation that the action of the Bruce-Page Government is based on an intention to give negative value to arbitration. After a study of the industrial conditions in the Southern States since before last Christmas, the thoughtful worker cannot escape coming to the conclusion that, operated by the limited powers of the Commonwealth, arbitration has a negative value. It cannot be really effective in bringing benefit to the industrial worker unless it be given a positive value. It is that kind of value with which Mr. Bruce seeks to invest it in handing arbitration powers back to the State. In Queensland we should regard this action as ideally right, since it conforms to the general practice of workers in ninety per cent. of industries governed by arbitration awards. Queenslanders, of their own volition, have sought the State Court award in preference to the Federal. Since the question whether the State should have arbitration power more fully developed, or whether industry should be muddled by sharing the power between two courts, is the only matter at issue, it seems that supporters of the Labour Party, on its general policy, should, acting normally, support the Bruce Government, whose views in respect to arbitration are for practical purposes those of ninety per cent. of Labour unions. Mr. Littleton is not the only point of

VOTE FOR ARTHUR CLINTON MORGAN

SUPPORT THE BRUCE—PAGE GOVERNMENT.

KEEP THEODORE FROM THE TREASURY BENCHES.

To cast a vote that will ensure that a Labour member will not represent the Darling Downs there are only two ways in which the figures can be placed on the ballot paper. Those who wish to do their part towards securing the return of the Bruce-Page Government should vote:—

- 2 GROOM
- 3 LLEWELYN
- 1 MORGAN

The only way in which those who will vote for Sir Littleton Groom, and who do not wish to see a Labour representative returned, can make their vote fully effective against Labour is by placing the figure 2 against the name Morgan. These No. 2 votes for Morgan will only be counted if Sir Littleton Groom is at the bottom of the poll.

Electors must place three figures on their ballot papers.

(W. H. A. Dunn, "Chronicle" Office, Toowoomba.)

commissions appointing the first Labour Ministry, action was in progress to establish fish-shops, and from this starting point the Government proceeded to compete with those engaged in private enterprise quite a number of industries. We are not in a position to estimate just what injury was done to private enterprise through this competition in a source that should be insulating every person in the possession of capital to make use of

But the Government lost in their socialistic enterprises £3,700,000, on which the people of Queensland are paying £200,000 annually in interest. There is a sinking fund attached to the interest—which we doubt—it will be sixty years before the debt is amortised. By that time the Government's efforts to kill individuality will have cost the people of Queensland between fifteen and sixteen million pounds sterling, a sum far too large to pay for any Government. Someone had to be made the scapegoat for the failure of the Government's industrial enterprises. The Government has made its employees the goat, instead of laying losses at the doors of its own incompetence. Is there anything in Mr. McCormack's icy speech that is of positive value in restoring public confidence in him, or that is likely to give an impetus to industry and so increase avenues of employment? If Mr. McCormack were capable of any administrative or legislative act that would be an inspiration to confidence, he would not have waited to

be available to children living in such districts as are now about to be visited."

**AUSTRALIAN BUILDINGS.**

The reason why our buildings do not compare with those of other parts of the world was put down to cost by Mr. D. Gale, an architect, who has returned from New York, where he has been working (says the Melbourne "Age"). Mr. Gale said the fault was not with our architects, who merely designed buildings as they were told, and even if we had the men who were responsible for the beautiful buildings of London and New York they would erect just the same types. The fact was that people here wanted economy in design, as we were a young country and there was not very much money for the work. As a matter of fact, a building in America would cost less than the same one would in Australia. The trouble was we took too much time to put them up, and this added greatly to the cost. Here we started right at the bottom and built up, whereas in America, with the greatly increased use of steel-frame buildings, they could build each story, and if necessary, many of them, at the same time. Also, if any work could be done off the job, it was, and then rushed into place, so that the men doing it would not be getting in someone else's way. All this led to speed, and therefore economy, and meant that there would not be such a pressing need for economy.

**ALCOHOL.**

Having for its object an impartial and strictly scientific inquiry into the alcohol question, an Alcohol Research Council has been formed in Sydney to (a) find the truth concerning the relation of alcohol to human life; (b) make this truth readily available; (c) enlist the services of the best authorities possible for these purposes. Mr. L. V. Newman (Botanic Research Department of Sydney University) was elected

**Toowoomba Labour Committee.**—There will be a meeting of the Labour Committee in the committee rooms to-night at 7 o'clock to make final arrangements for polling day. All workers are urged to attend.

**Labour Committee and Polling Day.**—By advertisement in this issue the Labour Campaign Committee invites

Newtown State School:—  
A to K—H. W. Lee and Miss E. Hawkins.  
L to Z—J. Smith and P. Piper.  
North Boys' State School:—  
A to K—E. J. Dunigan and L. L. Obst.  
L to Z—V. Kimmins and A. E. Obst.  
General Hospital—Miss V. Gallagher and C. Virgen.  
Railway Station.—F. Gartside and W. Marks.  
South End (Groom Park Club

**TO THE ELECTORS OF TOOWOOMBA.**

"DON'T expect too much the first month or two, but wait a year or two," said Labour when they first attained office.

Labour's "year or two" has meant 14 years—fourteen years of high hopes unfulfilled.

Labour's Minister for Education gloats over the amount of money spent on Education. But what's the good of it if our boys and girls can't get work when their education is completed?

The Country Party will give your children their chance in life to make good. Do your part by Voting National to-morrow.

The Ship of State is perilously near the rocks, its captain and crew utterly incompetent to avert disaster.

There is yet time to replace them with a Captain and Crew able to wear the Ship of State off shore, but it must be done not later than 6 p.m. to-morrow.

**SAVE THE SHIP OF STATE!**

**VOTE NATIONAL AND CHANGE THE GOVERNMENT.**

J. D. ANNAND.  
T. R. ROBERTS.

May 9, 1929.

any elector who wishes to be conveyed to the polling booth on Saturday to call or send a message to the committee rooms, Macmahon Street, or the

House).—J. Garner and F. Miller, EAST TOOWOOMBA.  
The Returning Officer for East Toowoomba

## Appendix 6

### Comparison table for the three major Dunn daily newspapers: Maryborough, Rockhampton and Toowoomba

#### Establishment

	Est.	Founder
Maryborough Chronicle	1860	Charles H. Buzacott
Toowoomba Chronicle	1861	Darius Hunt
Morning Bulletin*	1861	William H. Buzacott

\* The Morning Bulletin began publication as the Rockhampton Bulletin and changed its name to the Morning Bulletin on 1 January 1878.

#### Start of daily publication

Rockhampton Bulletin	1873
Maryborough Chronicle	1882
Toowoomba Chronicle	1906

#### End of competition

Maryborough Chronicle	1919	(Wide Bay News closed)
Toowoomba Chronicle	1922	(absorbed D.D. Gazette)
Morning Bulletin	1929	(bought Evening News*)
Toowoomba Chronicle	1970	(merger with Star**)

\* The Dunns continued to publish the Evening News till 1941.

\*\* The Downs Star began publication in July 1955 as a paid daily and later became a free daily.

#### Introduction of front-page news

Maryborough Chronicle	1938	(1 Sept.)
Toowoomba Chronicle	1942	(25 May)
Morning Bulletin	1942	(19 Oct.)

The Courier-Mail introduced front-page news on 28 February 1938.



Tabloid

Morning Bulletin	1957-1959*
Maryborough Chronicle	1966
Toowoomba Chronicle	1969
Morning Bulletin	1979

\* The Morning Bulletin reverted to broadsheet publication from August 1959 when it replaced its Koenig and Bauer press with a Hoe press bought from the defunct Melbourne Argus.

Offset

Maryborough Chronicle	1977
Toowoomba Chronicle	1979 (22 May)
Morning Bulletin	1979 (25 Sept.)

SOURCE: Queensland newspaper index prepared by the author and held by him.

**Appendix 7****Quarterly financial reports  
of the three Dunn dailies  
at the end of 1958**

Following are the October-December financial reports for the three Dunn daily newspapers at the close of 1958. They provide comparisons of staffing totals and general performance and size.

TELEPHONES 52 AND 104.

(ESTABLISHED 1860)

POST OFFICE BOX 216.

# The Maryborough Chronicle

(PUBLISHED DAILY)

Proprietors: Maryborough Newspaper Co. Pty. Ltd.

(Member of the Australian Provincial Daily Press Association.)

Address Business Letters to  
The Manager.

Adelaide Street,

Address Letters for Publication to  
The Editor.

Maryborough, Q.

## REPORT FOR THE QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1958.

**ADVERTISING:** The advertising revenues for the period was £15,798 6. 2., an increase of £1680 6. 3. over the corresponding quarter in 1957. It was made up by

Local advertising (increase)	£1496
National " "	184
	<hr/>
	£1680

Federal election advertising appeared in this quarter.

**NEWSPAPER SALES:** Paid circulation for December, 1958 shows an increase of 163, due mainly to temporary heavy sales at Hervey Bay over the holiday period. The increase in October, 1958 over October, 1957 was 22 only. Income from paper sales at £8725 is £54 less than for the December, 1957 quarter. A breakdown shows:

Cash sales (decrease)	£128
Agents' sales (increase)	74
Subscriptions (unchanged)	—
	<hr/>
Decrease	£54

**OTHER REVENUE:** Owing to decreased rents, other sources of revenue show a decrease of £108.

**NEWSPRINT:** 40 tons 16 cwt of newsprint were consumed during the quarter, an increase of 1 ton over the December, 1957 quarter. Thirty-eight more pages were printed during the 1958 quarter.

**WAGES, STAFF:** Service fee and wages paid during the quarter amounted to £11,975, an increase of £612 over the corresponding 1957 quarter. £150 9. 11. was also paid as employer's superannuation contributions during the 1958 quarter.

The number on the staff at December 31 was as follows:

Composing Room	20
Machine Room	4
Publishing and Distribution	2
Run Boys (part time)	20
Editorial	9
Office	7
Cleaning	1

as well as three employees of A. Duan and Company Pty Limited.

- 2 -

Gratuities are paid to three retired members of the staff.

GENERAL EXPENSES: These have been maintained at a satisfactory level.

EXPENDITURE: Major items of expenditure during the period were:

Bowaters - newsprint	£2767	7.	11.	
Q'land Country Press	665	17.	5.	£3433 5. 4.
Queensland Country Press				1295 13. 6.

BANK: The company's overdraft at December 31, 1958 was £41,970 11. 11.  
Large disbursements to be made are:

Bowaters - newsprint	£3750
J.F. White - builder	2084
	<u>£5834</u>

REMARKS: Advertising has been good during the quarter, only one extra ton of newsprint being used with the new paper and extra column to produce 38 more pages (larger papers) than in the 1957 quarter. The benefit of the advertising rate increase will commence to appear from March 1 next.

Our method of collecting local cash newspaper sales makes comparison of circulation figures and income at times somewhat misleading. The company's overdraft is well within the limits of the arrangement with the bank.

*C. W. Engle*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MANAGER.

THE ROCKHAMPTON NEWSPAPER COMPANY PTY. LTD.

REPORT for the QUARTER ended 31st. December 1958.

ADVERTISING: Advertising revenue for the period was £45,128:9:11, an increase of £3,981:17:2 over the corresponding quarter 1957. In December 1957 Waltons-Sears produced a 24 page supplement at their opening, and it was not expected that this would be repeated this December. This supplement accounted for £770:15:0 revenue, and therefore an adjustment should be made to arrive at the true position: excluding the supplement the increase would amount to £4,752:12:2.

NEWSPAPER SALES: The average daily circulation for the quarter was 16,517. Revenue from this source was £15,175:18:9, an increase of £34:7:10 over the corresponding quarter. However as stated in previous reports no true comparison can be made until the new system of rendering subscription accounts has settled down.

REVENUE FROM OTHER SOURCES remains reasonably constant.

NEWSPRINT: During the quarter 143.61 tons of newsprint were consumed, an increase of 11.57 tons (£1157).

WAGES AND STAFF: Wages paid during the quarter amounted to £18,287:9:1, an increase of £934:13:5 over the corresponding period 1957. Overtime was £555:3:6 compared with £515:15:5. At 31st. December the staff was composed as follows:

Composing	30
Stereo	3
Machine	3
Publishing	3
Editorial	20
Process	2
Office	14
Cleaning	4
	<hr/>
	79
	<hr/>

BANK: The Bank Account (No. 1 Account) at December 31st showed a debit balance of £3175:19:8. No.2 account showed a credit balance of £8236:0:0.

GENERAL REMARKS: During the quarter the Company acquired four units of the Argus Press for £30,000. It is estimated that the total cost, including new building to house the plant, will be £60,000, and accommodation for this amount has been arranged at the Bank.

At 31st December £14,389 has been expended on this venture

- 2 -

and therefore the debit balance of £3175:19:8 at that date shows the Company's finances in a fluid state.

During the period demand for advertising space on occasions exceeded the space available, and it was necessary to produce one issue of 40 pages (hand inserted) to cope with this demand. The new press should be in operation to cope with the Christmas rush in 1959.

FOR THE DIRECTORS.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be 'J. H. L.', written in dark ink.

TOOWOOMBA NEWSPAPER CO. PTY. LTD.QUARTERLY REPORT.OCTOBER - DECEMBER, 1958.ADVERTISING REVENUE:

This amounted to £49337, and is £4325 greater than the same period last year. Despite the opposition we have in Toowoomba for advertising we are pleased to report an increase.

NEWSPAPER SALES:

Subscriptions and newsagents supplies less returns were £19376. Average nett circulation was 16740. The Brisbane Telegraph has opened a news service department in Toowoomba for their Downs edition. Sales have increased slightly, but this is being credited to their Wealthwords Competition.

NEWSPRINT:

143 $\frac{3}{4}$  tons were used for the quarter. This is 9 tons greater than the previous year. Our total stock of newsprint, ink and flong at 31/12/58 was £42,000.

WAGES:

We paid wages £22647 and Overtime £661 for the quarter. Management and Consulting Service cost £2700.

STAFF:

The numbers employed are:-

Composing Room	29	(1 part time)
Press and Publishing:	12	
Stereo Department:	4	
Delivery:	6	
Editorial & Photographic:	23	
Business:	20	
Cleaning:	2	(2 part time)
Mechanic:	1	

-----  
 97      94 full time.  
 -----      3 part time.

GENERAL EXPENSES:

An amount of £1975, including £827 for the Printing Press, was spent during the quarter.

EXPENDITURE:

Major items were:-

Newsprint:	£ 16809
Dividends:	13537.10.0
Brisbane T.V. Shares	1250
New Delivery truck	
less sale old one:	335

BANK:

The credit balances at Bank are:-

No. 1 Account:	£ 16.12.10
No. 2 Account:	1005. 0. 0
	-----

GENERAL:

Sundry Debtors amounted to £32902. 0. 0

*[Signature]*

January 16th, 1959

Manager.

## Appendix 8

## The PNQ newspapers at 1 April 1968

<i>Newspaper</i>	<i>Year of commencement</i>	<i>Year became a daily</i>
Morning Bulletin (Rockhampton)	1861	1873
Toowoomba Chronicle	1861	1906
Maryborough Chronicle	1860	1882
Queensland Times (Ipswich)	1859	1908
Daily Mercury (Mackay)	1866	1906
Warwick Daily News	1867	1919
Nambour Chronicle <sup>1</sup>	1903	--
Bundaberg News-Mail <sup>2</sup>	1876	1907

1. Bi-weekly.

2. PNQ held 75 per cent of the 52 per cent controlling interest which Provincial Investments Pty. Ltd. acquired in the Bundaberg paper in 1961; the Townsville Bulletin and the Cairns Post (owned by Queensland Newspapers Pty. Ltd. from the end of 1965) held the other 25 per cent of the controlling interest.

SOURCE: Queensland newspaper index prepared by the author and held by him.



## Appendix 9

**Newspaper penetration: comparing  
changes in circulation and population**

Gordon Beavan, general manager of the *Border Mail*, Albury, 1983-present, and general manager, the *Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, 1980-82, discounts the importance of comparing circulation to population to establish 'penetration' by a newspaper into the community and argues that advertisers are more interested now in targeting specific segments of the audience. His argument follows:

The relationship of circulation figures to population has more to do with a theoretical potential for total newspaper growth, the activities and claims of the marketing department, and expressions of angst from the circulation department, but nothing at all to do with general management... sometimes I think it has more to do with marketing or sociology than with newspaper history.

The *Border Mail* once had a large migrant hostel at Bonegilla within the PCA (Prime circulation area), but few of the hostel residents spoke English. These thousands of people in the PCA would have imparted a deleterious bias to any relationship between circulation and population. The same thing happens, on a lesser scale in university towns and towns with large troop garrisons.

In the 1970s and, I suspect, the 1980s, in Broken Hill the only newspaper, the *Barrier Daily Truth*, was itself owned by the Barrier Industrial Council. All unionists got a copy of the paper each day as part of their union dues. The family I used to stay with had three people working and got three newspapers delivered to the same house each day.

If one eventually found how many occupied dwellings there were in a PCA and one ran a filter over that number to quantify any limiting literacy problems; then a second filter to determine the average size of a household in an occupied dwelling; then a third filter which determined the households that could afford to buy the paper every day, one is still left with only a potential number of newspaper buyers.

The actual newspaper they buy, and in Australia there is always a choice of masthead if not publisher, will probably be determined by demographics or time of delivery. Beavan does not see 'penetration' as having much to do with a newspaper's history or with managerial decisions which have to be made before the purchase of equipment and land, and the hiring of staff.

The figure I always look at is our competitor's circulation. It is always possible to get some of that circulation, or advertising, rather than convince a non-buyer that he/she should start reading. The problem is that not only does the population increase/decrease but the geographical boundaries of the PCA itself change especially as transport methods change. For a regional daily, the 1992-93 [NSW] spate of railway line closures may represent a significant and permanent change in a PCA.

**Weather**

- Fine, SW-SE winds.
- Max. 21.
- Seas slight.
- Details, P. 29.

# Sunshine Coast Daily

**Classies 'Phone 43 4655**

TELEPHONE: 43 4655

MONDAY, JULY 7 1980

PRICE 15c

## It's your Daily

Good morning, Sunshine Coast.

Welcome to your first historic issue of the Sunshine Coast Daily.

You could be the lucky reader who wins an exciting Pacific cruise.

Every reader who signs on for a six days a week Daily delivery by the end of July, and who is still enjoying this service at the end of September, will be automatically included in the drawing for a 14-day P. and O. Pacific cruise for two. Details page 15.

**TODAY**

Individualism — that's what the Sunshine Coast and your Daily is all about. Our first editorial is on page 8.

Buderim could be a suitable location for high-rise. See page 9.

All the weekend sport — international, national and regional. Eight pages of sport on pages 32-40.

**TUESDAY**

All over the Sunshine Coast, there are people for whom retirement is an adventure, not a sentence. Carole Dunn talks to one of them.

Japanese molasses is being used to fertilise Coast bananas — that's the unusual link Bob Burnett explores in his land article.

**WEDNESDAY**

Potent plasmids — no, not a new type of poison but a scientific discovery that may solve the 24D health problem.

Who won the State of Origin Rugby League match — and why? Bill Hoffman reports from Lang Park.

Controversial columnist John Keenan roasts our political system.

**THURSDAY**

Like to know the best spots on the Sunshine Coast to eat? Anne Panchoud takes a critical look at one of our popular restaurants.

Marine expert Greg Swain takes the helm of a real flyer — a J-24 yacht.

**FRIDAY**

A cotton wool baby — skin so thin her parents have to wrap her in cotton wool.

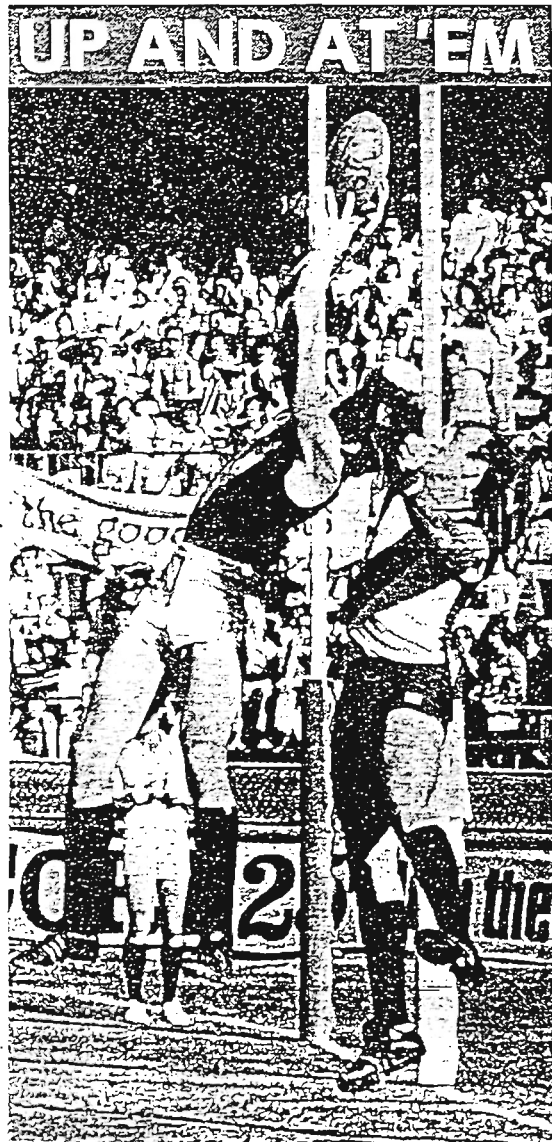
For the sports fans, a four-page racing lift-out and previews of all the major weekend sporting attractions.

**SATURDAY**

Enough to keep you reading all weekend — Ian Austin reviews the shows, book reviews with Fazal Rahman, gardening with Peter Young, arts and crafts; they'll all be there.

Car bike and truck buffs can stay in front of the motoring scene with one of the nation's top writers, Peter Davis; and there even a page to keep the children happy.

# Coast battles welfare crisis



● Star Richmond full forward Michael Roach takes a great mark in yesterday's match at the Gabba between VFL and Queensland. The Australian rules State of Origin match went to the VFL team 28.18.186 to 16.10.105. Queensland rules administrators hope a VFL fixture match will be played in Brisbane next year after the home state's great effort. — Full match report P. 40.

Lack of adequate public transport, the decline of voluntary community organisations and a shortage of government funds has turned the Sunshine Coast into a welfare worker's nightmare.

A study carried out by the Sunshine Coast Professional Welfare Workers' Committee has revealed that about 30,000 people — more than one third of the population — are totally dependent on Social Services payments or pensions.

The majority lived at or below the accepted poverty level with incomes not exceeding \$80 a week.

The study showed wide gaps in the region's health and welfare facilities and called on local authorities and developers to recognise their responsibilities.

Committee spokesman, Mrs M. O'Donnell, a social worker, said existing services were already up to 10 years behind the actual need.

Continued development without adequate planning for the disadvantaged could place the welfare and health services in a desperate situation.

Only 296 beds in public and private hospitals at Cooroy, Nambour, Maleny, Buderim and Caloundra were available for the Coast's population of about 80,000.

The breakdown for the major medical centre, Nambour General Hospital, showed 34 beds for midwifery, 40 medical, 31 surgical, nine paediatric, but no specific geriatric beds and no facility for psychiatric care.

Waiting lists at nursing homes like Sundaile meant care for the aged was often "care for the lucky".

Other community organisations such as Community Home Care, Red Cross, Blue Nursing, CWA Day Care, Emergency Housekeeping, Meals on Wheels were unable to fill the gap.

These were stretched to the limit and continually in need of more staff, more financial support and/or government subsidy.

The paramedical field was also in critical need. Nambour General Hospital had only one social worker and three physiotherapists.

Lack of regular, reliable transport system between the coast and hinterland was seen as one of the most serious obstacles to solving the Sunshine Coast's social problems.

The poor transport system aggravated problems of loneliness and isolation and affected a wide range of people — job seekers applying for work, people in need of welfare or health treatment, even those who needed to attend a Commonwealth Employment Service office to register for unemployment benefits.

Another area affecting the young to middle-aged in particular was the lack of family planning and marriage counselling services. Only the Catholic Family Welfare bureau in Caloundra offered a family planning service.

However, divorce and separation rates were high, particularly in coastal areas where there was a high turnover in population and, in places, a less stable community life.

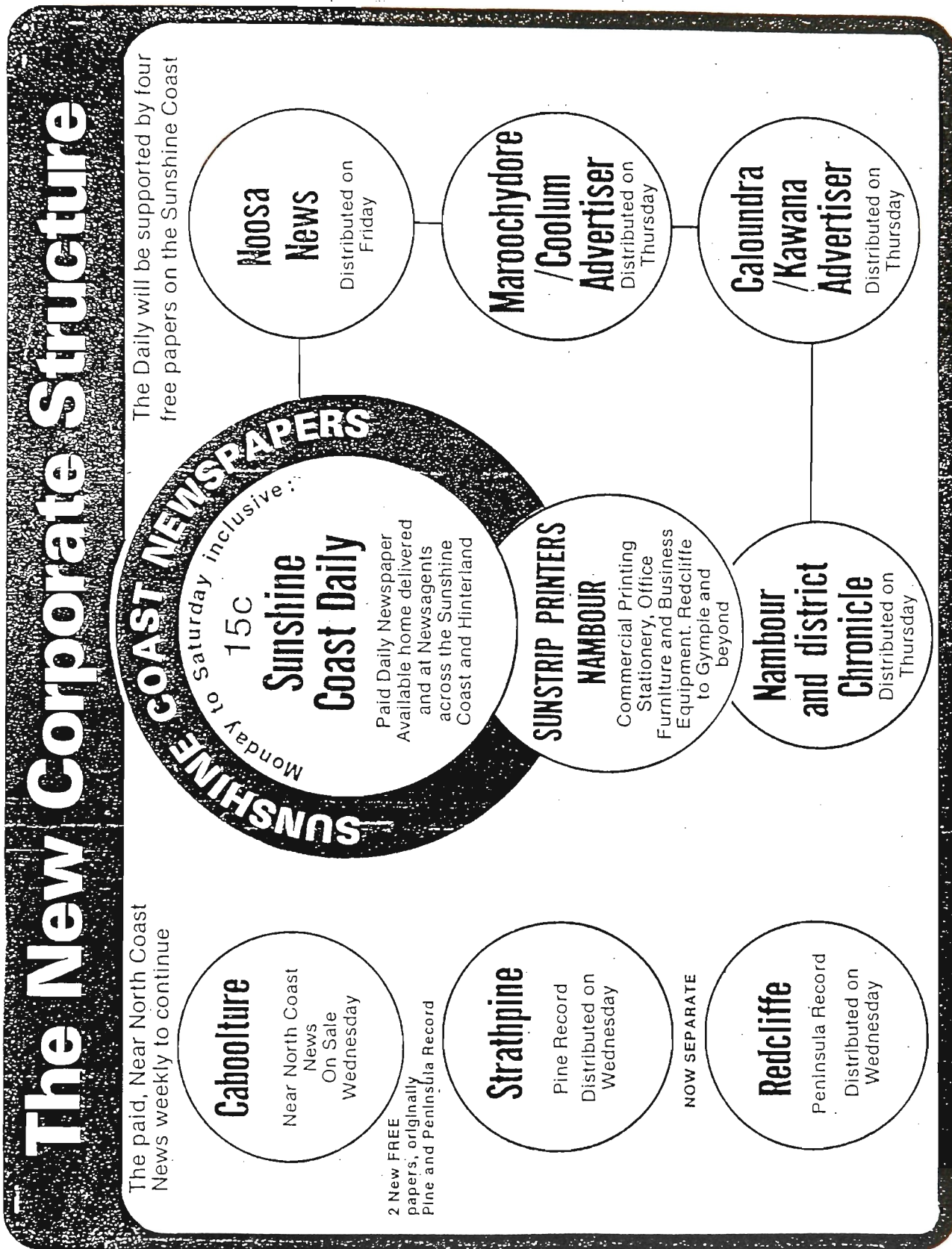
Single mothers and one parent families were rapidly becoming a major problem. A survey of children taken at one school revealed that 60 per cent of the children in a class had only one parent.

● Services on their Knees: See Report P. 4.

**FIRM BIDS FOR STEAM CAR PAGES**

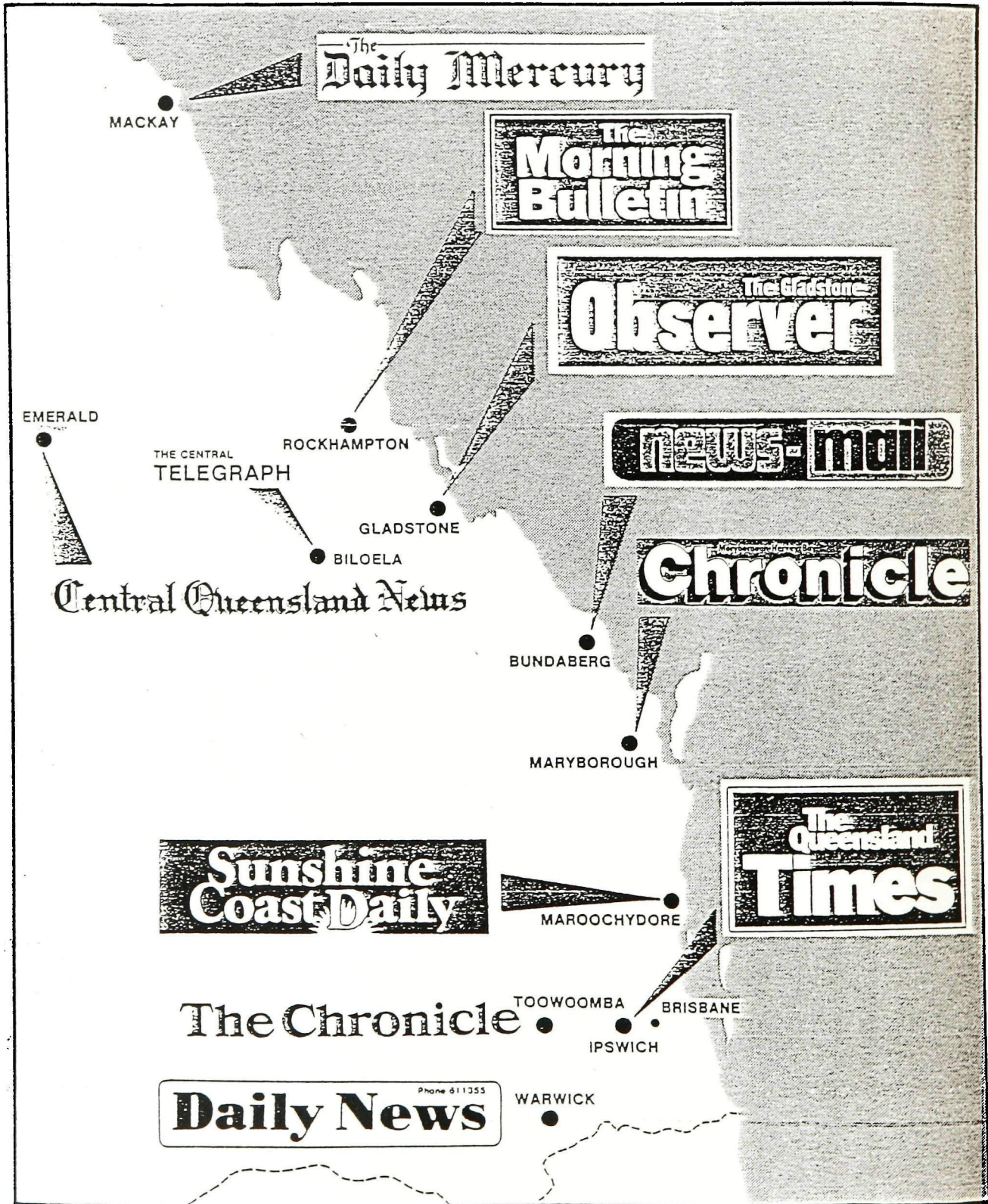
Appendix 11

New corporate structure at Sunshine Coast Newspapers after the launch of the Daily



Appendix 12

PNQ's newspaper stable, 1987, before expansion into NSW



SOURCE: PNQ Annual Report, 1987, p. 1.

**Appendix 13**

**Australian Provincial Newspapers Ltd.  
board of directors, 1990**

Mr Graham Tucker, chairman

Mr Liam Healy, deputy chairman

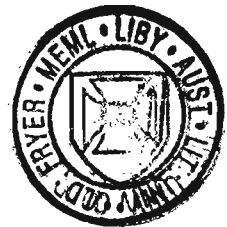
Mr John Reynolds

Mr Cameron O'Reilly

Sir Sydney Schubert

Sir Leo Hielscher

SOURCE: APN News-Print, November 1990.



ENDS

