

# **Crawford Creations**

## **What would we have done without Crawfords?**

*An exploration of Crawford Productions' contribution to the development of an 'Australian Consciousness'.*

### **Volume One**

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## Declaration

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I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary institution.

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Philip Roy Davey

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## **Abstract**

Between 1946 and 1987, *Crawford Productions* was a major independent Melbourne producer of radio and television drama, and innovative musical and educational programs. Led by orchestra conductor Hector Crawford, his sister Dorothy Crawford and her son Ian Crawford, *Crawford Productions*, or simply *Crawfords*, was influential in developing an 'Australian consciousness and identity' through its many successful programs. This dissertation explores several elements of Hector Crawford's quest to create an 'Australian consciousness', including the opportunities he provided for many singers and artists through live musical radio programs. I argue that Dorothy Crawford's production skills were pivotal throughout this process as well as during the formative years of television. Hector lobbied against the dominance of American television programs and in support of Australian dramatic television content which, I argue, added greatly to a public awareness that television was not portraying Australia's national traditions and culture. I contend that this awareness helps explain why *Crawfords'* television drama series such as *Homicide* (1964) and *Division 4* (1969) were so readily accepted by national audiences. Through employee oral history accounts I demonstrate how *Crawfords* engendered a collegiate training environment with a 'get the job done whatever the cost' attitude. The ensuing employment, training and career opportunities benefited the entire television and film industry and contributed to an evolving 'Australian consciousness'. This dissertation also examines the rationale behind Melbourne's third commercial television licence being granted to Ansett Transport Industries and why *Crawfords'* bid failed. In response to the existing literature, I argue that the Federal Government was not biased towards Ansett as a 'business friend'. While Hector Crawford has often been described as the 'Father of Australian Television', I argue that his entrepreneurial and business skills alone may have been ineffectual without the contributions of family members and senior staff. I contend that 'The Family of Australian Television' is a more accurate epitaph.

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Source: *The Listener In*, Melbourne, 2-8 February 1946, Page 9.

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Source: *The Listener In*, Melbourne, 16-22 November, 1946, Page 19.

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**Dedicated to Liam Davison: 29 July 1957 – 17 July 2014**

Acclaimed novelist, writer, reviewer, teacher, mentor,  
colleague and friend who perished over Ukraine on Malaysia  
Airlines Flight MH17.

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Photos of Hector Crawford's office and the Boardroom at Collins Street,  
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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1. Prologue

In one of many media tributes to Hector Crawford following his death in 1991, actor Charles (Bud) Tingwell compared Crawford to Daryl Zanuck of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox and Warner Bros, and British television producer Lord (Lew) Grade “as a leader in entertainment in television”.<sup>1</sup> Another noted that, despite a long and difficult process, Hector Crawford’s role “in establishing the local film and television industry was pivotal”.<sup>2</sup> Barbara Hooks recalled that “Hector Crawford enabled Australians to see themselves in television drama for the first time, with their own stories, as told by their own people”.<sup>3</sup>

Crawford Productions, or simply ‘Crawfords’, was the only independent radio production house to make the transition to television (from the week transmission commenced in November 1956) through considerable technical and creative planning, establishing a television school and by on-the-job learning. But attaining sustained success was inhibited by the dominance of cheap American programs, while television owners argued that they did not have the funding, technical expertise or artistic ability to facilitate local drama production.<sup>4</sup>

Hector Crawford believed that, just as he had portrayed through radio, Australian television should reflect Australian ideals, values and culture. Programming should be portrayed by Australians and made by Australians. As noted above, however, establishing an ‘Australian consciousness’ was a “long and difficult process”.<sup>5</sup> Hector lobbied the Federal Government and television proprietors while generating a strong public awareness for domestic production. By the time Crawfords’ ground-breaking police drama series *Homicide* was broadcast in 1964, its acceptance exceeded all expectations. The company soon grew into a mini-Hollywood studio where employment, training and career opportunities facilitated considerable industry growth.

Hector’s strong entrepreneurial skills and charisma were powerful assets that exuded considerable influence in terms of Crawfords’ ensuing success, but he did not act alone. Underpinning the introductory tributes and the ubiquitous “this has been A

Crawford Production” call sign were many important elements intertwined within an evolutionary process that laid the foundation for Crawfords’ achievements. As Berryman notes, most viewers had little knowledge of this process, and significantly, the people who made the programs.<sup>6</sup>

Without the contributions of his sister Dorothy Crawford, her son Ian Crawford and many other senior creative and technical colleagues, Hector would simply not have had programs to sell. With this in mind, I became uncomfortable with Hector regularly being hailed as the ‘Father of Australian Television’, and sought to explore and recognise the work of so many Crawfords’ people who contributed to the resurgence of the Australian television and film industry. While I do not seek to diminish Hector’s achievements in any way, my research reveals for the first time the extent of multiple contributions to the Crawfords’ legacy.

This dissertation, therefore, considers how the radio and television programs Crawfords produced helped nurture an ‘Australian consciousness and national identity’ from a holistic perspective. These include Hector’s musical prowess, political activism and public lobbying; Dorothy Crawford’s innovative production techniques and Ian Crawford’s technical expertise. I also investigate the various creative abilities of Sonia Borg, Ian Jones, David Lee, Tom Hegarty and Terry Stapleton and the hundreds of actors, writers and technical staff who benefited personally while contributing to the growth of the industry.

## **1.2. Research Questions, Structure and Methodology**

### **1.2.1. Research Questions**

To address these issues, I developed four broad-ranging research questions. These aim to provide a greater understanding of Hector Crawford’s influence both publically and within the company, the role of Dorothy Crawford and senior colleagues in the company’s success and, through the personal experiences of many ‘Crawford creations’, an insider’s perspective of their Crawford experience.

Specifically, the first question explores Hector’s approach to promoting an ‘Australian consciousness’ during the radio era, his pursuit of local drama content for television and his influence in this quest. Another measure of his determination

to broadcast Australian drama was Crawford's exhaustive, but unsuccessful effort to acquire Melbourne's third commercial television licence. Intrinsicly linked to the first question, the second asks why the Menzies' Government awarded the licence to non-broadcaster, Ansett Transport Industries.

Throughout this dissertation there are many examples of Dorothy Crawford's highly respected, creative contribution as a producer, casting director and script editor. Later, in television, several emerging and highly talented colleagues became equally important. The third question, therefore, asks if entrepreneur Hector would have been as successful without the creative contributions of his sister and senior colleagues?

While scholarly analysis has outlined the Crawford story from several key perspectives – some of which are detailed below – one omission in the literature is a detailed study of those who made the programs; the actors, writers and technicians, et al. Question four considers the many personnel who benefited from the Crawford experience of opportunity, training, employment and career advancement.

### **1.2.2. Structure**

This dissertation has been structured in three chronological sections. Part One: *Riding the Radio Waves*, not only addresses the questions posed above from a radio perspective; it provides a brief history of Crawfords during the radio era, noting the more favourable circumstances Crawfords encountered, in contrast to the television era, because of the 1939 ban on imported material from non-Commonwealth countries. When Crawfords entered the industry, I note how the company faced considerable competition, given that independent production was now thriving.

Part One describes Hector and Dorothy Crawford's developmental years: Hector as orchestra leader for *Music For the People*; Dorothy as a vocalist, repertory theatre actor and ABC radio announcer. Crawfords' first production, *The Melba Story*, followed by similar musical drama offerings, exemplify Hector's early successes encouraging an 'Australian consciousness'. Corroborated by oral history accounts, a major focus of Part One is the progression of Dorothy Crawford as a respected radio producer and her value to Crawfords. In Part One, I also describe the relationship between actors and independent radio producers, and how Crawfords resolved

various personal and professional issues that many actors faced. Finally, a case study of Crawford's successful police series *D.24* highlights Hector's skills as an impresario, skills that would underpin the success of Crawfords' television crime productions.

Part Two: *Trials, Tribulations and Breakthrough*, discusses Crawfords' preparation for television and its early, sometimes amateurish, program development amid tight budgets and inferior technology. Production staff and actors gained invaluable experience, however, and as Crawfords was commissioned to produce sustained indigenous programs such as *Export Action* (ABC) and *Consider Your Verdict*, (HSV7) the skills of Dorothy Crawford, Ian Crawford, Sonia Borg, and Ian Jones proved integral during these formative years.

Part Two also explores Hector's political and public activism from 1956 in seeking an 'Australian Consciousness'; in particular, his controversial booklet *Commercial Television in Australia* (1959), and his influence in convening the 1963 Senate Select hearing known as 'The Vincent Inquiry'.<sup>7</sup> Some of his recommendations, although not formally adopted by the Government, would prove pivotal to Crawfords' later successes. This section contains a detailed study of the process employed to determine Melbourne's third commercial television licensee, and reveals why Crawfords' consortium was unsuccessful against Ansett Transport Industries. Finally, through the recollections of those who made the program, various opinions are offered regarding the pivotal success of *Homicide*, notwithstanding the many obstacles Crawfords faced during its development.

Part Three, *Crawfords: A View From Within*, is a unique study informed by oral history interviews where respondents such as family members, senior staff, regular employees or itinerant actors and artists relate their experiences. The concept of Crawfords as a family dynasty is explored as is the notion that Crawfords became a large and hierarchical 'extended family' post-1964.<sup>8</sup> This part again highlights the respect felt for Dorothy Crawford, and the importance of writers, while identifying a degree of internal dissent as the company's rapid progress stalled in the 1970s. Of particular interest are several observations concerning Hector's management style and alleged creative interference after his sister became inactive due to ill health.

Part Three concludes by focusing on three distinct Crawfords' groups: actors, creative, and production personnel. Through an analysis of their experiences, it is possible to assess the extent to which Crawfords enhanced individual careers and the industry in general.

### **1.2.3. Methodology**

Rather than include a formal literature review, my approach has been to engage with a wide range of relevant material including my own primary research and oral history interviews, alongside other primary, and extensive secondary sources. Much of this dissertation has been informed by primary material: official documentation from the Crawfords' company collection (Australian Film Institute Library), Federal Government and Cabinet reports and records (National Archives of Australia), private collections, and many third party oral history interviews from National Film and Sound archives (NFSA) and National Library of Australia (NLA).

A series of filmed interviews from the NFSA Crawford's Oral History Project were inspiring and led me to identify other individuals to interview. Comprising nearly 80 members of Crawfords' alumni involved in many different facets of Crawfords' operations, my interviews are integral to this dissertation. They provide a unique, insider view of the Crawford family and hierarchy, describe how so many benefited from the employment, training and career opportunities Crawfords generated, and corroborate many aspects of my research questions.

Although little scholarly written material about Crawfords exists, several important studies and commentaries have informed this dissertation. Key observations are summarised here:

Albert Moran's seminal work *Images & Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia* (1985), discusses Crawfords' dominance in the decade following late 1964.<sup>9</sup> His observations concerning the influence of Australian visual imagery, notion of locale, differences in characterisation and crime narrative techniques between *Homicide*, *Division Four* and *Matlock Police* up to and including *Cop Shop*, are recommended reading.<sup>10</sup>

Alan McKee's 2001 analysis of *Homicide* notes the program's 'quiet' debut with respect to media commentary: "The launch of *Homicide* then was not an immediate bombshell in the Australian press. It did not overnight push Australian drama to the centre of the mediasphere; it crept in gradually".<sup>11</sup> To "show familiar spaces on television – the same physical locations in which audiences might walk", formed a strong part of *Homicide's* appeal, McKee contends.<sup>12</sup>

Equally effective was the feeling of familiarity *Homicide* engendered through aural descriptions of locations and addresses while detectives worked through the process of crime, investigation and resolution.<sup>13</sup> McKee suggests that in the main, Australian audiences readily accepted hearing the 'true' Australian accent, albeit in many different guises: "A hierarchy is established [e.g. narrator, police officer, witnesses, suburban housewife, criminals] in which the broader the Australian accent, the less trustworthy the character".<sup>14</sup> McKee's concluding comments about *Homicide* are important:

*Homicide* made it possible for Australian drama – with Australian accents, local settings and production values that did not quite match up to the imported fare – to survive on Australian television.[...] Its legacy contributes to Australia's worries about imported programming, and to pride in any 'local' product that succeeds against it. It is part of a narrative of a move away from cultural cringe to a recognition that Australian accents might fairly be heard in Australian drama.<sup>15</sup>

*The Sullivans*, possibly Crawfords' most successful serial, is described by McKee as another link to celebrating national identity and unity by revisiting the past.<sup>16</sup> Not only did *The Sullivans*, as a period piece, exemplify Crawfords' painstaking research and insistence on authenticity, it resonated with viewers who remembered family life in war-time Melbourne while also achieving high ratings nationally and internationally.<sup>17</sup> McKee notes that "this turn to history fits well with other trends in Australian culture during this time" and suggests that *The Sullivans* represented a dichotomy between popular television soap operas such as *Number 96* (produced by Cash-Harmon), *The Box* and the drift towards the mini-series format.<sup>18</sup>

Another valuable contribution to Crawfords' history is Rozzi Bazzani's article "TV Cops Take the Running" in which she adds a further dimension to the public acceptance of Crawfords' crime programs.<sup>19</sup> Crawfords' cop shows, she argues, in



conjunction with the company's in-house training and wealth of creative talent, went some way toward resurrecting Australia's almost non-existent film-industry.<sup>20</sup>

Crawford's cop shows dived into the cinematic void and took the running with episodic crime-series television that began with *Homicide*, then *Hunter*, *Division 4*, and *Matlock Police*, showing Australian surroundings, sounds and stories to a hungry audience. They filled the vacuum created by the failure of Australian feature production, which, through no fault of its own, could neither sustain nor properly develop audiences. Australian cinema had never consistently experienced the large degree of devoted public acceptance afforded to Crawford's crime series.<sup>21</sup>

Bazzani contends that for many Australians, the last Australian feature film that had been screened was a distant memory. Accordingly, "seeing themselves for the first time dramatized in car chases in a crime series on TV was mesmerising".<sup>22</sup> The audience response to Crawfords' early crime dramas was therefore symptomatic of a thirst for recognition of, in the words of Hector Crawford, "a specifically Australian consciousness and sense of national identity".<sup>23</sup> Just as many have referred to Hector Crawford as the 'father of Australian television', Bazzani suggests Hector was, perhaps controversially, "the most influential figure in the Australian film and TV industry's last fifty years".<sup>24</sup>

Tom O'Regan's essay "Film and its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film and Television Interface" considers the impact of the third commercial TV licence; in particular, *Homicide's* role as part of a movement away from television drama's connection to live theatrical productions and plays "towards cinema and film production values."<sup>25</sup> As I discuss in Chapter Eight, O'Regan supports Hector Crawford's assertion to *The Vincent Inquiry* that the only way Australian creative and production personnel could acquire experience was by training within the realms of less costly media, limited budgets and minimal rehearsal.<sup>26</sup> While this was viewed by many in the industry as "high quality mediocrity", O'Regan contends the employment generated and the training ground established provided a solid foundation for the future.<sup>27</sup>

For those seeking a detailed account of Crawfords' crime series, Don Storey's authoritative database and website *Classic Australian Television* provides a wealth of detail for most episodes, along with a chronological narrative for each series.<sup>28</sup> Finally, the Crawford alumni website *Crawford Productions TV*, designed and

maintained by Crawfords' sound editor Garry Hardman, clearly demonstrates the perpetual collegiate nature of Crawfords' extended family.<sup>29</sup>

### 1.3. Chapter Overview

Having described my research questions and approach, I shall now provide an overview of key observations made throughout the dissertation. Chapter Two begins by noting that comments such as the "profound influence" of Crawfords as an independent radio producer should be observed cautiously given the extensive competition Crawfords faced.<sup>30</sup> Drawing upon the work of Combe and Griffin-Foley, a brief overview of Australian radio's development contextualises the environment Crawfords encountered from 1945, in particular, the wartime ban on American radio programs, which allowed local industry to flourish.<sup>31</sup>

Chapter Three traces the formative years of Hector and Dorothy Crawford: Hector gained prominence as an orchestra leader around Melbourne, and for *Music For the People* in Melbourne's Botanic Gardens; Dorothy concentrated on singing, repertory theatre, acting and announcing for ABC radio.<sup>32</sup> Joining forces in the early 1940s to resurrect the ailing Broadcast Exchange into a profitable production house, Hector and Dorothy then formed Hector Crawford Productions in competition with the ABC and many experienced independent producers.<sup>33</sup>

Chapter Four describes how Crawfords' first production, *The Melba Story*, was an instant success as an amalgam of quality music and drama.<sup>34</sup> *Melba*, the story of a famous Australian played by Australians, also introduced Glenda Raymond as a promising new talent.<sup>35</sup> This chapter introduces the genesis of Hector's quest to develop an 'Australian consciousness' through musical drama programs such as *Music for the People*, *Opera for the People* and *Mobil Quest* – programs that provided significant opportunities for both unknown and proven artists such as (Dame) Joan Sutherland. The development of Dorothy Crawford as a respected radio producer is introduced within this chapter.

Chapter Five discusses the relationship between actors and radio transcription companies, and the processes associated with post-war radio drama production.<sup>36</sup> A shortage of actors was compounded by the belief that the traditional Australian accent inhibited the sale of programs to the UK and USA and restricted opportunities

for Australians to work overseas.<sup>37</sup> A major focus concerns how Crawfords addressed these issues by establishing The Crawford School of Broadcasting in 1952.<sup>38</sup>

Dorothy Crawford's value to the business is the focus of Chapter Six. Through peer testimony and numerous contemporary reports, a picture of Dorothy's work ethic, meticulous attention to scripts and radio timing, production techniques, no-nonsense yet fair demeanour, management of artists, and the respect she gained within the industry becomes apparent. Concluding the radio era, Hector's entrepreneurial prowess comes to the fore in the story of *D.24*, Crawfords' most successful radio series, conceived following an approach to Victoria Police command. This police drama construct became a foundation for Crawfords' television crime productions.<sup>39</sup>

Part Two moves into the television era, with Chapter Seven noting that despite the misgivings of Government advisors, the first commercial licences in 1955 were awarded to powerful media interests.<sup>40</sup> Immediately recognising the nexus between protecting profit and local content production, I show that Hector Crawford correctly predicted the dominance of American programs at the expense of a local industry.<sup>41</sup> Crawfords experienced limited success during early years of television, (see 1.2.2) despite extensive preparation through the Crawford Television Workshop.<sup>42</sup>

Chapter Eight explores Hector's ongoing concerns about American program importation, the attitude of the Government and television proprietors, and his attempts to force change by creating public awareness on these issues. This chapter focuses on the Senate's 1963 *Vincent Inquiry* to scrutinise local content drama, the establishment of which was influenced by Hector's activism.<sup>43</sup> Hector's insistence that lack of opportunity and training hindered locally produced drama resonated among stakeholders.<sup>44</sup> As O'Regan contends, Hector's belief that the untapped available supply of creative personnel could work and learn within the new and less costly media of videotape technology, combined with film, was proved through Crawfords' early achievements.<sup>45</sup>

The truth behind Crawfords' seemingly strong but doomed bid for Melbourne's third commercial television licence is definitively revealed in Chapter Nine.<sup>46</sup> Informed by Australian Broadcasting Control Board (ABCB) hearing transcripts, Hansard

transcripts, Cabinet memos and recently declassified Cabinet Secretary minutes, this chapter explores and explains why the ABCB recommended that Ansett Transport Industries be awarded the licence. I outline why Crawfords' consortium was never in contention, and for the first time, reveal the dilemma Cabinet faced in approving a recommendation it clearly opposed.<sup>47</sup> Despite Crawfords' disappointment, however, it is noted how rapidly evolving changes within the industry favoured local drama production, thus rendering Crawfords' licence application unnecessary.<sup>48</sup>

As a 'breakthrough' program, I consider *Homicide* in Chapter Ten as a symbol of Crawfords' ensuing decade of success and a significant development that would benefit the whole industry and help generate an 'Australian consciousness'. Drawing from the perspectives of Crawfords' pioneers, this chapter outlines the sacrifices made to create *Homicide* and its unexpected success. Despite financial constraints and the show's flaws, the early *Homicides* are considered landmark achievements, made possible by dedicated crew commitment.<sup>49</sup> As expressed in *The Vincent Inquiry*, *Homicide* exemplifies Hector's belief that low-budget 'trial and error' techniques and less costly videotape technology would eventually benefit dramatic creativity.<sup>50</sup>

To provide context, Chapter Eleven identifies five distinct phases of Crawfords' television program chronology. Phase one, between 1956 and 1963, is discussed throughout Part Two above. Phase Two considers Crawfords' 'golden years' between 1964 to 1975 when the success of *Homicide* (HSV7) led to the Nine and 0/10 Networks seeking similar crime, police, espionage or private-eye genre programs to compete with *Homicide*. Along with quality talent quest *Showcase* and soap serial *The Box*, Hector's vision of an 'Australian Consciousness' progressed rapidly.

The third phase, between early 1975 into 1976, outlines the tenuous economic times and uncertain industry environment Crawfords faced as three major police shows, with *Showcase*, were cancelled over eight months. Left with two programs on air, it is noted how Crawfords restructured as several hundred staff were retrenched. Relying significantly on freelance staff, Chapter Eleven reveals how Crawfords rebounded with *The Sullivans* and, into the 1980s, several popular programs such as

*Cop Shop*, *Skyways* and *Carson's Law*. Finally, the fifth phase briefly describes Crawfords' mini-series and TV feature-film era from 1983-1987, made possible by generous tax concessions.

In Chapter Twelve, oral history accounts reflect on Crawfords' perceived hierarchical, extended family environment. The common theme of shared goals and values meant that to leave the 'family' was regarded as act of betrayal.<sup>51</sup> Although greatly admired and respected as a salesman and entrepreneur, this chapter details Hector's personal and financial inability to move from his comfort zone as changing viewer trends emerged in the 1970s.<sup>52</sup> Alternately, it is argued that Hector was understandably cautious following the financial hardship he experienced developing *Homicide*, and his reluctance to finance new concepts without network funding.<sup>53</sup> Dorothy Crawford, the overseer of creativity and a constant source of inspiration, is shown to be remembered with great admiration by television industry respondents, as she was in radio.<sup>54</sup>

Chapter Twelve describes the importance of writers to Crawfords, and how Hector fawned upon them.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, he required that writers adhere to a prescribed style, and this rigidity became frustrating for many creative staff who worked closely on Crawfords' crime shows.<sup>56</sup> Consequently, key personnel gradually departed from the early to mid-1970s to pursue their creative aspirations.<sup>57</sup> Several revelations concern Hector's intransigent 'my way or nothing' approach, his unwanted creative interference after Dorothy retired, and perceived ineffective management style.<sup>58</sup>

Chapter Thirteen concludes the dissertation with the oral histories and memoirs of actors, creative and production personnel. Although the experiences of bit-part and guest actors, lead actors, writers and technical personnel vary, the premise that Crawfords greatly enhanced employment, training opportunities and career progression – while holistically benefiting the industry – is corroborated. While recognising the contribution of the ABC, many note how difficult it was for the young and inexperienced to penetrate, until they left Crawfords. Most believe that without Crawfords' willingness to support initiative and merit via extensive hands-on training, many would not have developed a sustainable career within the industry.

It is my contention that the testimony within Chapter Thirteen characterises everything Crawfords sought to represent: the production of Australian dramatic and musical programs by Australians, featuring Australians, for Australians. Even those who do not especially attribute their own career outcomes to Crawfords readily acknowledge the role it played in promoting an 'Australian consciousness', training production staff, and providing a constant source of experience and employment.

Of the many accolades honoring Hector Crawford, Bud Tingwell's portrayal of Crawford "as a leader in entertainment in television" is, I would argue, the most fitting.<sup>59</sup> He was indeed the leader of a successful independent television production company, and the leader of many talented people who realised his vision and dreams. It was these people who trained and provided the Australian television and film industry with so many skilled personnel.

To reiterate, this dissertation steadfastly acknowledges how important Hector's early activism was to the development of indigenous television drama, but focuses on the premise that Hector could not have achieved all that he did in isolation, and seeks to recognise the collective contribution of the people he led. Based upon this research, it is possible to answer the question 'What would we have done without Crawfords?' My views are offered in the concluding Chapter Fourteen.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Brian Courtis, "Trailblazer of Oz TV", *The Advertiser*, Adelaide, 12 March 1991, p. 13.
- <sup>2</sup> Carmel Egan, "The battle to save our accent", *The Australian*, Canberra, 13 March 1991, p. 5.
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## **PART 1: RIDING THE RADIO WAVES**

### **Chapter 2: The Early Days of Radio in Australia**

#### **2.1. Introduction to the Crawford Radio Legacy**

In his book *On With the Show*, John Cain suggests that Crawfords, within a few years, dominated radio drama: “It was an organisation that had a more profound influence on Australian radio [and television] than almost any other, for over 40 years”.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, *Crawfords Australia* in 2014 continues to boast that “Hector Crawford Productions developed rapidly to become the Australian radio production industry leader” in the 1940s and 50s.<sup>2</sup>

Crawfords' contribution to the radio industry was certainly prolific, as most commentators acknowledge. But given the abundant competition Crawfords faced during this period, statements such as these require some degree of objectivity. In assessing the veracity of such claims, Part One will attempt to ascertain what, if anything, gave Crawfords the edge over its competitors during this period. The Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) produced drama series, serials, musicals, talent quests and quiz shows, as did many other independent production houses, especially Sydney's Macquarie Broadcasting Service. Why then was Crawfords thought to produce superior drama, talent quests and musicals?

Based on contemporary secondary material and primary oral history accounts from actors and other staff employed by Crawfords, Part One will outline several important facets of Crawfords' program production — script development and studio operations — both of which Dorothy Crawford managed so competently, along with Hector Crawford's musical output. The actors and singers who occupied Crawfords' studios and stages will be discussed as will *The Crawford School of Broadcasting* that was established in response to a shortage of actors and to 'refine' Australian accents to facilitate international sales.<sup>3</sup>

Through lavish musical productions such as *The Melba Story*, *Music For the People*, *Opera For the People*, and *Mobil Quest*, Hector Crawford made opera and classical music accessible to all, provided opportunities for artists, and in the process, discovered singers who would become well known in their genre. Any discussion

about Crawfords cannot be absolute without considering the impact of his musical prowess and initiatives and the 'Crawford Creations' that resulted.

As an entrepreneur and businessman, Hector Crawford was extraordinarily successful in attracting influential business partners, Melbourne radio station 3DB in particular. Given that advertising and sponsorship was vital in selling a new program to a radio station or network, Hector's powers of persuasion in this area are pivotal when considering the company's successes, overseas sales and general influence within the industry.

To contextualise the environment that Hector and Dorothy Crawford encountered when forming Hector Crawford Productions in 1945, this chapter will briefly outline the evolution of radio drama serialisation from the late-1930s and how it became a fundamental part of pre-and post-war society. As Hector and Dorothy Crawford, individually and collectively, developed their talents in business, music and theatre, the world of radio entertainment evolved around them. Radio, as a form of popular culture, provided emotional relief from the ravages of economic depression by uniting communities and families, and generated a sense of purpose.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, in the years leading up to the war, many significant changes occurred within the radio serial industry, changes that would ultimately create extremely favourable production circumstances by the time Crawfords began producing *The Melba Story* in early 1946.

## **2.2. Radio's Formative Years.**

My childhood memories include the recollections of my grandparents and parents about the 'good old days' when the whole family would gather around the radiogram or 'Bakelite Box' to listen to programs such as *Dad and Dave*, *Martins Corner*, *The Right to Happiness*, *The Burtons of Banner Street*, *Courtship and Marriage* or the legendary *Blue Hills*. Future Crawfords' writer John Ormiston Reid scripted John Hickling's *The March of Time* on 3DB, a half-hour dramatisation of the week's news.<sup>5</sup> During and after the war, personalities such as George Wallace, Monty Blandford, Harry Dearth, Roy Rene (Comedy), Jack Davey (variety) and Bob Dyer (quiz shows) dominated popular broadcasting until the advent of television.<sup>6</sup> A small boy in the early 1960's could not easily relate to the family ritual of evenings

around the radiogram. Nor could I imagine the world without television as I gazed in wonderment at my grandparents' radiograms gathering dust in the corner, irrelevant and unused.

Radio in Australia began in November 1923 through Sydney station 2BS, and during its infancy, was a localised business with limited broadcasting hours devoted largely to recorded and live music, news, talk shows, sport and educational services.<sup>7</sup> By the late 1920s, although commercial radio stations held metropolitan licences linked to regional stations, remaining competitive and solvent was a major concern.<sup>8</sup> Alternatives were sought that led to the American method of using long-distance telephone lines to create national networks. This encouraged advertisers to sponsor costly productions, as it provided a plausible method of reaching the right audiences.<sup>9</sup> Several entrepreneurs – such as the Herald and Weekly Times (in Melbourne) with 3DB/3LK – began building groups of stations acknowledging that national advertising and sponsorship links between radio programs and newspapers would ultimately generate the income required to establish national radio networks, an otherwise expensive and technically difficult procedure.<sup>10</sup>

The ability to relay programs depended on the provision – by the Postmaster General's Department (PMG) – of inferior telephone land-lines, but this method was largely inadequate to maintain stations' interests and attract national advertisers.<sup>11</sup> Commercial operators also believed that the PMG limited land line access to prevent stations, operating as a cohort, from becoming competent enough to compete with the ABC national broadcaster.<sup>12</sup>

The issue of serial drama broadcasting, networking and sponsorship became prominent in 1931 when commercial radio stations were staved of recorded music – the foundation of their business – due to an ongoing copyright dispute with music publishing companies.<sup>13</sup> In need of alternate quality programs, broadcasters observed the American experience that the highest-rated productions were predominantly dramatic serials, well supported by sponsors and, significantly, distributed via network feeds either live or as recorded transcriptions on acetate discs.<sup>14</sup>

By 1933, several networking collaborations had been tried: one by AWA; another by 2UW, the forerunner of what was to be known as the *Major Network*. This network

comprised stations in each capital city, three of which were owned by the *Herald and Weekly Times*, and included Melbourne's 3DB.<sup>15</sup> Recognising that radio was now a viable medium for advertising and that broadcasting serials would attract large audiences, broadcasters sought serial transcriptions from America to meet the demand.<sup>16</sup> Concurrently, the art of recording direct to disc was perfected in Australia and as independent production houses increased, serials were recorded and sold to stakeholders in competition with American imports.<sup>17</sup>

Combe notes that by 1938 four commercial networks existed: "AWA, the Commonwealth Broadcasting Network (CBN), the Major Network and the Macquarie Broadcasting Network (MBN)", although the former two organisations did not offer national networks.<sup>18</sup> Despite the existence of sufficient independent producers, Macquarie, led by American producer and business-woman Grace Gibson, had a clear edge and opted to broadcast self-produced serials and American imports.<sup>19</sup> Having established an efficient production unit and distribution system, Macquarie was able to sell their productions locally and internationally.<sup>20</sup> The first such company to sell Australian-made shows overseas, Gibson acknowledged many years later that "we couldn't have survived if we hadn't had those overseas sales".<sup>21</sup> Combe describes the Macquarie operation in this way:

Before the outbreak of the war in 1939 Macquarie had developed an organisation which was unique in Australia, and probably the world, in that MBS was a holding company for a group of companies which was vertically integrated so that the activities of each – research and development, disc manufacture, broadcasting, program production and distribution and advertising services – were all required to be independently profitable, yet subordinate to the interests of MBS.<sup>22</sup>

By early 1939 there were 12 production houses working to supply commercial stations with serial transcriptions.<sup>23</sup> Thus the development of radio serials during the 1930s presented the added bonus of providing rare employment opportunities for both established theatre and many fledgling actors seeking work in the radio serial industry. In turn, a proliferation of talent quests such as *Swallows' Parade*, *Showboat of the Air* (both 3KZ), *Australia's Amateur Hour* (3DB) and *Are You an Artist* (3UZ) offered another form of popular entertainment and reward.<sup>24</sup>

Even though the indigenous production of serials grew rapidly, their quality was poor, and a 'cultural cringe' prevailed while inexpensive American imports were, in many cases, regarded as superior products.<sup>25</sup> The net effect was that employment for local musicians, actors, writers and producers was hampered, as was the development of a broader export market; issues that, paradoxically, Hector Crawford fought against when television commenced.<sup>26</sup> Fortuitously for Hector and indeed the industry as a whole, the commencement of World War Two resulted in the Federal Government temporarily banning imports classed as non-essential from all countries not in the Commonwealth.<sup>27</sup> This action terminated the purchase of radio transcription discs from the United States, a move that would prove extremely favourable for the development of Australian writers, actors and producers.

In just five months following the ban, the radio transcription industry in Australia began to thrive, which excited stakeholders. In May 1940 questions were put to Federal Parliament seeking a permanent ban "in order to give encouragement to their production [transcriptions] in Australia and the manufacture of records here".<sup>28</sup> In response, the responsible Minister Hon. Percy Spender, advised that:

The Government cannot give an assurance that the existing prohibition on such transcripts will be continued after the termination of hostilities. I may add that the peace-time policy of the present government is to accord protection through tariff after public inquiry and report by the Tariff Board.<sup>29</sup>

There were dissenters. Macquarie's Texan matriarch Grace Gibson lobbied for the ban to be lifted or relaxed, possibly because of her business links with the American transcription industry.<sup>30</sup> The Macquarie network responded to the ban's continuation by opening five new independent studios in 1941 in Phillip Street, Sydney.<sup>31</sup> Later, when the Federal government hinted in mid-1942 that the bans might be lifted, an industry group of lobbyists argued that the ban should remain because of the obvious industrial and cultural benefits.<sup>32</sup>

Dave Worrall, 3DB's manager, was more circumspect in his support for retaining the ban, noting that a wide range of people associated with radio productions were being called away to war service.<sup>33</sup> Arguing that the manpower shortage reduced the numbers of trained Australian personnel, who could not adequately serve the boom in the radio transcription industry, Worrall suggested that it would be prudent to

allow some international programs into the country.<sup>34</sup> However, the large contingent of male radio personnel called away on war service provided opportunities for female announcers, writers, actors and producers.<sup>35</sup> The ABC, for example, hired Dorothy Crawford and future radio actor Mary Ward – in addition to established actor Patricia Kennedy – as its first female news announcers.<sup>36</sup> Kennedy and Sydney actor Neva Carr-Glyn are considered to be among the finest radio and theatre dramatic actresses of their generation. Kennedy recalls how the importation ban helped the industry:

When the war came they could no longer import these things [transcriptions] and some of these radio producers acting as entrepreneurs decided that maybe the Australians could be given a go, and let's see what they can do was the attitude. Scripts were written and that's how Australian actors were first able to move into the radio medium, which was marvellous.<sup>37</sup>

### **2.3. Epilogue**

Throughout the radio era, Sydney and Melbourne were competitive centres of activity; the inter-city rivalry prevailed even in those days.<sup>38</sup> Griffen-Foley notes that Melbourne audiences in 1945 resented Sydney productions being “shoved down their throats”.<sup>39</sup> However, the establishment of radio networks and the easy distribution of transcription discs between cities gave radio drama serialisation far-reaching impact. As Walker recalls, most production houses “would negotiate a Sydney-Melbourne deal in the expectation that half to two-thirds of the costs would be amortised”.<sup>40</sup>

The Sydney – Melbourne comparison serves to illustrate the power of the Sydney-based Macquarie Broadcasting Network, its subsidiary American Radio Transcriptions (ARTRANS) and later, Grace Gibson Productions. Such a comparison assists in contextualising the effusive statements cited in the introduction to this chapter concerning Crawfords. Certainly Crawfords did have a ‘profound influence’ in the radio industry after the war and was indeed an “Australian radio production industry leader”, but there were others, as will be discussed later.

Diana Combe’s extensive research in her PhD thesis *The Radio Serial Industry in Australia* leaves no doubt that the Sydney-based Macquarie organisation exerted immense power and influence, and enjoyed considerable success over a longer



period of time compared to Crawfords. Therefore sweeping statements about the greatness of Crawfords should be viewed with caution when one considers the concurrent output of MBS and numerous other independent commercial producers – particularly in Melbourne. Yet, as will be demonstrated, one can only admire the achievements of Crawfords given the relative size and resources of each concern.

Conversely, it should be noted that a major part of the Crawford success story, as will be demonstrated, can be linked to the close relationship it enjoyed with 3DB and the *Herald and Weekly Times*, the extent of which was never really acknowledged, particularly during the television era.<sup>41</sup> On this basis, it could be said that, like MBS, Crawfords influence and access to production facilities, marketing resources, sponsorship opportunities and financial support came, in part, from its in partnership with a powerful corporation. Perhaps the main differences between the two can be found in Crawfords' dynastic family structure, innovative ways of dramatising music and the strong desire to give Australian artists an opportunity for career pathways in productions that reflected Australian culture.<sup>42</sup>

## Endnotes

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<sup>5</sup> Richard Lane, op. cit., p. 144.

<sup>6</sup> "Radio Drama was Big Deal," *Listener-In TV*, March 31 – April 6, 1973, p.12.

<sup>7</sup> Bridget Griffen-Foley, *Changing Stations: The Story of Australian Commercial Radio*, University of NSW Press, 2009, pp. 6, 211.

The first radio broadcast in Australia featured Sydney's St Andrews Choir and various soloists. The British Broadcasting Commission [BBC] was established in 1922. (National Film and Sound Archives, Canberra, *Early Radio Broadcasting*: <http://dl.nfsa.gov.au/module/180/>, accessed 6 May 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 7.

Sir Keith Murdoch owned the *Herald and Weekly Times* and ultimately radio 3DB from 1929. As broadcasters attracted major sponsors when the serial industry eventually flourished, newspaper proprietors regarded radio advertising as interfering with their core business. Hence the *Herald and Weekly Times'* association with 3DB. (Combe, p. 10.)

<sup>11</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., pp. 6, 7, 8, 9.

<sup>12</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 9;

Bridget Griffen-Foley, op. cit., pp. 7, 9, 14, 15.

The Australian Broadcasting Commission was formally established in 1932.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_Broadcasting\\_Corporation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Broadcasting_Corporation), accessed 9 December 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>19</sup> "Background Story of Sydney Woman Producer", *The Listener In*, Melbourne, 20-26 January 1951, p. 16.

<sup>20</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>21</sup> "Amazing Grace", *The Mercury*, Hobart, 25 November 1987, p. 20.

<sup>22</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> R. R. Walker, *The Magic Spark: the Story of the First Fifty Years of Radio in Australia*, The Hawthorne Press, Melbourne, 1973, p. 51.

<sup>24</sup> "Shows That Never Grow Old", *The Listener-In*, 19-25 May 1955, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 14.

Combe asserts that most locally produced serials "were poor fare for audiences [...] because they were designed to appeal to the "lowest common denominator" of the audience" to maximise numbers of listeners for the benefit of sponsors (Combe p. 14).

For a definition of the term 'cultural cringe', see Chapter 4, end-note 56.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>27</sup> Bridget Griffen-Foley, op. cit., p. 215.

<sup>28</sup> Hansard, Commonwealth of Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, Session 1940, Second Session of the Fifteenth Parliament, Vol. 163, 17 April – 31 May 1940, Senate & House of Representatives, Canberra pp. 1512-1513. (Percy Spender – Treasurer).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Bridget Griffen-Foley, op. cit., p. 215.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216.

<sup>32</sup> The lobbyists consisted of actors, producers, writers, Actors' Equity representatives and the radio transcription companies.

*Ibid.*, p. 215.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 220.

<sup>34</sup> Worrall was a frequent visitor to the USA (from 1936) as a buyer of drama transcriptions for the Australian market.

"Shows That Never Grow Old", *The Listener-In*, 19-25 May 1955, p. 7.

<sup>35</sup> Bridget Griffen-Foley, op. cit., p. 221.

<sup>36</sup> Patricia Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Hawthorn, Victoria, 27 November 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> R. R. Walker, op. cit., p. 53.

<sup>39</sup> Bridget Griffen-Foley, op. cit., p. 222.

<sup>40</sup> R. R. Walker, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>41</sup> Bill McLaughlin, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>42</sup> Throughout the radio era, Crawfords was indeed a family dynasty comprising of Hector and Dorothy Crawford, her second husband Roland Strong, Hector's wife Glenda Raymond and later Dorothy's son Ian Crawford. During the television era, Hector's second cousin Henry Crawford was an influential executive member of the team.

Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit.

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Photo of Crawfords' Collins Street headquarters 1956-1971, The Olderfleet Building, taken by Peter Zerbe. To view this and other similar photos, please visit:

<http://crawfordproductions.tv/crew-gallerya.html>

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Autographed front cover of a theatre program for the play *Collusion* by the *Dorothy Crawford Players*, August 1937, from the Wynne Pullman private collection

## Chapter 3: Crawfords' Formative Years

### 3.1. Introduction

When the *Listen-In* entertainment journal announced that Hector Crawford was to form his own production unit, there was little fanfare; brother and sister team Hector and Dorothy Crawford were already quite well known in drama and music circles around Melbourne.<sup>1</sup> As ubiquitous as the name Crawford would become in the world of television, this process was already well underway by November 1945.

Hector, who along with Harold Elvins began *Music For the People* in 1938, had been heard on live radio during the 1930s and in numerous open air and suburban town hall choral concerts as a choir leader.<sup>2</sup> “At one time, while still a student, I had five choirs and the Melbourne Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra under my baton”, he recalled.<sup>3</sup> Progressing to Musical Director and General Manager of radio transcription clearing house Broadcast Exchange, Crawford had also come to prominence as a businessman through his efforts to resurrect this ailing company.

Dorothy, on the other hand, had developed a solid reputation in choral circles as a contralto soloist, an actress and playwright leading *The Dorothy Crawford Players*, and during the war as the ABC's first female news announcer.<sup>4</sup> In February 1945, Hector Crawford and his new symphony orchestra presented *Into The Spotlight*. Produced by Dorothy Crawford at Broadcast Exchange and sold to 3DB, *Into The Spotlight* featured Glenda Raymond and a host of leading vocalists and instrumentalists. A forerunner to *The Melba Story* twelve months later, *Into The Spotlight* presented a wide range of classical compositions translated into the idiom of modern music.<sup>5</sup>

Noting that “the services of both Hector and Dorothy Crawford will be available on a free-lance basis to advertising agencies and broadcasting stations”, the *Listener-In* gave no clue as to the real reason Hector and Dorothy had embarked on this new venture.<sup>6</sup> As it happened, *The Melba Story*, an imaginative amalgam of music and drama first broadcast in February 1946, gave notice to other production houses, listeners and radio stations that Hector Crawford Productions (as the company was initially known) represented quality, innovation and a new direction for radio

presentations. *The Melba Story* had an immediate impact and one cannot help notice the parallels in relation to the even stronger impact *Homicide* generated among television audiences eighteen years later.

In the previous chapter, it was noted how Hector and Dorothy collectively gathered experience in music, theatre and business management. This chapter explores the creative and business pathways they travelled, and the first of many business risks taken by Hector to leave Broadcast Exchange. This decision is then contextualised by outlining the challenges faced by the Crawfords in the form of strong independent competition in Melbourne at that time.

### **3.2. Early Training**

The convergence of Hector and Dorothy Crawford as a creative force and their immediate success was perhaps inevitable given the similar pathways they chose from the mid-1920s into the war years. Hector, who was chosen as a nine-year-old to sing and train with Melbourne's St. Paul's Cathedral Choir, received his formative musical education under the instruction of Dr Alfred Floyd. Considerable commitment was required, as was a love of music, so after five years with the choir, fourteen-year old Hector took these qualities with him as a foundation for what life had in store.<sup>7</sup>

By 1930, sixteen-year-old Hector, like his sister before him, had graduated from the Melbourne (Melba) Conservatorium where he had studied conducting and the French Horn. Fortunate to secure a clerical position with the State Electricity Commission (SEC), Hector then spent most of his spare time in the 1930s conducting amateur choirs and orchestras around Melbourne while helping elder sister Dorothy with the business side of her local drama productions.<sup>8</sup>

Ian Crawford recalls that at sixteen, in 1927, "Dorothy was the youngest person in Australia ever to hold the Teacher's Diploma of the London College of Music".<sup>9</sup> Having won a scholarship, she completed her course at the Albert Street (Melba) Conservatorium in East Melbourne where she studied singing, pianoforte, drama and elocution.<sup>10</sup> Dorothy became well known around Melbourne for her light voice that was described as "half-way between a contralto and a mezzo-soprano".<sup>11</sup> Employed

as a paid soloist by Melbourne's Australian (Independent) Church in Russell Street, her singing career flourished in choral circles.<sup>12</sup> But her love for drama, for words and for teaching dramatic art and elocution remained strong; she felt that a preference had to be identified.<sup>13</sup> As former colleague Sonia Borg noted fondly in the obituary she wrote for Dorothy in 1988:

Finally the choice had to be made between music and the spoken word. The latter won. And the lives of many of us are richer as a result of that momentous decision.<sup>14</sup>

Having already formed *The Dorothy Crawford Players* during her early years with the Australian Church, Dorothy produced and acted in halls around Melbourne. Her future husband, Roland Strong – who would become a Crawfords' Director – contributed as an actor and secretary of the company while Hector, despite his predilection for musical activities, was manager and occasional actor.<sup>15</sup> From 1936, after her decision to concentrate on the theatre, *The Dorothy Crawford Players* were popular around Melbourne until the war intervened. Of its many notable performances, the three act British play *Collusion* – considered a benchmark work by the London *Morning Post* – was premiered in Australia at Melbourne's King's Theatre on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1937; all proceeds were donated to women and children in the war zones of the Spanish Civil War.<sup>16</sup>

In 1938 Dorothy and Roland entered an amateur dramatic competition conducted by radio 3UZ.<sup>17</sup> Finishing fourth, the pair became friends with 3UZ producer Walter (Wally) Pym. It was through this association that Dorothy's career as a radio actress, announcer and producer began, albeit in extraordinary circumstances.<sup>18</sup> Visiting 3UZ to wait for Roland, who had become an announcer involved in nightly sketches performed live at the station, Dorothy was called on, at five minute's notice, to play several widely differing parts in the show she had gone to watch – all because the leading lady did not arrive.<sup>19</sup> Having never been on the air before, she eagerly grasped this unexpected opportunity. The result was an impressive impromptu performance and a preview of what Dorothy Crawford would expect and demand of the actors she would direct in later years. An immediate contract was offered and the beginning of a successful and enterprising career commenced.<sup>20</sup>

Leading up to the war Dorothy remained with 3UZ as a regular cast member while continuing with *The Dorothy Crawford Players* when possible. As mentioned earlier, Dorothy, along with Mary Ward and Patricia Kennedy, became the first female news readers on ABC Radio 3LO and 3AR. Ward does not recall any particular opposition to this unusual departure by the ABC: "We were releasing the men who went to the services; that was the idea".<sup>21</sup> Ward describes the nature of their work as announcers during the early war years:

Up early morning; market reports, news, crossings to London. In those days, if you remember, it was the PMG who ran the booths and they were marvellous. They helped us cross to London for the news and so it was all pretty dramatic stuff. [...] We were not allowed to ad-lib because of censorship. [...] Everything was scripted and there was always a supervisor on duty listening in case we slipped up!<sup>22</sup>

In late 1940 the ABC appointed Dorothy as Director of Talks, a position in which she expanded her skills in script editing, production and managing people.<sup>23</sup> In the meantime, Hector's continuing prominence as *Music For the People* orchestra leader, and the contacts he had acquired in the business world, had led him in a direction that would have life-changing ramifications for them both.<sup>24</sup>

### **3.3. Resurrecting Broadcast Exchange**

Legionnaire Sound Productions in King Street, Melbourne, was established in 1937 as radio transcription production houses began to prosper. Legionnaire claimed to be the first such company to have perfected the process of hardening a direct playback cellulose-acetate disc to allow multiple playbacks, which in turn allowed multiple pressings, a ground-breaking achievement for radio networks and sponsors.<sup>25</sup> Encountering financial difficulties, Legionnaire (along with subsidiary companies Televox and Featuradio) was taken over in 1941 by Broadcast Exchange of Australia (BEA) operating out of Market Street in Melbourne.<sup>26</sup> Chaired by the proprietor of Allans & Co (retail giant Allans Music House) George Sutherland, Broadcast Exchange was a recording and radio production company in its own right, although its principal function was that of a recording and selling clearinghouse for the trade in general.<sup>27</sup>

Around the time Dorothy began at the ABC, Hector, having become established on the music circuit and as a staffer at the Melba Conservatorium, was approached by



Sutherland to join Broadcast Exchange as its Musical Director in late 1940.<sup>28</sup> Excited by the potential of this opportunity, 28 year-old Hector accepted immediately and competently provided musical services for the many different producers who recorded at Broadcast Exchange. In the financial sense, however, Broadcast Exchange was struggling to such an extent that Sutherland later asked Hector to take over as Managing Director and close down the company.<sup>29</sup>

Hector accepted, but did not want to see the company fall; it was a challenge that he could not ignore given the popularity of radio, particularly in Victoria where radio sets and licences had been purchased in numbers considerably greater than any other state. People tuned into Melbourne's five commercial and two national stations in large numbers, as John Cain notes:<sup>30</sup>

People related more closely to radio; it was intimate, it entered the privacy of the home, and it provided something for the whole family. Perhaps most importantly, in those tough years just after the worst of the Depression, it was relatively cheap.<sup>31</sup>

Through an understanding of the market, Hector did the complete opposite to what he was hired for. Just as he would later with his own company, Hector began to network with producers and managers of the many radio stations in Melbourne, collecting 'intelligence' and assessing their music and dramatic directions. Producing a number of radio musicals, Hector demonstrated his 'products' to his growing list of contacts and quickly made his first sale. Several musicals followed, as did his first drama serial for Broadcast Exchange.<sup>32</sup> Ian Crawford recalls that:

By hard work and foresight he'd set the company on a course which gradually turned its fortunes around. Soon it was recovering all the losses it had previously made. However, the company's successes allowed him less time in production, and in 1943 he got Dorothy to join him from the ABC as Manager of Production at BEA.<sup>33</sup>

As Hector continued to generate business opportunities, Dorothy assumed control of all serials and musicals, enabling him to concentrate on the business of running Broadcast Exchange. Several successful programs followed during the war years and as Dorothy and Mary Ward were reunited following their ABC duties, they developed relationships with many of the actors who would later be so supportive to Crawfords.

During 1944 and 1945 when Hector was busy stabilising Broadcast Exchange, two events transpired that would lead to the establishment of Crawfords along with the new company's inaugural 'Crawford Creations' Glenda Raymond with *The Melba Story*. Raymond, the future Mrs Hector Crawford and destined to be one of Australia's finest sopranos, recalls her introduction to the Crawford dynasty and the radio drama scene as twenty-one-year-old Glenda Ryan, shortly thereafter adopting the professional name of Glenda Raymond:<sup>34</sup>

Well, it all began for me in 1944, I guess. I recorded a special favourite song [*The Lass With the Delicate Air*] for my grandmother's birthday in at Broadcast Exchange and, unbeknown to me, my future husband was sitting upstairs in his office. He had a line down to the control room and happened to be listening in and heard a voice that he liked, and was interested in.<sup>35</sup>

Earning £3 7/6 at the time as a bank clerk, Raymond was called to her manager's office the next day to take a phone call from 'Mr Hector Crawford' who offered her a performance at his next *Music For the People* concert.<sup>36</sup> "He offered me the most wonderful thing: a contract to be a singer at £4 a week", she recalled.<sup>37</sup> Later, after *Melba* had been on air for seven months, Hector revealed that:

When I first discovered her, it took all my powers of persuasion to convince her of the really great asset she possessed in her voice.[...] It was decided that she should go to Pauline Bindley, herself an opera singer and trainer of some of our best singers.<sup>38</sup>

For a year leading up to *Melba*, Hector's protégée took singing lessons twice a week from Pauline Bindley of Sutton's Music in Melbourne, while gaining experience singing on radio.<sup>39</sup>

Toward the end of the war Broadcast Exchange began recording some of its programs in the Unitarian Church hall opposite St Patricks Cathedral in East Melbourne.<sup>40</sup> As this facility was also used by 3DB, Hector joined 3DB manager Dave Worrall in what was the beginning of a long business association. Worrall, who was particularly interested in Hector's plan to dramatize the life of Dame Nellie Melba, purchased the program for 3DB when the Broadcast Exchange Board of Directors, terrified at the cost and complexity of such a production, vetoed the project.<sup>41</sup> Glenda Raymond recalled the situation:

And so Hec said “well, I’m sorry but I’m not prepared. [...] there are other things I want to do such as this sort of project. If you’re not willing to do it then I will, regretfully, hand in my resignation and go ahead and do it somehow, on my own”. And so they parted company and Hec immediately went down to see Dave Worrell at 3DB about taking on the project. [...] Dave said “Wonderful! Yes! We will help you, we’ll give you all the assistance you need and we’ll do it together”.<sup>42</sup>

It was a brave move, but Hector’s success in rejuvenating Broadcast Exchange had made him confident that his judgement and ability to choose successful programmes were sound.<sup>43</sup> Gaining Dorothy’s support, the pair resigned from Broadcast Exchange to form *Hector Crawford Productions* and produced *The Melba Story* for 3DB.

### **3.4. Crawfords’ Major Rivals**

Leaving Broadcast Exchange was, according to Ian Crawford, the first of the many business gambles Hector took during his career.<sup>44</sup> Competition among the ABC, commercial stations and independent producers was fierce in Melbourne and Sydney in late 1945 with the ban on imported radio transcriptions having created a thriving industry. There was, however, a considerable degree of understanding within the industry, because of the on-going shortage of ‘really good’ lead actors who had mastered the concept of ‘flying’, i.e. being able to perform without rehearsal or a read-through.<sup>45</sup> (See Chapter 5.2.)

This shortage of actors, a problem constantly under review, resulted in the establishment of several training courses and acting schools by 1951, including The Crawford School of Broadcasting. Until then, production houses tended not to contract their lead actors so they could rush between studios to perform in other productions, as is discussed in Chapter Five. As a new independent producer, Hector had to offer something different to entice the best actors – which he required for *The Melba Story* – while attempting to outperform the productions of the ABC, Macquarie, AWA and several new independent transcription houses in Melbourne, such as Donovan Joyce Productions, Australian Radio Productions (Morris West) and John Hickling Productions.

### 3.4.1. Donovan Joyce Productions

Donovan Joyce Productions was formed in early 1945 and located in King Street, Melbourne.<sup>46</sup> Joyce came into radio drama production with an advertising and journalism background but had also been employed at various radio stations since 1932. Having worked his way up to radio management by 1935, he later became involved in amateur theatrical productions, primarily at Melbourne's famous Little Theatre (AKA St. Martins Theatre) where on occasion he would also stage manage.<sup>47</sup>

A small but prosperous company, Donovan Joyce Productions released thirty dramatic serials over nine years, many of which were written by Joyce.<sup>48</sup> Three of these were already on air by the time Crawfords was formed: *Departure Delayed*, *Passing Parade* and a thriller called *The Monster Maker*.<sup>49</sup> *Passing Parade*, which re-enacted authentic stories about the careers of outstanding men and women, was especially successful during its four-year run.<sup>50</sup> One of Joyce's most successful serials – *Madam Bovary* – teamed up 'imported' Sydney husband and wife stars Neva Carr-Glynn and John Tate with Melbourne's finest actors. Sponsored by Patersons Pty Ltd, *Madam Bovary* was released on 3KZ in 1949 as one-hour episodes.<sup>51</sup>

Employing an international writing technique, Joyce would "write to the star of the show, with the particular actor to play the lead selected after the story-line was established".<sup>52</sup> In the case of *Madam Bovary*, this method would have been applied to Neva Carr-Glynn; subsequent dialogue was written to elicit the best of her talents with the help of novelist Ru Pullen, who had written a number of Joyce's programs since 1945, including *Madam Bovary*. Pullen, who had worked with Joyce at 3AW during the war years, joined Donovan Joyce Productions on a full-time basis in 1949 as script editor, which allowed Joyce to resume writing scripts himself.<sup>53</sup> Known for his meticulous research, dynamic plots and competent direction, Joyce was so highly regarded by the Major Network and 3DB that he was contracted for an astonishing £75,000 on a speculative basis.<sup>54</sup>

Acting as an ambassador for the Australian radio transcription industry, Joyce spent several months in South Africa where he formed a fruitful relationship as an advisor to the South African authorities upon the establishment of *Springbok Radio* in May

1950. Arranging for the sale of some 15,000 program episodes representing practically all Australian production units, including his own, of particular interest is the inclusion of a number of Crawford's musical dramas that will be discussed later: *The Melba Story*, *Opera For the People* and *The Blue Danube*.<sup>55</sup>

In 1954 Donovan Joyce Productions was purchased by Morris West's Australian Radio Productions (ARP), although the two organisations continued to operate under their well-known brands.<sup>56</sup> Joyce ceased production in 1960 and despite being a brilliant writer, was unable to adapt to the television market.<sup>57</sup>

### **3.4.2. Morris West – Australian Radio Productions (ARP)**

Morris West, destined to become a popular Australian novelist, founded Australian Radio Productions (ARP) in a small studio above a chemist shop in Melbourne's Smith Street, Collingwood, also in 1945.<sup>58</sup> Taking his vows as a Christian Brother at age eighteen, West then completed his BA at Melbourne University before deciding not to affirm his vows. Becoming a teacher, West wrote his first novel, worked for Military Intelligence during the war, and was offered the position of Secretary to former Prime Minister Billy Hughes. Returning to Melbourne after six months in Canberra, West turned to journalism as a publicist for 3DB.<sup>59</sup>

Unlike Donovan Joyce, Hector Crawford and John Hickling, West was an amateur when it came to radio drama broadcasting.<sup>60</sup> Although possessing skills as a playwright, West knew very little about the technical and artistic aspects of the field he was about to enter; he viewed ARP as a business venture in a thriving industry environment. With the help of his brother-in-law, West gathered enough funds to get started.<sup>61</sup> The small studio in Collingwood was soon frequented by some of the top actors in Melbourne – including Richard Davies, Douglas Kelly and Patricia Kelly – who evidently wondered if West knew what he was doing.<sup>62</sup>

His first production, *The Curtain Rises*, was a disaster as was ARP's first twelve months financially.<sup>63</sup> But Melbourne's tight-knit acting clan, being loyal to the producers who provided their livelihoods, stuck by West and before long ARP had some success with a serial called *The Mask of Marius*, written and produced by West.<sup>64</sup> West's big break came in 1948 when his new soap serial, *The Burtons of Banner Street*, was purchased by sponsor company Bex and accepted by 3DB for the

Major Network. Sponsorship from advertising was a crucial part of selling a program to a network, a process in which Hector Crawford excelled.

Of particular interest in this respect is the control sponsors exerted over purchased programs and in the case of *The Burtons of Banner Street*, Giffen-Foley reveals how the Managing Director of Bex vetted each script for approval.<sup>65</sup> Given the level of censorship applicable in those days, Walker notes that scripts could not refer to politics, sex, religion, implied questionable situations and certainly not alcohol.<sup>66</sup>

Written by Philip Jones and featuring Walter Pym, Douglas Kelly, Robert Peach and Margaret Johnson, this production was a huge financial success, which allowed ARP to expand. In 1949, the company moved to spacious new production facilities in Spencer Street, West Melbourne.<sup>67</sup> Phillip Freedman, who would become a key writer for Crawfords' *Homicide*, was employed by West in addition to several other production staff.<sup>68</sup>

By 1950, at age thirty-four, West was running a company turning out £50,000 worth of popular serials per year, predominately self-written, directed and produced.<sup>69</sup> In 1952, ARP celebrated the 1,000th episode of *The Burtons of Banner Street* which, at the time, was a first for a Melbourne-made soap opera.<sup>70</sup> For a man who initially knew little about the radio transcription business and was reportedly naive in business matters, West became a leading independent producer and yet another competitor for Hector and Dorothy Crawford.<sup>71</sup> After a change of management in 1954, West retired from ARP to concentrate on his literary writing. ARP continued with Donovan Joyce Productions in its stable but in 1956, a name change to Australasian Radio and Television Productions signalled a move to producing television programs in Melbourne and Sydney.<sup>72</sup>

### **3.4.3. John Hickling Productions**

Rupert (John) Hickling was an intuitive man with a background in commercial radio production from the early 1930s.<sup>73</sup> Best remembered for dramatising the news of the week through *The March of Time* on 3DB, Hickling adapted this program for radio from the American theatre newsreel of the same name. On air between 1936 and 1942, the program was written, in part, by John Ormiston Reid and narrated by Keith Eden, both of whom would become key figures with Crawfords.<sup>74</sup>

Having negotiated a processing, distribution and marketing arrangement with the Major Network, Hickling established his own radio transcription production company in 1942 and sold his products to 3DB.<sup>75</sup> For the next three years Hickling was a prolific producer of programs designed to 'boost morale during the war'.<sup>76</sup> Lane describes Hickling's methodology in this way:

He brought his own special innovativeness to radio production through a unique skill in his understanding and use of background music. His capacity to operate the turntables at the same time as he brought the actors in on cue became something of a legend in radio circles of the 1930s and 1940s.[...] Radio's most capable actors appreciated his particular production skills as well as the speed with which they were recorded.<sup>77</sup>

Following *The March of Time*, Hickling's best work was produced during the war years after 1942: *The Living Theatre* – 70 hour-long plays – and a serial *Their Finest Hour*.<sup>78</sup> Immediately after the war, Hickling worked on the basis that listeners would welcome continuous entertainment during their leisure time, following the trauma of the war.<sup>79</sup> His crime thrillers and detective stories such as Earl Stanley Gardner's *Perry Mason* proved extremely popular, as did the serialisation of well-known novels such as *Anne of Green Gables* and *Pollyanna*.<sup>80</sup>

Given the post-war boom in the radio serial transcription business, Hickling, like other independent producers, faced intense competition from the ABC, Macquarie Network and imported programs from the United Kingdom. As business dropped off, Hickling followed a different pathway and produced a series called *Concerto for Voices*: readings by Australia's best actors from Shakespeare, The Bible, Edgar Allan Poe and Hans Christian Anderson. Unsuccessful commercially, Hickling went back to limited serial production but eventually closed the business in 1960.<sup>81</sup>

Patricia Kennedy remembers John Hickling as one of the first Melbourne producers to sell material interstate and overseas:

He got a writer named John Ormiston Reid to write his first scripts and he turned out an enormous amount of material at 3DB; it became a very big production unit. Hickling was certainly one of most prominent people concerned with the industry in Australia which was just burgeoning, slowly, but he did a lot of work during the pre-war era.<sup>82</sup>

### 3.5. Epilogue

It is clear that Dorothy Crawford, albeit well trained and experienced, entered the radio transcription business at a time when competition was strong and a large variety of programmes dominated the airwaves. In addition to the independent Melbourne producers, the Macquarie network has been discussed, while the ABC, experts in presenting one-off plays, classical music concerts and the world's best artists, was a dominant force. Out of Sydney, Harry Dearth's elite Lux Radio Theatre entertained listeners for over twelve years as did the Caltex Theatre's high-quality drama features every Sunday evening. Certainly, as Walker notes, radio "homogenised Australian society" and as I wrote in Chapter One, evenings around the radiogram were an integral part of family life.<sup>83</sup> The demand was strong, as Phillip Jones, a key writer for Morris West's ARP from 1946, wrote in his autobiography:

There was a place for them all, because radio would devour tens of thousands of episodes of recorded material, and for a time in the golden years it seemed that there would never be an end to the demand.<sup>84</sup>

Nonetheless, Hector Crawford's achievement in attaining immediate prominence with *The Melba Story* was significant, as will be demonstrated. Insofar as the Crawford success story is concerned, one must take into account the obvious skills and talents of Hector and Dorothy Crawford. Able to attract a sizable market share by offering listeners more accessible amalgams of classical music and drama through a succession of innovative and creative programs, many popular home-grown artists developed in the process, which will be demonstrated in coming chapters.

As Patricia Kennedy notes, radio actors and other production houses were operating long before Crawfords. But with Crawfords' arrival in such an entrepreneurial way, all the work they generated "was a great, great boon really. Crawfords inherited a group of really, really skilled actors who were able to step into their work, and work fast".<sup>85</sup>



## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> "Hector Crawford Forms Own Production Unit", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 27 October-2 November 1945, p. 3.
- <sup>2</sup> Harold Elvins was Director of the Melbourne (Melba) Conservatorium and hence a close friend of Hector Crawford. Melbourne businessman and philanthropist Sidney Myer had also established free, open-air concerts in the Royal Botanic Gardens with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in 1929.  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 32.  
Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myer\\_Music\\_Bowl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myer_Music_Bowl), accessed 5 June 2010.
- <sup>3</sup> Sandra Franks, "I'm Not Content – Not yet", *Women's Day*, Melbourne, 5 August 1974, p. 22.
- <sup>4</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 20.
- <sup>5</sup> "Spotlight on Music From 3DB", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, February 1945.
- <sup>6</sup> "Hector Crawford Forms Own Production Unit", op. cit.
- <sup>7</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, Prowling Tiger Press, Richmond, 1998, pp. 87, 88.
- <sup>8</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 16.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 13.
- <sup>10</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 13;  
Mimi Colligan, "Crawford, Dorothy Muriel," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 17, (MUP, 2007.)  
<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/crawford-dorothy-muriel-12367>, accessed 12 November 2013.  
"Our Leading Woman Radio Producer Works on the Run", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 12-18 November 1949, p. 27.
- <sup>11</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., pp. 13, 14 .
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Sonia Borg, "Dorothy Crawford", Obituary tribute presented by Keith Eden, St. John's Church, Toorak, September 1988. (From the Wynne Pullman private collection, Hawthorn, Victoria.)
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 14.
- <sup>16</sup> Quote from *London Morning Post*, cited in "Collusion: A Trifle in Three acts", Concert Program from *The Dorothy Crawford Players*, King's Theatre, Melbourne, 21 August 1937. (From the Wynne Pullman private collection, Hawthorn, Victoria.)
- <sup>17</sup> John Cain, op. cit., p. 89.
- <sup>18</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 19.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> "Our Leading Woman Radio Producer Works on the Run", op. cit.
- <sup>21</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra, Mary Ward, interview with Denzil Howson for *Once Upon a Wireless* project, Melbourne, 1993, Title No: 268116. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> Richard Lane, *The Golden Age of Radio Drama*, Screen Sound Australia, Canberra, 2000, p. 106.
- <sup>24</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 20.
- <sup>25</sup> Diana Combe, *The Radio Serial Industry in Australia: an historical study of the production of serials in Australia, and the influence of the industry in the development of commercial radio*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Macquarie University, 1992, p. 370.
- <sup>26</sup> R. R. Walker, *The Magic Spark: the Story of the First Fifty Years of Radio in Australia*, The Hawthorne Press, Melbourne, 1973, p. 55.
- <sup>27</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 365.
- <sup>28</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 20.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> John Cain, op. cit., pp. 90, 91.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 91.
- <sup>32</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., pp. 20, 21.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 21.
- <sup>34</sup> Bill McLaughlin, *From Wireless to Radio: The 3DB Story*, The Dominion Press, Blackburn, Victoria, 2009, p. 106.
- <sup>35</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Glenda Raymond, interview with Beverly Dunn for *Once Upon A Wireless* project, Melbourne, 7 September 1993. Title No: 271892. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.
- <sup>36</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 23.

- <sup>37</sup> Glenda Raymond, op. cit., p. 1.
- <sup>38</sup> "The Girl Who Sings Melba", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 17-23 August 1946, p. 10.
- <sup>39</sup> This included *The Magic Key*, a children's show featuring experienced actors Cliff Cowley and Keith Eden, and a choral show called *The Magic of Mass Voices* for which concert pianist Margaret Schofield was the accompanist and coordinator.  
Glenda Raymond, op. cit., p. 1.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>41</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 22.
- <sup>42</sup> Glenda Raymond, op. cit., p. 2
- <sup>43</sup> John Cain, op. cit., p. 91.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 24.
- <sup>45</sup> R. R. Walker, *The Magic Spark*: op. cit., p. 57.
- <sup>46</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 367.
- <sup>47</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 367.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donovan\\_Joyce](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donovan_Joyce), accessed 6 June 2010.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>49</sup> "Melbourne Production Unit: Donovan Joyce's Line-Up", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 14-20 April 1945, p. 3.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donovan\\_Joyce](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donovan_Joyce), op. cit.
- <sup>51</sup> "A Brilliant French Classic Comes to Radio", full page advertisement in *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 12-18 February 1949, p. 7.
- <sup>52</sup> R. R. Walker, op. cit., p. 58.
- <sup>53</sup> "Scripter For Radio Unit", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 19-25 March, 1949, p. 3.
- <sup>54</sup> R. R. Walker, op. cit., p. 59.
- <sup>55</sup> " 'Aussie Look' for Radio in South Africa", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 25 February-3 March 1950, p. 3.
- <sup>56</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 367.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donovan\\_Joyce](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donovan_Joyce), op. cit.
- <sup>58</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra, Margaret Bond (Nee Mouchmore), interview with Beverly Dunn for *Once Upon a Wireless Project*, Camberley, England, 7 May 1996, Title No: 307907. Transcribed by Phillip Davey.
- <sup>59</sup> Phillip Lewis, "Success Story of Morris West", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 20-26 May 1950, p. 16.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>65</sup> Bridget Griffen-Foley, *Changing Stations: The Story of Australian Commercial Radio*, University of NSW Press, 2009, p. 234.
- <sup>66</sup> R. R. Walker, op. cit., p. 58.
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 56.
- <sup>68</sup> "Melbourne Production Unit Expands", *The Listener-In*, 23-29 April 1949, p. 2.
- <sup>69</sup> Phillip Lewis, "Success Story of Morris West", op. cit.
- <sup>70</sup> John Hurd, "1,000 not out", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 5-11 January 1952, p. 4 .
- <sup>71</sup> Phillip Lewis, "Success Story of Morris West", op. cit.
- <sup>72</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 364.
- <sup>73</sup> R. R. Walker, op. cit., p. 59.
- <sup>74</sup> Richard Lane, "The Golden Age of Radio Drama", op. cit., pp. 144, 145.
- <sup>75</sup> Bill McLaughlin, *From Wireless to Radio*, op.cit., p. 79.
- <sup>76</sup> Richard Lane, "The Golden Age of Radio Drama", op. cit., p. 145.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra, Patricia Kennedy, interview with Denzil Howson, for *Once Upon a Wireless Project*, Melbourne, September 1993, Title No: 268815. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.

<sup>83</sup> R. R. Walker, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>84</sup> Philip Jones, "The Radio Transcription Companies" in Albert Moran (ed.) *Stay Tuned, the Australian Broadcasting Reader*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992, p. 47.

<sup>85</sup> Patricia Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Hawthorn, Victoria, 27 November 2007.

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Full page advertising promo – *Music for the People - Sunday 3.15 on 3DB-LK.*

Source: *The Listener In*, Melbourne, 24-30 November, 1956, Page 13.

## **Chapter 4: The House That Crawfords Built**

### **4.1. Introduction**

With the support of 3DB assured, Hector Crawford Productions began operations in November 1945 in a one room upstairs office above a Flinders Lane café called The Poppies – a convenient short distance from 3DB. Two years later, following rapid business growth, larger offices were found at 40 Little Collins Street – behind The Melbourne Club – and remained headquarters well into the 1950s.<sup>1</sup> By 1956 and with 40 staff members, the company took up several floors of the Olderfleet Building at 475 Collins Street, the scene of so many creative radio and television triumphs. Crawfords did not operate its own studios during the company's halcyon radio years. While the bigger musical dramas and competitions were recorded at the nearby Unitarian Church Hall in Cathedral Place, the bulk of the drama serials were produced in a claustrophobic, smoked filled studio at the end of a corridor at 3DB, as well as Broadcast Exchange and AWA.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter considers the evolution of Crawfords' musical drama from *Melba* through to *Opera For the People*, *Mobil Quest* and *Music For the People*. The career of Crawfords' first 'creation' Glenda Raymond is outlined and assessed, as is Dorothy Crawford's development as a radio producer. In addition to Hector Crawford's desire to provide a 'better class of music' to audiences, a central theme underpinning this chapter is his philosophy of developing an 'Australian consciousness'. Over the next decade Crawfords would provide significant employment for dramatic radio actors because the industry was well established, but in the world of television it took eight years to establish significant local content production. On the radio, it was specifically through musical programs, particularly *Mobil Quest*, that Hector offered amazing opportunities for both unknown and proven artists. This was the first stage of cultivating an 'Australian consciousness'.

### **4.2. The Melba Story**

*The Melba Story* would be 3DB's gain, while its rejection by Broadcast Exchange proved an error of judgement. Thus Hector could concentrate on his great passion, which by this time had become an obsession that had originated from his days as a choir boy at St. Paul's Cathedral. Introduced to Melba after she had sung there, the

young Hector had been greatly inspired.<sup>3</sup> Many years later, Hector's mentor Harold Elvins recalled Melba's tenure as a teacher at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and of her great interest in the staff and pupils. In 1939, as a Conservatorium staff member, Hector submitted a proposal to produce a radio serial about the life of Dame Nellie. Elvins, as Director, agreed but due to certain restrictions, the idea was put aside until 1945 when the Armstrongs, Melba's son and daughter-in-law, gave Hector permission to proceed.<sup>4</sup>

Running an extremely lean operation, the Crawfords had to work fast to finalise all the details for *Melba*. But with 3DB under-writing the project, the enthusiasm of Manager Dave Worrall was reassuring. Research, as with all things Crawfords, would play an integral part in the production's success. Having chosen accomplished radio writer John Ormiston Reid to compose the script, he and Hector spent months of arduous research in newspaper files, personal interviews with contemporaries of Melba, the examination of two biographies and her autobiography. Ensuring that the story was factually correct was extremely important, not only to Hector but also to Melba's family who insisted on approving each episode before recording commenced.<sup>5</sup> Melba, an artist "beloved by her public", led a somewhat controversial private life so the Armstrongs were anxious that such matters were not part of the story.<sup>6</sup>

*Melba*, described by Crawfords as 'musical drama', consisted of 26 thirty-minute episodes broadcast during 1946/47 (along with a sequel of 6 episodes in 1952) of blended narration, music and dialogue. Combining drama and music was a new concept in radio at the time and was the forerunner of several successful Crawford creations such as *Opera For the People*, *The Blue Danube* and *The Amazing Oscar Hammerstein*.<sup>7</sup> The part of Melba was initially to have been played by four artists. Australian soprano Stella Power, herself a protégée of Melba when both were at the Melbourne Conservatorium, was selected to play Melba as a mature artist in the first episode dramatizing the diva's farewell performance at London's Albert Hall in 1926.<sup>8</sup> Young soprano Kareen Wilson played Melba as a child, while Patricia Kennedy was chosen for the speaking role. Having completed just two years of singing lessons, 23-year-old Glenda Raymond was asked by Hector to portray Melba

in her teens and twenties, prior to taking over from Power for Melba's mature years. This latter circumstance has created some confusion.<sup>9</sup>

While Stella Power seemed like an obvious choice to sing in the series on behalf of her mentor, members of Melba's family, for reasons unknown, did not approve of Power's performance after previewing the first episode at 3DB with Hector and Dave Worrall. Hector then met with the Mitchell and Armstrong families at Melba's Coldstream (Victoria) estate and suggested that Raymond should portray the mature Melba at her peak. Happy with this proposal, the family agreed for the first episode to be re-recorded.<sup>10</sup> Here lies some confusion. Amid glowing reviews of the first episode broadcast in February 1946, it was reported that "the singing role of Melba was superbly taken by Stella Power" it was reported.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, a check of the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) database lists Power as performing in the first episode.<sup>12</sup> Although it is clear that Raymond appeared as Melba from episode two, it does appear that despite the misgivings expressed by Melba's family, Power's recorded version was broadcast for the premiere. Ian Crawford contends that the new recording, featuring Raymond, was broadcast as does Cain and Kent, but it is difficult to imagine the press of the time getting it so wrong.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever the truth of the case, Glenda Raymond went from being simply 'among the stars' to being *the* star of the production. Years later, she recalled how *Melba* was recorded and relayed to 3DB from the Unitarian Church facilities:

We used to record in the church itself which had a wonderful sound acoustically. The actors were in the church hall at the back. It was all quite fascinating because the actors were huddled around a group of microphones in the hall with Dorothy up in the control room with the engineer from 3DB. Hector, who was in the church with the soloists and conducting the orchestra, which had been set up just before the pews began, would be waiting to be cued in by a little red light. The instant that came on you were on. And that all went by landline down to 3DB in Flinders Street; so you can imagine the quality of some of those recordings.<sup>14</sup>

From the temporary sound-proofed control room set up in the middle of the church hall, producer Dorothy Crawford had full view of the actors but could only communicate with Hector in the church via a telephone intercom. If a recording had begun, there was no way of talking to Hector; to attract his attention a battery-powered torch globe on Hector's conducting podium was activated.<sup>15</sup> "By pressing it

she cued Hec when to commence music backgrounds under the speeches of the actors, which would segué, or mix into the chosen songs", Ian Crawford recalls.<sup>16</sup>

Through her early production work with the ABC and then Broadcast Exchange, Dorothy had grasped the importance of timing in live productions and had developed extraordinary skills. Ian Crawford elaborates:

During the first rehearsal, she'd time the length of the musical introduction to each item. During the second rehearsal she'd use her stopwatch to time Eric's [Pearce] narrations, then on the performance she'd cue Hector to commence his introductions while Eric was still narrating, getting the music to start up 15 seconds before Eric was due to finish, then crossing her fingers, praying like hell that the end of the intro – the start of the solo – would coincide with the end of Eric's narration. And it always worked. She was deadly.<sup>17</sup>

Established theatre and radio actor Keith Eden had a part in *Melba* and remembers that the production was nonetheless a steep learning curve for Dorothy:

She didn't know much about radio acting as such, but we [the actors] had established a sort of section of people; half a dozen of us, who got to know the technique of it and she learned from us. And then as she developed she was clever enough to realize that what she knew about the industry was total. And so she became the best radio producer of those dramas.<sup>18</sup>

In the case of *Melba*, and indeed all radio transcriptions until the early 1950s, master recordings on 16-inch acetate discs was then the only way to record programs for subsequent broadcast. If a mistake was made or the PMG landline was lost, expensive recordings had to be trashed and another take made from the start. That was another reason why only the best and most experienced actors were hired.<sup>19</sup>

Patricia Kennedy, as an established radio and theatre actor, achieved great acclaim with her portrayal of Melba's speaking voice. The role was a significant challenge for Kennedy who, at the time, examined Melba's life in great detail:

I've been voraciously reading everything I could find on Melba. She must have been a fascinating woman and a strange one, in many ways. She was, above all, a great artist. [...] I've had roles which provided a stronger medium for dramatic ability – but I think this is the most exciting I've tackled.<sup>20</sup>

To sustain an authentic representation of Melba's voice, Hector and Dorothy decided that Kennedy should speak the part throughout, from childhood to *Melba's* closing scenes. Kennedy's performance was regarded as a radio tour de force.<sup>21</sup>



The inaugural episode of *Melba* was very successful for Crawfords. Pronouncing “3DB’s *Melba* Serial a Winner”, *The Listener-In* suggested that the production had the potential of being the best of its kind yet to be broadcast: “Dignified treatment worthy of the subject, and meticulous care in scripting and casting, gave it a quality rare to radio here”, the paper wrote.<sup>22</sup>

As the series progressed listeners appreciated the exciting new talent that was Glenda Raymond; the singer thus became well known around Melbourne and indeed Australia. By August 1946, with the story of *Melba* half told, impressed music lovers demonstrated a growing desire to know more about this young new singer who had taken on such a difficult task.<sup>23</sup>

Just as Hector Crawford received letters every week asking about “the girl with the golden voice”, radio listeners wrote in droves to *The Listener-In*’s famous *Axes and Orchids* column; ‘Orchids’ far outweighed the ‘Axes’:<sup>24</sup>

Orchids to the serial “Melba”. About twenty of my friends gather every Sunday evening for this pleasant half-hour, some of them with vivid recollections of Melba in reality. They unanimously agree that Melba herself could not do better than the golden-voiced soprano Glenda Raymond.<sup>25</sup>

Indeed, from the moment Raymond made her debut at *Music For the People* in November 1944, both her musical director (Hector Crawford) and teacher Pauline Bindley had high hopes that their protégée would go abroad to continue her studies, as she did in 1948.<sup>26</sup> Bindley, a competent opera singer herself, was vindicated by Raymond’s performance in *Melba* and, by the time *Melba* had made an impact, was convinced training abroad should be contemplated.<sup>27</sup> As he was producing *Opera For the People*, Hector observed of Raymond that:

She is the quickest musical study I have ever met, and one of the best musical brains. At present she is deeply immersed in the study of language – and she’s taking them three at a time! Every one of these arias must be sung in its original language of French, Italian or German.<sup>28</sup>

*The Melba Story* remained Hector’s personal favourite, along with *Homicide*, and has often been regarded as Crawfords’ most memorable achievement in radio. As John Cain suggests:

In a sense *Melba* was Crawford's flagship – a high-cost, top-grade, classy production that had popular appeal to radio audiences. Its success was a defining moment for, and an affirmation of, an organisation that was to have a profound effect on Australian radio and television.<sup>29</sup>

Terry Stapleton, a principal writer for Crawford's during the 1960s and 1970s, explained why:

With his showman's instinct, and his unerring ear, eye and nose for drama, he [Hector] had long sensed that *The Melba Story* could deliver more than just the voice and the songs. There was a great human tale to be told, a saga of international scope, tracing the often tempestuous career of the Melbourne-born girl – Helen Porter Mitchell – through her rise and fall and rise. [...] It promised everything that Hector always sought for a Crawford production: music, drama, romance, conflict, scandal. And, above all, it was Australian.<sup>30</sup>

*The Melba Story* was the first 'Crawford Creation.' Glenda Raymond was the first artistic 'Crawford Creation'. *Melba* aired in seventeen countries including Canada, New Zealand and South Africa, creating an overseas success for Crawfords.<sup>31</sup> Particularly impressed with the quality of Crawfords' work, Canadian broadcasters became a lucrative market for many other Crawford Productions.<sup>32</sup> *The Blue Danube*, similar in style to *Melba*, was based on the life of Johann Strauss and featured experienced actor Douglas Kelly in the lead role. Each episode of this 1948 production cost an unprecedented £350, but raised £2,000 per episode from national and overseas' sales.<sup>33</sup> The Canadians, having been offered *Danube* in advance of production, accepted within 24 hours, with Phillips Lamps contracted as major sponsor. Crawfords next extravaganza – *The Amazing Oscar Hammerstein* (1950) with Raymond returning to a lead role – was also pre-sold to the Canadians. The American market proved extremely difficult to infiltrate, however.<sup>34</sup>

### **4.3. A Better Class of Music**

In developing *Opera For the People* (OFP) a new series of musical-dramatic opera presentations for radio, Hector Crawford sought to provide a better appreciation of operatic music. At the same time he hoped to encourage the formation of an Australian opera company:

So far as opera is concerned, Australia has been musically starved. No touring company has come to this country since 1934. In addition, no outlets have existed here until very recently, for Australian singers wishing to gain experience in operatic work. Any Australian seeking such experience has been forced to go abroad.<sup>35</sup>

Whereas *Music For the People* had, and would continue to provide, a mix of popular and classical music, OFP would, according to Crawford, play a very important part via radio of furthering interest in grand opera in Australia.<sup>36</sup> Was this an elitist presumption? Not according to Crawford. Having directed *Music For the People* for some eight years, Crawford claimed that regular 100,000 plus crowds at the Botanic Gardens spring and summer concerts proved that the public appreciated 'better class music'.<sup>37</sup> By developing the talent that already existed and offering an opportunity to new-comers, Crawford believed OFP would influence the establishment of an Australian opera company.<sup>38</sup>

Presented twice a week, OFP was produced in 104 half-hour episodes between November 1946 and March 1949, sponsored nationally by the Vacuum Oil Company.<sup>39</sup> While most episodes were pre-recorded, many were live in the Botanic Gardens and the Melbourne Town Hall. All episodes, reportedly costing £400 each to produce, were broadcast on the Major Network via 3DB in a nation-wide hook-up of more than 50 stations and, significantly, Radio Australia.<sup>40</sup> The first seven episodes recorded (of 23 in total) included many opera favourites.<sup>41</sup> Generally, each opera opened with a brief narration followed by a break into dramatic action. Interspersed with the arias, narration, drama and music were interwoven to reveal the plot, which was presented in a succinct English version retaining only the dramatic and musical highlights necessary to enable a full appreciation of the work.<sup>42</sup> As Hector explained at the time:

In *Opera For the People* we are endeavouring to do what we have already done in symphony music – to introduce the average man and woman to classics which have stood the test of time and to do this in a manner which does not savor the highbrow. In other words, we are trying to engender a liking for the music of some of the world's greatest operas.<sup>43</sup>

Determined to promote his vision of an 'Australian consciousness', Crawford provided many of Australia's finest young singers their first opportunity to perform operatic roles – accompanied by a symphony orchestra – to a widespread audience.<sup>44</sup> Raymond was a major performer, as were current and future *Sun Aria* winners John Lanigan (1945), Maxwell Cohen (1946), Charles Skase (1947) and David Allen (1950), along with Sylvia Fisher, Elsie Morison, William Laird and numerous others.<sup>45</sup> Seasoned actors such as Keith Eden, Patricia Kennedy, Douglas Kelly,

Marcia Hart and Mary Ward shared the speaking roles. John Ormiston Reid wrote the scripts, with each episode narrated by Eric Pearce.<sup>46</sup> Hector Crawford conducted the Melbourne (Melba) Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra with the Westminster Singers providing choral support.<sup>47</sup>

For producer Dorothy Crawford, the logistics of organising and ensuring a seamless performance presented immense challenges. As the principal roles entailed dual portrayal by singers and actors, careful study by Dorothy Crawford – involving split-second timing and minute planning – was necessary to eliminate any possible confusion on the part of the radio audience, who could not see the performers.<sup>48</sup> For those in the audience, any doubt caused by one star singing and another acting the same role was overcome by both wearing the same coloured clothes.<sup>49</sup>

*Opera for the People* presented often-complicated operatic plots via a combination of drama and singing. While this appealed to the general public, some critics and purist opera lovers expressed concern over the injection of such duality into grand opera. One reviewer noted that *La Boheme*, the first episode of *OFP*, was interesting, innovative, and indicative of the extent to which commercial radio was seeking to raise the standard of its programs:

This is an intelligent attempt to present grand opera in a new and simplified form which will appeal to the thousands of listeners who, while they enjoy good music, find the severely classical interpretation difficult to assimilate.<sup>50</sup>

Generally though, it was suggested that a classic opera such as *La Boheme* was better sung than acted:

As a fervent lover of Puccini's music and particularly of *La Boheme*, I must confess I found more enjoyment in hearing the lovely melodies charmingly sung. [...] than in hearing the familiar story in dramatised form. I felt somehow that something of the glamour and atmosphere of the opera was missing.<sup>51</sup>

As some operas were more difficult than others to dramatise 'the Crawford way', many opera lovers expressed dismay at "the hacking about of Mozart's music" or the "destruction of an art form considered sacrosanct".<sup>52</sup> But such criticism was countered by the massive crowds in attendance at Botanic Gardens' performances, commonly estimated in excess of 125,000 people, the large audiences filling the

Melbourne Town Hall and, ultimately, extensive radio coverage and sales overseas.<sup>53</sup>

Listeners regularly singled out Raymond, John Lanigan and David Allen for artistic praise.<sup>54</sup> The vast majority of performers were already well established in choral and classical music circles and were considered high quality performers in their own right. Searching for 'new' talent, a Sydney-based OFP talent quest, judged by Hector and Dorothy Crawford and broadcast on 2UW, was held during mid-1947. Attracting more than 200 entrants, the seven finalists were brought down to Melbourne to appear in *Opera For the People*.<sup>55</sup>

OFP revealed the patriotism and idealism that would later epitomize Hector Crawford's promotion of locally produced television drama. His desire to tackle the post-war cultural cringe that prevailed in Australia was never clearer.<sup>56</sup> Crawford felt that the general public was:

getting tired of boosted overseas' artists who were unable to live up to the claims made for them. Instead of spending fabulous sums to import overseas' 'stars', we should concentrate on encouraging our local singers and building up our own cultural standards. Australians don't realise the wealth of musical talent existent in their own country.<sup>57</sup>

Following the success of *Melba*, Hector Crawford sought to fulfil a number of objectives with OFP. The first was educational. Offering simplified interpretations of operatic classics – in English – for the 'average music lover' was successful and generally well received despite the occasional murmurs of outrage from 'true opera lovers'. Glenda Raymond recalled that:

*Opera For the People* was a great thing on commercial radio in those days. It was the sort of thing you would expect the ABC to be doing but certainly not commercial [radio]. However, after the success of *Melba*, people seemed to welcome this sort of treatment. It was a huge education as well as great entertainment for the people.<sup>58</sup>

Keith Eden, a regular part of OFP, also regarded this program as innovative and extremely educative:

People didn't know much about opera. They all thought it was a lot of Italians screaming their heads off at each other in Italian! You had people like Glenda Raymond and John Lanigan singing arias and the actors used to tell the story.

To walk on that stage in front of 100,000 people was a wonderful sight, and I think this gave people a tremendous interest in opera. Dorothy [Crawford] loved it because it got her out of those smoky poky studios we used to work in, and she became a dominant influence there.<sup>59</sup>

As for promoting Australia's wealth of talented singers, OFP reached a wide audience at home and abroad, and many of the program's stars became acclaimed singers in opera houses around the world.<sup>60</sup> In addition to the established singers, *Opera For the People* introduced and developed a great many new singers, a development that did not escape the attention of Victorian Premier John Cain Senior. In announcing State Government sponsorship to ensure that this new talent was given every chance, Mr Cain explained that:

His Government was keen to foster the appreciation of good music and to ensure that "unknowns" were given a chance to prove themselves. He felt that Victoria had a large but practically untapped source of musical talent and thought that such features as "Music For the People" provides an excellent opportunity for the discovery, the encouragement and the fostering of local artists.<sup>61</sup>

Having revealed the extent of home grown talent through OFP and *Music For The People*, the support Crawford managed to elicit from the State Government demonstrates his success in establishing a wider sphere of influence to help advance his cause. Furthermore, his desire for a nationally administered opera company would eventually come to fruition. In 1956, the Australian Opera Company, now known as Opera Australia, was formed in Sydney under the auspices of the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust.<sup>62</sup>

While it is difficult to quantify Hector's influence in the establishment of the Australian Opera Company, it is probable that such influence was critical. Many of the artists later associated with the Australian Opera Company received their first national and international exposure through Crawfords' programs. It can be said that Crawfords' eight-year national talent programme *Mobil Quest*, which introduced (Dame) Joan Sutherland – widely regarded as the greatest operatic soprano of her generation – was also an important factor.

#### 4.4. London Beckons

As Hector and Dorothy began planning their new *Mobil Quest* talent program for 1949, it was announced in February 1948 that Glenda Raymond would embark on a series of 'farewell' concerts to finance her departure overseas in August of that year.<sup>63</sup> With *Music For the People* an ongoing concern, *Opera For the People* in full swing and the company's drama arm producing many hours of series and serials, coordinating a national concert tour added further pressure on Crawfords. Although the company had done extremely well with the sale of programs overseas, profits were ploughed back into production, so finance was tight. A trip to Europe to further Raymond's already promising career was very much dependant on the success of her national tour, sponsored by the Vacuum Oil Company.<sup>64</sup> But by 1948 Raymond had attracted a significant following in Australia that would endure well into the 1960s.<sup>65</sup> Supporters did not let her down; concerts sold out in all capital cities:

Brilliant young soprano Glenda Raymond achieved yet another triumph when she sang to a capacity house in the Adelaide Town Hall last week. Crowds waiting to catch a glimpse of the young singer waited outside the Town Hall for almost an hour after the concert and held up traffic in King William Street.<sup>66</sup>

Arriving in London in September 1948, Raymond began lessons with famous Italian tenor Dino Borgioli.<sup>67</sup> Having made good progress, the soprano arranged an audition with the BBC followed by a contract to sing with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in *The Immortal Hour*. This was followed by two 13 week BBC radio and television concert seasons with Louis Levy and his orchestra.<sup>68</sup>

Despite her progress in England, Raymond was relieved to be called back to Melbourne in July 1949 when Hector needed her to plan and record his next musical variety offerings *Holiday for Song* and *Glenda*.<sup>69</sup> Following another national concert tour, *Opera For the People* and *Music For the People*, Raymond flew back to England in March 1950 to resume her BBC contract. Because Hector had proposed marriage before she left, Raymond rushed to complete her commitments and flew back to Australia in September, following her last performance at the International Music Festival in Wales.<sup>70</sup> Never to return to England professionally, Raymond could still be heard around the world in her own radio variety programs *Holiday for Song*, *Glenda*, *The Amazing Oscar Hammerstein*, a new series of *The Melba Story*

and many others programs. In 1951, the 52 episode *Glenda* series was believed to be the most expensive feature ever produced in Australia, costing an extraordinary £30,000.<sup>71</sup>

Glenda Raymond was an integral part of Crawfords' musical programs well into the 1950s and 1960s. Although she had made an impact in England, Raymond decided not to pursue an international singing career. Within two months of returning to Australia, Glenda and Hector were married, in November 1950. It was a massive media story and the beginning of a love affair that would endure for 41 years. As she explained years later, Raymond's career meant nothing at all without Hector by her side:<sup>72</sup>

I was requested to return to London to sing a role in *Bethlehem* that would have led to big things; it was late 1950. But I was head over heels in love with Hector and I didn't want to leave him again.

Someone once said to me you should never turn down an opportunity. If something is offered you accept it. But I'd blithely sent off a telegram saying "sorry, can't come", thinking it would happen again, there would be another opportunity; but of course there wasn't another opportunity. But any thought of an international career for either of us was out of the question.

Hector had started Crawfords and had family commitments with Dorothy, Ian, and his mother and father all dependent on him, and by this stage he was starting to gather the nucleus of Crawfords around him. He had a number of people, perhaps 20 in those days dependant on him for employment. We did our own things and then television started.<sup>73</sup>

While Crawford's first artistic creation was a very popular singer in Australia and had demonstrated the potential to excel on the world stage, Glenda Raymond was, it seems, a reluctant star; an enigmatic diva. A frequent special guest at *Music For the People* or *Mobil Quest*, Raymond did not contest any of the big singing competitions nor was she an entrant in her husband's *Mobil Quest* (described below), probably fearing a conflict of interest, or as John Cargher suggests, appearing would have been undignified given her status.<sup>74</sup> As the accolades from the public kept on flowing, one must wonder how far she might have progressed on the international stage?

Margaret Nisbett, 1951 *Mobil Quest* winner and a close friend of Raymond, believes Raymond could have been 'the new Melba' has she chosen to work at it:



Glenda was an amazing talent. She had the most golden sound. We were both Coloraturas. My voice was more a silver sound than hers which was a lovely liquid gold colour. Really Beautiful.

But I don't know that Glenda had the tough core that is really needed to become world class. She was a gentle, loving soul and very content with her life with Hector, once she had made that decision. She often said that there would only be one star in the family and "it wasn't to be me", only Hector. She absolutely worshiped him.<sup>75</sup>

Cargher, host of the ABC's radio show *Singers of Renown* for 42 years, was amazed at Raymond's achievements given her limited formal training. Cargher rated Raymond as the only genuine contender to replicate Melba's achievements ahead of peers and distinguished Australian singers Marjorie Lawrence (1928 Sun Aria winner), Dame Joan Hammond and contemporary soprano Yvonne Kenny.<sup>76</sup> He notes that:

It is difficult to believe that this well-paced brilliant soprano voice had no basic training whatsoever prior to blithely accepting the task of replicating Melba's voice in the 52 weekly radio hours of *The Melba Story*. Without even the most basic musical education, Raymond was taught a huge variety of operatic arias and, later, complete operas by [Hector] Crawford and [Pauline] Bindley. In retrospect, the mind boggles that a practical businessman like Hector Crawford went ahead with such a huge undertaking featuring a 24-year old without any performing experience or vocal training.<sup>77</sup>

As was revealed earlier, Raymond took 12 months of vocal training, and appeared in *Music For the People* and a number of Broadcast Exchange radio musicals prior to *Melba*, so Cargher is inaccurate in this respect, although correct about her inexperience. All the same, Hector certainly took a big risk, but that was the way he worked. Very rarely did his intuition fail him, and he could see that Raymond possessed a rare God-given talent, as Cargher himself suggests:

There is little or no difference between the untrained voice at the start of the *Melba* series and the voice which shone after tuition in England by Dino Borgioli and years of practical experience. Circumstances, and possibly a lack of ambition, prevented her from having renown outside the now almost obsolete medium of radio.<sup>78</sup>

The circumstance, in this instance, was Hector Crawford. But for the majority of the 1950s into the 1960s, Raymond retained her popularity as both a commercially popular artist and as a classicist. Raymond made frequent tours around Australia and New Zealand, while in 1951/52 she debuted for the ABC in a series of studio recitals and ABC concerts.<sup>79</sup> Finally, in 1958, Raymond sang for the Elizabethan Theatre Trust Opera Company in the *Barber of Seville*, the first of many such appearances

until 1970, at which time family life and commitments as a director of Crawfords became priorities, with the exception of frequent performances in television variety programs.<sup>80</sup> Glenda Raymond, the first artistic 'Crawford Creation', died in 2003 aged 81.

#### **4.5. Mobil Quest**

Whether or not Glenda Raymond could have reached the lofty career heights of (Dame) Joan Sutherland will never be known. Should "La Stupenda", as Sutherland was dubbed by an Italian audience in 1960, be classified as a 'Crawford Creation' given that her musical background, training and experience were entirely different to that of Raymond?<sup>81</sup> Despite her training and ambition, Sutherland remained forever thankful to the Crawfords for her sudden rise from typist to world opera star after winning Hector Crawford's 1950 *Mobil Quest*. Luciano Pavarotti later described her as the "Voice of the century".<sup>82</sup>

Next to *The Melba Story*, *Mobile Quest*, sponsored by the Vacuum Oil Company, was Hector Crawford's second great musical achievement during the radio era. While *Melba*, *Danube* and *Hammerstein* told the story of great musicians, *Mobil Quest* found promising Australian opera singers providing marvelous opportunities and financial rewards. Running for nine six-month seasons between 1949 and 1957, the programme launched the careers of such famous singers as Sutherland, June Bronhill, Margaret Nisbett, Donald Smith and Ronal Jackson. Over 8,000 singers were auditioned and £21,000 in prize money was distributed during this time, amply demonstrating the wealth of talent available in Australia.<sup>83</sup>

Radio talent quests were plentiful during Australian radio's golden decade, and while many often resulted in considerable local bookings for successful entrants, few really came close to matching the international career opportunities, prestige and financial rewards provided by Crawford's *Mobil Quest*. 3UZ's *Are You An Artist?* was decided by popular vote with a mere £35 prize pool on offer.<sup>84</sup> Similar programs included 3DB's popular and long running *Australian Amateur Hour* (1945-1958) and *Talent Tote* on 3XY, although *Maples P & A Parade* on 3KZ offered substantial awards for winners.<sup>85</sup> In 1947 the ABC announced that more than 2,000 entries had been received for its £2,500 National Radio Eisteddfod.<sup>86</sup> In actuality, the £2,500

covered a whole range of categories with the top three awarded just £65, £35 and £17.<sup>87</sup> In contrast, the winner of each *Mobil Quest* received £1,000 out of the Vacuum Oil finalist pool of nearly £2,000, and if the winner went overseas to study within the year they were given an extra £150 plus air-fare.<sup>88</sup>

Jacqueline Kent suggests that radio talent shows such as *Australia's Amateur Hour* bore very little resemblance to *Mobil Quest*.<sup>89</sup>

Most amateur talent contests relied on the opinions of listeners to decide winners, but the adjudicators for the *Mobil Quest* were Hector Crawford and Dr Edgar Bainton, the retired director of the NSW Conservatorium of Music.<sup>90</sup>

Competitors were given full orchestral accompaniment for their presentation of songs or arias from opera or operetta. Nothing about *Mobil Quest* was cheap; everybody wore dinner jackets or evening dresses for all heats and finals. [Whether live or in the studio.] Even the commercials had a certain amount of pomp and ceremony.<sup>91</sup>

Entries for *Mobil Quest* were invited from every state with applicants auditioned at each Major Network capital city station.<sup>92</sup> A selection committee comprising the station's musical director, manager and a representative nominated by sponsor Vacuum Oil Company, chose a total of 54 singers to contest the 18 heats: 20 from Melbourne, 18 from Sydney, five each from Brisbane and Adelaide; and three each from Perth and Hobart.<sup>93</sup> With three contestants taking part in each heat, *Mobil Quest* followed the usual pattern of semi-finals with a gala final at the Melbourne Town Hall.<sup>94</sup>

To encourage participation 30,000 brochures were distributed widely to singers, music teachers, conservatoria and other musical interests. The brochure included a list of 80 arias and 200 standard ballads, from which contestants had to master – in English – three arias and three ballads.<sup>95</sup> Hector Crawford chose all the songs on offer, drawing upon his knowledge of music and estimate of their popular appeal.<sup>96</sup> Ian Crawford believes that “it was his [Hector's] selection, not only of the entrants, but of the numbers they had to perform, which led to the success of *Mobil Quest*”.<sup>97</sup> Competitors were well rewarded, thanks to the sponsorship deal Hector has brokered with the Vacuum Oil Company. Each artist, when contesting a heat or semi-final, received a broadcasting fee of £3/3; each winning-artist collected a further £3/3. All competitors in the heats and semi-finals, which were recorded with the Australian

Symphony Orchestra at the Unitarian Church and open to the public, also received first class hotel accommodation and free air or rail travel to Melbourne courtesy of Vacuum Oil.<sup>98</sup>

Holding the gala final at the Melbourne Town Hall each year was indicative of the way in which Hector created opportunities for publicity by turning special events into major occasions. The Melbourne Town Hall, the hub of major orchestral events in Victoria, was a prestigious venue from which to broadcast *Mobil Quest* around Australia and to accommodate a large audience, with “competitors and orchestra in black tie; Hector in white tie and tails”.<sup>99</sup> Accommodating the sponsors was always an important consideration in Hector’s planning, as Ian Crawford recalls: “With commercial sponsorship being ever at the forefront of his mind, Hector ensured that Vacuum Oil petrol bowsers graced the stage!”<sup>100</sup> Shortly after the final the company sponsored all finalists and selected semi-finalists on a capital city concert tour, in which each recital featured a local singer who had appeared in the quest.<sup>101</sup> And even while *Mobil Quest* was in recess each year, weekly variety programs such as *Mobil Stars*, *Mobil Show*, *Mobil Town* and *Mobil Song* maintained a presence for Vacuum Oil while filling a gap for *Mobil Quest* devotees.<sup>102</sup>

In 1949’s inaugural *Mobil Quest*, Baritone Ronal Jackson won, while (Dame) Joan Sutherland finished fourth. Sutherland had won the *Sydney Sun Aria* earlier that year, and was urged by Hector Crawford to compete again in *Mobil Quest*.<sup>103</sup> Sutherland accepted the challenge and won *Mobil Quest* in 1950. Similarly, Elizabeth Allen, the 1953 winner, won at her fourth attempt while several other excellent singers were not successful despite several attempts. New Zealand Soprano (Dame) Heather Begg, winner of the 1955 *Sydney Sun Aria*, unsuccessfully contested *Mobil Quest* finals in 1955-56 as did 1950 *Sydney Sun Aria* Winner June Bronhill who came third to 1951 *Mobil Quest* winner Margaret Nisbett.

David Allen, winner of the *Melbourne Sun Aria* in 1950, was runner-up to Sutherland in *Mobil Quest* the same year. Another respected competitor, Joan Arnold, came second in the *Melbourne Sun Aria* in 1948 and 1949.<sup>104</sup> Arnold later became the first female director of the then Melba Memorial Conservatorium of Music. 1955 *Mobil Quest* winner Marjorie Conley never had the chance to consolidate a promising career. After persevering in six *Mobil Quests* between 1950

and 1955, winning the *Sydney Sun Aria* along the way in 1952, Conley died suddenly in 1959 aged just 28.<sup>105</sup>

Both *Mobil Quest* and the respective *Sun Aria* competitions attracted an impressive array of extremely talented artists. Financial rewards and career opportunities were similar for each contest, although in the case of the Melbourne *Sun Aria* entrants were required to be aged 32 years or under, as opposed to *Mobil Quest*'s 18–40 age limit.<sup>106</sup> Consisting of only two heats leading to the selection of 16 semi-finalists, the *Melbourne Sun Aria* has been hosted at Her Majesty's Theatre Ballarat since its inception. A considerably shorter competition, the Melbourne *Sun Aria*, now known as the *Herald-Sun Aria*, was restricted to elite singers of grand opera with six finalists ultimately chosen to compete in the final at Melbourne Town Hall.<sup>107</sup>

While the *Sun Aria* could be viewed as an elitist competition offering limited opportunities to advanced singers, the list of eminent singers who participated in both competitions may suggest a similar degree of elitism associated with *Mobil Quest*. There were clear differences, however. Running for six months each year, *Mobil Quest* was more accessible and although there could be only one winner each year, thousands of aspiring singers were auditioned before a symphony orchestra which was significant encouragement in itself. During the competition over nine years, hundreds of promising singers found themselves singing in heats broadcast via the Major Network which in turn elicited training and employment offers for stage or radio roles. As *Mobil Quest* gathered momentum, editorial comment in *The Listener-In*, while applauding Hector Crawford's objectives, expressed some reservation:

This is a serious attempt to find a great Australian voice. Whether the purpose which has inspired the new feature is achieved remains to be seen. A possible weakness in the set-up seems to be that it is open to singers of established reputation, as well as artists not so well known. This may mean that the rich prize may go not to a "discovery" but to a professional singer who has already made his or her mark, thus, to an extent at least, defeating the object of the quest.<sup>108</sup>

Although this is a valid point, including quality artists ensured high ratings with listeners enjoying many fine voices during *Mobil Quest*'s nine year-run. Conversely, *Mobil Quest* allowed considerably more fledgling singers than the *Sun Aria* to compete with the best in a significant learning and promotional opportunity.

Each heat, semi-final and final were eagerly anticipated and critically appraised, as is evident by the many opinions expressed in the weekly "Axes and Orchids" column of *The Listener-In*. Members of the judging panel were regularly attacked by irritated listeners who, having adopted their favourite artists, thought they knew better than the adjudicators:

Axes to the judges of *Mobil Quest*. How they think they are going to find Australia's best radio singer beats me. In three cases, the wrong winner has been chosen.<sup>109</sup>

I, like other readers, am absolutely disgusted with the decisions of the *Mobil Quest*. I feel many great artists are being done an injustice by the awards on various Sunday nights.<sup>110</sup>

Although Hector Crawford was an ongoing member of the judging panels, membership did change from time to time. All of them were experts in their field, as correspondents pointed out:

Regarding the criticism of judges of *Mobil Quest*. Do some of those people know that at least two gentlemen of this panel are Doctors of Music and must understand music thoroughly to hold these degrees? [...] Every artist has a certain following and no matter who was selected as winner, it displeases someone!<sup>111</sup>

As the first season of *Mobil Quest* progressed, constant criticism of the judging panel elicited a detailed written response to *The Listener-In* from one of the programme's two comperes. Under the pseudonym "Veritas", (thought to be announcer Eric Pearce), it was stated that in fairness to everyone concerned with the program, readers should be made aware of the facts.<sup>112</sup>

Judging *Mobil Quest*, claimed "Veritas", was not simply a case of the adjudicators personally attending each heat to deliver their verdicts on each of the three competitors. Because all heats and semi-finals were broadcast via commercial radio, every episode was recorded at least six or seven weeks in advance of the actual broadcast night, to guard against any physical and technical calamities. Of these recordings a space was left to insert the judging panel's taciturn announcement of the results, as "Veritas" explained:<sup>113</sup>

A short while after each programme is recorded the voices only on the disc are played back to the national panel of adjudicators for evaluation. As is well-known, this panel of adjudicators includes four musical authorities of integrity and exceptional ability. In their adjudication, three of the four people have never been aware of the identity of the three voices and all decisions have been made in favour of "numbers 1, 2 or 3" as the case may be. After the selection was made the adjudicators were then appraised of the identity of their selection and this result was then added to the recording.<sup>114</sup>

The assertion by some respondents that winners were deliberately told of their success in advance of the broadcast was rebuked. Throughout the early heats no winner was made aware of the panel's decision prior to the night of the broadcast, but in the last few heats, in order to organise the semi-finals, some winners had to be advised of their success in advance of the actual broadcast. However no contestant or anyone associated with *Mobil Quest* had any idea who would be the ultimate winner until the adjudicators' announcement on the night of the final after the last piece had been sung.<sup>115</sup>

I can assure all readers that no radio contest has ever been conducted more fairly and had so much care taken in the adjudication as has been the case with *Mobil Quest*.<sup>116</sup>

In order to manage a high quality nation-wide radio talent quest there is little doubt that some conventional processes were compromised. Whereas the Sydney and Melbourne *Sun Aria* competitions, by virtue of their brevity, facilitated personalised judging, *Mobil Quest*, in order to involve higher numbers of contestants, was judged in a way the purists found unconventional. Given that a singer's presentation and appearance can quite often be the difference between winning and losing, the practice of *Mobil Quest* judges not actually viewing contestants until the final was not ideal.<sup>117</sup> Regardless of these circumstances, many hundreds of budding singers were provided with opportunities that the *Sun Aria* in the main offered to a select few. These people were quite often profiled and photographed in the media prior to heats and finals and enjoyed a degree of recognition made possible largely by Crawfords.

While many critics were either musicians, singing teachers or performers, many average listeners did not particularly care who won and simply enjoyed the program, as 'Music Lover' notes:

I'm not interested in who wins the *Mobil Quest*; I listen to it because I like the programme. How people can write and criticise the decisions of such renowned judges is beyond me. I, for one, commend them on doing an extremely difficult task in a competent manner.<sup>118</sup>

*Mobil Quest* offered aspiring singers significant exposure and rewards, with the second and third place prizes of £300 and £100 respectively sometimes being the difference between taking lessons and not. For winners such as Ronal Jackson (1949) Joan Sutherland (1950), Margaret Nisbett (1951), Donald Smith (1952) and Elizabeth Allen (1953), being able to access the best vocal coaches helped them become stars in the world's leading opera houses. In her biography, Sutherland noted that the £1,000 first prize was like \$25,000 in 1997: "Our expenses were handsomely paid by the sponsors who also endeavoured to put us at our ease".<sup>119</sup> Having won the *Sydney Sun Aria* in 1949, at her fourth attempt, Sutherland recalled that the two competitions offered widespread publicity and a great deal of prestige. Before heading overseas, Sutherland, along with the other finalists and selected semi-finalists, embarked on the annual *Mobil Quest Tour of Australia*, an event cleverly conceived by Hector Crawford to augment the performers' fees while demonstrating high-quality home-grown talent.<sup>120</sup>

*Mobil Quest* was an innovative, unique and successful initiative that stimulated and promoted the best indigenous talent available. Along with *Opera For the People*, *Mobil Quest* probably encouraged the formation of the Australian Opera Company in 1956. By 1954, both Ronal Jackson and Joan Sutherland were members of the Covent Garden Opera Company.<sup>121</sup> Margaret Nisbett sang full time with London's *Sadler's Wells* company for eight years as would Donald Smith some years later. While these artists may not be exclusively 'Crawford Creations', Crawfords' influence in the evolution of home grown talent and the subsequent development of Australia's artistic reputation overseas cannot be denied.<sup>122</sup>

Melbourne Soprano Margaret Nisbett is a prime example, and she voices no doubt of the extent Crawfords' and *Mobil Quest* contributed to her stellar career:

For the fact that they gave me the start, which I might never have had the opportunity of taking up with someone else, it's probably one hundred percent towards what I've done.<sup>123</sup>



A case study located in Appendix B expands upon the role of *Mobil Quest*, the encouragement received from Hector and Dorothy Crawford, and the impact of subsequent prize money and sponsorships on Nesbitt's opera career.

#### **4.6. Radio Ratings – An Alternate Perspective**

While John Cain and Jacqueline Kent et al espouse the quality of programs such as *Melba*, *Opera For the People* and *Mobil Quest*, and while it was certainly true that programs such as *Australia's Amateur Hour* bore very little resemblance to *Mobil Quest*, samples of *Anderson Analysis of Radio Rating Reports* (Melbourne Area) between 1946 and 1954 show a different picture. While these reports are chronologically incomplete, those examined indicate that less formal programs like 3DB's *Australia's Amateur Hour* (AAH) were enormously popular. During this eight-year period there was scarcely a two-month span when *Australia's Amateur Hour* was not at number one of the top 15 commercial nightly programs. The same applies to other regular top 15 programs such as *Pick-a-Box*, *Caltex Theatre*, *Give it a Go*, *Martin's Corner*, *Dad and Dave* and *Lux Radio Theatre*; most of these being Sydney productions. Very rarely was a Crawford musical program in the top 15 except the first few episodes of *The Melba Story* which made 15th place in February-March 1946.<sup>124</sup>

Between early 1946 and into 1947, *Melba* rated 28, 21, 35 and 26 respectively out of approximately 170 programs. Similarly, *Opera For the People*, upon its debut in November 1946, rated 30 with other available figures indicating ratings of 46, 47, 45 and 36 respectively. In August 1948 *The Blue Danube* rated at 22 while Glenda Raymond's *Holiday for Song*, given her popularity, rated at 13.<sup>125</sup> Because records are missing it is not known if both *Melba* and *Opera For the People* rated any higher, nor are any rating records available in relation to *Mobil Quest*. While these ratings are still exceptionally good and should not be dismissed, the apparent failure of Crawford's to register a consistent presence in the top 15 evening programs suggests that the general public did not completely embrace Crawford's new style of 'high-brow' entertainment, but continued to prefer the more conventional programs named above. Crawford's would later achieve outstanding ratings success with a 'more conventional' program type – police drama *D.24* – as is discussed in Chapter Six.

*Melba*, *Opera For the People* and *Mobil Quest* were quality programs. The latter two generously-sponsored productions provided an Australia-wide forum, opportunities and outstanding prizes for aspiring Australian singers. Some of Australia's greatest opera singers were 'Crawford Creations'. These programs were well received by the media and contributed to the development of classical music in Australia, including the ultimate formation of Opera Australia. Yet their appeal, I contend, was limited to devotees of 'high-brow' music and despite what Hector Crawford believed, did not entirely capture the attention of average listeners.

Hector Crawford was not concerned about negative opinions. For him, the most important achievement of *Opera For the People* was that the program "ran as an unqualified success over a nation-wide radio network of 53 stations which, at that time, was the greatest commercial network ever used for a regular musical program".<sup>126</sup> While mainstream radio listeners seemed to prefer programs such as *Australia's Amateur Hour*, massive crowds at the Botanic Gardens demonstrated their support in person at, for example, a "magnificent presentation of Verdi's *Rigletto* [in March 1947] attended by more than 125,000 people".<sup>127</sup> Also made possible by the vision of the sponsoring Vacuum Oil Company, *Opera For the People* brought that company thousands of congratulatory letters on, what was generally termed, "the greatest radio programme produced to that time."<sup>128</sup>

Of *Mobil Quest*, which was broadcast across 60 stations by 1954, Hector Crawford wrote that the program, specifically designed to discover new voices, was an immediate success:<sup>129</sup>

In addition to the hundreds of thousands who acclaimed the radio production, hundreds of interested listeners also attended the recording studio [at the Unitarian Church in Melbourne] to see for themselves how a really big musical programme was actually "put on the disc" – a most interesting and educational aspect of the production – and to see and hear in person the singers performing before a symphony orchestra.

*Mobil Quest*, for many singers, is an experience and opportunity never previously offered them – in fact, it can be said that for the majority of our young singers such an opportunity did not exist before the advent of commercial radio.<sup>130</sup>

Written five years after *Mobil Quest* began, this article indicates that Crawford had no doubt as to both the ratings success of the programme and the wonderful

opportunities offered to singers. In respect to the former, the small sample of rating statistics available may contradict this belief, but an examination of a more comprehensive sample size, should one be available, may prove otherwise.

#### **4.7. Music For the People**

The musical radio programs produced between 1946 and 1957 outlined thus far reveal Crawford's objective of providing high quality entertainment to the masses while promoting and developing local talent. *Music For the People* (MFP) was another such program. Broadcast from 1938 well into the 1970s, MFP was for Hector Crawford a great passion, both as a performer and as musical director.<sup>131</sup> Broadcast via 3DB-LK and later televised, MFP began fairly modestly on a make-shift stage in Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens, but grew quickly in both concept and scale.<sup>132</sup> Crowds in excess of 100,000 provided recognition of the popularity of the wide variety of music on offer during spring into autumn each year for 35 years, rain, hail or shine. During the most inclement weather, the Melbourne Town Hall hosted proceedings.

Hector's grandest MFP moment occurred on 12 March 1967 when a long-enduring record crowd of over 200,000 came to hear Australia's popular home-grown pop group *The Seekers*.<sup>133</sup> As a ten-year-old I well remember this extraordinary event broadcast and televised live from the Sidney Myer Music Bowl, the 'home' of MFP after the Bowl's completion in 1959. With Glenda Raymond by his side as obligatory co-star, there was Hector Crawford, proudly and exuberantly conducting the Australian Symphony Orchestra as *The Seekers* performed several of their number one hits. Although the world-famous *Seekers* were not 'Crawford Creations', they epitomized everything that Hector had sought in his quest to create an 'Australian consciousness'. Judith Durham, *The Seekers*' lead vocalist, reminisced how this event was such a tremendous highlight for the group:

When we first walked out on the stage at the Myer Music Bowl with 200,000 people waiting for us, people certainly showed their love for us that day. Apparently 10% of Melbourne turned out to be at that concert.<sup>134</sup>

And that's exactly why MFP was so well received; a combination of popular music was presented by music's leading artists of the day, in an atmosphere that everyone could enjoy. Terry Stapleton elaborated in Hector's obituary:

There was always a great sense of occasion about a *Music For the People* concert – large, appreciative crowds, family groups, lovers, older people – a great cross section of the Melbourne public; what Hector used to call, with great affection, “My mob”. And the affection was lavishly reciprocated. Always a big moment when Hector made his entrance, striding on stage to great applause, the warm enveloping smile, the man of white hair, with dinner jacket, wonderful presence.<sup>135</sup>

For Hector Crawford, MFP was very much a labour of love. Some people, rather unkindly, suggested he was not much of a musician – though the reverse was true – while the occasional correspondent viewed his antics with the conductor's baton as “eccentric gesticulations and fantastic mannerisms”.<sup>136</sup> What critics did not know, however, was that between 1938 and 1973 Hector and Dorothy conceptualized and produced these concerts pro bono.<sup>137</sup> Ian Crawford remembers how his uncle loved music:

He was a marvellous programmer. His success with the ubiquitous *Music For The People* relied on a number of factors, including its setting in the lovely botanic gardens, the casual and free-wheeling atmosphere engendered by his charismatic and forceful personality, and intimate style of his chosen soloists and comperes. But above all, success was guaranteed by the programs he put together, by his selection of vocal and orchestral numbers, and particularly by the intimacy of soloists' encores.<sup>138</sup>

Over the years, MFP presented either straight variety shows with leading vocalists and instrumentalists, aspiring artists, operas or a specific thematic approach.<sup>139</sup> In late 1958, MFP was conducted for the last time at its second make-shift sound stage in the Botanic Gardens. Featuring the Choir of All Saints' Church, St. Kilda, and talented teenage musicians, there were no stars for this final concert; it was truly ‘music for the people’ as the sound of Christmas carols and the Hector Crawford Orchestra wafted across the park to the newly completed Sidney Myer Music Bowl.<sup>140</sup> The venue for *MFP's* 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary in February 1959, the inaugural *Music For the People* concert at this new cultural icon was an event featuring 1949 *Mobil Quest* winner Ronal Jackson – by now an international star – and Glenda Raymond.<sup>141</sup>

It was the end of an era for MFP. Ian Crawford recalls that the first concert in 1938 attracted a pre-war audience of 5,000 people; the crowds grew rapidly over the years:

The concerts were held in the southern end of the Botanic Gardens on a temporary sound stage. Regulations forbade any large permanent building in the gardens, so throughout each summer a small team of workmen would

spend two weeks building the stage and roof and erecting the huge tent behind it. Then Hector would perform, and the workmen would take a week to tear the whole thing down again. This went on for 21 years until the Sidney Myer Music Bowl was built.<sup>142</sup>

Although MFP became entrenched at the Bowl over the next 15 years, Ian Crawford always suspected Hector did not want to move from the idyllic Botanic Gardens setting that had been so appealing. Having directed the fund-raising appeal that partially financed the Bowl, it is thought Hector was disappointed at being forced by the Melbourne City Council to relocate MFP. However both the Melbourne City Council and the State Government, which had provided considerable financial support over the years, believed the Bowl to be an appropriate venue for high profile events.<sup>143</sup>

In a decade of effusive MFP responses published in *The Listener-In*, MFP was generally portrayed as a relaxing, informal afternoon of first-class music presented in pleasant surroundings.<sup>144</sup> But one cannot help ponder at Hector's unshaken belief that his methodology was for the good of the people. Was he instinctively imposing his own values on the masses by producing high quality musical programs, such as *Opera For the People* and *Mobil Quest*?<sup>145</sup> If so, it was with every good intention. During those difficult post war years, as my own parents related to me, people welcomed ways of forgetting (or analysing) the psychological wounds of the war while receiving a degree of normality that created cohesion in both the family and society in general.

As Joy Damousi notes, radio in the 1940s became "an integral part of Australian life and culture".<sup>146</sup> She contends that the influence of radio in the context of post-war reconstruction provided:

a space between public and private spheres where discussion of the privatised self often found expression within the public arena through the mode of confession. Radio was perceived to be a consciousness-raising medium that had the potential to educate its listeners, make good citizens and build a better world.<sup>147</sup>

Kate Darian-Smith notes the popularity of all types of radio programs between the 1930s and 1950s. "Families would gather in the evenings around the wireless to listen to radio plays and serials, such as the famous *Dad and Dave*".<sup>148</sup> Serious music

on the ABC was an option as were Hector Crawford's musical offerings.<sup>149</sup> In a 1947 poll, Darian-Smith observes that 40 per cent of respondents indicated that listening to the radio was their main form of evening entertainment.<sup>150</sup> Darian-Smith also suggests that radio entertainment during wartime built positive social morale, as with the British experience.<sup>151</sup> Given the outcome of the 1947 poll, it is reasonable to contend that Crawfords' radio programs were influential in restoring family unity and diminishing the 'wounds of war'.

MFP was in all probability one such morale-boosting program, while providing a prestigious forum to introduce new talent, a tenet that was never abandoned. In January 1947, it was reported that the "record crowd that attended Sunday's *Music For the People* revelled in a musical treat in which the Melbourne (Melba) Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra provided rich background for junior vocal talent, chosen by Conductor Hector Crawford after some 380 auditions".<sup>152</sup> A decade later, in March 1957, a similar headline announced that "six singers who have never sung with a symphony orchestra in public before will be featured at *Music For the People*".<sup>153</sup> That was the Crawford way.

## 4.8. Epilogue

It is reasonable to suggest that Hector's motives, during a decade of substantial musical productions, were often altruistic when considering the social constructs described by Damousi and Darian-Smith. But in terms of generating an 'Australian consciousness', *Melba* was about a great Australian, while the many opportunities generated for, and subsequent successes experienced by, Australian artists, as consistently demonstrated throughout this chapter, support this premise.

While Crawfords broadcast MFP and other musical offerings, Dorothy Crawford continued to produce the company's core programming: thousands of hours of quality drama series and serials. By the time television began, her indefatigable work ethic and skill was well respected within the industry and by listeners. In Chapter Six, oral history accounts from actors and colleagues with whom she worked demonstrate how she gained their trust, while explaining that the success of Crawfords would have been greatly diminished by her absence.

Contextualizing the relationship between radio transcription companies, actors and producers requires a brief account of the circumstances in which radio actors were employed, as well as the processes of post-war production of radio serial/series episodes, and the problems associated with the acceptance of the traditional Australian accent and an acute shortage of actors.

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Colour front page of *Mobil Quest* promotional booklet and *Mobil Quest* program for 1954, from the Margaret Nisbett private collection.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra, Glenda Raymond, interview with Beverly Dunn for *Once Upon A Wireless* project, Melbourne, 7 September 1993, Title No: 271892. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.
- <sup>2</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 32.
- <sup>3</sup> "Melba's Life as Radio Serial: Notable Production Feature for 3DB-LK", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 29 December 1945-4 January 1946, p. 3.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> "Melba's Life as Radio Serial", op. cit.
- <sup>6</sup> Jacqueline Kent, *Out of the Bakelite Box: The Heyday of Australian Radio*, ABC Enterprises, Crows Nest, NSW, 1990, p. 76.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> "Melba's Life as Radio Serial", op. cit.; Jacqueline Kent, op. cit.
- <sup>9</sup> "Melba's Life as Radio Serial", op. cit.
- <sup>10</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 25.
- <sup>11</sup> "3DB's Melba Serial a Winner", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 9-15 February 1946, p. 2.
- <sup>12</sup> National Film and Sound Archive: <http://www.nfsa.gov.au/>, last accessed March 2014.
- <sup>13</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 26;  
John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, Prowling Tiger Press, Richmond, 1998, pp. 92;  
Jacqueline Kent, "Out of the Bakelite Box", op. cit., p. 76;
- <sup>14</sup> Glenda Raymond, op. cit.
- <sup>15</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 25.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra, Keith Eden, interview with Beverly Dunn for *Once Upon a Wireless Project*, Flinders, Victoria, 16 June 1993, p. 4. Title No: 270436. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.
- <sup>19</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 25.
- <sup>20</sup> "Women Playing a Big Part in Melba Production", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 2-8 February 1946, 'Maxine' Section, p. 11.
- <sup>21</sup> "Melba's Life as Radio Serial", op. cit.
- <sup>22</sup> "3DB's Melba Serial a Winner", op. cit.
- <sup>23</sup> "The Girl Who Sings Melba", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 17-23 August 1946, p. 2.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> 'Music Lover,' Hobart, letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 15-21 June, 1946, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 13.
- <sup>26</sup> "The Girl Who Sings 'Melba'", *The Listener-In*, op. cit.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> John Cain, op. cit., p. 92.
- <sup>30</sup> Terry Stapleton, "A Legendary Figure of the Australian Entertainment Industry", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 March 1991, p. 6.
- <sup>31</sup> John Cargher: "Glenda Raymond – A Stellar Talent", notes in *Glenda Raymond Soprano: The Definitive Recordings*, ScreenSound Australia, 2003.
- <sup>32</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 30.
- <sup>33</sup> Jacqueline Kent, "Out of the Bakelite Box," op. cit., p. 78.
- <sup>34</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 30.
- <sup>35</sup> "Grand Opera Plans for Radio: Possible Stage Link", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 24-30 August 1946, p. 3.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>39</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne - Official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, *Submission to the Tariff Board Inquiry into the Production and Distribution of Motion Picture films and Television, Crawford Productions*, October 1972, p. 5.
- <sup>40</sup> "Nation-wide Hook-up of Opera For The People", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 12-18 October 1946, p. 2.



<sup>41</sup> These included *La Boheme*, *Faust*, *Barber of Seville*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata* and *Madam Butterfly*.  
Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> "Melba Stars Featured in Opera Series: Australia-Wide Radio Coverage Planned", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 September 1946, p. 3.

<sup>43</sup> "Nation-wide Hook-up of Opera For The People", op. cit.

<sup>44</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne - Official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, *Commercial Television in Australia*, published by Hector Crawford, Melbourne, 14 September 1959. p. 1;

Hector Crawford, "Submission to the Tariff Board Inquiry", op. cit., pp. 5-7.

<sup>45</sup> The **Herald Sun Aria Competition**, as it is now called, was formerly known as **The Sun Aria**, and sponsored by *The Sun News-Pictorial* newspaper. A prestigious vocal competition held in Ballarat, Victoria and Melbourne, the competition forms the aria section of the Royal South Street Eisteddfod in Ballarat, Australia's oldest and largest eisteddfod. Commencing in 1924, two heats of the competition are held annually in Ballarat in September at Her Majesty's Theatre, with the final held at Hamer Hall (formerly the Melbourne Concert Hall) in early November. Six Finalists are accompanied by Orchestra Victoria, conducted by Maestro Richard Divall. Previous winners of note include Dame Kiri te Kanawa (1966) and Jonathan Summers (1974).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melbourne\\_Sun-Aria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melbourne_Sun-Aria), accessed 8 June 2010.

<sup>46</sup> "Melba Stars Featured in Opera Series", op. cit.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> "World to Hear Sunday's Opera Performance in Gardens", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 29 March-4 April 1947, p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> 'The Listener', "New Opera Series Begins", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 23-29 November 1946, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Alan Williams, Coburg, Victoria, letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 24-30 January 1948, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 4.

<sup>53</sup> "Premier Behind Quest For New Singers: Search For More Operatic Talent", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 9-15 November 1946, p. 3;

"World to Hear Sunday's Opera Performance in Gardens", *The Listener-In*, op. cit;

Dorothy Harvey, letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 February 1948, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 19.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> "Sydney Singers For Opera For The People", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 5-11 July 1947, p. 1;

"Sydney Singers Here For 3DB Operas", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 6-12 September 1947, p. 2.

<sup>56</sup> The co-called 'cultural cringe', suggests Wikipedia, "is an internalised inferiority complex which causes people to dismiss their own culture as inferior to the cultures of other countries", particularly western cultures such as Great Britain and the USA.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_cringe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_cringe), accessed 10 November 2010;

Well known social commentator, A.A. Phillips, developed this phrase [cultural cringe] in what was regarded as "an influential and highly controversial" 1950 essay which explored the "ingrained feelings of inferiority that local intellectuals struggled against". While the cultural cringe was applied across fields such as science and medical research, Phillips wrote that the cultural cringe was most clearly associated with the Arts: Australian theatre, music and literature. Phillips contends that "the public widely assumed that anything produced by local dramatists, actors, musicians, artists and writers was necessarily deficient when compared against the works of the British and European counterparts". The public generally felt that the only way a singer or actor, for example, could prove him or herself was by spending time studying and performing in Britain, Europe or America.

[Arthur Angel Phillips](http://www.mup.unimelb.edu.au/catalogue/0-522-85221-1.html), (January 2006). in *A. A. Phillips on the Cultural Cringe*, Melbourne University Publishing. ISBN 0-522-85221-1. <http://www.mup.unimelb.edu.au/catalogue/0-522-85221-1.html>, Cited in Wikipedia:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_cringe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_cringe), accessed 10 November 2010;

During the golden years of radio between 1945-55, Australia's limited resources and small population was a factor in the belief artists should study and work overseas and then bring their skills and talents back home to share, as many did. Hector Crawford probably drew upon the notion of a cultural cringe to encourage awareness among sponsors to attract lucrative financial prizes, which, in turn, would support the development of Australian artists and future establishment of an Australian opera company. *Music For the People*, *Opera For the People* and *Mobil Quest* placed Australian talent at the forefront of Australian radio and enabled artists such as Joan Sutherland, Margaret Nisbett, June Bronhill, Glenda Raymond and many others to advance their careers overseas. I believe, however, that these artists studied overseas out of practicality and necessity rather than suffering from any sort of 'cultural cringe'.

<sup>57</sup> "Premier Behind Quest for New Singers: Search For More Operatic Talent", op. cit.

<sup>58</sup> Glenda Raymond, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>59</sup> Keith Eden, Interview with Beverly Dunn for *Once Upon a Wireless*, op. cit.

<sup>60</sup> For example, Elsie Morison made her debut at London's Royal Albert Hall in 1948, was a member of the Sadler's Wells Opera Company until 1954 and performed regularly at Covent Garden between 1953 and 1964.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elsie\\_Morison](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elsie_Morison), cited from Harold Rosenthal, 'Morison, Elsie' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, London, 1992, accessed 7 November 2010;

Glenda Raymond was contracted to sing with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC radio and television during 1949-50.

Sources: *The Listener-In*, "The Whispering Gallery" Section, Melbourne, 11-17 June 1949, p. 4; Maxine, "Radio Work More Exacting in London than Here," *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 20-26 August 1949, p. 20;

Tenor John Lanigan was, for nearly 30 years, a principal performer with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, initially in leading lyric roles, followed by character parts.

Source: Elizabeth Forbes, "Obituary John Lanigan", *The Independent, Independent Print Co*, London 23 August 1996, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-john-lanigan-1311060.html>, accessed 7 Nov 2010;

Sylvia Fisher went to England in 1947 as an established singer, performed for the BBC broadcasts, joined the Covent Garden Opera Company in 1948 and continued to perform there into the 1970s. Early in her career with Covent Garden Fisher was the Company's leading dramatic soprano.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sylvia\\_Fisher](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sylvia_Fisher) - Cited from H. Rosenthal and J. Warrack, *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Opera*, OUP, London 1974 printing, accessed 7 November 2010.

<sup>61</sup> "Premier Behind Quest For New Singers: Search For More Operatic Talent", op. cit.

<sup>62</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opera\\_Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opera_Australia), accessed 7 November 2010.

<sup>63</sup> "Glenda Raymond to Tour", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, February, 1948 (page number not available).

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> John Cargher. "Glenda Raymond: A Stellar Talent", op. cit.

<sup>66</sup> "Raymond Record Concert," *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 3-9 April 1948, p. 3.

<sup>67</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 26

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 34

<sup>70</sup> "Glenda Returning For New 3DB Show", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 15-21 July 1950, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>73</sup> Glenda Raymond, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>74</sup> John Cargher. "Glenda Raymond: A Stellar Talent," op. cit.

<sup>75</sup> Margaret Nisbett, Interview with Philip Davey, Regent, Melbourne, 29 June 2010.

<sup>76</sup> John Cargher, "Glenda Raymond: A Stellar Talent," op. cit.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> "Glenda Signed by the ABC", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 3-9 November 1951, p. 2.

<sup>80</sup> John Cargher, "Glenda Raymond: A Stellar Talent", op. cit.

<sup>81</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan\\_Sutherland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan_Sutherland), accessed 7 June, 2010.

<sup>82</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 31;

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan\\_Sutherland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan_Sutherland), op. cit.

<sup>83</sup> "This is the Last Mobil Quest", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 24-30 August 1957, p. 3;

Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>84</sup> "Close Contest in Artist Finals", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 6-12 March 1948, p. 8.

<sup>85</sup> "Last Four Chosen for Grand Final: P & A Parade", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 December 1946, p. N/A;

Advertisement for Maples P & A Parade", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 13-19 September 1947, p. 16;

"Tenor Scores in Talent Tote", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 27 August-2 September 1949, p. 9.

<sup>86</sup> "2,000 Already Entered for ABC Eisteddfod", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 14-20 June 1947, p. 2.

<sup>87</sup> "Advertisement for ABC Eisteddfod", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 19<sup>th</sup> July 1947, p. 8.

<sup>88</sup> "£1,000 Prize for Best Australian Voice", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, January 1949, p. 3.

<sup>89</sup> Jacqueline Kent, loc.cit., p. 78.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid;

"Judges Selected For £1,000 Quest", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 12-18 February 1949, p. 3.

The other three judges in the first series were Dr Percy Jones, organist and choirmaster of St. Patrick's Cathedral; Miss Bicknell Allen, well known music critic; and Mr Bruce Bellamy, advertising manager of Vacuum Oil.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> "£1,000 Prize for Best Australian Voice", op. cit.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> "£1,000 Prize for Best Australian Voice", op. cit.

<sup>96</sup> "Ballads Only in Quest", *Listener-In*, Melbourne, 10-16 March 1956, pp. 3, 8.

Over the years, the combination and/or style of songs varied but not to a large degree; for example, it was decided that in 1956 contestants "will be singing the world's outstanding ballads".

<sup>97</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>98</sup> "Big Prize Money for Mobil Quest", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 January 1950, p. 2.

<sup>99</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> "Quest Again Next Year – New Singing Feature", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne 17-23 September 1949, p. 2.

<sup>102</sup> Hector Crawford, "Submission to the Tariff Board Inquiry, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>103</sup> The *Sydney Sun Aria*, now known as the *McDonald's Aria in the City of Sydney Eisteddfod*, was the Sydney equivalent to the *Melbourne Sun Aria* Competition.

<sup>104</sup> [http://zades.com.au/gandd/index.php/geelong/people/gdsunaria#Local\\_winners](http://zades.com.au/gandd/index.php/geelong/people/gdsunaria#Local_winners), accessed 8 June 2010.

<sup>105</sup> <http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A130528b.htm>, accessed 8 June 2010.

<sup>106</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melbourne\\_Sun-Aria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melbourne_Sun-Aria), op. cit.

"Mobil Quest advertisement," *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 January 1950, p. 17.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> "Rich Vocal Quest Begins", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 9-15 April 1949, p. 4.

<sup>109</sup> 'Constand', letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 28 May-3 June 1949, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 25.

<sup>110</sup> 'Joan Arnold Admirer', letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 28 May-3 June 1949, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 25.

<sup>111</sup> 'Music Lover (1)', letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 4-10 June 1949, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 25.

<sup>112</sup> "Mobil Quest Adjudications", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 23-29 July 1949, p. 23.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Although one could say this was the purest way to judge the voice.

<sup>118</sup> 'Music Lover (2)', letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 4-10 June 1949, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 25.

<sup>119</sup> Joan Sutherland, *A Prima Donna's Progress*, Random House, Milsons Point, NSW, 1997, pp. 16, 17.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> "Australian Singers to Tour Africa", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 1-7 August 1953, p. 3.

<sup>122</sup> The modern reality television equivalents of *Mobil Quest* – *Australian Idol* (10 Network 2003-2009) and *Australia's Got Talent* (7 Network 2007-2010) also sought to discover the most commercial popular young singers/artists in Australia through a series of nationwide auditions. Although outcomes during the later stages of *Australian Idol* were determined by public voting, both programs employed controversial and often humiliating public criticism of contestants by on-air judging panels comprising high profile celebrities. Conversely, while considerable public criticism of *Mobil Quest* adjudicators has been demonstrated, Judges did not comment about contestants nor were they present during the recording of heats. (Although during 1952-54 adjudicators assisted with preliminary auditioning – Hector Crawford, *Mobil Quest Brochure*, 1953) Contestants in both contemporary equivalents performed live, and both programmes generated high ratings. The Grand Final of *Australian Idol* was held at the Sydney Opera House with artists such as Guy Sebastian and Shannon Noll achieving considerable success.

Sources: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_Idol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Idol), accessed 8 November 2010;

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia%27s\\_Got\\_Talent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia%27s_Got_Talent), accessed 8 November 2010.

<sup>123</sup> Margaret Nisbett, Interview with Philip Davey, Regent, Melbourne, 29 June 2010.

<sup>124</sup> National Archives of Australia, Melbourne, Ref: MP634/1, 388790 & 909721: *The Anderson Analysis of Broadcasting, AAB Ratings Report*: various incomplete sets of reports from February 1946 to July 1954.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Hector Crawford, "Art's Debt to Commercial Enterprise," *Mobil Quest Programme 1954*, Vacuum Oil Company, Melbourne, 1954, p. 1. (From the Margaret Nisbett Private Collection, Regent, Victoria.)

Of the Vacuum Oil Company, Hector Crawford wrote in the above article that "undeniably, the majority of commercial houses are keenly interested in the sale of their products, but it is also undeniable that in their advertising campaigns a great many of these enterprises are motivated by a genuine desire to incorporate in their programmes features beneficial to the community. In the case of radio, they are anxious not only to offer coveted opportunities to participating artists, but also to provide educational entertainment for listeners. But, perhaps above all, sponsors of these radio programmes are anxious to see that opportunities are provided for talented Australians to win fame and fortune in their own country and in the cultural centres of the world".

Hector Crawford, "Art's Debt to Commercial Enterprise," op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>127</sup> "Verdi Opera Revived in 3DB Series", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 30 August-5 September 1947, p. 2.

<sup>128</sup> Hector Crawford, "Art's Debt to Commercial Enterprise," op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Although the formation of *Music For the People* in 1938 is generally attributed to Hector Crawford and Dr Harold Elvins from the Melbourne (Melba) Conservatorium, Melbourne businessman and philanthropist Sidney Myer established free, open-air concerts in the Royal Botanic Gardens with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in 1929; these concerts were always well attended by Melbournians. The Sidney Myer Music Bowl, opened in 1959, was named after Myer.

Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 32;

Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myer\\_Music\\_Bowl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myer_Music_Bowl), accessed 10 June 2010.

<sup>132</sup> Terry Stapleton, "Crawford Put Australia On Television", *The Age*, Melbourne, 12 March 1991, p. 14.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Judith Durham, interview by Peter Thompson in ABC1 TV program *Talking Heads*, Melbourne, 1 March 2010. <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/talkingheads/txt/s2826959.htm>, accessed 10 June 2010.

<sup>135</sup> Terry Stapleton, op. cit.

<sup>136</sup> S. H. Sinclair, "He's Most Sincere", *The Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 24-30 March 1956, p. 25.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>139</sup> In 1946, Dorothy Crawford produced Edward German's light opera *Merrie England*.

Source: "3DB-LK Present Top Line Stars", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 2-8 March 1946, p. 9;

In 1952, *Music For The People* played at the Princess Theatre presenting a musical tribute to the Coral Sea Battle, *The Bonds of Freedom*, written by John Ormiston Reid.

Source: "A Tribute to the Coral Sea", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 10-16 May 1952, p. 13;

Always looking to capitalize on popular theatrical productions or significant events, Hector featured Virginia Paris, "the vivacious star of South Pacific" who, during a 1953 concert, sang a selection of Negro spirituals with 1952 Mobil Quest winner Donald Smith.

Source: "Music For the People Featuring Virginia Paris", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 28 March-3 April 1953, p. 23.

To celebrate the inaugural visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Melbourne in February 1954, *Merrie England* – "For a Royal Occasion" – was revisited with a different cast. During Melbourne's 1956 Olympic Games, the Government of Victoria and Melbourne City Council promoted *Music For the People* as the 'Official Function of the Olympic Arts Festival'.

Source: "Music For the People: Official Function Olympic Art's Festival", *The Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 24-30 November 1956, p. 13.

<sup>140</sup> When the Sidney Myer Charitable Trust announced the Sidney Myer Gift for the development of a music bowl similar to the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, Hector Crawford agreed to direct the appeal to raise the additional funds needed for the project. The Bowl was originally to be called the Melba Music Bowl, but was ultimately named after its principal benefactor. Myer, the well known Melbourne retail businessman and outstanding philanthropist who died in 1934, had envisaged a bowl of this type for Melbourne after visiting the Hollywood Bowl in 1929.

"It's a special young people's program in 'Music For the People'", *The Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 13-19 December 1958, p. 10;

Ian Crawford unpublished memoirs, op. cit.;

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sidney\\_Myer\\_Music\\_Bowl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sidney_Myer_Music_Bowl), accessed 5 June, 2010.

<sup>141</sup> "The musical event Melbourne has been waiting for...", *The Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 14-20 February 1959, p. 15.

<sup>142</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

"Big Crowds Expected at Gardens Concert", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 31 January-6 February 1948, p. 3.

<sup>144</sup> *Music For the People* reader responses from *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, various editions, 1946-1956.

<sup>145</sup> If indeed Hector Crawford believed that his own musical values' predilections were good-for-the-masses, at least his offerings were more palatable to most listeners, than the dogmatic approach adopted by autocratic BBC Director-General Sir John Reith (1922-1937).

Ian McIntyre writes of Reith's arrogant perceptions of the BBC's audience in the pre-audience research days of the 1920s: "The social centre of gravity is much nearer the bottom than the top of the social scale. In the broadcast audience it is probably rather lower still. You will probably have every sort of individual listening to you, and a large proportion of working-class people, mostly in their homes, not in clubs or pubs. The workman and his wife will certainly be there, but so will the ordinary middle class fellow and his [wife], mostly at the fireside".

Source: Sir John Reith quoted in Ian McIntyre, "The Expense of Glory: A Life of John Reith", *Harper Collins*, London, 1993, p. 174;

Socialist academic Harold Laski wrote that Reith "carries about with him a bundle of dogmas – social, religious, ethical, political – and he has a tendency to make them a measure of all things and all men. Sunday is what the lawyers call a *dies non* [a day on which no legal business is done] on the wireless, because Sir John will have it so".

Source: Harold Laski, quoted in Ian McIntyre op. cit., p. 187;

Reith's perception of the BBC audience composition and his staunch Presbyterianism led to a view "that broadcasting should not be allowed to assist the process of secularisation", a position that Reith manifested on Sunday's when programming was principally devoted to religious themes.

Source: Ian McIntyre op.cit., p.188;

McIntyre notes that some listeners appreciated this more than others while those further down the social scale with fewer resources, i.e. a radio, neither benefited nor were harmed by Reith's edicts and assumptions. One correspondent wrote that "Sunday is the worst day of the week, absolutely dead", while the producers within Radio Luxembourg and Radio Normandie welcomed their good fortune as British listeners sought alternative programming. (Ibid.)

<sup>146</sup> Joy Damousi, "Making the Ordinary extraordinary in the 1950s: Explorations of Inferiority and Australian Cultural History" in Hsu-Ming Teo and Richard White, (eds), *Cultural History in Australia*, UNSW Press, NSW, 2003, p. 215.

<sup>147</sup> Joy Damousi, op. cit, p. 216.

<sup>148</sup> Kate Darian-Smith, *On the Home Front: Melbourne in Wartime 1939-1945*, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 1990, p. 151.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 152.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., p. 149.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>152</sup> "Young Singers In Botanic Gardens Concert", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 4-10 January 1947, p. 2.

<sup>153</sup> "Newcomers Will Make Their Musical Debut", *The Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 30 March-5 April 1957, p. 3.

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

1. Full page newspaper advertisement promoting  
*The Crawford School of Broadcasting*.  
Source: *The Listener In*, Melbourne, 15-21 July 1950, Page 10.
2. Photo of *The Crawford School of Broadcasting* Principal Agnes Dobson  
supervising a group of students rehearsing in the studio.  
Source: *The Listener In*, Melbourne, circa early 1950s.

## **Chapter 5: The Life and Times of a Radio Actor**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The relationship between radio transcription companies, actors and producers during the radio years was quite different to what would develop during the television era. It is therefore useful to describe briefly the shortage of all actors post-war and lead actors in the early 1950s, the circumstances in which radio actors were employed, the processes associated with the production of radio serial/series episodes post-war, and difficulty attaining acceptance of the traditional Australian accent. The Crawford School of Broadcasting was established in response to these problems.

### **5.2. A Handshake Agreement**

Several long-term actors at the forefront of Crawfords' radio drama productions had established themselves in the industry before the war. Top-liners such as Keith Eden, Patricia Kennedy and Clifford Cowley, among others, were always in demand throughout the industry in Melbourne. By the end of the war, however, the few quality actors could not to meet the demands of what is commonly called "the golden decade of radio drama."<sup>1</sup> This scarcity can be attributed to several factors.

Firstly, with many actors serving in World War Two, Eden included, it was inevitable that many would become casualties of war. Secondly, with the importation of recordings restricted to Commonwealth nations after 1939, the creation of a thriving domestic radio transcription market in Melbourne and Sydney offered considerable employment opportunities for the small pool of actors available.<sup>2</sup> Thirdly, the recording method known as 'flying' – being able to perform without rehearsal or even a read-through – as described in Chapter Four, meant that producers usually only hired actors who had perfected this technique. Finally, producers preferred actors who could adopt multiple characterisations.<sup>3</sup> Quite simply, the expense of recording programs precluded 'professional' actors and producers wasting time when an inexperienced actor made a mistake near the end of a take.<sup>4</sup>

During the pre-war era, especially before the 1939 import ban, radio actors occasionally signed contracts or were employed as salaried staff. But Combe and

Griffen-Foley note that between 1945 and 1955, even the very best radio actors operated predominately as freelancers, accepting lead roles on a handshake, with the understanding that long-term commitments would be honoured.<sup>5</sup> Such flexibility benefited production houses and actors after the war because of the abundance of roles, with freelancing allowed actors time for writing or theatre engagements.<sup>6</sup>

As few as 100 radio actors were available in Sydney and Melbourne, according to estimates at war's end. Even when radio drama production peaked in 1951, and a new generation of actors increased numbers to several hundred in each city, there were only 20 to 30 principals in Sydney, and even fewer in Melbourne.<sup>7</sup> In these circumstances, a remarkable form of 'artistic socialism' developed, in which radio production houses worked collectively in a spirit of cooperation. The amount of work for freelancers compensated for the low hourly rates paid, and producers chose not to compete for the small number of quality actors by offering exorbitant remuneration. Instead of offering attractive individual contracts that would have tied an actor to one particular producer, all producers continued to have access to the small pool of quality actors, thus keeping costs down. Actors could still make a good living given the amount of employment available, although many may have preferred differentiated pay scales, contracts and a less exhaustive method of fulfilling engagements.<sup>8</sup>

Conversely, Combe contends that production houses actively manipulated pay rates. The decision to offer all actors, including leads, the same wages, served to depress compensation overall, and discouraged a bidding war for the most talented actors:<sup>9</sup>

By paying a flat rate to all actors, regardless of skill, producers achieved several things. The most competent actors – those with 'star' quality – could not ration their work while maintaining high incomes, nor could they insist on taking leading roles without sacrificing income. This meant that, in order to maximise their earnings, Australia's best actors were forced to take as many leading roles as they could, and also minor roles. As a result, producers were able to cast their serials with an exceptionally high proportion of top-ranking actors at minimum cost.<sup>10</sup>

The existence of a uniform fee scale exacerbated the stressful situation of actors rushing from studio to studio — in the morning at Crawfords and in the afternoon at ARP in West Melbourne — to record a week's quota of episodes for one serial. For example, in 1950 Crawfords produced an extensive 44 quarter-hours of radio drama



weekly. They followed the industry standard of one production hour for each quarter hour of on-air material, but tried to avoid the practice of 'flying' where possible<sup>11</sup> Still, there was little let-up: actors were expected to collect scripts before the recording session and perfect their parts. Worse still, actors were often expected to be ready to record after only two or three read-throughs, which intensified the fear of spoiling a recording.<sup>12</sup>

Intense concentration, and the ability to work quickly while playing multiple characters in the same episode were essential skills to become a successful radio actor.<sup>13</sup> Individuals with these qualities were in demand by all production houses which belies the argument that rates of pay were capped to discourage competition for radio's best actors. That notion was rejected by a 1946 Parliamentary enquiry although the committee did concede that low rates of pay forced the best talent overseas.<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, and possibly demonstrating a pro-ABC bias, the committee did not encourage cut-throat competition out of a fear that costs would rise for all concerned, placing the non-commercial ABC at risk.<sup>15</sup>

Combe suggests that one factor contributing to radio actors' low pay rates was the failure of their representative body, Actors and Announcers' Equity Association of Australia (Actors' Equity), to attract actors' membership, in contrast to the more stable nature of theatre actors: "The nature of the radio actors' work in constantly rushing from studio to studio, hour by hour, splitting up and regrouping", made it difficult for Actors' Equity to systematically approach radio actors and arrange workplace representation.<sup>16</sup> The only successful 'award' Equity negotiated was in 1944, when £1/1/- became the minimum rate per hour (a 15 minute episode) for freelance actors irrespective of status, scarcely an imposition on producers who generally paid above the award rate.<sup>17</sup> In 1950, freelance actress and drama teacher Maie Hoban suggested that this arrangement was "depriving promising young dramatic players of much-needed opportunities in radio" and contributed to the apparent shortage of actors (discussed in Section 5.3 below).<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1949, radio audience correspondents began complaining about hearing the same players in multiple radio dramas.<sup>19</sup> Even high profile actor Richard Davies, speaking on behalf of a group of leading artists, expressed "trenchant criticism of a

long succession of radio serials in which the players are called on to portray moronic characters and scatterbrained families”:<sup>20</sup>

Up to date, listeners have put up with bad writing and poor acting because there is nothing better. [...] The constant complaint of radio artists is that they know that their fellow artists are capable of finer things than portraying a never-ending run of 'phoney' Counts and addlebrained families.[...] Artists are far superior to many of the shows in which they appeared.<sup>21</sup>

While artists were calling for better quality scripts, by 1956 listeners had become bored with the concentration of 'elite' actors; one correspondent suggested that Keith Eden, Davies and Douglas Kelly should take long service leave.<sup>22</sup> Producers addressed the shortage of fresh talent, including writers, in a variety of ways throughout the 1950s (outlined in the discussion of The Crawford School of Broadcasting, section 5.4, below).

### **5.3. A Shortage of Actors and Accent Problems**

Although Crawfords faced strong competition from the ABC, other independent producers in Melbourne and the Macquarie Network out of Sydney, it is generally acknowledged that Crawfords, with its high output and experimentation with new concepts, met the challenge and thrived.<sup>23</sup> Actors were crucial to Crawfords' prolific program production, but they were in short supply, as noted above.

A critical element in the mid-1949 industry debate about the shortage of quality actors was the related belief that the traditional Australian accent – associated with the so-called 'cultural cringe' – inhibited the sale of programs to the UK and USA and restricted opportunities for Australians to work on stage or radio in those countries.<sup>24</sup> In addition, Dorothy Crawford and seasoned British expatriate actor Moira Carleton asserted that many of Australia's best actors produced, however unintentionally, 'phony' or exaggerated English accents in the many radio plays portraying English characters in an English setting.<sup>25</sup> Melbourne drama teacher Maie Hoban agreed:

There are quite a number who do so, and this is due to the fact that there are many radio performers with outstanding ability and natural talent who have not been correctly trained in the fundamentals of speech craft. Their performances, under competent producers, in Australian or dialectical plays, are quite acceptable; but standard English in English roles discloses their weaknesses and lack of technique and the fundamentals of speech craft. [...] Furthermore,

this speech must be acquired by any artist who wishes to become successful overseas.<sup>26</sup>

Regardless of these perceived shortcomings, Australian BBC representative Neil Hutchinson wrote that Australian radio actors did not need to travel to England to seek fame and fortune. In December 1948, Hutchison suggested that actors had a far better chance of establishing a career in Australia than in England.<sup>27</sup> Noting the steady movement of Australian radio and theatre actors to Britain in that year, Hutchinson advised that opportunities in England were few and far between for the many locals and Australian hopefuls competing for limited work:

Apart from the small repertory company employed full-time by the BBC, and to whom the BBC pays a decent repertory company salary, there are extremely few artists who find sufficient work in radio alone to earn even an adequate livelihood. The reason is clear; there are only three domestic programmes and, as I have said, the supply of artists is enormous.<sup>28</sup>

The continuing exodus of Australian artists to England was described by Hutchison as an 'escape mechanism': "The pilgrimage to London has become for many Australians nothing more than a kind of psychological escape for bored actors who perhaps feel they have reached a dead-end".<sup>29</sup> The low rate of pay offered by commercial producers in Australia was also a contributing factor. On a positive note, Hutchison echoed many overseas visitors when he stressed that "the general standard of radio acting in Australia is, I feel, as high as anything I have seen, although it is true that more producers are necessary to build on this high standard."<sup>30</sup>

Several years later, in 1955, a visiting English actor added weight to this argument after noting, with some frustration, the on-going debate about the perceived inferior Australian accent:

Would your readers please believe that the Australian accent is just as welcome on the stages of England as anywhere else in the world [opportunities permitting]. I have been in this country for 17 months and keeping an open mind, I think my own observations might help a little.[...] The grown Australian strikes me as a particularly clear speaker. That is, he speaks without the slovenliness of which we have plenty in England, and with a correct pronunciation.<sup>31</sup>

For producers in Melbourne, the problem of accents was minor compared to the scarcity of actors, particularly actresses, available to fill lead roles.<sup>32</sup> In Sydney,

producers were concerned about the exodus overseas of male leads. Producer Harry Dearth noted that since 1948, 26 top actors and writers, including Peter Finch, John McCallum, Ron Randell and writer Sumner Locke-Elliot, had been “crossed off his books”.<sup>33</sup> The desire for actors to travel overseas had certainly contributed to the shortage. The actors, themselves, wished to travel overseas: nearly all leading actors made the trip at some time in their careers. In most cases, their stays were relatively brief. Patricia Kennedy went to London in April 1950, but returned within ten months; for a person of her talent and local reputation, lead roles in Melbourne and Sydney were abundant and more attractive.<sup>34</sup> By 1950 several new actresses had joined Crawfords' stable and other production houses. These included Margaret Mouchmore, Irene Mitchell, Mary Ward, Elizabeth Wing and Bettine Kaufmann, but more were needed to satisfy the demands of sponsors and networks to facilitate the sale of programs overseas.

Local producers held regular auditions for aspiring actors. Dorothy Crawford, for example, noted that “an elaborate and comprehensive filing system has been devised to handle hundreds of applications for auditions”:<sup>35</sup>

We also have a special set of audition scripts, carefully selected from the many dramas produced during the past few years [...] A panel of at least three competent judges oversee each audition which may last for 10 minutes or, as in the case of one recent prospective actor, may spread over a period of hours [...] Written feedback is provided to each candidate and a recording made when considered necessary.<sup>36</sup>

In response to criticism that radio producers were not doing enough to locate new talent, Dorothy stressed that the Crawfords' method of auditioning was comprehensive but noted that “you cannot take someone away from a typewriter and make her a star overnight”:<sup>37</sup>

Present stars have been lucky. They entered radio when standards were not as high as at present, but they have developed and improved their technique with the passing of the years.<sup>38</sup>

## **5.4. The Crawford School of Broadcasting**

The Crawford School of Broadcasting (CSB) opened in July 1950. It was not the first such school: in 1945 Morris West's ARP group announced the opening of a commercial radio school to cover studio announcing, radio dramatics, dramatic

production and script-writing.<sup>39</sup> In 1948 Actors' Equity opened schools in Sydney and Melbourne to train actors in all branches of the theatre, screen and radio. At the time, it was reported that in Sydney alone, more than 300 students had been accepted, including many established actors and actresses.<sup>40</sup> In addition, Melbourne's Vincent School of Broadcasting delivered training in radio announcing.<sup>41</sup> Long before television commenced, the burgeoning radio industry was acutely aware of the need to produce new talent, not just actors and actresses, but also news announcers, quiz show hosts and voiceover experts.

Ian Crawford recalls that his uncle decided to open the CSB partly to improve revenue but primarily to increase "the number of actors needed in Melbourne to sustain the wealth of programs then in production".<sup>42</sup> Patricia Kennedy concurs:

I'm sure they [Crawfords] started that school because they were probably wanting to broaden out the number of actors who were really, a very small group in Melbourne. Sydney seemed to have a wider group of actors, but it [the school] also made money. [...] But I think it was a very good idea actually; it was a way of people being trained.<sup>43</sup>

At the School's opening, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, reported that the purpose of the CSB, which would offer "training in every aspect of radio acting, announcing, speech-craft and allied subjects", was principally to overcome the "present shortage of radio actors and actresses in Melbourne".<sup>44</sup> Students had the advantage of learning in modern fully-equipped studios that were intimate enough for individual attention but big enough to simulate learning under virtual broadcast conditions. Every aspect necessary to generate a polished radio performer was covered in the radio actors' course, from sound effects, studio procedure, and timing to theme music, dialects (foreign accents) and character interpretation.<sup>45</sup>

A few year later, in 1954, the availability of tape recordings enabled students to listen to themselves, and to compare their work with that of Australia's leading actors.<sup>46</sup> On hand to provide instruction were Douglas Kelly, Dorothy Crawford and husband Roland Strong, among many guest lecturers. At the time of the school's inception, Hector Crawford clearly indicated that the school was for the greater good of the industry:<sup>47</sup>

At the end of each course all producers, broadcasting and station personnel in Melbourne will be invited to hear transcriptions featuring students at the school. These auditions will be held only when the directors feel that young artists are actually ready for professional work.[...] Enrolment at the school does not necessarily presuppose that students will be cast in Hector Crawford programmes, unless they are of the required standard.<sup>48</sup>

Moira Carleton's considerable training and distinguished career in British theatre and radio made her an exceptional choice as inaugural principal. Having moved to Melbourne in 1939, Carleton gained renown for her versatility as a leading actor in radio, repertory theatre and television.<sup>49</sup> During the last ten years of her life Carleton maintained an ongoing character role in the long running ABC television soap *Bellbird* – a career highlight – while regularly appearing in several Crawford programs from the early 1960s until her death in 1978.<sup>50</sup> Much in demand by the ABC and all independent radio producers, Carleton did most of her work with Donovan Joyce and Crawfords, appearing in *Melba*, *The Amazing Oscar Hammerstein* and serials such as *Christian Marlowe's Daughter*, *Prodigal Father*, along with the crime/social series *D.24* and *Problem People*. Her most enduring character roles were in 728 episodes of *To Love and Honour* and 434 episodes of *Sincerely Rita Marsden*, serials produced by Dorothy Crawford from 1949 well into the 1950s.<sup>51</sup> Patricia Kennedy thought Carleton was a good choice as principal:

Moira [Carleton] ran the school. I took a couple of lessons but other than that didn't really have an involvement.[...] Moira, being very English, had all that English repertory training and she was very good at her work, extremely good indeed.<sup>52</sup>

Thus Carleton's appointment by Dorothy and Hector Crawford was probably a response to the criticism that Australian actors 'exaggerated' the traditional British accent. Her role, therefore, was to refine the voices of existing actors and train prospective actors in methods that would help them to prepare for a wide range of characters and dialects without exaggeration or superficiality.<sup>53</sup> Later in her career, after radio listeners had become well accustomed to her warm voice in *Sincerely Rita Marsden* and *To Love and Honour*, Carleton observed that "luckily for me, I've never been typecast so I'm called on to play anything from straight light comedy to drama, talking in dialect parts en route".<sup>54</sup>

Carleton was principal for three years, followed by Keith Eden and Agnes Dobson. The school was divided into two sections. In addition to the primary adult component, a Junior school was led by Principal Barbara Brandon, another distinguished British actress.<sup>55</sup> Crawfords' solid reputation within the industry meant that, even in its first years, CSB never had problems recruiting staff commensurate to the company's standards.<sup>56</sup> Much has been already been written about the well regarded actor Keith Eden, while Agnes Dobson, the school's next principal, was yet another actor held in high esteem. A regular character actor engaged by the ABC and commercial stations, Dobson was the daughter of a Shakespearian actor and was herself a talented script writer.<sup>57</sup> According to the 1954 CSB Prospectus:

Miss Dobson adds a sound theoretical background and was in great demand as a Coach of Radio Drama before accepting appointment as Principal of The Crawford School of Broadcasting.[...] Miss Dobson personally conducts all classes in radio acting.<sup>58</sup>

The prospectus reveals that the radio acting classes were occasionally taken by external tutors with wide-ranging industry experience. Subjects included timing, pausation, emphasis, infection, modulation, pitch, use of energy, interpretation, accents, dialects and doubling; everything that a radio actor was likely to encounter could be found in the curriculum. A not inconsiderable fee of £7/7/- was charged per term. Master Classes, comprising four students in each class, required a fee of £8/8/- while one-hour private lessons over the term could be arranged for £10/10/-.<sup>59</sup> Was CSB simply another source of revenue for Crawfords? According to primary evidence found within the Agnes Dobson Collection, it was not.

In either a media release or notes for a radio interview, Dobson describes in great detail CSB's goals of discovering and encouraging new talent, and observes that in just four years, approximately 73 students had been placed in professional radio roles.<sup>60</sup> Carefully noting the philanthropic nature of the school, Dobson corroborates Hector Crawford's comments when the school opened:

At the end of every year, the students have a final 'break up' or demonstration night, and producers are invited to see their work. After last year's demonstration night, students were given parts in several radio shows, quite outside Crawford Productions so, you see, there's a great scope for the students.<sup>61</sup>

Another CSB document, not unlike a course description for students, discusses radio in general while describing key elements of the industry such as the limitations, advantages and financing of radio.<sup>62</sup> One particular paragraph provides insight into Crawfords' views about the importance of this training and in 'doing it well':

The training of men and women to use in the medium of radio is a thing too important to be left to chance. It is one of the most important tasks confronting contemporary education. So far, attempts at training people for radio have been fumbling and inept. The attempts have been honest and efforts sincere, but the results have not been encouraging. Young people with a serious interest in radio had no place to turn.<sup>63</sup>

Finally, the majority of this course operating guide details English pronunciation, English pronunciation of foreign names and the pronunciation of foreign languages such as French, German, Italian, Hungarian, Dutch and Flemish, along with several guides for each language.<sup>64</sup>

Many radio actors have observed the importance of mastering as many accents and dialects as possible. Earl Francis, one of CSB's early graduates, believes that the secret to his success in approximately 3,000 episodes of radio plays and drama series/serials was his ability to employ a wide variety of accents, both in radio and later as a regular character actor in many Crawfords' television shows such as *Homicide*, *Hunter*, *Division 4*, and *Matlock Police*.<sup>65</sup> Referring to accents, Francis notes that:

When I started acting, a 'cultured' accent was almost a prerequisite for obtaining work. With the introduction of local productions [particularly in television], the Aussie accent became more acceptable and people enjoyed their home grown stars, stories and locations.<sup>66</sup>

Francis believes that the CSB contributed to smoothing the rough edges of the Australian accent and that "while the local opportunities provided by Crawford Productions lessened but did not halt the exodus of artists seeking work overseas, Crawfords most certainly helped in diminishing the notion of 'cultural cringe'".<sup>67</sup>

Keith Eden also recalled the value of being able to master multiple accents:

It really stimulated 3DB, I remember they would have at least six 1/4 hour episodes a day, on the one station, which from the actor's point of view, was good. I remember I used to do a whole hour in the mornings; one of them I played a Frenchman, one of them I played a Scotsman, another at Yankee, and then I played myself – one after the other.<sup>68</sup>



After 18 months at the CSB, the school's first group of students performed before an audience of leading radio producers and station executives in 3DB's main studio. Delighted with her students' progress, Carleton remarked that several of this group, who had never faced a microphone twelve months earlier, were "now doing particularly well in dramatic features from national and commercial stations".<sup>69</sup> Producers in attendance were "very impressed by the wealth of potential talent available". Phillip Jones, senior executive producer at Morris West's Australasian Productions (ARP), was delighted: "I've heard twenty voices I will be able to use in my programmes in 1952".<sup>70</sup>

The 1954 prospectus for the CSB published a list of thirty-two "past and present students professionally engaged in radio work".<sup>71</sup> Several of these had been involved in the first audition: Earl Francis, Noel Ferrier, Myrtle Woods, Gwenda Beard, Judith Thompson and teenage student Don Battye, all became pioneers of television's first twenty years. Another, Frank Gatliff, went on to establish himself as a leading character actor in UK television and on stage in London's West End.<sup>72</sup> Before leaving for England, Gatliff, along with Earl Francis, secured a bit-part role in Stanley Kramer's 1959 film *On the Beach*, as did many well-known Australian radio actors of the time.<sup>73</sup>

Conversely, Don Battye launched his career as a very successful television producer and writer with Crawfords, followed by work in other television production houses, between 1970 and 1992. Battye, one of the first junior (child) pupils of the CSB, began his training in 1951 as a 13-year-old, during Moira Carleton's last year as principal.<sup>74</sup> In a 1985 interview, Battye reported that he enjoyed working for Crawfords more than any other producer because the Crawford approach to production was much more sophisticated, due largely to the influence and skill of Dorothy Crawford.<sup>75</sup> Battye's story is expanded in a case study in Appendix B.

With the exception of Battye, Lewis Fiander and Noel Ferrier, it is difficult to establish exactly the number of child actors who achieved success through attending the CSB Junior School. But as a considerable number of adult students established solid careers in both radio and television, the Crawford School of Broadcasting should be viewed as a significant component not only of Crawfords, but of the entire industry. In keeping with Crawfords' philosophy of developing and promoting local

talent and programs – and hence 'Crawford Creations' – the CSB was a means of augmenting strong indigenous artistic participation in the radio industry, in preparation for the future, while responding to current needs. As Hector Crawford said at the time:

The school was developing new talent, not only for my productions, but for the radio industry as a whole. The more jobs these young people get, the more useful they will be to Australia radio.<sup>76</sup>

## 5.5. Summary

The shortage of quality actors due to war fatalities during the radio drama boom between 1945 and 1956, was managed by offering low-paid but substantial employment to the small pool of available actors who worked freelance from job to job.<sup>77</sup> The rarity of contracts for lead actors in production houses, was an arrangement that may have been collectively sanctioned.<sup>78</sup> Even though a new generation of actors had come to the industry by 1951, there were still very few quality actors available to fill leading roles, so a spirit of cooperation continued among producers with regard to sharing lead actors.<sup>79</sup> Although radio actors in the UK received higher pay, the exodus of Australian actors to Britain seeking better remuneration – which disadvantaged Australian radio – predominately failed because the traditional Australian accent was unacceptable for typical British roles. Indigenous accents also inhibited the sale of Australian programs to the UK and USA.<sup>80</sup>

Crawfords tackled the shortage of actors with a regular audition program and established The Crawford School of Broadcasting to increase the acting fraternity, and to also provide training in refining the Australian accent to a level of versatility suitable for many different genres.<sup>81</sup> Other training schools opened, but Crawfords, for the 'greater good of the industry', interacted with other producers, broadcasting and station personnel as graduates became available for professional work across the industry.<sup>82</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> R. R. Walker, *The Magic Spark: The Story of the First Fifty Years of Radio in Australia*, The Hawthorn Press, Melbourne, 1973, pp. 57, 62;  
Diana Combe, *The Radio Serial Industry in Australia, an historical study of the production of serials in Australia, and the influence of the industry in the development of commercial radio*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Macquarie University, 1992, pp. 341, 342;  
Philip Jones, "The Radio Transcription Companies", in Albert Moran *Stay Tuned, the Australian Broadcasting Reader*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1992, p. 47;  
Bill McLaughlin, *From Wireless to Radio: the 3DB Story*, The Dominion Press, Blackburn, 2009, p. 127.
- <sup>2</sup> Bridget Griffen-Foley, *Changing Stations: The Story of Australian Commercial Radio*, University of NSW Press, 2009, pp. 6, 215.
- <sup>3</sup> R. R. Walker, op. cit. p. 57.
- <sup>4</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 25.
- <sup>5</sup> Diana Combe, *The Radio Serial Industry in Australia*, op. cit., pp. 203, 221, 210-211;  
Bridget Griffen-Foley, *Changing Stations*, op. cit., pp. 234, 235.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.  

Combe notes that while leading actors had no objection to working faster. They did object to the uniform fee scale as this prevented them from maximising their earnings. All actors objected to employers withholding fees from the entire cast, regardless of individual fault, until an episode was completed.

Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 203.
- <sup>7</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 206.
- <sup>8</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., pp. 210, 211, 230.  

In today's terms, this situation could be compared to the salary cap applicable to Australian Football League (AFL) clubs to ensure some degree of equalisation in the competition, but that is where any possible comparison ends. Given that players are contractually tied to clubs and top players receive extremely generous remuneration.
- <sup>9</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 229.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs op. cit., p. 41.
- <sup>12</sup> Beverly Dunn, Interview with Philip Davey, Brighton, Victoria, 1 March 2008.
- <sup>13</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 215.
- <sup>14</sup> Many famous actors left Australia in the 1950s; partly to escape the so-called 'cultural cringe' but to mainly establish careers in film, television and stage in the UK or USA. Some, such as Rod Taylor, Peter Finch, Ray Barrett and Charles Tingwell did very well, while others fared less well and came home.
- <sup>15</sup> Australia Government, Report of the 13<sup>th</sup> Federal Parliamentary Standing Committee, Canberra, 3 July 1946, paragraph eight, cited in Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 213.
- <sup>16</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., pp. 208-209.  

Combe notes that many actors were wary of Actors' Equity and did not want to be associated with what was seen as an overt Communist organisation under Federal President Hal Alexander; nor as 'elite professionals' did it seem appropriate to be a union member. (Many freelancers did not see a need to join the union.)
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 211-212.
- <sup>18</sup> "Equity is to Blame", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 20-26 May 1950, p. 3;  

Miss Hoban suggested that drama students could, for one or two years, serve a kind of apprenticeship, during which time they would receive, say, half the existing rates of pay for minor roles in radio plays and serials. This would give them valuable experience under actual radio working conditions. [But] under present conditions, a producer would naturally rather pay the minimum rate of £1/1/- for proven performers at the expense of a newcomer.
- <sup>19</sup> "Radio Producers Seek New Voices", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 9-15 July 1949, p. 3.
- <sup>20</sup> "Radio Actor Slates Low Standard of Broadcast Shows", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 5-11 November 1949, p. 3.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> "Something New", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 2-8 June 1956, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 29.
- <sup>23</sup> Bill McLaughlin, *From Wireless to Radio: the 3DB Story*, op. cit., p. 107;  
Ian Crawford op. cit., p. 66;  
R. R. Walker, *The Magic Spark*, op. cit., p. 55;  
Albert Moran, (ed.) *Stay Tuned, the Australian Broadcasting Reader*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1992., p. 46;  
Jacqueline Kent, *Out of the Bakelite Box: The Heyday of Australian Radio*, ABC Enterprises, Sydney, 1983, p. 78;  
John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, Prowling Press, Victoria, pp. 92,9 3.
- <sup>24</sup> "Radio Producers Seek New Voices", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 9-15 July 1949, p. 3;  
"Dearth of Women Players Baffles Producers", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 29 April-5 May 1950, p. 3;

- "Actors and Accents", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 19-25 August 1950, 'The Editor's Box' Section, p. 4;  
"About that Australian Accent", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 21-27 January 1951, 'The Editor's Box' Section, p. 4;  
Leo McKern, "Aussie Accent Barred Abroad", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 25-31 July 1953, p. 3;  
"Neutral Accent is 'must' in London", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 8-14 August 1953, p. 3.
- <sup>25</sup> "Actors and Accents", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 19-25 August 1950, Editorial Comment Section, p. 4.
- <sup>26</sup> Maie Hoban, Pilgrim Theatre, Melbourne, letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 2-8 September 1950, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 29.
- <sup>27</sup> Neil Hutchison, "Artists' Exodus to London: BBC man's Warning", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 11-17 December 1948, p. 6.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> "It is a mistaken belief, not only in Australia, but in all countries of the English speaking world, that the colleges, Oxford and Cambridge, produce the high-cultured voices one hears in radio, show business and from the professional classes in Britain. There are, however, some 22 various dialects in Britain. What one terms Oxford and Cambridge "accents" are merely those of Britain's public schools – Eton, Harrow, Rugby. Winchester, etc".
- Source: J. L. Watson, "More about Accents", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 14-21 November 1955, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 29.
- <sup>32</sup> "Dearth of Women Players Baffles Radio Producers", op. cit.
- <sup>33</sup> "Shortage of Radio Actors In Sydney", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 20-26 May 1950, p. 3.
- <sup>34</sup> Patricia Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Hawthorn, 27 November 2007.
- <sup>35</sup> "Dearth of Women Players Baffles Radio Producers", op. cit.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>37</sup> "Producer Defends Local Talent Search Methods", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 20-26 May 1950, p. 3.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>39</sup> "Actors in Short Supply: Training Scheme Launched", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 5-11 May 1945, p. 3.
- <sup>40</sup> "Equity Opens Drama Schools in Two Cities", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 17-23 July 1948, p. 3.
- <sup>41</sup> "Radio Needs New Voices", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 17-23 February 1951, p. 23.
- <sup>42</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 41.
- <sup>43</sup> Patricia Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>44</sup> "Production Unit Opens Broadcast School", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 15-21 July 1950, p. 19.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> National Library of Australia, Canberra. *The Crawford School of Broadcasting Prospectus*, Hector Crawford Productions, Melbourne, circa 1954. (From the Agnes Dobson Collection, Special Collections, Ref: 1096638, NLA MS 6220.)
- <sup>47</sup> "Production Unit Opens Broadcast School", op. cit.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>49</sup> "Father Said: 'The Kid Will Do It'", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 November 1959, p. 23.
- <sup>50</sup> Henry Cuthbertson, "Moira Carleton", in *Equity News*, Vol. 2, No.10, September 1978, p. 49.
- <sup>51</sup> State Library of Victoria, Moira Carleton, interview with Patsy Adam-Smith, Melbourne, 29-30 August 1977, Ref: MS 11045, MS TMS 184-186. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.
- <sup>52</sup> Patricia Kennedy interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>53</sup> "Production Unit Opens Broadcasting School", op. cit.
- <sup>54</sup> "Father Said: 'The Kid Will Do It'", op. cit.
- <sup>55</sup> Prospectus: "The Crawford School of Broadcasting", op. cit.
- <sup>56</sup> "Production Unit Opens Broadcasting School", op. cit.;  
"Producers' Quest for New Voices", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 29 December-4 January 1952, p. 4;  
"Radio Actor Drama Coach", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 18-24 July 1953, p. 3.
- <sup>57</sup> Prospectus: "The Crawford School of Broadcasting", op. cit.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>60</sup> National Library of Australia, Canberra. Agnes Dobson, paper describing the role and methodology of The Crawford School of Broadcasting, circa 1954. (From the Agnes Dobson Collection, Special Collections, Ref: 1096638, NLA MS 6220.)
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>62</sup> National Library of Australia, Canberra. Agnes Dobson, course operating guide for The Crawford School of Broadcasting, circa 1954. (From the Agnes Dobson Collection, Special Collections, Ref: 1096638, NLA MS 6220.)
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>65</sup> Earl Francis, Templestowe, Victoria, letter to Philip Davey, 12 October 2007.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>68</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Keith Eden, Interview with Beverly Dunn, Flinders, Victoria, 16 June 1993, Title No: 270436. Transcribed by Philip Davey, 2009.
- <sup>69</sup> "New Radio Voices", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 15-21 December 1951, p. 4.
- <sup>70</sup> "Producers' Quest For New Voices", op. cit.
- <sup>71</sup> Prospectus: "The Crawford School of Broadcasting", op. cit.
- <sup>72</sup> Gatliff starred in the Cold War film and television series *The Ipcress File* and *Dangerman* respectively.  
Source: Philip Davey, *When Hollywood Came To Melbourne: The Story of the Making of Stanley Kramer's 'On the Beach'*, published by P. R. Davey, Melbourne, 2006, pp. 46, 48.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid., pp. 161, 163.
- <sup>74</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra. Don Battye, interview with Diana Combe, 29 March 1985. Title No: 191386. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup> "Producers' Quest For New Voices", op. cit.
- <sup>77</sup> R. R. Walker, *The Magic Spark*, op. cit.
- <sup>78</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., pp. 203, 210-211, 229;  
Bridget Griffen-Foley, *Changing Stations*, op. cit., pp. 234-235.
- <sup>79</sup> Diana Combe, op. cit., p. 230.
- <sup>80</sup> "Returning from the UK: Actors Slam Low Fees for Local Radio Players", op. cit;  
"Production Unit Opens Broadcast School", op. cit;  
"Dearth of Women Players Baffles Radio Producers", op. cit.
- <sup>81</sup> National Library of Australia, Canberra. The Crawford School of Broadcasting Prospectus, op. cit;  
"Production Unit Opens Broadcast School", op. cit;  
"Prospectus: "The Crawford School of Broadcasting", op. cit.
- <sup>82</sup> "Production Unit Opens Broadcast School", op. cit.

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Photo of students at *The Crawford School of Broadcasting* in the studio and control room.  
*Source: The Listener In, Melbourne, circa early 1950s.*

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Front page photo spreads of Dorothy Crawford producing *D.24 and Inspector West*.  
Sources: *The Listener In*, Melbourne, 11-17 August 1951, Page 1 and 16-22 June 1952, page1.

## Chapter 6: No Drama For Dorothy

### 6.1. Introduction

A key objective of this dissertation is to investigate Dorothy Crawford's contribution to the success of Crawfords and to consider whether Hector could have succeeded without his sister. In this chapter, the testimony of those who worked with her illustrates Dorothy's work ethic, production techniques, meticulous attention to scripts and radio timing, no-nonsense yet fair approach to production and the high regard she earned from actors and the industry as a whole.

The industry-wide problem of alcoholism among actors was a major problem faced by radio producers. This chapter explains how, through the 'caring' nature of Crawfords' 'family-orientated' environment, this problem was tackled. Dorothy's importance to the company is demonstrated in a case study of Crawfords' most successful and controversial radio program, *D.24*, a team effort between Dorothy, her husband Roland Strong, and its creator, Hector. For context, a summary of Crawfords' dramatic output follows.

### 6.2. Early Drama Production

While producing Crawfords' innovative musical programs, the tireless Dorothy Crawford began earning her reputation in the late 1940s as a leading Melbourne radio drama producer. By 1949, Dorothy Crawford was producing dozens of quarter-hour series and serials that, in a typical advertising deal, were written in multiples of four 13-week periods with four episodes broadcast each week.<sup>1</sup> Features presented in serial form could run for years, as indeed was the case with Crawfords. One of Crawfords' first non-musical dramatic series was *Little Theatre*, featured on 3DB from September 1946 to 1947.<sup>2</sup> Local writers wrote the stories, offering listeners a wide selection of themes, from farce and burlesque to the macabre. Crawford regulars Keith Eden, Patricia Kennedy, Clifford Cowley, Agnes Dobson and Moira Carleton were cast in the lead roles.<sup>3</sup>

Among the literary serials offered by Crawfords was the mystery *The Adventures of the Toff*, based on the books of English author John Creasey. Broadcast in late 1947, the series rated highly.<sup>4</sup> In 1949, up to 50 classics of literature were dramatised into

15 minute episodes of *The World's Best Books* for the Major Network. With scripts written and edited in consultation with leading English literature Australian academics and state education authorities, this serial provided both family entertainment and assistance to students studying texts prescribed for senior public examinations throughout Australia.<sup>5</sup> Sponsored by the Australian confectioner MacRobertsons, and approved by state education departments, this type of program was indicative of Hector Crawford's unique ideas that directly benefited a targeted audience.<sup>6</sup> The half-hour educational series *You and Your World* was produced in collaboration with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), and universities throughout Australia. Running between 1955 and 1959, *You and Your World* dealt with scientific issues and was narrated by leading University of Melbourne academics Sir John Medley and Professor Sir Samuel Wadham.<sup>7</sup>

Conscious of offering variety to listeners, Dorothy Crawford produced a wide range of material. In June 1949, "A Trio of Crawford Productions" was highlighted in *The Listener-In* illustrating Crawford's output at the time. The 'trio' included *The 39 Steps* in *The World's Best Books* series, 3DB's *Rola Theatre* biographical drama series about the achievements of famous historical figures, and a biographical series about the romantic careers of "well known celebrities from all walks of life" titled *Nom de Plume*. (one of Crawford's rare associations with station 3KZ).<sup>8</sup> In one *Nom de Plume* episode, for example, the romantic adventures of Robin Hood, (Keith Eden) and Maid Marion (Patricia Kennedy) provided light entertainment.<sup>9</sup>

Many other types of dramatic output emerged from Crawford's as the company prepared for television. Throughout the 1950s, Dorothy Crawford, like most producers, crafted soap-opera serials, apparently obligatory listening for housewives.<sup>10</sup> Some of Crawford's more successful and long-running dramatic offerings included *John Turner's Family* (252 half-hour episodes), *Prodigal Father and Prodigal Husband* (416 quarter-hours), *No Holiday for Halliday* (892 quarter-hours), *To Love and Honour* (728 quarter-hours), *Here Comes O'Malley* (311 quarter-hours), *Sincerely, Rita Marsden* (436 quarter-hours), *Inspector West* (728 quarter-hours) and *Consider Your Verdict* (312 half-hours).<sup>11</sup> *D.24*, regarded as



Crawfords most successful and confrontational radio drama over nearly a decade, is discussed in Section 6.5.

### **6.3. A Real Partnership**

An excellent salesman, Hector Crawford worked hard to sell Crawfords' program ideas to sponsors so that radio stations could offer Crawford productions with the knowledge that advance funding had been secured.<sup>12</sup> As has been noted earlier, a successful Australian airing often meant substantial overseas sales, an integral part of, and providing substantial support for, the company's operations.<sup>13</sup> By 1960, as the company fought for a share in the television market, Hector was the public face of the company, not only through his business dealings and musical performances but also as a regular commentator on a wide range of broadcasting policy issues over many years.<sup>14</sup>

Although Hector was the up-front person; the public face of Crawfords, one wonders how successful the company would have been without Dorothy Crawford's production skills? Dorothy's son, Ian, recalls that by the time television was underway, a degree of tension had emerged between Dorothy and her second husband, Roland Strong, whom she had married in 1949.<sup>15</sup> Strong, an announcer, writer, actor and Crawfords' company director, argued that Dorothy's lack of public recognition, given the important role she played in the success of the company, was grossly unfair. If Dorothy had not been such a talented producer, he asserted, Hector would have had nothing to sell.<sup>16</sup> Strong's position was clear: without Dorothy, most of Hector's efforts during the radio era would have accomplished very little.<sup>17</sup>

For years Strong pleaded with his wife to stand up for herself and demand the public recognition she deserved. Loyal and pragmatic, Dorothy sided with her brother, continually stressing the importance of Hector's public persona to Crawfords' success. It was a difficult situation, with Strong being a company director. To defuse the tension, the board of directors, upon Hector's recommendation, changed the name of the company to 'Crawford Productions' in 1960.<sup>18</sup> For Dorothy, Hector's action was a fitting tribute that acknowledged the high regard in which she was held by those who mattered most: the actors with whom she had worked for nearly 20

years. Her skills have been demonstrated throughout earlier chapters and are corroborated in this chapter by numerous oral history accounts.

Before her appointment as principal of The Crawford School of Broadcasting, Moira Carleton observed that the success of any good play or serial depended upon the production, and that good production required discipline. Based on her wide experience on stage and radio, Carleton found women as good, if not better producers than men.<sup>19</sup> By the time she asserted this in 1950, Carleton had observed first-hand the outstanding work of two female producers, Grace Gibson of Sydney's Macquarie Network and Dorothy Crawford in Melbourne. *The Listener-In*, in November 1949, acclaimed Dorothy as "Australian radio's outstanding woman producer", such was the impact she had made in a short time.<sup>20</sup>

As detailed earlier, Gibson had already made an enormous impact on radio drama and given that she continued in the business for 43 years, produced three times the amount of radio drama hours than Crawford's. Gibson was an amalgam of both Dorothy and Hector Crawford. Unlike Dorothy, Gibson was also a business-woman; an entrepreneur who handled sponsorship negotiations and overseas' sales.<sup>21</sup> She managed all facets of production, and was described as a "human dynamo".<sup>22</sup> One of the major early differences between Gibson and Crawford productions was Gibson's liberal spirit regarding content. She never feared to tell her "writers to throw in everything – sex, violence, mayhem, the works – in the initial episodes of a series".<sup>23</sup>

That was what the sponsor listened to – and if he was hooked at the start he was there for, hopefully years.[...] My production company was a bonanza from the start, despite a hell of a lot of competition. There were five other production companies going at the same time, including my friendly rival Hector Crawford.<sup>24</sup>

While Grace Gibson Productions and Crawford's shared mutual respect, business was business, and as *D.24* (later called *C.I.B* - Criminal Investigation Bureau so it could be broadcast interstate) evolved into Crawford's most successful crime drama series, Gibson and other producers initiated a number of similar programs. Gibson's long-running *Nightbeat* was a major success of the same genre.<sup>25</sup> As script editor, Dorothy became more adventurous with the *D.24* (written by husband Roland Strong) and had undoubtedly learnt a few techniques from her Sydney rival.

Ironically, as time went on, *D.24* attracted a considerable degree of criticism for its realism and controversial subject matter, as will be revealed later. Having established that Gibson ruled the Sydney domain while Melbourne was Dorothy Crawford's territory, it is prudent to examine why Dorothy Crawford attained high national regard.

Ian Crawford recalls that by 1949 his mother had gained great respect among Australia's radio actors.<sup>26</sup> In particular, elite actors such as Keith Eden, Patricia Kennedy, Mary Ward, Clifford Cowley, Richard Davies, Douglas Kelly, John Morgan, Kendrick Hudson, Moira Carleton, Elizabeth Wing, Margaret (Mouchmore) Bond, Irene Mitchell, Margaret Johnson, Robert Peach, Syd Conabere, and later Bettine Kauffman and Beverly Dunn, all of whom shared their services with Crawfords and other production houses, admired Dorothy. Evidence reveals that this group particularly enjoyed working with Crawfords because of the amalgam of musical and dramatic productions offered, and appreciated Dorothy's production techniques and work ethic:<sup>27</sup>

Her passion for correct stress, pronunciation and vocal intensity had, as professionals, endeared them to her. [...] Loyalty such as this enabled Crawfords to produce forty-four quarter hours of radio drama material a week by 1950.<sup>28</sup>

Many other producers allowed only three-quarters of an hour or less for production. Dorothy, fearing that quality would suffer under such conditions and with Hector's concurrence, always scheduled an hour to produce a quarter-hour of on-air material:<sup>29</sup>

There was rarely any overlap in production, so the forty-four quarter hours took five and a half days to produce, eight hours a day and four hours on Saturday mornings. Until late in radio days, Dorothy produced all programs, editing the next burst of forty-four scripts on the weekend. Virtually the only other radio producer the company used was Roland [Strong].<sup>30</sup>

Dorothy Crawford was a perfectionist. Rarely seen without a script in her hand, whether it be in the office, on a bus or at home, her penchant for editing, timing with a stopwatch and ensuring every sentence, word or phrase was just right proved to be a formula for success.<sup>31</sup> A 1949 profile of Dorothy observed that:

The end of one show only means the beginning of another.[...] Casting, choosing music and sound effects, discussing future programmes, auditioning new voices, conferring with script writers – these, and a hundred and one other details, fill her day completely – from 8.30 in the morning to midnight.

It's all hard work, for long hours, and at high pressure, but although there is little of that glamour that most people seem to imagine surrounds a radio personality, there is always something new and fascinating that gives her great satisfaction and a feeling that it's very worthwhile.<sup>32</sup>

In a 1951 interview, Dorothy explained that “every 15 minute episode of your favourite soap opera needs up to ten hours preparation before it goes to air. Radio play production is a complicated and exhausting business”. Every script underwent many drafts during numerous plot conferences before a script was finalised:

Dialogue alone is not sufficient – there must be action and sound effects.[...] Scripts move at different speeds. Love stories are told at a slow tempo; mysteries are quick, snappy productions.[...] Casting is one of the most important steps. The producer knows from experience the actor most suited to a fatherly role, or the actress more acquitted to play a sultry heroine.<sup>33</sup>

Hector had little contact with radio drama, other than deliberating on new program concepts and organising musical requirements.<sup>34</sup> Dorothy was therefore challenged to produce programs of a quality commensurate with Hector's efforts behind the scenes, attracting sponsors and selling programs. Dorothy Crawford prospered under such pressures. Those who worked with Dorothy describe the experience in a variety of ways: meticulous, precise, invigorating, charming, educative, challenging, frustrating, intimidating, confidence-sapping, exhausting, but, at the end of the day, a wonderful experience. The following profiles and testimony corroborate these emotions.

Beverly Dunn began her acting career in 1951 with an audition at Crawfords that led to an invitation to join The Crawford School of Broadcasting. Deciding to follow other pathways, Dunn gradually acquired bit-part roles with Walter Pym, who was producing for Morris West at ARP. Working among the various production houses, Dunn eventually found herself in a Crawford serial called *Kiap O'Kane* at only 18 years of age. This was followed by a series of small roles:<sup>35</sup>

Once I got into the 'real' business, it was usually morning at Crawfords at 3DB from 8.30 'til 12.30 and in that time they would do four episodes. And if too many things went wrong, everyone would be held up, because they'd have to go out to ARP (Wally Pym) in West Melbourne in a bus for the afternoon, and then you'd come back for John Hickling at say 6.30pm back at 3DB to do a serial.<sup>36</sup>

Dunn remembers Dorothy Crawford as an extremely elegant person, always beautifully made-up and wearing neat suits with flair, colour and jewellery:

Dorothy really made sure that the detail and the artistic integrity of things were absolute. She was very precise, and knew exactly what she wanted, always, with a role. She was very charming but she had a vision of what she wanted. Everyone had to go along with that, but was always right!<sup>37</sup>

Upon reflection, Dunn considers that her big break in radio came in the mid-1950s when Dorothy cast her in the psychological thriller *Awake the Murdered*, a drama that was extended from 52 to 104 episodes:

It was my favourite play with Crawfords, written by Osmar White. It really was a dangerous sort of thing to be doing in that it was pushing the boundaries of the normal type of serial previously ran.[...] But Dorothy took it on and gave me, as far as she was concerned, something that really was quite challenging.[...] Osmar felt that I would be the right person to do it.[...] Dorothy demanded a very high standard and she could have been very careful and not have cast me but indeed, casting me gave me a wonderful opportunity.<sup>38</sup>

Dunn describes her experience with Crawfords in the 1950s as "exacting", and provided the framework that enabled her to establish herself as a successful character actor with an impressive portfolio of radio and television series, feature films and mini-series, including Crawfords' police dramas. Dunn's most recent TV role was in the 2008 premiere of the crime series *Underbelly*.<sup>39</sup>

Like Dunn, Margaret Bond (nee Mouchmore), had few formal lessons in radio technique but believed that her performance ability was sufficient to become an elite actor. She ultimately worked across the Melbourne and Sydney radio scene, the BBC and leading theatre companies. Bond noted that the ability to sight read, combined with intelligence and passion for radio acting, were essential ingredients for success, "but I had a lot to learn, as I found out with Dorothy Crawford":<sup>40</sup>

I got sat on.[...] on several occasions and very badly needed it too! I can remember Dorothy sitting on me very firmly once saying that I had to remember that I was very young; I was a learner compared to others in the studio like Pat Kennedy and Keith Eden.[...] I just had to, sort of, 'take a back seat and not get too noisy'. I think that was more or less what she was saying. She was absolutely right too, and caused me to stop dead and think "well I will be more careful in future." Bumptious I think is the word!

She was stern but not difficult and I found her very good to work with. I think she was certainly one of the better producers around. Instead of saying "well you can get through it in 45 minutes can't you?" as John Hickling would say as he handed you the script, Dorothy always stuck to the industry standard hour.<sup>41</sup>

Margaret Johnson, another Crawford regular in demand across the industry, also described Dorothy as "very exacting", which was vital when it came to producing radio drama:

One felt they [Crawfords] had sound production techniques whereas there were times when you sometimes didn't.[...] She used to orchestrate just about every syllable you uttered.[...] I found it very trying at times working with Dorothy because she was very demanding but then she got exactly what she wanted; the inflection, and usually less voice, less voice.[...] But she was a wonderful producer. She always looked so right, and she loved it.<sup>42</sup>

Patricia Kennedy, having begun in radio acting before the war, worked with a large variety of producers long before Crawfords entered the industry. Well qualified to comment on the abilities of Dorothy Crawford, Kennedy notes that while Dorothy was tough, the pair always had a good relationship:

I thought she was a very good director of drama, but they were always the boss so you had to watch your Ps and Qs.[...] Dorothy was the drive and inspiration. I don't think Hector had the final say when it came to artistic matters; I would say Dorothy was authoritative and had the final word.

And apart from directing in the studio, she used to do the timing of all the scripts so that when we went into the studio at 8.30 in the morning, all the scripts had been timed and Dorothy, if she thought it was a bit too long, had put in tentative cuts.[...] Each of these tentative cuts were timed so that when we actually got on for the run-through on the mike she was able, very readily, to make cuts if it was over-time.<sup>43</sup>

As noted earlier, Kennedy's career highlight was *The Melba Story*, which she remembers as her most interesting, unusual, satisfying and well-loved Crawfords' production. "It gained a very big audience and I enjoyed that show very much."<sup>44</sup> Crawfords' equally respected Kennedy as an extremely experienced and talented

actress: she was often called upon to direct some of Crawford's serials, particularly when Dorothy was busy producing Crawford's many external musical programs.<sup>45</sup>

Wynne Pullman joined Crawfords in the early 1950s as an assistant within The Crawford School of Broadcasting. Pullman then worked for Dorothy as casting director and script editor for over ten years and remained constantly in awe of Dorothy's work ethic and production skills:

Dorothy, really, inspired us all to seek perfection. And we were all fortunate to have known and worked with her. She excelled really, in the areas of writing, directing and acting, and had a desire and also an ability to pass on her knowledge and I can tell you I learned a terrific amount from Dorothy. It enabled me to develop much more than I think in any other way.<sup>46</sup>

Pullman's close working relationship with Dorothy Crawford demonstrates the latter's ability to recognize potential and 'take a person under her wing', as Pullman experienced while learning the intricacies and nuances of script editing and casting. In a detailed case study of Pullman's Crawford experience, Appendix B outlines further evidence of Dorothy's contribution to Crawfords.

Although Pullman believes the success of Crawfords would have been diminished without her mentor's input, she concedes that the work of Hector and Dorothy definitely complimented each other.<sup>47</sup>

## **6.4. The Problem of Alcoholism**

Crawfords will always be remembered as close-knit extended family dynasty run by family members (See Chapter 12). During the radio era, in this relatively small organisation that relied on freelancers for most of its creative staff, both Hector and Dorothy could be counted upon to listen to and help resolve staff member's problems.<sup>48</sup> Unfortunately during this era, alcoholism was a difficult problem that often had a detrimental effect on radio operations; Dorothy and Hector were frequently called upon to help dry out and rehabilitate those afflicted, a practice that contributed to the esteem in which the company was held: the business was more than just pounds and pence, but a sober actor was in everyone's interests.<sup>49</sup> Much has been said about the capability of Clifford Cowley, Douglas Kelly and Richard

Davies, but they were all afflicted by alcoholism. Contrary to views expressed in Chapter Five (rushing from job to job), Ian Crawford suggests that because radio actors were paid by the hour, there was plenty of work available and they didn't have to take on other jobs to boost their wages, (or to fill in spare time):<sup>50</sup>

They had so much time on their hands between radio engagements waiting for their next hour of employment, drinking was rife throughout the industry. Hordes of them would congregate each day at Richardsons pub on the corner of Bourke and Russell Streets.<sup>51</sup>

Some actors arriving for their first performance of the day were already drunk at eight or nine in the morning. Cowley was one such actor but because he was an outstanding artist, Hector and Dorothy retained his services without reservation. Incredibly, in his last years, even though Cowley came to a recording session extremely drunk, he still managed to perform as required:<sup>52</sup>

Out of his mouth would flow the most exquisite drama. No-one could ever understand how this marvellous actor could perform so wonderfully when, without a script in his hand, he could hardly hold a conversation!<sup>53</sup>

During his first few roles as a junior actor, Don Battye had to stand on a butter box so his small frame could reach the microphone. Even at his young age, he quickly became aware of the drinking problem that existed:

Standing on a butter box, I can always remember being put right off by a couple of actors, at nine in the morning, with them breathing fumes over me – it was scotch basically that I could smell. But I also knew it was like the funny smell when you walked past a hotel. Fortunately I never got involved in that side of things because I was too young.<sup>54</sup>

Keith Eden fondly remembered Douglas Kelly and Richard Davies as gifted and wonderful actors, but hopeless drunks. For dedicated, sober actors such as Eden, alcoholism and the unwelcome effect it had on his livelihood and that of his colleagues, was viewed with considerable resentment:<sup>55</sup>

It meant that we couldn't record sometimes so we all lost money. I went to Dorothy at one particular time and said "look, if this man comes along drunk I'm not going to work with you ever again! I just can't put up with this sort of thing going on". So they had a chat with Cliff [Cowley] [...] he did get a little better but in the end of course he was hopeless and could hardly turn a page.<sup>56</sup>



The problem of alcoholism, asserts Eden, began before the war when producer John Hickling began producing radio programs at 3DB, close to the famous Phoenix Hotel in Flinders Street where journalists from the nearby *Herald and Weekly Times* gathered. Many radio actors had an arrangement with the hotel to start drinking at 7.30am, before the official opening time, when they would get into a bottle or two of brandy.<sup>57</sup> Recognising the extent of the problem, Crawfords intervened to help those afflicted become fit for work and live responsibly.<sup>58</sup> Glenda Raymond remembers how Hector and Dorothy were very caring about the people they worked with:

I can remember not very long after we were married and living in our St. Kilda Road flat Hec received a telephone call from D.24 one night saying they'd picked up someone called Cliff Cowley in a lane: I think he was right out to it so they said "you'd better come in the morning and collect him." So Hec bought Cliff home to the flat smelling like nothing on earth.

Hec pushed him into the bathroom and gave him fresh clothes. I'll never forget Cliff stumbling out of the bathroom on his stick – his legs had gone on him in those days – but he'd pulled himself together by then. "Oh Cliff, you look marvellous," said Hec. And Cliff said in that spendid voice, "well old boy, the sleeves are a bit long!" I could have hit him. He had Hec's one and only best sports coat!<sup>59</sup>

A successful radio and television actor, Syd Conabere, remembers that:

Cliff Cowley was always a very fine actor but it was difficult for him. While I had the best of both worlds with radio and theatre jobs, those guys [Douglas Kelly and Richard Davies] worked mainly in, and made a lot of money and a good living out of radio acting.<sup>60</sup>

Despite medical and psychiatric help arranged by Hector, Cowley did not last much longer. Younger men such as Kelly and Davies had bright futures if they could only stop drinking. Douglas Kelly had lead roles in most of Crawfords' best known programs from *Opera to the People* and *The Blue Danube* to dramas such as *Inspector West*, *D.24*, *Consider Your Verdict* and on television in *Homicide*. But he remained a chronic alcoholic and died in 1975 aged 61.<sup>61</sup>

The most tragic of all, according to peers, was Richard Davies. Remembered as one of Australia's most distinguished radio actors, Davies was unable to overcome his drinking problem and died in 1964 aged just 46.<sup>62</sup> Davies was admired for his kindness and assistance to other actors "across that cold, impersonal microphone which he had made bend so much to his authoritative command", as colleague Brian

James noted at the time of Davies' passing.<sup>63</sup> Davies' drinking problem, and that of Kelly and Cowley, suggests Conabere, was predominately a result of the workload pressures they suffered and not all due to having 'time on their hands' in-between appointments.<sup>64</sup>

Dick was a bit of an enigma. He was a fine radio actor and an intelligent man intellectually and all that, but what can you say – it was all very unfortunate. A lot of them drank too much, that was the trouble – the pressure was enormous and those guys, people like Dick and Doug, they really did run around from studio to studio, and always doing big parts.<sup>65</sup>

As radio faded in the late 1950s, Davies moved to Sydney where he worked for the ABC and Grace Gibson in later years, but like many actors, had difficulty making the transition into television. During radio's premium years, Davies developed a close relationship with Hector and Dorothy and performed lead roles in 'quality' productions such as *The Amazing Oscar Hammerstein*, *Opera For the People*, *Inspector West*, *D.24* and many others. Davies was an integral part of the Crawford stable, while remaining in demand across the entire industry.<sup>66</sup> As with Kelly, Cowley and many others, the Crawford family assisted and supported Davies during his darkest days in the gutter, but his battle with alcoholism was irrevocable:

Many will regret the passing of this sensitive and kindly man, much of whose work went unrecorded except in the minds of those of us who never knew him, but were moved by that excellent voice and untiring artistry.<sup>67</sup>

## **6.5. Case Study – Calling *D.24***

While looking after the welfare of its valued actors and small staff, the Crawfords were totally engrossed in producing so many successful and long-running series and serials. Having outlined in Chapter Four Crawfords' success with its innovative musical dramatic formula beginning with *The Melba Story*, it is fitting to conclude Part One by considering why many critics regard *D.24* (re-badged *CIB* for interstate airing) as Crawford's best 'straight' dramatic offering on radio.

*D.24* commenced on 14 August 1951, leading to a series of 470 thirty-minute episodes dramatizing true case stories from the files of the Victoria Police Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB), known by the Victoria Police radio call sign D.24. In the late 1940s the State Government recruited Sir Alex Duncan from Scotland Yard as

Victoria Police Chief Commissioner to tackle police corruption and restore public confidence.<sup>68</sup> Moving in business circles as he did, Hector met Duncan at a luncheon during which he learnt of Duncan's problems with Victoria Police public relations and recruitment. Crawford recalled their conversation:

I was at a luncheon sitting next to the then Chief Commissioner of Police Alec Duncan who was, prior to his being made Chief Commissioner, in charge of the Flying Squad at Scotland Yard. Alec was telling me all the problems he had with public recognition that you need for a police force and cooperation with it, and problems with recruiting, and then asked if I could think up a program idea that would help the police image. I thought we could be successful with the government in persuading them to sponsor it. So I went back and we developed the program of *D.24* [with Dorothy] which the police department sponsored.<sup>69</sup>

One could speculate that the state government and police commissioner, anxious to improve the image of the Victoria Police by employing state propaganda, took advantage of Hector's business instinct for recognising a successful program idea. *D.24* would ultimately prove fruitful for all concerned.

Dorothy Crawford undertook meticulous research, consulting numerous police officers and detectives. They related how various crimes were committed and solved while an expert shorthand writer transcribed the stories verbatim. Only names, places and dates were changed in the crimes and stories incorporated into ex-Hollywood writer Warren Glasser's scripts. Senior police officers attended each script conference to ensure accuracy and integrity, while controlling the image of Victoria Police. Starring Crawfords' team of established actors, the series was narrated by Roland Strong, with John Morgan portraying the *D.24* operator.<sup>70</sup> "*D.24* Calls You Every Tuesday Night at 8.30" was the catchcry in *The Listener-In*.<sup>71</sup> The first episode, introduced by the Chief Commissioner, told the story of two youths who conducted a series of hold-ups and eventually committed murder. Emphasising that public cooperation assisted the police in solving the crime, this story used art to imitate life in an attempt to instil public support for the police.<sup>72</sup>

Although acknowledging the public relations spin of *D.24*, editorial comments were generally favourable after the first episode:

The fact that these stories are based on actual cases in the Police Department files, and that they introduce familiar places, sharpens their interest. There is a frankly propaganda angle, but it is not unduly obtrusive [...] the acting cast combined to present an effective story with natural and unforced drama.<sup>73</sup>

After several months, editorial and listener comment indicated continued positive reception of the program. Significantly, observations indicate that progress had been made towards resolving the problem of Australian accents highlighted in Chapter 5.3:

*D.24* remains the best thing of its kind in Australian radio. Roland Strong's scripting [having taken over from Glasser] of the episodes has just about the right objective approach and while he sustains the interest well, he scrupulously avoids any suggestion of over-dramatisation. Miss Crawford types her cast well and players sound like real Australians, rather than actors portraying them.<sup>74</sup>

While some listeners occasionally found the subject matter gruesome, brutal and sadistic (such as the realistic sounds of bashing a woman, screaming, moaning, strangling, etc.), an overwhelming number of listeners had nothing but praise for *D.24*.<sup>75</sup> The program explored social and cultural issues such as juvenile delinquency, drunkenness, violence, drunk driving, theft, rape and murder, portraying these crimes in everyday familiar places with 'real' Australian voices. This helped listeners to identify and empathise with social problems that directly affected their way of life. Thus *D.24* was the radio predecessor of *Homicide*, *Division 4* and *Matlock Police*, all of which were immensely popular with television audiences in 1960s and 70s for the same reasons – they represented an 'Australian consciousness'.

In his book *The 3DB Story*, Bill O'Loughlin writes that Police Commissioner Duncan regarded *D.24* as a "potent means of fostering goodwill and co-operating between the public and the police", so much so that the original contract was renewed without hesitation after twelve months.<sup>76</sup> In a letter to Hector Crawford dated 28 July 1952, Duncan wrote:

I would like to take this opportunity of saying how gratifying the results of this programme have been. Through these broadcasts I am sure thousands of people have come to know the Police Force of this State better than ever before, with the result that public interest in many sides of our work has greatly increased.

We are now receiving much more help, not only in the detection of offenders, but in active assistance to individual members of the Force when handling a difficult situation. Recruiting has also benefited and the number of applicants each month doubled since the program began.<sup>77</sup>

According to Hector, the success of *D.24* was the direct result of scripter Roland Strong and producer Dorothy Crawford devoting many hours of research for each story before undertaking a broadcast.<sup>78</sup> Responding to editorial criticism from *The Listener-In* about a particularly graphic episode called *The Strangler*, which involved young children, Hector noted that the reactions of young listeners were taken into account:

They also read the tragic evidence in the cases dramatized in *The Strangler* and knew that at least two of the young children [involved] were especially warned by their parents of the dangers of speaking to strangers. The listener completely lost sight of the fact that the crimes dramatized in *The Strangler* happened here, in our own city and were NOT figments of a radio scriptwriter's imagination.[...] such men in the broadcast are a real and ever-present menace.<sup>79</sup>

Although supporting the paper's view that such a broadcast was harmful to children's minds, *The Listener-In* led with Hector Crawford's revelation that two young children, whose parents made them to listen to the broadcast, were subsequently saved from an attack at a Melbourne seaside suburb.<sup>80</sup>

So grateful were the parents at the children being saved from an appalling experience that their father communicated and placed the facts before us.[...] While not spared a most horrifying experience, in the father's own words, "it was due to *D.24* that they were warned and saved from what could have been an appalling tragedy".<sup>81</sup>

*D.24* was perceived as controversial and provocative because of the conservative nature of society in 1950s Melbourne, but the program served a useful social purpose while providing quality, popular entertainment.<sup>82</sup> On several occasions, *D.24* attracted the largest nightly audience for any program.<sup>83</sup> Recognising the success of *D.24*, Sydney rivals Grace Gibson and George Edwards developed several iterations of this style and genre. In Melbourne, Crawfords astutely capitalised on public interest in the crime genre by introducing *The Crime Club* in 1955, a series dedicated to profiling world famous detectives and their most important cases.<sup>84</sup> In many ways, *The Crime Club* was an international version of *D.24* in which actual crimes

were dramatized. *The Crime Club* was also narrated by Roland Strong, and its main objective was to “inspire in the community a respect for the forces of law and order”.<sup>85</sup>

After three years of *D.24*, Victoria Police withdrew its sponsorship, satisfied that the program had improved the force's public image.<sup>86</sup> When the press reported the State Government would drop sponsorship of *D.24*, advertisers, including eight national advertisers, inundated Crawfords with offers.<sup>87</sup> Sponsors recognised the value of being associated with *D.24*, one of the top-rated broadcasts in Melbourne. *The Listener-In* reported that, “in a short time it [*D.24*] rocketed into the top listener ratings. No other program had gained listeners so rapidly”.<sup>88</sup>

*D.24* had served its purpose by becoming a successful propaganda vehicle for Victoria Police. Stressing the futility of crime, *D.24* forged the public impression that the force was a friendly and effective organisation.<sup>89</sup> Crawfords was keen to sustain *D.24's* production, but its future integrity depended on maintaining the company's association with Victoria Police. Hoping the program would carry on without having to fund it, Victoria Police and the State Government agreed to extend its consultative and supervisory role on the understanding that a new sponsor would maintain focus on promoting good relations between the public and police. The cost of the series from this point was met by leading grocery chain store G. J. Coles, a major supporter of Crawfords both in radio and later in television.<sup>90</sup> Broadcast until 1960, *D.24* was Crawford's longest running and most successful radio series.

Over 9,000 episodes of radio drama and musical programs – comprising over 3,000 hours – were produced by Crawfords and broadcast around Australia over 17 years.<sup>91</sup> Of these, many programs were sold several times over to more than 20 countries, with Crawfords being the first Melbourne-based independent radio producer to succeed so extensively abroad.<sup>92</sup> Grace Gibson Productions clearly outpointed Crawfords with 75,000 hours of radio drama production – and more overseas sales. However to put this into perspective, Gibson began in 1932 and continued radio drama production well into the 1970s.<sup>93</sup> Crawfords' output, however, was impressive given its relative size and shorter time-span as a radio producer, as was its unique musical-dramatic presentations and promotion of an 'Australian consciousness'.

## **6.6. Epilogue - Preparing for the Future**

Dorothy Crawford's abilities as a producer, her substantial contribution to Hector Crawford Productions, and her caring attitude towards people are documented in several effusive commentaries. Dorothy was indeed the creative and operational leader of the company at that time; without her Hector's career may have been quite different. Dorothy was happy to be in the background, despite the protestations of her husband, and she recognised Hector's entrepreneurial skills and business talent. Accordingly, Dorothy and Hector complimented each other in a creative partnership that drove the success of the company.

As Wynne Pullman noted, Hector was an "ace salesman." and was constantly working behind the scenes to promote the company.<sup>94</sup> In 1953 he contacted Charles Moses, General Manager of the ABC, intimating that Crawfords was "in a position to offer programmes which would be acceptable to the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC)".<sup>95</sup> Noting that his company had achieved considerable success employing an innovative "musical-dramatic" technique in several programmes, while generating intense interest with the weekly half-hour drama *D.24*, Crawford wrote:

It is appreciated that the purchase by the ABC, of programmes produced by an independent company, would involve a departure from normal practice, but we would be grateful if the matter could be given consideration. But in support of this, we would submit these facts: We have at our disposal some quiet considerable broadcasting talent, we have proved our capacity for programme "ideas" and our ability to translate such idea into practical broadcasting form; and, we have a good knowledge of the requirement of the ABC.<sup>96</sup>

In particular, Crawford highlighted the availability of writers John Ormiston Reid, Jeffrey Underhill and Roland Strong, and the skills of producer Dorothy Crawford:

Each is widely experienced and has been responsible for many programmes that have been extremely well-received in Australia and beyond. In background, style and approach, they are, we believe, well equipped to write for the ABC.

As producer, Dorothy Crawford has earned for herself an enviable reputation. It is our belief that, despite the limits of times, etc., imposed by commercial broadcasting, Miss Crawford's production is of a standard rarely achieved in Australian radio.

Two of our directors, Dorothy Crawford and Roland Strong were, for several years, members of the ABC staff. Our claim, then, to have a "good knowledge of the requirements of the ABC", is not without foundation.<sup>97</sup>

Hector argued that because the ABC frequently employed an "outside" pool of artists and broadcast externally sourced BBC transcriptions, offering Crawfords' proven radio talent a place in National Broadcasting was a logical extension.<sup>98</sup> A notation on this letter dated 7 July 1953 confirms that Mr Moses "interviewed Mr Crawford at his request. Mr Crawford will submit concrete ideas in writing".<sup>99</sup> The outcome of this process is not known but my research found no Crawfords' contribution to ABC radio programming.<sup>100</sup> Many of Crawfords' pool of actors and other artists already worked for the ABC on a freelance basis while the commission employed a wide range of talented writers and producers, so the ABC's indifference to Hector's proposal was predictable. The ABC was sufficiently resourced without Crawfords.

Promoting the strengths and achievements of Hector Crawford Productions to establish a relationship with the ABC would augur well for an association when television began three years later (see Chapter Seven). Unlike the majority of Melbourne's independent radio producers, Crawfords was already positioning itself through the imminent opening of *The Crawford TV Workshop* in 1954, along with a planned fact-finding tour of television operations in the USA and BBC (see Chapter Seven.) After television began and advertisers turned in droves to this new medium, Crawfords found the going tough. But their foresight in preparing for the future eventually produced rewards, with the ABC televising Crawfords' Federal Government commissioned documentary series *Export Action* in the early 1960s.<sup>101</sup>

Part Two documents Crawfords' fortunes during the first eight years of television prior to the advent of its breakthrough crime series *Homicide* in 1964, but to reach this point, Hector had to fight many battles with politicians, regulators and television stakeholders while enduring financial hardship and many associated disappointments.



## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 32;  
Diana Combe, *The Radio Serial Industry in Australia, an historical study of the production of serials in Australia, and the influence of the industry in the development of commercial radio*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Macquarie University, 1992, p. 222.
- <sup>2</sup> "Drama Series by Local Scripters", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 31 August – 16 September, 1946, p. 3.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> "New 3DB Mystery Serial Begins", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 26 July-1 August, 1947, p. 3.
- <sup>5</sup> "World's Greatest Novels Listed For Radio Series", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 19-25 February 1949, p. 3;  
Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne - Official Crawford Productions documentation: Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry into the Production and Distribution of Motion Picture Films and Television Programs*, Melbourne, 1972, p. 8.
- <sup>6</sup> Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry*, op. cit., p. 8.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> "A Trio of Crawford Productions", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 18-24 June 1949, p. 4.
- <sup>9</sup> "Three Dramatised Biographies", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 26 November-2 December 1949, p. 4.
- <sup>10</sup> "Serials Damaging to Nerves, Morale of Housewives", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 26 April-2 May 1952, p. 3.
- <sup>11</sup> Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry*, op. cit., p. 9;  
Bill McLaughlin, *From Wireless to Radio: the 3DB Story*, The Dominion Press, Blackburn, 2009, pp. 107, 108.
- <sup>12</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs op. cit., p. 29.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> "Ethics Bureau For Commercials – Federation Move", *The Listener-In*, 22-28 March 1947, p. 3;  
Hector Crawford supported the establishment of a special government bureau to monitor material selected for recorded programs.  
Source: Hector Crawford quoted in "Local Radio Circles Condemn Low Standards of Overseas Features", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 27 August-2 September 1949, p. 3;  
Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, reproduction of letter to all federal parliamentarians, Hector Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 10 April, 1956, contained in *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry into the Production and Distribution of Motion Picture Films and Television Programmes*, Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 1972;  
Hector Crawford, as he prepared for the introduction of television, warned against the excessive use of imported program material.  
Source: Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, *Commercial Television Programmes in Australia*, published by Hector Crawford, Melbourne, 14 September 1959;  
Sent to all federal parliamentarians, Hector Crawford provided a detailed analysis of the dominance of cheap imported American programs over Australian television, at the expense of locally made programs.  
Source: Ian Crawford, op. cit., pp. 75, 76.
- <sup>15</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 78.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 78, 79.
- <sup>19</sup> "Women Make Good Stage and Radio Producers", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 4-10 February 1950, p. 2.
- <sup>20</sup> "Our Leading Woman Radio Producer Works on the Run", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 12-18 November 1949, p. 27.
- <sup>21</sup> "Amazing Grace", *The Mercury*, Hobart, 25 November 1987, p. 2.
- <sup>22</sup> "Background Story of Sydney Woman Producer", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 20-26 January 1951, p. 16.
- <sup>23</sup> "Amazing Grace", op. cit.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> Diana Howard, (Crawford administrator) Interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 5 July 1979. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 269156. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009; "Amazing Grace", op. cit.
- <sup>26</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 28.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

Patricia Kennedy occasionally helped out producing. (See endnote 43 below).

<sup>31</sup> "Our Leading Woman Radio Producer Works on the Run, op. cit.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> "That popular serial can cause many headaches", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 17-23 November 1951, p. 20

<sup>34</sup> Beverly Dunn, interview with Philip Davey, Brighton, Victoria, 1 March 2008.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Margaret Bond (nee Mouchmore), interview with Beverly Dunn, for *Once Upon A Wireless* project, Camberly, England, 7 May 1996, Title No: 307907. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Margaret Johnson, interview with Beverly Dunn, for *Once Upon A Wireless* project, Melbourne, 12 July 1994, Title No: 272376. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.

<sup>43</sup> Patricia Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Hawthorn, Victoria, 27 November, 2007.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Wynne Pullman, interview with Beverly Dunn, for *Once Upon A Wireless* project, Melbourne, 16 July 1993, Title No: 271892. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.

<sup>47</sup> Wynne Pullman, interview with Philip Davey. Hawthorn, Victoria, 29 March 2008.

<sup>48</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., pp. 99, 116.

<sup>49</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Don Battye, interview with Diana Combe, 29 March 1985, Title No: 191386. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.

<sup>55</sup> Keith Eden, op. cit.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Glenda Raymond, interview with Beverly Dunn for *Once Upon A Wireless* project, Melbourne, 7 September 1993, p. 1, Title No: 271892. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.

<sup>60</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Sydney Conabere, interview with Beverly Dunn, Sydney, 20 November 1993, Title No: 270457. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.

<sup>61</sup> Richard Lane, *The Golden Age of Radio Drama*, Screen Sound Australia, Canberra, 2000, p. 161.

<sup>62</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled ), op. cit, p. 28;  
"Actors Mourn a Friend", *The Australian*, Sydney, 9 December 1964, p. 11.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Sydney Conabere, op. cit.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled ), op. cit, p. 28.

<sup>67</sup> "Actors Mourn a Friend", op. cit.

<sup>68</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 32.

Interestingly, Sir Ken Jones, Deputy Assistant Commissioner at Scotland Yard, was recruited as Deputy Commissioner of Victoria Police in 2010.

<sup>69</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 5 July 1979, Title No: 269138. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.

<sup>70</sup> "Secret Files Tapped for *D.24* Dramas", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 21-28 July 1951, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> Advertisement in *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 11-17 August, 1951, p. 12.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> "Reality Drama in Home Setting", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 25-31 August, 1951, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup> "Realism in Police Drama", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 17-23 November, 1951, p. 4.

<sup>75</sup> L. Yorsten, Caulfield, Victoria, "D.24 Popular", (a very enjoyable session), letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 27 October-2 November 1951, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 27;

Alan Croke, Parkdale, Victoria, "D.24 Praised", (program best of its type on air), letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 22-28 December 1951, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 21;

A Pritchard, Glenhuntly, Victoria, "D.24 series", (crude and brutal), letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 5-11 April 1952, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 23;

"Annoyed Mother", Hampton, Victoria, "D.24", (horrified at awful story that had me in tears), letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 5-11 April 1952, "Axes and Orchids" Section p. 23;

Norm Rankin, Sandringham, Victoria, "D.24 Series", (best on the air), letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 22-28 March, 1952, "Axes and Orchids" Section (page number not available).

"Best liked radio feature is the D.24 series", quoted in "Poll Proves TV Wanted By Public", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 8-14 November 1952, p. 2.

<sup>76</sup> Bill McLaughlin, *From Wireless to Radio: The 3DB Story*, op. cit., p. 108.

<sup>77</sup> National Archives of Australia, Sydney, SP 1299/2, TV/28/3/25, Part 43, A, W. Duncan, Chief Commissioner, Victoria Police, letter to Hector Crawford, Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 28 July 1952.

<sup>78</sup> "Bayside Sequel to D.24 Episode", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 13-19 September 1952, p. 2.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

"'Civilised', Horsham, Victoria, "D.24 Series", "As a parent of a young girl, I sincerely thank D.24 for the episode titled *The Strangler*", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 20-26 September 1952, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p.21.

<sup>82</sup> Joy Damousi discusses Donald Horne's views on Australian society in his book *The Lucky Country*: "Horne was echoing the sentiments of many of his generation who believed that during the 1950s and 1960s Australia was a vast suburban expanse which bred indifference, mediocrity and hedonism, rather than reflection and self-analysis [...] The expatriate community that perceived Australia in these terms had grown during this time as Jeffrey Smart, Barry Humphries, Germaine Greer and Peter Finch, amongst others, escaped what they perceived was the stultifying conservatism of Australian cultural life."

Source: Joy Damousi, "Making the Ordinary extraordinary in the 1950s: Explorations of Interiority and Australian Cultural History" in Hsu-Ming Teo and Richard White, (eds), *Cultural History in Australia*, UNSW Press, NSW, 2003, p. 214;

"D.24 has excellent credentials, but some of the most revolting cases in Victorian police history have been dramatised for listeners with all the fearsome artistry of screaming actresses and most realistic sound effects. Where the darkest corners of the human soul are concerned, it is sometimes wiser for the public to remain in ignorance".

Source: "Radio Standards Slated by Roman Catholic Critics", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 November 1953, p. 3;

"Widespread reaction to the use of stark realism in the D.24 radio series has followed the recent broadcast entitled 'The Strangler.' Mrs Julia Rapke, Children's Court Special Magistrate, described the broadcast as 'disgusting, alarming and detrimental to children'.

Source: "Strangler Broadcast Causes Stir", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 6-12 September 1952, p. 2;

<sup>83</sup> "Actual Crime Show Tops", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 18-24 September 1954, p. 8;

National Archives of Australia, Melbourne, MP634/1, 909721: *The Anderson Analysis, AAB Radio Survey Report of Home Listening*, Australia Broadcasting Control Board, Canberra. (Incomplete sets of reports from February 1946 to July 1954.)

<sup>84</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 32;

"Big Crime Feature for 3DB", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 30 May-5 June 1953, p. 2.

<sup>85</sup> Hector Crawford Productions, *The Crime Club* program proposal, circa June 1953.

<sup>86</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>87</sup> "Big Bids to keep D.24 on the Air", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 11-17 July 1953, p. 3.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> "D.24 will Stay", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 5-11 September 1953, p. 3.

<sup>91</sup> Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board*, op. cit., pp. 5, 9-10; Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>92</sup> Of the 9,000 program episodes produced by Crawfords, many were sold several times over (approximately 20,000 episodes).

Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board*, op. cit., pp. 11-17;

Crawfords Australia, *The History of Crawfords Australia*, Melbourne, website: [http://www.crawfords.com.au/index\\_about.html](http://www.crawfords.com.au/index_about.html), accessed 5 May 2010.

<sup>93</sup> "Amazing Grace", op. cit.

<sup>94</sup> Wynne Pullman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>95</sup> National Archives of Australia, Sydney, SP 1299/2, TV/28/3/25, Part 43A: Hector Crawford, Hector Crawford Productions, letter to Charles Moses, General Manager, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney, 30 June 1953.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, summary of Crawford Productions' radio output in *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry into the Production and distribution of Motion Picture Films and Television Programs*, Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 1972.

<sup>101</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 75.

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Feature article about radio production featuring Dorothy Crawford:  
"That popular serial can cause many headaches".  
Source: *The Listener In*, Melbourne, 17-23 November, 1951, page 20.

## **PART 2: Trials, Tribulation and Breakthrough – Crawfords During the Early years of Television (1956-1963)**

### **Chapter 7: Crash through or Crash**

#### **7.1. Introduction**

This chapter outlines the difficult formative years of Crawfords as an independent television producer prior to its *Homicide* crime series success in 1964. Crawfords' early contributions to locally produced television and commercial programs are described and supported by oral history accounts from key staff members and associates from this period.

Crawfords endured a daunting commercial environment during this era. It is therefore relevant to briefly describe the circumstances behind the awarding of the four commercial television licences in 1955 (in Sydney and Melbourne) and the domination of this process by powerful newspaper, media and radio consortia. Despite the documented misgivings expressed by close advisors to the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the result was a concentration of power dismissive of Australian television drama production.<sup>1</sup>

#### **7.2. A Dual Television System**

The introduction of television in Australia was first considered by a Joint Parliamentary Committee convened by the short-lived Menzies wartime government in July 1941.<sup>2</sup> At this point, as Ann Curthoys notes, officials from the Postmaster General's Department "were pessimistic that the new technology had any future as a mass medium of communication while the manufacturers and broadcasters were optimistic".<sup>3</sup> The Committee decided that further consideration required a demonstration of considerably more development of this new medium.<sup>4</sup>

Although public interest in the introduction of television had grown significantly after the Second World War, only in the early 1950s did the newly elected federal Liberal Government begin planning for its introduction, although post-war reconstruction issues and the threat of another world war were considered greater

priorities.<sup>5</sup> During the post-war years, the Chifley Labor Government appeared reticent to introduce television, perhaps fearful that the already powerful newspaper magnates and other media interests would use this new medium to further their capitalist objectives while promoting conservative politics.<sup>6</sup> Under these circumstances, the Chifley Government did adopt the British model of state-owned television through the BBC, a highly regulated TV system in which the only competitor – to whom the BBC sub-contracted – was the Independent Television Service (ITV).<sup>7</sup> The resulting *Broadcasting Act 1942-1948*, prohibiting the granting of commercial television licences, was viewed by the Liberal Party opposition as “authoritarian and socialistic”, but the Chifley Government lost office in 1949 before it could be implemented.<sup>8</sup>

Concerned that television would reduce magazine and newspaper profits, newspaper proprietors promoted themselves as potential TV licensees. Speculating that the Liberal Party would be more supportive of free enterprise, they encouraged the newly elected Menzies' Government into action, as did a curious public.<sup>9</sup> Following a fact-finding mission to the UK and USA in the early 1950s, the Menzies' Government amended the *Broadcasting Act 1948* to permit commercial licensees, thus creating the compromise situation of a dual system of TV ownership, as then existed in radio.<sup>10</sup> The rationale, Curthoys suggests, was to avoid the strict regulation of the British system while diminishing the excesses of a totally American-like commercial structure.<sup>11</sup> Twenty years later Sandra Hall suggested that this did not really work as planned because the inaugural commercial stations relied on American content:

The US system is so much a product of free enterprise that public television is caught up perpetually in a crisis over its funding. Britain has produced what is generally considered to be the most sophisticated service in the world; a skilful amalgamation of cultural elitism and controlled commercialism and here in Australia we were supposed [in 1956] to get the best possible sort of television for a mixed economy – a marriage between responsibility (provided by a national service) and showbiz (via the commercial part of the service).<sup>12</sup>

Former Nine Network executive Nigel Dick agrees: The dual system was still slanted towards the “highly competitive American television system, as compared to the far less [and competitive but highly regulated] British system” and explains the initial dominance of American programs, as is subsequently discussed.<sup>13</sup>

Having decided upon an appropriate television structure, the Government initiated the *1953 Royal Commission on Television* to guide the government through its yet-to-be formulated TV policy.<sup>14</sup> The primary decision would establish the 'national broadcasting service' component of the proposed dual system: should a new authority be created or could an existing authority such as the Australian Broadcasting Commission combine its radio operations with television?<sup>15</sup>

The Royal Commission decided that both commercial and national interests would be best served by appointing the Australian Broadcasting Commission as Australia's national broadcasting service, funded by revenue from television viewers' licence fees, while issuing two commercial licences in both Sydney and Melbourne.<sup>16</sup> It was also agreed that the Australian Broadcasting Control Board (ABCB), formed in 1948 to regulate radio, would also supervise and regulate television policy and operations, and oversee the selection process for new commercial stations, under the authority of the Television Act 1953.<sup>17</sup> Finally, the Commission limited television ownership to two stations, as legislated in the revised (1956) *Broadcasting and Television Act 1942-1956*.<sup>18</sup>

### **7.3. A Concentration of Media Ownership**

In 1955, applications for the four available licences were received, including one from the Australian Workers' Union and the Australian Labour Party for a licence in each city.<sup>19</sup> The leader of Federal Labor, Dr H.V.Evatt, speaking in support of the application, intimates why the former Chifley Government feared dominance of television by newspaper proprietors, as noted in the Australian Broadcasting Control Board Grant of Licences report:<sup>20</sup>

The object of the Labour Movement and the Union would not be a question of mere profit making. In other words, a television licence would not be regarded as a piece of property coming into the field of what is normally or basically a public utility, but a service in which there would be a definite trust imposed upon us.<sup>21</sup>

One wonders how a commercial television station would function while managed by a major political organisation and an alleged communist infiltrated union. Evatt's application can nevertheless be seen as a counter-balance, i.e., an attempt to limit the

concentration of power to the right while including leftist interests.<sup>22</sup> The ABCB, diplomatically, dismissed the control of TV stations by a political organisation.<sup>23</sup>

Predictably, as Dick recalls, “the licences were granted to three newspaper proprietors, or three newspaper groups and Sir Arthur Warner. The main players were kept reasonably happy”.<sup>24</sup> It actually was four newspaper groups, because the General Television Corporation consortium (GTV9) – led by Warner, a former Victorian Liberal politician and Astor Television Managing Director – included David Syme and Co. (*The Age*), *The Argus* and Australasian Limited.<sup>25</sup> (In late 1959, GTV9 was sold to the Packer Consortium.<sup>26</sup>) The principal backers of the three other successful consortia included *The Herald and Weekly Times* (Keith Murdoch), the *Sydney Sun* (John Fairfax and Sons) for Amalgamated Television services Pty. Ltd., and Consolidated Press Ltd (Frank Packer) for Television Corporation Ltd.<sup>27</sup>

This brief overview of the introduction of television in Australia seeks to illustrate the power of the newspaper industry and the perception that conservative politics supported the ‘big end of town.’<sup>28</sup> Dick’s observation that newspaper interests regarded television ownership as a means of protecting and increasing profit demonstrates one of the barriers independent program producers such as Hector Crawford faced when trying to establish a local production industry in an environment where cheap, but mostly quality overseas programs were readily available.<sup>29</sup>

Hector Crawford’s campaign to encourage production of locally produced drama progressed during a long period of Liberal Party dominance. Because the early wave of inexpensive American programs enhancing the profitability of commercial stations, however, a certain degree of ambivalence existed with regard to imposing local drama quotas; indeed a specific quota for Australia drama was not introduced until 1966.<sup>30</sup> Despite this, Crawfords made some inroads between 1956-63 with the help of the financial backing and support it received from *The Herald and Weekly Times*, and radio 3DB, a legacy of the successful relationship both groups forged at the height of the radio years.<sup>31</sup> 3DB Manager Keith Cairns recalled that “Crawford’s was a very good operation; his sister Dorothy especially, was the creative brain there. Hector was a superb front house man, but Dorothy was the creative genius.”<sup>32</sup>



Pragmatically, the winners in the 1955 licence application process were best equipped to finance and develop the Australian television industry; but the choice was not extensive. A proposed political alliance was outlined above, and it could be argued that Sydney applicant *Truth and Sportsman Limited*, a newspaper renowned for inaccurate and unsavoury reporting, could not have satisfied the criteria of 'good character and reputation' and a 'good record in allied fields'.<sup>33</sup> While supporting the ABCB's recommendations in a memo to cabinet, key Prime Ministerial advisor, Dr Ronald Mendelsohn, expressed concerns about increasing the power of the media and the pressures this would impose on Australia's national station in a dual system:

We have concentrated on an examination in the broadest sense of the Board's recommendations, and we believe that they should be supported.[...] [But] the Board's recommendations in the result do place a very heavy responsibility on the national television body [the ABC] to ensure that it provides not only a good service, but a service which will be attractive to a substantial percentage of the public.<sup>34</sup>

There is no doubt that if the Government accepts the Board's recommendation, the power of big newspaper and radio groups will be greatly strengthened.[...] The applicants in Sydney and Melbourne already have very substantial interests in the fields of mass communications and "we believe that it would be in the public interest for the ownership of commercial television stations to be more widely spread than is contemplated by all the applicants."<sup>35</sup>

Because of these views, Mendelsohn suggests that Cabinet consider three choices: acceptance of the ABCB's recommendations, rejection and a renewed search for additional applicants or, rejection and a completely new process.<sup>36</sup>

Mendelsohn, an advisor to a conservative government, was a socialist economist and former member of the Labor Party. His background may therefore have influenced his views that the public interest would benefit from more diverse ownership of commercial television stations to be more widely spread than recommended by the ABCB.<sup>37</sup> Having suggested Cabinet consider other options, Mendelsohn was nonetheless prepared to accept the ABCB recommendation on the basis of the three main safeguards against commercial media dominance promulgated: the establishment of the nationally owned and run Australian Broadcasting Station (ABC) to lessen the power of commercial interests, the ABCB's mandate of daily supervision to ensure television station proprietors responded to public interests; and, the preventative policy refusing any future commercial licences to existing licensees.<sup>38</sup>

Nevertheless, the implication that the government of the day tacitly supported commercial television interests – while superficially supporting ‘localism’ both in program development and Australian values and culture – is valid.<sup>39</sup> Diametrically opposed philosophies reflect both sides of the local content argument and established the context of Hector Crawford’s ongoing dilemma of increasing locally produced drama. Programming recommendations, (1), made by the 1953 Royal Commission into Television and included in the revised Broadcasting and Television Act 1942-1956, were key government prerequisites for licensees.<sup>40</sup> However as Crawford, Harrison and Moran note, they were not enforced in any way until 1960 when a forty percent quota for general Australian content was required.<sup>41</sup> The latter (2), almost Reithian in nature (see Chapter Four, endnote 145) was the key tenet perennially and self-righteously espoused by Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations (FACTS) – as late as 1970 – in response to the “TV: Make it Australian” campaign at that time:

1. Immediate steps should be taken to encourage the creation of programmes which set acceptable cultural standards, and further important national objectives. [...] There is an obligation on all television stations to ensure that the best use is made of Australian talent.<sup>42</sup>
2. The primary responsibility of the television licensees is to the public and it is in their interest that programming is selected by stations.<sup>43</sup>

To summarise, it is not suggested that the Menzies’ Government deliberately favoured the media groups awarded Australian television’s inaugural licences, nor instructed the ABCB in this way. As is revealed in Chapter Nine, the Government, in 1963, did not agree with the ABCB’s recommendations for Melbourne’s third commercial licensee. But believing in due process, and respecting decisions made by specially convened committees, the Prime Minister and Cabinet reluctantly approved the recommendation (see Chapter 9.14 and 9.15). Rather, the main issue of contention, during the early years of television, was the failure of the Government and ABCB to enforce the standards prescribed above in point (1). It is in this context that conservative governments were perceived to supported commercial television interests.

## 7.4. Early Program Progress

Crawfords became the first independent company to produce a live program on commercial television – and during television's first week of operation.<sup>44</sup> Looking back 57 years, the human-interest program *Wedding Day* is a metaphor for Crawfords' marriage with this new medium after a successful decade in radio. *Wedding Day* was the first of several variety, quiz and comedy programs produced by Crawfords in those formative years, although as Crawfords' stalwart Ian Jones recalls, "most of them were dreadful".<sup>45</sup>

A journalist and sub-editor with *The Sun* before joining HSV7 as a writer in 1956, Jones describes *Wedding Day* as a program in which couples came into the studio to talk about their marriage ceremony earlier that day:<sup>46</sup>

They had a monstrous set and I hated the format because it was a one big set-up. And then they did *Take That*, a sort of school boy comedy thing with actors running around in short pants and caps and getting whacked with a cane. I tended to cringe a bit. A TV version of radio's *Yes What* was terrible, and then there was [another comedy] *Don't Argue*.<sup>47</sup>

But Ian Crawford views these early programs somewhat differently, particularly *Take That* which he regards as an historic event largely unrecognised as the first regular and moderately successful drama-based Australian comedy television program. And *Wedding Day*, he recalls, resulted from numerous visits by Hector Crawford to HSV7 Managing Director Keith Cairns, to sell this concept as Crawfords' first television program:<sup>48</sup>

While the newly married couple were asked simply quiz questions and presented with fairly cheap prizes, their enthralled wedding guests were gathered with Cairns in a large room at HSV7, watching bride and groom actually on television.<sup>49</sup>

By late 1959, *Peters Club*, Crawford says, was a reasonably successful children's program for GTV9, which won an award from the *Truth* newspaper for Best Children's Program of the year.<sup>50</sup> Co-produced by Crawford and Natalie Raine, *Peters Club* screened for 18 months and "was a pot-pourri of sketches, interviews and song featuring well known personalities of the day Judy Banks, Rod McLennan and pianist Shirley Radford".<sup>51</sup> Other programs included *Raising a Husband*

(GTV9), a 30-minute interview program format; *Hutton's Family Quiz* (HSV7) and, *Fighting Words* hosted by Barry Jones.<sup>52</sup>

During these early years, Hector Crawford could not convince Channels Seven or Nine to allow Crawfords' personnel to direct programs. Ian Crawford, as a technical specialist, was permitted to 'block'; i.e. direct the movement of cameras and actors, but Dorothy Crawford was not allowed to direct officially from the control room.<sup>53</sup> HSV7 staffer Alex Emmanuel directed many of Crawfords' early programs, as did Alf Potter and Ted Gregory, including the interiors of *Homicide*.<sup>54</sup> Having seized the initiative and developed considerable production knowledge and technical expertise during the 1950s, this disappointed Crawfords, who probably knew as much about television production as anyone, as is explained below in Section 7.5. Yet these early programs were the first television 'Crawford Creations' to encourage and develop local talent.<sup>55</sup>

## 7.5. The Crawford Television Workshop

Much of this early progress may be attributed to The Crawford Television Workshop. In 1954, aware that television was just two years away, the Crawfords realised that the days of radio drama production were numbered. Always looking to the future and a new challenge, Hector and Dorothy began researching how Crawfords could successfully transition from radio to television and provide their staff, and others, with a foundation in television production.<sup>56</sup>

In 1955, Hector hired a large hall at St. James Old Cathedral in King Street, West Melbourne, for The Crawford TV Workshop to be set up and managed by Ian Crawford.<sup>57</sup> At the same time, the Crawfords embarked on a series of overseas' television study tours, visiting the BBC and United States, where they observed many top drama programs being produced.<sup>58</sup> The detailed knowledge they absorbed was utilised immediately within the television workshop.<sup>59</sup> Ian Crawford recalls that upon their return, the workshop was ready to go:

I'd been given the job of setting up our 'studio' in the hall, complete with sets and – wonder upon wonders – a television camera. The only camera available at that stage, apart from a studio camera that was worth a small fortune, was an

industrial camera – a cumbersome device that I bought that had been designed to look into blast furnaces, or all things.

It didn't have a viewfinder, so we had to buy an industrial monitor, the same shape and weight as the camera. David Lee and I then had to make a tripod of hardwood with three blow-up tyre wheels, two fixed, the third castored so we could steer it. We couldn't tilt the camera up or down or pan from side to side so David would steer me by twisting the back of a wooden chair. The whole thing was absolutely monstrous but we improvised.<sup>60</sup> [See photo spread section]

Workshop students required sets, which Crawford and Lee painstakingly built. Studying instruction in a book they engaging an architectural student to paint and decorate them.<sup>61</sup>

After returning from overseas, Hector officially announced the establishment of the workshop, which he said “would train students in all phases of TV production techniques by experts with overseas TV experience.”<sup>62</sup> Paul Bacon, an experienced British repertory actor, regular BBC television performer, and choreographer, was appointed the Workshop's inaugural director. Australian actor Don Crosby followed in 1960.<sup>63</sup> Each night Bacon and theatre actor Natalie Raine coached drama classes while actor John Morgan and Ian Crawford conducted announcing classes.<sup>64</sup> A journalist, on-hand from *TV Times*, made the following observations:

The sketch they [the students] were doing was about a doctor and his woman patient. While they were doing it, Crosby was giving them valuable tips like “don't tread on a comedian's lines” and pointing out that things like dropped “H's” must sound natural and not like someone who's educated doing it on purpose.<sup>65</sup>

It was clear that radio and stage actors would have to adapt to succeed in television. Radio actors, in particular, were accustomed to the comfort zone of the studio and not having to face an audience. As early as 1951, shrewd radio actors in Sydney and Melbourne looked ahead to television by brushing up their technique in front of stage audiences.<sup>66</sup> By 1953, courses conducted by the Council for Adult Education and the Melbourne Technical School were filled with aspiring actors and those interested in TV programme transmission and TV studio techniques.<sup>67</sup> So many people hoped to succeed in television, that waiting lists were created offering priority to established commercial and ABC radio actors and announcers.<sup>68</sup> The Crawford TV Workshop was no exception.<sup>69</sup>

John Cain contends that many of the radio actors involved with the TV Workshop were active in television in the late 1950s and beyond. But the learning curve was steep, and many fine radio actors failed to make the transition, notably Sydney host Jack Davey, who was probably the biggest star in radio variety during the 1950s.<sup>70</sup>

He just didn't handle it right. I think maybe he was too nervous about it. Bob Dyer [another big radio star in Sydney], on the other hand, was a success because he just played with the audience in front of him, as he had on radio.<sup>71</sup>

As Ian Crawford observes, radio actors suddenly had to deal with movement, memorise their lines and manage props while performing convincingly. The importance of preparing radio actors for television, through the TV Workshop, cannot be over-estimated.<sup>72</sup> According to Hector Crawford:

We just had to get our people ready to swing to television and so the closed circuit TV studio in St. James' Old Cathedral got us all thinking in terms of visual things. We put on demonstrations; I think the first demonstration of closed circuit TV was a ballet done there by us, a year before television opened.<sup>73</sup>

Several years later, *This Is Ballet*, a 15-minute pilot directed by Paul Bacon, demonstrated a ballet group at rehearsal. Performed live, the pilot was viewed on monitors in a makeshift control room by GTV9 general manager Colin Bednall and Norm Spencer, producer/director of *In Melbourne Tonight* (IMT), who were amazed at how such a performance was achieved with just one camera, as Ian Crawford remembers:<sup>74</sup>

I took Norman downstairs, introduced him to our group and, rather embarrassed, showed him our equipment. He was truly astounded, and asked me if I'd like to spend a few evenings backstage at *In Melbourne Tonight*. Naturally I jumped at the chance.<sup>75</sup>

Although impressed, GTV9 decided that the concept would not "appeal to the broad audience demographic they required" and rejected the idea.<sup>76</sup> But the hard work learning the technical aspects of television paid-off handsomely for Ian Crawford. The most popular variety program in Melbourne in 1959, and hosted by the most popular celebrity, Graham Kennedy, *IMT* provided additional experience for Ian.<sup>77</sup>

I was to stay with *In Melbourne Tonight* for the next seven years [on a part-time basis], their only freelance cameraman, always on Graham's camera five nights a week. The whole experience with *In Melbourne Tonight* was, to that stage, the happiest time of my life.<sup>78</sup>

Although the TV Workshop's main purpose was to train actors and announcers, it also provided on-the-job training for the cameramen, sound and lighting technicians working at the school. This evolved into the Crawfords' admired nursery-type environment that prevailed in the 1960s and 70s – when production staff learnt their skills from self-taught TV pioneers such as Ian Crawford and David Lee – working on real programs. “I learned about film directing out of a British book about film editing”, Crawford marvels:

In my view it was what was on the screen that counted and what was on the screen was put on the screen by a film editor. That how I learnt it in the first place.<sup>79</sup>

While the TV Workshop prepared potential actors for television, they had very little opportunity to act because initially, Crawford recalls, “we just couldn't sell any drama – our speciality in radio – because it was just too expensive; so we did quiz shows.”<sup>80</sup> HSV7's Keith Cairns, faced the same dilemma: for nearly a decade, commercial stations depended on imported American drama programs. Lacking the knowledge, skills and funds to produce their own drama, Cairns turned to Melbourne's Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) for training, the only other accessible source of instruction:<sup>81</sup> “We sent numbers of our people to learn the techniques of production, sales and engineering, because none of us knew anything about it”.<sup>82</sup>

The shift from the diminution of radio drama production to television drama production was difficult financially for Crawfords' company of 40 staff members.<sup>83</sup> Yet the newly established television stations faced their own hurdles. John Cain notes that only the most successful radio producers could adapt quickly as did Crawfords through their TV Workshop.<sup>84</sup> Hector and Dorothy Crawford, both extremely well informed about industry trends, were better placed to produce local drama than the newly licenced TV stations during those early years.<sup>85</sup> Other successful radio producers such as Donovan Joyce, Morris West, John Hickling and Broadcast Exchange faded into obscurity.<sup>86</sup>

The long-running *D-24* and Crawfords' last major radio series, *Consider Your Verdict*, rated extremely well until early 1960. The substantial worldwide sales of its radio programs in the 1950s kept Crawfords viable, enabling its evolution to, and demonstrating its competence in, television production.<sup>87</sup> More unorthodox radio series such as the social commentary *Problem People*, and an academic documentary titled *You and Your World*, also maintained Crawfords' viability.<sup>88</sup> The Crawford TV Workshop, according to Hector Crawford, was an important part of this formative process and contributed to the company's survival. By 1960, Crawfords was rewarded for its persistence by the success of the first of three significant drama productions.<sup>89</sup> The ABC, at the same time, had done significantly better.

## 7.6. The Drama of Making Drama

Until Crawfords developed a level of production expertise that attracted the attention of both government and commercial interests, the television drama market until the early 1960s – while technology was primitive – was limited to the ABC. Elizabeth Jacka reveals that national broadcaster enjoyed impressive success producing one-off live drama productions. Many were British classical works by Shakespeare, Sheridan and Shaw, while original Australian material was produced later on:<sup>90</sup>

While at this time considerable effort was being made to include original works in the radio drama output, the same effort was not made in TV drama, perhaps because TV was looked down on and established radio writers were not keen to make the transition. It is worth remembering that at this time there was virtually no Australian theatre or cinema. In this environment, the ABC's efforts in the new medium were nothing short of heroic. In these earliest years they produced annually 24 live plays, roughly half each in Sydney and Melbourne.<sup>91</sup>

In 1959, the first multi-part drama to be made in Australia, a 30-minute seven-episode serial, was written, produced and shown in 1960. *Stormy Petrel*, an historical theme based on the story of Governor Bligh, would be considered amateurish by today's standards.<sup>92</sup> But it was a great achievement for ABC television, winning a Logie for Best Actor (Brian James) and a special Gold Logie for Best Drama in 1961.<sup>93</sup> Encouraged by their success, and supported by government funding, the ABC produced a sequel titled *The Outcasts* about the life of Governor Macquarie, followed by *The Patriots*, this time about explorer William Wentworth and Governor Darling.<sup>94</sup> Just as Crawfords' TV Workshop prepared actors and announcers for



television, Jacka contends the ABC improved the standard of TV drama scripts by establishing their TV Writers' Workshop in 1959.<sup>95</sup>

Similar undertakings by commercial stations were not as successful. For instance, in 1959 GTV9 produced *Emergency*, based on the successful British hospital drama *Emergency Ward 10*. Roland Strong, Dorothy Crawford's husband and long-time writer and announcer for Crawfords, produced *Emergency*, although only 16 episodes were completed. The production was doomed from the start, according to Strong, because Channel Nine General Manager Colin Bednall committed only £250 to each 30-minute episode, half of what was required, even though BP sponsored the series:<sup>96</sup>

We had, I think, the best radio actors in the country. But every actor needs rehearsal and we just didn't have the time and money to do it. They were only paid £20 each, hardly worth their while. The scriptwriter, and we didn't have many writers, was paid £25, and we didn't have the money for decent sets.<sup>97</sup>

Additional criticisms included poor quality transmission and mistake-riddled productions. The series was recorded on Kinescope; on 16mm film from a specially adjusted television monitor which severely inhibited editing possibilities:<sup>98</sup>

If an actor had trouble with a line of dialogue, or a set shook, the scene could not be re-shot. This inability to remove errors from the finished episode was one of the primary sources of criticism for the series. As reviewers commented, viewers don't expect to see actors stumble on lines in a filmed show.<sup>99</sup>

Despite these difficulties, the early episodes were well received in Melbourne – though less so in Sydney, where the series was televised by GTV9's then affiliate ATN7.<sup>100</sup> As the series progressed, an extraordinarily scathing half-page article by a Sydney daily newspaper attacked *Emergency*, convincing BP to withdraw its sponsorship. GTV9 could not absorb the costs and halted production.<sup>101</sup> One can only speculate about what, if any influence the anti-Melbourne lobby may have played in *Emergency's* demise? Ian Crawford had his own theory about *Emergency*: "There was nothing wrong with the story, but it didn't work because these people didn't have the experience in writing, editing, directing and producing for television".<sup>102</sup> Reflecting years later, Strong believed that his team was disadvantaged from the start, because of the low budget and inferior technology. "I tried to write the damn thing having written a lot of radio but I quickly learnt that TV

and radio were rather different. The story of *Emergency* is simply one of trying to do it too early with too little money".<sup>103</sup>

Thus, low budgets, sensitive sponsors, and technical limitations made the recording and distribution of locally made programs difficult and expensive until the early 1960s. The preferred method of televising locally produced content continued to be live-to-air.<sup>104</sup> Until the arrival of video-tape in 1962, commercial stations relied heavily on slick (but inexpensive) imported programs from America, local live plays, live sport, variety, and events such as *Music For the People*, *In Melbourne Tonight* and *Sunnyside Up*.

## 7.7. A Foothold at Last

### 7.7.1. *Seagulls Over Sorrento*

Following the success of the ABC's live play series, Hector Crawford convinced HSV7 to buy his television version of a World War Two themed stage play *Seagulls Over Sorrento*.<sup>105</sup> Produced by Dorothy Crawford and directed by HSV7's Alf Potter, *Seagulls* featured a strong cast of ex-radio actors, including four of the core actors from the stage versions in the UK and Australia – William Hodge, Brian James, Don Crosby and Frank Taylor.<sup>106</sup>

Like some of Crawford's expensive early musical dramas on radio, *Seagulls* cost a staggering £3,500 to produce, in addition to HSV7's technical expenses. As Ian Crawford recalls, it was the first independently produced full-length Australian television drama:<sup>107</sup>

Having got into the idea, Hector said "let's do it". Everyone outside our company told him he was mad – it was two hours and ten minutes long, [including live commercials] and would, of course, have to go to air live – but he went ahead anyway.<sup>108</sup>

Produced on 1 May 1960 in Studio One at HSV7's South Melbourne headquarters, *Seagulls* had a large cast and set; live commercials had to be produced in Studio Two. From a technical point of view, Crawford found the experience exciting but equally frustrating because he could not direct the play:

Alf Potter had never directed a drama; all he had directed was footy! [Live Australian Rules Football telecasts] So it was very frustrating that we had to agree to some of the things he wanted done, because I disagreed with them from a dramatic point of view, a blocking point of view, and a directorial point of view.<sup>109</sup>

Because the play featured several navy men sitting around a table pondering a forthcoming mission, the play was criticised for its lack of action, although the actors received high praise:

Unfortunately, the lack of action in "Seagulls Over Sorrento" was accentuated by the hiatus effect of an exceptional number of breaks for commercials. [But] the four men were the core of an acting team which performed with professional polish and a confidence rarely seen in local drama. It was backed by sharp camera work and firm production.<sup>110</sup>

Despite limited action, Ian Crawford believes the program "was a success and gave the company its vital introduction to televised drama."<sup>111</sup>

Following this breakthrough, Crawfords' drive to produce sustained drama on Australian television advanced considerably when Hector sold HSV7 a new television series in 1960: an adaptation of his successful radio series *Consider Your Verdict*.<sup>112</sup> In 1961, Hector again approached the ABC (see Chapter 6.6) with a new concept funded by the Federal Government Department of Trade, and secured a long-term contract to produce *Export Action*, a series of promotional documentaries designed to stimulate export activity in the Australian manufacturing industry.<sup>113</sup> *Export Action* is a little known but significant element of Crawfords' history. While these two programs could not have been more different thematically, they strengthening Crawfords' position as an independent television producer.

### **7.7.2. Export Action**

*Export Action* was an unorthodox program idea welcomed by the Federal Government. Because of his associations with government and the business world, Hector became aware that the Department of Trade was planning a publicity campaign to stimulate and develop overseas investment and tourism in Australia, and to export Australian primary and manufacturing products. He approached the Federal Government:<sup>114</sup>

We went to the government because at the time there was great business about making Australians more conscious of the need to export. We produced a plan which we believed could be achieved on a very wide scale at minimal cost. We put the scheme to the government and they accepted it.<sup>115</sup>

When Cabinet agreed to the Department of Trade's proposal, the ABC approved the broadcast of *Export Action*.<sup>116</sup> Three caveats were specified: the broadcasts had to be supported by the Export Development Council and Manufacturing Industries Advisory Council; program content containing an advertising component had to be "within the legal franchise of the Commission"; and "any inescapable advertising aimed at giving sharpness to the message should not be blatant".<sup>117</sup> Although a 'soft-sell' approach was required, the incongruous nature of the series at the ABC inevitably resulted in written complaints alleging covert advertising.<sup>118</sup>

In July 1962, the first group of what would be 114 four-minute fillers aired under the banner of *Export Action*. Broadcast initially by the national stations, they were then picked up by commercial stations, because they could count as Australian content.<sup>119</sup> Soon thereafter, a series of 13 in-depth half-hour programs were televised. The initial group of four pilot 30 minute episodes cost £798, or £199 each for both Crawfords' and ABV2 studio time.<sup>120</sup> Ian Crawford recalls that *Export Action* featured 78 large and small companies that manufactured everything from transformers, book binding machinery, or electrical, camera and optical equipment, to machinery for agriculture and dry cleaning, locks, keys, hardware and cricket balls, but there were probably many more.<sup>121</sup>

Writer and director Douglas Tainsh recalls that *Export Action* "was quite dynamic and for some reason people used to watch it":<sup>122</sup>

It was about people at work, at machines, and success is a good thing. They were success stories. You'd get hold of Hills Hoists, and you'd get talking to those guys and you'd realise they were just ordinary men like yourself who had thought of an idea and become millionaires. It was a sort of rags-to-riches story in just about every *Export Action* episode.<sup>123</sup>

Crawfords received a list of potential manufacturing companies to target. A small research team interviewed the people concerned, asked if the company wanted to participate and obtained a few basic facts for the filming team:<sup>124</sup>

Dudley Robinson was a cameraman, myself, and a kid to help us, and that kid is probably some editor of renown in Australia, or a director. That's how the kids were trained and they loved to come on the film crew, it was what every kid aspired to, being on the film crew and going off to the Flinders Rangers for a couple of weeks.<sup>125</sup>

Ian Jones, new to Crawfords as 'Executive in Charge of Special Projects', began working on *Export Action* almost immediately. As both writer and director, he believes that these documentaries and later similar programs provided the necessary experience and credibility Crawfords needed for future productions such as *Homicide*.<sup>126</sup>

It was done on a cost plus 10% basis, and we had four hours to produce the 30 minute episodes. They were showing basically how companies got into the export market and how they operated. Maton Guitars was one I did. Because the Minister for Trade [Sir John McEwan] was a Country Party member, Hector thought we should do one on the roles of the countryman in Australian business and export in general. So I wrote a script called "The Countryman" which ended up quite a spectacular. [...] we got a mounted policeman with a stuck-on moustache riding across a ridge looking like a timeless Australian countryman.<sup>127</sup>

Early episodes were recorded with the inferior telecine process integrated with film, but the introduction of video-tape improved quality considerably. The inexperienced post-production staff still faced a steep learning curve; they worked in antiquated facilities with inferior equipment at Collins Street, the site of all post-production of *Export Action*.<sup>128</sup> But, as Ian Crawford notes, the entire process provided wonderful experience and initiated the so-called nursery process that generated so many skilled 'Crawford Creations' production staff.<sup>129</sup> Hector Crawford believed that *Export Action* was "a highly successful and imaginative program that did enormous work for the government at very, very small cost".<sup>130</sup>

They got all the [air] time for free [because] we negotiated with the commercial stations to do this as a community gesture and also that the product would count for Australian content. And so they got a blanket commercial coverage over Australia by the national and commercial broadcasters, without any time cost at all.<sup>131</sup>

In December 1962, after six months of *Export Action*, the Chairman of the Export Development Council wrote to the ABC expressing approval of the series, despite initial misgivings:

When they [Export Action series] were first proposed, most of us had some doubts about what sort of an image they would create. These doubts have all been dispelled. I believe that the series is high class and making a national impact greater than we expected. Not only are viewers being impressed with the vital need to build up our export income, but they are being inspired by the stories which are being told.<sup>132</sup>

A successful example of Hector Crawford's predilection for unusual ideas, the importance of *Export Action* (produced between 1962 and 1965) to Crawfords cannot be over-estimated. The program provided a vital source of income at a time of limited opportunities for independent television producers, and Crawfords' staff received valuable experience and on-the-job training. As Ian Crawford elaborates:

This was an excellent way for Hector to gain the confidence of the senior echelon of companies, for we dealt directly with them at all times, cutting out their advertising agencies. This enabled Hec, in many cases, to subsequently sell corporate films to the companies concerned at remarkably low prices, using much of the footage already shot for the television series.<sup>133</sup>

*Export Action* consolidated Crawfords' Documentary Division, attracting ongoing commissions to produce commercials, corporate promos and other government programs.<sup>134</sup> These included *The Active Australian*, recruitment 'shorts' for the Department of the Army; a similar series titled *Profile of a Soldier* and an 'on-the-spot' special *Christmas Salute* that profiled Australian soldiers serving in Malaysia.<sup>135</sup>

Finally, the production and success of *Export Action* contributed to Hector's rapprochement with the Menzies Government as many of its members had been unhappy since September 1959, when Hector distributed his infamous 'little yellow book' *Commercial Television Programs in Australia*.<sup>136</sup> Deeply concerned by the deluge of imported programs on television, Crawford's booklet, as described in the next chapter, provided clear statistical evidence of this phenomena, while attacking the Federal Government for its failure to enforce the local content provisions included in Section 114 (1) of the revised *Broadcasting and Television Act 1942-1956*.<sup>137</sup>

### **7.7.3. Consider Your Verdict**

During the local drama production standoff between 1956 and 1963, Hector Crawford continued to submit program ideas to stations, including the ABC.<sup>138</sup> One

of these was a television adaptation of his successful courtroom radio series *Consider Your Verdict* which, as he explained, was along the “lines of the ad-lib dramatic program broadcast on English and American television under the title *The Verdict is Yours*”.<sup>139</sup> Stressing its low budget, along with Crawfords' ability to handle the genre given its equivalent radio experience, Hector offered an “interesting and unique opportunity”.<sup>140</sup> The ABC turned him down, citing the unavailability of studio facilities and not wanting to curtail current program offerings, but HSV7 quickly bought the series.<sup>141</sup> While Crawfords' Documentary Division thrived with *Export Action* – along with television commercials and in-house promotional materials for retailing giants Coles and Myers – the company's Drama Division concurrently produced *Consider Your Verdict* for HSV7.<sup>142</sup>

Broadcast from February 1961 to June 1964, *Consider Your Verdict* was based upon the vast array of real-life court cases from Crawfords' radio series and *D.24*.<sup>143</sup> The Crown Law Department, Victoria Police and Melbourne University's Faculty of Law all provided advice.<sup>144</sup> *Consider Your Verdict* was economical to make at £500 per one-hour episode; a static production, it was filmed in a cold reverberating old building in Johnson Street, Collingwood, where soundproofing was inadequate.<sup>145</sup> Although the program began as a two-hour show divided into weekly one-hour instalments, it proved too cumbersome, and was cut down to a concise one-hour format.<sup>146</sup>

*Consider Your Verdict* was unusual. While questions put by the barristers – played by radio stalwarts Keith Eden, Terry Norris, George Fairfax, Wyn Roberts and Peter Aansenen – were fully scripted, witnesses and the accused received directions on what to feel and say, but had to put this into their own words.<sup>147</sup> This, as Sonia Borg recalls, “was to help mainly amateur actors try and sound natural, spontaneous and not as if they had memorized their lines”.<sup>148</sup>

Each actor had to become familiar with the entire story, and commit the facts of their own evidence to memory, but respond to questioning in their own words.<sup>149</sup> Challenging for the many amateur actors recruited by Dorothy Crawford, experienced actor Moira Carleton, a regular in the show's radio version, found this approach fascinating “because they gave you a brief”.<sup>150</sup>

You're being tried for murder; this, this and that, all the details. And a lot of it was up to you as to whether you were caught or not, or whether you thought you were guilty. If you were just a witness you had to make up your own mind and your own scenes. The barristers were fully scripted and knew the kind of questions to ask, but they didn't know what you thought about it. Did you fall into their trap or didn't you? Did you think? This is again wonderful, but to some people it frightened the hell out of them. I loved it and really enjoyed it.<sup>151</sup>

The radio version of *Consider Your Verdict* featured real barristers and other legal professionals because they were not seen and were given fictitious names. This was impossible in the television version. Although regular actors were often engaged as QCs, Ian Crawford recalls employing some legal professionals:

We used to cast real barristers as judges, one of whom was Eugene Gorman, who caused countless and expensive re-recordings because of his cigar smoking habits and penchant for listening to the Saturday afternoon races via a transistor radio hidden under his bench, which the sound engineer picked-up.<sup>152</sup>

With virtually every Victorian actor employed in *Consider Your Verdict* and many subsequent programs, the dearth of experienced television actors was problematical. To overcome the problem, Dorothy Crawford literally cast people off the streets to perform as witnesses; even the juries were made up of amateurs – usually Apex Clubs or similar groups who were paid a collective fee towards their club.<sup>153</sup> Given the ad-lib nature of the show, most were able to disguise their limited acting abilities; although for those who were keen to learn, Dorothy later employed Sonia Borg to teach drama classes once a week.<sup>154</sup> Borg, a Viennese immigrant with a wealth of acting experience and training in Europe, made an impression during several of her roles in *Consider Your Verdict*.<sup>155</sup> She soon found herself an integral full-time Crawford's staff member as an actor, writer, producer and casting director over the next decade.<sup>156</sup> Possessing a distinctive European accent, Borg recalls that:

My students were men and women of all ages and all backgrounds and they weren't the only ones who learnt something: I picked up a lot from them by watching and listening and studying the way 'fair dinkum Aussies' thought and talked. It would be of tremendous value later on.<sup>157</sup>

During her own debut in *Consider Your Verdict*, Borg was conscious that if she made a mistake, the whole scene had to be repeated from the commercial break [due to telecine recording]. Her worse fears were realised, but she managed to retrieve the situation, as she recalled:<sup>158</sup>



I played an accused and suddenly my mind went blank. After 2-3 seconds what I had to say came back to me and then everybody, later-on, congratulated me on that wonderful pause! I thought this was very funny.<sup>159</sup>

It is not surprising that many of these amateur actors were never seen on television again despite some credible ad-lib performances, which, according to Ian Crawford, apparently fooled the ABC:

Many of them were contacted by the ABC and given roles in their drama productions, and they turned out to be dreadful when they were given proper scripts; just awful!<sup>160</sup>

Recalling his experiences as a QC, Terry Norris remembers that Dorothy Crawford was so pivotal to the program:

When I joined Thursday afternoon rehearsals were at the Olderfleet Building in Collins Street where you read the script of CYV for the first and only time. You read it through with Dorothy, and the next time you saw everybody was Saturday morning at the Fitzroy Tele-theatre where you began to tape it. You were really flying by the seat of your pants and of course in those days it was taken in two half-hour segments because taping then was so crude.<sup>161</sup>

I always remember Dorothy's final words as you got the countdown: "5,4,3,2,1 – good luck everybody, and no matter what happens, keep talking! In other words, don't stop, because if you stop, to join that tape costs £47/16/4. George [Fairfax] and I, who were the counsels, had the full scripts in front of us, so it was a bit easier. As counsels, we were able to ad lib to prompt actors who got themselves into trouble; to get them back into the script, but it was an anxious time."<sup>162</sup>

In those early days, Dorothy Crawford was in total control of drama production. Supporting her were writers Phil Freedman, John Ormiston Reid, Della Foss-Paine, Geoff Underhill, and Ian Jones, but it was Dorothy who edited scripts, supervised casting and produced the early episodes of *Consider Your Verdict*. When Sonia Borg took over as Producer, Dorothy, as Executive Producer, maintained the final say in everything.<sup>163</sup>

Dorothy's husband Roland Strong played a significant background role in *Consider Your Verdict* as court reporter/narrator. Introducing each case, Strong's role was to summarise lengthy testimony, explain points of law and break to report on relevant matters that would have taken too long to incorporate into the telecast.<sup>164</sup> Strong recalled that:

While it was a pretty poor show it was a first effort and a show you could get away with without action, because courtroom cases had appeal. HSV7 encouraged the production of *Consider Your Verdict* because of the success of the radio version which was on radio for a couple of years and seemed a natural, and cheap, progression.<sup>165</sup>

At this stage Crawfords was a family-orientated organisation with around 50 employees. Hector ran the business, Glenda (Raymond) Crawford was a Company Director, Dorothy was responsible for artistic content and her son Ian had developed considerable expertise in charge of technical production.<sup>166</sup>

Ian, while still working as a cameraman on *In Melbourne Tonight*, was given oversight of all technical aspects of *Consider Your Verdict*: "The early episodes were recorded on film as a kinescope recording, so the picture quality was horrible", he recalls.<sup>167</sup> "However a great day arrived when *Consider Your Verdict* was recorded on videotape upon which we could make edits".<sup>168</sup> This was long before the existence of electronic editing; tape splicing was limited to three cuts, all done manually using a microscope to find the cutting points, so precise was the procedure. The process of dubbing sound effects and music was another learning process.<sup>169</sup> Later, HSV7 approved an additional 30 minutes of production time which Crawfords used to write and produce an opening 'teaser' scene establishing the context for each case.<sup>170</sup> Until this time, *Consider Your Verdict* happened entirely in a courtroom setting. Although HSV7 again provided a staff director, the Crawford team had more control than in earlier productions; Dorothy directed the actors' performances and Ian directed the actors from a movements (blocking) perspective.<sup>171</sup>

At 163 episodes, *Consider Your Verdict* was the longest-running adult-drama on television at that time and significantly, was the inaugural drama series made outside a television station by an independent producer.<sup>172</sup> Despite being amateurish at times, mistake riddled and limited by the available technology, Australian audiences embraced this local product for what it was – good solid drama complete with witnesses and jury speaking in regular Australian accents.<sup>173</sup>

Albert Moran argues that, although *Consider Your Verdict* "looked distinctly tame" compared to courtroom drama *Perry Mason*, the differences in format of the former offered a more 'down-to-earth' presentation.<sup>174</sup> No actor had star billing, nor were there central roles; suspense depended on amateur actors 'breaking down', and on

the jury's verdict.<sup>175</sup> The narration of the court reporter at the start and end added realism as did subject matter that reflected Australian social and cultural values.<sup>176</sup> The success of *Consider Your Verdict* was confirmed when, in 1962, the program won a Logie Award for Best Australian Drama Series. Against industry trends, *Consider Your Verdict* encouraged proponents of local drama content, provided Crawfords' staff with welcome experience, and laid the foundation for *Homicide* in 1964.

Since 1956 Hector Crawford had been lobbying for fair representation of local drama content, and while considerable resistance to independent program packagers continued, progress was at last being made. Chapter Eight examines Hector's political and public lobbying and his influence promoting the acceptance of an "Australian consciousness and sense of national identity" on Australian television.<sup>177</sup>

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Photo from episode of *Consider Your Verdict* in promotional spiral bound booklet,  
© Crawford Productions, Melbourne, circa 1961. Source: National Sound and Film  
Archives, Canberra: Title No: 675437.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Postmaster General's Department, Series A.4940, Item C.1192, R.G. Osborne, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General Pursuant to the Television Act 1953 and the Television Regulations on Applications for Licences for Commercial Television Stations in the Sydney and Melbourne Area*, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Canberra, 14 March 1955, pp. 1-4;  
National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Series A.4940, Item C.1192, Submission No. 311, H. L. Anthony, *Secret Memorandum for Cabinet, Grant of Licences for Commercial Television Stations in the Sydney and Melbourne Area*, Canberra, 6 April 1955, pp. 1-4;  
National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Series A.4940, Item C.1192, R. Mendelsohn, *Notes on Cabinet Submission No.311, in Cabinet Minute (Secret), Decision No.393, Television: Grant of Licences for Commercial Television Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, Canberra, 18 April 1955, p. 3.
- <sup>2</sup> Ann Curthoys, "Television before Television", in *Continuum: An Australian Journal of the Media*, Western Australian College of Advanced Education, Department of Media Studies, Volume 4, No.2, 1991, p. 152.
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>5</sup> "Television is Possible Right Now Says MLA," *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 30 April-6 May 1949, p. 27;  
"First Official Moves on Commercial Television," *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 4-10 March 1950, p. 3;  
Ann Curthoys, "Television before Television," *op. cit.*, p. 153.
- <sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben\\_Chifley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Chifley), accessed 6 May 2011.  
National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Nigel Dick, (former television executive), transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, Melbourne, 3 October 1997, p. 4, Title No: 373515.
- <sup>7</sup> Ann Curthoys, "Television before Television", *op. cit.*, p. 154;  
Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, unpublished MA Thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, 1999, p. 102.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*;  
"First Official Moves on Commercial Television", *op. cit.*
- <sup>10</sup> Ann Curthoys, "Television before Television", *op. cit.*, p. 155.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 155, 156.
- <sup>12</sup> Sandra Hall, *Supertoy: 20 Years of Australian Television*, Sun Books Pty. Ltd., South Melbourne, 1976, pp. 2, 3.  
In 1953 Charles Moses, then ABC general manager, believed that the Australian TV system should find a middle path between the commercialism of the Americans and the cultural arrogance of the British. But in his view, only the ABC had the taste and skill to undertake this task.  
Sandra Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
- <sup>13</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television in Australia*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- <sup>14</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry, Television Drama in Australia*, Currency Press, 1985, p. 18;  
Ann Curthoys, "Television before Television", *op. cit.*, pp. 155.
- <sup>15</sup> Albert Moran, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19;  
National Archives of Australia (NAA), Postmaster General's Department, R.G.Osborne, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General* *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- <sup>17</sup> Albert Moran, *op. cit.*, p. 20;  
National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Series A.4940, Item C.1192, R Mendelsohn, *Notes on Cabinet Submission No.311*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- <sup>19</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Postmaster-General's Department, R.G.Osborne, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>22</sup> After taking over leadership of Federal Labour in 1951, Evatt successfully campaigned against Menzies' attempt at constitutional reform to ban the Australian Communist Party. Many staunch anti-Communists in the Labor Party believed that this was "both bad politics and bad policy, because of the active Communist infiltration of numerous trade unions, and because of the threat to national security posed by communism".  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr\\_Herbert\\_Evatt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dr_Herbert_Evatt), accessed 7 May 2011;  
National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Series A.4940, Item C.1192, R Duthie, Acting Secretary of Cabinet, *Cabinet Minute, Decision No.393, Submission No.311, Television: Grant of Licences for Commercial Television Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, 18 April 1955, Appendix 2, pp. 1, 2.

Ibid. Cabinet did not, however, discount the awarding of a television licence to a political party at a later time.

- <sup>23</sup> R.G.Osborne, Chairman, ABCB: "Dr Evatt expressed the view to us that the [global] trend towards the concentration of the ownership of newspaper and broadcasting interests existed in Australia and that the applications for licences indicated its extension to television and this trend should be resisted at this stage. The Board appreciates the force of much of what Dr. Evatt said to it on this subject, but we do not think that the grant of licences to political parties would help to solve the problems to which he referred. Indeed, it seems impossible [...] to contemplate a situation in which, of the two commercial television stations to be established at the outset in one area, one would be in the control of a political organisation [...] and political propaganda".

National Archives of Australia (NAA), Postmaster General's Department, R.G.Osborne, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General*, op. cit., p. 24.

- <sup>24</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Nigel Dick, former television executive, transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, op. cit., p. 4.

- <sup>25</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, H.L.Anthony, *Secret Memorandum for Cabinet, Grant of Licences for Commercial Television Stations in the Sydney and Melbourne Area*, op. cit., p. 1.

- <sup>26</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Keith Cairns, former HSV7 television executive, transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, Melbourne, 3 October 1997, p. 4, Title No: 373505.

- <sup>27</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, H.L.Anthony, *Secret Memorandum for Cabinet, Grant of Licences for Commercial Television Stations in the Sydney and Melbourne Area*, op. cit., p. 2.

- <sup>28</sup> In the post-modern era of economic rationalism, there is very little ideological difference between the Liberal and Labor Parties.

- <sup>29</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Nigel Dick, former television executive, transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, op. cit., p. 3.

- <sup>30</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry, Television Drama in Australia*, op. cit., p. 24;  
Kate Harrison, *The Points System for Australian Television Content – A Study of Symbolic Policy*, National Council, Royal Institute of Public Administration, Brisbane, 1980, p. 8.

- <sup>31</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Keith Cairns, former television executive, transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, op. cit., p. 8;

The successful relationship with Crawfords during the radio era (3DB), lends credence to the suggestion that *The Herald and Weekly Times* viewed Crawfords as a future television program producer.

Similarly, Nigel Dick contents that *The Herald and Weekly Times* supported him [Crawford] the most.  
Source: Nigel Dick, op. cit., p. 7;

In its application for the HSV7 licence in 1954, *The Herald and Weekly Times* cited Hector Crawford Productions as an integral part of its operations should HSV7 be successful. Indeed, over the years, Crawford Productions sold more programs to HSV7 than any other TV Station.

Source: Albert Moran, *Images and Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia*, op. cit., pp. 24, 25, 93;

Hector Crawford revealed that *The Herald and Weekly Times* was a major shareholder of Crawford Productions between 1973-75: "By mutual agreement we discontinued the arrangement believing it was not good for the *Herald* or for us. We bought them out".

Source: National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 5 July, 1979, Title No: Title No: 269138.

- <sup>32</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Keith Cairns interview, op. cit.

- <sup>33</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), R.G.Osborne, Postmaster-General's Department, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General*, op. cit., p. 2.

National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, R. Mendelsohn, *Notes on Cabinet Submission No.311*, op. cit., pp. 1, 2.

- <sup>34</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, R. Mendelsohn, *Notes on Cabinet Submission* op. cit., p. 2.

- <sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-3.

- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>38</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, R. Mendelsohn, *Notes on Cabinet Submission No.311*, op. cit., pp. 3, 4;

- <sup>39</sup> In the recent television mini series *Power Games: The Packer-Murdoch Story*, Rupert Murdoch, as part of a consortium seeking the third commercial TV licence in Sydney, demonstrates his disappointment at not winning the license because, it is implied, he wants to use the station to manipulate political public opinion.

Power Games: The Packer-Murdoch Story, television mini-series, Nine Network Australia, Sydney, 2013.  
[http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2827412/companycredits?ref\\_=tt\\_sa\\_4](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2827412/companycredits?ref_=tt_sa_4), accessed 5 December, 2013.

- <sup>40</sup> Hector Crawford. *Commercial Television in Australia*, published by Hector Crawford, Melbourne, 14 September 1959, pp. 2-4;

Albert Moran, *Images and Industry, Television Drama in Australia*, op. cit., p. 31;

- Kate Harrison, *The Points System for Australian Television Content*, op. cit., pp. 6, 7;
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, quoted from 1953 "Royal Commission into Television Report" in Hector Crawford, *Commercial Television in Australia*, op.cit., p. 2.
- <sup>43</sup> Federation of Commercial Television Stations [FACTS], *Facts of Australian Content in Television Programme Schedules*, Submission to the Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Sydney, 1970, p. 12.
- <sup>44</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 61.
- <sup>45</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 17 June 2009.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>48</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 61.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid
- <sup>50</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, Prowling Tiger Press, Richmond, 1998, p. 102.
- <sup>51</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 63, 64.
- <sup>52</sup> Barry Jones was famous for his appearances in quiz show *Pick A Box* and was later a Federal Labor Government Minister and then President of the Federal Labor Party.
- <sup>53</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 62.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid;
- Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 February 2008.
- <sup>55</sup> John Ormiston Reid, tribute to Hector Crawford: *A Man for Australia*, Melbourne, circa 1980. p. 3. (From the Wynne Pullman private Collection).
- <sup>56</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p.58.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>59</sup> John Ormiston Reid, op. cit., p. 3.
- Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 58, 59.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid, p. 60.
- <sup>62</sup> "Crawford Returns with New TV Deal", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 24-30 December 1955, p. 2.
- <sup>63</sup> "English Actor on Air," *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 13-19 October 1956, p. 9;  
Marsha Prysuska, "This is How Television Stars Are Made", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 31 March 1960, p. 12.
- <sup>64</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 60.
- <sup>65</sup> Marsha Prysuska, "This is How Television Stars Are Made", op. cit., pp. 13, 14.
- <sup>66</sup> "Radio Actors Plan Ahead for Video", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 15-21 September 1951, p. 15.
- <sup>67</sup> "Bargain price TV Courses rushed: Scores Turned Away", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 2-8 May, 1953, p. 3
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>69</sup> Marsha Prysuska, "This is How Television Stars Are Made", op. cit.
- <sup>70</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, op. cit., pp. 96, 97.
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>73</sup> George Hart, "Give Us the Money", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 11 April 1962, p. 11;  
Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>74</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 66.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 67.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid.,
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 67, 68.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 68.
- <sup>79</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>80</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Ian Crawford, video interview with David Lee and Jan Bladier, National Film and Sound Archive, *Crawford Productions Oral History Project*, November 2001, Title No: 555374. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>81</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Keith Cairns, former television executive, op. cit., p. 3
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid;
- "The only bit of experience on which we could draw was an operation run by the working man's college – as it was then called – the old RMIT [in Melbourne]. They had a television production class which we all attended. It was very basic and not immensely helpful. It was something we did the hard way. We had no colour television.

- We had no video tapes. We just did it by the seat of our pants and, we got on air with Channel 7, the first regular station in Melbourne.”
- <sup>83</sup> Radio drama became unviable as advertisers/sponsors deserted radio in droves for the new medium of television. Crawford's was never a financially strong company with any profit ploughed back into production. Chapter 9, in analysing Crawford's application for the third Melbourne TV licence, highlights the perilous state of the company's finances.
- <sup>84</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, op. cit., 1998, p. 96.
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>86</sup> Diana Combe, *The Radio Serial Industry in Australia: an historical study of the production of serials in Australia, and the influence of the industry in the development of commercial radio*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Macquarie University, 1992, pp. 364, 365, 367-369.
- <sup>87</sup> Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry*, op. cit., pp. 9-17; Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 61;
- <sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 60; Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry*, op. cit., pp. 8-9.
- <sup>89</sup> Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>90</sup> Elizabeth Jacka, *The ABC of Drama 1975-1990*, Australian Film and Television School, North Ryde, 1991, p. 14;
- During 1958/59, ABC General Manager Charles Moses noted that the ABC produced 22 major dramatic productions, equally divided between Sydney and Melbourne.
- "Television has Changed: Evening drift from Radio", TV Times, Melbourne, 28 April 1960, p. 8.
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>93</sup> <http://uk.imdb.com/title/tt0380143/awards>, accessed 11 May 2011.
- <sup>94</sup> Elizabeth Jacka, *The ABC of Drama 1975-1990*, op. cit., p. 14.
- <sup>95</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>96</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Melbourne, Roland Strong, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, circa 1980, *Title No: 270933*. Transcribed by Philip Davey; Don Storey, *Classic Australian Television*, <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/emergenc.htm>, accessed 11 May 2011.
- <sup>97</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>98</sup> Roland Strong, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit; Don Storey, *Classic Australian Television*, op. cit;
- Quality was further eroded by playback through a process known as telecine, in which films or kinescoped recordings were played back on a movie screen and captured by a live TV camera.
- Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_Television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Television), accessed 7 May 2011.
- <sup>99</sup> Don Storey, *Classic Australian Television*, op. cit.
- <sup>100</sup> Roland Strong, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>101</sup> Don Storey, *Classic Australian Television*, op. cit.
- <sup>102</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>103</sup> Roland Strong, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>104</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_Television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Television), op. cit.
- <sup>105</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 76.
- <sup>106</sup> "Polished Team Scores in 'Seagulls'", *Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 7-13 May 1960, "Ion", Section, p. 4.
- <sup>107</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 76.
- <sup>108</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>109</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>110</sup> "Polished Team Scores in 'Seagulls,'" op. cit. Because this live production cost £3,500, additional sponsorship and advertising was necessary to finance it. Commercials ruined the continuity of a drama best suited to theatre. Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 76.
- <sup>105</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 76.
- <sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 80.
- <sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 78. Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry*, op. cit., p. 20.
- <sup>114</sup> National Archives of Australia, Sydney, Agency notes for Series CA 3558, Department of Trade Publicity Directorate: Series MP1771/1 – *Export Action*; Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 75, 78.

- <sup>115</sup> Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>116</sup> National Archives of Australia, Sydney, Department of Trade, Series SP1299/2, File TV28/3/25, Part 43: *Hector Crawford Productions*, E.P.McClintock, First Assistant Secretary, memo to Sir Charles Moses, General Manager, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney, 6 July 1961. (See also NAA, Series C1574, File 10/7/28).
- <sup>117</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>118</sup> Not long after *Export Action* began, the ABC received a letter of complaint from one manufacturer claiming undue advantage to one of his competitors: "It had always been understood that the National Station's policy was to strenuously oppose and avoid advertising of any form. Therefore, it came as a shock to us to see this film which can only be described as plain straight-out advertising by Mindrill".
- Triefus Industries (Australia Pty Ltd, Sydney, letter to The Chairman, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney, 26 July 1962. (National Archives of Australia, Sydney, Department of Trade, op. cit.)
- A similar letter from the Labour Council of NSW claimed that an affiliate had complained that *Export Action* was being used to advertise products. "The ABC, in permitting such a program" the letter claimed, "was out-commercialising commercial television stations, and that viewers were entitled to one advertisement-free channel in Sydney or other capital cities".
- J.D.Kenny, Secretary, Labour Council of NSW, letter to Sir Charles Moses, General Manager, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney, 7 August 1962. (National Archives of Australia, Sydney, Department of Trade, op. cit.)
- In Federal Parliament, the Minister for Trade, Sir John McEwan, stated that *Export Action* "was achieving the purpose for which it was made and there was no reason sections of industry should complain of being overlooked". When questioned about other exporting firms being resentful of the valuable free publicity given to selected firms, McEwan said the "main object of the film was to awaken in the minds of industrialists consciousness of the opportunities existing in export fields", thus implying that Export Action would benefit all manufacturers.
- Cable from press office, Federal Parliament, Canberra to Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney, 28 August, 1962. (National Archives of Australia, Sydney, Department of Trade, op. cit.)
- The argument continued for several months until it was generally accepted that "the programmes are not intended to promote the sales of any particular product in Australia".
- Draft reply to question No.127, House of Representatives Notice Paper No.43 of 3 October 1962. (National Archives of Australia, Sydney, Department of Trade, op. cit.)
- <sup>119</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra: Series SP1299/2, File TV28/3/25, Part 43: Hector Crawford Productions, C Semmler, Assistant General Manager (Programmes), Australian Broadcasting Commission, memo to A C Wood, Director of Trade and Publicity, Department of Trade, Canberra, 6 June 1962. (See also NAA, Series C1574, File 10/7/28);
- Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry, op. cit., p. 20;
- <sup>120</sup> C.Semmler, Assistant General Manager (Programmes), op. cit;
- National Archives of Australia, Canberra: Series C1574, Item TV 10/7/28. E.Chapple, Manager for Victoria, Australian Broadcasting Commission, inter-office memo, 7 June 1961.
- <sup>121</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 78;
- National Archives of Australia, Canberra: Series SP1299/2, File TV28/3/25, Part 43: Hector Crawford Productions, J. Walter Thompson Australia Pty Ltd, memo to C Semmler, Assistant General Manager (Programmes), Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney, 6 March 1962. (See also NAA, Series C1574, File 10/7/28).
- <sup>122</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Douglas Tainsh, interview with Albert Moran, Queensland, circa 1978. Title No: 271499. (Transcribed by Philip Davey).
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>124</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>126</sup> Ian Jones, interview by Don Storey, *TV Eye* No.12, July 1997, <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/INTVW/IanJones.htm>, accessed 12 May 2011;
- Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 17 June, 2009, op. cit.
- <sup>127</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>128</sup> Lindsay Parker, interview with Philip Davey, Mount Waverley, 7 October 2007;
- Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 78.
- <sup>129</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 78.
- <sup>130</sup> Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>131</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>132</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra: Series SP1299/2, File TV28/3/25, Part 43: Hector Crawford Productions, John Allison, Chairman, Export Development Council, Melbourne, letter to Sir Charles Moses,



- General Manager, *Australian Broadcasting Commission*, Sydney, 21 December 1962. (See also NAA, Series C1574, File 10/7/28).
- <sup>133</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 78.
- <sup>134</sup> Douglas Tainsh, op. cit;  
Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry*, op. cit., p. 21;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 77-78.
- <sup>135</sup> Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry*, op. cit., p. 21.
- <sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75, 77.
- <sup>137</sup> Hector Crawford. *Commercial Television in Australia*, op. cit.
- <sup>138</sup> National Archives of Australia, Sydney, Series SP1299/2, File TV28/3/25, Part 43: Hector Crawford Productions Brief Synopsis of Suggested Ideas for the Australian Broadcasting Commission, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, 18 November 1959.
- <sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p.80.
- <sup>142</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Don Storey, *TV Eye*, op. cit;  
David Lee, interview with Don Storey, *TV Eye* No. Eight, 8 May 1996.  
<http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/INTVWDavidLee.htm>, accessed 1 June 2011.
- <sup>143</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, *Canberra*: Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, 13 July 1977. Title No: 269345. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>144</sup> "Court Drama For Channel 7", *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 21-27 January 1961, p. 2.
- <sup>145</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 80, 81.
- <sup>146</sup> Lawrie Francis, "How I Considered My Verdict", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 25 January 1962, p. 9.
- <sup>147</sup> Sonia Borg, *On the Wings of a Bird*, unpublished memoirs, Wyalangta, Victoria, 2007, p. 77.
- <sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*;  
Crawford's CYV Briefing Manual states the technique employed in the production of *Consider Your Verdict* is unusual, effective and exciting. It is what is called "prepared ad lib treatment". Each person participating in the court proceedings is given a brief which includes a thumbnail sketch of each character, a background and story of the case, a chronology of events, a list of exhibits, a précis of evidence of witnesses; and, the opening address for both the prosecution and for the defence opening".  
National Sound and Film Archives, Canberra: Crawford Productions, *Consider Your Verdict* promotional spiral bound booklet, Title no: 675437, Melbourne, circa 1961.
- <sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>150</sup> State Library of Victoria Special Collection: Moira Carleton, interview with Patsy Adam-Smith, 29-30 August 1977. Ref: MS 11045, MS TMS 184-18. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>152</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 81.  
Hannan was one of the Senators who led the *Vincent Inquiry* into local television content.
- <sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80;  
Roland Strong, op. cit.
- <sup>154</sup> Sonia Borg, *On the Wings of a Bird*, op. cit., p. 79.
- <sup>155</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Philip Davey, Wyalangta, Victoria, 16 June 2007.
- <sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>157</sup> Sonia Borg, *On the Wings of a Bird*, op. cit., p. 79.
- <sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>158</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>160</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Don Story, *TV Eye*, op. cit.
- <sup>161</sup> Terry Norris, interview with Philip Davey, Balaclava, Victoria, 8 December 2010.
- <sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>163</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>164</sup> "Consider Your Verdict: Live Court Action", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 16 February 1961, p. 8
- <sup>165</sup> Roland Strong, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>166</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia*, op. cit., p. 98.
- <sup>167</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit. pp. 81, 82.

<sup>168</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Don Storey, *TV Eye*, op. cit.

<sup>169</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit. pp. 82, 83.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>171</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>172</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry, Television Drama Production in Australia*, op. cit., p. 98.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> Hector Crawford. *Commercial Television in Australia*, op. cit., p. 1

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Photo from episode of *Consider Your Verdict* in promotional spiral bound booklet,  
© Crawford Productions, Melbourne, circa 1961. Source: National Sound and Film Archives,  
Canberra: Title No: 675437.

## **Chapter 8: Seeking an Australian Consciousness**

### **8.1. Introduction**

As *Consider Your Verdict* and *Export Action* helped to keep the company solvent and enhanced its image, Hector Crawford was embroiled in coordinating an application for the third Victorian television licence, a tremendous opportunity offered to suitable contenders by the Federal Government in February 1962. Hearings on this matter were held during late 1962 and the outcome announced in April 1963. Chapter Nine focuses on this process, which resulted in a disappointing outcome for the Crawford consortium, Australian Telecasters Limited.

However, on 29 November 1962, in the midst of the licensing hearings, Federal Parliament announced that a *Senate Select Committee on the Encouragement of Australian Productions for Television* would convene between 5 February and 22 May 1963. Commonly known as *The Vincent Inquiry*, Hector Crawford's contribution as a facilitator and witness is discussed later in this chapter. As an introduction to these important events in Crawfords' history, this chapter outlines and reviews Hector's initial representations regarding his concerns about imported programs and desire for indigenous drama program content.

### **8.2. Industry Protection and Cultural Values**

When asked if Hector Crawford was an obsessive lobbyist for locally produced drama, Ian Crawford says no: "He wasn't obsessed in the sense that he had tunnel vision. But he wanted to make Australian drama that reflected Australian culture that was for the good of the people, as we all did. It wasn't an obsession. It was the right thing to do".<sup>1</sup> While this may seem like the Reithian approach imposing high culture values and standards upon audiences through educational and 'quality' material, this was not the case.<sup>2</sup> As Ian Jones reflects on Crawfords' later successes, "Hector's rationale was to create employment for actors, writers and production staff, but it really was much more than that":<sup>3</sup>

It created the environment in which people could accept Australian drama. No longer were people saying why are you using exaggerated Australian accents? It became a norm to see your own city, our own country, your own people in dramatic situations. Hector's contribution is immeasurable, absolutely immeasurable.<sup>4</sup>

While acquiring considerable insight into television production techniques during their fact-finding mission to the USA in late 1954, Hector and Dorothy Crawford grew decidedly uneasy about the probable composition of television programs on Australian television.<sup>5</sup> American TV, commencing soon after the Second World War, had by the mid-1950s stockpiled an abundance of programs for sale to Australian proprietors.<sup>6</sup> Nigel Dick suggests this resulted from America's large population and the nation's "vigorous and dedicated commitment to competition":<sup>7</sup>

It was a simple financial matter for the Americans to amortise program costs across the nation which was not the case for Australia with a population of only 10 million at the beginning of television. The US didn't have to worry about protecting a local film and production industry, for which it was more than large enough market to feed off itself. US television had an inbuilt defence against foreign programs invading the American culture for it simply didn't need programs from overseas.<sup>8</sup>

Having made handsome profits within the domestic market, the Americans could afford to sell high-budget quality programs to Australia at a fraction of their cost, against which, as Hector Crawford noted, no program producer in any country in the world could possibly compete.<sup>9</sup> An episode of the popular series *Perry Mason* cost around \$80,000 per episode to produce, but when 'dumped' into the Australian market, licensees were able to sell such programs to sponsors from between £150 to £225 per episode.<sup>10</sup> The Crawfords saw this coming, but for Dick, as Program Manager at GTV9, it was a welcome situation:

While Australian licensees were quick to realise the supply of programs available in the US, American producers were also quick to see the potential Australia provided for foreign programs; the distributors were soon beating a path to Australia to sell their wares.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, Dick contends that because American films dominated cinemas, Australian audiences were accustomed to watching more American films than those originating in the UK.<sup>12</sup> This assumption suggests that Australian audiences welcomed the preponderance of US programs. But this was not a euphemism for cost

savings: capital expenditure required for infrastructure establishment and high operational costs meant that commercial operators needed several years to break even let alone make a profit.<sup>13</sup> American TV entrepreneurs understood that the implementation of television in Australia would offer a lucrative market for American programs for some years before the local industry evolved into self-sufficiency.<sup>14</sup> As Dick recalls:

The Americans fully understood that the cost of local production was high. They knew that drama and situation comedy programs, especially, were expensive to produce locally. Importantly, they also knew that these genres of programs were part of television's staple diet and if production of Australian drama and situation comedy programs weren't affordable, then these programs would have to come from overseas.

The Americans deliberately set out to foster the Australian market for the future and encouraged Australian licensees to buy as many of their programs as possible, pricing them accordingly. [...] American distributors hadn't waited for Australian television executives to visit them. Advance parties had already been to Australia to see and learn first-hand what was happening in Australia.<sup>15</sup>

John Cain is highly critical of the enthusiasm with which Australian TV programmers absorbed US shows, suggesting that as Australia was preparing for television, "most of the industry had low expectations about what we could do":<sup>16</sup>

They correctly predicted that 'canned' shows from the United States and Britain would be the basic TV offering, interspersed with a few local presenters and newsreaders. It was a predictable response from the newly blessed licence holders who, in the main, had come out of the newspaper and radio stables. But this deference to foreign expertise was the natural order of things. Little thought was given to our own capacity to provide music and drama for television, thereby developing our own culture rather than extending somebody else's.<sup>17</sup>

However, television proprietors could not purchase as many programs as they wanted, due to the Australian government's post-war limit placed on overseas import expenditure.<sup>18</sup> Former HSV7 Manager Keith Cairns recalls that at the beginning, each station was restricted to purchasing £25,000 worth of overseas programs per half year.<sup>19</sup> But to bypass this restriction, the Americans adjusted program prices to align with the maximum budgets available to Australian television operators.<sup>20</sup> To maximise this arrangement, Sydney and Melbourne stations pooled their annual £100,000 budgets and bought programs jointly; TCN9 linked up with HSV7, while ATN7 and GTV9 joined forces.<sup>21</sup> When Frank Packer purchased GTV9 in late 1959,

this arrangement changed because Packer, the owner of TCN9, now competed with HSV7's in Melbourne.<sup>22</sup> HSV7 then linked up with ATN7 in Sydney.<sup>23</sup>

The situation that John Cain described and Hector Crawford feared had occurred, despite the latter's warnings to the Australian Government seven months before the inception of television.<sup>24</sup> Australia's 'cultural cringe', which held back the development of indigenous radio programs in the 1930s, may again have exacerbated this situation.<sup>25</sup> This continuing problem may be defined as "an internalised inferiority complex which causes people to dismiss their own culture as inferior to the cultures of other countries, particularly western cultures such as Great Britain and the USA."<sup>26</sup> (See Part 1, Chapter 4.3, Endnote 56).

Prompted by the revelation that one licence-holder in Sydney had advertised the availability of 22 top-rating imported programs for the commencement of television, Hector began his lobbying process.<sup>27</sup> In April 1956, he sent a letter to all federal parliamentarians expressing concern that US and British programs would dominate the introduction of television in Australia. He asked the question:

To what extent will Australian viewers be presented with Australian culture and the Australian way of life on their television screens, and to what extent will they be presented with imported television programs?<sup>28</sup>

Reminding stakeholders that television was "the most powerful medium ever to be at the disposal of man for the dissemination of ideas, the presentation of facts and the moulding of thoughts and opinion", Crawford expressed disquiet about the responsibility faced by those charged with introducing television:<sup>29</sup>

There is ample evidence from other countries to show that television dominates to an extraordinary extent the thoughts, the actions and the habits of the people; what is seen and heard is so unhesitatingly believed by the viewers – young and old.<sup>30</sup>

Although anxious about the domination of Australian television being dominated by American and British programs and the re-release of old films specifically for the television market, Crawford did not lose objectivity. "Among them [these films]", he wrote, "are doubtless some extremely fine features which will enable us to see and hear, for the first time, the work of some of the world's outstanding writers, artists

and producers".<sup>31</sup> Crawford supported the tenet that such programs should be made freely available to Australian audiences, but feared that unrestricted importation of such programs would only bring with it a "considerable amount of unworthy material and will make the establishment of an Australian program industry difficult, if not impossible".<sup>32</sup>

Crawford's letter emphasises the domestic and overseas success of his and other radio productions, and the steps taken by Crawfords to prepare for television: "It is beyond question that Australia is creatively, artistically and technically equipped to produce television programs of the highest order", he wrote.<sup>33</sup> Such optimism may have appeared premature: in April 1956, it remained to be seen if radio actors could make the transition to television (and many did not). Ian Crawford has already demonstrated the difficulties presented by technological ignorance, inferior equipment and the trial and error nature of those early days of television (see Chapter 7.5).

Hector believed that without remedial action, "the best of creative and artistic talent would continue to go overseas for [experience] and recognition."<sup>34</sup> Suggesting that Australian talent would remain untapped, Crawford was worried that the Australian culture and way of life would be replaced by that of another.<sup>35</sup> Crawford asked for a policy of protectionism, stating that "without protection, then, the Australian product must certainly be forced from the market to the point of extinction".<sup>36</sup> To support his argument, Crawford described the disintegration of the Australian motion picture production industry, without government protection.<sup>37</sup>

By late 1958, as Ian Crawford recalls, Hector's efforts to encourage the stations to live up to their promises associated with the recommendations of the 1953 Royal Commission had been negligible.<sup>38</sup> Although the Australian Broadcasting Control Board (ABCB) listened and agreed that there should be more Australian content, particularly drama, the Board pointed out the difficulties confronting licensees:<sup>39</sup>

There are however, special problems, primarily financial, in the production and presentation of live drama programs: the cost of producing such a program is, at present, far in excess of the amount which is likely to be met by an Australian sponsor.

The Board would be disturbed if stations failed to keep the possibility of this type of production in mind, and it was pleased to note that the end of the period under review [1957/58] some stations had plans for the presentation of Australian dramatic productions.<sup>40</sup>

To television owners, however, Australian 'drama' at that stage consisted mainly of live plays and live variety shows such as *In Melbourne Tonight*, *Sunnyside Up* and *The Tonight Show* in Sydney, augmented by game, quiz and discussion programs. In defence of such programming, Colin Bednall, General Manager of GTV9, maintained that television was really about people, the personalities that presented the programs and the bonding process between audiences and the station.<sup>41</sup> Dick, acknowledged that, while reflecting Australian life and culture was an important function of Australian produced drama, in those days it was simply too expensive.<sup>42</sup> Without any specific regulation or quotas, television owners, between 1956 and 1960 freely imported American programs while justifying imported program content on the alleged popularity of American programs.<sup>43</sup>

However, Moran states that, "a license applicant who proposed to do no more than install a telecine-chain and hire an engineer could not hope to impress the ABCB and gain a license".<sup>44</sup> Therefore potential owners, well aware of the American resources available to them, may have never intended to adhere to the *Broadcasting and Television Act* provisions regarding local production using local staff. Giving the impression of an intention to develop local content, station owners continued to build studios and acquire equipment, all of which were initially under-utilised.<sup>45</sup>

While recognising that cost and technical problems inhibited the production of Australian programs at this early stage of development, the government and ABCB perhaps naively believed that stations had planned within these parameters, and would introduce indigenous drama as circumstances allowed. This may explain the ambivalence of the government and ABCB, during these early years of TV, regarding the enforcement of local content promises made by licensees. The comments made in the late 1960s by Len Mauger, ATV0's inaugural General Manager, as recalled by Ian Jones, illustrates this reasoning:



Len Mauger was speaking some years later at a Writers' Guild Function. It was question time and he was needled about the promise that had been made in the Ansett ATV0 submission; promises for Australian content and the rest of it. And Len Mauger finally said "look – don't blame us, blame the system. The point is you make promises to get a licence. It's not policed that you keep them. [original emphasis] You hope to keep them but you make promises to get the licence." One newspaper in Australia reported that as I understand it. And the editor was sacked.<sup>46</sup>

With the ABCB believing that TV licensees would consider producing local drama when financial and technical circumstances allowed, Hector Crawford was, in early 1959, desperately trying to solve the difficulty of selling indigenous drama to television stations as an independent producer. In his view, film and television producers were "not prepared to come out in the open and fight for the acceptance of locally-produced programs on television".<sup>47</sup> Frustrated after two years of ineffective lobbying and concerned at the Government's failure to make television stations meet the commitments made in their licence applications, he decided that direct confrontation was warranted.<sup>48</sup> In September 1959, Crawford self-published and distributed his audacious 22 page 'yellow booklet' *Commercial Television Programs in Australia* and distributed it widely to Federal Parliament, State Parliaments, industry stakeholders and the public.<sup>49</sup>

Well-researched and articulate, Crawford's paper reiterated the themes of his 1956 letter, but with additional rigor. This included specific details of what had actually happened – as he had predicted in 1956 – contrary to the recommendations of the 1953 Royal Commission requiring that, from the onset, programs must raise the standard of public taste, set acceptable cultural standards further national objectives and in so doing, ensure that the best use was made of Australian talent.<sup>50</sup> A major source of Crawford's consternation was a clause in the revised (1956) Broadcasting and Television Act 1942-1956, under the Encouragement of Australian Artists section:

Section 114 (1): The Commission and Licensees shall, as far as possible, [my emphasis] use the services of Australians in the production and presentation of broadcasting and television programs.<sup>51</sup>

According to Crawford, licensees could "interpret the phrase 'as far as possible' to suit their own convenience". Crawford reveals that writers, actors, musicians and

production companies vigorously opposed the clause and its implications.<sup>52</sup> They expressed the view that station owners would, in all likelihood, only employ Australian talent for the plethora of talent quests, panel shows, interviews, sport and similar programs, as opposed to drama and musical productions.<sup>53</sup> To support his argument, Crawford pointed to similar concerns expressed by Charles Moses, General Manager of the ABC, in his evidence to the 1953 Royal Commission.<sup>54</sup>

Crawford notes, however, that the Government unequivocally defended this section of the act through the Postmaster-General, who made the following statements on 10 May, 1956:

I point out very definitely that no one on this side of the chamber will bow to anyone else in his realisation of the potentialities of television and in his determination to use these potentialities to the utmost extent for the development of Australian art and culture. Let that point be understood immediately.

The importation of American production cannot be allowed to continue to the detriment of Australian production. At the start, therefore, we are endeavouring to restrict such importation by the imposition of import quotas[...] to the value of £60,000 per annum<sup>55</sup>

Based upon this and other Government statements prior to the introduction of TV, Crawford asserted "that at no time did the government envisage television in Australia as being other than predominately Australian in every phase of programming. And I am sure that it was also the general feeling that, in the fields of drama and music in particular, Australian artists should dominate".<sup>56</sup> Despite the edicts espoused by the 1953 Royal Commission and the localism provisions contained in the *Broadcasting and Television Act*, the purpose of Hector's paper was to demonstrate that the opposite had occurred, and to an unacceptable level. Crawford revealed that between the commencement of TV and mid-1959, 176 series (mostly of 52 episodes) had been purchased from 11 American producers, not including full-length feature films, at 'dumped' prices.<sup>57</sup> He stated:

American programs are being given pride of place on our television time channels. By 'pride of place' I mean those periods during which the greatest number of people view TV and surveys on viewing habits have shown these to be between 6.30pm and 9.30pm.<sup>58</sup>

A sample taken during this time period for the week commencing 29 June 1959 is edifying. Excluding approximately eight hours occupied by advertising, news, weather forecasts and sports reviews, the program pattern for each commercial station in Sydney and Melbourne totalled 131 half hours of imported content and just five half-hours of local content, and these almost entirely quiz and variety shows.<sup>59</sup> In the ABCB Annual report for 1957/58, statistics indicate that on Sydney stations, excluding advertisements, 41.18 percent of programs were of Australian origin; 48.78 percent imported items (not including advertisements). For the Melbourne stations, the figures were similar: 42.53 and 46.91 percent respectively.<sup>60</sup> While the proportion of local content may seem appropriate, Crawford pointed out that the Australian programs included:

all programs which involve the use of the Stations' TV cameras in the studio or on location, as well as programs which are specially made in Australia on film for use by the stations.[...] (Source: 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Report – ABCB.)<sup>61</sup> [That is, studio news reports, externally filmed news reports, sport, game, variety and discussion shows.]

Equally misleading, Crawford noted, were figures in the ABCB Annual Report that 'established' the largest program category was drama. In Sydney, drama occupied 33.51 percent of all program time; Melbourne 28.34 percent.<sup>62</sup> Of this, Crawford observed, 98 percent of all commercial drama was imported with only two percent of Australian derivation. To reiterate Crawford, 'Australian content' consisted predominately of news, interviews, quiz shows, cookery demonstrations, sport, talks, amateur talent quests etc.<sup>63</sup> For Crawford, these figures indicated two things: such programs did little to employ creative and interpretative artists in the fields of drama and music and his vision of creating an 'Australian consciousness' was just that, a vision.<sup>64</sup> To support his argument, Crawford cites action taken in the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Italy and America, affording vigorous protection to domestic television programming and establishing strong ceilings on import quotas.<sup>65</sup>

In Hector's vision, the production of quiz and variety programs did not satisfy the promise to "use as far as possible the services of Australians in the production and presentation of TV programs".<sup>66</sup> Virtually accusing the ABCB of being derelict in its duty to ensure that the provisions of the Broadcasting and Television Act were

enforced in the spirit he envisaged, Crawford suggested several 'solutions' for consideration.<sup>67</sup>

- Increasing duties and taxes to provide protection via Customs tariffs;
- Introducing a drama specific-quota system that precluded using the type of programs currently 'satisfying' this requirement;
- Supplementing the quota, with financial assistance for Australian television producers, in accordance with the provisions of Section 5 of the Broadcasting and Television act; and,
- Charging commercial stations 10% of their gross revenue for a fund to subsidise Australian programs.<sup>68</sup>

None of these measures were adopted, not to Crawford's satisfaction. In the ABCB's 1959/60 Annual Report, a tacit, even defensive response, indicated that "much thought has been given to the types of programs which can be reasonably described as 'distinctively Australian in content and character'":<sup>69</sup>

There is a difference between the amount of time, effort and expense involved in preparing an hour of adequately rehearsed and artistically presented drama, ballet, opera or similar matter, and that required to televise an hour of miscellany such as is often presented in afternoon programs directed to housewives.

While due credit may be given to licensees for genuine endeavours to develop programs of truly Australian characters and for establishing a pool of Australian talent, the Board is devising a means of recording the work of each station to distinguish the various types of programs.<sup>70</sup>

Whether Hector's commentary influenced the ABCB cannot easily be established. However the Board did review the 'as far as possible' clause in Section 114 (1) of the *Broadcasting and Television Act*, which it augmented with the introduction of a general quota system in 1961.<sup>71</sup> The 1959/60 ABCB Annual Report stated that:

Early in 1960, the Minister, after considering a report by the Board, invited the attention of all commercial television stations to the provisions of Section 114 and expressed the view that at the end of three years' operations the proportion of Australian programs televised by any station should not be less than 40 percent of its total hours of transmission. The Minister also informed them that a total of at least one hour should be occupied between the hours of 7.30pm and 9.30pm each week night by programs which are distinctively Australian in content and character.<sup>72</sup>

Much to Hector's frustration, this achieved nothing. The report acknowledged that stations simply rearranged their schedules to televise Australian content – quiz, variety, news and discussion programs – to meet the new requirements without

embarking on new production, including drama.<sup>73</sup> As Moran contends, this implied “that the quota was a de facto recognition of what the stations were doing rather than a prescription for what they should be doing”.<sup>74</sup>

Ian Crawford describes Hector's confrontational 'yellow booklet' as “a stinging attack” on Government inactivity that “led to a furore which resulted in little action except to harden the Government's attitude against Hector”.<sup>75</sup> In a veiled criticism of free-market capitalism, Ian avers that “unfortunately, others didn't see the selling of overseas drama programs for one tenth to one fiftieth of their cost of production in the same way that we did”.<sup>76</sup>

Supporting Ian's conclusions, John Cain suggests that although Hector presented a powerful case, “the industry did not want to grapple with what he was saying and did not want to debate it because a poorly informed public was far more accepting and compliant”.<sup>77</sup> Why would licensees want to get involved in a campaign for local content when overseas programs were so popular?<sup>78</sup> While acknowledging that many imported programs were entertaining and of high quality, it is argued they were 'so popular' because of constant promotion by station owners who controlled the press and media, and who equally could stifle debate on local content. The notion that the industry would move away voluntarily from its reliance on imported programs to self-sufficiency appeared fanciful.

Although Hector's booklet briefly damaged his relationship with the Federal Government, his rapprochement began with the *Export Action* contract success in 1961.<sup>79</sup> But Hector's lobbying raised considerable awareness among the creative world and public about the desirability of creating an 'Australian consciousness'. His 1956 letter and 1959 paper created a climate that was sympathetic to Australian produced drama. Kate Harrison explains:<sup>80</sup>

Although the Crawford pamphlet was rather partisan, it indicated the way in which the debate was developing and the people who were taking part in it. The fact that it was privately produced, rather than the work of any union or association, shows that the level of consolidation of local-content activism. It was not the work of an employee in the field, but of an independent producer. Perhaps the debate had not yet come alive at the level of the individual performer, for whom television was bread and butter.<sup>81</sup>

Crawford's local content lobbying between 1956 and 1960 found support amongst the public and some members of the industry. Relying upon this affirmation of his cause, Crawford was then influential in compelling the formation of the 1963 *Senate Select Inquiry into the Encouragement of Australian Productions for Television*, otherwise known as *The Vincent Inquiry*, as will be demonstrated.

### **8.3. An Emerging Awareness**

In challenging the dominance of imported programs, Hector Crawford set in motion a widespread sense of Australian awareness. Encouraging debate among leading commentators and the creative side of the industry, Hector's activism also pushed a range of public pressure groups into action: concerned that television stations had failed to produce programs that were "distinctly Australian in character", these groups would contribute to *The Vincent Inquiry*.<sup>82</sup>

As media commentators began to focus on the local content debate, most agreed on one point, as O'Regan notes: Government action was necessary to force the stations into more local TV production, especially the higher cost and 'quality' Australian films that could be sold overseas.<sup>83</sup> Before discussing *The Vincent Inquiry*, it is worth noting how commentators in the early 1960s, as Hector's activism continued, began to recognise that producing 'quality' local programs could be achieved by better utilising finite resources.<sup>84</sup>

A 1960 *TV Times* (Melbourne) article confirmed Hector's earlier fears that the "best of Australia's creative and artistic talent would have to continue to go overseas for experience and recognition", and confirmed Harrison's comments: the debate had not yet involved individual performers because most were overseas.<sup>85</sup> While some former radio actors appeared on live Australian TV, the article notes, over a 100 well-known actors had left Australia since 1958 because of decreasing radio production and the small amount of TV work available.<sup>86</sup>

ABC personality Corinne Kerby called for reducing the large volume of foreign series and films by increasing live programs, noting that this was the least expensive way of augmenting Australian content.<sup>87</sup> Those Australian performers who had already returned with high expectations for an abundance of work found little for

them to do.<sup>88</sup> Kirby identified another problem: talented creative writers were needed to produce local scripts that would entice “our expatriate artists to return home”. (Indeed at Crawfords, successful writers were the mainstay of the company’s later successes.) Kirby wrote that:

Overseas' ignorance of Australia is abysmal and here, in our hands, is the most powerful and persuasive way of presenting ourselves because this type of export would sell overseas. Think of all the [historical] stories waiting to be written. Think of the TV programs they would make. [...] Let us gather all our homesick artists and train our local writers to weave their magic and make it happen.<sup>89</sup>

*Listener-In TV* commentator ‘ION’, stating that “our TV MUST STAND on its own feet NOW”, acknowledged that Australian shows might have to be produced on shoe-string budgets, with limited acting talent available and insufficient equipment: “But what is achieved out of smaller budgets may be miraculous, and it often is, but it’s of interest only to those within the industry”.<sup>90</sup> If a low-budget program is well scripted with a local flavour, well-acted and produced, public interest should follow (as Crawfords’ *Homicide* would demonstrate in 1964). ‘ION’ insisted that the home market was “ripe for productions that are truly indigenous as well as live”, and cited the success of the ABC series *Stormy Petrel*, discussed in Chapter 7.6.<sup>91</sup>

In 1962, Sydney Box, chairman of *London Independent Producers LTD* (an industry figure similar to Hector Crawford), expressed consternation at the program content of Australia’s commercial TV stations which he viewed as “third-rate culturally shocking American material”.<sup>92</sup> Complimenting the ABC for “appearing to make a sincere and honest attempt to fill the void”, Box could not believe that the Australian Government had not “insisted on a certain percentage of true Australian content”:<sup>93</sup>

It truly disturbs me to find that Australia’s commercial television drama-production last year [1961] was about 1 percent of the total television viewing hours. We [in the UK] have it in our licences that we must supply material which we ourselves make, in our own place, with our own people.<sup>94</sup>

Box scathingly called the ongoing arguments concerning expense and lack of talent “tired old excuses with lack of validity”:<sup>95</sup>

A commercial TV station in a city of this size, after paying reasonable fees for material, should be making something in the order of £1,000,000 a year. Thirty years ago we [the UK] had no film industry. Then the Government gave us protection. The moment that happened the talent began to assert itself; it had been there all the time.<sup>96</sup>

Cairns acknowledged that both HSV7 and GTV9 began making profits after just 18 months, but their financial condition four years later is blurred.<sup>97</sup> Licensees were firm, however: they had invested in television to make profits.<sup>98</sup> Dick notes:

The ABCB was encouraged by the lobbyists to introduce quotas for more Australian content; the licensees were encouraged by their shareholders to return profits, and the majority of viewers wanted more mass appeal programs. The ABCB [regarded as a 'toothless tiger' by lobbyists] was really caught in the middle of an un-winnable contest. It couldn't ignore the lobbyists' cries for more quality programs, but nor could it make recommendations to the Minister that would have severely affected the licensees' ability to operate profitably.<sup>99</sup>

I contend that a much fairer representation of local drama content could have been financed if the influential and wealthy newspaper proprietors who owned the stations had so chosen.<sup>100</sup> Substantial profit was the objective of TV licensees who wielded enormous power as newspaper and radio proprietors, particularly at election times. As John Cain suggests:

Television was booming by the early 1960s and bottom lines were getting better and better. Why would they want to get mixed up with a crusade about local content, when the import formula was working so well.<sup>101</sup>

## 8.4. The Vincent Inquiry

In response to lobbying by Hector Crawford and pressure groups, the *Senate Select Inquiry into the Encouragement of Australian Productions for Television* was established to review these issues. Sitting between February and May 1963, four Government and three Opposition senators interviewed 139 witnesses.<sup>102</sup> But the inquiry remains enigmatic. Never tabled in Parliament, the report and its 79 recommendations were ignored and never implemented. The conclusion to this section considers the reasons.

While Hector's activism alone may not have been sufficient to compel a senate inquiry, his access to business interests and conservative members of government allowed him to consult with like-minded politicians.<sup>103</sup> Thus Crawford may have



helped to orchestrate *The Vincent Inquiry* through his relationship with Federal Liberal Party Senator George Hannan, whose motion in the Senate opened the way for the committee's establishment.<sup>104</sup>

A prominent Melbourne solicitor and future member of the ABCB, Hannan was an avid support of the arts and theatre, a part-time actor, and a member of Actors' Equity. He played the part of a judge in *Consider Your Verdict*, but knew Crawford before this program began.<sup>105</sup> In a letter dated 25 March 1960, Crawford wrote to Hannan about many of the themes discussed previously, suggesting that Australian television could produce good local shows using the new medium of video tape as a compromise for expensive film-based programs.<sup>106</sup> But the following paragraph drew attention to the need for a study:

An enquiry into television programs is a matter of extreme urgency. Since viewers' tastes are already being moulded to the American type of program, it is important that an investigation should examine the question of an adequate proportion of Australian content in the programs featured by the commercial stations.<sup>107</sup>

In a letter to Hannan dated June 1961, Federal Liberal Party Senator Seddon Vincent (Western Australia) referred to the perceived cultural 'backwardness' in Australia that had forced Australian actors to seek employment in Britain and Europe.<sup>108</sup> Blaming the "indifference of our governments", Vincent recommended two remedial measures similar to those suggested by Crawford in his submission to Vincent's Inquiry nearly two years later: tariff protection for the Australian film industry and the establishment of a special arts fund to be administered by an "Australia Council".<sup>109</sup> The synergy between Hannan, Vincent and Crawford was strong and almost certainly inspired the formation of the Senate Select Committee.

Another important aspect was the respect Crawford had attained from industry stakeholders who shared similar views, from whom he was frequently approached for advice. For example, Actors Equity, with whom Crawfords had generally enjoyed a good relationship, sought advice regarding a 1961 submission to the Federal Government in which Equity criticised the ABCB for failing to ensure that television licensees adhered to Section 114 (1) of the Broadcasting and Television Act (see above).<sup>110</sup>

Two years later in 1963, after *The Vincent Inquiry* had convened, the Australian Radio, Television and Screen Writers' Guild, preparing to testify before Vincent's committee, sought advice regarding the incorrect contention of television owners that it was the shortage of writers that stifled locally made productions.<sup>111</sup> Crawford, who had already given evidence, wrote to the Guild that in his opinion, it was the shortage of drama programming, associated employment opportunities and economic concerns that restricted the development of local writers, as he had expressed to the committee.<sup>112</sup> (See endnote 129.)

In essence, *The Vincent Inquiry's* terms of reference represented both Hector's concerns and those of many other stakeholders.<sup>113</sup> His ubiquitous presence, therefore, should not be underestimated in mobilising the growing discontent among the wide range of private individuals, interest groups and industry stakeholders who appeared before the *Inquiry* to publicly express their views on television. Furthermore, Crawford believed that Melbourne's third TV licensee was within his reach, having presented the case of his consortium several months before to the ABCB hearings. The decision was still pending, but his presence and influence through all of these activities was far-reaching.<sup>114</sup>

Established to judge the level of concern over the content of television programs in Australia, the Committee focussed on the relevant Acts in relation to the responsibilities of the ABCB, television companies and the ABC.<sup>115</sup> The lack of Australian television drama content and film industry output were the Committee's primary focus, although many other program categories were certainly considered.<sup>116</sup> The opening statement of the 82-page Vincent Inquiry report (Part One) asserts that:

There is much public concern over television programs. This concern, as might be expected, comes mainly from the more informed or responsibly minded section of the community, and it is widespread.<sup>117</sup>

While the majority of criticism was directed at commercial operators, the report also expressed unrest at the performance of the ABC, although acknowledging that the national station was at least trying to provide programs that were "adequate, comprehensive and in the public interest".<sup>118</sup> "The great weight of evidence" pointed to a lack of Australian-produced drama and a surplus of imported drama from the USA, which was criticised for its excessive portrayals of crime, violence and horror.

The quality and/or lack of educative, religious, children's and migrant themed programs did not escape reproach.<sup>119</sup>

Evidence levelled against commercial operators was informed by submissions from 139 witnesses, many of whom spoke as representatives of large numbers of other Australians, thus the report suggests that the real measure of public opinion was significantly greater.<sup>120</sup> Ranging from private individuals, peak bodies, religious and social groups, teachers and academics to independent producers, industry stakeholders and television executives, the variety of witnesses was impressive.

Representation from television stations was, however, minimal; the only station proprietor to appear was Sir Frank Packer.<sup>121</sup> In his MA thesis, Television executive Nigel Dick, himself a witness, expressed grave misgivings about the Committee's objectivity and believed that many of its criticisms were predetermined, just as it is my contention that Crawford, Hannan and Vincent exerted considerable influence.<sup>122</sup> John Docker, a staunch opponent of television regulation and advocate of the populist pathway, takes a facetious view of *The Vincent Report*.<sup>123</sup> Docker questions the methodology and credibility of witnesses and their evidence:

The Senators revealed an almost childlike faith in the objectivity of [the] research findings, but found that hardly anything so far had been done in Australia in the 'field of true scientific research'. The inadequacy and apparently tentative character of present research didn't, however prove an obstacle to the senators in drawing their conclusions.

There is, 'undoubtedly', adequate scientific proof of the harmful effects of certain programs.' [...] In watching crime and violence programs adolescent viewers develop a 'stereotyping of outlook' [...] Such, say our senators, are 'all established conclusions'; they constitute 'conclusive scientific proof'.<sup>124</sup>

The Committee did make several pertinent observations about Australian content and drama. First and foremost, as Harrison notes, the committee was "extremely critical of the ABCB's approach to regulation and of its narrow interpretation of its legal powers".<sup>125</sup>

It was noted that the Board had failed to enforce the ministerial directive [in 1960] that 40 percent of all programs should be Australian, and that it should have taken some disciplinary action.<sup>126</sup>

The Committee expresses the view that the Board should have long since abandoned its policy of 'sweet reasonableness' and taken much firmer action with the commercial stations in relation to these serious program defects of which it has from time to time complained.<sup>127</sup>

The Committee's numerous findings and recommendations concerning indigenous drama correlate with many of the issues raised in Hector's detailed submission. Expanding on the themes he had cited over eight years, Hector's emotive and nationalistic discourse was repetitive, but generally well-researched, articulate and persuasive. One of his key concerns, national identity and culture, was ratified by the Committee because of the volume of evidence presented:

They [the witnesses] expressed the view that many Australians, particularly young Australians, already prefer American drama.[...] They have by now accepted American values and a preference for that particular form of the American way of life which is depicted by American TV programs.

Perhaps the greatest danger lies in its effect upon the rising generation who, day after day, are not only receiving anything but the most inadequate picture of Australia, her national traditions, culture and way of life, but in its place are recipients of a highly coloured and exaggerated picture of the way of life and morals of other countries (mainly the USA).<sup>128</sup>

In his evidence, Crawford expanded on his belief that a large contingent of creative artists seeking employment would benefit and improve from the low-budget production techniques developed by Crawford Productions for indigenous drama:<sup>129</sup>

The demand for the products of my company cannot be described as great and is far below its production capacity. Because of the lack of demand for high-budget programs in Australia, the company set about developing the technique of low-budget drama productions. [...] *Consider Your Verdict*, which is a low budget production, has achieved a reasonable measure of success.

Because of this low-budget technique, episodes of *Consider Your Verdict* are produced at about one-fifth of the cost of high-budget drama. There is available to my company unlimited supplies of Australian talent. [...] This talent exists in abundance in all fields and must be considered to be largely untapped.<sup>130</sup>

In Hector's view, television licensees were reluctant to promote locally made drama because of economics, inferior technology, lack of expertise and a population and market too small to recoup costs.<sup>131</sup> Cheap imported programs were attractive to Australian sponsors reluctant to sponsor high-quality Australian-made drama made at three times the cost.<sup>132</sup> But the availability of new technology, Crawford argued, precluded television proprietors' continued excuse of the high cost of producing local drama.<sup>133</sup>

In Hector's 'Additional Evidence' addendum to the Committee, he elaborated on these various methods of recording live TV drama: using motion picture techniques on film, 'live' television techniques on videotape or the inferior kinescope method. Crawford emphasised videotape as a solution to the local drama issue:<sup>134</sup>

With the coming of videotape, a new tool became available for comparatively cheap, high quality recording of television drama. The cost differential between drama produced by television techniques, and drama produced by film techniques, may be judged from the fact that *Whiplash*, produced in Australia on film, cost £20,000 per half-hour episode.<sup>135</sup> A first-class half-hour drama produced by television techniques could be produced in Australia for £3,000 per half-hour episode.<sup>136</sup>

The advantages of producing drama by TV techniques, i.e. videotape, were much lower cost, speed of production and the advantages gained in the rapidly developing field of electronics.<sup>137</sup> While this approach would not immediately reinvigorate Australia's ailing feature-film industry, it would be the catalyst for these pioneers to attain the skills commensurate with feature-film production, beginning in the early 1970s. Many former Crawford-trained technicians and creative personnel became valued contributors to feature film and quality TV mini-series, discussed in Part Three.<sup>138</sup>

Creating a profitable export market to reduce costs for the local market, Crawford believed, would evolve by using these production methods and as technology and artistic quality improved, as it had in radio days.<sup>139</sup> Prior to the advent of television, Crawford recalled, "the radio industry of Australia produced many thousands of hours of Australian drama. Most of these programs were exported to many countries throughout the world – with the exception of the USA":<sup>140</sup>

[But] it is important that Australian television should be transmitting Australian-produced drama that is indigenous to our country – drama that should be produced primarily with the object of enriching the lives of Australian people rather than being specifically designed for overseas audiences.<sup>141</sup>

To facilitate this objective, Crawford urged the Committee to fully appreciate the difference between the more economical television methods of producing Australian drama and motion picture film techniques:

Each has its place in the pattern of television programming and it seems undesirable, at this stage, to consider Australian drama for television as being inseparably bound with either form.<sup>142</sup>

The Committee, noting the expense and high financial losses in Australian drama production, countered that commercial TV companies were not financially 'geared' to cater to a large increase in Australian drama.<sup>143</sup> The consequences, according to "evidence from some very experienced and knowledgeable witnesses", were that some Australian actors lacked the skill and sophistication of their British and American counterparts, and many good actors had gone overseas, while experienced writers, directors and producers were scarce.<sup>144</sup> The rare Australian drama production could not compete with cheap imports because 'shoe-string' budgets did not allow for sufficient rehearsals, adequate payment of good actors and writers, or even an indifferent production process (as described by Roland Strong during the production of *Emergency*).<sup>145</sup> This situation, the report acknowledged, was "due not only to a lack of proper training but more importantly, to inexperience through lack of continuity of employment."<sup>146</sup>

These issues were crucial elements of Hector's evidence to the Inquiry and included in its final report. The committee accepted Hector's assertion that the standard of studio facilities and technicians, through their work on other programs, was excellent by world standards.<sup>147</sup> It therefore noted, in Paragraph 74 (6), that:

A further problem associated with dramatic standards is a tendency towards complacency in the industry. Far too many people are accepting the present situation of a lower standard of production as inevitable. This is a dangerous and defeatist attitude in any artistic enterprise. Given an opportunity and some encouragement, the Australian production can improve and compete with the world's best.<sup>148</sup>

As Sydney Box noted, British TV talent began to assert itself when presented with ongoing opportunities. Hector Crawford espoused using inexpensive videotape technology to provide the pool of largely untapped talent an opportunity to improve their skills, a point that did not escape the attention of the Committee.<sup>149</sup> Tom O'Regan comments on the significance of this realisation:

This was an important rhetorical shift. Vincent's recommendations were made not to rectify an intrinsic Australian cultural lack, but to allow an already established cultural propensity to be tapped. The argument that Australia lacked talent could no longer be the acceptable position it had been on both cultural horizons (where it was used to argue for the grafting of culture onto an inhospitable Australian terrain) and on TV station horizons (to argue against local content).<sup>150</sup>

In shifting the terrain of debate in this way Vincent played an important role in changing the politics of Australian culture. The problem was no longer one of setting up alternative cultural institutions to counter the 'vulgarity' of the media, but to work within the available media – to have them work for culture.<sup>151</sup>

But it was Crawford who sowed these seeds of change, as has been demonstrated by his earlier correspondence with Hannan, Vincent and other key stakeholders, in which he advocated the use of cheaper, medium-specific videotape technology to enable the development of local creative talent. The Committee, as is apparent in the language of its report, was cognisant of this compromise 'solution' before the hearings began.

Hector's recommendations to the Committee did not favour a quota system unless it applied to all program categories, unlike the general 40 percent Australian quota allocated in 1960.<sup>152</sup> Crawford believed that the imposition of a specific drama quota "could place the television industry in the position of increasing the category of Australian drama on television, whilst leaving unsolved the economic problems associated with the production of this type of program".<sup>153</sup> However, the Committee did recommend a quota be introduced "in respect of the dramatic content of Australian programs at not less than nine percent of total time devoted to programs of Australian origin to be imposed progressively over the next ensuing three years".<sup>154</sup>

Influenced by the success of quotas introduced in other countries, the Committee applied a number of caveats, one of which could be attributed to Hector's recommended approach to local production: "A quota should be related to the potential supply of programs of good quality which are available at a reasonable price".<sup>155</sup> In other words, the drama quota should not include poor quality 'drama quickies'. In acknowledgement of financial constraints, "a quota should make special allowances for drama of high quality or drama which, because of its type, has been more than usually expensive to produce". Such flexibility, the report suggested,

“should neither be beyond the capacity of the Board [ABCB] to administer nor of the industry to comply with”.<sup>156</sup>

Although Crawford's 1959 paper advocated protection by large increases in Customs tariffs and duty, by 1962 he had retreated from this position. His evidence stated that such a move would have adverse holistic economic effects on the television industry, “without solving the problems associated with Australian program production”.<sup>157</sup> Instead, Hector's primary recommendation was for a special fund, for commercial stations only, to be established by Commonwealth legislation and administered by the ABCB. Hector's criteria for the allocation of funding included Australian productions that, in the opinion of administrators, would “contribute to the raising of the standards of public taste” and would “contribute to the development of an Australian consciousness and expression”.<sup>158</sup> Seventy-five percent of such funds would “be used for the production of dramatic or musical programs”.<sup>159</sup> To finance such a fund, Crawford suggested a five percent levy on advertisers and a hefty increase of £1 in viewers' licence fees; the Commonwealth Government would make up any shortfall.<sup>160</sup>

The Committee countered by recommending an Australian Television Council to oversee funding requests for TV programs and feature film proposals, conduct research and award scholarships to writers and other activities.<sup>161</sup> To be administered by four leading members of the arts' community and one member each from the ABC, ABCB, and Department of Treasury, the Australian Television Council would be funded out of Commonwealth revenue and offset by additional taxation revenue though anticipated increased activity in the TV, film and theatre sectors, along with eventual export sales.<sup>162</sup> As private TV licence fees had already contributed considerably to government revenue, increased fees was not considered. Commercial licensees, however, were expected to share in the financial burden of this initiative through increased licence fees of up to four percent per year for earnings exceeding £500,000 after three years.<sup>163</sup>

While Hector Crawford and various lobbying groups welcomed the opportunity to publicly express their views, GTV9 Programming Manager Nigel Dick believed the committee lacked objectivity. As mentioned earlier, Dick alleged that many of the Committee's criticisms were predestined and intended to publicly rebuke the



commercial operators. In his MA thesis, Dick provides examples of sarcastic and rude responses to views offered by witnesses with which they did not agree.<sup>164</sup>

It seemed the committee members believed that they were experts in understanding television and what the community wanted from it in the way of programs. If viewers didn't want what the committee believed was appropriate, they should be given it anyway.<sup>165</sup>

Dick had no doubt that the principal purpose for the inquiry was to enforce an increase in Australian drama, including some form of quota.<sup>166</sup> But a number of witnesses, he noted, were not as forthcoming on this issue as the committee may have expected.<sup>167</sup>

In its report the committee stated that most witnesses strongly favoured the introduction of a quota system, although the difficulties were generally recognised. On one reading of the report it can be just as easily argued that those witnesses with an understanding of the financial barriers facing Australian television did not support the committee's view that quotas should be introduced. Among those who understood television the general view was that quotas, per se, could create greater problems, for example cheap productions.<sup>168</sup>

Hector Crawford was one such person, and John McCallum, Joint Managing Director of J.C. Williamsons Theatres, told the committee that "if a station has to fill a spot with Australian production you might get the cheapest". Like Crawford, he advocated establishing a body to allocate funding for local productions.<sup>169</sup> The General Manager of the ABC, Sir Charles Moses, Dick wrote, told the committee that he considered an *overall* quota would be a waste of time (as he had warned the 1953 Royal Commission), and that commercial operators could contribute more to drama by providing writers and actors with greater opportunities, just as Crawford espoused.<sup>170</sup>

Sir Frank Packer's attitude to the Inquiry was, according to Dick, cavalier and provocative.<sup>171</sup> In response to one question suggesting that TCN9's budget for local production did not include one penny for drama he told the committee, derisively:

The description of drama is pretty difficult for me to answer, but I will give you a complete breakdown. There could be some drama in it – there is quite a lot of drama in paying for it sometimes.<sup>172</sup>

Packer suggested that commercial operators would not accept a dictated quota for local content that they could not and would not meet.<sup>173</sup> As O'Regan notes, *The*

*Vincent Report* and its nine percent drama quota recommendation was ignored by the Menzies' Government and received minimal media coverage.<sup>174</sup> Moran contends this inaction was because the Committee had been convened by the Australian Senate and not sanctioned by Cabinet. Furthermore, O'Regan contends that because the recommendations of the report "cut across the interests of the major TV stations with their extensive press interests, Government debate and possible support would not be conducive with a federal election pending"<sup>175</sup> Ian Crawford is somewhat more candid:

The government were scared to enforce it [The Vincent Report]. The power of the press meant that the government was terrified to put the press against them. If they put the whole press against them they would lose the next election automatically.<sup>176</sup>

Harrison demonstrates the hold of powerful media organisations over Governments, and their ability to stifle debate and action when they disagreed with the findings and recommendations of Senate Select hearings such as *The Vincent Inquiry*:

The local content lobby group lacked the extra political strength or persuasion necessary to force some action on the issue. The industry, of course, did not accept the comments of *The Vincent Report* as a valid appraisal of the situation. The industry journal reported that the report was not written objectively, but stressed the negative aspects of television. It was claimed that the report showed no appreciation of business economics, and made no useful suggestions about the future of the industry.<sup>177</sup>

As lobbying continued for increased locally produced drama, a ministerial directive to the ABCB in 1966 resulted in a second inquiry, this time confined to television licensees and senior executives.<sup>178</sup> This led to the first quota ever allocated when, in 1967, commercial stations were required to broadcast a mere 30 minutes of locally produced drama every week.<sup>179</sup> A more acceptable quota (for licensees) than the nine percent proposed four years earlier, Moran contends that it represented what the commercial licensees agreed *they* could do.<sup>180</sup>

Although never sanctioned and implemented, *The Vincent Report* remained a benchmark regarding elements considered important to local drama content, for lobbyists within the industry, and those outside the media who were concerned with cultural standards and the creative potential of Australia.<sup>181</sup> The *Television: Make It Australia* Campaign in the late 1960s drew upon *The Vincent Report* as a platform

around which to contextualise employment issues confronting the television industry.<sup>182</sup> But until 1970, as Dick argues, regulation of Australian content played a minor role in the increase of locally made drama that occurred after 1964.<sup>183</sup> Other, more tangible developments were responsible, as is discussed in Chapter 9.16.<sup>184</sup>

Hector Crawford's eight years of persistent lobbying, and his ability to influence like-minded politicians, stakeholders, and the public was not welcomed by commercial television licensees. *The Vincent Inquiry* can be attributed to Hector's activism while many of its recommendations can be traced back to his ideals, yet it did not result in legislated change. Hector's greatest influence on the Committee, which did not require government approval, was the realisation that the lack of opportunity and training stifled locally made drama: an untapped supply of creative personnel could work and learn within the new and less costly media of videotape technology, combined with film.<sup>185</sup> As discussed in Chapter 10, Crawfords adhered to these principles when it produced *Homicide*; a program that created the environment in which people began to accept Australian drama.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 February 2011.
- <sup>2</sup> John Docker, "Popular Culture Versus the State: An Argument Against Australian Content Regulations for Television", in *Media Information Australia*, No. 59, 1991, p. 23.
- <sup>3</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, Victoria, 17 June 2009.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> National Archives of Australia, Barcode 8222713, Series Number A12922: Hector Crawford, letter to federal parliamentarians, 10 April 1956: Annexure C to Evidence presented by Hector Crawford 7 February 1963, Australian Senate, Select Committee on the Encouragement of Australian Production for Television (The Vincent Inquiry), 1963.
- <sup>6</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, MA Thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, 1999, p. 101.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Hector Crawford. *Commercial Television in Australia*, published by Hector Crawford, Melbourne, 14 September, 1959, p. 4
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 4, 7.
- <sup>11</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., pp. 101, 103.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 102.
- <sup>13</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Keith Cairns, HSV7 (former television executive), transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, The Australian Television Archive, Film Art Deco Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 3 October 1997, pp. 4, 6, Title 373505.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 6.
- <sup>15</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., pp. 103,105.
- <sup>16</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, Prowling Press, Victoria, p. 97, 98.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Nigel Dick, op. cit., p. 104.
- <sup>19</sup> Keith Cairns, op. cit., p. 4.
- <sup>20</sup> Nigel Dick, op. cit., p. 104
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> Keith Cairns, op. cit., p. 4.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Hector Crawford, letter to federal parliamentarians, 10 April 1956, op. cit.
- <sup>25</sup> Diana Combe, *The Radio Serial Industry in Australia: an historical study of the production of serials in Australia, and the influence of the industry in the development of commercial radio*, unpublished PhD Thesis, Macquarie University, 1992, p. 14.
- <sup>26</sup> Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural\\_cringe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_cringe), accessed 10 November 2010.
- <sup>27</sup> Hector Crawford, letter to federal parliamentarians, 10 April 1956, op. cit.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>38</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 75.
- <sup>39</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Annual Report 1957/58*, Postmaster General's Department, Sydney, June 1958, p. 37
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>41</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Nigel Dick, (former television executive), transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, The Australian Television Archive, Film Art Deco Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 3 October 1997, p. 87, Title No: 373515.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp. 89, 90.

<sup>43</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., pp. 105, 115.

<sup>44</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry, Television Drama in Australia*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1985, p. 26.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 17 June 2009.

<sup>47</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 75;

Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, letter to Don Houghton, President, *Australian Radio, Television and Screen Writers' Guild*, Sydney, 5 March 1963.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Hector Crawford, *Commercial Television in Australia*, op. cit., pp. 1-3.

<sup>51</sup> Section 114 (1) of the *Broadcasting and Television Act 1942-1956*, quoted in Hector Crawford, *Commercial Television in Australia*, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Hector Crawford, *Commercial Television in Australia*, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 3, quoted from Hansard, Australia Parliament, 10 May 1956, p. 1963. [Keith Cairns said £50,000 – Endnote 19 above.]

<sup>56</sup> Hector Crawford, *Commercial Television in Australia*, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-7.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp. 12.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., pp. 12, 13.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp.15-17:

- Foreign produced programs imported into the United Kingdom did not exceed 14 percent during 1957/58. Following the success of the Independent Television Service (ITV) working with the BBC, the 14 percent was greatly reduced.
- In Canada, local program content was capped at 55 percent with a strong emphasis on the preservation of Canadian character representation. Direct program connection with American stations was heavily regulated.
- TV programming policy in Japan fixed a miserly quota and price ceiling for foreign TV films.
- Television programs in Italy were almost entirely produced domestically: 95 percent local, 5 percent American and British films.
- And in America, vigorous protection against imported TV programs, largely enforced by strong and influential unions, illustrated the extraordinary double standards of the USA.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-21.

<sup>69</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Annual Report 1959/60*, Postmaster-General's Department, Sydney, June 1960, p. 38.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Annual Report 1959/60*, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

Albert Moran, *Images and Industry*, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 75, 76.

Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, op. cit., p. 100.

[In this regard, there are interesting parallels with the 1970s *TV: Make it Australian* campaign.]

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>79</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 75, 76.

<sup>80</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, op. cit., pp. 98.

<sup>81</sup> Kate Harrison, *The Points System For Australian Television*, Royal Institute of Public Administration, Brisbane, 1980, p. 6.

<sup>82</sup> Tom O'Regan, *Film & its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film & Television Interface*, 1989, p. 5. Downloaded from <http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/film/AFTV.html>, accessed 23 September 2007;

Hector Crawford. *Commercial Television in Australia*, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>83</sup> Tom O'Regan, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>84</sup> George Hart, "Give us the money," *TV Times*, Melbourne, 11 April 1962, p. 11.

<sup>85</sup> Hector Crawford, letter to federal parliamentarians, op. cit.

<sup>86</sup> "I Wonder What Happened to.....", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 15 September 1960, p. 20.

<sup>87</sup> Corinne Kerby, "Our TV Must Create – Or Die", *Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, June 1960, p. 6.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> "Our TV MUST STAND ON its OWN feet NOW", *Listener-In TV*, 1 July-7 July 1961, " 'Ion' Section", p. 23.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Russell Clark, "Frankly Horrified at Our Commercial TV", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 15 February 1962, p. 8.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Keith Cairns, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>98</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p. 143.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., pp. 143, 144.

<sup>100</sup> It is interesting to compare the evolution of local automotive production with the development of local content television. Given that the automotive industry was much bigger and more important to the economy, particularly with regard to employment, prior to and after WWII, the Australian Government took steps to encourage an Australian automotive industry. Both General Motors-Holdens (GMH) and Ford provided studies to the Australian Government outlining the production of the first Australian designed car. Ford's proposal was the government's first choice, but required substantial financial assistance. GMH's study was ultimately chosen because of its low level of government intervention. During the war GMH produced vehicle bodies, field guns, aircraft and engines for the war effort. After the War, GMH returned to producing vehicle bodies, this time for *Buick*, *Chevrolet*, *Pontiac* and *Vauxhall*.

Holden, which had become a subsidiary of GM in the 1930s, continued to pursue the goal of producing an Australian car. This involved compromise with GM, as Holden's managing director, Laurence Hartnett, favoured development of a local design, while GM preferred to see an American design as the basis for "Australia's Own Car". Ultimately, the design was based on a previously rejected post-war Chevrolet proposal. The *Holden* was launched in 1948, creating long waiting lists extending through 1949 and beyond. During the 1950s, *Holden* dominated the Australian car market. GMH invested heavily in production capacity, which allowed the company to meet increased post-war demand for motor cars. Ford's mainstay in local production throughout the 1950s was the *Ford Custom* and *Customline* series but it wasn't until the early 1960s that the Australian-made *Ford Falcon* began to challenge the dominance of the Holden.

Source: Wikipedia - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holden#cite\\_note-17](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holden#cite_note-17), accessed 9/12/2012.

<sup>101</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, op. cit., p. 100.

<sup>102</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>103</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 43.

<sup>104</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, letter to Senator G. C. Hannan, Melbourne, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, 25 March 1960.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Senator Seddon Vincent, Kalgoolie, WA, letter and copy of submission to *Joint Standing Committee on The Development of the Australian Theatre and Film Industry*, June 1961, to Senator George Hannan, Melbourne, 17 June 1961.

(Federal Western Australia Senator Vincent Seddon died in office one year after *The Vincent Inquiry*. He was only 56).

Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seddon\\_Vincent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seddon_Vincent), accessed 18 March 2014.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Victor Arnold, Secretary, *Actors and Announcers Equity*, Victorian Division, letter to Hector Crawford, Melbourne, 11 September 1961;

University of Melbourne Archives, Ref 84/44: Minutes of Meeting, *Actors and Announcers Equity*, Victorian Division, 16 May 1962.

<sup>111</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, Melbourne, letter to Don Houghton, op. cit.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Tom O'Regan, *Film & its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film & Television Interface*, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Personnel of the Committee were Senators V. S. Vincent (Western Australia), Chairman; H. G. J. Cant (Western Australia); S. H. Cohen, QC, (Victoria); T. C. Drake-Brockman (Western Australia); G. C. Hannan (Victoria); D. McClelland (NSW) and R. C. Wright (Tasmania).

State Library of Victoria Collection: 1962-63, The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, The Senate, *Report from the Select Committee on the Encouragement of Australian Production for Television* (The Vincent Inquiry), Part One–Report, Government Printer, Canberra 29 October 1963, p. 1.

<sup>116</sup> Other program areas of investigation included children's, religious and educational programs, along with news bulletins, panel and discussion productions and programs suitable for special interest and minority groups.

*Report from the Select Committee on the Encouragement of Australian Production for Television* (The Vincent Inquiry), Part One–Report, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., pp. 1, 2.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, pp. 59, 60.

<sup>122</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>123</sup> Stuart Cunningham, "Docker: Criticism, History and Policy", in *Media Information Australia*, No.59, 1991, p. 27;

John Docker, "Popular Culture Versus the State: An argument against Australian Content Regulations for Television", in *Media Information Australia*, No.59, 1991, pp. 23, 24.

<sup>124</sup> John Docker, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>125</sup> Kate Harrison, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>127</sup> Kate Harrison, op. cit., p. 9.

Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>128</sup> Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., p.16

<sup>129</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, written address to the *Senate Select Committee for the Encouragement of Australian Productions for Television* (The Vincent Inquiry), reproduced in *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry into the Production and distribution of Motion Picture Films and Television Programs*, Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 1972, p. 2.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, Additional Evidence to the *Senate Select Committee for the Encouragement of Australian Productions for Television* (The Vincent Inquiry), reproduced in *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry into the Production and distribution of Motion Picture Films and Television Programs*, Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 1972, pp. 2, 6.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., pp. 2, 6.

<sup>135</sup> *Whiplash* was Australia's first venture in the area of film television drama produced at Artransa Park Television, a production company controlled by Sydney's ATN7. A large proportion of the series was filmed outdoors but the lead actor was American Peter Graves. Associated Television (ATV) in the UK was an underwriter for *Whiplash* because it viewed Australia as a large market for its programs and it made commercial sense to invest in an

Australian venture. The program was also an attempt to show that Australia could produce programs more cheaply. However, this was not the end result.

Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p.151.

Hector Crawford suggested that the producers were "primarily concerned with the markets of the USA rather than with drama for Australian TV viewers. Neither American nor Australian viewers benefited from the policy. The end-result was a rather confusing pattern of Australianised Americans and Americanised Australians acting out what were basically western situations against an Australian background".

Hector Crawford, Additional Evidence for the Senate Select Committee, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>136</sup> Hector Crawford, Additional Evidence for the Senate Select Committee, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Many former Crawford-trained technicians and creative personnel became valued contributors to Australian feature film. To name just two examples: Crawford staff writer Cliff Green wrote the screenplay for the films *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *Summerfield*, in addition to a vast range of quality television mini-series. As recently as 2011, former Crawford stalwarts Simon Wincer, David Lee and Jan Bladier directed and produced the feature film *The Cup*.

<sup>139</sup> Hector Crawford, Additional Evidence for the Senate Select Committee, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p.6.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid. [Eg. the Australian produced *Whiplash* was made for American audiences].

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Hector Crawford, written address to the Senate Select Committee, op. cit., p. 2;

Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Tom O'Regan, *Film & its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film & Television Interface*, op. cit., pp. 6, 7.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>152</sup> Hector Crawford, written address to the Senate Select Committee, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., paragraph 84 (2), p. 21.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., Paragraph 86 (1); Paragraph 81 (1-4).

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., Paragraph 81 (1-4).

<sup>157</sup> Hector Crawford, written address to the Senate Select Committee, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., pp. 10, 11.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

The notion of a 5% levy on advertisers was vigorously rejected by Sir Frank Packer when he gave evidence: "If you make TV too dear for him (the advertiser) with too much tax or too many collections he will leave you like a bomb. As a matter of fact there is a tendency for some advertisers now to seek away from TV a little".

Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>161</sup> Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., Paragraph 91 (1-6), p. 23.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., Paragraphs 116 & 117, p. 30;

Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., Paragraph 75 (1-4), p. 53.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., Paragraph 118 (1-3), p. 30.

While the *Australian Television Council* never materialized because the Menzies Government did not recognise 'The Vincent Inquiry' and filed it away, the special fund advocated by Hector Crawford and the Inquiry was manifested in other ways in the late 1960s when the Gorton Government established **The Australian Film Development Corporation** (AFDC).

In 1975 the Whitlam Government established The **Australian Film Commission** (AFC) as successor to the AFDC to promote the creation and distribution of films in Australia as well as to preserve the country's film history. It financially assisted film and television production and also produced films generally intended for government purposes, through its production arm, **Film Australia** (previously the Commonwealth Film Unit).



In 1998-99, **Film Finance Corporation Australia** was set up as a government-owned corporation and took over the major rôle of financing feature film and television production, while the AFC concentrated on the funding of development, marketing and research work for the media. **Film Australia** became a separate entity.

In 2008, the Australian Government created a new agency, **Screen Australia**, which merged the major government film bodies **Film Finance Corporation Australia, Film Australia, and the Australian Film Commission** into a single body, but with slightly different functions, rôles and financing methods.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_Film\\_Commission](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Film_Commission), accessed 10 December 2012.

Additionally, similar statutory bodies exist in most states. In Victoria, for example, the **Victorian Film Corporation** was established in 1976 and became **Film Victoria** in 1981. In 2012, the relevant statutory authorities are now **Film Victoria** and the **Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI)**.

<sup>164</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., pp. 149, 150, 153.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid;

Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., Paragraphs 79-86, pp. 20-22.

<sup>167</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., p. 152.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., p. 147, 148, 149.

<sup>174</sup> Tom O'Regan, *Film & its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film & Television Interface*, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>175</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry*, op. cit., p. 32;

Tom O'Regan, *Film & its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film & Television Interface*, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>176</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>177</sup> Kate Harrison, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>178</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry*, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Tom O'Regan, *Film & its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film & Television Interface*, op. cit., pp. 7, 8.

<sup>182</sup> Ted Hamilton, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, Victoria, 9 October 2009;

Terry Donovan, interview with Philip Davey, Armadale, Victoria, May 2008.

<sup>183</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., pp. 144-146.

<sup>184</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry*, op. cit., pp. 28-31.

<sup>185</sup> Tom O'Regan, *Film & its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film & Television Interface*, op. cit., pp. 7, 8.

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Full page newspaper advertising promotion for *Seagulls Over Sorrento*,  
Sunday Channel 7 at 8.p.m.

*Source: The Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 30 April – 6 May 1960, p. 10.

## Chapter 9: A Licence to Print Money!

### 9.1. Introduction

According to both Ian Crawford and Glenda Raymond, the failure of Hector Crawford's consortium *Australian Telecasters Limited* (ATL) to acquire Melbourne's third commercial television licence was the biggest disappointment of his career.<sup>1</sup> Ian recalls:

Diana Howard [Hector's Secretary] was in Hector's office when he learnt the result by phone: "He hung up and just sat there, his head in his hands. He was absolutely shattered".<sup>2</sup>

Crawford was desperate to reverse the lack of opportunity and training he believed obstructed the production of locally made drama. As Managing Director elect of ATL, Crawford knew that operating a new television station should be enabling, even though preparing a detailed application would be time-consuming and expensive while concurrently preparing his submission for *The Vincent Inquiry* hearings as discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>3</sup>

Austarama, the successful consortium, was formed by transport magnate (Sir) Reginald Ansett as a new subsidiary of Ansett Transport Industries (ATI), a group known to have no experience in television or related fields.<sup>4</sup> Austarama based its case on proven managerial skills, considerable experience in providing public service and ATI's extensive financial reserves.<sup>5</sup> Crawford Productions had 'the runs on the board' – despite limited opportunities – and was able to cite a number of successful productions.<sup>6</sup> Given Crawfords' relevant background, and the fact that four of the five applying consortia were better qualified than ATI, awarding a television licence to a major transport conglomerate was considered incongruous.<sup>7</sup>

Since 1963, many former Crawfords' associates and various industry stakeholders have remained adamant that the Federal Government favoured ATI.<sup>8</sup> In assessing the veracity of these claims, this chapter will consider the submissions of Austarama and ATL, testimony of witnesses, the summation of respective counsel and the final recommendations of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board (ABCB). In contrast to allegations of political interference and duplicity, reference to confidential cabinet submissions, minutes and notes written and overseen by Cabinet Secretary Sir John

Bunting, reveal a completely different government perspective towards this matter.<sup>9</sup> Finally, Bunting's recently released confidential notebooks disclose what Cabinet really thought.<sup>10</sup>

## 9.2. Background

On 22 February 1962 Postmaster-General C. W. Davidson invited applications for five additional commercial television licences, to be submitted by 15 June.<sup>11</sup> Believing that each mainland capital city could accommodate another commercial station, the Government believed that additional competition would benefit both viewers and the development of Australian television services.<sup>12</sup> A key objective of the ABCB was to encourage production of Australian programmes of greater substance than "light variety, quiz and informal afternoon sessions."<sup>13</sup> It was hoped that the quantity and quality of indigenous programs would improve with networking between aligned stations and the sharing of production costs:<sup>14</sup>

It has been considered essential that television in Australia should, as far as possible, be basically Australian in character and content, and it has been expected that as Australian production resources increase the proportion of imported material would be steadily reduced. [...] Australian programmes transmitted by any station should not be less than 40 percent of its weekly hours of transmission. [Applied from 1961]<sup>15</sup>

Some commentators suggested, however, that the decision to issue new licences was politically motivated in an election year, and would ensure that media interests did not control the new stations, as were the inaugural licensees. Although not within the scope of this chapter, a summary of this speculation is included within the endnotes.<sup>16</sup>

Hearings to assess the six Melbourne applications, chaired by R. G. Osborne (Chairman ABCB) and assisted by G. H. Lush QC and W. O. Harris QC, were held in Melbourne between 7 November and 13 December 1962; the outcome was announced on 5 April 1963. (On 7 February 1963, Hector Crawford addressed *The Vincent Inquiry*, and was therefore not yet aware of the license outcome.) C. I. Menhennitt QC appeared for Austarama; Maurice Ashkanasy QC for ATL.<sup>17</sup> Because acquisition of the licence was highly desirable and regarded as a "licence to

print money”, proceedings and cross-examination were probing and rigorous, with each consortium’s QC sometimes derisory and belittling.<sup>18</sup>

### **9.3. The Applicants**

Applicants were required to provide details under several categories. These can be summarised as ownership and constitutional matters, details of directors and principal shareholders, management arrangements, organisational structure, financial estimates, program proposals, staffing requirements and recruitment, studio facilities, and technical details.<sup>19</sup>

The methods of development and promotion of Australian produced programs received great emphasis.<sup>20</sup> Applicants were required to estimate the percentage of Australian content to be broadcast and the station’s operating hours during its first three years.<sup>21</sup> With few exceptions, a large amount of evidence was provided by each applicant, both in document form and through the elaboration of witnesses.<sup>22</sup> ATL, for example, submitted a well-researched, voluminous document, including numerous testimonies from associates and industry stakeholders.<sup>23</sup> Austarama’s similarly well-researched submission was more succinct, allowing witnesses to impress the hearing with crucial and convincing personal testimony<sup>24</sup>

The organisational attributes of the six Melbourne licence applicants were quite different from those of the Sydney applicants. While the Sydney applications included major sponsor companies, the Melbourne consortia consisted of non-participating nominee and general public shareholders, with one minor exception.<sup>25</sup> Unlike the Melbourne shareholders, sponsor companies in Sydney took a major share interest in their respective applicant company, and made available their resources and support in the planning of the application.<sup>26</sup> This provided the Sydney consortia with considerable stability, a “symbol of permanence to the investing public”.<sup>27</sup> Austarama, being part of ATI and managed by ATI executives, was deemed to be unique.<sup>28</sup>

#### **9.3.1. Australian Telecasters Limited**

At the instigation of Hector Crawford, Australian Telecasters Limited (ATL) was incorporated on 3 April 1962 with an authorised capital of £3,000,000 “divided into

12,000,000 fully paid shares of 5 shillings each".<sup>29</sup> At the time of application, 6,000,000 shares had been issued to 7,800 shareholders.<sup>30</sup> Had the application been successful, ATL would have subsumed Crawford Productions and The Crawford Television Workshop for £50,000 via a share allotment to the Crawford Family.<sup>31</sup> Sir Arthur Smithers, a Commissioner of the State Savings Bank of Victoria, was nominated as Chairman. Sir Edgar Coles, Vice Chairman and Controlling Managing Director of G. J. Coles and Co. Ltd., was Deputy Chairman.<sup>32</sup>

### **9.3.2. Austarama Television Pty Ltd**

Austarama Television Pty Ltd was incorporated on 8 June 1962 with an "authorised capital of £700,000 divided into 700,000 shares of £1 each".<sup>33</sup> At the time of the hearings only two shares had been issued: one to R. W. Ansett and the other to Ansett Transport Industries Ltd. (ATI).<sup>34</sup> Although Austarama was a new wholly owned subsidiary of a large public company, it would have no direct public shareholdings.<sup>35</sup> Should the licence be awarded, the remaining 699,998 shares would be issued to ATI, which would then issue to its shareholders 2,800,000 ordinary five-shilling shares as investments in the television subsidiary.<sup>36</sup> Shareholdings would therefore apply to the whole of ATI, incorporating Austarama.<sup>37</sup> Of the eight directors appointed, five were senior executives of ATI, including Chairman and Managing Director [Sir] Reg Ansett.<sup>38</sup>

The four remaining consortia applicants were Universal Telecasters Limited, Television Victoria Limited, Community Television Limited and Educational and Cultural Television Pty Ltd. For the purposes of this study, discourse will focus on Australian Telecasters Limited and Austarama. Details of the remaining four consortia, along with QC George Lush's related comments, are documented in the endnotes.<sup>39</sup> (Refer to matrix in Appendix D for the key indicators of each applicant).

### **9.4. Austarama: Key Elements**

In his evidence, Reg Ansett testified that he had become aware of television's potential long before the Government sought a third licensee.<sup>40</sup> Ansett believed that television could assert considerable influence and provide opportunities "for the community to be in touch with many aspects of life and events that otherwise might not to be available to them".<sup>41</sup> To reinforce ATI's successful growth through

'acquisitions' such as this licence, Ansett noted that he had established ATI with a one-vehicle passenger service during the early 1930s prior to establishing Ansett Airlines in 1937.<sup>42</sup> He had developed a number of subsidiary companies and in 1957, ATI acquired Australian National Airlines – with several associated companies – to become Australia's second commercial airline.<sup>43</sup> In competition with Trans Australian Airlines (TAA), ATI strengthened its position by purchasing four regional airlines between 1957 and 1961.<sup>44</sup>

Given this varied and successful expansion, ATI viewed the operation of a television station as a 'natural extension' of the Group's operations, and its financial and managerial capability integral to the growth of a profitable enterprise and valuable 'public service'.<sup>45</sup> No other applicant, it was asserted, had ATI's experience in providing public services.<sup>46</sup> Ownership by 40,000 ATI shareholders would protect Austarama from any takeover bids.<sup>47</sup> Because ATI was not linked in ownership, influence or control with any media or political organisations, Austarama would also be free of pressure or influence from sectional groups.<sup>48</sup>

#### **9.4.1. Financial Standing**

Although it was expected that the new station would be financially independent, Menhennitt noted in his introductory statement to the Board that "a licence can be granted to Austarama in the confident assurance that it will weather any financial storm that may arise".<sup>49</sup> Austarama was in a sound position for no other applicant could claim strong 'parental' support, or turn to a backer in the event of financial difficulty.<sup>50</sup> The only possible exception was Community Television whose principal shareholder was the large public company Electronic Industries.<sup>51</sup> But as Hector Crawford conceded, the 25 companies that had purchased ATL shares were in no sense promoters who could offer future financial backing.<sup>52</sup>

Because the new licensee would report directly to the ABCB, another clear advantage Austarama claimed, was ATI's extensive experience with a stringent regulatory regime and control by Government authorities.<sup>53</sup> ATI enjoyed a sound relationship with the Transport Regulation Board. It had cooperated with the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA), not only in regulatory matters, but also in working with Trans Australian Airlines (TAA) to develop a framework that ensured

stability within the airline industry while maintaining competition.<sup>54</sup> A letter from the Director-General of Civil Aviation supported this premise:

I have been particularly impressed with the calibre of top executive staff in Ansett Transport Industries Ltd. In my view, the officers concerned have shown ability and imagination in dealing with a wide range of aviation problems.<sup>55</sup>

Austarama did not under-estimate the complexity of establishing a new TV station in competition with established stations, but believed that a healthy competitive environment could be created as in the airline industry.<sup>56</sup> While striving to achieve 58% of Australian content in its inaugural year, Austarama chose not to “over-provide the market” and to telecast initially for only 42 hours per week (ATL had offered 61 hours) between the prime times of 5pm and 11pm.<sup>57</sup>

#### **9.4.2. Programming**

Austarama promised a “revolutionary approach to programme planning”.<sup>58</sup> This sweeping statement provoked debate and during questioning Ronald Walker, the architect of Austarama’s submission, conceded the term ‘revolutionary’ was inappropriate.<sup>59</sup> It was more about “moving in a definite direction” according to Walker, ATI’s Executive Director of Planning and Development.<sup>60</sup> That ‘definite direction’, as it transpired, seemed not unappealing, especially in local content ideas. Austarama, rather than relying too heavily on indigenous serialised drama, proposed to develop a distinctly Australian flavour through ‘live’ productions that would “depict this country’s developing culture, environment, scenery, people and stories”.<sup>61</sup> This particular Australian slant was appropriate because ATI already travelling around Australia and could employ its knowledge well.<sup>62</sup>

ATI Advertising and Publicity Coordinator Kenneth Osborne, as a member of ATI’s Television Committee, devised this program format – with a budget of £1,000,000.<sup>63</sup> Concluding that programs using Australian talent would not be sufficient to project an Australian image, he resolved that program content would need to “encourage an awareness of the achievements of Australia and advance the arts and culture of the nation”.<sup>64</sup> Recognising that Austarama’s overall program format should be balanced and cover a variety of interests – in accord with Ansett’s views – Osborne had to judge competition from other stations to formulate a distinctively different blend of programs.<sup>65</sup> While seeking advice and discussing his ideas with senior staff and



program managers of established stations, Osborne also learned about potential programming problems.<sup>66</sup>

As a result of these investigations I decided to develop a pattern of programming that would cover a wide range of interests, and would concentrate wherever possible on locally-produced material. Whilst paying close attention to the requirements of relaxation and amusement, we would endeavour to provide some programmes of a more serious or instructive nature.<sup>67</sup>

Endorsing this framework, Ansett suggested that Austarama's operation of a television station would be assisted by ATI's extensive experience in the study and evaluation of public taste and requirements.<sup>68</sup>

Related to television, I am sure that this experience must be of great value to us in that we will not just follow the prevailing pattern of programs, but by an accurate assessment of public requirement we will be able to work towards a betterment of television programming generally.<sup>69</sup>

## **9.5. Criticism of Austarama and Ansett Transport Industries**

The notion that operating a television station was a "logical and desirable extension of ATI's activities" was questioned as Lush and Board Chairman Osborne "struggled to associate a television facility with the operations of a transport company."<sup>70</sup> Ansett reiterated his position that, like the television industry, ATI was an experienced provider of public services but agreed that any tangible connection could not easily be demonstrated.<sup>71</sup> Rather:

We do a great deal of work on possible expansion and the only meaning that I can put to the 'logical' is that we probably digested the big activities that we took on in the aviation field and we feel perhaps that this is a logical field that we should try and enter.<sup>72</sup>

Profit motive was another common discussion point.<sup>73</sup> ATI received 'preferential' Government assistance through significant tax deductions for aircraft depreciation, but this concession diminished over several years. It was suggested that it would be "especially desirable" to have a successful television station by the time the concession ended.<sup>74</sup> Ansett rejected these ideas. He agreed that acquiring a profitable TV station was desirable, but no more so to ATI than to any other applicant. He also stated that a profitable TV station had little relevance to reduced airline tax deductions.<sup>75</sup>

There is no significance in that at all. We have, I believe, a very highly profitable business and I trust and hope that it will continue that way. [...] We are making more profits at the present time in ATI than ever before. We are in a very strong position.<sup>76</sup>

Lush, and other advocates, queried ATI's statement that Austarama shareholders would acquire an interest in the new station, given that all shareholdings represented an interest in airline, road transport, hotels and other services.<sup>77</sup> Confirming that it was a 'package deal', offering no direct participation in the TV station, Ansett considered it a bonus that shareholders would have an interest in the entire company.<sup>78</sup>

Austarama's proposed broadcasting time of 42 evening hours per week was considerably less than ATL's 61 hours, and all other applicants.<sup>79</sup> In response to suggestions this would create a 'second-class station', a logical defence was offered.<sup>80</sup> A higher class of program production could be developed during free studio time during the day, while restricted on-air time would initially limit over-provision and avoid industry instability.<sup>81</sup>

However, an explanation was required after the revelation that Government legalisation provided a £6,000,000 guarantee against private loans for replacing aircraft, and is particularly relevant to the responses from senior Government officials outlined later in this chapter regarding the ABCB licence recommendation.<sup>82</sup> In 1961, to ensure the profitable and stable operations of both Ansett Airlines and TAA, the Federal Government legislated a 15-year guarantee of capital loans.<sup>83</sup> Asked why this "reserve Government support for your purchase of aircraft" was necessary, Ansett responded that:<sup>84</sup>

It is *not* necessary, [my emphasis] but I think it is a great vote of confidence in my organisation when the Government are prepared to put up guarantees to the extent of six million.<sup>85</sup>

Sensing that this 'entitlement' and the generous taxation concessions for aircraft depreciation conveyed a position of privilege, Ansett sought to negate any such impression:

[It] is wrongly thought by some that Government funds have in some way been advanced to [ATI]. The fact is that no funds whatsoever have ever been supplied to [ATI] or to any of its subsidiaries by the Government.<sup>86</sup> [eg: Austarama].

Nevertheless, it may be inferred that these Government arrangements placed ATI in a privileged position, a circumstance that did not augur well with the Secretary of Cabinet E. J. Bunting.<sup>87</sup> Concerned that other capable applicants had been rejected, Bunting wrote that this “kissing goes by favour” approach for “friends of the Government” would cause public indignation, resentment and embarrassment, as is shown in the conclusion.<sup>88</sup>

## **9.6 Australian Telecasters Limited: Key Elements**

The decision to establish Channel 0 offered Hector Crawford an opportunity to implement the ideals he had espoused over many years. The purpose for the application – along with the intended character and policy of the station – came as no surprise:

The motive force of this application is the desire of persons possessed of the necessary qualifications, interest, background and skills to found and successfully conduct a commercial television station which is Australian in concept and which is dedicated to the service of Australians.<sup>89</sup>

The theme supporting the application was that of a ‘family station’, providing ‘service’.<sup>90</sup> This was not merely an ideal, but a “desirable and readily attainable reality”.<sup>91</sup> As John Cain wrote, “this credo reflected what Crawford Productions had already been doing for almost twenty years, first in radio and later in television”.<sup>92</sup> While the application necessarily outlined program details for education, children, religion, the community, sport and news, ATL was able to provide a vast catalogue of radio drama, musicals and its own television productions already gone to air: an achievement that no other applicant could claim.<sup>93</sup>

### **9.6.1. Wide Industry links and experience**

Crawfords' well-documented experience and skill over many years in radio and with the production of TV programs and commercials, had attracted considerable goodwill and support.<sup>94</sup> Testimonies from numerous Australian and overseas artists, major advertisers, sponsors and peak body associations/unions were submitted as

evidence. Actors' Equity, after permitting Hector to state his policy platform at a Victorian Branch meeting, passed a motion leading to in *Actors and Announcers Equity Association of Australia* contributing a favourable testimony to ATL's application.<sup>95</sup> The Professional Musicians' Association offered praise for ATL, believing the new station, incorporating Crawford Productions, would "pay high regard to the usage of live music and Australian artists".<sup>96</sup>

Crawfords' past and present associations would give ATL a significant advantage in being able to call upon numerous creative artists, and existing production staff recruited and trained over many years.<sup>97</sup> New facilities for training and development "would give the station a unique start and ensure its capacity and ability to achieve its program aims, particularly in relation to Australian talent".<sup>98</sup>

Not only are these persons fully skilled and experienced, but many of the most competent television production and technical personnel in Australia are known to Crawford Productions Pty. Ltd., hence the selection of suitable personnel to man all the production posts in the Station is much simplified.<sup>99</sup>

Further recruitment would be straightforward. Through Crawfords, ATL would also acquire a music library with associated scores and orchestral parts, background music, scripts and program research material, as well as original television formats and ideas. Crawfords' knowledge of Australian markets, sponsors, advertising agencies, and overseas markets for the sale of programs would be invaluable.<sup>100</sup> It would be difficult for Austarama to match such extensive industry experience and associations.

### **9.6.2. Programming**

To facilitate developing a 'family station' and 'service provision' to the community into actual television programming, a substantial budget had been allocated for Australian produced programs.<sup>101</sup> Dorothy Crawford's evidence explained that, while Australian programs were a priority:

To achieve a balance, we feel we should have the best programmes from other countries; not only America, but London and the Continent. [...] At the moment, it would be quite impossible to telecast for the hours proposed and do it all with Australian programmes.

[But] [...] we have this heart for Australian programmes, for increasing the influence of Australian culture, for helping Australian artists and performers of all kinds, and so we have a very great interest in Australian programmes; we always have had.<sup>102</sup>

ATL's proposal to deliver 45.4 percent of Australian content in its first year (less than Austarama's 58 percent) was a pragmatic decision based on economic realities and the difficulties experienced since 1956.<sup>103</sup> Australian drama production was viewed as problematical and costly, hence ATL's rather conservative proposals.<sup>104</sup> Initially, drama would consist of a one 60-minute production, four quarter-hour serials weekly, and four 'high budget' dramas during the year.<sup>105</sup> *Consider Your Verdict* would continue, and *D.24* would be adapted for television (i.e. *Homicide*).<sup>106</sup> ATL would promote Australian drama development "to the limit of its abilities"; profits would subsidise such productions, as had been the Crawford way.<sup>107</sup>

In addition to drama and other program categories, ATL would produce a wide range of public service, community and musical programs while offering 'at cost' production services for educational programs to the Department of Education.<sup>108</sup> Finally, ATL proposed to make available its new Nepean Highway Moorabbin studio facilities to external independent film production units: creative people who would produce ATL programs under Crawfords' supervision.<sup>109</sup>

## **9.7. Criticism of Australian Telecasters Limited**

Ian Crawford's thesis that his uncle and ATL had failed to attract sufficient financial backing requires clarification.<sup>110</sup> ATL demonstrated strong corporate and community support for establish coats with its 6,000,000 shares purchased by approximately 7,800 shareholders.<sup>111</sup> ATL's authorised capital injection of £3,000,000 and actual available funding available of £2,450,000 – at the time of the hearings – were in excess of any other applicant (refer to Appendix D).<sup>112</sup> The £2,450,000 available consisted of £1,550,000 from subscribed capital, £500,000 from an ANZ bank overdraft, and £400,000 in unsecured notes.<sup>113</sup> Added to this was A. V. Jennings' commitment to advance a mortgage loan of £544,470 for Building construction; half was repayable prior to opening and the remainder during years three and four of operation.<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, technical equipment valued at £735,680 would be provided on hire-purchase by AWA, with £257,488 repayable prior to opening and the remainder during years one to four of operation.<sup>115</sup>

During questioning, Menhennitt expressed incredulity that not one of these financial backers had sought security – from Crawford. When asked “what security the bank are going to take for their half million”, Crawford responded “the goodwill of a commercial television licence”:<sup>116</sup>

I swear to the Board that the Bank have not asked for security. The Bank have seen our application and know the details of the situation and have no hesitation in giving us an understanding for an overdraft of half a million.<sup>117</sup>

Subsequently, Ashkanasy submitted to the Board written evidence that ATL's financial arrangements were free of any security caveats and indeed based on considerable goodwill and support for the venture. Letters were produced from ATL's stakeholders, the ANZ Bank and A. V. Jennings Industries (Australia).<sup>118</sup>

Another critical matter affecting ATL's credibility was Hector's reluctance to release Crawfords' company profit and loss statements to the Board for scrutiny, because of commercial confidentiality.<sup>119</sup> After Crawford made these documents available to the Board confidentially, Lush observed that the “rival applicants cannot be shut-out from cross-examination on the subject”.<sup>120</sup> Upon inspection of the statements, it became clear that the profits, assets and liabilities Crawfords recorded were in no way commensurate with the large financial sums available to Austarama and ATI for the operation of a television station.

For the five years between 1 July 1957 and 30 June 1962, the Crawford Television Workshop had averaged only £97 profit per year.<sup>121</sup> However, because its continuous enrolments trained new talent, ATL was prepared to run it at a loss.<sup>122</sup> Greater ammunition to ATL's opponents was Crawfords' small net profit of £8,263 since 1958 – an average of just over £2,000 per year – as was the revelation that Crawfords' measure of financial success during the period 1954-1961 was the increase of tangible assets over liabilities from £5,000 to £10,000.<sup>123</sup> Of even more concern was Hector's admission that he rarely managed an annual business turnover in excess of £100,000.<sup>124</sup> How then, Menhennitt wondered, could Hector handle a “business of the order of 25 times the size of anything you have ever done before?”<sup>125</sup>

Menhennitt's emphasis on Crawfords' small profits, low asset base and Hector's inexperience in major financial management sought to demonstrate ATL's inability to operate a Television station, the potential to fail and hence be an easy target for takeover bids, according to Ashkanasy in his summation.<sup>126</sup> But Crawford refuted Menhennitt's attack during his evidence:

No. I think you perform a miracle if you stay in business as an independent producer, Mr Menhennitt. I think this is the point. It is true that our company has not been [very] profitable over the last five or six years as an independent production company, but I think you are performing a business miracle if you have stayed in business, and a great number of other businesses of a similar nature have gone out of business.<sup>127</sup>

Moreover, ATL Deputy Chairman Sir Edgar Coles – an executive with financial experience in the retail sector comparable to ATI – suggested to Menhennitt that managing a relatively small turnover of £100,000 per annum did not necessarily equate to insufficient financial experience:<sup>128</sup> “The size does not matter. It is the results that count. Mr Crawford had had good financial experience in his field”.<sup>129</sup>

ATL forecast a profit of £137,000 (Austarama £323,000) and anticipated a 30.3 percent share of advertising revenue by the third year of operation, a conservative estimate confirmed by the ANZ Bank.<sup>130</sup> ATL had carefully prepared its financial estimates, so it is reasonable to assume that satisfactory profits would ultimately be generated.<sup>131</sup> There was an expectation that Channel 0, when established, would be profitable, but not for the reasons implied by Menhennitt. Higher motives than profit, and common goals had inspired ATL's application, specifically, the creation of an 'Australian consciousness', as Askanasy constantly reiterated:<sup>132</sup>

For many years Mr Crawford has been campaigning for a better deal for Australian talent – for better opportunities for development of Australian singers, musicians, actors and other professionals associated with the stage and theatre. [...] So he confidently believes [that he has] found the means of achieving, in some substantial degree, what he has been for so long advocating.<sup>133</sup>

Throughout the hearings, Menhennitt, representing Austarama, sought to discredit Hector Crawford with suggestions that to “entrust him with a TV station” would result in operational failure and financial ruin in very short time”.<sup>134</sup> In response, Ashkanasy explained that while 'Crawfords' profits had been small, they “have made a good living in what everyone agrees is usually an unprofitable business”.<sup>135</sup>

Key points that Menhennitt chose to ignore were repeated: that Crawfords returned profits to program production, that their progression in TV had only been restrained due to lack of opportunity and that, if 25 years of 'in-kind' productions such as *Music For the People* had not been undertaken pro bono, Crawfords' balance sheets would have been decidedly healthier.<sup>136</sup>

The key requirement that the new licensee promote and develop Australian programs was for Crawfords "nothing more than what they had been doing for many years."<sup>137</sup> Why then, "the sudden interest by other applicants?" Ashkanasy queried.<sup>138</sup> Members of Universal Telecasters Limited, such as Chairman Sir Frank Selleck, G. H. Carroll, and Sir Frank Tait, controllers of Australia's leading theatres, had done little to assist Australia's struggling film industry, he alleged.<sup>139</sup> "Mr Ansett too, the newly found champion of Australian artists" had evidently not "devoted any of his many millions to subsidise an Australian outlook on TV".<sup>140</sup> Ashkanasy's summation illustrated the dichotomy between ATL's demonstrated dedication to this philosophy and Austarama's, and other applicants' opportunism:

The conclusion is clear. The people and companies opposing us in this application have all had opportunities, in one way or another, to make some contribution to the development and encouragement of Australian talent. They are informed people. They must have all had some knowledge of the plight of Australia writers, actors, singers and musicians since the advent of Television.

They must have known that Australian artists have, for years, had to seek opportunities abroad. Yet which of them, in fact, has done, or will do anything to support Australian talent without the very obvious financial benefit of the licence to operate a television station? Again – no licence, no interest in Australian produced programs.<sup>141</sup>

## 9.8. Australian Broadcasting Control Board Criteria

The overriding question asked by the ABCB was "which of the applicants is best qualified to best serve the public?"<sup>142</sup> Before reaching its conclusion, the ABCB re-evaluated the criteria applied to the 1955 applications, which had given considerably more importance to "experience in some other fields of communication and entertainment".<sup>143</sup> While prior experience was preferable, the Board concluded, such a requirement was no longer deemed essential because television expertise and technical knowledge had [allegedly] developed significantly since 1955.<sup>144</sup>



Because the 1955 licences were awarded to large media interests, it was decided that the third licensees should not add to this concentration, thus decreasing their power to influence public opinion.<sup>145</sup> Conversely, although the 1955 licensees possessed strong management and financial resources, the 1963 Melbourne applicants – with the exception of ATI – did not; five of the applicants were not supported by sponsor companies.<sup>146</sup> Who then, was likely to provide the best television service to the viewer and community at large?<sup>147</sup> The Board's choice to prioritise company and financial strength over experience in the field greatly strengthened Austarama's case while ATL's was significantly weakened.

### **9.9. Summation of George Lush, QC**

During the final two days of the Board's hearings, its principal advocate George Lush offered his opinions on matters that had been debated.<sup>148</sup> A précis of his views concerning the four least likely applicants appears in endnote 39; this section focuses on his summation of the submissions by Austarama and ATL.

With both propositions being of a promissory nature, it was Lush's onerous task to consider the following questions: which applicant could be relied upon to implement their proposals? Which had the financial resources to sustain operations? Who was in the best position to recruit the best artistic, creative and technical personnel?<sup>149</sup> Who would genuinely serve the best interests of those viewers who had articulated dissatisfaction with the quantity and quality of indigenous programs?<sup>150</sup> Lush faced a quandary. The combined resources and intelligence of ATI and ATL would have satisfied all requirements. But each offered different strengths: the former financial stability and managerial strength; the latter a proven domestic artistic track-record, patriotism and ability to acquire the technical people, artists and creative personnel "essential to a successful television operation".<sup>151</sup>

Before his critique, Lush expressed misgivings about the ABCB's revised criteria.<sup>152</sup> In particular, he noted the applicants' opposing views on two key areas – either a consortium of experienced businessmen or people interested in the arts were capable of establishing and effectively operating a television station or "only those who know something of the business of television, who have proved that they have the capability to operate, should be really considered for the licence".<sup>153</sup> Although the

ABCB had decided that prior experience was no longer essential (9.8 above), Lush publically criticised the decision of the Board he representing, stating that expertise should be important:

That, if an applicant comes before this Board showing that is has already assembled some of the skills required for the operation of a television station, then that applicant has an initial advantage over the applicant who says "we have formed an efficient business organisation and we will gather around us the skills at a later time".

The real point, one supposes, is that the Board knows more about the second class of applicant for the purposes of making its recommendation than it knows about the first.<sup>154</sup>

### **9.10. Austarama Summation – Key Points: George Lush QC**

Lush expressed concern that shareholdings would not be being available under the Austarama's brand.<sup>155</sup> He speculated that the other five applicants believed it was preferable to offer direct shareholdings to the public.<sup>156</sup> Lush asked if a "successful licensee will receive a prize of very high monetary value, should not as many members of general public as possible benefit from this decision?"<sup>157</sup> While not disqualifying Austarama from the licence, Lush asked the Board to consider if its structure provided adequate association with the television station, even though shareholders benefited more from holding collective shares in ATI.<sup>158</sup>

Austarama's application, Lush noted, was prepared by its own executives and very thorough: "In our submission, nobody has indicated technical or financial flaws which are such as to bring it down".<sup>159</sup> Austarama "offers financial strength with competent and efficient management; Reg Ansett is the prime mover within the company".<sup>160</sup> Nonetheless, Lush contended that these qualities did not necessarily equate to expertise in the creative and artistic aspects of television, a facet of Austarama's application that caused him concern.<sup>161</sup>

It is a more difficult task for the Board to judge whether the same initiative, both in vigour and in direction, in correctness of direction, can be applied by this company to the artistic side of the television business. It is submitted that, in the end, this company will have to rely on programme directors and station managers in just the same way as other companies will have to rely on them.<sup>162</sup>

Lush agreed that ATL was able "to put forward programme ideas of attractiveness and of originality", but he suspected it would take "more than imaginative business

executives to keep the screen filled" seven days a week for 52 weeks a year.<sup>163</sup> In contrast to the creative resources available to Crawfords and ATL, Austarama would need to recruit extensively to meet its manpower needs.<sup>164</sup>

Austarama could be criticised for the brevity of its proposed prime-time broadcasting hours, as outlined in 9.5, and because this approach "skimmed the cream of advertising time".<sup>165</sup> Lush did not accept Walker's explanation that this would limit over-provision and provide stability for the Television industry: "That is a phrase perhaps that brings to mind the references in the application to the rationalisation agreements applicable to Airways and well-regulated competition".<sup>166</sup>

Finally, Lush accepted Menhennitt's statement that Austarama's application contained no personal profit motive: "While Mr Ansett would be the very last to deny that his objective is to run the station for profit," Lush was satisfied "that the element of personal acquisitiveness and personal greed does not play a part in the Austarama application".<sup>167</sup>

### **9.11. Australian Telecasters Limited Summation – Key Points: George Lush QC**

John Cain recalls that, following Lush's summation, the Crawfords and their associates believed "that the Board would favour ATL".<sup>168</sup> As a shareholder, Roland Strong attended each day of the hearing, and with Hector and Dorothy sat in the audience to hear Lush's closing address concerning ATL. Ian Crawford wrote that:

To use Roland's words, "the QC thereupon handed Hector the licence on a platter". No other applicant got a single favourable mention [which is not true]. The QC's adulation was so overwhelming that Roland was embarrassed.<sup>169</sup>

Although Ian exaggerated, Lush did offer solid support for ATL when he said:

We submit, with respect, that this applicant can claim with more justification of any other that an entry into television would be a logical extension of the history that lies behind its formation.

This application represents the entry of Crawford Productions into television. It is submitted that such an entry can fairly be described as a logical extension of the activities of a producer of radio and television entertainment and this particular applicant seeks to make the entry unencumbered by any burden of influencing interests which may sometimes attach themselves to television applicants.<sup>170</sup>

Crawfords was criticized for being a relatively small organisation; its success and financial gains were over-shadowed by its rival applicants. Although such criticism had validity,<sup>171</sup> Lush pointed out that “the Crawfords have remained constant to their particular occupation in which big opportunities have not presented themselves up to this time”, and had achieved great success.<sup>172</sup> Lush asked if Ansett had achieved success after beginning in a small way with one car, why then should not Hector Crawford be afforded the opportunity to expand his business?<sup>173</sup>

Clealely impressed by the evidence of ATL Chairman Sir Arthur Smithers and Deputy Chairman Sir Edgar Coles, Lush noted that ATL's Board members possessed considerable business management and financial experience, attributes “not on a small scale” that would counter-balance Hector's lesser experience while maximising his knowledge and skills in programme production.<sup>174</sup> While giving evidence, Coles had expressed great confidence that ATL would perform to a high standard while indicating his great regard for Crawfords:

I have seen much of the work of Crawford Productions Pty. Ltd. and, in my opinion, it is of a very high standard. I am satisfied that, with the knowledge, skill and experience available to the applicant company through this association, the television station will be set up, if the application is successful, to be competently and efficiently run and conducted in every respect. It will make a major contribution towards the furtherance of Australian talent in every sphere.<sup>175</sup>

Lush believed that ATL was the only applicant that could be relied upon to advance the development of indigenous programs, based on the experience of Hector and Dorothy: “If this applicant is granted the licence, Australian production will, at the very least, be given a greater opportunity in television than it has had before”.<sup>176</sup> Unimpressed with the plethora of consultative panels proposed by ATL, Lush nonetheless observed that such panels “have been the means of drawing the interest of many distinguished people to support this application”.<sup>177</sup>

Although Lush's views were appropriate, given Crawfords' history, ATL's drama and musical offerings were criticised as conservative and “more of the same”.<sup>178</sup> Conversely, Austarama's program ideas were appealing in their Australian origin and subject matter. But these promises were what the Board wanted to hear.

Assessing their bona fides, and all relevant elements submitted by applicants, was the Board's task, under the guidance of principal advocate George Lush.<sup>179</sup>

## **9.12. Recommendation of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board**

The ABCB recommended Austarama as the "best qualified and most likely to provide the best service in the public interest", for the following reasons:<sup>180</sup>

We were impressed by the overall grasp of the financial, administrative, technical and programme aspects which are involved in planning a television station, and the competent and assured presentation of evidence. We attach a great deal of importance to the nature of the programme proposals of the applicant. We are satisfied that they are both realistic and economically practicable and give real evidence of an appreciation of the problem of reconciling high standards with financial stability.<sup>181</sup>

No comparative narratives were included to explain why ATL and the other applicants had been unsuccessful. Nor was there any response to Lush's comments concerning ATL. The ABCB glossed over the concerns outlined by Lush although it agreed that Austarama's holistic shareholding arrangement did not disqualify the applicant.<sup>182</sup> Regarding ATI's financial support from the Commonwealth (see 9.5), the Board went to great lengths to promote ATI's sound record of working within a legislative framework and strict airline regulation under the DCA Agreements.<sup>183</sup> But the Board was uneasy about the political ramifications of their decision:

We have considered whether a company with such a privileged position under the airlines legislation should also be enabled to operate a commercial TV station by the grant of a licence since it is clear that the number of such licences must be strictly limited and they confer valuable privileges. In our opinion, this applicant is not disqualified on this ground.<sup>184</sup>

The Board noted that ATI was a very large company with considerable experience in conducting public services; a circumstance they deemed similar to operating a television station:<sup>185</sup>

We are satisfied that the real case for this applicant lies in its successful establishment of record of ability, energy, enthusiasm and material resources, and in its understanding of its public responsibilities.<sup>186</sup>

While detailed comparisons of each applicant's case would have been desirable for the Government and future researchers, it is possible to glean some understanding of

the Board's perspective by referring to criteria documented in sections 9.8 & 9.9 above. For example, "stability against external factors, particularly take-overs, and internal stability", were primary concerns.<sup>187</sup> An additional TV station would be successful in the Melbourne area, the Board believed, but only if "the new station was competently and efficiently operated and offered programmes which attracted audience and sponsor or advertisers".<sup>188</sup> This was vital because in addition to running a station effectively, the competition with two powerful and influential existing stakeholders would be immense: "They will not sit by and wait for the newcomer to enter the field without consolidating their positions".<sup>189</sup> The Board "came to the conclusion that applicants whose financial structures was sound, and was least susceptible to change, were to be preferred".<sup>190</sup>

Because of the diverse and the voluminous amounts of program proposal evidence, the Board noted the difficulty of ascertaining the most suitable applicant merely by comparing their program proposals.<sup>191</sup> Rather, they chose to judge the general context of each application by comparing:

The general principles underlying the proposals, expressed or implied; the manner in which the proposals were presented, the imagination and insight displayed in the ideas, the practicability and genuineness of the proposals and the general character of the station that the applicant hoped to create.<sup>192</sup>

The financial and management criticisms directed at ATL; issues of competitiveness, stability and takeover concerns, were valid. But given its broadcasting and television experience, ATL more than matched the 'general principles' desired above. The Board's view that Austarama's programming ideals and proposals were superior was erroneous; they were similar to those of ATL, as outlined in Section 9.6, but with a more 'outdoor' emphasis.<sup>193</sup> In awarding the licence, the ABCB approved of several ideals and principles espoused by Austarama, as detailed below, which the Board implied were unique. In actuality, they mirrored those of ATL:

- the "too often accepted formula" that all programming should contribute to profit was rejected [by Austarama],
- such a formula inevitably leads to a proliferation of mass-produced imported material,
- emphasis would be placed on injecting a high degree of "Australianism" into programmes compatible and acceptable to the family life of Australian homes; and,
- locally produced programmes would be subsidised and profitability would not be the benchmark for the continuation or rejection of such programmes.<sup>194</sup>

Hector and Dorothy Crawford, more than any other producer, had aligned their work to these principles. For the Board to promote these ideals as unique to Austarama, while ignoring the history of Crawford Productions, was unacceptable. But to then suggest in its report that ATL's program proposals offered significant changes from the usual format of current stations was also perplexing.<sup>195</sup> ATL's offerings had earlier been unjustly described by opposition counsel as conservative and "more of the same", so it is not apparent how the Board regarded these as "considerable departures", particularly as *Consider Your Verdict* had won a Logie Award for best Australian drama.<sup>196</sup> Although I have expressed the view that Austarama's Australian content was not unappealing, it does however offer many new styles of programs more at variance with ATL's offerings and television in general at that time. (See endnote 66).

Other anomalies exist. Prior to recommending Austarama, the Board questioned whether the percentage and duration of Australian programs promised by applicants was realistic. The Board compared the existing broadcasts and realized it was difficult to forecast so far in advance.<sup>197</sup>

We cannot ignore the experience of existing stations, some of which have made determined efforts to promote Australian drama and have encountered difficulties of a magnitude and nature which had not been foreseen. While we welcome the enthusiasm and sincerity which marks the proposals of Applicants for Australian programmes, we have the impression that their intentions have an air of reality which is not borne out by the substance of their proposals.<sup>198</sup>

We find ourselves preferring the proposals arising from reasonable far-sighted and intelligent expectations of performance over those which suggest a high degree of good intention which may be inadequately based.<sup>199</sup>

On the one hand, the Board expressed disquiet about Australian program offerings with significant variance – which, may be argued, applied to Austarama – and yet, on the other, welcomed "far-sighted and intelligent expectations of performance".<sup>200</sup> During the first year of operation Austarama promised 58 percent Australian programmings; ATL 45.4 percent.<sup>201</sup> Which percentage was more responsible? ATL's Australian content proposals were called both conservative and more realistic than Austarama's more 'adventurous' offerings'. Which had an intelligent expectation of performance?

### 9.13. The Response

The reaction to the Board's decision was intriguing. First and foremost, reference to Hector Crawford and ATL was conspicuously absent from subsequent journal commentaries and media articles, Federal Parliamentary debates and official documentation. Using the phrase 'other applicants' gave the impression that ATL had never been considered a serious contender. Second, dissenters were incredulous that ATI, already in receipt of significant government financial incentives, should be granted yet another 'privilege'.<sup>202</sup>

An editorial in *Nation* suggests that observers believed insufficient weight had been given to controversial issues that should have been grounds for exclusion from the process. These matters were considered but "found not to disturb the applicant's case".<sup>203</sup> Austarama's shareholding structure, its complete lack of experience in managing television production, and the generous government guarantees associated with Ansett National Airlines were identified as the most critical issues that had been ignored.<sup>204</sup> The absence of applicant comparisons were partly explained, the editorial noted, by the Board's comment that "the problem of selection was not only difficult but in some respects invidious".<sup>205</sup>

Before the decision was made public, John Cain recalls, ABCB Chairman Robert Osborne informed a surprised George Lush that, "in the Board's view, the Ansett application had been the outstanding one 'from the outset'".<sup>206</sup> Over 30 years later Sir George Lush, by then a retired High Court Judge, remained convinced that Austarama's application "was a bit mechanical with no heart in it. I felt it was not prepared by somebody with a real understanding of what we would today call the industry". Lush was perplexed by Osborne's admission,<sup>207</sup>

The main reason, however, was that the reading of all the applications in preparation for the hearing had left me bemused. A few were hopeless, but the rest made one dizzy with noble protestations. My feeling was "where do we go from here?"<sup>208</sup>

What can be deduced from this? Were Board members, supposedly competent in management and finance, so overwhelmed by the detail of each proposal that they turned to ATI's solvency and strong management skills as the foundation for their decision? As businessmen, they may have thought that "commercial realities would



very quickly assert themselves in the station's management", which Austarama was demonstrably best equipped to control.<sup>209</sup> Perhaps television was so new that these men could not perceive the importance of Crawford's philosophy of programming, training and the Australian consciousness. Nevertheless, a detailed comparison of all applicants would have dispelled subsequent criticism.

The Federal Opposition Leader, Arthur Calwell, employed parliamentary privilege to allege the licence was granted to financially benefit Reg Ansett, who had "been a 'good friend' of the government", but whose company was 'struggling' economically.<sup>210</sup> The decision had attracted "a good deal of bitter and cynical criticism in Melbourne, and indeed all over Australia", he said.<sup>211</sup> Calwell did not specifically refer to Crawfords; but he was convinced that some applicants had demonstrated better claims than ATI, claims that had been glossed over.<sup>212</sup>

Calwell questioned the solvency of ATI. He wondered how Austarama could be financed in view of ATI's "£6,000,000 worth of assets of 'dubious value,' and liabilities amounting to £32,000,000?" Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies responded that Calwell had deliberately attempted to establish a false impression:

He accused Mr Ansett and his company of being bankrupt. That was a terrible thing for a man to say under the cover of parliamentary privilege. [...] If he had only troubled to look at the balance sheet of Ansett Transport Industries he would have found that the assets were worth not £6,000,000 but £30,000,000.<sup>213</sup>

Making a Motion of Censure, Calwell alleged that Ansett knew of the Board's recommendation several weeks after the hearings concluded but well before the decision became public. Implying 'insider trading' by Ansett, Calwell suggested it was no coincidence that ATI shares appreciated by 30 percent.<sup>214</sup>

In other words, the report was tailored to meet the recommendations. Recommendations first, report afterwards. The Melbourne hearings ended on 13<sup>th</sup> December, yet by 31<sup>st</sup> December at the latest the board knew whom it intended to recommend. As I have said, he [Ansett] boasted of it openly at Christmas parties and to several people.<sup>215</sup>

The ABCB report is dated 11 February 1963, and Cabinet did not officially deliberate on the matter until 4<sup>th</sup> April 1963 after receiving an ABCB executive summary from the Postmaster-General, C. W. Davidson, dated 27 March 1963.

Specific advice prepared by Dr Ronald Mendelsohn and Cabinet Secretary E. J. Bunting, advising against the recommendation, was distributed to Cabinet on 3 April.<sup>216</sup>

Calwell suggests that Ansett's Christmas braggadocio indicates that an ABCB member(s) had covertly informed him of the outcome, since the Government did not see the report until March.<sup>217</sup> But how could Ansett be sure that the Government would ratify the recommendation? Calwell also questioned the intercession of the Minister for Civil Aviation Senator Paltridge in encouraging the Director-General of Civil Aviation to provide an impressive letter of reference outlining ATI's regulatory compliance with the Departments of Civil Aviation and Transport (see 9.4.1):<sup>218</sup>

By what right did the Director-General of Civil Aviation intervene in this case? Why did he come along to support Mr Ansett's application? Were not all the other applicants for a licence honourable and decent people? Had not they all had dealings with government departments? Were not all of them equally entitled to receive recommendations equally fulsome and equally satisfactory from their particular points of view? <sup>219</sup>

Calwell was misinformed. Malcolm Fraser MP noted that the letters of reference were tabled in response to earlier cross-examination when Mr Harris QC questioned ATI's capacity and willingness to work effectively within a rigorous government regulatory environment.<sup>220</sup> In the same manner, Hector Crawford was asked to table confidential company balance sheets and letters from his financial backers entered to defend the integrity of his company's history (see 9.7, endnote 18).

Calwell also correctly predicted that the Prime Minister, Minister for Trade (John McEwen) and the Treasurer (Harold Holt) opposed awarding the licence to Ansett.<sup>221</sup> He suggested that "the campaign for Ansett was spear-headed by Western Australian Ministers led by the Minister for Civil Aviation", and supported by the Minister for Labour William McMahon and several NSW Ministers, any of whom could have given Ansett advance notice.<sup>222</sup> But in a series of contradictory statements, Calwell claimed that "Cabinet was divided on the issue".<sup>223</sup>

The Cabinet took a long time to make up its mind. The leading Ministers who opposed the granting of the licence to Ansett Transport Industries Limited did so because they realised how much political dynamite there was in the issue.<sup>224</sup>

Yet Calwell's Motion for Censure inferred that it was actually the Government that instructed the ABCB to recommend Austarama, and informed the House that the ABCB was merely a "rubber stamp for decisions already reached by Cabinet in private".<sup>225</sup> Senior Government officials were definitely concerned about the political ramifications, validated in the Bunting memo; Calwell was incorrect about a whole-of-Government conspiracy.

The Prime Minister took exception to Calwell's charges of dishonesty and collusion.<sup>226</sup> Menzies advised Parliament that, "apart from two casual observations that were made to me a week or two before the report was available (circa early February 1963), I did not know who the applicants were in Victoria".<sup>227</sup> "Now I do", in particular:

Mr Reg Ansett, whom I perhaps meet once a year, has no political affiliations that ever I heard of. [...] Anyhow, this is a man of enterprise. He is tough, he is a driver, and he has undoubtedly achieved remarkable things. When I first knew him he was very favourably regarded by the Labor Party, but now that he has succeeded, that is fatal.<sup>228</sup>

To support his position, Menzies referred to "the 'other company', *Universal Telecasters Limited* (see endnote 39), as if Hector Crawford, ATP and the other three consortia applicants did not exist. He noted that the majority of *Universal Telecasters*' board members "have been for years, my very close personal friends. They did not get the licence". He suspected they were supporters of the Liberal Party, "but the Board does not recommend their group. This is what this favouritism charge is worth."<sup>229</sup>

Arthur Calwell's strong reaction to the decision reflects the ideological divide between the ALP and the Liberal Party at the time: the promotion of nationalism and state-owned not-for-profit organisations versus a free market operation.<sup>230</sup> The structure of the airline industry had been a contentious issue for the ALP for sometime, particularly since 1952 when the Menzies' Government encouraged competition between the government-supported TAA and the privately owned Australian National Airways (ANA).<sup>231</sup>

During the debate, Deputy Opposition Leader Gough Whitlam conceded that by the time ATI took over ANA in 1957, it was dysfunctional, insolvent and had been investigated by the Auditor-General.<sup>232</sup> Whitlam sarcastically acknowledged the business acumen of Ansett, contending that he had 'rescued the Government' from embarrassment by resurrecting an airline it had supported financially since 1952 (as guarantor of aircraft loans up to £3,000,000) to promote competition.<sup>233</sup>

It is all the more praiseworthy that Mr. Ansett, who as I have said took over that dying and disreputable company, has honoured all his obligations under legislation passed by this Parliament. [...] The Government is so grateful to him [Ansett] for having preserved the two-airline policy that it has guaranteed his airline operations and has now given him this additional bonus in the form of a television licence.<sup>234</sup>

Therein lies the context of the ALP's vehement opposition – a perception that the Government conferred benefits on ATI's companies out of gratitude.<sup>235</sup> Despite public denials by the Prime Minister and his colleagues in *Hansard*, the official record of Federal Parliament, this assessment was also forefront in the minds of the Cabinet Secretary and senior members of the Prime Minister's Department.<sup>236</sup>

## 9.14. A Decision Against all Common Sense

Prime Minister Menzies' views about the role of independent boards formed to make recommendations to government are critical to understanding why the Board's recommendation was reluctantly accepted by Cabinet. He acknowledged the time and effort expended by each licensee applicant in preparing their submissions; the exhaustive inquiries, investigations and reports at great cost to all.<sup>237</sup> If, as Calwell alleged, such boards were instructed beforehand which candidate to recommend, Menzies observed that:

It would be a very strange thing for a government to say, when all that was over: "We are sorry. You have wasted your time and money. We propose to pay no attention to the report of the board."<sup>238</sup>

I venture to say that in these circumstances, a government would need to have overwhelming reasons before it rejected the recommendation. [...] If it did not and it said, "we do not like this recommendation", what would it do then? Could it say "this company is out. [...] Send the matter back for another inquiry? Let everybody come back along once more and have another investigation, or perhaps open it up for other people?". That is not real life.<sup>239</sup>

But Calwell's comment that his "mind boggled at the idea that even this Government would have the audacity to load yet another benefit on the court favourite" mirrored the privately held views of the Prime Minister's Department – 'overwhelming reasons' for rejection perhaps – that could not possibly have escaped the attention of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.<sup>240</sup> But while the Prime Minister's statement does not reflect the urgency of advice provided to him (below), it can be construed as the position of a man adhering to strongly held principles, as the Cabinet notes confirm. (see endnotes 288-290).

In response to the ABCB's recommendations, confidential briefing notes were prepared by the Secretary of Cabinet, E. J. Bunting, and departmental advisor, Dr Ronald Mendelsohn, as the latter had undertaken for the 1955 recommendations.<sup>241</sup> (See Chapter 7.1) Accompanying these notes is an executive summary written by Bunting to the Prime Minister (See Appendix D) and a one-page attachment that discussed precedents for rejecting ABCB advice.<sup>242</sup>

The briefing notes are brutally frank. The choice of Ansett and ATI was regarded with incredulity and as a potential embarrassment for the Government.<sup>243</sup> It noted that the reversal of criteria weighting, (discussed in 9.9) enhanced ATI's position:

Since these criteria have produced the result that the Board thinks that a rather predatory airline and road transport operator should be given the Melbourne licence, it is important to note that they have departed from their criteria of 1955, which included a good record in "allied fields". Ansett, or *Austarama*, clearly has no experience in television or related fields.<sup>244</sup>

The Board's reasons for selecting *Austarama* "did not commend themselves." While acknowledging ATI's ability to provide financial, intellectual and management skills and resources, this alone was deemed inadequate in the absence of relevant industry experience; a position adopted by George Lush (section 9.10).<sup>245</sup> But the greatest concern focused on the ABCB's apparent "undue emphasis on the preferential position accorded to ATI in the airline field as a reason for further favours in a new field".<sup>246</sup> The effusive reference provided by the Director-General of Civil Aviation only exacerbated the view that the Government supported the application.<sup>247</sup> But as has been noted in section 9.13, these references were sought by opposition counsel

and not for the purpose suggested in the briefing notes. The briefing's conclusion was scathing:

In our view Ansetts, which already pre-empts the commercial civil aviation field with Federal Government support, should not receive the gift of a further valuable public franchise, especially since it is recommended in terms which can be construed as accession to Government influence in favour of the applicant.

It is not unimportant that Ansett has proved a bold seeker of favours, and contrary to the Board's belief, does not have an unimpeachable record either of stability or character. His [Ansett] stability and his prosperity depend much on preservation of his existing franchise.<sup>248</sup>

Although the Government had never rejected a Board recommendation for awarding a capital city TV licence to a specific applicant, the briefing stressed that it was not mandatory for the Postmaster-General to accept the Board's advice.<sup>249</sup> The briefing argued against accepting the recommendation and suggested referring the matter back to the Board.<sup>250</sup> How would this be managed publicly? With the assistance of a media campaign, the Government could reinstate that the Board's previous criteria – experience in entertainment and communication – remained essential to the Government; criteria not met by ATI's application.<sup>251</sup> Furthermore, "it could be said that this is the first occasion in which a single company, rather than a consortium, has been chosen", although the *Herald and Weekly Times* established HSV7 in 1955.<sup>252</sup>

The briefing recommended that the Government should instruct the Board to embrace industry experience and a broader range of interests as essential criteria. If this happened, ATI would submit an amended application that would not alter the principle dilemma facing the Government: ATI's existing 'special' relationship with the Commonwealth in Civil Aviation.<sup>253</sup> The briefing wonders if government should reveal its reasons for rejecting ATI's application, even though Ansett would inevitably ask why the Government had not made this clear at the start.<sup>254</sup>

E. J. Bunting's personal memo to the Prime Minister is remarkably candid and its tone one of considerable indignation:

I have been trying to work out what exactly gave rise to the recommendation for Ansett. It looks to run against all common sense and really amounts to a bad joke.<sup>255</sup>

While appreciating the Board's views concerning ATI's "impressive grasp of the financial, administrative, technical and programme aspects," he surmised they had assumed a capability superior to other applicants:<sup>256</sup>

Even so, with other obviously competent groups in the field, it would seem to me that the Board's common-sense should have told it that Ansett was inappropriate.<sup>257</sup>

Bunting found it "lamentable" that the ABCB had repeatedly emphasised Ansett's 'special relationship' with the Government to demonstrate ATI's compliance with regulatory processes, and that the Board had not disqualified ATI for this reason.<sup>258</sup> He believed that Australians would be angered by the decision: "Well received at Ansett's Latrobe Street headquarters but regarded up and down Collins Street as outrageous".<sup>259</sup> Should Cabinet resolve to overturn the recommendation, Bunting suggested that an appropriate "cause or pretext" must be adopted.<sup>260</sup> He advised:

I have tried to think of some way of finessing, but have come to the conclusion that there is no alternative to a plain unambiguous statement that, having regard to Ansett's relations with the Government in another field and admirable though Ansett's performance and behaviour in that other field is, it would be inappropriate to bestow on the Company a second benefit in the form of a television franchise.<sup>261</sup>

## **9.15. What Cabinet Really Thought**

Thus many points of contention arose following the ABCB recommendation and Parliamentary debate. ATL's stakeholders believed it "got a raw deal"; Lush's favourable concluding address was ignored by the ABCB; and conspiracy theories surrounded the Government affording preferential financial treatment to Ansett.<sup>262</sup> The Labor Party Opposition alleged that certain (unknown) Government Ministers and/or Members 'encouraged' the ABCB to favour Ansett, was adamant that Menzies' Cabinet was divided and believed that senior Government ministers viewed the decision as 'political dynamite'.<sup>263</sup>

On the one hand, the Prime Minister insisted that due process must be upheld: Government had accepted the ABCB's recommendation based on the thoroughness

of their deliberations.<sup>264</sup> In fact, comparing both applicant's economic and management status clearly demonstrates that Austarama was best placed financially to operate a television station, although this later proved irrelevant to the Government's position. Moreover, the confidential briefing notes of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet clearly refute notions of Government conspiracy. They vigorously oppose the ABCB's recommendation on the grounds that the ABCB had irresponsibly reversed the selection criteria while emphasising a 'special relationship' with the Government.<sup>265</sup> Why then did Cabinet endorse the recommendation? How did they regard the advice offered by Cabinet Secretary E. J. Bunting?

The recent archival release of the Cabinet Secretary's 1963 Cabinet note-books reveals a definitive explanation of Cabinet's decision.<sup>266</sup> These notes indicate that Cabinet was *not* swayed by ATI's impressive financial and management status but rather, was greatly disturbed about ATI as a most inappropriate choice because of the general perception that the company was already in receipt of Government privileges.<sup>267</sup> It is clear that Bunting and Mendelsohn's advice was taken seriously, while the Board's decision to depart from their criteria of 1955 – relevant experience in 'allied fields' – was not well received.<sup>268</sup> Cabinet notes also dispel any notion that the ABCB was instructed to favour Austarama, and hence any conspiracy against ATL.<sup>269</sup> The ABCB ostensibly believed that Austarama's submission was the best, as outlined in 9.12 above, despite Lush's advice to the contrary.

Cabinet met on the evening of 4 April 1963 to consider the ABCB's proposal in *Cabinet Submission No.610*, taking less than an hour to affirm the Board's recommendation.<sup>270</sup> Bunting's notes describe a frustrated discussion among Cabinet members as they explored credible ways and means of rejecting the Board's recommendation. Cabinet had no hesitation in approving *United Telecasters Sydney Limited* as the third Sydney licensee, given its "outstanding and strong submission".<sup>271</sup> But the negativity directed at Austarama and ATI demonstrated the impact of Bunting and Mendelsohn's briefing paper and Bunting's personal memo submitted earlier.<sup>272</sup> Arthur Calwell's assertion that the 'top three' senior Government members did not approve is also confirmed: Menzies, John McEwan



(Leader of the Country Party, Minister for Trade and Industry,) and Harold Holt (Treasurer) were the principal dissenters.<sup>273</sup>

The Prime Minister joined in Cabinet's antipathy, referring to paragraph 85 on page 106 of the ABCB Report as "drivel"; this same section had been described as 'lamentable' by Bunting.<sup>274</sup> In this paragraph, the ABCB, stressed Ansett's 'special relationship' with the Commonwealth as a demonstration of its compliance with regulatory processes, thus preferring it for licensing 'in another field'.<sup>275</sup> Worse still was the over-zealous reference provided by the Director-General of Civil Aviation, which added to the perception of Government support for ATI's application?<sup>276</sup> Because the Board admitted that ATI already enjoyed "a privileged position under airline legalisation", Cabinet envisaged a politically damaging situation.<sup>277</sup>

The Prime Minister asked the Minister for Civil Aviation, Senator Shane Paltridge, to explain the Director-General's action:

This [reference] arose because other applicants criticised Ansett's relationship with Civil Aviation in vicious terms. Silence on Civil Aviation's part would have gone against Ansett and I issued authority that Director-General should make [a] factual statement.<sup>278</sup>

Thus Calwell's allegation that Paltridge intervened on Ansett's behalf is not supported in Bunting's notes.<sup>279</sup> At one point, however, Paltridge agreed that "we have a dilemma but the simple course is to stick to the Board's decision".<sup>280</sup>

Clearly, Cabinet valued Bunting and Mendelsohn's recommendations, in particular, the view that "it is not unimportant that Ansett has proved a bold seeker of favours, and contrary to the Board's belief, does not have an unimpeachable record either of stability or character".<sup>281</sup> Noting Bunting's advice that it was not mandatory for the Postmaster-General to accept the Board's advice, much of the discussion was devoted to determining appropriate "cause or pretext" to enable its rejection while limiting political fallout.<sup>282</sup>

Harold Holt was clearly agitated and refused to accept that Cabinet be regarded as a mere 'rubber-stamp.'

This raises question of whether Cabinet can have a judgement where we can express a view. To me Ansett recommendation is incredible judgement and feel bound to challenge it. This licence certainly the last to become available [in Melbourne] and to give it to Ansett, a transport company, [...] is not acceptable. [sic]

Also, feel we have moral duty to the picture theatres who have been displaced by TV. This looks like a definite case for Universal Telecasters, [made up largely of theatre and cinema proprietors] an application based on merits; that application outstanding. [sic]<sup>283</sup>

Paul Hasluck, Minister for Territories, saw no escape, noting that the report is “tightly constructed. Recommendations have been bolstered with reasons”.<sup>284</sup> If the Cabinet chose to disagree with the Board’s recommendation, their case must be based upon the report itself. It would not go down well politically: “To go against the Board’s judgement sets-up a precedent”.<sup>285</sup> (Sir) John McEwen agreed:

If we take a position contrary to the recommendation, we need to be in a position to explain it. Either we object to Ansett on some principle or other or we thought that other applicant better. And so far don't see it. [sic]<sup>286</sup>

Given his earlier support for *Universal Telecasters*, Holt believed that a plausible position was obvious: “Explanation is that for a capacity to provide entertainment and public requirement for entertainment, there are much better applicants”. [sic].<sup>287</sup>

Menzies, having listened to his colleague’s views, suggested that to turn down the Board’s view and substitute the judgement of Cabinet would “take us into an arbitrary field of great difficulty and embarrassment”.<sup>288</sup>

Whatever we decide is unpopular – if Ansett gets it the others very sore. If we reject Ansett, he has legit. grievance and we have to answer for going against the Board and substituting our judgement. [...] involve us in (making?) explanations around Australia, and not just Victoria. [...] and 90% of the people won't understand the explanation. Agree with Holt 100% but just can't see the way out. [sic]<sup>289</sup>

Bunting’s succinct account of this meeting clearly indicates that Cabinet desperately wanted to reject ATI, but could not find a politically viable way of doing so. Minister for Defence Athol Townley wanted to “send it back” while even Postmaster-General Davidson wondered if “we can send it back without disclosure?”<sup>290</sup> The Prime Minister made the final decision: “We’re caught so it

seems. Recommend approval”; this brief statement corroborates his devotion to, and subsequent statement to Parliament, about following due process.<sup>291</sup>

Having established that neither Cabinet nor Government officers had instructed the ABCB to favour Austarama or any other consortia, it is ironic that Board Chairman Osborne revealed to Postmaster-General Davidson that the “Board was predisposed against Ansett but forced to the view that Ansett[‘s] application was the best”.<sup>292</sup> The truly disturbing aspect of this saga is the disregard applied to Australian Telecasters Limited by both the ABCB and the Government. If another consortium were to be selected, it would seem that Universal Telecasters Limited or Community Television Limited were the only possibilities, despite George Lush’s misgivings.<sup>293</sup>

## **9.16. Epilogue**

As Hector Crawford came to terms with this setback, developments within the industry and the advent of third licensees paradoxically created a favourable environment for Crawfords. Proactive in the face of additional competition, established stations faced a sharp rise in the cost of imported productions.<sup>294</sup>

A contributing factor was the licensing of additional commercial stations in mainland capital cities, and the consequent development of four independent buying groups in Australia, which for many of the purchasers, are compelled to buy programmes which are produced to supply the needs of only three main American users.<sup>295</sup>

Nigel Dick wrote that as television viewers across the world demanded better production values, television had to pay more for programs. As American producers absorbed greater program costs, “39 episode series were reduced to 26 episodes series, and then 20 or even less. The drama programmes made exclusively for syndication were no longer good enough and the network drama producers took over”.<sup>296</sup>

The production of a lesser number of episodes in each series obviously resulted in there being a lesser number of first-run drama programmes available for export. In turn this put upward pressure on the prices Australian television paid for each hour of overseas drama.<sup>297</sup>

In its 1964 Annual Report, the ABCB suggested the price increases of imported programs offered an opportunity for considerably greater activity in the production of Australian programmes of quality.<sup>298</sup> The greater cost and scarcity of imported programs made it unreasonable to “expect new stations to achieve immediately the levels of local content programming which existing stations had taken eight years to develop”.<sup>299</sup>

Albert Moran believes that other factors contributed to increased local program production: viewer surveys from the early 1960s indicated a decline in television viewer time, the beginning of a “subtle but sustained crisis in which the television stations found themselves from 1963 to 1967”:<sup>300</sup>

In these years, stations experienced the viewer drift, which was followed by advertisers switching some of their funds to radio and the press. This in turn brought a noticeable decline in their own profitability.

From 1957 to about 1960, American programs had been the most popular; now American programs [were] in competition with American programs [on Australian TV] were leading more viewers than at any other time to turn off their sets. Clearly, if American programs could no longer assure very high ratings then the time had come to think about new programs and a new programming strategy.<sup>301</sup>

The ABC threatened commercial interests by producing more quality local material. At the same time, commercial stations, rather than developing new drama to fill the void left by the scarcity of American programs, continued to fulfil their 40% quota of Australian material with more quiz, music and variety offerings.<sup>302</sup> Viewers grew tired of these, creating a more favourable environment for television stations to offer local drama productions.<sup>303</sup>

Given his disappointment, Hector Crawford may not have realised it at the time, but here was a golden opportunity for Crawfords to fill the growing programming void while making their philosophical impact. In essence, the Crawford enterprise had not needed to apply for its own TV licence; its lack of success was probably the best possible outcome for the company. Ironically, Hector's disappointment was short-lived given the subsequent success of Crawfords and the sound working relationship it developed with Reg Ansett, who constantly called Hector for advice.<sup>304</sup>

As early as October 1963, the costs of running a commercial television station in Melbourne or Sydney had risen to £1.5 million a year.<sup>305</sup> To break even, a station required revenue of £130,000 a month; Ansett had projected a monthly income of £100,000, while advertising surveys in August 1963 indicated Channel 0 had transmitted £110,000 worth of advertising. Low ratings led to calls for Austarama to be established as a separate public company.<sup>306</sup> Austarama's financial difficulty after just a few months of operation, illustrates the predicament that ATL might have confronted due to its low asset base.<sup>307</sup>

Hector avoided this problem and could concentrate on what Crawfords did best – drama and musical variety – within a more responsive market. This shift in momentum would evolve within 12 months: *Homicide* unexpectedly became an amazing success, beginning a progression of over two decades of high-rating programs. Chapter 10 revisits the genesis of *Homicide* and why, despite HSV7's initial reluctance to support the program, *Homicide* was such an over-night and continuous national success, from the perspective of those who made and appeared in the program.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 84;  
John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, Prowling Tiger Press, Richmond, 1998, p. 103.
- <sup>2</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 84.
- <sup>3</sup> John Cain, op. cit.
- <sup>4</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Dr. Ronald Mendelsohn and E. J. Bunting, (Cabinet Secretary), "Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610." *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, (Confidential), Prime Minister's Department, *Commonwealth of Australia*, Canberra, 3 April 1963, p. 3;  
National Library of Australia, Canberra, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Inquiry into the applications received by the Postmaster-General for a Licence for a Television Station in the Melbourne Area*: Transcript of Proceedings, Melbourne, 7 November–13 December 1962, Commonwealth of Australia, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra, 1963, p. 1907.
- <sup>5</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,640-1,644.
- <sup>6</sup> *Consider Your Verdict* had won the Logie Award for Best Australian Drama Series in 1962.  
John Cain, op. cit., p. 105;  
Hector Crawford, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit., pp. 38-41;  
Maurice Ashkanasy, QC, Australian Telecasters Summation, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 2,237-2,240, 2,247.
- <sup>7</sup> G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,249.  
Hansard, Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates, Session 1962-63, *First Season of the Twenty-Fourth Parliament*, House of Representatives, Canberra, 9 April 1963, p. 701. (A Calwell, Leader of the Opposition, ALP).
- <sup>8</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 84;  
John Cain, op. cit, p. 106;  
Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, Victoria, 17 June 2009;  
Gary Stewart, interview with Philip Davey, Melbourne, 9 April 2009.
- <sup>9</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Dr Ronald Mendelsohn and E. J. Bunting, (Cabinet Secretary), *Notes on Cabinet Submission* No. 610, op. cit.
- <sup>10</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.11099, Control symbol 1/60, Barcode 8920713: E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, *Notes of Cabinet Meetings*, Prime Ministers' Department, Australian Government, 13 February – 30 April 1963.
- <sup>11</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: C.W. Davidson, Media Release, "Third Commercial Television Licence Sydney and Melbourne", Press statement by the Postmaster-General, Canberra, 5 April 1963;  
National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General on Applications for a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Sydney and Melbourne Area*, Commonwealth of Australia, Commonwealth Government Printer, April 1963, p. 4.
- <sup>12</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Annual Report, 1962*, Commonwealth of Australia, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra, pp. 34.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>15</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, "Report and Recommendations," op. cit., p. 88.
- <sup>16</sup> A contemporary article in *Nation*, noting that television licences had, in the main, become lucrative assets to inaugural licensees, supports the premise that the licence announcement "seemed to stem from the Government's dislike of the Press in general, and one newspaper in particular":  
"Knowing that economic fact [licensees holding a valuable asset], and knowing too that the controllers of newspapers and television are "watching political developments, Mr Menzies' Government, with its knife-edge majority, see that it has now a political weapon of considerable power to influence the newspapers".  
G.J.M., "On Mr Menzies' Wavelength: Television Licences and Election Years," in *Nation*, Sydney, No. 90, 24 March, 1962, p. 8.  
Thus it may be that by potentially awarding additional licences in each capital city, and in particular, a third licence in Melbourne and Sydney to non-print media interests, existing licensees would be put on notice to provide 'more appropriate' political coverage.  
*Ibid.*;  
In the absence of the government receiving more favourable editorial comment, the 'undesirable' possibility of Federal Labour winning government would entrust the administration of the television licensing process to the left of politics, a situation that might have been adverse for current licensees; i.e there may have been more regulation exerted by a Federal Labor Government for an increase in local content drama programs.  
*Ibid.*, p.10;

As punitive action by the Government to offending media moguls, the third licence would increase competition in Sydney and Melbourne, thus forcing up the prices of imported programs thereby encouraging commercial stations to collaborate and focus more on developing Australian produced drama programs. [As indeed did occur.]

Ibid., p.8;

Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Annual Report*, op. cit., 1962, p. 34.

Cain suggests that the government, after observing the extent to which the 1956 licensees had employed their television interests as extensions of other media interests, would logically prefer groups not associated with other media, print or radio.

John Cain, op. cit., p. 104.

- <sup>17</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 4;  
Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1.

Both Menhennitt and Askanasy became High Court judges.

[As a point of interest, Hector Crawford presented his evidence to *The Vincent Inquiry* on 7 February 1963, not yet aware of the licence outcome.]

- <sup>18</sup> A vigorous adversarial tone is evident throughout the transcripts.

Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, Melbourne, 7 November – 13 December 1962, op. cit;

The phrase 'a licence to print money', contends Ian Jones, was based upon the perception that "if Ansett Transport Industries got the licence, automatically the licence (TV) in those days was regarded as 'a licence to print money'. The government would never have to worry about them [Ansetts] making a loss. I think it's as simple as that".

Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, Victoria, 17 June 2009.

However in actuality, Keith Cairns notes that the phrase 'a licence to print money' was really an aphorism: "We (HSV7) had to spend a lot of money and more progressively to meet increasing demands of viewers and program development, but eventually it became a very profitable operation of course, but in the first stages [from 1956] it was not even a break-even operation.

Keith Cairns, former HSV7 television executive, transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, 3 October 1997, The Australian Television Archive, Film Art Deco Pty Ltd p. 6. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 373505;

Mr Menhennitt asked Crawford about his career at Broadcast Exchange and suggested he was either dismissed from his role as Managing Director or forced to resign because of inefficiency, disagreements with administrators and financial ineptitude. Clearly stunned by this accusation, Crawford stated in no uncertain terms that he actually pulled the company out of difficulty into a successful business and left on absolute harmonious terms.

C. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit., pp. 234, 235, 1,967.  
H.Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit., pp. 234-236.

Shortly after Mr Menhennitt made his accusation, a letter was tabled from Geoff Allan, Managing Director of Allans Music, refuting these suggestions: "Mr Crawford resigned from Broadcast Exchange of his own free will in order to commence business with his sister. Since that date, business relations have continued between Mr Crawford and this company. I have pleasure in recording the fact that the relationship that existed between Broadcast Exchange of Australia, prior to its sale by Allan and Company, and its staff, has always been most friendly and cordial. Mr Crawford and Miss Dorothy Crawford have always been held in the highest esteem."

M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit. p. 286.

Mr R. L. Gilbert, advocate for Television Victoria Limited, asked Ansett if, in his anxiety to get into TV, he was prepared to instruct his counsel to deliver a personal attack on Mr Crawford regarding the circumstances in which he left Broadcast Exchange, a subsidiary of Allans Music, in 1941. Ansett refuted the accusation.

R.L.Gilbert, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit., p. 1,867.

Indeed, Mr Ashkanasy wondered if Ansett's "sudden interest, and newly acquired desire to foster Australian talent should not be taken seriously" [and ] suggested that "Nowhere, in anyone's evidence, is there any suggestion that at any time during his life Mr. Ansett has taken an interest in stage or screen, or any other culture, or in arts or theatre, including drama and the making of films."

M. Ashkanasy Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit. pp. 2,329-2,330.

- <sup>19</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 109-111.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

- <sup>23</sup> Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area*, Russell, Kennedy and Cook, Melbourne, Solicitors for Australian Telecasters Limited, Schedule AA – Letters of Support. (From the Graeme Preston Collection, Heidelberg, Victoria);

John Cain, op. cit., p. 104.

- <sup>24</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., 83, 84.

- <sup>25</sup> G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,386.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>28</sup> G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,386.

<sup>29</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 41

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

Directors of ATL included Hector Crawford (Managing Director), Director of Crawford Productions Pty. Ltd.; Dorothy Crawford-Strong, Director of Crawford Productions; W. G. Hall, Director of Ampol Petroleum Ltd.; R. Money, Chairman of Directors of Rhodes Motor Holdings Ltd.; Sir Tasman Heyes, Director of Commonwealth Hostels Ltd.; and, J. J. Webster, Director of Lords Holdings Ltd.

Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area*, Russell, Kennedy and Cook, Melbourne, Solicitors for Australian Telecasters Limited, op. cit., pp 4-8.

<sup>33</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,836;

Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,389.

<sup>36</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>37</sup> G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,389.

<sup>38</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 57.

<sup>39</sup> **Notes regarding Universal Telecasters Limited**

This application was made on behalf of the above named yet to be formed company and was to be chaired by Sir Frank Selleck, Accountant and Director of Cox Theatre Holdings.(i) In his summation, ABCB counsel Mr. G. Lush expressed concern that three of the four people responsible for the application were involved in motion picture and theatre interests. Based on previous experience, it was felt that motion picture and theatre interests did not make a useful contribution to television.(ii) The fact that several significant shareholders were from leading theatre and cinema companies added to this perception while the absence of crucial witnesses and unsatisfactory program proposals proved decisive.(iii)

(i) Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 46-48;

(ii) G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,405, 2,406;

(iii) Ibid., p. 2,406-2,407;  
Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 47-49.

**Notes regarding T.V. Victoria Limited**

Lush noted that the proposed Board of T.V. Victoria was not as strong as other applicants whose directors had been drawn from the academic, medical and business world.(i) The only director associated with the television industry was Mr R. Bretz, a television consultant from the University of California at Los Angeles.(ii) Mr Bretz was the major contributor to this application and, Lush suggests, looked to the USA as a source of both superior, quality television programs in addition to possible cultural indoctrination.(iii) It was implied, therefore, that T.V. Victoria's relatively small Australian content proposal was linked to the search for quality and hence a preference for overseas' material.(iv) In view of the general dissatisfaction with existing commercial programs, "present station images are far too American" and insufficient Australian material, this application was not regarded favourably.(v)

(i) G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,413;

Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 44-45;

(ii) Ibid., p. 45;

(iii) G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 2,413, 2,414;

(iv) Ibid., p. 2,415;

(v) Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 79.

**Notes regarding Community Television Limited**

This consortium was led by Sir Arthur Warner, Chairman of Electronic Industries Limited, who had been the successful applicant for Melbourne's GTV9 licence in 1955, which he sold to Sir Frank Packer in 1959/60.(i) Although maintaining that he had no option but to sell his shares in 1959 because of a conflict of interest, this situation attracted considerable criticism and cross-examination during the hearings.(ii) In his summation, Lush contended that the ABCB might take the view that Warner had already had an opportunity and should not be given another. On the other hand, said Lush, if the Board considered that Warner's action in 1959/60 was appropriate, then Community Television Limited, with its electrical interests, should be considered.(iii) If granted the licence, 1,000,000 shares would be issued to five individual classes of unique shareholders, with each class eligible to elect two directors, as follows:(iv)



- Class A: Returned Servicemen and Returned Serviceman's Clubs
  - Class B: Members and affiliated branches of The Australian Labor Party (Victorian Branch)
  - Class C: Members and affiliated branches of the Liberal and Country Party.
  - Classes D & E : Electronic Industries Ltd and holders of ordinary shares (v)
- (i) G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 2,401-2,402;
- (ii) Ibid;  
"Two Melbourne newspaper companies, *The Argus* and *The Age*, won the license for GTV9 (General Television Corporation). Other shareholders were Hoyts, Greater Union Theatres, Electronic Industries (Sir Arthur Warner was chairman of both GTV and E.I.), J.C. Williamson's Theatres, 3XY, 3UZ, 3KZ and Cinesound Productions. In 1960, Electronic Industries was acquired by the British electronics firm PYE and since laws forbade the foreign ownership of Australian commercial television stations, PYE was forced to sell their shares in GTV9. Instead of selling his shares to Fairfax Newspapers (owners of ATN7) as expected, Sir Arthur Warner sold them to Sir Frank Packer, owner of TCN9 Sydney for £6 (\$12) a share, a total of £3.76 million (\$7.52 million) - thus the Nine Network was born."  
Australian Television Archive, from <http://austv.hostforweb.com/cgi-bin/cgi2/index.rb?page=gtv9%20melbourne&section=television%20history%20reference/tv%20stations/nine%20network&mode=0>, accessed 15 August 2012;
- (iii) G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,401;
- (iv) Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 51, 52;
- (v) Ibid., p. 51.

#### Notes regarding Educational and Cultural Television Pty Ltd

This consortium, whose directors were primarily educationalists and academics, involved a completely new type of initiative for the commercial television field, that of direct teaching.(i) Lush noted in his summation,"that the undertaking of teaching via commercial television is not an activity for which this class of station was designed and, indeed, tends to divert the station from the services which it was designed to provide for the public." (ii) Lush suggested that this application had been submitted not to gain a licence, but rather, to attract attention in the hope that such action would lead to participation in a television station.(iii)

- (i) Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 54, 55;  
G.Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 2,393, 2,394.
- (ii) Ibid;  
Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 80.
- (iii) Ibid., p. 2,398.
- <sup>40</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,835-1,836.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,835.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid.  
These subsidiaries included Pioneer Tourist Coaches, Ansair Pty Ltd to build coaches for the former, Pioneer Tours, the development of a hotel resort on Hayman Island, and the establishment of Ansett Freight Express Pty Ltd.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup> R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,640, 1,644, 1,645;  
R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,835.  
The reasons why the Directors of Ansett Transport Industries Limited made application for the licence include:
- the acquisition of a television licence would be a natural extension of the parent company's activities and there were sound prospects that the operation of a television station would, after a formative period, would contribute profit to the group;
  - its experience in conducting public services suited the company to undertake the responsibilities of such an important enterprise in the community; and,
  - the operation of a television station was well within the managerial and financial capacity of the parent company.
- R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,836.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 1,841.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 1,838.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 1,839.
- <sup>49</sup> R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,644.  
Regarding his financial stability, Ansett advised the Board that for 1961/62, ATI's overall revenue was £29,404,208 with profit after tax of £1,066,256. Liabilities totalled £25,567,141, total assets exceeded £35,783,348, tangible assets amounted to £10,000,000, and there were 40,000 shareholders.
- R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,835.

Through shareholdings, debentures and loans, Austarama, with its parent company, would invest £2,500,000 to establish Channel O.

Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 58.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 2034.

<sup>51</sup> G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,386.

<sup>52</sup> Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 227, 252, 256.

<sup>53</sup> R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,644;

R.R.Walker, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,816-1,817.

<sup>54</sup> R.R.Walker, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,817;

R.Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,844.

<sup>55</sup> D. G. Anderson, Director-General, Department of Civil Aviation, letter to Australian Broadcasting Control Board, quoted in Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,935.

<sup>56</sup> R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,644, 1,998-1,999;

R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,862.

<sup>57</sup> R. R. Walker, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,650;

R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,998-1,999.

<sup>58</sup> R. R. Walker, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,812;

K. Osborne, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,908.

<sup>59</sup> R. R. Walker, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,812.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. p. 1650;

K. Osborne, op. cit., p. 1,908.

<sup>62</sup> R. R. Walker, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,691.

<sup>63</sup> K. Osborne, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,903.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

Austarama's proposed Australian content budget for all categories during its first year was £791,000 (live productions) and £390,000 (film productions).

R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., Appendix F, p. 2,013.

<sup>65</sup> K. Osborne, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,903.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

*Austarama* proposed the following basic sample framework of programs:

- *Austarama Walkabout*: to show Australia and its people.
- *Australian Playhouse*: a vehicle for Australian playwrights and artists.
- *Under The Southern Cross*: to inform Australians of their historic past.
- *Corroboree*: to give an outlet to finer arts in Australia.
- *The Smiths*: a domestic comedy about an Australian family.
- *The Zero Hour*: to provide Australian variety.

Ibid., pp. 1,908, 1,909.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,841.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> G. Lush and R. G. Osborne, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,850, 1,895.

<sup>71</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,850, 1,894-1,896.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 1895.

<sup>73</sup> W. Harris, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,682.

<sup>74</sup> G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,860, 1,853-1,855;

Regarding favourable taxation concessions: "We say quite deliberately this was done by the Government to encourage the aviation industry, the taxation benefits of high or higher rate of depreciation than is in fact what is realistic, having regard to the life of the aircraft, was done deliberately. It has been done for the benefit of the Government airlines, TAA and Qantas and this company, but does not in any way suggest instability. On the contrary it suggests deliberate Government policy of insuring that a public service is maintained".

R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,951.

<sup>75</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,853, 1,854.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., pp. 1,854, 1,866.

<sup>77</sup> G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,853;

- M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,720.
- <sup>78</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,852-1,853.
- <sup>79</sup> R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,998-1,999.
- <sup>80</sup> G. Lush, Summation of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,860.
- <sup>81</sup> R. R. Walker, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,703;  
R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p.,1,862.
- Ansett's conservatism in limiting initial broadcasting times was apparently based on the now obsolete analogy "If another airline operator came on the market and operated the same as Australian National Airlines (A.N.A) and Trans Australia Airlines (T.A.A.), everyone would suffer considerably".
- <sup>82</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,844-1,845;  
R. R. Walker, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,819;  
National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Confidential Executive Memo to the Prime Minister, addendum to "Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610: Television" – *Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, (Confidential), Prime Minister's Department, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 3 April 1963;  
National Archives of Australia (NAA), Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Dr Ronald Mendelsohn and E. J. Bunting, (Cabinet Secretary), Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610," op. cit., p. 4.
- <sup>83</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,844 -1,845.
- <sup>84</sup> R. L. Gilbert, advocate for Television Victoria Limited, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,868.
- <sup>85</sup> R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 1,867-1,868.
- <sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1,845.
- <sup>87</sup> E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Confidential Executive Memo to the Prime Minister, op. cit.
- <sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>89</sup> M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,237.
- <sup>90</sup> Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan area*, op. cit, pp. 11-12;  
M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 2,238-2,239;  
John Cain, op. cit., p. 104.
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*
- This concept of service would be achieved in the following manner:
1. Service to the community by providing, setting up and operating efficiently and economically a modern fully-equipped and properly manned television station, especially for this purpose; and,
  2. Service to the community as a whole, in a multitude of ways directed to the raising of standards and the advancement of educational and cultural influences. [...] In particular it will be the policy of the Applicant Company to encourage the development of all influences which will lead to greater national consciousness.
- <sup>92</sup> John Cain, op. cit., p.105.
- <sup>93</sup> M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 17, 2,238-2,239, 2,381-2,381;  
Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 38-40;  
Dorothy Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 457-460;  
John Cain, op. cit., p. 105.
- <sup>94</sup> M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 17, 23.
- <sup>95</sup> University of Melbourne Archives, Accession Number 84/44: Minutes from committee meeting, *Actors Equity-Victorian Division*, Melbourne, 16 May 1962.
- The testimony reads: "Crawford Productions have always set out to employ Australian actors, actresses, singers and writers and at all times been in the forefront of any effort to develop Australian creative and interpretative talent."
- Australian Telecasters Limited, op. cit., Schedule AA – Letters of Support. (No page number);  
M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 23.
- <sup>96</sup> Australian Telecasters Limited, op. cit., Schedule AA – Letters of Support. (No page number).
- Testimony of the Professional Musicians' Association: "Crawford Productions, in the field of commercial radio and entertainment, has a record without equal and a sincere interest to foster and develop Australian artists. [...] I refer to such productions as *Opera For the People*, *Mobil Quest* and *Music For the People*. [...] We have enjoyed a harmonious relationship for many years in their capacity as employers of a large number of musicians."
- <sup>97</sup> Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 39.
- <sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., pp. 39-40.

<sup>101</sup> The sums of £733,592, £798,477 and £874,902 respectively had been allocated for the station's first three years of operation. Of this, during the first year, light entertainment such as variety, opera and musical programs were allocated £380,173, drama £133,263 and the remainder to categories such as sport, current affairs, the Arts, information and children's programs. Payment to Australian artists would total £398,272 with a further £299,570 allocated for scenery and station facilities.

Ibid., pp. 43-44.

<sup>102</sup> Dorothy Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 463, 464.

<sup>103</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 43,58; Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area*, op. cit, p. 25.

<sup>104</sup> ATL was aware of the these difficulties: "It has been said

- that television drama is costly,
- in Australia, such drama which has been produced has not proved very popular with audiences,
- few sponsors have proved willing to support Australian drama,
- it has proved difficult to create an Australian television drama because there is a shortage of writers,
- Australian actors are principally radio actors and are not experienced in the 'new' medium; and,
- whilst producers and directors handle variety programmes with competence, they have had no experience of drama".

ATL's response to this perception:

"When television transmission began six years ago, all of these statements were valid. Today none of them is wholly true. Collectively, they can still be regarded as obstacles to the regular production of Australian television drama. But, so far as the Applicant Company is concerned they are surmountable obstacles".

Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area*, op. cit, p. 25.

<sup>105</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 43, 58.

<sup>106</sup> Dorothy Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 458, 465; Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 129.

<sup>107</sup> Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan area*, op. cit, p. 25; Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 183.

<sup>108</sup> The public service, community and musical programmes would include:

- *New Horizons*: An educational series to supplement school curricula in drama, music, art and philosophy.
- *Vision*: A series about man's customs, cultures, religious beliefs, music and art.
- *Casing the Classics*: A discussion of the great works of literature by a non-academic and non-literary guest panel.
- *Yarra Bank*: Controversial topics.
- *Royal Commission*: A program on which expert testimony is given before an adjudicator – or panel – on current affairs and community problems.
- *This I Believe*: A series designed to promote religious tolerance.
- *The World Around Us*: To inform viewers of significant changes reshaping lives in the world.
- One live half-hour weekly musical program.
- Two operas or operettas, and two other large-scale musical presentations each year.

Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan area*, op. cit., pp. 38, 39; Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., pp. 52-55; Schedule W. Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 86.

<sup>110</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 February 2011.

<sup>111</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., pp. 40, 42.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 42; Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area*, op. cit, p. 74.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p. 75;

- Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 278- 279.
- <sup>115</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 222.
- <sup>117</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>118</sup> M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit., pp. 277-279.
- <sup>119</sup> M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit., pp. 71-72.
- <sup>120</sup> G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 74.
- <sup>121</sup> Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 164-165.
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid., pp. 165-166.
- <sup>123</sup> R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 206, 207.
- <sup>124</sup> R. Menhennitt / Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 206, 207.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 208.
- <sup>126</sup> R.Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,040;  
M.Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit., p. 2,378.
- <sup>127</sup> Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 207;  
E. G. Coles, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 331, 335.
- <sup>129</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>130</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 42, 58;  
Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 45-46.
- <sup>131</sup> M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings. op. cit., p. 2,240.
- <sup>132</sup> Ibid;  
Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
- <sup>133</sup> M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,240.
- <sup>134</sup> From this adversarial approach, which Reg Ansett denied sanctioning, it could be argued that ATI regarded Hector Crawford and ATL as a major threat.  
R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,968;  
R. Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,867.
- <sup>135</sup> M. Askanasy, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,378.
- <sup>136</sup> Ibid., pp. 2,378, 2,379.
- <sup>137</sup> Ibid., p. 2,381.
- <sup>138</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>139</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>140</sup> Ibid., p.2,382.
- <sup>141</sup> Ibid., p.2,383.
- <sup>142</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 68-69.
- <sup>143</sup> Ibid., pp. 61, 62.
- <sup>144</sup> Ibid., pp. 62, 63.
- <sup>145</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 64.
- <sup>146</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra: Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Cabinet Minute (Secret), Decision No.393, Submission No. 311, *Television: Grant of Licences for Commercial Television Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, Australian Government, Canberra, 18 April 1955, pp. 1-3;  
Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 64;  
G. Lush, Summary of Proceedings, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,386.

The revised criteria used by the ABCB to assess the applicants were:

- competence in being able to efficiently operate a television station from a technical, managerial, program and advertising perspective;
- ability to demonstrate long-term financial, managerial and shareholder stability to avoid any possibility of a takeover;
- stakeholders, through their records and evidence, demonstrate good character, integrity and high ideals; and,
- imagination and intelligence in the presentation of programme as demonstrated by the application and evidence.

Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., pp. 67, 68.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>148</sup> G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,393.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p.2,386.

<sup>150</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 80.

<sup>151</sup> G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,386.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., pp. 2,387-2,388.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 2,387.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p. 2,388.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 2,390.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 2,391, 2,392.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 2,392.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 2,392.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p. 2,393.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> John Cain, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>169</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 84.

<sup>170</sup> G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 2,421, 2,422.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., pp. 2,422, 2,423.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 2,423.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., pp. 2,422, 2,423.

<sup>174</sup> G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,425.

<sup>175</sup> E. Coles, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 295.

<sup>176</sup> G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,425.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., pp. 2,425, 2,426.

ATL proposed to form several sub-committees linked to a General Consultative Committee established to oversee all programme policy and development. Many prominent individuals would be invited to serve on these committees.

Hector Crawford, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 37.

Such people included Robin Boyd – writer, teacher, social commentator and highly regarded architect; and eminent scholar Dr Percy Jones – Assistant Director of the Conservatorium of Music and the Faculty of Music at the University of Melbourne. Both gave evidence impressively, particularly when articulating their dedication to the cultural and intellectual development of Australia and the originality of ideas expressed. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin\\_Boyd](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Boyd), accessed 5 November 2012.

R. Boyd, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 358;

P. Jones, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Statement of Evidence, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 377B.

<sup>178</sup> R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 264-266.

<sup>179</sup> At the conclusion of the hearings, George Lush's final statement to the Board, after reflection, indicates regret concerning his 'extremely harsh observations' about the five applicants dealt with before *Australian Telecasters Limited*. He says:

"May I therefore say this, Mr Chairman, that as we appreciate the position and as we appreciate the task confronting this Board, it is now, as it has been before, dealing with a number of applications by applicants, any one of whom could operate a station if a licence were granted to them, and, with possibly one exception, the submissions that we have seen fit to put forward were not intended to suggest that the applicants who were the subject of the criticisms could not run a television station, or that they could not run it well. The submissions were designed solely in the hope that they might assist the Board in the very difficult task of discriminating between a

number of applications which have been prepared with research and industry, and with the use of the very extensive resources at the call of the various applicants".

G. Lush, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 2,429.

<sup>180</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 105.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105;

The Board offered the following precedent: being a subsidiary of a large public company, Austarama's circumstance was compared to that of original Melbourne applicant Herald Sun TV Pty Ltd (HSV7) which, in 1955, had been formed specifically by another large public company – The Herald and Weekly Times Limited – and was subsequently awarded a licence.

*Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 79.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>196</sup> R. Menhennitt, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., pp. 264-266;  
*Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>201</sup> See matrix Appendix D. Austarama's 58% Australian content was the second highest after Educational and Cultural Television's 65%. The programs offered by this consortium were deemed representative of minority community groups, and were programmes that had not yet secured general acceptance and hence were not appropriate for commercial television at present.

*Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>202</sup> "Equating 0 and 10: The new television licences for Melbourne and Sydney", *Nation*, Sydney, 20 April 1963, pp. 8, 10;  
National Archives of Australia, Canberra: Series A.4940, Item C.1192: E. J. Bunting, Confidential Executive Memo to Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Department, op. cit;  
Mr. Ansett in the Dandenongs", *Nation*, Sydney, 10 August 1963, pp. 9, 10;  
John Cain, op. cit., p. 106, 107.

<sup>203</sup> "Equating 0 and 10", *Nation*, op. cit., 20 April 1963, p. 8.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations, op. cit., p. 100.

<sup>206</sup> John Cain, op. cit., pp. 107.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106, 107.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>209</sup> "Equating 0 and 10: The new television licences for Melbourne and Sydney", *Nation*, Sydney, 20 April 1963, p. 10.

<sup>210</sup> Hansard, Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates, Session 1962-63, *First Season of the Twenty-Fourth Parliament*, House of Representatives, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 9 April 1963, pp. 485-487 (A. Calwell - Leader of the Opposition).

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 486, 487.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.* p. 487, 701 (18 April 1963).

- <sup>213</sup> Hansard, Commonwealth of Australia, Parliamentary Debates, Session 1962-63, *First Season of the Twenty-Fourth Parliament*, House of Representatives, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 18 April 1963, p. 738. (Sir Robert Menzies, Prime Minister.)
- In actuality, the figures recorded were liabilities £25,567,141, total assets £35,783,348, and tangible assets £10,000,000.
- R Ansett, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., p. 1,841.
- <sup>214</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April 1963, p.702 (A. Calwell, Leader of the Opposition).
- Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April 1963, p.713 (E. G. Whitlam, Deputy Leader of the Opposition).
- <sup>215</sup> Ibid.
- During his tirade in Federal Parliament, Arthur Calwell also alleged that rumours were circulating that Ansett was already negotiating to sell his new licence to one of the disappointed applicants for more than £2,000,000: "I am in very close touch with a lot of leading Liberals these days," he stated. "They all happen to be disappointed applicants for the Melbourne Licence. They tell me a lot of things, and I believe them to be very honest in what they say."
- Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April 1963, p. 698 (A. Calwell, Leader of the Opposition).
- In response, Ansett said he was "flabbergasted" at Mr Calwell's charge. ATI was not trying to sell the Channel 0 licence and had no intention of attempting to sell it later".
- "Calwell Demands an Inquiry: Ansett 'trying to sell his TV licence'", *The Herald*, Melbourne, 18 April 1963, p. 3.
- <sup>216</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: C W Davidson, Postmaster-General, Confidential Cabinet ABCB Executive summary, Cabinet Submission No. 610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, 27 March 1963;
- National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: E. J. Bunting, (Cabinet Secretary), and Dr Ronald Mendelsohn, Executive Memo, "Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610:" *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, (Confidential), op. cit;
- E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary. Confidential Executive Memo to Prime Minister regarding Submission No. 610: "Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne," *Prime Minister's Department*, Canberra, 3 April 1963, op. cit.
- <sup>217</sup> It was reported that in response to this allegation, Ansett stated that "the news that his company had been recommended for the licence had come as a complete surprise". Furthermore, "he had not met any member of the Broadcasting Control Board, and the only time he had seen the Board chairman was from the witness box at the inquiry".
- "Attack on Ansett's 'Tissue of Untruths'", *The Age*, Melbourne, 11 April 1963, pp. 1, 2.
- <sup>218</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April 1963, p. 701 (A. Calwell, Leader of the Opposition).
- <sup>219</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>220</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April 1963, p. 748 (M. Fraser, Federal Member for Wannon); W. Harris, Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Transcript of Proceedings, op. cit., 30 November 1962, pp. 1,688.
- <sup>221</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 9 April 1963, pp. 486 (A. Calwell, Leader of the Opposition).
- <sup>222</sup> Ibid., pp. 486, 487.
- <sup>223</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>224</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>225</sup> Ibid., 18 April 1963, p. 699.
- <sup>226</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates* op. cit., 18 April 1963, pp. 736-739 (Sir Robert Menzies – Prime Minister).
- <sup>227</sup> Ibid., p. 737.
- <sup>228</sup> Ibid., pp. 737-738.
- <sup>229</sup> Ibid., p. 738.
- <sup>230</sup> In 1945, under the Chifley Labor Government, the Australian National Airlines Commission was established as a statutory authority to regulate interstate and territorial airline services including TAA, a not-for-profit service provider.
- State Library of Victoria: Dr. H. V. Evatt, Leader of the Australian Labour Party, *TAA Sabotaged: ANA gets £3,000,000 from the Menzies-Fadden Government*, pamphlet published by Federal Executive of the Australian Labour Party, Melbourne, 29 October 1952, pp. 2, 3, 5, 6.
- <sup>231</sup> In 1952, when the Menzies' Government encouraged competition between TAA and the privately owned Australian National Airways (ANA), it was decided that the Commonwealth would act as guarantor of loans not exceeding £3,000,000 for the purchase of heavy aircraft. According to Dr H. V. Evatt, then Leader of the ALP, the premise that this decision was "aimed at setting up 'conditions of active competition' was completely untrue":
- "For all practical purposes the agreement will end all real competition of TAA against ANA. By its charter TAA exists solely to promote an efficient and safe air service and not at all for private profit. On the other hand, ANA, as an elaborate profit-making enterprise, is compelled by its corporate charter to do its utmost to extend its profits for the benefits of the shipping companies which comprise or control it".



"It is false to pretend that an agreement which will deprive TAA of an important part of its business and goodwill and transfer that part to the rival proprietary company (ANA) is aimed at securing "active competition" between them. Pioneer companies like Ansett, Butler and others get nothing from this Bill. It is a Bill to enrich ANA at the expense of TAA [...] TAA is completely owned by the people of this country".

State Library of Victoria: Dr H. V. Evatt, Leader of the Australian Labour Party, *TAA Sabotaged*, op. cit., p. 5

<sup>232</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April 1963, p. 713 (E. G. Whitlam, Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> E. J. Bunting, Confidential Executive Memo to Prime Minister, addendum to Submission No.610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit.

<sup>237</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April 1963, pp. 737 (Sir Robert Menzies – Prime Minister).

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April, 1963, p. 699 (A Calwell, Leader of the Opposition).

<sup>241</sup> E. J. Bunting and R. Mendelsohn, Confidential Briefing Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., pp. 2, 3.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., pp. 3, 4.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., pp. 4, 5. (The briefing notes do not elaborate on the accusations made against ATI as a "predatory airline").

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, pp. 6-7.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> E. J. Bunting, Confidential executive memo to Prime Minister, addendum to Submission No. 610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid. ('Collins Street' being a possible reference to Crawford's Olderfleet Building headquarters.)

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 February 2008;

Ian Jones, op. cit;

John Cain, op. cit., p. 106;

Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 84.

<sup>263</sup> Hansard, Commonwealth of Australia, *Parliamentary Debates*, Session 1962-63, *First Season of the Twenty-Fourth Parliament*, House of Representatives, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 9 April 1963, op. cit., pp. 485-487. (A. Calwell - Leader of the Opposition).

<sup>264</sup> Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 18 April 1963, pp. 737 (Sir Robert Menzies – Prime Minister).

<sup>265</sup> E. J. Bunting, Confidential executive memo to Prime Minister, addendum to Submission No.610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>266</sup> E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>268</sup> E. J. Bunting and R. Mendelsohn, Confidential Briefing Notes on Cabinet Submission No.610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit., p. 3.

E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit., p. 145 (Speaker: Harold Holt, Treasurer).

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>270</sup> Ibid., p. 141
- <sup>271</sup> Ibid., p. 142
- <sup>272</sup> E. J. Bunting and R. Mendelsohn, Confidential Briefing Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit.
- <sup>273</sup> Hansard, Parliamentary Debates, op. cit., 9 April 1963, pp. 486;  
E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit.
- <sup>274</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.11099, Control symbol 1/60, Barcode 8920713: E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit., p. 142 (Speaker: R. G. Menzies, Prime Minister);  
National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General on Applications for a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Sydney and Melbourne Area*, op. cit., p. 106;  
E. J. Bunting, Confidential Executive Memo to Prime Minister, addendum to Submission No.610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit.
- <sup>275</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General on Applications for a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Sydney and Melbourne Area*, op. cit., p. 106.
- <sup>276</sup> E. J. Bunting and R. Mendelsohn, Confidential Briefing Notes on Cabinet Submission No.610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit., p. 4.
- <sup>277</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General on Applications for a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Sydney and Melbourne Area*, op. cit., p. 106.
- <sup>278</sup> E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit., p. 142 (Speaker: R G Menzies, Prime Minister);  
Ibid., p. 143. (Speaker S. Paltridge, Minister for Civil Aviation.);  
Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, op. cit., 9 April 1963, pp. 486 (A. Calwell, Leader of the Opposition).
- <sup>279</sup> E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit., pp. 143,144 (Speaker: S. Paltridge, Minister for Aviation). See also endnotes 218-221.
- <sup>280</sup> Ibid., p. 144.
- <sup>281</sup> E. J. Bunting and R. Mendelsohn, Confidential Briefing Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610: *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, op. cit., p. 5.
- <sup>282</sup> Ibid.  
E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit.
- <sup>283</sup> E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit., p. 143 (Speaker: Harold Holt, Treasurer).
- <sup>284</sup> Ibid., pp. 142, 143 (Speaker: P. Hasluck, Minister for Territories).
- <sup>285</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>286</sup> Ibid., p. 145. (Speaker: J. McEwen, Minister for Trade and Industry, Leader of the Country Party).
- <sup>287</sup> Ibid., (Speaker: H. Holt, Treasurer.)
- <sup>288</sup> Ibid., (Speaker: R G. Menzies, Prime Minister.)  
Prime Minister Menzies apparently encouraged a variety of divergent views in the decision making process.  
Source: National Library of Australia, Canberra, Ron Mendelsohn, former senior public servant, interview by John Farquharson (sound recording), for *National Library of Australia's Oral History Program*, 7 December 1995, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.oh-vn794578>, accessed 10 May 2011.
- <sup>289</sup> E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit., pp. 145-146. (Speaker: R G. Menzies, Prime Minister.)
- <sup>290</sup> Ibid, p. 146, (Speaker: C. W. Davidson, Postmaster-General.)
- <sup>291</sup> Ibid., pp. 146 (Speaker: A. Townley, Minister for Defence);  
Ibid., (Speaker: C W Davidson, Postmaster-General);  
Ibid., (Speaker: R G Menzies, Prime Minister);  
Hansard, Parliamentary Debates, op. cit., 18 April 1963, pp. 737 (Sir Robert Menzies – Prime Minister).
- <sup>292</sup> E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, op. cit., p. 144 (Speaker: H. Holt, Treasurer).
- <sup>293</sup> See endnote 39.
- <sup>294</sup> "Channel Sickness: Harder Times for the Television Broadcasting Companies," in *Nation*, Sydney, 31 October, 1964, p. 12.
- <sup>295</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>296</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, MA Thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, 1999, p. 108.
- <sup>297</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>298</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Annual Report*, op. cit., p. 67.
- <sup>299</sup> Ibid., p. 68;

Albert Moran, *Images & Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1985, pp. 29-30;

In 1960, the ABCB had stipulated that beginning in 1961, commercial television stations must broadcast a minimum 40 percent of Australian content. However the Postmaster-General announced that the new capital city television stations did not have to achieve this requirement until their third year of operation. Because the new stations would "just be starting in the television field, this arrangement seemed 'fair and reasonable,'" according to the Postmaster-General.

Kate Harrison, *The Points System For Australian Television*, Royal Institute of Public Administration, Brisbane, 1980, p. 6;

"PMG Wants More Local TV," *The Herald*, Melbourne, 12 September 1963, p. 20;

Hector Crawford was scathing on this concession to the new stations and viewed it as further evidence of Government conspiracy. In a letter to ATL Chairman Sir Arthur Smithers, Crawford recalls that:

"Ansett gave a sworn undertaking to include 58 percent Australian content in his first year and the Control Board, recommending him for the licence, said of Austarama's programmes: 'We are satisfied that they are both realistic and economically practical.' Now, according to the P.M.G, it seems that Ansett is required to have only 40% Australian content. I doubt that there is anything we can do in the interests of our forlorn shareholders, but to my mind this is the final proof of the travesty of the whole procedure connected with the hearing of applications, and granting of licences". [My emphasis].

Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, letter to Sir Arthur Smithers, Caulfield, Victoria, 13 September 1963.

<sup>300</sup> Albert Moran, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid., pp. 31-32;

Tom O'Regan, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>303</sup> Tom O'Regan, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>304</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 February 2008;

Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled) op. cit., pp. 100, 113;

National Film and Sound Archives, Melbourne: Glenda Raymond, video interview with Jan Bladier and David Lee, *National Film and Sound Archives Crawford Oral History Project*, 19 September, 2002. Transcribed by Philip Davey.

<sup>305</sup> "Channel Sickness: Harder Times for the Television Broadcasting Companies," op. cit., pp. 12, 13.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

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*Music For the People* conducted by Hector Crawford, Botanic Gardens,  
Melbourne 1945 (Photographer J. Gallagher) and 1956  
(Photographer Don Edwards).

(Source: National Archives of Australia, Series No: A12111, 1/1956/17/82,  
7422919; A1200, L860, 11664885; A1200, L1292,11745993)

View these photos by visiting:

<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp?B=7422919>

<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp?B=11664885>

<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp?B=11745993>

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

1. Crawford's Television Workshop in action: Front page spread in *The Listener In* newspaper.

*Source: The Listener In, Melbourne, Circa 1955, page 1.*

2. "This is how TV Stars": article in *The Listener In*.

*Source: The Listener In, Melbourne, circa 1959, page ?*

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Crawfords' Television Workshop Photos from the National Archives of Australia featuring Ian Crawford behind a makeshift camera and Paul Bacon directing a ballet cast.

Sources: NAA: A1200, L21586, 11232018;  
NAA: A1200, L21536, 11731107.

To view these photos, visit:

<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp?B=11232018>

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Crawfords' Television Workshop Photos from the National Archives of Australia featuring Ian Crawford behind a makeshift camera and Paul Bacon directing a ballet cast.

Sources: NAA: A1200, L21584, 11731143;  
NAA: A1200, L21589, 7654369.

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Photograph of the *Cop Shop* cast, circa 1980.

(© Crawford Productions publicity.)



**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Photograph of the *The Flying Doctors* ' cast, circa 1980s.

(© Crawford Productions publicity.)

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Photograph of the first *Homicide* detectives 1964.  
(Lex Mitchell, Jack Fegan and Terry McDermott )

(© Crawford Productions publicity.)

To view this photo and many others, visit:

<http://classicaustraliantv.com/homicide.htm>

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Photograph of the *Homicide* team 1968.  
(George Mallaby, Jack Fegan, Leonard Teale and Les Dayman.)

(© Crawford Productions publicity.)

To view photo, visit: <http://classicaustraliantv.com/homicide1.htm>

## Chapter 10: A Changing Television Landscape – *Homicide*

### 10.1. Creating *Homicide*

In 1962 Crawfords experimented with a television pilot of the radio series *D.24* but videotape was not yet available, film proved too costly, and the logistics were difficult to overcome.<sup>1</sup> Sonia Borg recalls that Hector kept battling for some type of police show and came up with the concept of *Homicide*.<sup>2</sup> “One Man Crime Wave”, the pilot episode, ultimately screened as episode 24A. Produced in 1963, Phil Freedman wrote the episode and to finance it, Hector mortgaged his house while both he and Dorothy forfeited a salary for over a year.<sup>3</sup> Hector carried the pilot film around with him and at every opportunity, would set up a projector and screen the episode.<sup>4</sup> But as Ian Crawford recalls, selling the pilot to television networks proved almost impossible:

For more than twelve months Hec hawked *Homicide* round Australia trying to get some network or other to pick it up. It was only by his constant visits to Channel Seven that Dick Sampson [Director of Finance] and Keith Cairns [General Manager] were, it seems, worn down by him to the extent that they bought it to try to get him off their backs.<sup>5</sup>

During this year, there was something of a hiatus at Crawfords, as Sonia Borg recalls.<sup>6</sup> Borg had progressed to a position of great regard within the company and her ongoing contribution to *Homicide* as Associate Producer (director of actors), writer, actor and script editor was significant:

While we were waiting Phil Freedman and I, with Della Foss-Paine and a few other writers, started to write scripts in case it was ever going to be sold. [...] We had two real cops giving us advice and when we got the go-ahead we read many old newspaper clippings to get inspiration and ideas followed by lots of meetings. We wrote down a story line and then that story line was distributed to other writers and then we would all sit together and discuss the story line and people would come up with ideas. So there was always a great feeling of family you know?<sup>7</sup>

The costs of making *Homicide* had been greatly underestimated; Hector recalled that when HSV7 finally agreed to buy 13 episodes, thinking the show would fail, the only price Crawfords could get was far below cost.<sup>8</sup>

*Homicide* lost money [\$38,000] on the first 26 episodes [...] and it took until episode 106 to recover all accumulated losses. I was, in fact, supported by my wife during the early period of getting *Homicide* on television [...] it was only through Glenda going out and singing a great deal that kept me solvent.<sup>9</sup>

Unable to anticipate that *Homicide* would command unprecedented high ratings for any drama, “let alone a home-grown one”, these financial risks could have ruined Crawfords.<sup>10</sup> But as ratings grew to a remarkable 54 per cent, an incredulous Sir Frank Packer, who had facetiously predicted *Homicide* would fail and be “killed by the cowboys” (American westerns), was forced to move his number one program *The Dick Van Dyke Show* against *Homicide*, to no avail.<sup>11</sup> “Dick Van Dyke was soon reassigned to another time slot to try and save it from an early grave”. *Homicide* was an “absolute, total, outstanding, tearaway success”.<sup>12</sup> After the early episodes screened, Melbourne viewers were enthusiastic:

“It [*Homicide*] is a better show than any imported one because it is local and we know, or have heard of, the suburbs where it is acted.[...] I think we can supply the talent, good photography and beautiful scenery equal to anywhere which any overseas company can offer, and it has the added attraction of being Australian. It has been proved now that Australia can give viewers A1 entertainment so why go outside for it.”<sup>13</sup>

*Homicide* we must agree is a healthy comeback for Australian television. [...] Now we have somebody with courage enough to give Australian actors a chance; also publicise our own police in action.<sup>14</sup>

With *Homicide* so Melbourne-centric, the program rated strongly in Victoria almost immediately. Brisbane, Adelaide and Sydney launches of the program were scheduled for January 1965, commentators wondered if it would “sink without a trace” in Sydney, the city renowned for rejecting Melbourne-based productions.<sup>15</sup> Media scribes urged Sydney to “give the show a go – it’s well worthwhile”:

If the series succeeds in Sydney, other Melbourne channels and production houses will be encouraged to try their luck with drama.[...] Success of *Homicide* in Sydney would mean more work for the actors and writers who’ve been denied it for so long.<sup>16</sup>

Believing that the later episodes of *Homicide* were of better quality, Crawfords screened numbers eight through thirteen in Sydney first, but viewers were ambivalent. Ironically, after episodes one through seven were screened later, Sydney-siders felt that the show had improved considerably.<sup>17</sup> By August 1965,

Sydney audiences had warmed to the program and with outstanding ratings throughout Australia, HSV7 purchased a further 13 episodes.<sup>18</sup> In each of the first 26 episodes, a courtroom scene had been included to add resolution to each crime. To strengthen the series, Crawfords decided to include more action and detective work, and courtroom sequences were rarely included after this point.<sup>19</sup> Hector Crawford described Channel Seven's renewal as:

a complete demonstration that Australians can produce drama if they are given the opportunities – and that drama can rate very well in a television hot spot. In Melbourne, for example, *Homicide* is slotted at a peak time in a four-channel marker against *The Danny Kaye Show*, *Outer Limits*, and *The Dick Van Dyke Show*. Our locally produced series is topping all of these highly regarded programs.<sup>20</sup>

By July 1966, *Homicide* topped the ratings in Sydney with an estimated 615,000 viewers watching every week; Melbourne had 570,000, with Adelaide and Brisbane in the vicinity of 150,000.<sup>21</sup> By November 1966, when the Television Society of Australia recognised *Homicide* with an award for “continued improvement in film technique”, it had become clear that Hector was correct in adopting a low budget and less sophisticated production methods to train and encourage creativity; it was a means to an end, participants were benefiting from the experience and improving incrementally. Commentator Frank Doherty, after viewing Episode 85 “The Ex”, wrote that every facet of “this show is getting better and better”:<sup>22</sup>

Film technique is not the only ingredient of *Homicide* to have shown a marked improvement in recent months.[...] Story lines are usually creditable, untrammelled with side issues and with dialogue cut and polished. With long work together, the cast operates smoothly and is increasingly more impressive in characterisation.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the financial risks, the fact that Crawfords persisted with *Homicide* demonstrates the company's dedication to establishing a thriving local industry, a commitment that set the Crawford family apart from the Packer family.<sup>24</sup> Hector stated that Crawfords had “set out to prove three things”:<sup>25</sup>

- that Australians were capable of producing a good drama series,
- answer criticism of local actors and writers; and,
- finally, but by no means the least important, to prove that Australians were prepared to watch programmes made in Australia.<sup>26</sup>

Had they succeeded at this point? The less expensive production methods espoused by Crawfords during *The Vincent Inquiry* (see Chapter 8.4) had proved viable, as Hector reiterated:

The success of *Homicide* in face of a shortage of money lies in the development of 'short-cut' techniques which were worked out by trial and error methods through the early episodes. We are still experimenting with new techniques and expect our gradual, but constant improvement of the program to continue.<sup>27</sup>

During its formative years, *Homicide* employed over 200 actors and a significant number of writers who, with film and studio directors, producers and production staff, achieved a notable hit show.<sup>28</sup> The ratings speak for themselves and viewers had become emotionally attached to the series. When *Homicide's* first Detective Sergeant, Frank Bronson (Terry McDermott), was written out of the show and shot by Gerard Kennedy in Episode 58 "Vendetta", widespread public furore erupted.<sup>29</sup>

What a short-sighted policy it was to let Terry McDermott resign from *Homicide*. He made that picture and is not only a good actor, but our idea of a first class detective who was kind but firm and never bullied his suspects.<sup>30</sup>

Both Hector Crawford and McDermott had underestimated public reaction. Obligated to respond to a critical editorial, Crawford revealed that the company and McDermott could not agree on a new contract.<sup>31</sup> McDermott, in hindsight, regretted his insistence on a \$20 pay rise and regarded the death of his character hero Sgt. Bronson "as a great mistake".<sup>32</sup> The reaction to the demise of television's favourite police Detective Sergeant demonstrated a sense of ownership by viewers who, for the first time, felt that their opinions would be noted and considered by program producers, unlike overseas programs whose producers were oblivious to Australian viewer input.

By the middle of 1966, *Homicide* had not only been accepted in Sydney, but was aired in Britain. Media commentator John Pinkney validated the success of Hector Crawford's objectives:

The Down-Under whodunit's dizzying success has finally discredited the people who claim Australians "don't want to watch" local drama. The creative people who hatch *Homicide* have taken 18 months to prove an important point: namely, that Australians can produce professional dramatic series, if given the chance to work, and gain experience regularly.<sup>33</sup>

*Homicide* was no 'flash in the pan'. By the time the last episode was shown in January 1977, 510 episodes had been produced, including the pilot. Running for 12 years and six months, *Homicide* was the longest-running primetime drama in Australian television history. Although popular police drama *Blue Heelers* (1993-2006) equalled *Homicide*'s 510 episodes, the latter had more actual air-time due to five feature-length episodes.<sup>34</sup>

## 10.2. From the Inside - *Homicide* Retrospectively

"It's a hold-up" were the first words uttered by an actor in *Homicide*. Ian Turpie, future pop star and television celebrity, played the brief but memorable role of Melbourne University student Lindsay Murdock – shot dead in a cap-pistol mock bank raid that went horribly wrong.<sup>35</sup>

Ian Jones, co-writer and film director of *Homicide*'s first episode "The Stunt", recalls the excitement of viewing his pioneering work on television:

Oh yes. It was incredibly exciting, incredible. That first scene was so spectacular, with Ian Turpie running across the Melbourne University campus. When the students jump out of the car one of them jumps up at a wall and startles a passer-by – that was Dorothy [Crawford]. And in the bank you'll hear, as he says "it's a hold up", ooh....; that very good reverberating gasp is Dorothy Crawford.<sup>36</sup>

That first scene was, aptly, filmed next door to Crawfords' Olderfleet Building headquarters and one of the rare times that the crew filmed interiors outside of a studio: "It was an old insurance building on the site where they were building the National Mutual Building in Collins Street. We rebadged it as *The Federal Bank*".<sup>37</sup>

Despite the inexperienced crew, financial and time constraints and the show's early flaws, Jones' Assistant Director David Lee considers that the early *Homicides* were great achievements and demonstrated commitment to a cause. They *knew* what they were doing, but did not yet know how to do it properly:<sup>38</sup>

We didn't have any lights, we only had reflectors and a couple of battery lights, so we didn't do night scenes all that much. The logistics of getting it done in time, with an absolute minimum of equipment and trying to make it look good, was the difficult part.

We made it look as good as we could make it in the time, but *time* was the all important thing. If we didn't get it done, we would have to work on the weekend, and that meant we would muck up the actor's rehearsal time, so it was always against the clock, to do the best you could within the time.<sup>39</sup>

It took nearly a year before the film crew felt comfortable as they perfected several production issues. But as early as the second series of thirteen episodes commissioned by HSV7, Crawford's became aware of just how important the exterior film segments were to *Homicide's* popularity:

Australians were seeing Australia for the first time, seeing Australian streets and Australian cars, and it was then that they increased the ratio of film to interior video. So we, the film side of *Homicide*, got more lights, time and money.<sup>40</sup>

Leonard Teale, who had several roles as a villain before becoming *Homicide's* longest serving detective, believes that it was the people of Melbourne who steered *Homicide's* fate with such good early ratings. "It was the first outside action series, people were seeing their own city for the first time and the people spoke the Australian language".<sup>41</sup>

Right from the outset the use of the camera was terrific. Episode 3 ["The Rosary"] was particularly good. The camera work was startling; the lighting in the church scenes was so good - it had a stamp on it. So that was one thing. Also, I think it might have been the first to marry film and video on a regular basis.<sup>42</sup>

Crawford regular Terry Norris recalls that, despite the early technical difficulties and inadequacies, *Homicide* became an instant hit because people could identify with everyday familiar Melbourne places. "They couldn't believe it because they were so used to seeing the streets of LA or London. But my God, that's St. Kilda Road".<sup>43</sup>

Sydney viewers, having constantly rejected Melbourne's variety and quiz shows truly embraced *Homicide* as the ratings attest.<sup>44</sup> One major reason for this turnaround, suggest David Lee and Don Storey was that:

Australian viewers were not used to seeing Australian drama, and suddenly seeing Australian streets and houses, and hearing actors speaking for the first time with Australian accents was [significant].<sup>45</sup>

Storey also contends that interstate audiences found *Homicide* innovative because it portrayed suburban crime immersed in realism, showing what detective work was



really like in the suburbs and fringes, rather than just the big city streets as featured in U.S. cop shows.<sup>46</sup> Sydney resident and Crawford regular Jeanie Drynan thought it important that Australians began seeing themselves regularly: "You'd hear the Australian accent and you could relate because maybe the stories were going on in the newspaper".<sup>47</sup>

Frank Doherty noted in 1966 that "no other Melbourne production has had so strong a national reaction as *Homicide*".<sup>48</sup> He complimented Crawfords' persistence:

The Crawfords have proved that with good scripting, competent acting and painstaking production, an Australian programme can not only find its way to the top on its own merits but also, in the face of so much imported material, stay there.<sup>49</sup>

In and around Melbourne, the locals were fascinated by the on-location filming, says actor Terry Gill:<sup>50</sup>

Filming around Melbourne you couldn't rid the buggers. 'What's this for?' they would say. *Homicide*. 'Oh!' And so you'd say – you just stay there; you'll probably end up in it, so they wouldn't walk through the action.<sup>51</sup>

In fact, in many early episodes crowds of on-lookers can be seen as the detectives go about their business, as usually happens at a real crime scene; this inconvenience to the crew added a sense of realism to the show. As the series progressed, excited crowds gathering around became such a problem that an assistant director was added to the crew to help with crowd control and to hasten shooting.<sup>52</sup>

Gill considers that *Homicide* was very much 'a love affair' for Melbournians but that his rationale is just as relevant to cities like Sydney. For Melbourne viewers, the relationship to everyday life was one of greater proximity:<sup>53</sup>

They loved the idea of seeing a Richmond lane or Port Melbourne alley. It was their home grown sort of thing and people felt like they were part of it. Once that tie had been broken and once more overseas shows started coming in again, they just wouldn't cop it.<sup>54</sup>

Sonia Borg is constantly amazed at the number of people who recognise her from the early episodes. This, she attributes to a belief that many viewers preferred the early episodes, despite their inadequacies.<sup>55</sup>

I think really it was because there was, in spite of all our efforts, a bit of unreality in them, because our techniques weren't really that good. And our way of presenting stories, even if they were based on fact, had that little bit of fiction about them like Agatha Christie. It was slanted towards entertainment rather than like the later episodes that were very serious and had social messages and so on.<sup>56</sup>

Former Channel Nine Program Manager Jim McKay contends that the early episodes of *Homicide* were not only about learning; they were produced at a loss, because of financial constraints, but stimulated local content.<sup>57</sup>

They got better at it. But I think it was such a winner because it was a good idea. *Homicide* hit a nerve, it was well written with good stories. They might look pokey from this distance. It was our backyard, it was cast well and they did a damn good job to get it produced and yes, it was full of holes but I think it worked because it got the 'right' things right – it didn't matter so much that walls wobbled when they shut the door. Nine soon wanted *Hunter* and *Division 4*.<sup>58</sup>

Actor Graeme Blundell offers a reflective and carefully constructed opinion about the success of *Homicide*. Blundell's first role in a successful film and television career was as a university student extra in the "The Stunt's" bank scene. Blundell has fond memories of *Homicide* which he regards as the beginning of Hector's great contribution to establishing "our own 'where'; the place we know, where life is going on and the predictable familiarity of the life being represented pulled us in".<sup>59</sup>

While there was some indifference and even derision, we all watched *Homicide*. There might have been shaky scenery, a muffed line, the odd boom shadows, but we watched it for other things. *Homicide* was a ritual pleasure offering reassurance in its familiarity and regularity; audiences became accustomed to hearing Australian accents and to seeing dramas worked out in their own streets.<sup>60</sup>

### 10.3. The Australian Accent – Revisited

In Chapter 5.4, Earl Francis and Keith Eden explained that as radio actors, a 'cultured' English accent and the ability to capture a range of languages was necessary to obtain work, because so many radio and stage plays portrayed English characters in an English setting, or some other culture.<sup>61</sup> Consequently, many talented Australian actors produced, however inadvertently, 'phony' or exaggerated English accents in the absence of appropriate elocution training. With the right training, Australian actors from this era could have adapted to such roles quite well

with their natural voices, but by adopting unnatural or exaggerated accents, made the regular Australian accent seem inferior.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the fact that our true Australian accent did not appear on our screens for some time resulted in some measure how actors had been trained.<sup>63</sup>

This may explain why *Homicide* did not appeal to some of the more conservative or cultured artists. Flamboyant stage actor Frank Thring suggested that “*Homicide* was as cheap as it was unjustified, and below what any fastidious actor would consider”.<sup>64</sup> But viewers, rebutting Thring, demonstrated pride in supporting a home-grown product, and were prepared to accept the program's inexpensive production values.<sup>65</sup>

While the The Crawford School of Broadcasting ‘smoothed out the rough edges’ for radio actors, as Crawfords’ crime genre television shows evolved, many radio and theatre actors had difficulty portraying the harsher but typical Australian vernacular associated with criminal stereotypes. A number of veteran radio actors associated with Crawfords performed admirably in the early episodes of *Homicide* – in roles that suited their skills.<sup>66</sup> But hard-core criminals and crooks required a new generation of actors. Paul Cronin, who would later find stardom in *The Sullivans*, recalls that:

the radio actors who came into Crawfords when they started doing drama, spoke with a very, very cultured voice, and that didn't work for playing criminals. So I came along and a number of us came along who didn't have that theatre training; I think we were better off for it.<sup>67</sup>

Actor Gerard Kennedy found in these early years that the ‘cultural cringe’ still prevailed against the true Australian voice.<sup>68</sup>

The ABC didn't want anybody who had an Australian accent and I could never get a speaking role with the ABC early on. And commercial theatres had mostly American players with the occasion Brits, but no Australian playing the lead.<sup>69</sup>

Having become accustomed to a cultured version of the Australian accent through theatre, ABC plays, television news announcers and variety show hosts, were suddenly confronted with the true Aussie accent. Some programs were cultured but most were rough around the edges – starting from *Consider Your Verdict*, *Homicide*

and then through subsequent police shows. Ian Crawford remembers the terrible criticism from viewers upon hearing Australian voices in *Consider Your Verdict*:

“Why do you put on this ridiculous Australian accent with your actors?”. We didn't – it was natural. But if you think back to that time to the ABC News, to all ABC announcers, they were very British still and this is what they [the public] were bred on.<sup>70</sup>

Soon after *Homicide* commenced, Dorothy Crawford arrived at Crawfords' Olderfleet Building headquarters somewhat perplexed. “You'll have to 'British-up' your accents because the taxi driver said to me we don't talk like that!”<sup>71</sup> Terry McDermott was in the office, and in a heated argument he told Dorothy there was no way he was going to change: “She capitulated and it wasn't mentioned again. It was just as well, because a lot of its [*Homicide*] charm was that it was Australian”.<sup>72</sup>

#### **10.4. Epilogue**

Gerard Kennedy believes that the “biggest thing [about Crawfords' shows] was Australians being able to accept an Australian on the screen, with an Australian accent which even THEY hated. So many people said 'Is that me?' So gradually they got used to it”.<sup>73</sup> Maggie Miller, a regular guest character actor, attributes the diminution of the cultural cringe to the influence of Crawfords: “Australians grew to like their own. They liked hearing *their* accent and seeing their own [localised] stories on the screen”.<sup>74</sup>

The success of *Homicide* and subsequent new programs enabled Crawfords to develop the environment and capability in which they could train, employ and offer career opportunities to teams of creative and technical personnel and literally hundreds of actors. In the process, they reinforced the concept of an 'Australian consciousness'. Part Three of *Crawford Creations* explores 'the Crawford television experience' from their own perspective.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> David Lee, interview with Don Storey, *TV EYE* No.8, 8 May 1996, <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/INTVWDavidLee.htm>, accessed 1 June, 2011.  
One pilot was made but never aired. It was a docu-drama, about the regular life of the Victoria Police: "We [David Lee, Roland Strong and a cameraman] were living in a police car for seven days, and we filmed everything that moved. D24 was way ahead of its time, but to make it really fast and sleek was just too expensive".
- <sup>2</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 13 July 1977.
- <sup>3</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 87.
- <sup>4</sup> Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, Kings Cross, 28 February 2008.
- <sup>5</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs op. cit., p. 86;  
Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 5 July 1979.
- <sup>6</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Philip Davey, Wylangta, Victoria, 10 June 2007.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Don Storey, Classic Australian Television, <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homicide.htm>, accessed 5 November, 1999;  
TV Times, Melbourne, 25 November, 1970 (page number not available).
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 86.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 87.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> 'Wilseshor,' Niddrie, Victoria, "Homicide Shows Courage", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 November 1964, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 36.
- <sup>14</sup> 'Satisfied Viewer,' Malvern, Victoria, "Crime Series Shows We Have Talent", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 5 December 1964, "Axes and Orchids" Section (page number no longer available).
- <sup>15</sup> John Pinkney, "Please Sydney...Don't Condemn Homicide Without Trial", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 20 January 1965, pp. 6, 7.  
At this time, the rivalry between Melbourne and Sydney's evening variety programs *In Melbourne Tonight* and *The Tonight Show* dominated the media.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 13 July 1977; NFSA Title No: 269345. Transcribed by Philip Davey.  
Terry McDermott, interview with Philip Davey, Upwey, Victoria, 27 September 2008.
- <sup>18</sup> "Homicide Reaches New Peak", *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 28 August-3 September 1965, p. 7.
- <sup>19</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 87.
- <sup>20</sup> Hector Crawford, quoted in "Homicide Reaches New Peak", *Listener In-TV*, op. cit.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> Frank Doherty, "Homicide Improves", *TV Times*, 16 November 1966, p. 16.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Don Storey, *Classic Australian Television*, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homicide.htm>;  
Roger Diss, "Homicide proves slayer." op. cit.
- <sup>25</sup> Roger Diss, "Homicide proves slayer." *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 30 July-5 August 1966, p. 3.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid;  
Hector Crawford, quoted in "Homicide Reaches New Peak", *Listener In-TV*, op. cit.
- <sup>29</sup> Roger Diss, "Homicide proves slayer." op. cit.
- <sup>30</sup> "He was a Fair Cop", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 7-13 May 1966, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 32.
- <sup>31</sup> John Pinkney, "Bronson Didn't Want to Die", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 6 April 1966, p. 11;  
"Crawford's Reply", *ibid*;  
Terry McDermott, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup> John Pinkney, "Homicide Hit the Top", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 18 May 1966, p. 7
- <sup>34</sup> Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homicide\\_%28Australian\\_TV\\_series%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homicide_%28Australian_TV_series%29), accessed 8 June 2013.
- <sup>35</sup> "The Stunt", Episode 1 of *Homicide*, Crawford Productions, Melbourne, October 1964.
- <sup>36</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 17 June 2009.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> David Lee, op. cit.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Leonard Teale, interview by Don Storey, TV EYE No. 3, October 1994, <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/INTVWLeonardTeale.htm>, accessed 1 June 2011.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Terry Norris, interview with Philip Davey, Balaclava, Victoria, December 2010.

<sup>44</sup> John Pinkney, "Please Sydney...Don't Condemn Homicide Without Trial", op. cit., pp. 6, 7.

<sup>45</sup> Don Storey, Classic Australian Television, op.cit. <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homicide.htm>, accessed 5 November 1999.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Jeanie Drynan, interview with Philip Davey, Manley, NSW, 9 January 2009.

<sup>48</sup> Frank Doherty, "Homicide shows the way for Australian TV", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 15 September 1966, p. 11.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Terry Gill, interview with Philip Davey, Tooronga, Victoria, 2 September 2008.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs op. cit., p. 93.

<sup>53</sup> The people of Melbourne could easily relate to *Homicide* just as they did to the film *On the Beach* (1959) because both portrayed every day, familiar locations.

Terry Gill, op. cit;

Philip Davey, *When Hollywood Came To Melbourne: The Story of the Making of Stanley Kramer's On the Beach*, published by P. R. Davey, Melbourne, 2006.

<sup>54</sup> Terry Gill, op. cit;

<sup>55</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Jim McKay, interview with Philip Davey, Glen Iris, Victoria, 28 February 2011.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Graeme Blundell, "Final Credits Roll for Father of TV Drama", *The Sunday Age*, Melbourne, 17 March 1991, p. 8.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Earl Francis, Templestowe, Victoria, letter to Philip Davey, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2007;  
Keith Eden, (Radio and television actor), Interview with Beverly Dunn for NFSA Once Upon a Wireless Project, Flinders, Victoria, 16th June 1993. Title No: 270436. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009;  
"Actors and Accents", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 19-25 August 1950, Editorial Comment Section, p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> Maie Hoban, Pilgrim Theatre, Melbourne, letter to the editor, *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 2-8 September 1950, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 29.

<sup>63</sup> Alan Hopgood, interview with Philip Davey, Brighton, Victoria, 9 August 2008.

<sup>64</sup> J. Howes, Caulfield, Victoria, "Homicide on the Upgrade", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 17-23 July 1965, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 44.

<sup>65</sup> "The production and acting in *Homicide*, one of the too few Australian television series, has never reached the high standards demanded by the affluent Mr Thring. But the series has improved with each episode and the number of viewers who look forward to it on Tuesdays is steadily increasing. One would think Mr Thring would encourage an Australian produced show with at least constructive criticism."

J. Howes, Caulfield, Victoria, "Homicide on the Upgrade", letter to the editor, op. cit.

<sup>66</sup> Radio actors associated with Hector Crawford Productions who appeared in the early episodes of *Homicide* include Douglas Kelly, Moira Carleton, Barbara Brandon, Agnes Dobson, Beverly Dunn, Keith Eden, Bettine Kauffmann, Nevil Thurgood, Madeleine Orr, Patricia Kelly, Roly Barlee, Kenric Hudson, Earl Francis, Elizabeth Wing, Neva Carr-Glyn, Lola Brookes, Syd Conabere and John Morgan.

Don Storey, Classic Australian Television, op. cit. <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homicide.htm>.

<sup>67</sup> Paul Cronin, interview with Philip Davey, 1 February 2009.

<sup>68</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview by Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 30 August 2008.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 January 2008.

<sup>71</sup> Terry McDermott, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Gerard Kennedy, op. cit.

<sup>74</sup> Maggie Miller, interview with Philip Davey, The Gurdies, 27 January 2008.

## **PART 3: CRAWFORDS – A VIEW FROM WITHIN (1964-1987)**

### **Chapter 11: Crawfords' TV Program Chronology**

As respondents relate their side of the story, it is useful at this point to reference discussion with a chronology and basic framework of Crawfords' post-1964 programs. This chronology focuses on the period 1964-1987 at the end of which Hector sold the company. Within this timeframe, Crawfords can be characterised by five distinct phases. The first, 1956-1963, was presented in Part 2: a time of transition, advocacy and development when the going was tough and disappointments many.

The second phase, late 1964 into 1975, is regarded as Crawfords' 'golden era' in Television when the best Crawford programs – made for considerably less money – clearly portrayed an 'Australian consciousness', while constantly out-rating many American programmes.<sup>1</sup> By 1971, as an example, Crawfords had a successful weekly police drama series running concurrently on all three commercial networks – *Homicide*, *Division 4* and *Matlock Police*.<sup>2</sup> Other offerings during this period included *Hunter* and *Ryan*. At the same time Hector continued to enhance the careers of Australia's musical talent as he had with *Mobil Quest: Showcase* ran from 1965-70 (ATV0), 1973-74 (GTV9) and 1978 (HSV7) (see Appendix C). Concurrently, *Music For the People* continued to be broadcast from the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

In *Homicide*, *Division 4* and *Matlock Police*, viewers witnessed a murder, crime or series of crimes, the ensuing investigation and resolution.<sup>3</sup> Twelve *Homicide* detectives plus three Inspectors were featured during *Homicide's* lifetime, but these law-enforcers and their personal lives were not generally explored.<sup>4</sup> Wives and girlfriends were featured from time to time, but character analysis was restricted to the 'crims' or guest artists.<sup>5</sup> While the criminology differed, the same lack of central character analysis generally applied to *Division 4* and *Matlock Police*, both of which focussed on CIB and uniformed police operations in specific locations within southern inner-suburban Melbourne and rural Victoria. Core actors remained relatively stable for the duration of each program. From time to time an adventurous writer would pen a variation to the preferred formula, more so in *Division 4* in which

Gerard Kennedy's character, among others, was the focus of attention.<sup>6</sup> Occasionally sanctioned, conservative Crawford family members generally did not encourage these variations; that remarkably creative family thus became the cause of frustration and confrontation and stifled the creativity of many talented writers.<sup>7</sup>

After the success of *Homicide* and before *Division 4*, *Hunter* was created for Channel Nine. Created by Ian Jones, the counter-espionage series was partly inspired by the success of spy series such as *Dangerman* and *The Man From UNCLE*, but did not use all the gimmicks.<sup>8</sup> Don Storey describes *Hunter*, which ran for 65 episodes, as a "bold, sophisticated and ambitious venture into slick, professional local drama".<sup>9</sup> *Hunter*, the production of which received unofficial assistance from the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), offered writers plenty of scope; the series focused on Australian counter-intelligence agent John Hunter played by Tony Ward, and his enemy, Communist agent Kragg played by Gerard Kennedy.<sup>10</sup> Several twists in the characterisations in *Hunter* will be outlined later, as will the premise that, according to many within Crawfords, *Hunter* never gained acceptance from viewers because the concept of a 'secret agent' lurking in the Australian shadows did not seem plausible.<sup>11</sup>

In May 1973, with three police shows continuing to receive high ratings, Crawfords launched the all colour film private detective series *Ryan* played by Rod Mulliner, who had replaced Tony Ward for *Hunter's* last eight episodes. *Ryan* was introduced to prepare for colour television and to make an impact on the overseas market.<sup>12</sup> By this time 39 episodes had been produced and uncharacteristically pre-purchased by Channel 7 without having viewed them all.<sup>13</sup>

*Ryan* received indifferent reviews and ultimately poor ratings. Channel Seven made several programming errors by pitting *Ryan* against Channel Nine's *Division 4* on Sunday night and then moved the program to Monday night. Channel Nine then did the same with *Division 4*. By September 1973, Channel Seven cancelled the series and maintained, in response to subsequent criticism, that Rod Mulliner was weak in the title role and the wrong choice for the part.<sup>14</sup> *Ryan* failed, suggests Ian Crawford, because "people didn't believe Australian private detectives carried guns; they only investigated divorce!"<sup>15</sup> But while there was a credibility gap in Australia, he observes, "foreign audiences displayed no such misguided knowledge, and the



success of *Ryan* internationally was to outstrip the success of either *Homicide*, *Division 4* or *Matlock Police* overseas".<sup>16</sup>

In 1972 Cash/Harmon's risqué yet landmark soap serial *Number 96* premiering on Channel 0. Hector Crawford was quick to realise the potential of introducing radio-style serials for television, particularly after the sustained and overwhelming success of *Number 96*.<sup>17</sup> Ian Jones and Tom Hegarty subsequently wrote *The Box*, a serial about the day-to-day running of fictional Melbourne television station UCV-12, and the professional and personal lives of its staff, both in front of, and behind, the camera.<sup>18</sup> Although Hector did not easily embrace this concept, he took the idea to Channel Seven but its station management did not accept the program.<sup>19</sup> Ironically, Reg Ansett and Channel 0 thought otherwise and gave Crawfords approval to proceed.<sup>20</sup> In 1974, *Number 96* and *The Box* put the 0/10 Network at the top of the ratings for the first time.<sup>21</sup>

The third phase – 1975 into early 1976 – was a disastrous period of economic instability and industry uncertainty for Crawfords.<sup>22</sup> According to television station owners, viewer tastes devolved to favour less-expensive soap serials.<sup>23</sup> By September 1975, all three police programs, plus *Showcase* (GTV9), had been cancelled, despite consistently good ratings. Ian Crawford, and many former colleagues, are certain this action was “a combined effort by the three networks, acting in collusion, to reduce Hector's power in the industry”.<sup>24</sup> Although these matters are beyond the scope of this thesis, a thorough examination of these circumstances and the associated impact of the industry-wide *TV Make it Australia* campaign, which involved many Crawfords' actors, would be a worthy area for further research.<sup>25</sup>

Following the tumultuous 1975-76 period, when the company had to retrench several hundred staff, two programs remained; *The Box* and the moderately successful patriotic comedy *Last of the Australians*. *The Box* partially sustained Crawfords during its restructure as did *Crawfords Senior*, the company's commercial documentary arm. In 1976 Crawfords, despite the growing popularity of soap operas, attempted to revive the police genre with the eccentric but short-lived *Bluey* featuring Lucky Grills. Although unsuccessful at the time, the program enjoys cult

status today.<sup>26</sup> *Young Ramsay* (1977-80), featuring John Hargreaves as a country vet, did not continue beyond 26 episodes, despite Producer Henry Crawford's high expectations for this new family-style program.<sup>27</sup> But it was *The Sullivans*, according to many within Crawfords, that saved the company.<sup>28</sup>

The development of war-time serial *The Sullivans* and its premiere in November 1976 signalled the commencement of phase four and a shift to pseudo-soap programs that were an amalgam of comedy, criminal and human relationship drama. *Cop Shop* (1977-1983), about life in a suburban police station, was a tremendous success winning seven Logie awards.<sup>29</sup> *Skyways* (1979-1981), placed within Melbourne Airport Tullamarine, was a moderate success, while *Carson's Law* (1982-1984), with its exceptionally accurate 1920s period detail, won three Logie Awards in 1984 including Most Popular Show in Victoria. Attempting a big-budget return to straight police drama, Crawfords then produced 40 episodes of *Special Squad* (1984-85), but in an era dominated by soaps, *Special Squad* attracted little acceptance.<sup>30</sup>

The fifth and final phase of Hector's leadership saw the company take belated advantage of the generous new '10BA' tax-effective market (1980) with a range of well-crafted mini-series. *All The Rivers Run* (1983), starring John Waters and Sigrid Thornton, was an immediate success winning two Logie Awards in 1984.<sup>31</sup> Other successful mini-series included *My Brother Tom* (1986), *Alice to Nowhere* (1986), *The Flying Doctors* (1986) – which led to a highly successful series between 1986 and 1994 – and *The Far Country* (1987) based on Nevil Shute's novel, directed by George T. Miller and again featuring Sigrid Thornton, with British actor Michael York.

During the early years of television Crawfords depended on the skills of a small group of gifted creative and technical personnel who passed on their pioneering skills to others. As the company grew significantly into the early 1970s and moved from Collins Street to Abbotsford, many of these pioneers moved on to other areas within the industry and newly trained people took over, while additional writers, directors and other staff were recruited.<sup>32</sup> Following the forced restructure of Crawfords in 1975, key staff members were employed on a freelance basis to work on a particular production. Many staff returned to the company while moving around

the industry in this capacity.<sup>33</sup> By 1982, after Crawfords had moved to new studios at Box Hill, another generation of internally trained staff assumed greater responsibility, under the guidance and experience of Hector, Ian Crawford and Terry Stapleton (by this time Dorothy had retired due to ill-health). The following chapters encapsulate several generations of an insider's perspective.

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

*Skyways* promotional material featuring the *Skyways* cast, circa 1979.

(© Crawford Productions publicity.)

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Albert Moran, *Images & Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1985, p.101;  
Berryman, Ken, "Showcasing Crawfords: The National Film and Sound Archive / Crawfords Oral History Project," paper presented at the 14th International Oral History Conference, Australian Film Commission, Screen Australia, August 2006. p. 2. [http://afcarchive.screenaustralia.gov.au/downloads/speeches/crawfords\\_oral\\_history.pdf](http://afcarchive.screenaustralia.gov.au/downloads/speeches/crawfords_oral_history.pdf), accessed July 2007.
- <sup>2</sup> Don Storey, *Classic Australian Television*, <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/Ryan.htm>, accessed 1 July 2013.  
Albert Moran, op. cit., p.101.
- <sup>3</sup> Albert Moran, op. cit., pp.102, 163-161.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.100, 165-166.
- <sup>5</sup> Sonia borg, interview with Albert Moran, 13 July 1977. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 269345, talking about Dorothy Crawford's characterisation rules. Transcribed by Philip Davey.  
  
Howard Griffiths, interview with Albert Moran, circa 1977. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No:269364. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>6</sup> Sonia Borg, op. cit., talking about the creativity of writer Luis Bayonas;  
Norman Yemm, interview with Don Storey, *TV EYE* No. 2, May 1994. <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/> accessed 1 July 2013.
- <sup>7</sup> Terry Stapleton, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, July 1977, Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 269333. Transcribed by Philip Davey;  
Tom Hegarty, interview with Albert Moran, 25 August 1980. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No:270921/269399. Transcribed by Philip Davey;  
Cliff Green, interview with Philip Davey, Warrandyte, 25 April 2008.
- <sup>8</sup> Howard Griffiths, op. cit., 1977;  
Don Storey, *TV Eye: Classic Australian Television*, op. cit. <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/Hunter.htm>, accessed 1 July, 2013.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>10</sup> Howard Griffiths, op. cit;  
Terry Stapleton, op. cit.
- <sup>11</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 97.
- <sup>12</sup> Don Storey, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/Ryan.htm>;  
Ian Crawford, op. cit., p.105.
- <sup>13</sup> Don Storey, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/Ryan.htm>.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>15</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p.107.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), *ibid.*, pp.112-114.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*;  
Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, 10 October, 2009.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*;  
Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, 10 October, 2009.
- <sup>20</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), *ibid.*, pp.112-114.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*  
Albert Moran contends that Crawfords took little pride in successful programs like *The Box*: "They are most proud of ones like *Homicide* and *The Sullivans* which appear to satisfy the needs of popular appeal and the company's sense of civic duty."  
Albert Moran, *Images & Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia*, op. cit., pp. 94, 95.
- <sup>22</sup> Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 5 July 1977. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 269138. Transcribed by Philip Davey;  
Vicki Fairfax, interview with Philip Davey, Glen Iris, 13 January 2008.
- <sup>23</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., pp.112-114;  
David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, Auckland, New Zealand, 6 March 2011.
- <sup>24</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs op. cit., pp.115, 116;  
Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 January 2008;  
Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 17 June 2009.
- <sup>25</sup> The *TV – Make it Australian* campaign was founded by *Division 4* actors Ted Hamilton and Terry Donovan in late 1969 and existed with numerous changes in membership and leadership until the mid-1970s. A committee made-up of Australian actors, this lobby group required the Government, television station owners, the Australian Broadcasting Control Board (ABCB) and the Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations (FACTS) to ensure an adequate representation of Australian culture with local productions on Australian TV stations. This included categories such as drama, variety, comedy, current affairs, sport etc. The Committee also wanted every

channel to provide a mandated quota of Australian drama. This group, unofficially run out of Crawfords, held covert meetings in members' homes. Hamilton and committee members had meetings with Prime Minister Sir John Gorton and various government Ministers. Several well-attended rallies were held in Melbourne to create public awareness.

Ted Hamilton (Actor and musician), Interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, Victoria, 9 October 2009.  
Terry Donovan (actor), interview with Philip Davey, Armadale, Victoria, May 2008.

Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ted\\_Hamilton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ted_Hamilton), accessed 26 March 2014.

Emanating largely from Melbourne, the TV – *Make it Australian* campaign generated much publicity with the public. Australian actors and performers gave their time to present their arguments during free variety concerts in Melbourne and Sydney.

Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>26</sup> Don Storey, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/bluey.htm>, accessed 10 July 2013.

<sup>27</sup> Henry Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>28</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 120-123;  
Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>29</sup> IMDb Data base, op.cit., [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0082201/?ref\\_=fn\\_tt\\_tt\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0082201/?ref_=fn_tt_tt_1), accessed 5 November 2013.

<sup>30</sup> Non-Crawford soaps *Prisoner*, *Sons and Daughters* and *Neighbours* were enormously popular in the 1980s.

<sup>31</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs op. cit., pp.132, 133;  
IMDb Data base, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0086663/awards?ref\\_=tt\\_awd](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0086663/awards?ref_=tt_awd), accessed 10 July 2013;  
Luis Bayonas, interview with Philip Davey, Hampton, 6 January 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Howard Griffiths, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs op. cit., p. 116;  
Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit .

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*Division 4* promotional material featuring the *Division 4* cast, circa 1969.

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*Matlock Police* promotional material featuring Paul Cronin and other cast members, circa 1971.

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Photo - Social gathering of *Matlock Police* cast for Vic Gordon's birthday: including Vicki Hammond, Reg Gorman, Rosie Sturgess, Paul Cronin, Michael Pate, Vic Gordon and others circa 1972. Copyright owner unknown.

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## **Chapter 12: A Family Affair - The Crawford Dynasty**

### **12.1. Introduction**

This chapter explores Crawfords as a family dynasty in Australian television and how this differs, for example, from the Packer family. Crawfords became a large extended family post-1964, and although hierarchical, its members shared similar goals and values. Reasons for leaving the 'family' were many and varied; departures were generally not well received, but Hector expressed great satisfaction at the subsequent achievements of former staff.

Although admired, respected as a person, salesman and entrepreneur, Hector's perceived conservatism and financial constraints prevented him from moving beyond his comfort zone as changing viewer trends emerged in the 1970s. Many key personnel, experiencing frustration while working closely with Hector, departed in the mid to late 1970s to pursue their creative dreams. Family members expressed concern about Hector's intransigent 'my way or nothing' approach, his unwieldy business practices, and apparent ineffective management style, which tends to support the concerns expressed at the ATV0 license application hearings.

### **12.2. An Extended Family**

Ken Berryman contends that "the Crawford Production Company is, arguably, the closest Australian broadcast industry history has come to a family dynasty".<sup>1</sup> The contribution of the Packer family – Sir Frank, Clyde, Kerry and latterly James – to Australian television, however, is undeniable.<sup>2</sup> What separated the Packers from the Crawfords? The Packers owned a TV station, enjoyed wealth, power, vast resources and possessed a strong, diverse business multimedia acumen. Unlike Crawfords, they demonstrated a perfunctory attitude towards local drama content, Australian performers and culture that has been outlined in earlier chapters.

Crawfords took a different approach to their work: instead of accumulating profits, they ploughed it back into television production.<sup>3</sup> Hector's "deeply patriotic and driven" nature "nurtured a truly Australian TV industry to reflect the lives of ordinary Australians", and helped negate Australia's cultural cringe.<sup>4</sup> David Stevens

believes one true distinction was Crawfords' renowned training ground that provided the skills and expertise so crucial to reinvigorating Australia's ailing television and film industry in the early 1970s.<sup>5</sup>

*Homicide* and a succession of productions introduced a studio-like atmosphere to the company as Crawfords' television pioneers Ian and Dorothy Crawford, Ian Jones, Sonia Borg and David Lee led the way. Experienced production and creative leaders with similar ideals augmented their work.<sup>6</sup> Albert Moran contends that Crawfords did not have to import experts as they grew, but rather, "draw upon their own accumulated experience and knowledge."<sup>7</sup> This is not entirely accurate, however; at least not immediately. An extensive international recruitment drive for writers around 1970, and others with creative/production experience led to hiring, among others, Ian Jones (1963), director Andrew Swanson and cinematographer Lindsay Parker (1966).<sup>8</sup> It was this group of people who fostered "a quick-to-learn egalitarian workforce" which attached itself to the 'dreams of a pioneer' which most agree the industry will never see again".<sup>9</sup> Berryman expands on this premise:

The overall impression is of a group of talented, resourceful and committed individuals on an exhilarating ride, displaying genuine camaraderie and a willingness to roll up their sleeves and get the job done, for little financial reward, but a firm belief that they were producing something worthwhile.<sup>10</sup>

AT Crawfords' peak in 1975, approximately 450 were on staff.<sup>11</sup> Sound editor Garry Hardman's Crawford Alumni website *Crawford Productions TV*, with 1,567 associates registered, is an indication of the esteem and lasting impact those working for Crawfords inherited, and more adequately defines Berryman's notion of an 'extended family dynasty' in Australian broadcasting.<sup>12</sup>

### **12.2.1. An Hollywood Studio Culture**

The analogy to a Hollywood studio environment applies to the last years of the 1960s at Collins Street to 1971 at Abbotsford where the 'chaos' was managed, better until the cancellations of 1975 curtailed production activities.<sup>13</sup> Standing outside the refurbished Olderfleet Building in 2014, it is difficult to visualise the creative fervour and chaos occurring within its three floors that many describe as a cold, claustrophobic hovel; but this environment somehow instilled a sense of



intimacy and imaginative spirit.<sup>14</sup> Senior writer Tom Hegarty describes the excitement therein:

You'd have opera being rehearsed upstairs; they had the piano outside Hector's office at the end of the building, and they'd be charging across the roof shooting *Homicide* or *Division 4*, and a body would fall past the window and you'd think what the hell was that? So you'd stick your head out the window and someone would yell "you're in the shot, get your head out of shot!". They'd chucked a dummy off the roof. It was a real hive of activity and wonderfully stimulating, and won't ever be duplicated again because the industry has changed so much from those days.<sup>15</sup>

Actor Gary Day also likens the hectic enterprise occurring at the expansive Abbotsford studios in the early 1970s to the "back-lot of MGM. It was so busy I could never find my way to production meetings".<sup>16</sup> Ted Hamilton believes that Crawfords was the "only studio system we had outside of the TV stations":<sup>17</sup>

It was the first studio system that nurtured talent and creative artists; not in the sense of like MGM in America that taught you to sing and dance – they didn't do any of that. They didn't teach you to act but they were a nursery in terms of if you had to do it, it was sort of "you're on!" No matter how good or bad, you were on. So the writers, directors, the sound recordists, the editors – all of that had a working environment on a weekly basis that the show had to be done. Now how it got done they didn't care as long as it was done.<sup>18</sup>

### **12.3. Leaving the Family**

Loyalty and commitment were an integral part of the company's culture, although it diminished as the industry changed. Just as in the radio era, Hector and Dorothy were always willing to listen and help resolve staff member's problems.<sup>19</sup> When Crawfords was at its peak in the early 1970s, *Division 4* regular Ted Hamilton, facing dismissal for frequent unreliability, explained he was taking measures to address his alcoholism. Hector and Dorothy immediately retracted Hamilton's dismissal and offered to support his rehabilitation.<sup>20</sup> This hands-on family approach, suggests Tom Hegarty, "was generated out of Hector having his sister around and it grew out of that; I think that ultimately was lost with the move to Abbotsford".<sup>21</sup>

The same commitment was expected from staff, and when senior staff, actors and those who trained at Crawfords departed, their actions were viewed with amazement and sometimes as betrayal.<sup>22</sup> But reasons for leaving were many and varied: some were a natural progression as key actors, fearing typecasting, sought opportunities to

expand their acting capability in other forms of drama. Lorraine Bayly, who played Grace Sullivan, exhausted after three years of punishing 16-hour day, five-day-a-week production schedules, and missing her first love, the theatre stage, made a break.<sup>23</sup> However, *The Sullivans'* rating were so high and her character Grace Sullivan so beloved, Crawfords did all they could to convince her to stay.<sup>24</sup> Bayly was leaving two 'families', yet did not realise the significance at the time:

Hector didn't talk to me for over a year after I left *The Sullivans* because he was very angry at me; it [Crawfords] was like a family and I should never have left, and which I wish they'd made clearer to me at the time. But as I said in retrospect I'm glad I did because of all those other things I wouldn't have done.<sup>25</sup>

But Hector 'was' open to reasonable negotiation. Gerard Kennedy, after many guest roles in *Homicide*, a career enhancing lead role in *Hunter* and five years as Detective Sgt Frank Banner in *Division 4*, became concerned about the future of his career: he had little stage experience, and wanted to try other styles of acting.<sup>26</sup> As Kennedy recalls, Hector was understanding: "Crawfords actually let me work in various productions such as *Rush* (ABC), and *Cash & Company* (HSV7) to try and appease my desire to be doing different things".<sup>27</sup> Terry Donovan, another *Division 4* regular, was afforded similar concessions and accepted a lead role in *Rush*, while continuing with *Division 4*.<sup>28</sup> When Kennedy finally decided to leave *Division 4*, he did so under controversial circumstances (see Chapter 13).<sup>29</sup>

Similarly writers, after years constrained to a rigid style of crime genre writing, welcomed the chance to work on other programs, particularly as the reinvigorated feature film industry began to offer many new opportunities such as the ABC's epic serial *Power Without Glory*.<sup>30</sup> The first group of Crawford writers to become freelancers or join the ABC were Sonia Borg, Howard Griffiths, and Tom Hegarty.<sup>31</sup> Cliff Green also joined the ABC and worked as a freelancer from 1972 but his departure from Crawfords demonstrates Hector's intractability. Green, a former school teacher, enjoyed writing for *Homicide* and *Matlock Police*. Hector needed many more writers to sustain his three police shows, and 'ordered' Green to direct Crawfords' new writer training program. Green wrote for television to escape teaching; this was not part of his plan:<sup>32</sup>

So I went to Hector, put this to him and of course, you know, he didn't appreciate it particularly. He saw it as disloyal to the company, to the family. They needed writers, I was equipped as he saw it, to train them.<sup>33</sup>

Green did not waver: such duties were not in his contract and sacking him would contravene the agreement. When he pointed this out, Hector responded, "well fella, I think you'd better resign hadn't you?"<sup>34</sup> Green walked out, and later a furious Ian Jones, who admired Green's writing, confronted Hector in the boardroom over what he viewed as a serious error of judgement.<sup>35</sup> By the end of the 1990s, Green had established an impressive portfolio of television and film scripts, including the award winning *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. Lex Mitchell, an inaugural *Homicide* detective, was axed from the show after 26 episodes but did not find out until reading his final script.<sup>36</sup> These departures illustrate the poor treatment sometimes received by talented and committed 'family' members, and the double standards that occasionally emerged from within Crawfords. At the same time, many family members achieved great acclaim after leaving the company, often based on the training they received within the family.

Crawfords had grounds to feel aggrieved when technical people and crew members departed – given the company's investment in their training – as freelance rates of pay for feature films steadily grew.<sup>37</sup> The cancellations of 1975 that resulted in a much leaner organisation and fewer permanent staff, led even Crawfords to employ freelance writers and film crews for short-run programs. For long-running productions, many were hired as 'permanent' staff, receiving greater security but less pay. Thus writers and technical crews faced the choice of working on this basis at Crawfords, or elsewhere for much higher pay and little security; many chose the latter.<sup>38</sup>

In 1977, Overseas Sales Manager and future CEO of Crawfords Australia Nick McMahon rued the apparent decline of company loyalty and the notion of family that had begun to dissipate even before 1975.<sup>39</sup>

We are sick of training people up on full-time staff only to see them go out on a freelance basis to film in film crews, on features. You've only got to look through the credits for feature films and you'll find that most of the crews on a lot of the feature films worked here at some stage; all have been trained here.<sup>40</sup>

The movement of staff into more appealing projects was symptomatic of the industry in the 1974-85 period during which a considerable number of television series and feature films were produced both independently and by television networks. Ironically, much of the movement, and the subsequent success of individuals and programs, resulted from Crawfords' ground-breaking work in both proving Australians could make quality drama while training the people to advance industry growth.

Writer-director David Stevens associates this period with the 1972 election of the Whitlam Labor Government when, as he remembers, "Crawfords got caught up in" the great cultural and social revolution in Australia and around the world.<sup>41</sup> Crawfords was now permeated with a new breed of creative personnel, many of whom had studied TV and film techniques in depth; Hector had to accommodate himself and the company to many new young and ambitious people. These included directors such as Igor Auzins, Paul Eddey, Simon Wincer and Pino Amento; writers such as Vince Gill, David Boutland, John Dingwell, Everett De Roach and Luis Bayonas – all visually orientated people who sought to break away from the creative rigidity perceived in Crawfords' police genre.<sup>42</sup>

The public wanted more than Hector's tried-and-true formula of police shows.<sup>43</sup> Public values had changed – popularizing soap serial *Number 96* and films such as *Alvin Purple* and *Petersen* – so there was scope for Hector's long-established creativity. Hector responded with soap serial *The Box*, but Crawfords had very little 'in the can' and found themselves in dire trouble when their flagship programs were unexpectedly cancelled in 1975. The consequence of Hector's reluctance to be more innovative is discussed in Section 12.5.3.

During Crawfords' expansion at Abbotsford, and despite economic peaks and troughs, Hector never wavered from believing the staff was 'his family', even as the company became more hierarchical.<sup>44</sup> Ted Hamilton observed that Crawfords could be difficult because "they were the bosses and didn't like anyone telling them they were wrong,"; they were nonetheless decent people".<sup>45</sup> Those who made important contributions to a particular episode received either a brief letter or telephone call from 'the family', as actor Andrew McFarlane recalls:

Dorothy did write letters and notes to particular actors who had done performances as did Hector and Glenda. And I've still got some letters where they'd say "I particularly liked your performance last night" and that meant a lot, and they were always on their own card with their home address printed on it.<sup>46</sup>

Such letters are much valued by their owners, but silence usually meant that the episode or performance did not meet Crawfords' high standards.<sup>47</sup> One of the more progressive writers, Spaniard Luis Bayonas, recalled a comedy episode of *Homicide* he wrote featuring the Yemm twins, Norman and Gordon. "I didn't get a letter on this occasion", but contrary to some views, Bayonas remembers Hector as being open to experimentation.<sup>48</sup>

Hector's immediate reaction to key staff leaving may have been disappointment or even incredulity, but he rarely bore grudges:<sup>49</sup> "Hector was very supportive of the work his former writers did later for the ABC", recalled Cliff Green. Following the premiere of *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, Green was delighted when "Hector came down the aisle, put his arm around me and said 'lovely piece of work fella. We're very proud of you'".<sup>50</sup> Hector's second cousin Henry Crawford, casting director, writer and producer, found Hector a very dominant person with whom he had an adversarial relationship, which he attributed to Hector's unwelcome interference in creative matters and lack of forward planning.<sup>51</sup> A brilliant lateral thinker who impressed colleagues, Henry resigned in despair when the opportunity arose to produce several historical dramas with ex-Crawford staffers:<sup>52</sup>

I must say that Hector didn't take well to me leaving. Typically. I was mad and certifiable: "You've had another breakdown fella". But after *Against the Wind* and *A Town like Alice* were successful and time had passed, I had a call from him and Glenda extending an olive branch. We met for dinner and it was just a nice evening really, and I'm glad for the sake of history and family blood that that was kind of put to bed that night.<sup>53</sup>

Everett De Roach understood Hector's reaction to Henry leaving: "I felt that Hector had probably been grooming Henry to take his place and Hector had a great sense of family, so when somebody left he felt that it was like a death in the family. He felt very betrayed. [...] [When] Ian Jones and Henry Crawford broke away, I always felt that was kind of the beginning of the end of Crawfords."<sup>54</sup>

## 12.4. A Sense of Hierarchy

As in any large family, hierarchy led to conflicts and creative differences, although the sense of egalitarianism that Ian Crawford espoused requires clarification.<sup>55</sup> A strong bond prevailed among crew-members and production staff 'at the coal-face', but a level of detachment between the employees and management developed because of the value that Hector placed on some job functions.<sup>56</sup> Good scripts were integral to successful programs; Hector placed writers on a pedestal above even producers and directors, which makes Hector's treatment of Cliff Green all the more perplexing.<sup>57</sup> As director George Miller recalls, writers and the script department were always regarded as the most important parts of the Company: "Big money was paid to writers; directors received less than a cameraman!"<sup>58</sup>

An invitation to the famous after-work boardroom drink sessions, was a sign that you had 'made it', but the privilege was usually reserved for directors, department managers and writers.<sup>59</sup> Ian Jones remembers no particular barriers to attending if a person was needed: "Every night Hector would call me and say 'I think we can call the faithful together' and if there was anyone in particular he wanted to come he'd mention them".<sup>60</sup>

We had a board meeting every day and the drinks were really a sort of way of getting things around with senior creative talent, which was a terrific concept. Hector was an amazing boss. He was obsessive about talking to people about things and getting committees together and then we'd do exactly what *he* wanted to do! The perfect answer to democracy – benevolent despotism in full flight.<sup>61</sup>

Another element of the hierarchy was honouring long-serving esteemed senior staff with the title of 'Associate Director' – vis-à-vis director of the company – in lieu of monetary reward.<sup>62</sup> Writers Howard Griffiths and Tom Hegarty viewed this initiative with scepticism as it proved divisive: "It was a bad move and had the effect of immediately excluding all the people who didn't become Associate Directors; they suddenly felt that they weren't valued, and it really split the organisation into two halves."<sup>63</sup>

To be in that kind of inner circle as Associate Director was supposed to be prestigious. Hector saw this as a way of giving more people participation in the [running of] the company but it's not true. It's just window-dressing. Associate Directors don't do anything. They have meetings every month, and nothing else happens.<sup>64</sup>

## 12.5. Working With Hector

### 12.5.1. "But Fella, will 'Mama Footscray' like it?"

Known for his 'Hectorisms', Crawford addressed practically every male staff member as 'Fella' because he could never remember names.<sup>65</sup> He rarely raised his voice and was never malicious if something had gone seriously wrong; he was very good with people, in discussion, conciliation and resolving problems.<sup>66</sup> Suave, emollient and impeccably attired, Hector was affectionately called the 'Silver-Fox' because of his mane of white hair.<sup>67</sup>

During the Abbotsford and Box Hill eras, *Sullivans'* actor Stephen Tandy remembers Hector as a mysterious figure, almost like a 'Godfather': "Whenever we got the chance to meet him personally and have a chat I must admit I was in awe of him. He had such a presence".<sup>68</sup> It was this demeanour that facilitated movement between both sides of politics, the network bosses and people of influence.<sup>69</sup> Hector's Executive Secretary Anne Warren remembers the excitement of receiving calls or personal visits from Bob Hawke, Jim Cairns or Don Dunstan, et al; respected actors and eminent artists such as Dame Joan Sutherland.<sup>70</sup>

Hector's greatest attributes were his fatherly image, tremendous entrepreneurial prowess, ability as a salesman and patriotic commitment: "Hector was incredibly visual and vitally dedicated to Australia, and Australians being seen on Australian television", recalls George Miller.<sup>71</sup> First and foremost, Hector saw himself as a musician, artist, and showman, who was in his element conducting the *Music For the People* and *Showcase* orchestras.<sup>72</sup> Ian Crawford describes Hector as an absolutely brilliant salesman – probably no one better – with the panache and ability to network with people that mattered.<sup>73</sup> Nine Network Program Manager Jim McKay remembers that Hector was always actively trying to sell a show; *The Sullivans* for example:<sup>74</sup>

I met in Hector's Office with Ian Jones in to hear a new drama idea but was singularly unenthused. The proposal was a dark and grim series; not what I was looking for. I said we are looking for a family type early evening type show. Hector looked over at Ian who left the room. He came back in with a piece of foolscap paper and read me a vague outline of *The Sullivans* to which I responded "that's terrific"! It was a pretty significant moment for us all because it all started there and *The Sullivans* became a big success. I was delighted with the show, even on paper.<sup>75</sup>

McKay did not find Hector obsessive about local dramatic content. Enthusiastic, committed and driven, but not compulsively unreasonable.<sup>76</sup>

I always thought he was a great salesman with all his wonderful charm, manners and the graceful way. He was a very well-liked friend and achieved a lot. I think he made the most of his natural talents in that regard.<sup>77</sup>

Hector was a hands-on day-to-day manager. Ian Crawford recalls that his uncle would meticulously examine the daily production reports for all the shows, making comments and sending memos of congratulation or advice to actors and members of his 'family'.<sup>78</sup> "But he would think nothing of carpeting an actor he felt had not performed well".<sup>79</sup> Those who worked closely with Hector, however, were exasperated by his reluctance to move beyond successful program genres, or when he failed to grasp or ignored new program concepts; it was 'my way or the highway'.<sup>80</sup> Hector's perennial measure of success was that any new program should appeal to 'Mama Footscray'.<sup>81</sup> Henry Crawford and colleagues despaired at Hector's apparent lack of creativity and penchant for the fading 'comfort zone' of his police series genre. As Dorothy's Parkinson's Disease progressed, Henry recalls that Hector "tried to assume a greater role in the creative side but it was a disaster".<sup>82</sup> Tom Hegarty agrees:

He loved writers and nobody else in the industry loved writers like him. But he never understood them. When Dorothy moved out he thought he could take over that role because he'd been dealing with musicians all his life. Musicians are creative people – so [he thought] he could understand writers. But nobody replaced Dorothy; nobody could.<sup>83</sup>

### **12.5.2. Crawfords Without Dorothy**

As was outlined in Chapter Six, from the early days of television Dorothy Crawford was the 'supreme commander' of Crawfords' creative/production processes – with the assistance of son Ian as technical supervisor, Sonia Borg, Marjorie Keen, Ian Jones, Phillip Freedman, and from 1966 Terry Stapleton and Tom Hegarty. It was Dorothy who had the final decision on casting, new episode concepts, script editing, rehearsals, and studio direction of actors' performances, all while mentoring and nurturing 'family' members.<sup>84</sup> Ian directed interior actors' movements and camera angles. Although diagnosed in 1967, successful treatment enabled Dorothy to retain



considerable creative influence until around 1976, although others such as Sonia Borg and then Henry Crawford as Casting Director, took over various functions to lessen her load.<sup>85</sup>

Knowing that the creative side of the company was in capable hands, Hector had been free to employ his entrepreneurial and musical skills to sell programs and lobby for greater Australian content.<sup>86</sup> Once Dorothy was unable to continue, Hector felt obliged to involve himself in creative processes, apparently lacking trust in the competent staff who had assumed Dorothy's roles:<sup>87</sup> "He involved himself endlessly, even though he just wasn't creative," rues Henry Crawford.<sup>88</sup> Ian Crawford, while reiterating Hector's "wonderful ability to sell a program", employs the following analogy:

To make a program, to design a program, to make it, to storyline the whole package and to produce it, eventually – that was Dorothy. Dorothy made the bullets and he [Hector] fired them. And then Dorothy and I made the bullets and he fired and then it was Dorothy and Sonia who made the bullets and he fired, and then I made the bullets, and then Ian Jones.<sup>89</sup>

Cliff Green remembers that, "we were always pleased when Hector had a season of *Showcase* on because he stayed out of our hair and let us get on with the drama. He wasn't a drama person at all".<sup>90</sup> As long as the three police shows continued to rate well, Hector was in his comfort zone and did not actively encourage creative innovation.<sup>91</sup> He employed more writers and directors to keep up an exhausting schedule as *Homicide*, *Division 4* and *Matlock Police* saturated the airwaves.<sup>92</sup> But experienced directors, producers and writers became tired of the same old formula and the newer writers, keen to experiment in a changing social and cultural society, became frustrated to the point of rebellion.<sup>93</sup>

### **12.5.3. A Lack of Direction**

While Hector did not reject creative flexibility, the problems developing in the ranks focused on the continuous police genre shows.<sup>94</sup> After the cancellations of 1975, *The Box* and *The Last of The Australians* were the only programs remaining.<sup>95</sup> This genre, ironically, met changing viewer demands (*Number 96*) and aligned with the conceptual aspirations of creative personnel.<sup>96</sup> Despite sound advice, and although he

agreed to produce *The Box*, Hector's planning was inadequate. In 1974, he was quoted as stating that, "*Homicide*, I believe, could go on forever". It was his "don't worry about it fella, we're right" attitude that proved disastrous when the cancellations finally occurred.<sup>97</sup> Following the company's restructure during 1975/76, soap serials such as *The Sullivans*, *Cop Shop*, *Skyways* and *Carson's Law*, created by Ian Jones, Jock Blair and predominately Terry Stapleton, resurrected Crawfords, while providing writers, now mostly freelance, with considerably more scope and freedom to be adventurous.<sup>98</sup>

Hector was not averse to diversification when financial risks were negligible. In 1972 he used his salesmanship to arrange a co-production deal with American company Hallmark Cards. A little known American telemovie called *The Hands of Cormac Joyce* saw Phillip Island turned into an Irish village, with Crawfords providing production facilities.<sup>99</sup> Apart from this one venture, Paul Cronin believes that Hector missed chances to develop international co-productions. "I think the issue was that he liked to be in total control. But a little piece of a big pie would have compensated".<sup>100</sup> In late 1971, Crawfords divided its documentary and commercial arm into separate entities. A new company known as *Crawford Senior (Documentary) Pty Ltd* was formed under Sales Manager/Executive Producer Val Stewart. Nearly 100 short promotional films were sold and made for industry, commerce and government agencies.<sup>101</sup>

In 1974, Crawfords Theatre Productions was formed, producing concert tours by Glen Campbell, Liberace, Lobo and a successful theatre season of *Doctor In The House*.<sup>102</sup> When this diversification became competitive and financially precarious, the theatre department was phased out.<sup>103</sup> Nick McMahon, who had been involved, moved into overseas program sales, an area regarded as very important to the company in 1977.<sup>104</sup>

These initiatives indicate a degree of conceptual creativity, so it is unfair to criticize Hector for his apparent apathy towards more adventurous television concepts. His reluctance may be traced back to the enormous cost of making *Homicide's* pilot in 1963 and the subsequent financial hardship described in Chapter 10. Unless a television network was prepared to finance a pilot episode, as had been the case with

all programs after *Homicide*, Crawfords would not risk financing new undertakings.<sup>105</sup>

With advance planning, many similar programs to those that saved the company after 1975 could have been in development before the crisis; within this environment, disenchantment became evident around the company, around the time of, and after the cancellations.<sup>106</sup> Writers Russell Haag and Patrick Edgeworth left to form Homestead Productions and produced two historical series: *Cash and Company* and *Tandarra*.<sup>107</sup> Several Crawfords' staffers, including former *Homicide* Production Manager Mike Lake and Art Director Les Binns, left to work on the feature film *Eliza Fraser* while it was in development.<sup>108</sup> Thus Crawfords was influential in the evolution of these and subsequent Australian mini-series and films produced by ex-Crawfords' staffers, as well as the overall renaissance of the Australian film industry during the 1970s and 1980s, without actually taking part, at least until *All the Rivers Run* in 1983.<sup>109</sup>

#### **12.5.4. Dissention in the Ranks**

Amid this environment, Henry Crawford recalls “strange internal movements going on from people like producers Geoff Burrowes and Colin Eggleston to stage a coup and take over the company; it virtually halted business for a week”.<sup>110</sup> David Stevens agrees there was dissention in the ranks: “Young aspiring film-makers, not only ambitious, but with an element of megalomania in them”, felt that Crawfords' artistic direction had floundered, and required refocusing. The boardroom drink sessions disintegrated from a forum of creativity to an arena of suspicion and intrigue.<sup>111</sup> As this ‘artistic takeover’ loomed, Ian Crawford invited Henry Crawford and Stevens to the boardroom to question their loyalty:

There was just the three of us, and Ian said I have to know which side you're on, which was a shock to my system. We said well we're with Crawfords. He said yes, but which Crawfords? Us – the family – or the others? And we said well, the family. He said well that's good to know.<sup>112</sup>

#### **12.5.5. Missed Opportunities**

Although a staff coup was averted and the protagonists left, if Crawfords had the financial capacity to diversify into new TV concepts and “strike out into the

beguiling pastures of miniseries”, this dissatisfaction might have dissipated.<sup>113</sup> Hector continued to insist on full-funding from the networks for such projects, but mini-series or feature films were simply too expensive to fund without partners or overseas' assistance. Ian Crawford recalls:<sup>114</sup>

Not that we hadn't made attempts to get bigger projects off the ground. We were offered the filming rights to the best-selling Nancy Cato novel, *All the Rivers Run*, but were unable to raise network funding for the project, not only because it would only be a short-term project, but it was expensive period piece. But there's little doubt that had we looked to the world market at that stage, rather than relying on our own networks, funding could well have been cobbled together.<sup>115</sup>

Financial considerations aside, Hector continued to demonstrate an unwillingness “to go beyond the boundaries of television and television series/serials as he understood it”.<sup>116</sup> On many occasions new ideas were submitted but rejected. Around 1971, Ian Jones and Phil Freedman wrote a country doctor series called *Pat Malone GP*, but Hector wanted more dramatic hospital-type action.<sup>117</sup> At the time Reg Ansett was seeking a new series and while *Pat Malone GP* could have been offered, *Matlock Police*, another police series created by Jones and Terry Stapleton, was offered instead.<sup>118</sup>

Jones then penned a 19<sup>th</sup> Century drama series titled *Kelly Country*, but Hector was more concerned about *The Box* at the time.<sup>119</sup> Ian and Tom Hegarty prepared another script called *The Wool Kings* and the pilot was made: “It was probably one of the better scripts Crawfords ever had but Hector said ‘I don’t understand this, and I don’t think we could make it for whatever it was’. Hector said he couldn’t sell anything he didn’t believe in”.<sup>120</sup> Jones expands:

I was passionate about historical drama and Hector seemed to like this idea, so Tom Hegarty and I cast and prepared the pilot with Terry Donovan as the lead. But look, Hector never put it to a network. It was bizarre. Historical drama was Hector's blind spot. So it was a huge disappointment.<sup>121</sup>

Between the mid-1970s and early-1980s, Crawfords either did not, or could not, take advantage of the available opportunities to produce or co-produce several historical telemovies and serials that, as Ian Crawfords laments, could have been made “under the umbrella of Crawfords by our people”.<sup>122</sup> When *All the Rivers Run* was finally

made in 1983, it was only because of the favourable 10BA tax concessions then available to Australian filmmakers.<sup>123</sup> Hector was able to attract the Seven Network (through the *Herald & Weekly Times* and its subsidiaries) and HBO Premiere Films as co-producers/investors.<sup>124</sup> Smart recognisance work by Ian Crawford finally convinced Hector that life in Echuca on the Murray River during the wool freight era could be accurately portrayed with moderate expense; the pristine old Echuca township, a popular tourist attraction, was perfect for period props.<sup>125</sup>

Notwithstanding the eventual production of *All the Rivers Run*, Ian Crawford regrets that “our conservative company” did not take advantage of the 10BA concessions for nearly three years, by which time tax deductibility had been reduced from 150 per cent to 130 per cent.<sup>126</sup> Hector finally took action and this decision signalled a very successful five years of Crawford mini-series and telemovies, as précised in Chapter 11, until Hector sold the company in 1987. So many new productions were being made externally by this time that Crawfords found its staff being usurped for massive wages.<sup>127</sup>

By 1980, Hector's most talented and trusted colleagues had left to work on the serials and telemovies that Crawfords had rejected – out of sheer frustration.<sup>128</sup> Ian Jones and Bronwyn Binns formed *Pegasus Productions*, Henry Crawford became a successful producer, while George Miller, Tom Hegarty, David Stevens, Simon Wincer, David Lee, Jan Bladier, Kevin Dobson, Geoff Burrowes and Roger LeMesurier experienced great success elsewhere.<sup>129</sup> Thus a predominantly new generation of creative and production staff worked on Crawfords' miniseries after 1983. Staff stalwarts who remained with Crawfords included Terry Stapleton, Bud Tingwell with Ian and Hector Crawford; freelancers such as directors Miller, Pino Amento, Rod Hardy, Ian Bradley and Alan Hardy; producers John Barningham and Mike Lake; several former staff writers, while former ABC Head of Drama Oscar Whitbread was recruited as Producer for *The Flying Doctors*. But the addition of many new and progressive writers represented what was essentially a ‘changing of the guard’.<sup>130</sup>

### 12.5.6. The Terrace House Principle

Many who worked closely with Hector remember him as a disorganised administrator entrenched in micro-management. Reluctant to delegate despite his capable staff, matters requiring attention were delayed or simply were not done. "He wanted to control everything", according to Henry Crawford.<sup>131</sup> In 1980, Tom Hegarty was more forthright: "The way the company worked is basically the way Hector wanted it to work":

There were numerous efforts to introduce systems with several major consultants while I was there, to sort out a systemic way for the company to work, but nobody took any notice. Hector knew that he should work more efficiently or in different ways but his personality wouldn't allow him to. He worked in a very personal sort of way and that's what the company was all about.<sup>132</sup>

While they had no option but to finance *Homicide* in-house, these inefficiencies exacerbated Crawfords' financial struggle during the early years of *Homicide*, at a time when the company should have been capitalising financially on the show's popularity. Inept production practices resulted in excessive overtime.<sup>133</sup> Lindsay Parker, who joined Crawfords with significant experience as a cameraman, film editor and documentary filmmaker, recalls Hector's desperation in those days:

Hector called me up one day and said "I'm in big trouble. I'm losing money left, right and centre". I said well it's no wonder, nothing was being properly costed. It was an extremely big learning curve. I said to Hector well, to start with, you need a production office. There's got to be such a thing as a budget on all components of an episode and overtime has got to be approved. It's just ridiculous what's going on here on the moment. So he said right, establish a production office; I became Production Manager.

We drew up budget sheets, all script writers would send down their scripts to the production office in segments and they'd be timed. This was exterior film only. They'd be timed and costed and they went back, and we'd say right. If you've got a budget of say \$2,000 for this, you're up to \$700 at the moment. You can do this or this, or you've gone over budget and you've got to cut back.<sup>134</sup>

By the time *Division 4* was in development, *Homicide* was being produced at \$100 above or below budget.<sup>135</sup> *Homicide* film director Andrew Swanson contributed to this turnaround by drawing upon his experience as a second Assistant director for Stanley Kramer's film *On the Beach*, and later as an 'apprentice' in Hollywood:

They [Crawfords] had no proper scheduling system in terms of how you organise a shooting so I copied what we did in *On the Beach*. You'd have a production board and you'd break it down, put all the scenes, exterior veranda, all that you do in one hit. They had a sort of loose idea but it was chaotic, so we introduced a system that I think worked.<sup>136</sup>

As the 1970s progressed the expansive new offices at the old Kodak factory in Abbotsford provided production facilities far superior to those in Collins Street. Such facilities were fabulous while business was good, but Henry Crawford and Ian Jones continually warned Hector that Crawfords' centralised operation was risky:<sup>137</sup>

I felt, and I said to Hector look, we're in grave danger of becoming a dinosaur; dinosaurs are big and powerful but they need one hell of a lot to keep them going, a lot of food and faster quicker, leaner, smaller creatures can come in and survive on much less. I said, I think we're too vulnerable.<sup>138</sup>

Jones labelled the new facility at Southhampton Crescent 'Zoob Towers', a symbol of an oversized corporate structure that had dissipated the 'family' culture and contributed to the crisis of 1975. "The impression I had was that things just got out of hand and people too big for their boots."<sup>139</sup>

When Jones and Henry Crawford departed to produce a successful string of mini-series and telemovies, they applied a concept known as the 'Terrace House' principle of an expandable and retractable company; it was a form of decentralisation that Henry raised with Hector many times:<sup>140</sup>

I said what we should be doing is buying a little terrace house for each production, so there's not a huge mega overhead. It's a good investment and if something fails you're not dreadfully exposed. Like if you lose a police show you haven't lost two of your limbs. So I said we should have five terrace houses and a core production operation in each one – a script editor, a producer, a production manager; maybe draw on a central casting facility but just take these little satellites and structure the business like that.<sup>141</sup>

Hector never believed in this approach.<sup>142</sup> His ego, according to Henry, was so inflated that, having built up his empire, "being seen in a big office at the top of the building" was paramount.<sup>143</sup> The terrace house principle would have minimised the damage of 1975, but as Crawfords recovered into the 1980s, Hector's centralised approach was at least partially vindicated. Vacant studios at Abbotsford were used

again and *The Sullivans*' interiors, among others, were produced in-house and fed via an outside broadcast unit to GTV9.<sup>144</sup>

Crawfords moved to a more sustainable facility at Box Hill in 1982, and as Hector finally took advantage of '10BA' tax concession scheme to produce *All The Rivers Run*, its success led to a number of mini-series, including a successful sequel and a six-hour mini-series *The Flying Doctors* based on the Royal Flying Doctor Service.<sup>145</sup>

## 12.6. Epilogue

Many on the periphery of Crawfords remember Hector with reverential awe.<sup>146</sup> They attribute the company's success to his 'great vision' without realising or acknowledging that it was his sister Dorothy and a succession of creative personnel who transformed Hector's 'vision' into operational fact. Individuals closer to the company knew better. Ian Crawford, in particular, as production manager, technical guru, problem solver and from 1980 Managing Director, devoted his life to Crawfords. Despite Ian's dedication, Hector's insecurities and inefficiencies inhibited Crawfords from greater achievements and financial reward. Ian Crawford balks at the notion of Hector's 'great vision' being unique within the company:

It wasn't [all] Hector's vision, Hector's vision was only 50% of it; the other 50% of it was doing the shows, making the shows to bring his visions to life, or Ian Jones's visions, or Tom Hegarty's visions, or Terry Stapleton's.<sup>147</sup>

By 1987, with his health failing, Hector revisited the sale of Crawfords. He sensed the time was right when all three television networks changed ownership as the economic circumstances of the nation deteriorated; ultimately, Australia would endure a severe recession from 1991. Hector feared there would be considerably less demand for Australian drama and accepted an offer from Ariadne Pty Ltd, a property development company moving into the entertainment business. Just five days before the deposit was due, Australia's stock market crashed. Despite being financially decimated, Ariadne honoured its agreement and the deal was sealed – in cash. Two years later, Ariadne was forced to sell the re-branded *Crawfords Australia* to Bruce Gordon's Oberon Broadcasting Group.<sup>148</sup>



## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Ken Berryman, "Showcasing Crawfords: The National Film and Sound Archive / Crawfords Oral History Project", paper presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> *International Oral History Conference*, Australian Film Commission, Screen Australia, August 2006. [http://afcarchive.screenaustralia.gov.au/downloads/speeches/crawfords\\_oral\\_history.pdf](http://afcarchive.screenaustralia.gov.au/downloads/speeches/crawfords_oral_history.pdf), accessed July 2007, p.1, accessed November 2006.
- <sup>2</sup> The Packer family company - Australian Consolidated Press (ACP)
- <sup>3</sup> Bryce Hallett, "The Nursery Where Starts Were Formed", *The Australian, The Weekend Review Section*, Canberra, 21-22 May 1994, pp.13
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid
- <sup>5</sup> David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, Whangerei, Auckland, New Zealand, 6 March 2011.
- <sup>6</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 99.
- <sup>7</sup> Albert Moran, *Images & Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1985, p. 99.
- <sup>8</sup> Ian Jones was recruited for his writing experience and production with *The Sun* newspaper and HSV7; film director Andrew Swanson for his experience as an Assistant Director for Stanley Kramer's film *On the Beach* and later in Hollywood; and cameraman/film editor Lindsay Parker for his documentary film-making experience.  
Ian Crawford, op. cit., pp. 84, 115;  
Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 17 June 2009;  
Andrew Swanson, interview with Philip Davey, Perth, WA, October 2009;  
Lindsay Parker, interview with Philip Davey, Mt. Waverley, 7 October 2007.
- <sup>9</sup> Bryce Hallett, op. cit., quoting Ian Crawford.
- <sup>10</sup> Ken Berryman, "Showcasing Crawfords", op. cit., pp. 4, 5.
- <sup>11</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 116
- <sup>12</sup> Gary Hardman Crawfords Tribute website: <http://www.crawfordproductions.net/>, accessed 10 July 2013;  
Ken Berryman, "Showcasing Crawfords", op. cit.
- <sup>13</sup> Ian Crawford describes his vision of Crawfords' studio culture in this way: "The long-lived "Studio" production culture, with large numbers of actors and writers under long-term contract to the biggest production studios in Britain and the United States had all but come to an end, and studios overseas now engaged writers on a short-term freelance basis. But in Australia, Hector, Dorothy, and latterly I, had built a Studio culture of our own, gathering some forty full-time staff writers around us, boosting staff numbers to some four hundred and fifty. But now the axe had fallen, [referring to the cancellations of 1975] and far more comprehensively than any of us could ever have believed".  
Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 116.
- <sup>14</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, Sydney, 10 October 2009;  
Sonia Borg, interview with Philip Davey, Wylangta, Victoria, 10 June 2007.
- <sup>15</sup> Tom Hegarty, op. cit.
- <sup>16</sup> Liz Porter, quote by actor Gary Day in "The House of Crawfords", *The Sunday Age*, Melbourne, 20 October 1996, p. 39.
- <sup>17</sup> Ted Hamilton, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 9 October 2009.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., pp. 99, 116.
- <sup>20</sup> Ted Hamilton, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.;  
Tom Hegarty, interview with Albert Moran, 25 August 1980. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 270921. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>21</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>22</sup> Graeme Preston, interview with Philip Davey, Heidelberg, 1 December 2007;  
Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 30 August 2008;  
Terry McDermott, interview with Philip Davey, Upwey, 27 September 2008;  
Lorraine Bayly, interview with Philip Davey, Cremorne, Sydney, 28 February 2009.
- <sup>23</sup> Lorraine Bayly, op. cit.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.  
Bayly returned to the Crawfords for *Carsons Law*.
- <sup>26</sup> Gerard Kennedy, op. cit.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>28</sup> Terry Donovan, interview in *TV Times*, Feb 9 1974 (page number not available).
- <sup>29</sup> Don Storey, Classic Australian Television, <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/div4part2.htm>, accessed 15 July 2013;

Gerard Kennedy, op. cit;  
Gary Stewart, (Kennedy's Manager) Interview with Philip Davey, 9 April 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Sonia Borg, op. cit;  
Howard Griffiths, interview with Albert Moran, circa 1977. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 269364/269399. Transcribed by Philip Davey;

Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Cliff Green, interview with Philip Davey, Warrandyte, 25 April 2008;

According to writer Everett DeRoach, Hector had been keen on acquiring the rights to *Power Without Glory*, but was advised by his lawyers not to touch it, given its controversial nature at the time.

Everett DeRoach, interview with Philip Davey, Mt. Eliza, 27 August 2008.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Cliff Green, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Terry McDermott, op. cit.

<sup>37</sup> Nick McMahon, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 12 July 1977. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 269380. Transcribed by Philip Davey.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> David Stevens, op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ian Jones, op. cit;  
Henry Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, South Yarra, 6 December 2009.

<sup>44</sup> Anne Warren, op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> Ted Hamilton, op. cit;  
Terry McDermott, op. cit.

<sup>46</sup> Andrew McFarland, interview with Philip Davey, Kings Cross, 14 May 2011.

<sup>47</sup> Maggie Miller, Interview by Philip Davey, 27 January 2008;  
Jonathan Summers, interview with Philip Davey, Southbank, Melbourne, 7 December 2008;  
Paul Cronin, interview with Philip Davey, 1 February 2009;  
Stephen Tandy, interview with Philip Davey, Brisbane, 2 April 2009;  
Julia Blake interview with Philip Davey, Balaclava, Melbourne, December 2010;  
Terry Norris, interview with Philip Davey, Balaclava, Victoria, December 2010.

<sup>48</sup> Luis Bayonas, interview with Philip Davey, Hampton, Victoria, 6 January 2010.

<sup>49</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit;  
Cliff Green, op. cit.

<sup>50</sup> Cliff Green, *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Everett De Roach, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>55</sup> Terry McDermott, op. cit;  
Sue Boundy, (Wardrobe and Continuity) interview by Philip Davey, Frankston, Victoria, 29 November 2008.

<sup>56</sup> Terry McDermott, op. cit;  
Ross Denby, makeup Department, interview with Philip Davey, 15 December, 2008.

<sup>57</sup> Terry Stapleton, interview with Albert Moran, July 1977. From the NFSA collection, Title No: 269333. Transcribed by Philip Davey;  
Cliff Green, interview with Philip Davey, Warrandyte, 25 April 2008;  
Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 116.

<sup>58</sup> George Miller, interview with Philip Davey, Cape Paterson, 10 January 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Ted Hamilton, op. cit;  
Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Anne Warren, [Hector's Secretary], interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 16 March 2008.

<sup>60</sup> Ian Jones, op. cit.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>62</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, 13 July 1977. From NFSA Collection, Title No: 269345. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>63</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit; Howard Griffiths, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit; Approximately 12 associate directors were appointed over the years.
- <sup>64</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>65</sup> George Miller, op. cit.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>67</sup> Terry Donovan, interview with Philip Davey, Armadale, Victoria May, 2008; Terry Norris, op. cit.
- <sup>68</sup> Stephen Tandy, op. cit.
- <sup>69</sup> Anne Warren, op. cit.
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid.
- Bob Hawke as President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and later Prime Minister, Jim Cairns as a Federal Government Cabinet Minister and Treasurer and Don Dunstan as Premier of South Australia.
- <sup>71</sup> George Miller, op. cit.
- <sup>72</sup> Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 5 July 1979. From the NFSA Collection, Title No: 273664. Transcribed by Philip Davey; Henry Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>73</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 January 2008.
- <sup>74</sup> Jim McKay, Nine Network executive, interview with Philip Davey, Camberwell, 28 February 2011.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>78</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 116.
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>80</sup> Terry McDermott, op. cit; Ian Jones, op. cit; Tom Hergarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit; Henry Crawford, op. cit; Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit; David Stevens, op. cit.
- <sup>81</sup> "Mama Footscray" was Hector's flippant way of identifying and stereotyping the demographics of expected viewers. Footscray in the 1960s and 1970s was a lower class working suburb west of Melbourne, but is very much a multi-cultural suburb in 2014.
- Ian Jones, op. cit; Mark DeFriest, Crawfords' film director, phone interview with Philip Davey, Perth, WA, 25 September 2008; Henry Crawford, op. cit.
- <sup>82</sup> Henry Crawford, *ibid*.
- <sup>83</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>84</sup> Howard Griffiths, op. cit; Henry Crawford, *ibid*; Ian Jones, op. cit; David Stevens, op. cit.
- <sup>85</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit, p. 96; Henry Crawford, op. cit.
- <sup>86</sup> Ian Jones, op. cit; Henry Crawford, op. cit; Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit; Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>87</sup> Henry Crawford, *ibid*; Tom Hegarty, *ibid*; Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>88</sup> Henry Crawford, *ibid*.
- <sup>89</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>90</sup> Cliff Green, op. cit.
- <sup>91</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit; Tom Hegarty, op. cit; Ian Jones, op. cit.

- <sup>92</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 115;  
Ian Jones, *ibid*;  
Tom Hegarty, *ibid*;  
Henry Crawford, *ibid*.
- <sup>93</sup> David Stevens, op. cit;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 115.
- <sup>94</sup> Terry Stapleton, op. cit.
- <sup>95</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 115, 116.
- <sup>96</sup> David Stevens, op. cit.
- <sup>97</sup> Tom Hegarty, op. cit;  
George Wilson, "Mother Knows Best", *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 23 November-29 November 1974 (page number not available).
- <sup>98</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 115;  
Ian Jones, *ibid*;  
Tom Hegarty, *ibid*;  
Henry Crawford, *ibid*;  
Luis Bayonas, op. cit;  
Everett De Roach, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>99</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., pp. 107, 108.
- <sup>100</sup> Paul Cronin, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>101</sup> Hector Crawford, letter to Val Stewart, Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 6 October 1971;  
Hector Crawford, letter to Val Stewart, Crawford Productions, Abbotsford, 15 November 1972;  
Hector Crawford, letter of Reference for Val Stewart, Crawford Productions, Melbourne, circa 1977;  
Val Stewart, collection of production notes, memos and letter from Crawford Senior, 1970-1977;  
Val Stewart, interview with Philip Davey, Mount Waverley, 7 October 2007.
- <sup>102</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit;  
Nick McMahon, op. cit;  
*Doctor In The House* programme, *Crawford Theatre Productions*, Melbourne, 23 August, 1974.  
(From the private collection of Philip Davey).
- <sup>103</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit;  
Nick McMahon, op. cit.
- <sup>104</sup> Nick McMahon, op. cit.
- <sup>105</sup> Tom Hegarty, op. cit;  
Ian Jones, op. cit.
- <sup>106</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit;  
David Stevens, op. cit;  
ie: *The Sullivans, Cop Shop, Skyways and Carsons Law*.
- <sup>107</sup> Georgina Greenhill, Graphic Artist, interview with Philip Davey, 23 August 2007;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 115.
- <sup>108</sup> Georgina Greenhill, op. cit.
- <sup>109</sup> Glenn Martin, interview with Philip Davey, 21 November 2007.
- <sup>110</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit.
- <sup>111</sup> David Stevens, op. cit.
- <sup>112</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>113</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 127.
- <sup>114</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>115</sup> Ironically, when projects such as *All The Rivers Run* were financially more sustainable under the new Government tax concession known as '10BA,' Crawford's went ahead with this historical mini-series in 1983; it was a huge success.  
*Ibid.*, pp. 127-128, 132-133, 135-139.
- <sup>116</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>117</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>118</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, Kings Cross, 28 February 2009.
- <sup>119</sup> Ian Jones, op. cit.
- <sup>120</sup> Tom Hegarty, op. cit.
- <sup>121</sup> Ian Jones, op. cit.

<sup>122</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., pp. 132, 133. (See 126 below)

<sup>123</sup> *All the Rivers Run* was Crawfords' first mini-series and won two Logie Awards.

<sup>124</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 136.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 133.

"At the beginning of the 1980s, under the new 10BA tax concession, significant tax advantages were offered to investors in Australian films and, with limitations, in television drama.

"The Australian Film Commission received a large number of applications for projects to receive approval as "Australian" programs, with funding having to be from within Australia, the projects having to use Australian writers, directors, cast and crew. Once the project was given an "Australian" certificate, the only condition was that the finished film had to be publicly screened in front of a paying audience.

"The new legislation enabled many legitimate producers to make very many excellent and worthwhile films, but dubious third-rate operators jumped aboard the gravy train, hiring tiny halls for one-night stands to achieve their obligatory once-only public screenings—screenings of dreadful feature films which would never have attracted any investment moneys without the existence of 10BA.

"For all the time it lasted, it was a bonanza, not only for program-makers regardless of quality, but for investors as well".

Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., pp. 132, 133.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 132.

Sound Editor Glenn Martin remembers the turmoil in 1978 when *Against the Wind* started. "That took a lot of Crawford people. They just left and it was amazing for the people that did leave because that was one of the first independent productions and there was no guarantee of work after that. Crawfords – I'm not sure whether they were offering work to anybody to come back afterwards. They just didn't like anybody leaving the family, after training everybody up. There seemed to be some degree of resentment, particularly from the bosses anyway. I remember the stories of 'you're never going to work again' at Crawfords if you leave and do *Against the Wind*, which offered more money at better freelance rates. Certainly as far as I know everybody who left ended up doing very well. Then 10BA came in, the tax incentives, a few years later and helped the whole film industry".

Glenn Martin, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>128</sup> (see endnote 129 below)

<sup>129</sup> Mini serials, serials and telemovies that Crawfords had earlier rejected and were later made by ex-Crawfords personnel are as follows:

- *Against the Wind* (1978): George Miller and Simon Wincer directors; Ian Jones, Bronwyn Binns, Henry Crawford producers, plus six Crawford writers.
- *The Last Outlaw* (1980): George Miller and Kevin Dobson directors, Bronwyn Binns and Ian Jones writers & executive producers with Roger Le Mesurier and Tom Binns.
- *A Town like Alice* (Nevil Shute) (1981): Tom Hegarty writer, David Stevens director, Henry Crawford producer.
- *The Man From Snowy River* (1982): George Miller director, Geoff Burrowes & Simon Wincer producers.
- *Five Mile Creek*, (1983-1985) (Series 15 eps.): George Miller, Gary Conway, Kevin Dobson directors, Tom Hegarty, Peter Kinlock, David Boutland writers; Henry Crawford David Lee, Jan Bladier producers.
- *The Lighthorseman* (1987): Simon Wincer director, Ian Jones writer and producer with David Lee, Jan Bladier and Simon Wincer.

Source: International Movie Database (IMDb), Amazon.com USA. <http://www.imdb.com/>, accessed 18 July 2013.

<sup>130</sup> IMDb, op. cit, <http://www.imdb.com/>.

<sup>131</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit.

<sup>132</sup> Tom, Hegarty, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.

<sup>133</sup> Lindsay Parker, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Andrew Swanson, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>137</sup> Ian Jones, op. cit;  
Henry Crawford, op. cit.

<sup>138</sup> Ian Jones, op. cit.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ian Jones, op. cit;  
Henry Crawford, op. cit.

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<sup>141</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

Crawfords Australia, [http://www.crawfords.com.au/index\\_about.html](http://www.crawfords.com.au/index_about.html), accessed 17 July 2013.

<sup>146</sup> Elspeth Ballantyne, Interview by Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 18 April 2008;  
Terry Norris & Julia Blake, interview with Philip Davey, Balaclava, December 2010;  
Vicki Fairfax, Interview with Philip Davey, Glen Iris, 13 January 2008;  
John Hipwell, interview with Philip Davey, 23 July 2008.

<sup>147</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>148</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., pp. 144, 145.

## Chapter 13: The Crawford Experience

### 13.1. Introduction

In Chapter Twelve oral history accounts described the respective skills, contributions and difficulties associated with Hector, Dorothy and Ian Crawford from the perspective of those who worked with them. In this chapter, oral-history accounts recall the experiences of those involved with different facets of Crawfords' television productions. The perspectives of three distinct Crawfords' groups are considered: Bit part, guest and core actors; directors, writers and script editors; and production personnel such as producers, film and sound editors. Through their testimony, the premise that Crawfords greatly enhanced employment, training opportunities and career progression within the television and film industry, as opposed to limited employment or even alternate non-related careers, is tested.

### 13.2. Casting at Crawfords

Until Hector's second cousin Henry Crawford was appointed Casting Director in 1968, Crawfords did not have a formal casting office. Beginning in 1961, Dorothy Crawford and Sonia Borg, assisted by Marjorie Keen, handled casting matters; Dorothy had the final say on all selections.<sup>1</sup> After several 'forgettable' bit-parts in *Homicide*, Henry recalls how he was mentored into the casting role by Dorothy:

Dorothy very much took me under her wing. [...] Every Tuesday night, for instance, when *Homicide* screened, I had dinner with her and Ian Crawford and we'd sit and watch the show, analyse it and afterwards do comments on all the actors. [This occurred for every Crawford program.]<sup>2</sup>

As the company's output grew, Henry cast around 60 roles a week and auditioned perhaps 200 people a month. Because of his experience in theatre production, he also organised several of the national tours that followed each *Showcase* season. (see Appendix C). Moving on to various special projects, script editing, and production, Henry trained Loretta Healy as Casting Director; she held the position for most of the 1970s.<sup>3</sup>

Henry recalls that until his appointment, "casting tended to be done in the corridor", by word of mouth, although Dorothy and assistant Marjorie Keen set up a revolving

card system on which actors were graded and various attributes recorded: "It was a sort of early manual computer".<sup>4</sup> Script editor/producer Graham Foreman remembers that some actors were suspicious of this system thinking it might inhibit work opportunities:

They used to add a comment about each episode: 'A' for a really great performance in a guest role; the sort of performance you could hang an episode on, and say well, he or she will be able to do this as a leading man or lady if it's a big role like a confession to murder.[...] And then it went down B, C, D or E. Every night when a show was on air we used to watch [...] and do this Dorothy review.<sup>5</sup>

As noted earlier with *Consider Your Verdict*, Dorothy had strong intuitive skills in judging acting ability. She literally invited people off the streets to audition for bit-parts, and was adept at sourcing talent with long-term potential.<sup>6</sup> Actor Jill Forster, a model at the time, recalls her 'calling':

Dorothy had seen me in an Australian TV commercial for *Dove Soap*, which was only shown in Melbourne and not in Sydney. I was living in Sydney. She rang me and offered me this lead in *Hunter*. I said "well, that's really very nice of you Miss Crawford but I am not an actress" and she said "well I said you are!".<sup>7</sup>

Forster was encouraged by her agent, but said to Dorothy "don't blame me if I fall face on my face!"<sup>8</sup> Dorothy offered her the role of a security officer, working alongside Tony Ward, in two *Hunter* episodes filmed on the Woomera rocket test site in South Australia: "I watched it and didn't think very much of the series actually. I didn't think very much of me either!"<sup>9</sup> But it was a first step, and Forster gave up modelling to concentrate on what became a successful acting career.<sup>10</sup>

### **13.3. Making Stars of Many – Crawfords' Acting Fraternity**

As Crawfords' productions evolved work became readily available – particularly for those who could manage wide-ranging characterisations – so it was not uncommon for an actor to return to any number of Crawfords' shows a few weeks after their last role.<sup>11</sup> Many parts were small but some led to substantive single-episode or on-going central character parts. Unlike television today, actor Elspeth Ballantyne recalls "Crawfords wanted characters of all ages, physical appearance and ethnic background; that's what made them work".<sup>12</sup>



Remembered for her role as a compassionate warden in Grundy's *Prisoner* and later in *Neighbours*, Ballantyne graduated from NIDA (National Institute of Dramatic Art) in 1960 intent on a stage career.<sup>13</sup> Like many actors during this period, she welcomed Crawfords' bit-part roles as an income supplement.<sup>14</sup> Ballantyne found Crawfords very professional and recognized the strong partnership of Dorothy and Hector: "I think that every single one of us had enormous pride working for a company that strove to get the highest standards possible".<sup>15</sup> Having worked in ABC plays and its serial *Bellbird*, Ballantyne was very conscious of Crawfords' time constraints and budget limitations:

The ABC [...] was state funded and so I don't think the pressure was on you quite as so much when the government is paying for you. What I was keenly aware of when working for Crawfords was to do that job as professionally as you can because they can't afford to pay overtime, to get you the best dress in town and they can't afford the best cast. But we will do what we can.<sup>16</sup>

Ballantyne was challenged by the nuances of early television: little rehearsal time, overlooking flawed lines, and 'uncivilised' on-location working conditions. "I was in numerous *Homicides*, usually as a "fallen women; a sad mother whose husband had just been run-over or shot".<sup>17</sup> At Crawfords, and the ABC, she learned protocol on the studio floor: "Both were very good at that, so I had it all 'down pat' by the time of *Prisoner*":<sup>18</sup>

[But] my little input [to Crawfords] was such that it became a revered part of my career in that it was professional work and it was always quite a challenge because TV was fairly new. And so to do drama outside and inside, courtroom stuff and procedure; they got it as right as they possibly could.<sup>19</sup>

Maggie Miller, another stage actor, is also well known for her post-Crawford roles in *Prisoner* and *Neighbours*.<sup>20</sup> Miller appeared in many of Crawfords' early crime shows; her most substantial role was in *The Sullivans* after Lorraine Bayly's character Grace had been killed off in the war.<sup>21</sup> In 1976 Miller won Best Individual Actress Logie and Sammy Awards for her portrayal of a pregnant, hostile and brow-beaten mother in *The Life and Times of Tina Kennedy* during the last season of *Homicide*.<sup>22</sup> One of the many social issues Crawfords tackled, this episode focussed on child abuse and the unexplained fatality of her young child (see page 311).<sup>23</sup>

[The Director,] Igor Auzins offered it to me. [...] It was a real opportunity as you don't often get a chance to show any versatility. It was a very difficult storyline – I had to get right into it [the character who] was a bit thick but cunning. Tom Dysart played the husband, and Tommy's usually very upfront so this role [as a brooding man with a subdued menace] was difficult.<sup>24</sup>

She recalls: “Hector wrote me a letter congratulating me on that performance, which I was just gob-smacked by. I was so touched that he would actually write me a personal letter”.<sup>25</sup>

Miller did much ABC work, notably *Bellbird*, and recalls that both the ABC and Crawfords provided opportunities and training in technical processes, cinematography, directing, and acting.<sup>26</sup> While acknowledging the contribution of the ABC, particularly with early live dramas, Miller views Crawfords' pioneering work as pivotal:

I don't think the ABC ever had the viewing audience that commercial TV has had, and that's where Hector really blazed a trail, because he opened up the whole possibility for Australian shows. And people really liked them. [...] It's a great shame that Crawfords is no more because they supplied an awful lot of work for an awful lot of people.[...] [Hector] was an extraordinary man who did so much.<sup>27</sup>

Miller is enormously grateful for the chances she had through Crawfords “to strut her stuff: If you're not given an opportunity, it's very hard to create them, especially in TV”.<sup>28</sup>

Sydney actor Jeanie Drynan, another NIDA graduate, made her film debut in the 1966 British produced Australian classic *They're A Weird Mob*.<sup>29</sup> A regular in *Division 4*, Drynan maintains that despite her theatre training, working at Crawfords taught her the craft of television acting:

They were a terribly professional outfit; a lot of actors would never have found their film legs if they hadn't worked for Crawfords. Ian Crawford had an eye for the technical side of it, [...] and in the studios the boys worked really hard.[...] A lot of films may not have happened for me if I hadn't been in front of the cameras and learnt how to do it with the boys at Crawfords.<sup>30</sup>

Drynan remembers Crawfords as a safe and assured community to work with because this commitment:

Some of the crew worked really, really long hours; they were doing everything to get it up there and get it on, and some days were very, very long. You'd get into the make-up chair at six in the morning and you'd still be leaving the studio very late at night, but you were giving it your all.<sup>31</sup>

As a champion of 'let's make it Australian' and Australian drama, Hector Crawford's influence, Drynan reflects, was incredibly important: "If they'd [the networks] imported a lot more shows actors would not have been working and training; nor would the technicians".<sup>32</sup> Drynan recalls:

I think Crawfords cemented in me that I was much more of a TV or film actress than I was in the theatre because I consider it my apprenticeship in a way that it wasn't with the Melbourne or Sydney Theatre Companies. Mine was at Crawfords where I learnt my craft.<sup>33</sup>

Tony Bonner is another Sydney actor whose first real break was as a Bondi life guard in *Weird Mob* prior to his long-standing role as a forest ranger in the very popular children's series *Skippy*.<sup>34</sup> From the mid-1970s Bonner was a guest lead in most Crawfords' shows, notably on-going roles in *Cop Shop*, *Skyways* and *Carson's Law*.<sup>35</sup> Although Bonner had been an actor for ten years, he enjoyed being involved with Crawfords' dedicated actors, the camaraderie, the beginnings of careers of directors and cinematographers and the freedom that Hector gave his producers and directors to push the creative envelope a little, where possible:

Everyone came to work at Crawfords feeling that they were doing something, that they weren't there just for the pay cheque, that they were involved in a company that cared about them; a company with longevity. You knew you weren't just in this show and probably the company's going to collapse. You always had that feeling of substance and roots being put in.<sup>36</sup>

Having worked in the serial *Power Without Glory*, Bonner considers that the ABC, under Director of Drama Oscar Whitbread, also made a significant contribution to Australian television during this period. Reg Grundy was another major independent producer, notes Bonner, who specialised in game shows and "could always smell a dollar. But with Hector, it was all substance".<sup>37</sup> Crawfords, in Bonner's view, encouraged and trained many great Australian producers, directors, cinematographers, technical crew and actors; in particular, producers Henry Crawford and Ian Jones, and directors George Miller, Kevin Dobson, Pino Amento and Simon Wincer:

[While] quite a few of us [actors] had already started before we joined Crawfords, there was certainly a group of young actors that cut their teeth on *The Sullivans* and various other shows that went on to very substantial careers. I'm thinking of Steve Tandy and Andrew McFarlane. There would be a considerable amount of actors around today thanks to Crawford Productions.<sup>38</sup>

Several husband and wife actors made regular guest appearances: Maurie Fields and Val Jellay were well known to viewers while Terry Norris and Julia Blake continue to work in TV and film.<sup>39</sup> As noted in Chapter Seven, Norris regularly played a QC in *Consider Your Verdict* (in which Blake debuted on TV) and the early episodes of *Homicide*, while later appearing in virtually all of Crawfords' offerings in multiple character roles, as a criminal in police dramas or comedian in *The Last of The Australians* and *Bobby Dazzler*, such was his versatility.<sup>40</sup>

Overall, Norris's long-running portrayal of the idiosyncratic Senior-Sergeant Eric O'Reilly in *Cop Shop* is best remembered:

Part soap, part drama. This would have been the happiest time in my career and the best cast I ever worked with. [Crawfords] was a fantastic training ground for actors because you were working often and quickly, so I think it stood a lot of people of our generation in good stead. One learned to work very efficiently.<sup>41</sup>

Similarly, recalls Blake, Crawfords gave her a range of guest roles and experience that did not restrict her to a regular job while she raised her family: "In a way, they were a lifeline to remain connected with the industry and to feel I was developing skills that of course, once I went into say [feature film] *Travelling North*, I could draw upon".<sup>42</sup>

Both recognized that the ABC was a solid training ground and producer of local drama, but Norris echoes the belief that Crawfords provided even greater opportunity through access to commercial networks and their willingness to reward individual promise.<sup>43</sup> Unlike the lack of guest roles today, the ABC and Crawfords both offered a large number of diverse roles; Crawfords in particular, notes Blake, was innovative with their casting:

They would cast 'character' people; Alwyn Kurts, Jack Fegan or someone like that. Nowadays the casting is much more bland and younger, so if you think around for character actors working now who are say around 60 or so, it's really hard.<sup>44</sup>

As the Australian film industry regenerated in the 1970s and 1980s, Blake frequently found herself on film sets with Crawfords-trained crews: "They were highly skilled and worked fast and efficiently, so when overseas' stars came out, they were suitably impressed".<sup>45</sup> Blake remembers those performances as created in a friendly and supportive atmosphere in which even difficult filming conditions remained pleasurable:

To work for a management that cares about its actors and will then give you, no matter how small a role, feedback afterwards from the boss. For me they were the epitome of what an employer should be.<sup>46</sup>

Both regarded Hector as "a marvellous combination of passionate advocate for the Australian product and entrepreneur, and a pioneer who broadened work opportunities for artists". Blake often measures other producers against those attributes.<sup>47</sup>

Jill Forster, introduced earlier as a Dorothy Crawford discovery, is part of another married team; with actor John Stanton, Forster worked in *The Box* and *Homicide*. Both appeared in episodes of all Crawfords' early crime shows; Stanton was a member of the *Homicide* detective team for 51 episodes.<sup>48</sup> Playing her husband's lover in Stanton's final episode was an emotional experience: "I was shot and killed before his eyes and then his character was crippled in a car crash".<sup>49</sup>

Like others before her, Forster upset 'the family' and finished *The Box* on acrimonious terms after vehemently objecting to the scripted conclusion of *The Box*: "I didn't in any way spoil the ending because I was too professional an actor, but I didn't join in. [with the frivolity that the script required.] Hector was very unhappy".<sup>50</sup> After attempting to apologise and explain her opposition, "he just said 'well, it will be a long time before you work here again.' And it was. Once the Crawford family made you persona non grata, you were out".<sup>51</sup> But Forster rated Crawfords highly: "Dorothy was instrumental in guiding me along a completely new path. [...] I was her protégé; one of many incidentally". Working on *The Box*, despite several issues, was a highlight: "There was such a continuity of work; we were all like one big family".<sup>52</sup>

As Crawfords began to dominate television, veteran Melbourne actor Terry Gill found himself cast every four to six weeks: "It was wonderful, and the actors today can't believe it".<sup>53</sup> But location shoots were very primitive: Crawfords did not provide wardrobe, meals, facilities or transport.<sup>54</sup> But everyone wanted success and "it just wouldn't have happened as far as TV is concerned without Crawfords' pioneering efforts".<sup>55</sup> Gill noted a degree of 'cultural cringe' permeating the ABC:

I'd done heaps of TV by then but the director [of *Bellbird*] told me he didn't want a "Crawfords performance;" we want a bit of passion! I said what the fuck do you mean? There's plenty of passion out there, it's just that they survive on their own wits; you get paid by the government".<sup>56</sup>

Cast in a variety of roles, Gill appeared in all police shows before securing a lead in the short-lived but popular *Bluey*, which Gill regards as ahead of its time. The all-film *Flying Doctors*, in which Gill played the local police sergeant for eight years, remains a career highlight.<sup>57</sup> Gill is still a working actor: "But these days, despite your experience, you still have to audition for every part. With Crawfords, you were called in to play a policemen and that was it".<sup>58</sup> Gill reflected on Hector's legacy:

I can remember so many blokes just being shit-kickers around the place who started maybe as a boom-swinger or gaffer but gradually ended up as directors and became huge. If I'd ever won an award the first person I would thank would be Hector, because he stuck his head out and did all this; they were so popular.<sup>59</sup>

Like Gill, Alan Rowe was one of many familiar faces seen in numerous bit-part roles and high-profile commercials.<sup>60</sup> Rowe was a prolific performer for Crawfords from *Consider Your Verdict*, all the police shows, *Hunter* and *Ryan* to *The Sullivans* and *Skyways*; *Bellbird* for the ABC and *Prisoner* for Reg Grundy.<sup>61</sup>

Reportedly cast as a barman 18 times consecutively, Rowe never argued about the parts he got: "Some might have had 16 scenes, others only one or two, but I was always glad to be working with Crawfords".<sup>62</sup> One of the difficulties bit-part actors faced was the long break between filming exterior and interiors scenes. As Rowe recalls, "you'd come back wondering what was that character you were playing! The continuity girls would take polaroids, and you had to turn up exactly the same as your last scene".<sup>63</sup> As a comedian and stage actor, Rowe found the transition to television a challenge; it was a case of learning on-the-job:

I had to remember to tone down my movements as being on stage doing musicals is a totally different medium. My actions were too big, too exaggerated for television, and in a close up a lot of your actions would disappear off the screen. Television drama was new and you had to learn new techniques, and there were no schools to teach you in those days.<sup>64</sup> [Except of course Crawfords!]

Rowe was always a bit-part freelancer: "As long as I was working at my craft and earning a living I was happy. Maybe a permanent role in a series would have been good, but the flexibility of Crawfords enabled me to keep working in clubs, which I loved. It was a great balance".<sup>65</sup>

Thespian cockney actor Neville Thurgood successfully adapted from Crawfords' radio drama to a regular bit-part TV performer. In 1959 Thurgood played an uncredited bit-part in the film *On the Beach*, followed by several episodes in the ill-fated *Emergency*.<sup>66</sup> Like Gill, Thurgood remembers never having to audition for a Crawford role and it was not uncommon to receive a phone call at 10 pm for a part on location the next morning. Not viewing the script until arriving on location, Thurgood usually struggled with his lines: "I often used to have things like that happen at the last minute so I suppose I was a handy man".<sup>67</sup>

Frequently cast as a police officer, postman, barman or passer-by, Thurgood did not mind being stereotyped because "people remembered and I got work out of it".<sup>68</sup> He enjoyed his work with Crawfords and the ABC, while serving concurrently as an Actors' Equity representative: "I think that Crawfords did more for local talent and helping to promote it just as 'we' in Equity were advocating this" [employment of local artists]. Crawfords, Thurgood notes, supported restricting the employment of overseas' actors while providing more substantive parts for locals. "Equity had a very happy relationship with Crawfords".<sup>69</sup>

Nick Holland was part of Crawfords' next generation of actors. Inspired by the 'Australian flavour' of the early police dramas, he wanted to be an actor. When Nick was 15, his drama teacher suggested approaching Crawfords for an audition: "If you were any actor in Australia you could hold up your hand and say, I think you should use me in one of your shows". He relates:

They took it really seriously. [...] It was videotaped with three of their staff directors [led by] David Stevens, watching you live. [...] Of course you were nervous but there was so much respect for the business of acting and the

professionalism they were looking for: "We have a business called television for which we need actors so we had better go find the good ones". That was their attitude and I still find it incredulous now because nothing like that has ever happened since.<sup>70</sup>

Holland was cast in a substantial guest role in *Matlock Police* playing the son of a character played by Martin Vaughan, an actor about to rise to prominence for his portrayal of John West (AKA John Wren) in the ABC's *Power Without Glory*.<sup>71</sup>

I was really green and had no idea of the process of TV, but the older actors took me under their wing. [There were] between 42-48 scenes in the episode and I was in 40 of them, so I was really thrown in the deep end. [...] But in a way, my ignorance was a good thing; I didn't actually know enough about the process to be worried about it. I knew I had to act but how it all worked, well!<sup>72</sup>

Holland was fortunate to have secured this role. It was late 1975 and *Matlock* had been cancelled. It was the third-last episode, but after the *The Sullivans* became established, Holland became a regular member of that 'family' for over three years.<sup>73</sup> Parts in *Prisoner*, *A Country Practice*, *Home and Away*, several feature films and more recently, *Packed to the Rafters*, evolved from his Crawford experience.<sup>74</sup>

Now involved as an advertising producer/director/writer while establishing his own film production unit, Holland finds it extraordinary that Hector managed to get so many shows on air. In this context, the enormous value of working for Crawfords cannot be over-estimated: "I honestly can't image my life, let alone my career, without that experience".<sup>75</sup>

[Hector] had such drive and energy, [...] and I don't know of any other individual in Australia who's not just made an impact, but been responsible for the creation of so many things.[...] Whether you're an actor, writer or director or technician, saying you've worked at Crawfords is always a plus on your resume.<sup>76</sup>

### **13.4. Crawfords' Resident Actors**

Unlike the radio era when principal actors tended not to be contracted and were 'shared' among other radio producers (see Chapter 5.2), core actors in television were frequently under contract, generally stayed with productions for long periods and hence became more integrated with the 'Crawford family'. On *The Sullivans*, *Cop Shop* and *The Flying Doctors*, lead actors formed a secondary 'family' unit. While these actors recall their experience warmly, they also remember the gruelling



production schedules, issues with stereotyping and the irritant of constant recognition. Although Crawfords provided so much work, central actors often worked to the point of exhaustion as opposed to itinerant actors. Interviews with four main cast members from *Sullivans* describe how each dealt with these issues while revealing their views about Crawfords.

Before joining *Sullivans*, Lorraine Bayly worked in theatre for 15 years and was one of many prominent actors featured as a compere of the iconic ABC childrens' show *Playschool*.<sup>77</sup> Associate Producer Graham Foreman recalls that the process of casting 'Grace Sullivan' became so costly that Hector stopped auditioning. "Henry Crawford stuck a couple more people in and one of them was Lorraine. I remember Rod Hardy [director] saying we've found her, we've found her!"<sup>78</sup> Hector was pleased, particularly when he saw the chemistry she developed with on-screen husband Paul Cronin.<sup>79</sup>

Grace Sullivan, whom Bayly modelled on her own mother, became the most popular 'mum' in Australia, winning two Silver Logies.<sup>80</sup> But after nearly three years of filming from 6am through to sometimes 2am five days a week, while spending weekends reading scripts and learning lines, it was time to leave.<sup>81</sup> Bud Tingwell, one of *Sullivans'* many directors, empathised with Bayly:

I've never seen such exhausted people as the actors in *The Sullivans*. Lorraine Bayly would be in the first shot at 7.30am.[...] I remember one night I broke the record for the longest day's work; finished at 2am and [then] another guy went to 4am! Some of the younger ones were a bit confronted when they realised this was not how they thought it would be as a TV star!<sup>82</sup>

Chapter 12.3 notes that Hector was devastated when Bayly left. Her on-screen son, actor Andrew McFarlane, maintains the show *was* her: "It hung on her.[...] She was much more dedicated [than the younger cast] and much more involved in the quality of her performance".<sup>83</sup> Concerned about being typecast, Bayly yearned to return to the stage:

Thankfully I didn't get stereotyped. I got to play a variety of roles straight afterwards.[...] That's what I had been aiming for when I was training – to be extremely versatile.[...] I've played a huge range of characters from age 12 to 87!<sup>84</sup>

Having proven her versatility, Bayly returned to Crawfords in 1983 to play a lawyer in another period piece, *Carson's Law*, set in the 1920s. Written for Bayly by Terry Stapleton, *Carson's Law* won three Silver Logies, including Most Popular Show category 1984, and was a great success in Europe.<sup>85</sup> Graham Foreman was intrigued that Bayly, as Jennifer Carson, “used to fight against anything she thought was too much like Grace Sullivan! I’m sure she might have preferred *Carson's Law* to *The Sullivans* and [so] the part was created for her on that”.<sup>86</sup>

Because Bayly had worked in *Homicide*, *Hunter* and *Division 4* in-between theatre engagements, she does not believe that Crawfords greatly influenced her career until *Sullivans* because she “was there all the time” (seen on TV five nights a week).<sup>87</sup> If not for *Sullivans*, she surmises, she would not have been cast in *Carson's Law*, nor her roles in *The Man From Snowy River*, or other miniseries and films:

I can't go to the point of saying that I owe them my career because I don't, but I owe them a lot. They got their money's worth out of the actors because actors worked hard for them too, which was nice because it was a two-way thing, and that's the part that made it like a family.<sup>88</sup>

Bayly does not think that the Australian TV or film industry would what it is today, without Crawfords. It opened doors for those who contributed their own hard work and sacrifices to prove that programs could be made economically and efficiently. Hector provided actors and crews with the experience necessary to cope with movies when they came along.<sup>89</sup>

[The crews] that I worked with were the best in the world, not just Australia. Considering their time restraints and the conditions they had to work under sometimes the results that came out were just amazing. I can't speak highly enough of the crews on both those shows. It was great that Crawfords allowed them to learn; the younger ones, from the ones doing it all the time.<sup>90</sup>

Paul Cronin was well-known for his 220 episodes as motor-cycle cop Gary Hogan in *Matlock Police* and its brief spin-off *Solo One*.<sup>91</sup> As Bayly's on-screen husband, Cronin won five Silver Logie Awards as Australia's most popular male lead actor for his portrayal of Dave Sullivan, “an upright, hard-working and somewhat old-fashioned patriarch” in *The Sullivans*.<sup>92</sup> Although Cronin had no formal training, never aspired to be an actor and rarely acted after *Sullivans*, his achievements were impressive.<sup>93</sup>

After 14 years working behind the scenes in theatre, Cronin auditioned for Crawfords in 1970 for a bit-part in *Homicide*. He never attended Crawfords' drama classes; rather, Cronin was hired based on his audition.<sup>94</sup> Cronin particularly enjoyed *Matlock Police*: "I didn't have a very cultured voice, [which] didn't work for playing criminals, [or police officers]. So I came along, and a number of us who didn't have theatre training were better off for it".<sup>95</sup> Cronin relished being locked-in to continuing roles in successful programs. "Practising your craft all the time makes for a better actor I think. That's what Hector used to say and he was right".<sup>96</sup>

In *Sullivans*, Cronin was both literally and figuratively a father figure and role model to many of the younger actors. Nick Holland worked with Cronin on a daily basis: "He mentored me; both he and wife Helen had very strong family values. They really cared about my career".<sup>97</sup> Similarly, Cronin remembers Hector Crawford as *his* own father figure: "He'd praise you up for last night's episode or whatever, [...] and I had a real soft spot for him, but I had rows with him too; everybody did. He was a very strong willed man and wanted to control everything. But he had to, look at what he's done:"<sup>98</sup>

He was a very talented entrepreneur; we all used to say he was the best actor of all of us! [...] And there was a time when you'd read the credits at the end of an Aussie film and most of them were trained at Crawfords. Crew people, writers and so on. [...] I personally owe Hector and the whole of Crawfords everything. Without them giving me the opportunity I wouldn't have been able to strut my stuff. None of us would.<sup>99</sup>

Andrew McFarlane, having studied playwriting, performing and filmmaking at school, developed a passion for acting. Later, while an Arts-Law student, McFarlane phoned Crawfords requesting an audition:

Rita Tanno, [...] with a cigarette hanging out of her mouth, said here, read this, and gave me a piece of paper off a typewriter; that was my audition. She said "you're okay, you look good. Go to this address". The cops had to interview me. They were looking for a suspect so I had to shake my head and say "why pick on me?"<sup>100</sup>

That was early 1972. McFarlane then enrolled at NIDA, quit university and moved to Sydney while still on Crawfords' books, but students were not allowed to perform. "A little bit of knowledge is a dangerous thing", NIDA maintained.<sup>101</sup> Consequently, when McFarlane graduated, TV was considered a second-rate option:

We wanted to be with the State Theatre Company of SA or the Melbourne Theatre Company.[...] I believed all the interesting roles were in theatre. I was very starry eyed and theatrical and knew nothing about the medium of television. [...] Once I got in there I kinda went, wow! I still wanted to do theatre, which I did do, but the idea of working in TV was great and then suddenly I got \$250 in my hand at the end of a week!<sup>102</sup>

After several guest roles in *Division 4* and *Matlock Police*, McFarlane played Constable Roger Wilson in the final 55 episodes of *Division 4*. Working regularly in *Division 4* and later *The Sullivans*, McFarlane learnt much from the principals, “whether it be a brief scene, or a few lines”, and working with so many stalwart Australian actors in guest roles was actually very instructive.<sup>103</sup> Nick Holland recalls McFarlane and fellow NIDA graduates Ingrid Mason and Richard Morgan marvelling that “we’ve learned more in three months here than we did in three years at NIDA. Maybe not about acting as a whole, but certainly about the craft of television.”<sup>104</sup>

McFarlane stayed with *Sullivans* for 12 months and returned briefly for *The John Sullivan Story* telemovie. While agreeing with Bayly that the schedule was exhausting, McFarlane left because he desired to work in theatre and gain versatility.<sup>105</sup> McFarlane found *The Sullivans* “very identifiable” on both social and cultural levels:

I think everybody kind of went “that’s just like my family was” and while they couldn’t have symbolised everybody in Australia, they must have had something that everybody wanted – that’s what it was like for us as well. *Sullivans* certainly had a broad appeal [...] The *Sullivans* worked particularly well in Melbourne, and while the other states liked it, it was particularly popular in Melbourne because it was really identifiable.<sup>106</sup>

Sixty episodes in *The Flying Doctors* was McFarlane’s most enjoyable experience of working with a group of people in a long-running production. “We all stayed friends and it was certainly a Crawford highlight for me.”<sup>107</sup>

We virtually took the town over [Victorian country of town Minyip] and it became Coopers Crossing. But it became too expensive and logistically a bit of a nightmare for them [Crawfords] because it was a four hour drive. [...] We were churning out 3-4 episodes at a time, and the turnaround was impossible. [As the main character,] your responsibility is huge, you have publicity on top of that, plus your own life to fit in. So I quit.<sup>108</sup>

In retrospect, McFarlane regards Crawfords as 'his entrée' to the acting world. Theatre was his aim, but Crawfords gave him a national and then international profile because those shows were sold overseas, particularly *The Flying Doctors*:

It gave me knowledge of how to work with film, it gave me an introduction to the technical aspects of film, it gave me a whole handbook of how to work in TV in a film set. [...] Hector opened up Australia's eyes to watch their own TV and also created a vast school of technicians that then went on, not just in their own area, [...] if someone said I've always wanted to try this Hector would say give the boy a go.<sup>109</sup>

As John Sullivan's brother Tom, actor Stephen Tandy remained with *The Sullivans* for its entirety – over 1,000 episodes.<sup>110</sup> A NIDA graduate at 19, Tandy performed for the Queensland Theatre Company, among others, prior to successfully auditioning for *Sullivans* five years later: "I [was] screen tested and read opposite producer Marie Trevor who read the Grace part".<sup>111</sup> Tandy enjoyed the diverse nature of the role: his character was a devoted son, a great brother, a brave soldier, and a lover as well. He remembers Tom was very popular: "People would call out in a shop 'look who's here – Tom Sullivan'".<sup>112</sup> But fame had its price:

At one stage I got a bit overawed by it all [...] and tired of all the attention in the media. I felt like I was becoming *TV Week* fodder; constantly in magazines and just started to miss the theatre. [But] conveniently, they blew Tom up with a hand grenade against the Japs so when he was recuperating in a coma in a Darwin hospital [...] I had an 11-week break.<sup>113</sup>

Tandy bonded with former *Homicide* detective Norman Yemm and appreciated his support and mentoring: "We were side-by-side for four or five years.[...] He was the most perfect friend and actor to go through all that together".<sup>114</sup> Many of *The Sullivans* formerly fledgling actors remain in demand, as are many directors with whom Tandy worked:

The original directors were Rod Hardy, Simon Wincer, Bud Tingwell and John Barningham. [There] must have been over 30 directors over that period: Graham Foreman, a female director – Mandy Smith – and guest directors [such as] Gary Conway. [...] George [T. Miller] was a very popular director with the crew members; they all loved George".<sup>115</sup>

Tandy never tired of his role but working 48 weeks a year, often through the night, left him physically stressed. Winter shoots were freezing when using the old Port

Melbourne gas works as Changi prison camp: “We had to pretend we were in the heat of Singapore so we wore very little clothing. I actually complained to Hector who was very quick to sort out my problems”.<sup>116</sup> Later, two weeks’ filming in and around Amsterdam for reasons of ‘wartime’ authenticity, with director David Stevens, Yemm and Olivia Hamlett, was an unexpected recompense.<sup>117</sup>

When *Sullivans* concluded in 1983 Tandy was disappointed, but accepted an offer from the Melbourne Theatre Company and has worked in theatre ever since.<sup>118</sup> Asked to what extent Crawfords helped his career, Tandy contends that Crawfords *was* his career; it provided six solid years of employment:

But it was an unusual thing, I can't regret it of course, [...] but I just wonder whether I missed the boat in other areas? The film industry seems to have not been a major part of my career but I have done a fair bit of TV bit parts; nothing to match *The Sullivans* in terms of prestige or length of time but that will always be the biggest thing in my past.<sup>119</sup>

While many Crawfords actors and crew went on to feature film, Tandy elected to return to theatre. Such a long run in *Sullivans* could have type-cast him. Nonetheless, Tandy recognises Crawfords’ contribution to television as enormous. When he entered the industry in 1971, “all you were aware of, as a Sydney boy, was Crawford Productions, the Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC), and the occasional ABC series that was being made in Melbourne. Crawfords was the ‘Hollywood’ of Australia”:

I think Hector was ahead of his time. He was a great giant figure in Australian TV history and there was no prouder moment than when he was awarded the inaugural Hall of Fame Logie. We were in the audience that night but of course every time *The Sullivans* won best drama or actors’ awards, which it did several times in a row, he would stand up and beckon us all to the stage. That was such a proud moment.<sup>120</sup>

Gerard Kennedy left Brisbane to earn his living as an actor in Melbourne. Unlike some other respondents, Kennedy found the ABC had little to offer and because it preferred the more ‘cultured’ voices and creative people with experience: “The ABC didn’t want anybody who had an Australian accent and I could never get a speaking role with the ABC early on”.<sup>121</sup> Dorothy Crawford auditioned Kennedy who was bemused at her approach.<sup>122</sup> Because of her radio background, “it was all [based] on ears, yes! She just looked away, and looked down as I read a *Homicide* script I’d learnt”.<sup>123</sup>

Anxious to avoid celebrity status, Kennedy preferred working within a team and not as the star.<sup>124</sup> Paradoxically, his popularity in early *Homicides* and as a principal in *Hunter* and *Division 4*, made Kennedy the first *actor*, instead of entertainer, to win a Gold Logie for most popular television personality; two in fact, along with two Silver Logies for best actor.<sup>125</sup> Kennedy recalled the difficulties of fame after winning these awards:<sup>126</sup> “People recognised me in the street, but it was embarrassing, as Kragg [in *Hunter*] was a villain doing some terrible things. I thought it was terrible”.<sup>127</sup>

Beginning in 1966, Kennedy played several important guest roles in *Homicide*, usually as a criminal. Playing a violent and embittered jail escap , Kennedy’s potential became apparent in the episode “Vendetta”; he seriously wounds Leonard Teale’s detective character and then, during the manhunt, assassinates Terry McDermott out of the show.<sup>128</sup> After *Homicide*’s success, Ian Crawford recalls, Sir Frank Packer commissioned Crawfords to development a series for Channel Nine: “One Australian police series was enough, he said, so trying a different genre, Hec put together an espionage program called *Hunter* starring Tony Ward”.<sup>129</sup> Kennedy remembers that “Hector called me into the office and made me the offer and more money than I’d ever heard of in my life.[...] The offer was to play a baddie [a Communist spy] who embarrassingly survived every week”.<sup>130</sup>

Kennedy found the role challenging and deliberately underplayed Kragg: “I preferred the more natural style of British movies, so that influenced me really”.<sup>131</sup> It worked. Kragg became very popular and Kennedy won the George Wallace Award for Best New Talent in 1969.<sup>132</sup> Ironically, Sonia Borg relates, Kragg was so popular, the audience began to barrack for the baddies, so he defected to the ‘west’, mid-series, working alongside COSMIC agent Hunter played by Tony Ward.<sup>133</sup> But Ian Crawford regarded *Hunter* as a problem from the beginning:

Not only did Crawfords have to nurture Channel Nine staff in the ways of making drama, they had problems controlling some of the artists such as Tony Ward. But the ratings hit a respectable 29 thanks largely to with the successful defection of Kragg.<sup>134</sup>

Although Borg cast *Hunter*, she disliked the concept and was convinced that Crawfords should not have imitated overseas shows:

[It] seemed ludicrous, putting this sort of story into Australia. There were some good episodes that Howard Griffiths wrote and Gerard Kennedy was terrific. [But] I disliked this anti-Communist theme; that kind of bias, for me anyway. I didn't see it as entertainment and thought it was corny.<sup>135</sup>

When Hector decided to terminate *Hunter*, Crawfords commissioned Ian Jones to create *Division 4*, for Kennedy as lead detective Frank Banner.<sup>136</sup> Reluctant to make the move, Sir Frank Packer eventually acquiesced but threatened Hector with disaster should the program fail.<sup>137</sup> *Division 4*, however, “immediately struck gold with ratings of 48-50”.<sup>138</sup> After the rigidity of *Homicide*, writer Tom Hegarty found *Division 4* “a more flexible format [that] you could write a story [for] that really involved the plain clothes cops or the uniform division”.<sup>139</sup>

Yet for Kennedy, six years of *Division 4* did not provide the acting versatility he sought, even though Hector permitted Kennedy to work with other production companies. Fearing type-casting, he decided to leave, but to this day wonders if that action cost colleagues their jobs.<sup>140</sup> When Kennedy informed Crawfords that 1975 would be his last year, Hector wrote to Nine Network Managing Director Len Mauger who accepted the decision, and Hector then offered Kennedy a role in *The Box* (ATV0).<sup>141</sup>

Mauger, having absolute power, did not inform the late Sir Frank Packer's son Kerry Packer, then Nine-Network owner, who found out third-hand from a journalist.<sup>142</sup> Kennedy was stunned when the journalist asked him about Kerry Packer's threat to push all Crawfords' shows off the air if Kennedy moved from *Division 4* to *The Box*.<sup>143</sup> Packer claimed that he had not been informed of Kennedy's situation and was unpleasant when the actor visited him in Sydney.<sup>144</sup> Kennedy's manager Gary Stewart went along, anxious to help:

Packer said it's a great show, [*Division 4*] or words to that effect. It's a good show because you're in it. If you're not in it I don't want it! It's my money and I want the best people in the show and you're obviously a part of that success.<sup>145</sup>

Stewart could see both sides of the argument and suggested a compromise be negotiated. If Kennedy signed up for another 13 weeks, said Packer, he would release him “no strings attached”.<sup>146</sup>



I then negotiated with Crawfords for a new contract; we signed it but within days the whole bloody show was cancelled. Packer stuck to his word with Kennedy, but what he didn't say was "I'm going to cancel the show as well".<sup>147</sup>

Crawfords seemed uncomfortable in formalising the contract extension. Kennedy now believes that Packer had already cancelled *Division 4*.<sup>148</sup> Former *Homicide* detective John Stanton had been signed to gradually take over, but he only featured in episode 300, the last.<sup>149</sup> Perhaps Packer and Crawfords joined in this subterfuge because they both wanted Kennedy until the end to maintain ratings. Kennedy felt enormous responsibility when all three police shows were cancelled, but his resignation was probably coincidental amid the industry unrest that almost destroyed Crawfords (see Chapters 11, 12.5). Kerry Packer remained vindictive towards Kennedy, who did not work in a Nine Network program until Packer sold the network. "I got a running role in *The Flying Doctors*, but when Packer bought the network back, my contract wasn't renewed."

It was a conflict between Packer and Crawfords. Crawfords [was] hurting Packer's business! Packer's nose was out of joint because local production was having a lot of success and [this] hurt his pocket so when I decided to leave, I think I ended up as a bit of a pawn in the whole process.<sup>150</sup>

Some years after *Division 4*, Kennedy returned to Crawfords as an airline executive in *Skyways*, as well as significant roles in *Carson's Law* and *The Flying Doctors* while appearing in an impressive array of television series and feature films.<sup>151</sup> Still a working actor at 82, Kennedy appeared in the 2008 Melbourne gangland war series *Underbelly* and the more recent *Fat Tony and Co*:

My career wouldn't have existed without Crawfords, [particularly] as Crawfords actually let me work in various [external] productions to try and appease my desire to be doing different things. Hector was the type of person you don't find anymore.<sup>152</sup>

According to many within Crawfords, such as Bud Tingwell and David Stevens, the introduction of colour programs in the early 1970s is regarded as *Homicide's* 'golden era'.<sup>153</sup> The first all-colour film episode, "Initiation", broadcast in early 1973, introduced Gary Day as a new detective.<sup>154</sup> The unwieldy integration of film and video ended, production times improved and realism on the streets improved markedly as live audio replaced post-synchronisation processing.<sup>155</sup> After Day successfully auditioned, he expected a seamless transition from the Melbourne

Theatre Company (MTC) to TV: “[But] it was an eye-opener and I wouldn’t say that I took to it immediately. I became aware that hey, I’ve got a bit to learn here”.<sup>156</sup> Tingwell took over the Inspector’s role soon after, and Day considers that “we all made some extremely good shows for the day”.<sup>157</sup>

I learnt so much and particularly from Bud [Tingwell]. Bud was the first person that I saw who actually put character ahead of the dialogue. I mean to [Inspector] Alwyn [Kurts], Len [Teale] and myself the dialogue was the important thing; well, the dialogue is the important thing but Bud’s little character traits said so much about the character.<sup>158</sup>

The advent of all-colour film reduced production for each episode of *Homicide* and the other police shows from nearly three weeks to around 60 hours over six days.<sup>159</sup> Around this time the unsuccessful *Ryan* was axed but Hector, not wanting to make people redundant, devised a way of producing two *Homicides* a week by using the two crews.<sup>160</sup> Day recalls:

Unbelievable! We had green and the yellow scripts, [one for each crew.] I remember us cops were in there when Hector proposed this and thinking hey, wait a minute, what about the workload, or someone bought it up. [Hector] says I’ll pay you double. Well, go for your life!<sup>161</sup>

Day was impressed by the talent of *Homicide*’s crews, despite the youth of Australian Television:

To make an hour’s show, one every six days; they were amazing. [They were all] thinking on their feet. For my generation, you can’t go anywhere where there’s not someone that you don’t know from *Homicide*, or from Crawfords, and they’re still there – the sound guys who became directors.<sup>162</sup>

According to Day, many of the newer more adventurous directors such as Igor Auzins, George Miller, David Stevens and Pino Amento were very innovative and creative, despite Hector’s conservatism.<sup>163</sup>

Day also disliked the constant public recognition and associated publicity responsibilities: “I really didn’t have a knack for it and I can also tell you that I was pretty wobbly psychologically. It was also coupled with the fact that in some ways, I didn’t have a hell of a lot to do in *Homicide*, [...] apart from running or jumping over fences”.<sup>164</sup> But he does not blame Crawfords, and remembers Hector as good and very patient with him during these times and also during contract re-negotiations:

Hector said to me, yeah, okay, I'm going to give you \$250, [from \$150] and Ian Crawford said well that's fine Hector, but why? And Hector said, I think it will make a lot of difference to his work and commitments, and I think it did. A very gracious man.<sup>165</sup>

After *Homicide*, Day was cast in *The Box*, *Carson's Law* and numerous other non-Crawfords' programs such as *A Country Practice*, *Murder Call*, and *Blue Heelers*. Day also featured in three high-rating mini-series: the wartime themed *Come In Spinner*, along with *The Great Bookie Robbery* and ground-breaking *Blue Murder*, regarded as two of the most powerful and accurate Australian criminal dramatizations ever produced.<sup>166</sup> Day is grateful for the opportunities Crawfords afforded him:

They were good times. I look back on them, and I'm grateful because it bought everything to a head [...] that needed to be. So I have no reservations that I was in the right place at the right time and very grateful for it.<sup>167</sup>

### **13.5. From Concept to Screen: Crawfords' Writers**

Writers and script editors were an integral component of Crawfords' success and, rightly or wrongly, Hector placed them on a pedestal higher than most other creative or production areas. Senior writers and program creators Philip Freedman, Ian Jones, Sonia Borg, Tom Hegarty, Howard Griffiths, Cliff Green and Terry Stapleton were the principal contributors between 1964-76, but as each moved on while Crawford's program output increased, Hector launched an extensive recruitment campaign for writers. When Hector sold Crawfords in 1987, Stapleton was the only writer remaining from this initial group, and stayed until his premature death in 1991, not long after Hector's death. Like so many other staff within Crawfords, the experience these writers and script editors acquired enhanced their subsequent careers.<sup>168</sup>

It is important to highlight the perennial influence of Dorothy Crawford among the writing fraternity and the script writing/story rules she imposed. Although not a television writer, Dorothy could intuitively identify problems with structure, characterisation and timing, a skill she perfected during radio.<sup>169</sup> During Crawfords' early television successes, Dorothy had absolute control of drama and scripts. The Crawfords were reluctant to vary this arrangement, but, as David Stevens notes, it became unwieldy as Crawfords' activities quickly evolved to film and television.<sup>170</sup> Working as a team in story conferences became paramount. Sonia Borg explains:

We had the story conference before we actually started writing the script and you would have the script editor, one or two writers, [and] the actual writer of the story. You'd have to put in a scene breakdown and you'd all sit together, discuss, criticise, praise it. In the early days Dorothy was in charge of the meeting, and she would still come in if a writer was extremely difficult, or known to be a difficult person.<sup>171</sup>

Tom Hegarty explained that, "Dorothy had this innate, built-in understanding of writers that Hector never had. She could put the finger on what was wrong with a script but she couldn't fix it".<sup>172</sup> Borg recalls that even if Dorothy did not edit a script or produce the episode, she would still read them all and "make comments so all the writers knew very well that these were the rules".<sup>173</sup> Even after illness confined Dorothy to her home around 1976, she read all scripts and offered comments, a practice that continued for several years.<sup>174</sup> By this time Ian Jones and Terry Stapleton had the final say, but Dorothy still carried considerable weight; "if the script editor had any sense, he would listen to her".<sup>175</sup>

Dorothy based her intuition on Crawfords' traditional approach to emotion and drama, from which several 'rules' were defined that Sonia Borg believes made good sense.<sup>176</sup> There had to be a character to 'barrack' for or empathise with: "If you had no sympathy for anyone, that was bad. Not necessarily a policeman; a victim or even a criminal could have a reason for this terrible crime".<sup>177</sup> Long passages of dialogue should be avoided, a build-up towards action at the end, such as a big car chase, was always preferable, as was a good gender balance.<sup>178</sup> Graham Foreman remembers that in the early days Dorothy embargoed flashbacks. She saw them as a lazy method of explanation that kept the story from moving forward: "So Ian [Jones] wrote a whole story full of flashbacks to prove it could be done!"<sup>179</sup> But Dorothy was not inflexible, as Borg relates:

I remember in one episode we broke all the rules, Phil [Freedman] wrote it, I played the part in it, it was the fourth birthday of *Homicide*, and he was trying to show, instead of glorifying the criminal, [...] the story about the victim of the crime. Dorothy produced it, and Hector was absolutely furious when he saw it on air! It wasn't the normal *Homicide*; [it] really was completely different but Dorothy went along with it and thought it was a terrific script.<sup>180</sup>

Borg's assessment reinforces the idea of Hector's conservative attitude towards change, as well as the frustrations faced by some writers for many years, particularly some of the newer more adventurous creative minds. With Sir Frank Packer looking

on ominously, Hector had to be cautious regarding what both the networks and audiences wanted.<sup>181</sup> Tom Hegarty points out that *Division 4* provided a more flexible platform to flesh out characters, as *Division 4* involved both a CIB and uniform division.<sup>182</sup> This became apparent as early as the first episode: “The Soldiers” introduced Detective Frank Banner’s character by focusing on his personal life in a particularly moving manner.<sup>183</sup>

Crawfords assigned the best of its writers to *Division 4*, wary of Packer’s threat.<sup>184</sup> Howard Griffiths, formerly an Oxford academic, went from *Hunter* straight into *Division 4* and was immediately reinvigorated. Griffiths learned much about television writing from *Division 4*, which was about human interest more than ‘extravagant action’.<sup>185</sup> “We made the policeman people whereas in *Homicide*, they were simply still the agents of the plot; [they] didn’t exist as characters at all.[...] In *Division 4* we began to introduce the bad cop and things like that which would have been unheard of before”.<sup>186</sup> Writers predominately welcomed this new direction, although Terry Stapleton, offered only tepid support, tending to uphold the company line and Dorothy’s ‘rules’.<sup>187</sup>

In contrast to Griffiths’s frustration at Crawford’s rigidity, many later writers found working for Crawfords a rewarding and career-enhancing experience. As a freelance magazine writer in Brisbane, American expatriate Everett DeRoach sent a speculative *Division 4* script to Stapleton and was offered a six-week trial.<sup>188</sup> When offered a 12 month contract, 22 year old DeRoach asked Hector if he was quite sure – “I’ve got no experience!” “Look son”, he said, “we’ve been at this quite a while, we know what we want”.<sup>189</sup>

A prolific contributor to Crawford’s police shows and then a freelancer, DeRoach recalls that it was an “earn while you learn” experience. “We were given every amount of help and patience, which doesn’t happen anymore”, and again, in contrast to other views, DeRoach was perfectly happy with the freedom afforded to him:<sup>190</sup>

[After a program aired] We’d get together for a post-mortem, and there would be Henry and Ian Crawford and whoever directed the episode. They’d usually get maybe a dozen or so people around the table to discuss what worked and what didn’t. But as a writer you never felt that your job was on the line; they almost encouraged you to make bold mistakes. So it was a time of great freedom in a way too because they had four shows rating really well.<sup>191</sup>

DeRoach now finds it amazing that in the early 1970s, Crawfords had well over 40 staff writers and freelancers available, each of whom usually had six weeks to write a script. A strategy to keep scripts flowing, the importance of injecting a different feel, theme and approach was also a consideration.<sup>192</sup> By 1975, DeRoach wanted new challenges, although the solution came in the worst possible way. After the cancellations he was among the first to go because his contract had expired.<sup>193</sup> “It was horrendous for me especially because I didn’t have any other talent and was unemployable”.<sup>194</sup> After several months *Bluey* came along as did other opportunities, and freelancing became very profitable. “I look back on it now as being the best thing that ever happened”.<sup>195</sup>

DeRoach regarded Hector and Dorothy as brave people. “I probably didn’t realise until they were gone just how bold they were. Dorothy used to strike the fear of God into us, but gosh she knew her stuff, and we listened”.<sup>196</sup> DeRoach looks back fondly:

Between them and Grundys, there was no industry otherwise. I guess the ABC was doing a bit with *Bellbird*. But as far as commercial drama [goes] Crawfords was the only game in town. [...] I had to pinch myself every day and still do. [...] I despair to think where I’d be if that hadn’t come along. It changed my whole life.[...] Through Crawfords [...] I was trained with skills that I still use every day.<sup>197</sup>

When DeRoach joined Crawfords he enjoyed reading the scripts of progressive writers such as Luis Bayonas. (see Chapter 12) “He was my hero – I think it’s because he’s European”.<sup>198</sup> A Spanish artist and writer, Bayonas had struggled to make a living in Franco’s Spain, the land of ‘spaghetti westerns’ and military dictatorship. Working as a film crew member, he began writing scripts and met future wife and Crawfords’ writer Lynn, who was working for Orson Wells in Madrid. Having escaped the restrictions of Spain to live in Burma, Lynn found a copy of *The Melbourne Age* in which Hector advertised for writers and, wanting to return home herself, encouraged Bayonas to apply:<sup>199</sup>

I knew nothing about Australia, it was a big blank. [...] I said well nobody is going to hire anybody from here – how do you do it? So she organised sending one of my scripts and I got a letter from Hector saying “You’re hired”, trial period one year and see how you like it. So okay, why not?<sup>200</sup>

Bayonas found Melbourne somewhat dull which he compared to Spain in the 1940s: “Everything closed at night; it was like a time machine”.<sup>201</sup> But at Crawfords, he was introduced to many “incredible writers writing stunning scripts”, and in Hector he found “a very understanding, adventurous and imaginative producer. I looked forward to going to work at Crawfords”.<sup>202</sup>

I couldn't believe my luck. I think I arrived around the end of 1969 and worked on *Homicide*. I found things about me there that I didn't know. I loved the place, I loved Melbourne.[...] The work was full-on because we had to come up with an episode a month or something. It was so good to be able to have the freedom.<sup>203</sup>

By his own admission, Bayonas was an eccentric writer, which contradicts the common view that writers were rarely allowed to stray from the accepted formula and ‘rules’. The fact that Hector offered a contract to a more radical writer on speculation, at a higher pay rate, refutes the notion that he was stuck in the past and not open to new ideas.<sup>204</sup> As Bayonas remembers:

At Crawfords, we as writers used to get together and decide the shape and the format of the show. It was writers thinking and taking to Hector. We'd go to the boardroom and have a drink and say to Hector what are we going to do now; where do we go from here? We have to change this and that, and I was writing very off-beat because I hate boring formula, traditional things, and they let me get away with that.<sup>205</sup>

Even with his different cultural background, Bayonas was able to adapt his style to Australian culture and vernacular, evidenced by his prolific contribution to Crawford productions and Australian television.<sup>206</sup> Aware of Hector's conservatism, he is amazed at his own achievements: “It is more of a wonder to me how I could get away with the things I was writing”.<sup>207</sup> Working for Crawfords was a great training ground for the Spaniard, “the best training I had in my life”:

When you are writing for TV you have to be super good because it's very, very hard. You don't write freely as you would feel like doing. It's not sort of yourself but moved by inspiration. You have three weeks to do it, you got to write around a rigid story, incredibly hard. [sic].<sup>208</sup>

Bayonas enjoyed the camaraderie at Crawfords and was very close to writer John Dingwell whom he tagged as a typical Aussie. “He [Dingwell] wrote [the film]

*Sunday Too Far Away*, and working with good people like that at Crawfords was a life changing experience".<sup>209</sup>

### **13.6. From Driver to Director; Trainee to Sound Editor**

For on-location personnel, producing 15-20 minutes of exteriors to integrate with studio scenes was like an endless film school.<sup>210</sup> After a day's shooting, George Miller explained, they would cut the film together for evaluation in what was called a 'double head'. This was Ian Crawford's domain: "Ian was a bit of a tough nut and I learnt a hell of a lot from Ian, often at my own peril".<sup>211</sup> Miller explains:

He was so clear about everything; what the film had to communicate and what we were obliged to communicate, and how your film had to tell *that* story.<sup>212</sup>

You would be rolling along and he would just go stop it, roll it back. "Take a look at this. Have you got a cut-away of that?" You would say yes. "Put in a cut-away, it'll make it smoother; I'm confused; I don't know where I am? Have you got a wide shot; something that shows me where these two people are? Yeah, OK, put it in!" This was like film school, every week, 48 weeks a year.<sup>213</sup>

Experienced film director Andrew Swanson appreciated the Crawford practice of allowing directors to make the first cut. After working with a good editor for several days, a double-head screening with Ian Crawford and perhaps Ian Jones proved invaluable, as was the judgement of a random third person.<sup>214</sup>

They would not have read the script and would have seen nothing. So the scene would start and Ian Crawford would say "hold it", stop the camera. "I didn't get that. That happened too quickly". And you would say ok, we'll extend the length of that scene by a few seconds or he might continue on and say "wait a minute, we need a close up of that person, I want to see her face".

You'd agree. You'd say to Ian Crawford yeah, fair enough, and later on when you saw the show on air, and you saw the alterations, you'd think yeah, dead right.<sup>215</sup>

Miller agrees. When he directed the non-Crawfords feature film *The Man From Snowy River* in 1982, featuring Kirk Douglas, Miller invited Ian Crawford to the double-head screening out of sheer respect:

That was an enormously proud moment for us because we'd learnt so much from him. There it was, and at the end of it he just went GOOD! And that was about as thumbs up as he ever got.<sup>216</sup>



Just as Dorothy Crawford and Ian Jones were integral to creative processes, Ian Crawford and David Lee held similar status with their “extraordinary technical knowledge”.<sup>217</sup> Both educated themselves in the complexities of television production. Ian had perennial oversight and quality control responsibilities as either producer or executive producer. Both trained the trainers who then trained other trainers; one of many to benefit was sound editor was Glenn Martin.

After Martin finished school in 1971 jobs were scarce. Intent on a career in television production, he applied to Crawfords but they had a waiting list of 200 people. Later, while working in the photographic department at Myers, Martin called Crawfords several times: “If you showed interest by ringing again, you jumped the queue. Once they saw your enthusiasm they gave you a chance; I was just 17”.<sup>218</sup>

Assigned to the training department, Martin found himself surrounded by other young people. “There were perhaps six trainees who would be fed out to different departments whenever they needed help”.<sup>219</sup> Martin was taught the art of negative matching which he pursued for over two years, with about 14 others, at the time *Homicide* was running two crews after *Ryan* had ended: “This was about 48 weeks work a year on each; an amazing turnover that nobody could match at the time. [...] Nobody was getting overtime and the rates of pay weren't all that great but we were certainly dedicated to the cause”.<sup>220</sup> When production slowed, Martin trained in the sound department.<sup>221</sup>

Having survived the redundancies of 1975, Martin worked on *Solo One* as assistant sound editor: “My first job as sound editor was on *Bluey* and then I took over *The Sullivans* for a couple of years”.<sup>222</sup> Like others, Martin found working on *Sullivans* “tough and cruel” which forced him to leave Crawfords.<sup>223</sup> Being an integrated program, film inserts (external location shots) went from about eight minutes a week to thirty-six when the writers decided to include war scenes and follow the characters around.<sup>224</sup>

I was the only sound editor doing it. You'd be recording the actors, organising the actors, post syncing, finding alternative dialogue, doing all the footsteps, body noises, effects and explosions. So after two years I just got totally burnt out.

[But] it's amazing when you think back of now, considering the equipment we were using was quite basic, but then there was no comparison. Any slight technology leap was huge. Looking back, you might think that was nothing, compared to how it is now, but I think that was part of it. Everybody was just trying to get the best; they could see that they were improving things, and it didn't matter that it took a lot of time.<sup>225</sup>

As a freelancer, Martin returned to Crawfords for *Special Squad*, *Young Ramsay* and several mini-series including *All the Rivers Run*: "I think anybody who worked on that show just loved it so much. It was very high quality and Crawfords took the gamble".<sup>226</sup>

Now based in Perth, Martin works on sound recording and editing for social and historical documentaries, television drama and film projects: "I've got my own digital suite now so when I do work at home it's all my own stuff. I could never have done that years ago".<sup>227</sup> Martin is grateful to Crawfords for setting up his career:

If Crawfords hadn't of been around, the people from my era wouldn't have got in the industry and maybe out of it for say 10-15 years later. It would have been a totally different mentality. Crawfords proved that Australians could make quality programs and changed public opinion.<sup>228</sup>

When the 1997 motion picture epic *Titanic* won 11 Academy Awards, Hugh Waddell was part of the sound editing team working as Supervising Automated Dialogue Replacement (ADR) Editor. Waddell and his colleagues were also recognised by the Motion Picture Sound Editors, USA, with the Golden Reel Award.<sup>229</sup> One of those Academy Awards was for Best Sound and Editing, and Waddell remembers being mentioned on stage at the Academy as a proud moment – to have worked on one of the most successful films ever, along with many other great films in Hollywood, was amazing for a "for a kid just off the street straight out of school into a job at Crawfords".<sup>230</sup> This was the catalyst. "It was all because of the training I got back then".<sup>231</sup>

Waddell was a high school drop-out; the only course he enjoyed was film and sound editing: "I tried for two years to get into Grundys and Crawfords".<sup>232</sup> Finally his mother called Crawfords' Administration Manger Diana Howard and convinced her to give the 18 year old a try-out. With an opening in the sound department, Waddell was matched up with Richard Marks: "We'll give you both a week and a show

[each] to cut and the person who cuts the best show gets the job as a music editor".<sup>233</sup> At the end of an enterprising week, Crawfords' technicians listened to both cuts and said, "Richard, you're the music editor; Hugh, you're the sound effects editor".<sup>234</sup> To this day, both are working in the same field; though at a much higher level.

As assistant to experienced technicians Frank Lipson and Glenn Martin, Waddell transferred daily rushes (the day's filming), usually exterior action material, from quarter inch master location rolls to 16mm film for programs such as *The Sullivans*, *Cop Shop* and *Skyways*.<sup>235</sup> Working at Abbotsford in 1979, Waddell was given his first show when, after several months, Crawfords was short an editor: "Let's see what you can do with it. You've got one week". He recalls:

And that's what I loved about Crawfords, they always promoted from within and trained us. They really showed us every facet of post-production, the world I was in. But they trained me in sound effects, choosing sound effects and cutting dialogue; [...] the way sound effects worked with the dialogue, and recording the ADR.<sup>236</sup>

Between 1979 and 1982, Waddell worked extensively on *The Sullivans* and enjoyed the family environment Crawfords still engendered, even after the turmoil of 1975. "It was throughout the company; from the woman who answered the phones through to the grips, the security guard and the post-production people. It was like we were all in it together".<sup>237</sup>

After moving on to other Australian-based productions, Waddell moved to Southern California in the mid-1990s and has since worked on over 70 motion pictures.<sup>238</sup> He attributes his success to the multi-faceted (rather than specialised) training he received from Crawfords, generating the versatility to take on any job thrown at him. This is true of many Crawfords' alumni he encounters: "Crawfords created a generation of technicians and although we all went our own ways, even to this day I still talk to ex-Crawfords' guys all the time in Hollywood".<sup>239</sup>

Waddell does not believe his career would have developed without Crawfords. The new Australian Film School in Sydney was elitist and catered to intellectuals with a film project in mind. The ABC, despite many approaches and letters, always seemed like a closed shop to Waddell.<sup>240</sup> "There may have been an opportunity but there was

certainly no clear road to becoming a professional sound person other than the likes of Crawfords, which was more open to taking on young fellows and training them".<sup>241</sup>

An accountant by profession, George T. Miller became coordinator of Crawfords' public affairs discussion program *Fighting Words* around 1966.<sup>242</sup> Miller approached Crawfords because of his avid interest in politics, and for a time worked as an administrator with General Manager Bob Pascoe while acting as Dorothy's chauffeur. Miller enjoyed photography and cinematography so when a vacancy arose for a first assistant director, he went on-location as assistant to *Homicide* directors such as Gary Conway and David Lee.<sup>243</sup> His inexperience did not matter; they were prepared to give him a chance to prove himself.

Miller learnt the role of focus-puller/assistant cameraman, among other functions, and was invited by Ian Jones to work as his assistant director on the controversial *Division 4* episode "John Kelso" (see endnote 181). "We actually did two episodes and got on like a house on fire".<sup>244</sup> Miller was then called in to see Hector:

Fella, for your sins you are to become a director. Your father-confessor is Ian Jones. [...] So I said "when would you like me to start?" This was Tuesday and he said "Monday fella!" So I had to learn all about film directing, that I hadn't already learned, in a few days, as well as preparing that episode and finding locations. [etc.]<sup>245</sup>

Miller directed all three police programs. "*Matlock* was my favourite, [...] It was in the country and I'm a boy from the country".<sup>246</sup> *Young Ramsay*, featuring John Hargreaves as a county veterinarian, was something quite different for Miller, which he directed and produced with Ian Crawford as executive producer: "I discovered that I knew how to work with animals, [...] but some directors couldn't hack it".<sup>247</sup> Miller later directed the mini-series *All the Rivers Run* (1983) and Nevil Shute's *The Far Country* (1987), during which period, he believed, "Crawfords peaked; absolutely".<sup>248</sup> So had Miller – from coordinator and chauffeur to respected director! To be entrusted with, in Miller's words, such "exquisite and sophisticated" productions strongly attests to the success of Crawfords' training philosophy and regime.<sup>249</sup>

For Miller, however, what really embodied Crawfords' camaraderie, its risk-taking and pioneering can-do spirit, was a long-held principle that he has never forgotten: "I learnt from David [Lee] that to survive in the industry there was a rule at Crawfords, which was 'don't come back without the film – ever.'"<sup>250</sup> No excuse was good enough:

David taught me that people trust you when you go out there with a certain amount of film, some actors, a script and a bunch of crew largely unable to get around in cars because many of them weren't old enough, that you CAN make it work, that you can have the mobility in the head to just make it work, to know the story and never come back without it.<sup>251</sup>

For instance, Miller was directing a night shoot when the cameraman took ill. 'Don't come back without it' lingered in his mind'. "I called Production Manager Lindsay Parker". He recalls:

I said Lindsay, I'm not going to leave here without the film. "If you shoot it, I'll fire you". So I said fuck you, and said to Ian Dewhurst the gaffer, let's shoot it, and he and I just shot it. I wanted to get it done and it was damn good, actually. I think I got a note from Hector saying thank you for stepping into the breach fella!<sup>252</sup>

Miller regards Crawfords as an incredibly prolific film school, which with Hector's vision, caused the industry to flourish. "Hector made an Australian drama something that Australians wanted to see. We held our own because Australians wanted us but also because the drama that we made was good drama".<sup>253</sup>

After finishing *The Far Country*, Miller spent the next 20 years in Hollywood, working on films, television movies and mini-series, often with crews comprised of Crawford trained technicians:

It [Crawfords] forms the basis of where I am now. Always did, always will. And now that I have more time to look back and reflect every single moment I spent there was precious. Harrowing at times but never, never dull.

My privilege was to work with Hector whom I held in awe. I didn't always agree with him but there was no doubt who had the final say; it was always him. I could have asked him so many things and I didn't and for that I'm eternally sorry.<sup>254</sup>

## **13.7. Epilogue**

In contrast to critical analysis of the structure and characteristics of individual programs discussed in the work of Moran and McKee (see Introduction, Chapter One), this chapter adds an alternate dimension to the Crawford story by drawing upon the memories of the disparate creative group who actually made the programs. While space does not permit input from all interviewees, individual views expressed overwhelmingly reflect those of the majority.

There are many elements within this chapter that exemplify the 'Crawford way' of generating an 'Australian consciousness'. Dorothy Crawford's intuitive selection and nurturing of actors and her skills in identifying script flaws; the multi-faceted skills of Sonia Borg and Ian Jones; the technical knowledge and absolute insistence on perfection of David Lee and Ian Crawford; the diversity and creativity of Crawfords' writers; the directors, sound and film editors, who in a 'crash through or crash' approach, learned on-the-job; and, the willing actors who perfected their television presentation skills through Crawfords.

Hector is regarded with great respect and appreciation, and criticism is mostly limited to those who worked closely with him. Most acknowledge the contributions of the ABC, but associate it with elitism and unwillingness to engage inexperienced actors or untrained technicians. Crawfords' less conservative, even risky approach with staff and training was highly successful, benefiting both the company and the industry holistically, and one of Crawford's greatest legacies.

In the concluding Chapter Fourteen, I shall speculate on how the Australian entertainment industry might have developed without Crawfords.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Henry Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, South Yarra, 6 December 2009;  
Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, 13 July 1977. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Ref: 269345. Transcribed by Philip Davey;  
Sonia Borg, interview with Philip Davey, Wylangta, Victoria, June 2007.
- <sup>2</sup> Henry Crawford interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Henry Crawford interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>5</sup> Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, Kings Cross, 28 February 2009.
- <sup>6</sup> Jill Forster, interviewed by Nigel Giles for the National Film and Sound Archives, Canberra, 8 February-6 March 2006, Part 1. (NFSA Ref: 84810). Transcribed by Philip Davey;  
Sonia Borg, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>7</sup> Jill Forster, interview by Nigel Giles, op. cit.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>12</sup> Elspeth Ballantyne, interview with Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 18 April 2008.
- <sup>13</sup> Ballantyne was the only lead actress to remain with *Prisoner* for its entirety between 1979-86.  
Elspeth Ballantyne, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
International Movie Database (IMDb), an Amazon.com Company, USA.  
[http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0050555/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0050555/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 4 October 2013.
- <sup>14</sup> Elspeth Ballantyne, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> Ballantyne continues to appear on television and in film guest roles, her most recent being in Southern Stars' production of *Paper Giants: Magazine Wars*. Other notable productions external to Crawfords include *Tandarra*, *Power Without Glory*, *Sea Change*, *Stingers*, *All Saints*, and the film *Caterpillar Wish* with the late Wendy Hughes.  
Ibid.  
IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0050555/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0050555/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 4 October, 2013.
- <sup>20</sup> Maggie Miller, Interview with Philip Davey, The Gurdies, Victoria, 27 January 2008;  
IMDb, op. cit: [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0587682/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0587682/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 4 October, 2013.
- <sup>21</sup> Maggie Miller, Interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid;  
Don Storey, Classic Australian TV <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homeeps451-509.htm>,  
accessed 4 October 2013.
- <sup>23</sup> Don Storey, Classic Australian TV, op. cit.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid;  
Maggie Miller, Interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> Drynan has compiled a substantial portfolio of roles in Australian television and film. Bruce Beresford's ground-breaking *Don's Party* (1976) and *Murial's Wedding* (1994), for which she received Logie Award nominations, are stand-outs.  
Jeanie Drynan, interview with Philip Davey, Manly, 9 January 2009;  
IMDb op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0238758/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0238758/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 4 October 2013.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>34</sup> Tony Bonner, interview with Philip Davey, Kings Cross, 9 January 2009; IMDb op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0060025/?ref=nr\\_sr\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0060025/?ref=nr_sr_1), accessed 7 December 2013.
- <sup>35</sup> After *Skippy* (1968-70), Bonner worked in the UK for several years. IMDb op. cit., <http://www.imdb.com/find?q=Tony+Bonner&s=nm>, accessed 2 September 2013; Tony Bonner, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid. Grundy later had major successes with the long-running soaps *Prisoner* and *Neighbours*.
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>39</sup> Perhaps inevitably, Norris and Blake have frequently played on-screen partners as in *The Society Murders*, *Hawke* and the film *Innocence* by Paul Cox, with whom Blake has worked extensively. A prolific film and theatre actor, Blake has more recently been acclaimed for her enduring role in the ABC's *Bed of Roses* while previous highlights included the films *My Brilliant Career*, *The Getting of Wisdom*, *Travelling North* and the serials *Against the Wind* and *Prisoner*.  
Terry Norris & Julia Blake, interview with Philip Davey, Balaclava, 8 December 2010; IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0086611/?ref=tt\\_cl\\_t1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0086611/?ref=tt_cl_t1), accessed 5 October 2013; IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0635909/?ref=tt\\_cl\\_t5](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0635909/?ref=tt_cl_t5), accessed 5 October 2013.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>41</sup> As a freelance actor, Norris also played in the ABC's *Bellbird* for seven years among many other programs. Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> *Travelling North* (1987) was a successful Australian film starring Leo McKern and Graham Kennedy. Ibid; IMDb op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094176/?ref=fn\\_tt\\_t1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094176/?ref=fn_tt_t1), accessed 1 November 2013.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid; Don Storey, Classic Australian TV, <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homicideEps401-450.htm>, accessed 5 October 2013.
- <sup>49</sup> Interview with Jill Forster, op. cit; Stanton's most acclaimed career role was that of Liberal Party leader Malcolm Fraser in 1983 mini-series *The Dismissal*. IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0085006/?ref=nm\\_fimg\\_act\\_32](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0085006/?ref=nm_fimg_act_32), accessed 5 October 2013.
- <sup>50</sup> Interview with Jill Forster, op. cit.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>53</sup> Terry Gill maintains that until a pool of good actors had been established in Melbourne, Crawfords tended to give small bit-parts to the locals and central roles to Sydney actors, "otherwise they'd run out of actors, and didn't want to fly someone down from Sydney for a few lines! But occasionally you would get lucky with a bigger part". In the meantime, Gill worked at GTV 9 on *In Melbourne Tonight* singing and dancing, as a production assistant and then as producer of the *Bert Newton Show*. Gill worked for the ABC in their monthly plays and later in *Bellbird* and *Power Without Glory*.  
Terry Gill, interview with Philip Davey, Tooronga, 2 September 2008.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid.; Terry McDermott, interview with Philip Davey, Upwey, 27 September 2008.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid.  
Gill can claim a string of performances in major television series and films such as *Against the Wind*, *The Last Outlaw*, *I can Jump Puddles*, *Crocodile Dundee* and *Snowy*; *Prisoner*, *Neighbours*, *Something in the Air* and *Blue Heelers*.  
IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0318743/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0318743/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 6 October 2013.
- <sup>58</sup> Terry Gill, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>60</sup> Alan Rowe, interview with Don Storey, *TV Eye No.9*, Melbourne, August 1996. Reproduced in Classic Australian TV website: <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/INTVWalanrowe.htm>, accessed 6 October 2013.
- <sup>61</sup> IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1469145/?ref=tt\\_cl\\_t9](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1469145/?ref=tt_cl_t9), accessed 6 October 2013.



<sup>62</sup> Alan Rowe, interview with Don Storey, op. cit.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Other Australian actors with bit-parts in Stanley Kramer's *On the Beach*, who later worked for Crawfords, include Bill Bennett, Lola Brooks, Joe McCormack, Margaret Cruikshank, Keith Eden, George Fairfax, Stuart Finch, Earl Francis, Bill Hunter, Brian James, Richard Meikle, John Meillon, John Morgan, Madeleine Orr, Peter O'Shaughnessey, Rena Pope, Nevil Thurgood, Ken Wayne and Norman Yemm.

Philip Davey, *When Hollywood Came To Melbourne: The Story of the Making of Stanley Kramer's On the Beach*, published by P. R. Davey, Melbourne, 2006;

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0053137/fullcredits?ref=tt\\_cl\\_sm#cast](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0053137/fullcredits?ref=tt_cl_sm#cast), accessed 7 October 2013;

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0862147/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0862147/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 7 October 2013;

Neville Thurgood, interview with Philip Davey, Macedon, Victoria, 23 August 2008.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0129707/?ref=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0129707/?ref=fn_al_tt_1), accessed 8 October 2013.

<sup>72</sup> Nick Holland, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit., 7 December 2007.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0390785/?ref=fn\\_al\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0390785/?ref=fn_al_nm_1), accessed 8 October 2013.

<sup>75</sup> Nick Holland, phone interview with Philip Davey, 7 December, 2007.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Hosting the ABC's *Play School* seemed to be obligatory for most major actors who possessed the attributes to host a children's program. Crawfords' actors include Bayly, Andrew McFarlane, Liz Birch, Anne Haddy, Noni Hazlehurst, Patsy King, Jan Kingsbury and John Waters.

Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Play\\_School\\_%28Australian\\_TV\\_series%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Play_School_%28Australian_TV_series%29), accessed 10 October 2013;

Lorraine Bayly, interview with Philip Davey, Cremorne, NSW, 28 February 2009.

<sup>78</sup> Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Lorraine Bayly, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.;

Australian Television Information Archives: [http://www.australian television.net/awards/logie1978\\_81.html](http://www.australian television.net/awards/logie1978_81.html), accessed 12 October 2013.

<sup>81</sup> Lorraine Bayly, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>82</sup> Charles 'Bud' Tingwell, telephone interview with Philip Davey, North Balwyn, 22 October 2008.

<sup>83</sup> Andrew McFarlane, interview with Philip Davey, Kings Cross, Sydney, 14 May 2011.

<sup>84</sup> Lorraine Bayly, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Nick Holland observes that while Bayly was a lovely woman and the consummate professional, "she never had children and may have had a different mindset about *Sullivans*", hence a degree of uneasiness with the show.

Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.;

Nick Holland, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>87</sup> Lorraine Bayly, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0188797/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0188797/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 5 March 2013.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.;

Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul\\_Cronin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Cronin), accessed 13 October, 2013.

<sup>93</sup> Paul Cronin, interview with Philip Davey, 1 February 2009.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Nick Holland, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.;

Andrew McFarlane, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.;

Stephen Tandy, interview with Philip Davey, Brisbane, 2 April 2009.

- <sup>98</sup> Paul Cronin, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>99</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>100</sup> Andrew McFarlane, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>101</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>102</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>104</sup> Nick Holland, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>105</sup> Andrew McFarlane, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>106</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>107</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>108</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>109</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>110</sup> Australian Television Information Archive: <http://www.australiantelevision.net/sullivans.html>, accessed 14 October 2013.
- <sup>111</sup> Stephen Tandy, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>112</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>113</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>114</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>115</sup> Tandy worked with actors such as Kerry Armstrong, Michael Caton, Helen Morse, John Wood and Noni Hazlehurst; all still in demand. "The heights that Noni has ascended to since is unbelievable. She's just the most remarkable screen actress I've seen on film and TV shows. She's just brilliant. Gary Sweet – it's interesting that he's moved into a lot of darker roles (eg *Blue Murder*). Since he's matured as an actor he hasn't stayed the bright happy-go-lucky person; he's gone into a lot of heavy almost sinister roles; he's a very respected actor. They talk of Mel Gibson of course. I didn't work with Mel in *Sullivans*; I think he'd just done *Mad Max* or was about to and he was a star graduate from NIDA".
- Ibid.
- <sup>116</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>117</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>118</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>119</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>120</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>121</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 30 August 2008.
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>124</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid;  
Australian Television Information Archive: [http://www.australiantelevision.net/awards/logie1970\\_73.html](http://www.australiantelevision.net/awards/logie1970_73.html), accessed 15 October 2013.
- <sup>126</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>127</sup> Gerard Kennedy, video interview with Jan Bladier and David Lee, 30 November 2004. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 670369. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>128</sup> Don Storey, *Classic Australian TV*, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homicide.htm>, accessed 5 November 1999.
- <sup>129</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), Melbourne, 1994, p. 96.
- <sup>130</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Jan Bladier and David Lee, op. cit.
- <sup>131</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>132</sup> Australian Television Information Archive: [http://www.australiantelevision.net/awards/logie1966\\_69.html](http://www.australiantelevision.net/awards/logie1966_69.html), accessed 15 October 2013.
- <sup>133</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit;  
Tony Ward as 'Hunter' was a secret agent for the Special Clandestine Unit 3 of COSMIC - the Commonwealth Offices for Security and Military Intelligence Co-ordination. The Communist enemy that Gerard Kennedy as Kragg represented was CUCW - the Council for Unification of the Communist World, the Australian division of which was headed by Mr. Smith, played by Ronald Morse.  
Don Storey, *Classic Australian TV*, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/Hunter.htm>, accessed 23 October 2013.
- <sup>134</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 97.

- <sup>135</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.
- <sup>136</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 97;  
Australian Television Information Archive: <http://www.australiantelevision.net/division4.html>, accessed 15 October, 2013.
- <sup>137</sup> Ian Crawford, op. cit., p.97;  
Terry Stapleton recalls that Hector decided to conclude *Hunter*: "The station, GTV9, wanted another series but by that time we had *Division 4* on the drawing board and were anxious to progress it and in some ways I think that we all tended to agree that we'd taken *Hunter* about as far as it could, and it was never going to be an absolute smash whereas it had picked up a lot and had become a satisfying show. So our time would probably be better spent elsewhere and of course we had the 'star problem' and so forth and we knew that in Gerard we had a great lead so we were anxious to get the whole *Division 4* package going".  
Terry Stapleton interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, July 1977 Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Ref: 269333. Transcribed by Philip Davey.
- <sup>138</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., p. 97.
- <sup>139</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, Mosman, 10 October 2009.
- <sup>140</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>141</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>142</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>143</sup> Ibid.  
*The Box* was shown on rival station ATV0.
- <sup>144</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>145</sup> Gary Stewart, interview with Philip Davey, 9 April 2009.
- <sup>146</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>147</sup> Gary Stewart, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>148</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>149</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Jan Bladier and David Lee, op. cit.
- <sup>150</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>151</sup> Outside of his work with Crawfords, Kennedy is perhaps best known for his role in the film *Newsfront*. Other films include *The Mango Tree*, *The Irishman* and *The Lighthorsemen*. Television series and mini-series of note include *Rush, Cash and Company*, *Tandarra*, *Power Without Glory*, *Against the Wind*, *The Last Outlaw*, *Prisoner*, *A Country Practice*, *Blue Heelers*, *Neighbours* and *Underbelly 1* and *Fat Tony and Co*.  
IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0448047/?ref\\_=ttfc\\_fc\\_cl\\_t25](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0448047/?ref_=ttfc_fc_cl_t25), accessed 15 October 2013.
- <sup>152</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Gerard Kennedy, interview with Jan Bladier and David Lee, op. cit.
- <sup>153</sup> Charles 'Bud' Tingwell, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, Whangarei, Auckland, NZ, 6 March 2011.
- <sup>154</sup> Gary Day, interview with Philip Davey, Abbotsford, 18 November 2009;  
Ironically, this inaugural colour episode feature *Homicide*'s first Sergeant Terry McDermott as a bank robber and murderer.  
Don Storey, Classic Australian TV, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homeeps351-400.htm>, accessed 18 October 2013.
- <sup>155</sup> Gary Day, interview with Philip Davey, Abbotsford, op. cit.;  
David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>156</sup> Gary Day, interview with Philip Davey, Abbotsford, op. cit.
- <sup>157</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>158</sup> Ibid.  
"He [Tingwell] always used to have an ash tray under his drawer in case a person really wanted to smoke because he didn't want that in his office, but what that was about too [was in case] he dried up or couldn't remember his lines - and he had a lot of lines to remember. He'd open the drawer and his script was there. So he'd get the ash tray and put it out and know what to say next!"
- <sup>159</sup> David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>160</sup> David Stevens, *ibid*.  
Gary Day, interview with Philip Davey, Abbotsford, op. cit.
- <sup>161</sup> Gary Day, *ibid*.
- <sup>162</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>163</sup> Ibid.  
"George Miller seemed to take a shine to my character; never was that affectionate to me but I think he liked my character and he use to write as well so some of my better episodes were written and directed by George".
- <sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> *Blue Murder* was a true story based on police corruption and heavy criminal activity in 1970s/1980's NSW. Characters portrayed included corrupt police Detective Senior Sergeant Roger Rogerson and notorious criminals Arthur "Neddy" Smith and Christopher Dale Flannery. Because of its theme, filming in Sydney was an anxious time for cast members, as Gary Day recalls:

"*Blue Murder* [...] was bigger than everybody and very dangerous to do. I had threats on the phone as did Richard Roxburgh [who played Rogerson]. I said to Richard my lady's getting phone calls that are really worrying and he said I'm getting weird phone calls too. He said well listen, there's probably nothing in this but I think we should go to the producers and so we did and they were not surprised at all. And the writer never slept in the same motel two nights in a row. And we were told while this was going on, not to ring family or whatever on the phone, so I remember going down and ringing my father in NZ from a phone box, just to keep it isolated because you didn't know.... I mean you were just paranoid about the fact that here we are working with the NSW police, exposing them; and we're also working with them on the set. It stands to reason there would be someone there keeping an eye on us".

Gary Day, interview with Philip Davey, Abbotsford, op. cit.

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0206404/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0206404/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 18 October 2013.

<sup>167</sup> Gary Day, interview with Philip Davey, Abbotsford, op. cit.

<sup>168</sup> For Example, Cliff Green wrote the screenplays for *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *Summerfield*; Tom Hegarty *A Town Like Alice* and David Stevens *The Sum of Us*.

IMDb, op. cit., Cliff Green: [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0337730/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0337730/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 15 April 2008.

IMDb, op. cit., Tom Hegarty: [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0373684/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0373684/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 5 October 2009.

IMDb, op. cit., David Stevens: [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0828350/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_3](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0828350/?ref=fn_nm_nm_3), accessed 5 March 2011.

<sup>169</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.; David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.;

Borg: Some writers didn't like the story conferences and felt they were really sessions where everybody was criticising and pulling things to pieces.

Victoria Police consultants were also integral members of story conferences to advise on police protocols, procedures and accuracy. Serving police officer Gordon Timmins was particularly important to Homicide, as were other members for Division 4 and Matlock Police. Timmins actually appeared in Homicide as part-time detective Doug Marshall after retiring from Victoria Police in 1966.

Don Storey, Classic Australian TV, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/homicide1.htm>, accessed 20 October 2013.

David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.;

Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 17 June 2009.

<sup>172</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>173</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.;

Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit.

<sup>175</sup> Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.; David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>176</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.;

Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

There are many early episodes of *Homicide* in which one feels sorry for a criminal or another central character.

<sup>178</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.

<sup>179</sup> Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>180</sup> Sonia Borg, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.; Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>181</sup> Hector was often proved correct, however. Howard Griffiths notes how ironic it was the better *Homicide* got, the more its ratings dropped: "It's true and really sad because we used to argue fiercely with Hector, arguing the faith that if you make something better the audience will respond. But being that close to commercial TV it really is worrying because evidence seems to be the other way, literally the better it became. I don't know if that was the connection; there may have been all other reasons such as the competition [even though] the program may have been better, but it seemed to happen that way. And then *Homicide* went through a period when it got worse and suddenly the ratings went up again".

Howard Griffiths, interview with Albert Moran, circa 1977. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, (NFSA), Canberra, Title No: 269364. Transcribed by Philip Davey.

In her book *Supertoy: 20 years of Australian Television*, Sandra Hall contends that by 1974, Crawfords' police shows were so institutionalised that they were virtually impregnable. And yet, one year later, all had been dropped. Hall suggests there were several reasons as to who was to blame, "but the most ironic came from a channel executive I was interviewing in Melbourne". "Crawfords" he said, "was a company dominated by writers and he dated the shows' decline to the awards won by the 'John Kelso' episode. His thesis was that Crawford writers had become heady with their success and had concentrated on producing other 'John Kelsos' instead of building up the characters of the policemen".

"The Return of John Kelso" was episode 100 of *Division 4* for which actor John Fegan won a Logie award for Best Individual Acting Performance while episode writer John Dingwell won a Best Script for Drama Series Awgie (Australian Writers' Guild) award. This episode focuses almost entirely on a down and out criminal struggling to adapt in his old neighbourhood after being released from prison. Hall notes how at this time American series such as *Columbo* and *Cannon* had evolved into a direction whereby their heroes were turned into "characters with idiosyncrasies and emotions". Crawfords' writer John Edwards and script editor for 'John Kelso', told Hall that "we did what we could" in this regard. With 'John Kelso', "we popped something quite different into the usual format. We did the same with other scripts but we couldn't do it more often because it would have alienated our original audience who started watching the series for quite different reasons. And we couldn't afford to have that alienation show up in the ratings.

Sandra Hall, *Supertoy: 20 Years of Australian Television*, Sun Books, Melbourne, 1976, pp. 118-119; John Edwards, Crawford writer, quoted in Sandra Hall, *Supertoy*, op. cit., pp. 118-119.

<sup>182</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>183</sup> Don Storey, Classic Australian TV, op. cit., <http://www.classicaustraliantv.com/div4eps1-50.htm>, accessed 21 October 2013.

<sup>184</sup> Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>185</sup> Howard Griffiths, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> By the late 1970s, Howard Griffiths did not seem to hold Crawfords in high regard:

"I think the worst thing about that entire place is that it's the most incestuous organisation in the world. The ABC is pretty incestuous as you can understand but compared to Crawfords I think it has its eyes and ears wide open to the world. It's terribly insular and enclosed. They are never able to distance themselves from what they are doing or be critical of what they are doing".

"[There was a] terribly insulated sort of sealed off kind of feeling which I think again has tended to destroy the place. It had resisted standards [because of] what happened in the early days – we set our own because there weren't any others; they didn't exist anywhere, but then that sort of got hermetically sealed in, and when there were others, I think the place as a whole refused to look at them, and refused to face facts and say really what we're doing isn't very good".

On this basis, Griffiths did not readily approve of the many Crawford trained writers who moved into the system: "I think it's been bad for Australia television in that almost all the writers operating are ex-Crawfords and there is a sort of absorption of Crawford's rules that take's a long time to outgrow, if some people ever do outgrow. There isn't enough variety of writing in Australian TV". Yet Griffiths wrote for many of television's most popular programs during the 1980s until his death at 64 in 1999. One wonders what his impressions of Australian Television writing would be in 2014?

Howard Griffiths, interview with Albert Moran, op. cit.; IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0341688/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_2](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0341688/?ref=fn_nm_nm_2), accessed 21 October 2013.

<sup>188</sup> Everett DeRoach, interview with Philip Davey, Mount Eliza, 27 August, 2008.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> DeRoach engaged different approaches to writing a story; It depended whether it was a series or a serial: "With a series where it's one-offs, we were left to our own devices and coming up with the story was my favourite part of it. Generally I'd go for a meeting in town and on the drive home I would have the whole story. There's something about driving that allows you to focus and I'd have the whole story plotted by the time I got home, sub plots and all. Whereas the serials like *The Sullivans* and so forth depended on what came before and after. Although they said that *Homicide* was based on actual cases, not all were".

Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Luis Bayonas, interview with Philip Davey, Hampton, 6 January 2010; Brian Courtis, "Taking the Reins" [profile of Lynn Bayonas], *The Age*, Green Guide Section, Melbourne, 20 June, 2002, p. 8.

<sup>200</sup> Luis Bayonas, interview with Philip Davey, Hampton, 6 January 2010

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> In addition to the three police shows, Bayonas also wrote episodes for *Ryan*, *Cop Shop*, *Special Squad* and *The Flying Doctors*. Other non-Crawford productions include *Chopper Squad*, *Bellamy*, *A Country Practice* and *GP*.

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0063188/?ref=fn\\_al\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0063188/?ref=fn_al_nm_1), accessed 25 October 2013.

<sup>207</sup> Luis Bayonas, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> George T. Miller, interview with Philip Davey, Cape Paterson, 10 January 2009.

<sup>211</sup> George T. Miller, video interview with Jan Bladier and David Lee, September, 2006. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives, [NFSA], Canberra, Title No: 705348. Transcribed by Philip Davey.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> George T. Miller, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>214</sup> Andrew Swanson, interview with Philip Davey, Perth, October 2009.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> George T. Miller, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>217</sup> George T. Miller, video interview with Jan Bladier and David Lee, op. cit.

<sup>218</sup> Glenn Martin, interview with Philip Davey, 21 November 2007.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

Glenn Martin was awarded the Australian Centenary Medal in the 2001 Queen's New Years Honours List for his services to Australian society and Australian film production.

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0552348/?ref=fn\\_al\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0552348/?ref=fn_al_nm_1), accessed 28 October 2013.

<sup>229</sup> Waddell recalls that dialogue editing was complex digital post lip-sync for most of the film: "While they were filming on one side of the ship, they were still noisily building the other side".

Hugh Waddell, interview with Philip Davey, North Balwyn, 2 January 2009.

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120338/fullcredits?ref=tt\\_cl\\_sm#cast](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120338/fullcredits?ref=tt_cl_sm#cast), accessed 28 October 2013.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Hugh Waddell, interview with Philip Davey, North Balwyn, 2 January 2009.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> A selection of mini-series and feature films that Waddell has worked on include *Five Mile Creek* and *Cyclone Tracy* (Australian), *Rising Sun*, *The Meteor Man*, *Baby's Day Out*, *Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street*, *The Hunted*, *Sleepers*, *Titanic*, *Great Expectations*, *The Thin Red Line*, *The Perfect Storm*, *Shrek*, *View From the Top*, *Kill Bill 1 & 2*, *Exorcist: The Beginning*, *North Country* and *Snakes on a Plane*.

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0905304/?ref=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0905304/?ref=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 31 October 2013.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> George T. Miller, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

Miller recalls: "*Fighting Words* was a TV program hosted by Danny Webb which was like radio with pictures; just pictures of people talking really. Danny Webb would get two people that we had lined up that we knew would argue, and we would tape it on Sunday nights and really arguments arose that I never knew were arguments. They were political, of course. You've got to think of me as about as politically naïve as it was possible to get, but yes it was".

<sup>243</sup> George T. Miller, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

IMDb, op. cit., [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0004305/filmoseries?ref\\_=nm\\_filmg\\_dr\\_42#tt0064238](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0004305/filmoseries?ref_=nm_filmg_dr_42#tt0064238), accessed 27 October 2013.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> George T. Miller, video interview with Jan Bladier and David Lee, op. cit.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> George T. Miller, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

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Promotional material for movie version of *The Box*, source unknown.

© Crawford Productions Publicity circa 1974



## Chapter 14: Conclusion

Chapter One identified several elements of research that underpin the evolution of an 'Australian consciousness' in Crawfords' radio and television operations. They include Hector's personal lobbying for greater local content drama production, his unsuccessful application for a television station licence, the creative and technical contributions of Dorothy and Ian Crawford, and the testimony of many who worked at Crawfords regarding their extensive training, employment and external career opportunities. This concluding chapter reviews the outcomes of this research in assessing Crawfords' contribution to the Australian entertainment industry.

### 14.1. An 'Australian Consciousness' Revisited

As emphasised throughout this thesis, Hector Crawford consistently recognised that Australian talent, culture and identity had been significantly neglected, both in application and opportunity. His tactics to reverse both public perception and the attitudes of television proprietors have been demonstrated through his ongoing activism, sacrifices and personal risk taking.

Life was much easier for Hector as an independent radio producer than it would be in television. Local radio drama production was thriving because of a wartime ban on the importation of American programs, and so it was in this environment that Crawfords experienced immediate success with *The Melba Story*.<sup>1</sup> Crawfords faced considerable competition and created a niche market by combining high-quality drama and music. With productions such as *Music For the People*, *Opera For the People* and *Mobil Quest*, Hector began creating an awareness that Australians, if given the opportunity, could perform and produce quality programs. While *Mobil Quest* facilitated international and domestic career possibilities for artists, those seeking this experience were no longer forced abroad.<sup>2</sup> Did the public appreciate Hector's 'better class of music'? With regular 100,000 plus crowds at his outdoor concerts, it was apparent that a large proportion of listeners did.<sup>3</sup> Incomplete ratings suggest that not all radio listeners accepted 'high-brow music', preferring lighter programs such as *Australia's Amateur Hour*.<sup>4</sup>

While Hector concentrated on musical direction, Dorothy Crawford produced Crawfords' straight drama for which she gained much respect amid significant competition. Because overseas' program sales to the UK and USA were inhibited by disdain for the traditional Australian accent, Hector initiated The Crawford School of Broadcasting to "smooth over its rough edges, address a shortage of actors and prepare people for television".<sup>5</sup> Hector's creation, in consultation with Victoria Police, of Crawford's most successful radio series *D.24*, also promoted an 'Australian consciousness'.<sup>6</sup>

Employing considerable foresight, Crawfords prepared for television with The Crawford Television Workshop to train actors and technicians.<sup>7</sup> The ambivalent attitude of television stations towards locally produced drama and preference for inexpensive American programs remained huge barriers. Unlike in the radio television owners were free to buy American programs, up to a generous monetary threshold.<sup>8</sup> Hector had to begin again to create an 'Australian consciousness' within television.

Hector's lobbying for greater local drama content has been discussed, but how effectual was he? His well-researched yet controversial 1959 booklet – so critical of local content inaction – irritated the government.<sup>9</sup> But early in 1960, the ABCB recommendation that 40 percent of transmission hours be Australian programs, with one hour per day 'distinctly Australian', was adopted.<sup>10</sup> Nothing really changed; there were more 'Australian' variety, quiz, news and discussion programs but little drama.<sup>11</sup>

John Cain believes that Hector's case was strong but the industry chose to ignore the problem because "a poorly informed public was far more accepting and compliant".<sup>12</sup> Yet Hector recognised a groundswell of support from commentators disturbed by the lack of available television work.<sup>13</sup> A public forum to facilitate debate among public pressure groups, such as *The Vincent Inquiry*, was an ideal way to generate awareness that television was lacking an 'Australian consciousness'. Although Crawford's forthright statements alienated some Government members, he gained support from others, including Senators George Hannan (Liberal) and Seddon

Vincent (Labor).<sup>14</sup> Correspondence between the trio indicate Crawford's influence in establishing the Inquiry.<sup>15</sup>

Television stakeholders believed that the inquiry lacked objectivity, its outcomes were predetermined and it did not appreciate the economic circumstances involved.<sup>16</sup> The Government ignored its recommendations, but the inquiry created public awareness and its findings informed the 1969-1976 *TV-Make It Australian* campaign.<sup>17</sup> In his evidence, Hector identified the obvious problems: although inexperience, poor technology and cost factors remained an impediment to local production, the imposition of a local drama quota was impractical. He suggested an alternate solution: while the lack of opportunity and training hindered locally made drama, there was an infinite pool of creative personnel available ready to work and learn within the new and less costly media of videotape technology, combined with film.<sup>18</sup> Crawfords had already adopted this method with *Consider Your Verdict*, and when stations were ready for local drama, *Homicide* evolved under these conditions.

Beginning in 1956, Hector's letters to politicians, commentaries, media interviews and evidence to inquiries were prolific. Although his representations did little to change the attitudes of television proprietors, the 1960 Ministerial directive for 40 percent local content was at least a starting point.<sup>19</sup> I argue, therefore, that when commercial stations began accepting locally made drama such as *Homicide*, it was because of changing circumstances within the industry and not specifically Hector Crawford's lobbying. Rather, with new commercial stations established, the ABC producing more quality local material and with an emerging scarcity of American programs, it became more favourable for commercial operators to offer local drama programs.<sup>20</sup>

Nonetheless, it is further argued that through Hector's activism, a public awareness was created that television as it stood, was not portraying Australia's national traditions, culture and way of life at the expense of promoting foreign cultures.<sup>21</sup> Recognising this situation was caused by imported foreign programming as a starting point, Hector's pioneering work in the early 1960s grew into subsequent employment, training and career opportunities. His ongoing quest to nurture an 'Australian consciousness' meant that both viewers and program producers were

ready, when the time was right. Hector's efforts in creating this public awareness, I argue, explains why *Homicide* was so broadly accepted around Australia.

## **14.2. Dispelling a Long Established Myth**

Prior to *The Vincent Inquiry*, Hector concluded that owning Melbourne's third commercial licence was the only way he could advance local drama content. But did his 1962 application fail because, as many Crawfords' associates still insist, the government conspired against Australian Telecasters Limited to rebuke Hector's constant criticism?<sup>22</sup> And indeed, how could a transport company like Ansetts, with absolutely no experience in television production and broadcasting, be preferred over a highly successful radio producer who had prepared so diligently for television? I conclude that the licence hearings were extensive and equitable, although inconsistent. (See Chapter 9.11, 9.12). The evidence presented to the hearing was thorough, and in the end it is clear why the ABCB recommended Ansetts. Genuine motivation, altruism and experience were insufficient; Crawfords could in no way compete with ATI's immense asset base, financial and management strength.<sup>23</sup>

There is no evidence to suggest that the government influenced the ABCB against Crawfords. On the contrary, official documents reveal that government officers were shocked at the ABCB recommendation, which it regarded as providing 'further favours for business friends' and hence politically dangerous.<sup>24</sup> Cabinet agreed with its officers and discussed how it could reject the recommendation. But believing in due process and the independence of government appointed committees, it was Prime Minister Menzies himself who reluctantly approved the recommendation; Crawfords was not even mentioned by Cabinet as an alternative.<sup>25</sup>

The irony is that this disappointment ultimately benefited Crawfords, because of the changing circumstances within the industry. Hector's efforts were not wasted. The testimony of witnesses supporting Australian Telecasters, and that of Crawfords' associates, reveal that creating an 'Australian consciousness' remained prominent as a goal of the company's projects.

### **14.3. The Influence of Dorothy and Ian Crawford**

In Part One, the oral history recollections of her colleagues introduce Dorothy Crawford's extensive contributions to Crawfords and development as a radio and television producer. From the early 1940s at Broadcast Exchange until illness forced her retirement in the late 1970s, Dorothy was by Hector's side for nearly forty years.

My research documents that Dorothy's role has been largely ignored or under-rated while Hector received most of the credit for Crawfords' success: respondents recalled her creative skill, work ethic, people management and warm personality with great respect and admiration. While Hector managed the business and musical aspects of Crawfords, it was Dorothy who produced ninety-nine percent of programs, and like Hector, she produced *Music For the People* pro bono. While Hector lobbied and articulated his ideals, it was Dorothy who managed the business and maintained creativity when the going was tough. While Hector struggled to finance the pilot episode and the first year of *Homicide*, it was Dorothy who declined a salary for 12 months. Whenever a new staff member needed mentoring or a flawed script required analysis, it was Dorothy to whom Hector turned. After Dorothy retired, leaving trained capable people in place, Hector was lost and lacked trust; he felt compelled to 'interfere' with creative activities, as is observed in Chapter 12.

During Crawfords' television peak, Dorothy retained the final say in most creative matters while Ian Crawford was regarded as the senior technical supervisor. In addition, the skills and experience of senior associates Sonia Borg, Ian Jones, David Lee, Tom Hegarty and Terry Stapleton, make the notion of Hector as the 'Father of Australian Television' seem untenable. Dorothy's creative and operational contributions, and those of the aforementioned colleagues, were as significant in fostering an 'Australian consciousness' as were Hector's entrepreneurialism and activism.

But there was much more to Dorothy. She actively cared about people, despite her 'dragon-lady' reputation, and she often mediated between Hector and troubled staff. Many respondents fondly recall discussing program issues at her Toorak home, greatly welcoming her input and advice, As film director David Stevens notes, "what

became clear to me very, very quickly is that Dorothy was not the woman that she was presented to be".<sup>26</sup>

During its first few years, Ian Crawford produced *Homicide*. Self-taught in the technical side of television, Ian was the other prime mover upon whom Hector depended enormously. As Chapter Thirteen notes, many a director or producer endured his 'cross-examination' at 'double-head' screenings, but appreciated his frank, accurate and correct appraisals of what worked and what did not.<sup>27</sup> Hector expected rigid scrutiny of daily rushes, and as Ian candidly acknowledges, Hector was a hard-task master. His expectations were high and his frequently unrealistic demands upon his nephew created tension.<sup>28</sup> But stoically, Ian devoted his life to Crawfords and resigned shortly after Hector sold the company in 1987.<sup>29</sup> Freelance producer Mark DeFriest did not share Ian's fortitude:

I watched Hector turn people around. I watched Hector scare the shit out of people, including me. But as a freelance producer, if I worked there once a month that was enough for me! I could still have my own life.<sup>30</sup>

DeFriest, an assistant director, producer and director, is one of the many later generations of 'Crawford Creations' who continued Crawfords' contribution towards an 'Australian consciousness'. But the evolution of that consciousness was incremental beginning with the pioneering work of Dorothy and Ian, with David Lee and writer Phil Freedman, followed by Sonia Borg, Ian Jones, Terry Stapleton, Tom Hegarty, Henry Crawford, and so many others.<sup>31</sup> As this group scattered a new cluster of staff, having been trained and mentored by the aforementioned, took Crawfords into the late 1970s-1980s, while ultimately benefiting the entire industry as so many have recalled in the previous chapter.

Hector Crawford won four Logie Awards for his contribution to Australian television and drama, and was the inaugural Gold Logie Hall of Fame inductee in 1984.<sup>32</sup> This dissertation does not seek to undermine his achievements; to do so would be unthinkable. But Dorothy's tremendous contributions, and those of the people the family gathered around them, requires stronger recognition. I contend that the working relationship between Hector and Dorothy was symbiotic: they needed each other to achieve success.<sup>33</sup> Without Hector, Crawfords would not have existed, and without Dorothy, Crawfords would not have succeeded.

## **14.4. What Would We Have Done Without Crawfords?**

This dissertation provides numerous examples of the benefits of Crawfords' training and opportunities for employment and career advancement to many creative and technical personnel. These benefits, and those who received them, contributed to the growth and prosperity of the Australian entertainment industry.

Many respondents referred to the mini-Hollywood studio atmosphere at Collins Street and Abbotsford during Crawfords' peak; the stimulating creative environments amid controlled chaos, the low pay and challenging on-location conditions, and everyone prepared to go beyond the call of duty to meet deadlines. But most shared an overriding belief that the ultimate goal was absolutely worthwhile.<sup>34</sup> David Lee's philosophy of 'never coming back without the film, ever,' permeated the work ethic of the whole company: the writers, directors, producers, film and sound editors. The show had to be done: no one really cared how as long as it was done.<sup>35</sup> The majority of respondents rue the demise of Crawfords, which Ted Hamilton describes as the only independent studio of its type.<sup>36</sup> Not unlike the 'terrace house approach' espoused by Henry Crawford and Ian Jones, current Australian production crews are generally freelancers hired for one purpose only, to make the show, and move on.<sup>37</sup>

The Crawford experience of opportunity and training was predominately positive, but it had negative sides. Most agree that Crawfords was hierarchical: workers at the 'coal face' were under-recognised while Hector venerated writers and producers.<sup>38</sup> But it was at their peril that any Crawfords' trained person was 'crazy' enough to leave such a 'wonderful organisation'.<sup>39</sup> Although Hector could not realise it at the time, staff leaving to advance careers was Crawfords' greatest contribution to the industry's growth and sustainability, both locally and internationally.

Many close to Hector lament his inability to move out of his comfort zone. As long as the police shows rated soundly, all was well.<sup>40</sup> But when viewer tastes and industry attitudes changed in the mid-1970s, Crawfords was decimated by the crash.<sup>41</sup> Hector had not planned ahead with relevant new programs and did not seriously consider several historical mini-series proposed to him by Ian Jones and Henry Crawford; series that were later produced independent of Crawfords with

great success (see Chapter 12, endnote 129).<sup>42</sup> Hector's reluctance to embrace these new program concepts was met with frustration; many felt he lacked creativity: he was a great salesman but had to believe in his products.<sup>43</sup> When Dorothy became quite ill, Hector's interference in creative matters caused considerable tension.<sup>44</sup> Ironically, it was Ian Jones' completely new concept *The Sullivans* that saved Crawfords, with the perennial contributions of Terry Stapleton and Ian Crawford restoring Crawfords' viability and reputation into the 1980s.<sup>45</sup>

Many creative personnel had become restless leading up to 1975 and sought a more adventurous direction. Many writers have indicated their frustration at the rigid style required for the police shows, yet in contradiction, some of the newer more progressive writers suggest they were encouraged to 'experiment' within limits. In fairness to Hector though, his negative experiences with financing programs and sensitivity to network program content requirements were partly responsible for his conservatism.<sup>46</sup> Dissention led to many exasperated creative people, including many of Hector's most valued colleagues, departing to form their own production companies and produce programs that Hector had rejected.<sup>47</sup> These programs should have been Crawford Productions, as noted in Chapter Twelve.<sup>48</sup> Crawfords finally produced several excellent mini-series in the early 1980s, when favourable taxation conditions assuaged Hector's financial anxiety, but my argument is that Crawfords could have been greater with more foresight.

This dissertation has shown that bit-part and guest actors appreciated the employment and experience Crawfords provided: many enjoyed extensive careers in television and film. Many NIDA theatre trained graduates, unprepared for television acting techniques, are grateful to Crawfords for turning them into well-rounded actors.<sup>49</sup> Full-time lead actors however, while enjoying the camaraderie and 'family' nature of enduring programs such as *Cop Shop*, *The Sullivans*, *Carson's Law* and *The Flying Doctors*, were often exhausted by gruelling filming schedules, and feared being type-cast.<sup>50</sup> When several programs ran concurrently, schedules were considerably more hectic for pre and post production staff.

Crawfords' nursery system of on-the-job training was unique in the television industry and has almost certainly not been replicated since. How else could an



administrator/driver/focus-puller such as George Miller end up being a director in Hollywood?<sup>51</sup> Where else could 17 year-old Glenn Martin, by showing enthusiasm, be given a chance, over a waiting list of 200, to become a sound editor?<sup>52</sup> High School drop-out Hugh Waddell, after begging Crawfords to give him a try at sound editing, ultimately earned a job as sound effects editor. After working on *The Sullivans*, Waddell later moved to Hollywood where he has worked on over seventy films, including the award-winning *Titanic* in 1998.<sup>53</sup> So many others, too numerous to mention, have related similar accounts. Their stories highlight one of Crawfords' great legacies – the generations of technicians, writers and actors who have worked together on commercial television, the ABC and in various production houses both in Australia and around the world.

However, could not the ABC have provided similar training? The truth seems to be that the ABC was difficult to infiltrate for inexperienced actors and technicians. Gerard Kennedy tried several times but they disliked his 'Australian accent' and apparently preferred proficient actors.<sup>54</sup> Despite many approaches and letters, Waddell found the ABC, Australian Film School in Sydney, and Melbourne's RMIT virtually impenetrable without some form of experience, academic attainment and/or subject knowledge.<sup>55</sup>

For most aspirants, therefore, Crawfords was the only place available for foundation training. Crawfords had a more urgent need for staff because of the number of its commercial productions and drama programs. Unlike the ABC, Crawfords was not government funded.<sup>56</sup> Crawfords' pay rates were low, but it performed programming miracles with small resources.<sup>57</sup> Many actors with stage experience and cultured voices worked extensively for both the ABC and Crawfords.<sup>58</sup> One cannot deny the ABC's prolific live drama output during the 1960s (see Chapter 7.6), and its series and serial offerings from the late 1960s when many Crawfords' trained people contributed to ABC program output.<sup>59</sup>

What then, would Australia have done without Crawfords? Had Hector disbanded the company as radio viability declined, the absence of his passion and advocacy for an 'Australian consciousness' may have retarded the development of a local industry while further limiting commercial employment opportunities for industry creatives

during those early years. When the third commercial licences caused an increase in program demand and American programs became very expensive, I have noted how Crawfords was ready to take over. Without Crawfords, who would have stepped into the breach?

Commercial stations would have had to develop their own programs, train staff and possibly create a Crawford-like studio culture to make it all work. Apart from the ABC, would commercial stations have been ready? Locally produced commercial drama such as *Emergency* and the American co-production *Whiplash* had been unsuccessful. Commercial stations were dependant on American imports, and had not prepared for self-sufficiency. Crawfords had prepared, and without them the industry would have stagnated. The many Crawfords-trained writers and technicians, so highly regarded throughout the industry, may have entered alternate occupations.<sup>60</sup> The resurgence of the Australian film industry from the mid 1970s may also have been impeded without the prolific contribution of Crawfords' people to independent mini-series and feature films.<sup>61</sup>

Without Crawfords, television may have been very different for The Grundy Organisation. Rather than specialising in game, quiz and variety-type programs, Grundy may have considered serious drama much earlier than he did. Grundys later dabbled in drama such as *King's Men* and *Bellamy*, but experienced sustained success only through many long-running soap dramas.<sup>62</sup> Today, Grundy Television Productions is a leading independent producer.<sup>63</sup> But the Grundy Organisation also benefited from the services of Crawfords' trained staff, some of whom joined Grundys as Crawfords' glory days receded.<sup>64</sup> Based on the evidence provided in this thesis, one cannot imagine Australian television without Crawfords,

## **14.5. Epilogue**

This dissertation has examined many aspects of Crawfords' contributions to Australian radio and television omitted or inadequately addressed by previous research. Oral history accounts of those who lived Crawfords' story add an important dimension to Australian media's rich body of knowledge. My examination of Hector Crawford's passion and lobbying for an 'Australian consciousness', and his ability to generate public awareness, has revealed the equally significant contributions of

Dorothy and Ian Crawford, whose creative and technical skills converted Hector's vision into tangible outcomes. Senior creative and technical colleagues contributed to the vision, as did the collegiate nature and the 'get the job done whatever the cost' attitude that permeated the entire company.

Despite many risks, disappointments and uncertainty, Crawfords, as an organisation, enshrined a strong sense of Australian identity and culture within television as it had in radio and live public appearances. This thesis demonstrates that Hector's contribution was immense, but he was not alone. Crawfords was 'The Family of Australian Television'.

In 1994, journalist Bryce Hallett captured the very essence of Crawford Productions in this most appropriate tribute, upon which I conclude:

[Hector,] the unrelenting showman and salesman also gave rise to a magnificent training system fuelled by his grand visions and underpinned by a belief that Australians were as good, if not better, than their American counterparts. Hundreds of workers came through Crawford's door. They learned quickly in a sink-or-swim environment. Invariably, if someone failed in one area, their energies would be diverted to another.<sup>65</sup>

## **14.6. Further Research**

Two areas of research alluded to but beyond the scope of this dissertation warrant further investigation. The first, indirectly related to Crawfords, is of broader industry relevance. Between 1969 and 1976, the *TV Make It Australian* campaign pressured the Government, ABCB and television networks to produce more local content. Instigated by actor and entertainer Ted Hamilton, actors across the country gathered to encourage more employment for Australian artists. The circumstances and outcomes of this activism could provide valuable insight into the direction of Australian television at this time.

More scholarly attention should be devoted to the cancellations of Crawfords' three top-rating police shows and *Showcase* (see Appendix C) over a six-month period in 1975. Most within Crawfords insist this was a deliberate network conspiracy to cut Crawfords down to size for becoming too powerful. Just as I have disproved conspiracy theories about Melbourne's third commercial television licence hearings, further investigation of the cancellations may reveal what really happened. Crawford's unofficial background role in the *TV Make It Australian* campaign may

have contributed to the action, but other factors such as the economic downturn and changing viewer attitudes should also be considered. This is another long-standing myth that requires resolution.

## 14.7. Afterword

At Dorothy Crawford's memorial service in 1988, Keith Eden read a moving eulogy written by Sonia Borg. It aptly captured Dorothy's influence on those who knew her:

The play's the thing. [...] All of us live out life's play. Some of us direct it, some of us perform in it, some of us record it. Every now and again there comes a person who excels in their particular area. But occasionally comes a person whose area of expertise extends across all three areas. Such a rare individual was Dorothy Crawford.

Many of us are fortunate to have known and worked with Dorothy. Those of us who did so found the experience profound and inspirational, impacting on our whole existence. For Dorothy not only excelled in the areas of writing, directing and acting, she had an innate desire and ability to pass on her knowledge to others, enabling them to grow and develop and reach their full potential.<sup>66</sup>

In 1973, Dorothy Crawford was recognised by Australian Writers' Guild with a *Special Award for Encouraging Australian Writers*. Following her death, the Australian Writers' Guild recognised her contribution to the arts by instituting the annual *Dorothy Crawford Award for outstanding contribution to the profession*.<sup>67</sup>

The day Hector died, former colleagues George Miller and cinematographer Dave Connell were driving to a film shoot in Queensland:

We were travelling from Noosa down to Brisbane, I think about 11.00am. David's not the world's most sensitive person but he's the world's best cinematographer and so we were just driving along and he said "Gee I'm feeling shithouse". What, in the stomach? "No, it's weird". And I said – me too, I just feel really low. We turned on the radio which announced that Hector died! This was 1991. There was a real spiritual bond and I kind of believe in that stuff! He [Dave] said to me I feel so bad.<sup>68</sup>

"I'll never forget that, and I frequently resurrect Hector in my dreams as being this kind of father figure, a figure I held in great regard and respect. To me he *was* the industry".<sup>69</sup>

## Endnotes

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- <sup>2</sup> "Grand Opera Plans for Radio: Possible Stage Link", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 24-30 August 1946, p. 3.
- <sup>3</sup> "Grand Opera Plans for Radio, op. cit.;"  
"Premier Behind Quest For New Singers: Search For More Operatic Talent", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 9-15 November 1946, p. 3.
- <sup>4</sup> See Chapter 4.6.
- <sup>5</sup> "Radio Producers Seek New Voices", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 9-15 July 1949, p. 3;  
"Dearth of Women Players Baffles Producers", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 29 April-5 May 1950, p. 3;  
"Actors and Accents", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 19-25 August 1950, 'The Editor's Box' Section, p. 4;  
"About that Australian Accent", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 21-27 January 1951, 'The Editor's Box' Section, p. 4;  
Leo McKern, "Aussie Accent Barred Abroad", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 25-31 July 1953, p. 3;  
"Neutral Accent is 'must' in London", *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 8-14 August 1953, p. 3;  
"Producer Defends Local Talent Search Methods", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 20-26 May 1950, p. 3;  
Patricia Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Hawthorn, 27 November 2007;  
"Production Unit Opens Broadcast School", *The Listener-In, Melbourne*, 15-21 July 1950, p. 19.
- <sup>6</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Hector Crawford, interview with Albert Moran, Melbourne, 5 July 1979, Title No: 269138. Transcribed by Philip Davey 2009.
- <sup>7</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 58.
- <sup>8</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, MA Thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, 1999, pp. 101, 104;  
National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Keith Cairns, former HSV7 television executive, transcript of interview by Daryl Dellora, Melbourne, 3 October 1997, Title No: 373505, pp. 4, 6.
- <sup>9</sup> Hector Crawford. *Commercial Television in Australia*, published by Hector Crawford, Melbourne, 14<sup>th</sup> September 1959;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 75, 76.
- <sup>10</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Annual Report 1959/60*, op. cit., p. 38.
- <sup>11</sup> Albert Moran, *Images and Industry*, op. cit. p. 32
- <sup>12</sup> John Cain, "Hector Crawford" in *On With the Show*, Prowling Press, Victoria, p. 100.
- <sup>13</sup> "I Wonder What Happened to.", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 15 September 1960, p. 20;  
Corinne Kerby, "Our TV Must Create – Or Die", *Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, June 1960, p. 6;  
"Our TV MUST STAND ON its OWN feet NOW", *Listener-In TV*, 1 July-7 July 1961, " 'Ion' Section", p. 23;  
Russell Clark, "Frankly Horrified at Our Commercial TV", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 15 February 1962, p. 8.
- <sup>14</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., pp. 75, 76.
- <sup>15</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, letter to Senator G. C. Hannan, Melbourne, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, 25 March 1960;  
  
Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Senator Seddon Vincent, Kalgoorlie, WA, letter and copy of submission to *Joint Standing Committee on The Development of the Australian Theatre and Film Industry*, June 1961, to Senator George Hannan, Melbourne, 17 June 1961.
- <sup>16</sup> Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p. 149.
- <sup>17</sup> Ian Crawford believes that "the government were scared to enforce *The Vincent Report*. The power of the press meant that the government was terrified to put the press against them. If they put the whole press against them they would lose the next election automatically".  
  
Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 February 2008;  
Ted Hamilton, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, Victoria, 9 October 2009;  
Terry Donovan, interview with Philip Davey, Armadale, Victoria, May 2008.  
  
*TV-Make it Australian* campaign: See Chapter 11, endnote 25.
- <sup>18</sup> Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation: Hector Crawford, *Additional Evidence to the Senate Select Committee for the Encouragement of Australian Productions for Television* (The Vincent Inquiry), November 1962, p. 2.  
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Tom O'Regan, "Film & its Nearest Neighbour: the Australian Film & Television Interface", [http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/Reading\\_Room/film/AFTV.html](http://www.mcc.murdoch.edu.au/Reading_Room/film/AFTV.html), pp. 6, 7, 8, accessed 23 September 2007.

- <sup>19</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Annual Report 1959/60*, op. cit., p. 38; Report from the Select Senate Committee, op. cit., p. 6; Kate Harrison, *The Points System For Australian Television*, Royal Institute of Public Administration, Brisbane, 1980, p. 8.
- <sup>20</sup> "Channel Sickness: Harder Times for the Television Broadcasting Companies", in *Nation*, Sydney, 31 October 1964, p. 12; Nigel Dick, *The Conception and Development of Commercial Television*, op. cit., p. 108; Albert Moran, *Images & Industry: Television Drama Production in Australia*, Currency Press, Sydney, 1985, pp. 28-30; Tom O'Regan, op. cit., p. 9.
- <sup>21</sup> Report from the Select Committee, op. cit., p. 16
- <sup>22</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, Victoria, 17 June 2009; Gary Hardman, telephone interview with Philip Davey, 11 October 2007; Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>23</sup> National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Australian Broadcasting Control Board, Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General on Applications for a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Sydney and Melbourne Area, Commonwealth of Australia, Commonwealth Government Printer, April 1963, p. 105.
- <sup>24</sup> National Archives of Australia (NAA), Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: Dr Ronald Mendelsohn and E. J. Bunting, (Cabinet Secretary), "Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610": *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, (Confidential), Prime Minister's Department, *Commonwealth of Australia*, Canberra, 3 April 1963, p. 3;
- National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.4940, Item C.1192: E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Confidential Executive Memo to the Prime Minister, addendum to "Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610": *Television – Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, (Confidential), Prime Minister's Department, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 3 April 1963;
- National Archives of Australia, Canberra, Series A.11099, Control symbol 1/60, Barcode 8920713: E. J. Bunting, Cabinet Secretary, Notes of Cabinet Meetings, Prime Ministers' Department, Australian Government, 13 February – 30 April 1963.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> George Miller, interview with Philip Davey, Cape Paterson, 10 January 2009; Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, Kings Cross, 28 February 2009; Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, Mosman, 10 October 2009; David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, Whangerai, Auckland, NZ, 6 March 2011.
- <sup>27</sup> Sound and film editor Tony Paterson was significantly influenced by Ian Crawford:
- "One of the most important things about being at Crawfords was meeting Ian Crawford. Ian was someone who always thought at many stages forwards, backwards and sideways.[...] And when you'd go into the double head screening Ian would ask a series of questions about how the thing was structured. Now what you would need to do before to be able to answer the questions, before you cut the thing, you would always need to anticipate what questions he was going to ask you about the way you did it. As a consequence, everything was planned. I knew why I cut out of the shot, I knew why I went to the next shot and I was able to develop a system. [...]"
- "Now what Ian would do is ask you how long do the close-ups run? Do they start up at the beginning of the scene; you'd need to know the start and end point of all the components and you'd need to know why you decided to go in at any given time. He'd ask you! [...] And he wouldn't ask you for the fun of it; he'd ask you because he may need to restructure the whole thing when he's integrating it with the TV video component. [...]"
- "[Ian] was someone who just knew the mechanics with such an amazing amount of detail. Very meticulous and necessarily so. They were just brilliant questions related to the material. He wasn't doing it to be nuisance but to get the absolute maximum value out of the material that was on the screen. He was an absolute pivotal person in the film world and influenced by subsequent film career and the way I do other things; the way I write, and the way I plan everything. It was absolutely critical to the way Crawfords used to work. Ian has a brilliant mind and was vastly under-rated. A brilliant person at planning".
- Tony Paterson, telephone interview with Philip Davey, 23 July 2008.
- <sup>28</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>29</sup> Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs, op. cit., p. 146.
- <sup>30</sup> Mark DeFriest, telephone interview with Philip Davey, Perth, 25 September 2008.
- <sup>31</sup> Included in this group are John Barningham, Jock Blair, Gary Conway, Graham Foreman, Cliff Green, Howard Griffith, Gary Hardman, Rod Hardy, Lindsay Parker, George Miller, David Stevens, Andrew Swanson, Doug Tainsh, Marie Trevor and Simon Wincer.
- <sup>32</sup> In 1969, 1971 and 1975, Hector won special Silver Logie Awards for "Outstanding Contribution to Australian Television and drama. In 1976, "For Faith and Continuing Investment in Australian Drama; in 1984, a Gold Logie as the Inaugural Hall of Fame inductee.
- Australian Television Information Archive, Logie Awards, [http://www.australiantelevision.net/awards/logie1974\\_77.html](http://www.australiantelevision.net/awards/logie1974_77.html), accessed 29 November 2013.
- <sup>33</sup> Mark DeFriest, telephone interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

- <sup>34</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, Mosman, Sydney, 10 October 2009;  
Liz Porter, quote by actor Gary Day in "The House of Crawfords", *The Sunday Age*, Melbourne, 20 October 1996, p. 39;  
Ted Hamilton, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 9 October 2009;  
Berryman, Ken, "Showcasing Crawfords: The National Film and Sound Archive / Crawfords Oral History Project", paper presented at the 14th International Oral History Conference, Australian Film Commission, Screen Australia, August 2006. [http://afcarchive.screenaustralia.gov.au/downloads/speeches/crawfords\\_oral\\_history.pdf](http://afcarchive.screenaustralia.gov.au/downloads/speeches/crawfords_oral_history.pdf), accessed July 2007.
- <sup>35</sup> George Miller, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Ted Hamilton, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>36</sup> Ted Hamilton, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>37</sup> Henry Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, South Yarra, 6 December 2009;  
Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>38</sup> Terry Stapleton, interview with Albert Moran, July 1977, NFSA collection Title No: 269333. Transcribed by Philip Davey;  
Cliff Green, interview with Philip Davey, Warrandyte, 25 April 2008;  
Ian Crawford, op. cit., p. 116.
- <sup>39</sup> Graeme Preston, interview with Philip Davey, Heidelberg, 1 December 2007;  
Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 30 August 2008;  
Terry McDermott, interview with Philip Davey, Upwey, 27 September 2008;  
Lorraine Bayly, interview with Philip Davey, Cremorne, Sydney, 28 February 2009.
- <sup>40</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit.;  
Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, Mosman, 10 October 2009.
- <sup>41</sup> Henry Crawford, op. cit;  
David Stevens, op. cit;  
ie: *The Sullivans, Cop Shop, Skyways and Carsons Law*.
- <sup>42</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>43</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, Auburn, Victoria, 16 January 2008;  
Henry Crawford, *Ibid*.
- <sup>44</sup> Henry Crawford, *ibid.*,  
Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>45</sup> Ian Jones, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.;  
Jim McKay, Nine Network executive, interview with Philip Davey, Camberwell, 28 February 2011.
- <sup>46</sup> Tom Hegarty, op. cit;  
Ian Jones, op. cit;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., pp. 127, 128.
- <sup>47</sup> David Stevens, op. cit.
- <sup>48</sup> Ian Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Ian Crawford, unpublished memoirs (untitled), op. cit., pp. 132, 133.
- <sup>49</sup> Elspeth Ballantyne, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Jeanie Drynan, interview with Philip Davey, Manly, 9 January 2009;  
Nick Holland, telephone interview with Philip Davey, Perth, 7 December 2007.
- <sup>50</sup> Lorraine Bayly, interview with Philip Davey, Cremorne, NSW, 28 February 2009;  
Andrew McFarlane, interview with Philip Davey, Kings, Cross, 14 May 2011;  
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Nick Holland, op. cit.
- <sup>51</sup> George Miller, interview with Philip Davey, Cape Paterson, 10 January 2009.
- <sup>52</sup> Glenn Martin, telephone interview with Philip Davey, Perth, 21 November 2007.
- <sup>53</sup> Hugh Waddell, interview with Philip Davey, North Balwyn, 2 January 2009.
- <sup>54</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview with Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 30 August 2008.
- <sup>55</sup> Hugh Waddell, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>56</sup> Elspeth Ballantyne, interview with Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 18 April 2008.  
Maggie Miller, Interview with Philip Davey, The Gurdies, Victoria, 27 January 2008;  
Terry Gill, interview with Philip Davey, Tooronga, 2 September 2008.
- <sup>57</sup> Australian Broadcasting Control Board, *Inquiry into the applications received by the Postmaster-General for a Licence for a Television Station in the Melbourne Area, Transcript of Proceedings*, 7 November – 13 December 1962, Melbourne, Commonwealth of Australia, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra, 1963: Hector Crawford, Statement of Evidence, p. 207;  
*Ibid.*, E. G. Coles, pp. 331, 335.
- <sup>58</sup> Elspeth Ballantyne, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Maggie Miller, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.;  
Tony Bonner, interview with Philip Davey, Kings Cross, 9 January 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Terry Norris believes that Crawfords and the ABC were quite similar in the late 1960s-early 1970s: "Crawfords in those days was like a factory, as was in fact the ABC here at Ripponlea. Both very, very similar and when you went in it was almost like the heyday of the old Hollywood studio system. There were the writers, the costume people, things were happening and that time they [Crawfords] were doing 5-6 shows at the same time. The three cop shows, *Showcase*, *The Sullivans*. It was a hive of activity".

Terry Norris, interview with Philip Davey, Balaclava, Melbourne, December 2012;  
Elizabeth Jacka, *The ABC of Drama 1975-1990*, Australian Film and Television School, North Ryde, 1991.

The following writing and directing credits are examples of the work former Crawfords' staffers did for the ABC. Most of course worked for numerous other production companies as well:

Cliff Green: *Marion* (1974), *The Seven Ages of Man* (1975), *Power Without Glory* (1976), *Burn the Butterflies* (1979), *Lucinda Brayford* (1980), *All the Green Years* (1980), *I Can Jump Puddles*, (1981), *Phoenix* (1992), *Janus* (1994-1995), *Mercury* (1996), *Something in the Air* (2000-2002).

John Dingwell: *The Seven Ages of Man* (Writer & Director) (1975), *Pig in a Poke* (writer) (1977).

Howard Griffiths: *Rush* (1974), *The Seven Ages of Man* (1975), *Power Without Glory* (1976), *Outbreak of Love* (1981), *G.P.* (1993).

Sonia Borg: *Quality of Mercy* (1975), *Power Without Glory* (1976), *Women of the Sun* (1981), *I Can Jump Puddles*, (1981), *Mercury* (1996).

Lynn Bayonas: *Quality of Mercy* (1975).

Tom Hegarty: *Power Without Glory* (1976).

Igor Auzins: *The Outsiders* (Director) (1976-77).

David Stevens: *The Outsiders* (Director) (1976-77).

Peter Schreck: *Because He's My Friend* (1978), *G.P.* (1991-1994).

Roger Simpson: *Power Without Glory* (1976), *Players in the Gallery* (1980), *I Can Jump Puddles*, (1981), *Learned Friends* (1983).

Everett DeRoche: *Locusts and Wild Honey* (1980).

Kevin Dobson: *I Can Jump Puddles*, (Director) (1981).

Terry Stapleton: *This Man, This Woman* (1989), *Embassy* (1990-1992).

Paul Maloney: *This Man, This Woman* (Director) (1989).

Peter Andrikidis: *G.P.* (Director) (1989-1996), *Embassy* (1990), *Wildside* (1998-1999), *Grass Roots* (2000-2003), *Serangoon Road*, (2013), Janet King (2014).

Luis Bayonas: *G.P.* (1989).

David Boutland: *G.P.* (1990-1993).

Peter Kinlock, *G.P.* (1991-1995).

Source: IMDb, <http://www.imdb.com/>, accessed 2 December 2013.

<sup>60</sup> Gerard Kennedy, interview by Philip Davey, Port Melbourne, 30 August 2008;

Gary Hardman, telephone interview with Philip Davey, 11 October 2007;

Hugh Waddell, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;

Gary Martin, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>61</sup> See Chapter 12.5.5.

<sup>62</sup> Grundy Television Productions produced a number of successful and long-running soap dramas from the mid 1970s. These include *Class of 74*, *The Restless Years*, *The Young Doctors*, *Glenview High*, *Prisoner*, *Sons and Daughters*, and *Neighbours*.

IMDb: [http://www.imdb.com/company/co0075775/?ref=ttco\\_co\\_1#miscellaneousX20company](http://www.imdb.com/company/co0075775/?ref=ttco_co_1#miscellaneousX20company), accessed 1 December 2013.

<sup>63</sup> Reg Grundy, like Hector Crawford, is recognised as "one of the most successful Australian entrepreneurs, and media and television moguls of his generation", although the pathway he took was quite different. Grundy is an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (1983) and was made a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2008.

Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reg\\_Grundy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reg_Grundy), accessed 1 December 2013.

<sup>64</sup> Tom Hegarty, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;

Graham Foreman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;

Anne Warren, interview with Philip Davey, Toorak, 16 March 2008;

Howard Griffiths, interview with Albert Moran, circa 1977. Audio recording from National Film and Sound Archives (NFSA), Canberra, Title No:269364/269399. Transcribed by Philip Davey.

David Stevens, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>65</sup> Bryce Hallett, "The Nursery Where Starts Were Formed", *The Australian, Weekend Review Section*, Canberra, 21-22 May 1994, p. 8.

<sup>66</sup> Borg, Sonia. "Dorothy Crawford", Obituary tribute presented by Keith Eden, St. John's Church, Toorak, September 1988. (From the Wynne Pullman Collection, Hawthorn, Victoria.)

<sup>67</sup> Mimi Colligan, "Crawford, Dorothy Muriel", *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 17 (MUP), 2007. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/crawford-dorothy-muriel-12367>, accessed 26 October 2013.

<sup>68</sup> George Miller, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.



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Photo of George Mallaby, John Fegan and Sonia Borg with racehorse unknown, circa 1968.  
Copyright owner unknown.

*(From the Sonia Borg private collection)*

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Glenda Raymond and Hector Crawford at home 1985.

(Photo by Anne Warren courtesy of Garry Hardman)

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Portrait of Dorothy Crawford, producer of *Opera for the People*.  
Dawson, John M. (1948).

National Library of Australia: To view this photo, visit:

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an24205819>



# **Crawford Creations**

## **What would we have done without Crawfords?**

*An exploration of Crawford Productions' contribution to the development of an 'Australian Consciousness'.*

### **Volume Two - Appendices**

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Hector Crawford conducting at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl, circa mid 1960s.

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The “Golden Archway” entrance to the Collins Street  
Crawford Productions’ office foyer.

*Photo by Peter Zerbe courtesy of Garry Hardman. To view photo visit:*

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Newspaper advertising promo of radio drama play *Consider Your Verdict*, for Monday, August 18 at 2.30 p.m on 3DB-LK.

Source: *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 16-22 August, 1958, Page 15.

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Photo of *Mobil Quest* 1951 winner Margaret Nisbett.

Source: *Mobil Quest* Program Guide, Vacuum Oil Company, Melbourne, 1954.

## APPENDIX B – Radio Case Studies

### 1. Margaret Nisbett – Opera Singer

*Mobil Quest* was so highly regarded by singing teachers around the country that students were strongly encouraged to enter. Realising no other musical contest could offer young singers such wide and valuable experience, many teachers provided special coaching to ensure their students acquitted themselves well.<sup>1</sup> Margaret Nisbett, who became a renowned Australian coloratura soprano, was one such student:

My singing teacher Pauline Bindley suggested that I enter the *Mobil Quest* at a time when I was preparing to compete in the Melbourne *Sun Aria* in 1951", she recalls. So I entered *Mobil Quest* in 1951 and happened to win my way through the heats. I was going to try the *Sun Aria* again, in which I had made the quarter finals in 1950, but the Mobil people didn't want me to go on with this just in case I didn't do any good or in case I did and it would 'belittle' what they had done for me! This did not seem to stop artists alternating between the two competitions, however.<sup>2</sup>

Winning heat 11 of *Mobil Quest* in 1951, Margaret then competed with 24 semi-finalists to win her way to the Grand Final at the Melbourne Town Hall. Winning *Mobil Quest* with her rendition of the "Mad Scene" from *Hamlet* by Ambroise Thomas; "Dearest Home from Verdi's *Rigoletto* and "The Laughing Song" from *Die Fledermaus* by Strauss, Nisbett recalls how overwhelmed she was at the time:<sup>3</sup>

*Mobil Quest* was the first big sortie into anything like this. The only time that the judges saw contestants in person was in the [Melbourne] town hall final and, to make it even harder, I had to compete with six other finalists instead of the normal five because there was a furore in one of the semi-finals as they couldn't split two of the contestants.<sup>4</sup>

The quality of the semi-finalists in 1951 was quite extraordinary, according to Dr L Bainton, one of the adjudicators. Hector Crawford recalled Bainton's response: "nowhere else in the world could a group of singers, such as he had heard, be brought together in a similar competition".<sup>5</sup> Not surprisingly, seven singers reached the grand final, although it had only been intended that six – one from each semi-final – should do so. The extra singer was tenor Eric Mitchelson.<sup>6</sup>

The grand final night was a huge success and as an example of *Mobil Quest's* popularity, every seat in the Melbourne Town Hall was sold 90 minutes after

bookings opened. Broadcast on 3DB around Australia, a capacity crowd of 2,736 saw the concert on 6 September 1951, the night that changed Margaret Nisbett's life:<sup>7</sup>

One of the amazing things about my final was that four or five of the finalists 'from all over Australia' came from Preston where I lived. June Bronhill, who came third to me, was an exception coming from Sydney.<sup>8</sup>

From the age of five, Nisbett had aspired to be a great opera singer and travel to Europe to study. *Mobil Quest* provided the opportunity for her to achieve this goal:

Without that, I would not have gone abroad when I did. The prize of £1,000, plus further help with travelling expenses from Vacuum Oil, was a huge amount in those days.

Australia was overflowing with talent at this time so when I went to England and was accepted into the opera company Saddlers Wells, it was not unusual to find say three of five singing leading roles there Australian. June Bronhill and I were both there at the same time while Joan Sutherland [1950 *Mobil Quest* winner] had just been accepted into Covent Garden and we all became close friends and colleagues.<sup>9</sup>

Staying in London for a decade, Nisbett returned home when Melbourne promoter Garnett Carroll offered her the lead role of 'Maria' in *West Side Story*. The opportunity was too good to refuse:<sup>10</sup> "That was the first long running show I did outside of opera so I learned to add versatility to my repertoire by singing popular material".<sup>11</sup>

Unlike most opera singers of her generation, Nisbett elected to 'go freelance' and has since made her living working between television and stage. In between numerous appearances on Graham Kennedy's *In Melbourne Tonight*, *Music For the People* and *Carols By Candlelight*, Nisbett hosted her own 36-week ABC TV series *Margaret Nisbett Operetta* while touring regularly around Australia.<sup>12</sup>

When asked about the influence Hector Crawford Productions exerted on career pathways for Australian singers, Nisbett unreservedly observes that "Hector Crawford probably created more work in the entertainment industry than any other in Australia":<sup>13</sup>

*Mobil Quest* was a magnificent opportunity to sing, first of all, over the radio, and the whole experience was unique. To sing for Hector Crawford, who everybody worshiped, and on such a stage as that – an Australia wide stage – even before we got to the finals.

Everybody who appeared in *Mobil Quest*, I would say, had a name afterwards. Even if they just went out in the first heat. Just to have made it was prestigious. Certainly there was the *Sun Aria*, but there was no orchestra, no radio and that competition was much shorter.<sup>14</sup>

Nisbett also recalls how well artists were looked after by sponsor Vacuum Oil; when artists went overseas a representative from the company would be on-hand to ensure everything ran smoothly:

We were seen off with big pomp and ceremony. We all did farewell concerts to supplement our prize money but without *Mobil Quest* I would never have been able to go and would probably have remained a secretary with the Tramways Board.<sup>15</sup>

Nesbitt rates *Mobil Quest* in a class of its own, both as a competition and because it had the backing of Mobil, a name as familiar as Shell:

I don't know how Hector got the backing of it," she ponders. He probably did so with one of his wonderful plans. Hector, despite his left wing politics, still mixed beautifully with business people.<sup>16</sup>

Although Nesbitt is quite clear about Hector Crawford's contribution to the industry, she is quick to point out the enormous contribution made by Dorothy Crawford to the company:

She was understated really. I think he [Hector] got the accolades because of his entrepreneurial style, because of his flair and because he was in front of everybody all the time. He was the showman. Dorothy was the core of the whole thing as far as I'm concerned and I'm not talking out of place. I don't know, but I always gathered that feeling. He was the front showcase and she was the working machine at the back.

Dorothy was really tough but at the same time very kindly and sympathetic. But there was always this slightly withdrawn feeling because she was so busy. She had so much on her plate that she had to be self-contained; but she was the workhorse.<sup>17</sup>

The question as to what extent *Mobil Quest* and Crawfords contributed to Nesbitt's career is quite clear:

I know that people are given an opportunity and if you take the opportunity it's then up to that person to go to the next step. I did go to the next step, but didn't stay as long as Joan Sutherland for personal reasons so when the opportunity arose to come back for *West Side Story* I thought this is fate, I'm going home.

But Crawford's provided me with that first big step of being able to be financed to go and fulfil a dream; that's to go and study opera in England and see what I could do and I did very, very well.

So yes, they provided me with the beginning, of being able to say I've lived my life earning money doing something that I absolutely adore. They put my feet on the path.<sup>18</sup>

## **2. Don Battye – Child Actor, Producer, Writer**

Making the choice between a new bicycle and acting lessons with *The Crawford School of Broadcasting* (CSB) Junior School was simple according to Don Battye. From the age of five he had wanted to work in radio or theatre, an ambition he attributes to the influence radio exerted on his life during the 1940s and 50s:

I was no different to any other child in those days I guess," he says. "I used to sit at home from 5.15pm or whatever and listen every quarter hour to a radio serial and then be highly embarrassed of course when I did get work [later] and have to sit at home listening to myself!

Battye recalls the existence of several fairly small schools of broadcasting in the early 1950s. Usually run by retired or unsuccessful actors, most were largely unrecognised, or unaccredited in today's terminology. Crawfords was different:

Crawfords of course had the name and it was the first time they'd done it so it was a fairly big thing for the people in the business, or people wanting to be in the business.

The first teacher young Don encountered at Crawfords was Allan Matheson. An extremely gentle man, Matheson taught a group of six or seven "horrible little children" on Saturday mornings from about 9.30 to midday. After a few weeks Matheson suddenly vanished as Battye found out one morning when a rather formidable lady sat behind the desk:

Announcing she was Moira Carleton, hated Children and was taking over her husband's classes, we sat there absolutely petrified. It took me a few years to realise in fact what a wonderfully warm, although quite frequently, acid tough lady that Moira was. She was quite an exceptional lady and Moira, I remember, had the attitude that it was a waste of money for children to be going there doing classes if they weren't in fact going to do any good.

I think the end result of her opinions were that she and Dorothy [Crawford] had an enormous row and didn't speak to each other for something like 5 or 10 years and Moira vanished after that. I think she lasted for about 12 months as the tutor before Barbara Brandon took over.

In Moira's classes Battye would read from old scripts of *D.24* or other serials Crawfords had produced. Swapping parts and playing different roles, it was a case of children pretending to be adults. Given Carleton's indifference to these classes, the emphasis on pronunciation and dialects was absent. When Barbara Brandon took over, lessons became more interesting and meaningful:

Barbara was a very quiet and gentle lady who probably, I think, had more to do with the success of those classes than anybody else. She used to force producers, including the ABC, people from Broadcast Exchange, and if she could, someone from Macquarie down from Sydney occasionally. She'd drag them in on a Saturday morning, literally lock them in the control room, and force them to sit through the kids going through their antics!

Battye remembers that Brandon was very good at recognising student talent, and whether individuals really belonged in the radio industry. With one young chap expressing more interest in tape recording equipment than acting, she had the foresight to encourage him into the control room. This was typical of Crawfords over the years.

As Battye progressed through the course, he did as much radio work as he could fit in with his school work. In his teens, Battye appeared regularly on a 3DB children's program produced by Jean Lawson. Having started full-time work as an office boy, Battye would dash out at lunchtime three days a week to collect a script to read for live-to-air performance that evening:

They would let me leave at five to five and I'd run from the office back to 3DB to go to air live at 5.15 – at one stage the cast included Bert Newton. We would never have a read through with Jean. It was bang – the introductory music would start and we'd go straight into the serial live from 5.15 – 5.30.

The pool of adult radio actors remained quite small in Melbourne; Battye quickly become known among them as they moved between perhaps five studios in any given day. Because they talked among themselves and with the various producers, Battye picked up many child roles via their networking and recommendations. Although being a CSB student did not always guarantee a role, Battye showed

enough promise in his first year to snare several roles as a child/teenager in Crawford's biographical series *Respectfully Yours* (1951/52):

*Respectfully Yours* I enjoyed immensely, which told the life stories of famous people. I remember one of them I did was playing Louis Brail as a child. Crawford's took that program very seriously because I actually had to go to the Royal Blind Society and talk with somebody about Brail and discuss the history of the man before I played the role, which Dorothy absolutely insisted on. This was a prestigious type of program in which I played a number of characters as children. And of course it was good and serious drama because it was about a real person.

As he grew older, Battye enjoyed working for Crawford's more than any other producer because in his opinion, the Crawford approach was much more sophisticated, due predominately to Dorothy Crawford:

The woman was quite extraordinary. She was a hard lady to work for. She terrified the hell out of me when I was a kid but laughed about it many years later of course with her.

But Dorothy really did rule the roost and her knowledge which I think was more instinct than anything else. She worked by and large I think by instinct, although she had been an actress of course and done a lot of work herself for the ABC, I think most of it was probably instinct. She just simply knew what was going to work best dramatically.

While most of the CSB graduates began the course as adults, Battye remembers fellow teenage student Lewis Fiander who made a name for himself:

Lewis tried to talk me into coming to Sydney at a very early age. I remember my parents being horrified when I went home and announced that Lewis Fiander wanted me to go to Sydney with him! I hadn't even left school of course. To my amazement, Lewis in fact did go to Sydney, really took off and of course ended up in London and came back to do a few things here on stage. Lewis of course had a lot of work. Of the junior classes he's about the only one I remember who made it.

While Fiander enjoyed an extensive career on stage and on television in England, Don Battye never earned his living totally from radio, except when he was working in both radio and theatre:

If I had of decided to make a living out of radio then I would have gone to Sydney, as Sydney was the mecca of radio. I went out of radio pretty much as soon as I got into the theatre and radio serials by this time were beginning to wain and theatre, once it got me in its grip, took over.



In 1970, Battye returned to Crawford Productions where he produced and wrote for Crawfords' police productions. In 1977 he left Crawfords and worked on well-known soaps such as *Sons and Daughters* and *Neighbours* for Reg Grundy.<sup>19</sup>

### **3. Wynne Pullman – Radio Casting Director and Script Editor**

Wynne Pullman, who joined Crawfords in the early 1950s, is one of the best-qualified people to describe Dorothy Crawford's attributes, production skills and working relationships during the radio era. Initially an assistant to staff such as Moira Carleton, Agnes Dobson and Barbara Brandon in The Crawford School of Broadcasting, Pullman later worked closely with Dorothy as casting director and script editor for over a decade.<sup>20</sup>

From an early age Pullman aspired to work as both a radio actor and in production, which was exactly the way her career progressed. Prior to joining Crawfords, Pullman debuted on stage at the Little Theatre and then in radio with roles in John Hickling's *Anne of Green Gables* and *Pollyanna*. Pullman went through the audition process with the ABC and Dorothy Crawford but only received letters of appreciation promising to be 'in touch'. The phone calls never came!<sup>21</sup>

After being hired by the School of Broadcasting, Pullman first met Dorothy in the control room at 3DB while working on a script for the students. Noticing that Pullman had a talent for timing and editing scripts, Dorothy asked her to return, "to try you on some other scripts that are not quite ready. Dorothy was quite intuitive about the people who came in; some she forgot about immediately, others she continued to keep an eye on." Pullman was one of those lucky ones and her career blossomed.<sup>22</sup>

When a script arrived on her desk, Pullman's first job was to assess its running time by reading aloud and acting out all the parts. A half-hour program's on-air content could not exceed, by law, 27½ minutes; the remaining time was filled with commercials assigned by the sponsor of the program. After that, casting would be arranged and a studio booked.<sup>23</sup> While Crawfords worked on occasion at AWA and Broadcast Exchange, a dingy smoke-filled little room at the end of a long 3DB passage was often the scene of many a classic drama recording. "It was really

hideous”, recalled Keith Eden. “Everyone smoked in those days and I don’t know how we all didn’t die of lung cancer. Can you imagine – twelve actors, all smoking, morning and afternoon!” Eden actually complained to the Health Department so 3DB came up with the idea that it was temporary studio and would be replaced, which they did about 15 years later when radio drama was redundant! <sup>24</sup>

Occasionally, after timing a script, Pullman found a shortfall and had to ask the writer for another page. “Quite often writers would get rather agitated with her because they would swear sufficient copy had been written, but an insert would be required and it would extend the on-air time if needed.” At the same time, the scripts contained cuts marking paragraphs that were least important to the story. At the end of rehearsal, the marked cuts could be made quickly if the script was a bit too long.<sup>25</sup>

During recording sessions actors received various hand signals – to cut a particular sentence or to shorten the running time. The signal to hurry things along was making a circle. Pulling a long length was the indication to go slowly. A cut was a ‘cut the throat’ sign sometimes given by Dorothy from the control room window. Being able to respond quickly to such techniques was important: re-recording and unwanted expense were thus avoided, although sometimes a retake was necessary.<sup>26</sup> Pullman was amazed at Dorothy’s work ethic:

Never seeking accolades or personal wealth, her days were filled with everything to do with Crawfords. She would be in the studio by 8.30 in the morning because it was the first call although she did a lot of preparation at home, and she would often call me at home and talk about things. One thing I can always remember is that my phone would always go at one o'clock every Sunday. I would be on the phone for perhaps an hour with Dorothy.

I can remember quite often going down to the theatre. It might've been St. Martin's or into the Princess Theatre but when I went in I'd go over and pick up my ticket and they would say “Oh before you go in would you ring Dorothy Crawford.” That often happened, because I think that Dorothy needed to know where I was at all times.<sup>27</sup>

Emulating her boss, Pullman was quite often seen timing a script on a tram, train or in a cab, much to the curiosity or amusement of onlookers! Working many more hours than she was paid, Pullman notes that she was not bothered; “Overtime was more or less a labour of love”:<sup>28</sup>

Dorothy, really, inspired us all to seek perfection. And we were all fortunate to have known and worked with her. She excelled really, in the areas of writing,

directing and acting, and had a desire and also an ability to pass her on knowledge and I can tell you I learned a terrific amount from Dorothy. It enabled me to develop much more than I think in any other way.

Sometimes we thought we'd done a really great job – either acting, casting, or writing – but Dorothy just wouldn't quite agree with it. It was sometimes rather hard to take when you thought "Oh I can do this, no worries at all." While we all learned our lessons hard in that way, we really did learn to care and I think everybody had a very, very deep respect for Dorothy.

I know some men folk didn't like being told what to do by a lady, not all. I can remember one actor who said "look I've come in the day before, picked up my script, taken it home, worked on it and thought well I can't get it any better than that." But at rehearsal Dorothy would say now that was quite good but I think if you concentrated on *that* particular word, it gives it a different meaning. And he said "of course she was right wasn't she, but I haven't seen it have I?"<sup>29</sup>

Pullman believes that Dorothy Crawford was admired by actors and writers alike because, although they had worked for many other organisations in the same field, working for Dorothy was an uplifting professional experience. This perception certainly contributed to the elite pool of actors and writers available to her. Writers included John Ormiston Reid (*The Melba Story*, *The Amazing Oscar Hammerstein*, *The Blue Danube and Inspector West*); Della Foss Paine (*John Turner's Family and Prodigal Father*); Osmar White (*Awake the Murdered*); Roland Strong (*D.24 and CIB*) and Jeff Underhill (*Here Comes O'Malley*, *The Beau*). Regarded as perhaps the standout of this team, John Ormiston Reid was awarded the 1948 Academy Award by the Australian Federation of Commercial Broadcasting Stations for best serial script of the year – *The Blue Danube*.<sup>30</sup>

When asked if she thought Crawford's would have been so successful without Dorothy Crawford, Wynne Pullman thinks not:<sup>31</sup>

She and I sometimes didn't agree on things. It might have been to do with casting. I'd say one thing, she'd say another, but what about.[...]To give her credit, later on, after whatever it was we'd finished, she came back and plonked a nice little glass with some little gift and say "there you are.[...] you deserve that". I would say:"You really think it was right in the long run?" No doubt about it!"<sup>32</sup>

There may have been other people who were *just as good* as Dorothy, but I really feel no one could've been *any better* at what they were doing than Dorothy Crawford.<sup>33</sup>

The airwaves really knew the call sign "produced in the studios of Hector Crawford productions by....pause..., Dorothy Crawford", and I'd say these programs were listened to by millions around the world.<sup>34</sup>

Because “thousands of episodes of Crawford-produced radio programs were exported to over twenty countries,” there is no reason to doubt the veracity of this belief.

Pullman recalls that Hector Crawford was generally not involved in drama production matters, but does not discount his contribution; Dorothy and Hector complimented each other's work:

Hector was a marvellous person with a lovely sense of humour. I would say that he was an ace salesman. I always said “Mr. Crawford, you could sell anybody their own funeral!” He could laugh a lot, loved his music and loved everything about it. They [Dorothy and Hector] not only worked very long hours, we did too. I don't think I ate much before eight o'clock at night, but Hector and Dorothy would be in the office discussing things at about 10 o'clock each night, and that's a long day.<sup>35</sup>

The relationship was, in actuality, a significant partnership of rare proportions within the industry and a major factor behind the success of Hector Crawford Productions.<sup>36</sup>

Looking back on her work with Dorothy, and generally with Crawford Productions, Pullman says that it was very hectic, but enjoyable: “It was well worth it, very rewarding and I'm sure I benefited in many ways through having the opportunity to work with Crawford Productions.”<sup>37</sup>

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Hector Crawford, "Art's Debt to Commercial Enterprise," *Mobil Quest Programme 1954*, Vacuum Oil Company, Melbourne, 1954, p. 2. (From the Margaret Nisbett private collection.)
- <sup>2</sup> Margaret Nisbett, interview with Philip Davey, Regent, Victoria, 29 June, 2010.
- <sup>3</sup> Hector Crawford, "Art's Debt to Commercial Enterprise," *Mobil Quest Programme 1954*, Vacuum Oil Company, Melbourne, 1954, p. 12. (From the Margaret Nisbett private collection.)
- <sup>4</sup> Margaret Nisbett, op. cit.
- <sup>5</sup> Hector Crawford referring to "Mobil Quest 1951" in *Mobil Quest Brochure*, Vacuum Oil Company 1953, p. 12. (From the Margaret Nisbett private collection.)
- <sup>6</sup> Margaret Nisbett, op. cit.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Margaret Nisbett, op. cit.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra. Don Battye, interview with Diana Combe, 29 March 1985, Title No: 191386. Recording transcribed by Philip Davey 2009. All direct and non-direct quotes used in this case study are from the above interview transcription.
- <sup>20</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Wynne Pullman, interview with Beverly Dunn, for *Once Upon A Wireless* project, Melbourne, 16 July 1993. Title No: 270522. Transcribed by Philip Davey, 2009.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> Wynne Pullman, interview with Philip Davey, Hawthorn, Victoria, 29 March, 2008.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Collection, Canberra: Keith Eden, interview with Beverly Dunn, for *Once Upon A Wireless* project, Flinders, Victoria, 16 June 1993. Title No: 270436. Transcribed by Philip Davey, 2009.
- <sup>25</sup> Wynne Pullman, interview with Beverly Dunn, op. cit.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid. While these studio production methods were not unique to Crawfords, they are outlined at this point to provide a general insight into contemporary radio production techniques.
- <sup>27</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> "Award Winner Congratulated," *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 22-28 January, 1949, p. 3.
- <sup>31</sup> Wynne Pullman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup> Wynne Pullman, interview with Beverly Dunn, op. cit.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.  
Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne - Official Crawford Productions documentation: Crawford Productions Pty Ltd, *Submission to Tariff Board Inquiry into the Production and Distribution of Motion Picture Films and Television Programs*, Melbourne, 1972, pp. 12-16.
- <sup>35</sup> Wynne Pullman, interview with Beverly Dunn, op. cit.
- <sup>36</sup> Wynne Pullman, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Photo of *Showcase '69* winner Julie Raines.

Source: *TV Week*, Melbourne, circa 1969.

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Excerpts from *Showcase '73* tour manual for contestants.

© Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 1973.

(From the private collection of Jonathan Summers.)

## APPENDIX C

### Television Case Study – *Showcase*

This case study is an overview of Crawfords' *Showcase* talent quest, another method by which Hector Crawford promoted an 'Australian consciousness'. Broadcast during 1965-1970, 1973-74 and finally in 1978, *Showcase* was generously sponsored, lavishly produced and provided quality singers, musicians and other artists with the opportunity to perform with a full orchestra on national television.<sup>1</sup>

*Showcase* winners were talented artists, many of whom progressed to stellar careers in classical or popular music. The public exposure, and the national 'road-shows' for finalists, meant that there were very few losers: most contestants, including compere Gordon Boyd, received offers of employment that established many domestic careers. Through the oral history memoirs of several winners and participants, this case study describes the *Showcase* experience.

#### 1. Prologue

When current *Opera Australia* baritone Jonathan Summers made his debut at the Sydney Opera House in 1981, a remarkable set of circumstances unfolded. Performing the lead role in *La Traviata*, Summers was privileged to share the stage with Dame Joan Sutherland.<sup>2</sup> Thirty-one years before, in 1950, Sutherland won Crawfords' *Mobil Quest* (See Chapter 4.5). In 1973, Summers won the Judges' Choice award in *Showcase '73*, Crawfords' television equivalent of *Mobil Quest*. Just as Sutherland had won the *Sydney Sun Aria* competition in 1949, Summers did the same in 1973, along with the *Melbourne Sun Aria*.

Both singers, particularly Sutherland, were established artists around Sydney and Melbourne respectively and on the edge of great success prior to winning these competitions. Both had been finalists or runners-up in *Mobil Quest* and *Showcase* several times before winning. But as both attest, it was Hector Crawford's vision of encouraging and promoting local talent through such prestigious competitions, the prize money offered and the post-competition fund-raising tours that enabled both to study in England and advance their careers.<sup>3</sup> Both were 'Crawford Creations'; that

both shared the same Sydney Opera House stage was an extraordinary coincidence and a fitting tribute to Hector Crawford.

## 2. The Evolution of *Showcase*

In 1963 GTV 9 launched *Kevin Dennis Auditions*, renamed *Kevin Dennis New Faces* in 1965, and then just *New Faces* until the show ended in 1985. *New Faces* was initially a low-budget amateurish talent quest that improved considerably by the mid 1970s. Like so many similar radio talent quests in the 1950s, *New Faces* was a very popular show.<sup>4</sup>

In response, Channel 0 (ATV0) announced that Crawford's would produce *Holden Showcase '65*, a new national variety programme/talent quest to be shown in the key 7.30pm timeslot.<sup>5</sup> Commencing on 15 September 1965, the first series ran for 15 episodes to 22 December.<sup>6</sup> The range of artists in the first episode, competing for £8,500 in prize money and appearance fees, was indicative of the show's usual format: Heat One comprised a musical comedy soprano, an instrumental folk group, a native dancer, an Italian tenor, a magician, classical pianist and rock group. Initially there were 10 heats, four semi-finals and one grand final.<sup>7</sup> Judging panels always included Hector as Musical Director, along with respected entertainment experts.<sup>8</sup> Dorothy Crawford was Executive Producer during the early years of *Showcase*, and Brian Finch the Director. Experienced theatre, radio and cabaret actress Natalie Raine, as Producer, prepared and nurtured contestants throughout.<sup>9</sup>

As the show's popularity grew, seasons were extended to 26, 30 and 41 episodes to accommodate the wealth of available talent.<sup>10</sup> Just as with *Mobil Quest*, viewer concerns about judging increased; it was implied in *Listener In-TV* that some results were rigged. In response, independent 'Viewers' Choice' and 'Judges' Choice' categories were instituted in 1966. The Viewer's Choice had the added advantage of giving Crawford's an indication of popular acts to retain.<sup>11</sup> Separate grand finals were held for each category and the winners announced at a subsequent live television variety show that brought together all finalists, usually at a venue such as the Dallas Brookes Hall. In 1966, over 200 contestants appeared for prizes and fees exceeding \$20,000. From 1968 until 1970, *Showcase* was divided into Series A and B, with two



finals for each series, two grand finals to determine the overall Viewers' and Judges' winners, and a variety awards night.<sup>12</sup>

In 1971, after six seasons, ATV0 opted not to proceed with *Showcase*, citing poor ratings and high production costs.<sup>13</sup> Hector offered a reinvigorated *Showcase* to the Seven Network and although seriously considered, the proposal was refused, again due to the expense. At the time, Hector believed that *Showcase* was "too good to be allowed to die":

I'd say *Showcase* is the most worthwhile program on commercial television, and I'm not prepared even to contemplate it finishing.[...] I know I've got a struggle ahead of me, but I don't give up easily.<sup>14</sup>

Television proprietors did not agree, and the program was not seen again until 1973 on the Nine Network. *BP Showcase 73* was launched in May as a promotional episode and celebration of past successes. Many past *Showcase* discoveries and winners returned as guests, as did Gordon Boyd as compere, the Hector Crawford orchestra and the high quality production values associated with the program.<sup>15</sup>

In 1974 the program became *Cadbury Showcase '74* with the confectionary company set to continue sponsorship in 1975.<sup>16</sup> Over the course of the year Hector wrote several letters to GTV9 expressing concern over insufficient promotion and the slow progress of contract renewal negotiations for both *Showcase* and crime series *Division 4*.<sup>17</sup> The Nine Network, concerned about high production costs and low ratings for *Showcase* in Sydney, re-evaluated its commitment.<sup>18</sup> After Hector proposed a complete revamp of *Showcase* linked to cheaper costs, a contract for 1975 was prepared, but never signed.<sup>19</sup>

In a confidential memo dated 26 November 1974, GTV9 General Manager Len Hill strongly recommended to Nine Network boss Kerry Packer that *Showcase* be retained in 1975.<sup>20</sup> But Packer refused and *Showcase* became the first of four major Crawfords programs discontinued into 1975 (see Chapter 11). Hector then offered *Cadbury Showcase '75* to Ron Casey at HSV7, again unsuccessfully. When considering this option, the Seven Network asked Cadbury Schweppes about transferring sponsorship. The company was furious; this was its first indication of Packer's decision.<sup>21</sup> Compere Gordon Boyd was also angry:

We were out on the *Showcase Roadshow* in December 1974 and Glenda [Raymond] herself came down to give us the bad news that there wouldn't be any *Showcase 75* because, in very florid language, Kerry Packer had told Hector that he didn't want *Showcase*; he was bringing Graham Kennedy back. I lost a year's work with *Showcase 75*. I lost Cadbury's advertising. I lost the Roadshow. Kerry Packer decided he knew better than Hec about what entertainment was all about.<sup>22</sup>

As Crawfords recovered from the instability of 1975, popular television personality and compere Stuart Wagstaff was hired to host the last final iteration of BP Showcase '78, aired finally on the Seven Network.<sup>23</sup>

### **3. More than Just a Compere**

As compere of *Showcase* 1965-69 and 1973-74, Gordon Boyd did more than introduce acts: his was a full-time job. Whether rehearsing his own performances as a classical baritone or with contestants, or getting to know each act and determining interview questions, Boyd was involved with the whole process. He even accompanied artists on a national road show, beginning in 1967, at the conclusion of each series. Boyd resided in Sydney, he was accommodated at The Menzies Hotel in Melbourne, as were all contestants for each episode, a practice that was intended to help contestants remain focused.<sup>24</sup>

While *Showcase* introduced many popular artists, the program also enabled Boyd to establish himself within the Australian entertainment industry. During the 1950s and early 1960s, Boyd, who was British born, had featured in many UK television crime shows, notably *Scotland Yard*, under his real name Gordon Needham.<sup>25</sup> Well-known on UK stages, in cabaret, television musicals and regular radio appearances, Boyd came to Australia in 1963 to perform in musicals such as *Carousel* and *The Sound of Music*. At the same time, soprano June Bronhill approached Boyd to sing duets with her at *Music For the People*, at which point a career-enhancing association began with Crawfords.<sup>26</sup>

When the *Sound of Music* concluded, Hector had Gordon in mind as compere for *Showcase* and invited him to Melbourne for an audition with 22 other stage, radio and TV performers.<sup>27</sup> Crawfords invited Boyd for a second interview and in June 1965, the media announced that he had won the "plum compere job".<sup>28</sup> Boyd recalls that the

list had narrowed to three, and he was selected over ATVO personality and newsreader Barry McQueen, the first voice to be heard on the new station in 1964.<sup>29</sup>

The “opening show was a blend of good quality acts” one scribe wrote: “The ‘questing’ was done long before the show gets to your living room. The performers have been heard, sifted, heard again and finally selected”.<sup>30</sup> This extensive auditioning process, associated with *Showcase* throughout, is a trait that set the program apart from *New Faces*. Boyd proved a popular host, to both the media and public despite a few nervous inaugural moments. His was a polished performance and “a neat job”. finding the right balance between “sounding pompous and patronising with nervous contestants as opposed to light-hearted banter”.<sup>31</sup>

Viewers disapproved of many judging decisions.<sup>32</sup> Even the Viewers' Choice vote, initiated to negate this tension, was questioned.<sup>33</sup> But while many decisions were challenged by viewers via letters to the editor of *Listener In-TV*, *Showcase* was generally enjoyed and over the years received fulsome praise:<sup>34</sup>

Orchids to ATVO and Hector Crawford Productions for their magnificent presentation of *Showcase* '65 No.3. This program was a delight to the eye and ear and provided the best entertainment yet seen on television.<sup>35</sup>

*Showcase* far surpasses both *New Faces* and *Bobby Limb's Sound of Music* and most others with its high quality standard of presentation, variety and entertainment value.<sup>36</sup>

Towards the end of 1968, Boyd “longed to be a performer” again, sensing that viewers regarded him more as a compere than an entertainer: “When you see *Showcase* it's not the real Gordon Boyd you're watching”, he said.<sup>37</sup> Boyd resigned in February 1970, although he and Hector parted amicably.<sup>38</sup> Boyd established himself in the poker machine-rich NSW Club scene which, he claimed, provided wonderful opportunities for local artists and the “cream of overseas” performers because of the enabling gambling revenue.<sup>39</sup> Like Hector, Boyd was an advocate of promoting local talent and observed that TV producers in all states were “constantly drawing on the NSW pool of club performers for their shows”.<sup>40</sup>

Expatriate entertainer Rod McLennan, who had hosted Crawfords' *Peters Club* on GTV9 during television's early years, returned from London to host *Showcase 70*.<sup>41</sup> But McLennan was given little time to prepare and after several episodes received a

mixed reception, with one critic writing “that *Showcase* had lost a compere and gained a clown!”<sup>42</sup> McLennan was taken aback by this hometown criticism:

I didn't really expect it, but fortunately I haven't been put on the mat by Crawford Productions. [...] Mind you, I had never seen the show, or Gordon Boyd and it was a bit of a rush. [...] In the following show, however, I have decided to tone down a bit and let the entrants have their say.<sup>43</sup>

Comparisons to Boyd were inevitable: “*Showcase* will never be the same without Gordon Boyd”, one correspondent wrote. “Rod McLennan has filled in Gordon's place, but he will never take *his* place”.<sup>44</sup> Another wrote that “I do not like Rod McLennan; his presentation, looks, appearance. He has nothing going for him. Gordon Boyd did a good job”.<sup>45</sup> But some thought Boyd was wise to leave at his peak and welcomed “such a likable new personality on our screens”.<sup>46</sup> By the end of 1970, when HSV7 was rumoured to be taking over *Showcase*, it was hoped that McLennan would continue as compere: “After a few teething troubles, McLennan has developed into a fine compere, is a gentleman and a very clever artist as well”.<sup>47</sup>

But *Showcase* did not continue; ratings dropped to an unsustainable level. In May 1970, when *Coronation Street* became more popular in the 7.30pm time slot, *Showcase* was moved to 8.30pm, but ratings continued to fall.<sup>48</sup> By the end of 1970, Crawfords must have been concerned about McLennan as compere; Boyd was recalled to co-compere the last annual Roadshow: “Hector called me about returning, so that was the only time that both of us [Boyd and McLennan] were on the same show”.<sup>49</sup> The cancellation of *Showcase* in 1970 saved Crawfords from having to sack McLennan, who did not return when GTV9 resurrected the show in 1973.<sup>50</sup>

#### 4. Putting the Show Together

The *Showcase* auditioning process was thorough and stringent. Channel 0 personality Roy Hampson was the first person to sift through candidates and make recommendations to Producer Natalie Raine for further auditioning and short-listing.<sup>51</sup> Concert pianists Margaret Schofield and Leslie Miers accompanied artists and provided opinions; Miers, in particular, was Hector's right-hand man. Miers always sat in front of Hector while he was conducting the orchestra, and Hector relied upon him for advice. Miers was a small man and a skilful musician who accompanied artists in many other singing competitions.<sup>52</sup>

Weeks, perhaps months later, successful contestants would gather for their heats.<sup>53</sup> In 1968, 12 year old piano-accordionist and Viewers' Choice Finalist *Robertino*, AKA Joe Ruberto, remarked on the time it took to make one episode:<sup>54</sup>

On the first day [Friday] we would go to Collins Street and there I would just play the piece, Hector would practice his conducting. Leslie Miers, Natalie Raine and the director would be planning some camera ideas and the pianist would be checking the music. The second day was at Channel 0. The whole orchestra was there and we would just record the soundtrack, and we would get a copy on a reel-to-reel tape recording. We would privately practice miming to our own soundtrack and then on the Sunday, while we practiced miming at the studio, the director and producer would work out the camera angles and movements. The fourth day, Monday, it was recorded [to video tape] in front of a live audience.<sup>55</sup>

Ruberto did not find miming difficult: "I just played along with myself, it was natural. I didn't have to worry about improvisations as in those days the performance was all worked out note-for-note".<sup>56</sup> Principal Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Harpist and 1969 Judges' winner Julie Raines enjoyed miming: "As soon as it started I knew what I was doing as I'd play the same way, it wasn't improvised".<sup>57</sup> For operatic baritone John Lidgerwood, miming was not an issue, but it had to be done very well: "To mime properly you actually do sing with the recording".<sup>58</sup>

Gordon Boyd recalls that after the music was recorded, contestants returned to The Menzies Hotel: "If you walked up and down the various floors of The Menzies on a Saturday night you would hear repeated time after time whatever their items were because they had to practise their miming!"<sup>59</sup> Boyd remembers how musical arranger John Shaw was under enormous pressure: Shaw "was a tower of strength in managing orchestra parts for up to eight artists a week".<sup>60</sup>

Boyd travelled with artists throughout their journey, including the road shows, and was a very popular mentor. Julie Raines, then just 16, said that "apart from being a perfect compere, Boyd was great to us all".<sup>61</sup> For concert pianist and 1970 Viewers' Choice winner Leslie Howard, "there was no side at all to Gordon – he would even ask contestants for their opinions whilst he was rehearsing his number for each show".<sup>62</sup> Ian Cousins, another operatic baritone, remembers how "Gordon Boyd really helped put a stamp on that show. He was well respected and because he had a classical voice as well, this sort of legitimised, in a way, classical artists on the show".<sup>63</sup> John

Lidgerwood remembers that Boyd was a great fellow who could “teach some of today’s hosts a few manners actually”.<sup>64</sup>

#### **4.1. Showcase’s Star-maker**

Natalie Raine’s extensive show business experience made her Hector’s ideal choice for Producer of *Showcase*. Starting in theatre as a 12-year-old, Raine worked as a Vaudevillian at the Tivoli Theatres in Melbourne and Sydney, in films during the 1930s, J. C. Williamson’s Theatre Productions, and then in England on stage, radio and early television. Returning to Australia in the 1950s, Raine joined Crawfords’ Television Workshop as a tutor, later appearing in many of Crawfords’ police shows:

I have been a dancer, actress; have appeared in musical comedies, cabarets, in films and on radio. This makes it easier when I’m dealing with a dancer one moment and an operatic tenor the next. I am used to variety.<sup>65</sup>

Once the first applicants were accepted, Raine auditioned them again to “sort out the gold from the dross”.<sup>66</sup> She compiled notes about the “performers’ ability, potential, personality, grooming, deportment and movement”.<sup>67</sup> Because there were so many artists, only those with the greatest talent and potential could be selected, but even that required a considerable amount of work.<sup>68</sup> An artist with a superb voice might lack the experience needed to sell a song, or to learn how to move and interpret.<sup>69</sup> Raine spent hours helping contestants develop a polished performance:

[They] walk on to the *Showcase* set as professionals: we also take great pains to make sure they have selected the number which best suits them. Then an orchestration is done for them, again to suit their style.<sup>70</sup>

In 1971, after the first *Showcase* era, Raine reflected on the program with great fondness: “It has nourished talent, and proved that we have a tremendous untapped reservoir of performers”.<sup>71</sup> Years later, Gordon Boyd, and many *Showcase* respondents, recalled Raine’s contribution with great admiration and appreciation. According to Boyd:

Her contribution to *Showcase* was enormous in so far that she produced every show, every single show. She was a very good producer as she could give advice on position, thought, art, and eyes to contestants so they could deliver what they were trying to bring out. Natalie could give you great help with interpretation and give you things to do.<sup>72</sup>

Raine was challenged by the inadequacies of many artists, including those of timid 16 year old harpist Julie Raines: "She didn't want a shy little thing walking out; she wanted someone with a bit more pizzazz so she taught me how to do it. She was fantastic; a real trouper".<sup>73</sup>

Robertino, the young accordion player, became involved in another act because of Raine's creativity. Operatic tenor Thomas Edmonds, who in 1968 became the only artist to win both awards categories, used Robertino as a prop: "I remember him singing *Danny Boy* and I was in a bed supposed to be a little 'Danny boy!'"<sup>74</sup>

Another tenor, Lawrence Allen, who won the 1970 Judges' Award, recalls that Raine had overall control of artists: "With her everything had to be so theatrical."

"Come on darling, show us what you've got! Really sell yourself; sell your body". And she began to tell me about my shoulders, to allow them to relax down was very important to a singer – not to stick them up. I used to do that a lot. "Just relax them. Your voice is beautiful", she used to keep telling me. "That is just beautiful, but we need to do something with you Lawrence". I thought oh God, this is really hard yacka.<sup>75</sup>

Pianist Leslie Howard found Raine to be a tough but kind task-mistress who knew the theatre and television inside-out. Transferring successful television into good theatrical performance for the road shows was another of her skills: "We were very capable young performers, but we did not know how to handle the cameras and the studio until she taught us the ropes".<sup>76</sup>

Jonathan Summers, who contested *Showcase* in 1965-66, was runner-up in 1969, and finally the Judges' winner in 1973, enjoyed his association with Raine. Summers remembers with amusement the theme she tagged on his performance of *This Nearly Was Mine* (from *South Pacific*) in Heat Three, 1965:

I was just a rank beginner and Natalie Raine didn't help me by setting it up [my song] in a traditional sort of modern apartment and here I was serenading a pair of ladies' long gloves! But the most wonderful thing I think was part of the furniture. There was a picture that I had to pick-up and it was a picture of her as a younger woman! For a 19 year old bloke who didn't know anything much about love...well! Dear Nat, she was hilarious. She was amazing.<sup>77</sup>

In 1966, Summers went a bit further. "I sang *The Lord's Prayer* which she couldn't do much with, other than let the cameras do the work".<sup>78</sup> But amazingly, when Summers

later sang *I've Got Plenty of Nothing*, Raine 'blacked him out' and gave him a fuzzy-wuzzy wig; it was the days of the *Black 'n' White Minstrels*.<sup>79</sup>

## 5. Forging Career Pathways

*Showcase* generated considerable employment and career advancement opportunities for both production staff and artists, both domestically and internationally. Too numerous to detail in their entirety, some of these circumstances are described below by respondents.<sup>80</sup>

For Joe Ruberto's "Robertino", *Showcase* was "a once in a lifetime experience and although I would probably still be doing what I'm doing now [playing jazz piano], my participation provided a sense of pride for my ethnic background for which I'm still remembered by local Italians". Ruberto regarded *Showcase* as an excellent outlet to show one's talents: "While this did not mean a continuous flow of employment, people did see and book you".<sup>81</sup>

After *Showcase*, at just 14, Robertino made two record albums, but his youth precluded him from the opportunity to travel and work overseas. After completing a science degree, Ruberto has taught science part-time while playing piano at jazz festivals and Bennetts Lane in Melbourne: "Being able to merge both has been ideal".<sup>82</sup>

Julie Raines' father was a member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO), so from a very young age, she aspired to one day join the MSO. Beginning piano lessons at age three, Raines accompanied her father to MSO rehearsals and became enthralled with the harp. At age ten, Julie commenced lessons with one of the few harpists available in Melbourne, but he tried to discourage her from being a harpist so he could monopolise the limited work available in this musical field!<sup>83</sup> By sixth grade, Raines was playing at Malvern Town Hall speech nights and by 16 had established a solid reputation through the Australian Youth Orchestra:

My dad suggested that I do *Showcase* because it would get me out there as I was very shy. I was very confident on the harp but Natalie Raine had a huge task ahead of her to get me 'out there' and do those things.[...] And because I was well known, I didn't have to audition.<sup>84</sup>



Accompanied by the Hector Crawford Orchestra, Raines alternated between classical and popular variety: "There was nothing amateurish about *Showcase*, it was all very well done", she recalls.<sup>85</sup> "And Hector was always smiling conducting the orchestra; he was just a wonderful sort of father figure, or grandfather figure, when I was that young."

When I found out I'd won I was so elated because I knew I could get overseas. I knew I was good enough to study overseas and this was a huge stepping stone. It was a first class trip around the world for a year and I think I made it to two years so it was just fantastic.<sup>86</sup>

While completing her final year at high school, Raines won the ABC's *Victorian and National Instrumental & Vocal Competition*. At 18, she visited London and Amsterdam to attend harp conferences and heard many world-famous harpists: "I felt pretty good about myself when I heard them all!" Recognising New York as the mecca of harpists, Raines studied at the famed Juilliard School of Music at the Lincoln Centre for the Performing Arts. Taught to modify and enhance her playing technique, she then won the *Juilliard Harp Competition* from among nine harpist virtuosos. Attending master classes by Leonard Bernstein and Maria Callas were memorable; playing in a John Lennon concert was remarkable.<sup>87</sup>

Returning to Australia in the early 1970s, Raines played with bands conducted by Tommy Tycho and Geoff Harvey followed by "a marvellous two years playing jazz harp with jazz musicians such as Don Burrows and George Golla". Raines was in demand: an accomplished harpist who could play both classical and jazz music was rare in those days. In addition to recording sessions with Australian pop stars John Farnham, Ross D. Wylie and Ronnie Burns, Raines was a frequent soloist and accompanist on many of television's most popular evening variety shows, including Melbourne's *Carols by Candlelight* at the Myer Music Bowl. In the mid-1970s Europe beckoned": Raines was appointed solo harpist with the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra and later the Berlin, Munich and Copenhagen State Operas. As an academic at Hamburg University, Raines mentored many fine German students, "so I did everything with all the most famous conductors and soloists. We had Domingo and Pavarotti every couple of weeks".<sup>88</sup>

Since returning permanently to Australia in 1987, Raines lectures and teaches at the University of Melbourne's Victorian College of the Arts while performing with the MSO. She rates *Showcase* and the influence Crawford's had on her career:

They definitely pushed me out there a bit more and just doing that road show after the production play made me see that people wanted to hear the harp and how much I wanted to play. *Showcase* presented the artists so beautifully and I wish there was a program like that now. Aussie Idol is just for pop stars so that's a pity.<sup>89</sup>

When pianist Leslie Howard first appeared on *Showcase* in 1968, he was a young academic at Monash University, his professional musical life consisting of concert performances for the ABC and local musical societies. Howard recalled his first *Showcase* attempt: "I made the error of trying to please the judges rather than the public, and selected too obtuse a piece for this kind of competition. They threw me out in the second round!"<sup>90</sup> In 1969, Howard progressed to the Judges' Final, and won the Critics' Award: "In 1970, I played more safely and wisely, with the public taste firmly in view, and won the Viewers' Award."

*Showcase* gave me the fare and the funds finally to escape from the life academic (I had been lecturing and tutoring at Monash University from 1969 and completed my MA in 1971) and fly to Italy, to study the piano amongst gifted students from all over the world, and thence to London, where I've been based ever since.<sup>91</sup>

Howard has established himself on the world stage as a virtuoso classical pianist, arranger, composer and recording artist. An instructor at London's Guildhall School of Music, Howard often gives master classes at the Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music and adjudicates at many prestigious musical competitions. An expert on the works of Franz Liszt, Howard is President of the British Liszt Society and has been honoured with many international awards for this and other work.<sup>92</sup>

"[Dr] Howard is, by general consensus, the finest living exponent of Liszt. He has a formidable intellectual grasp of the music, and his vastly superior performances continue to carry the day".<sup>93</sup>

Howard attributes his start and a major part of his success to Hector Crawford, with whom he worked at both *Music For the People* and *Showcase*:

He was very easy to work with, and his orchestra was full of session men who never split a note! Hector could concentrate on making his soloists feel

comfortable. And it was very clever of him to give the same professional support to all the contestants, whatever their abilities. The same can be said of his wonderful rehearsal pianist and accompanist Leslie Miers.<sup>94</sup>

Like most other artists, Howard found that *Showcase* raised his profile, increasing offers of domestic work. "But it would have been very difficult without the impetus and support that the *Showcase* prizes gave me to study overseas:"<sup>95</sup>

Crawfords taught me how to better communicate with an audience, and how always to respond to any enquiry or congratulation from any member of the public. We *need* audiences and, like actors, need somewhat to be loved, because for the rest we are our own staunchest critics. Crawfords was fair and firm, and we became proper professional public performers under its benevolent aegis.<sup>96</sup>

Operatic tenor Lawrence Allan won the 1970 Judges' Award, but for him *Showcase* was a difficult experience with long-term tragic consequences. As a 17 year old in 1968, Allan failed the audition stage due to an embarrassing musical error. Determined to improve, two years at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, a scholarship and extensive training with singing teacher Brian Hansford prepared him for a second *Showcase* attempt. Despite recovering from tonsillitis, Allan sang Verdi's aria *Questa o quella*: "Natalie Raine was astounded by my performance and so I got the gig!"<sup>97</sup>

Allan sang four pieces during the 1970 season, but was very nervous and found the recording and miming elements terribly difficult: "I'd never worked with an orchestra before, but I tried to adjust and Hector was very, very professional. He just got on with the job: "Come on...you must sing now, this is it!"<sup>98</sup>

The man had a tremendous presence and look about him which made you sing. He could really spark you up. He was a person you could never fool; his eyes were sharp. He was a very good looking, stylish man; a man that you didn't mince with. I respected that.<sup>99</sup>

But Allan was incensed when Hector insisted that he sing Italian arias such as *O Paradiso* and pieces from *Tosca* in English: "I always remember how determined I was NOT to do this, because it would absolutely distort and ruin the arias; all impact would be lost".<sup>100</sup> Allan wrote to Hector refusing to sing the arias in English: "I won that battle; not many did, but I won and he [ultimately] loved it". Despite this success a series of circumstances proved detrimental to his singing career.<sup>101</sup>

Allan found the stress of travelling and performing eight times a week during the road show intolerable; instruction to sing popular material made him feel disillusioned and even exploited:

I'd been on *Showcase* singing the arias, and I felt that's what I should present to the people as what I had won. But here I was having to sing this populist stuff which I thought was just rubbish. It was out of context and I never felt happy about it. [...] I was also signed up I might add. I actually wanted to come home and not continue with that tour, but I was under contract. When you signed the audition form and you signed up to do *Showcase*, you signed up to do that tour.<sup>102</sup>

When the tour finished, Allan's voice was exhausted:

I was committed to *Carols By Candlelight* that year and on Christmas Day, after hearing my performance on TV, was quite disgusted. Even my Grandmother was shocked: "You've lost all the quality of your voice."<sup>103</sup>

The criticism had a strong psychological impact; Allan did not sing again for 10 years:

I tried to get my voice back but could never get *that* voice back. I just couldn't work it out what I did, so that was the very negative part of *Showcase* for me. I was too young, but that's not Hector or Natalie's fault. That's just the way it was, and that wasn't for me. It was tragic, tragic.<sup>104</sup>

Allan attributes his current career to Bettine McCaughan, then regarded as the best voice teacher in Australia. She helped him to rectify his problems by returning to basics.<sup>105</sup> During the 1980s Allan did well in several high profile competitions and acquired a role with the Australian Opera in 1988. His confidence restored, Allan finally went overseas – 20 years after winning *Showcase* – to discover his voice again and take more lessons. He was rewarded with a part in the British National Opera.<sup>106</sup>

Despite his experience in *Showcase*, Allan concedes that it "put me on the map in a big way. I got offers to sing at various concerts around Australia and other work that simply came my way, which I tried to do but in the end had to give it away and say I wasn't happy with myself".

I think that Hector did not realise that the stuff I was doing was too much for a young voice. But I don't blame them for it, they didn't know. On the other hand, I think *Showcase* was a program of great integrity. It was a far more prestigious type of show, a classy show and with people to whom you could really respect<sup>107</sup>

Allan believes that he is singing better than ever now: "I don't have the same stress and if they want me to sing *Because* I'll happily sing *Because!* I sing all over Australia. I do 'three tenor' gigs, I do concert work, all that sort of thing".<sup>108</sup>

## **6. A Shrewd Business Strategy: Perseverance Pays Off!**

Over the years, many *Showcase* winners and finalists established distinguished classical singing careers throughout Europe, the UK and Australia as performers in opera, operetta, musicals, classical recitals, and as recording artists. The late James Peglar, John Pickering, Thomas Edmonds, John Lidgerwood and Ian Cousins are just a few, while instrumentalists Julie Raines, Leslie Howard and classical violinist Jane Peters – who won *Showcase* '74 as a 12 year-old – have developed successful careers.<sup>109</sup> Tenors Pickering and Edmonds, in particular, are regarded as among the finest Australian singers of their generation, as is Baritone Jonathan Summers.<sup>110</sup> Summers' extraordinary achievements during the last six months of 1973 launched his career, unequivocally due to the flexibility and wisdom of Hector Crawford.

Jonathan Summers began singing lessons with Bettine McCaughan as an 18 year old in 1964: "She encouraged me to enter a number of singing competitions and Holden *Showcase* '65 was one of them".<sup>111</sup> By 1966, Summers gained classical experience singing at three levels: in small recitals, orchestral and choral concerts. As resident vocalist at the Heidelberg Town Hall, Summers' repertoire ranged from the ballads of Frank Sinatra, Matt Monro and Tom Jones to pop and rock classics.<sup>112</sup> In September 1966, Summers formed *The Proclaimers* gospel choir at the Rosanna Baptist Church in Melbourne's northern suburbs.<sup>113</sup> *The Proclaimers* specialised in American black gospel music, combining up to 50 choir members, soloists, rock band and Hammond organ: a unique mixture in Australia at that time. The success of *The Proclaimers* exceeded all expectations.<sup>114</sup>

By *Showcase* '69 Summers remembers being "a much more experienced and all-round performer". Coming second to Julie Raines in the Judges' Final, Summers travelled around Australia in the *Stars of Showcase 69* Road Show.<sup>115</sup> Recently married, Summers reconsidered his future as a professional musician and decided to take a job as a technical operator in radio operations for the ABC, a career that developed through *The Proclaimers*' association with the ABC:

I'd always been interested in radio and recording, so I decided to concentrate on *The Proclaimers*, sing part-time and finish with the serious music. I didn't see my future as a serious singer; so many competitions produced promising results, but I never actually managed to win any of the important ones.<sup>116</sup>

From 1969 to 1973, Summers continued to grow as a musician, gain experience as a performer and learn his trade as an 'audio engineer'. In 1972 he decided to make one last attempt at a professional career and intentionally promoted himself as a traditional opera singer.<sup>117</sup>

Encouraged by winning both the 1972 *Adelaide Eisteddfod Championship* and the State Final (Vocal Section) of the *ABC's Instrumental and Vocal Competition*, Summers entered five major competitions in 1973, beginning with the *Showcase* heats early that year.<sup>118</sup> On 20 July 1973, Summers performed in the *Showcase* Judges' Final singing *Credo* from Verdi's *Otello*, a performance he would later reprise many times around the world. At the subsequent Awards Night Variety concert in August, he was awarded the Judges' Choice first prize.<sup>119</sup>

Paradoxically, winning *Showcase* created many challenging problems: the national road show from 29 August to 5 October clashed with four of the major Australian singing competitions that Summers had entered:

I received a letter from Hector Crawford advising that I had been selected to join the *Showcase* Roadshow. It was a contractual obligation for all winners to participate if invited, so the letter was in fact an exclusive contract which made it virtually impossible to do anything else during the Roadshow.<sup>120</sup> [See page 396].

Discussions between Hector and Jonathan's father Jim, an experienced businessman and negotiator, were positive. Hector agreed to be flexible with the performance schedule so Summers could be in the right places at the right times for the concerts; this allowed for the possibility that he might win *all* competitions.<sup>121</sup> The road show travelled as far as Geraldton in Western Australia, and to towns and cities in the South East and Brisbane, complicating the logistics for ensuring Summers' availability for numerous heats, and the possible semi-finals and finals.<sup>122</sup> Hector's pragmatism and business acumen to see beyond the small picture of *Showcase* to the bigger picture made it all possible. He fully understood the ramifications of "what it would mean to *Showcase* to have *their* winner win all of these other competitions, and then be pushed abroad for further study, which is effectively what I did".<sup>123</sup>

With rehearsals for the *Showcase* tour in full swing, Summers travelled to Adelaide on 24 August where he won the *Adelaide Advertiser Aria* Competition. On Saturday, 1 September 1973, Summers performed with the road show at Swan Hill (Victoria),

returned to Melbourne that night and the next day won the *Commonwealth Final of the ABC Instrumental and Vocal Competition Vocal Section*. Having made the semi-finals and final of the *Sydney Sun Aria* on 22 September, Summers was allowed to miss the road show concert at Orange, NSW.<sup>124</sup>

Following this the *Melbourne Sun Aria* heats began at Ballarat's Royal South Street Society Theatre. Road show concerts in Adelaide, Perth and regional WA before and after necessitated numerous commercial flights, private charter flights and car dashes. The most harrowing journey was from Bunbury in South-Western Australia to appear in the *Melbourne Sun Aria* Final the next day, a day in which Hector excused Summers from a road show concert at Manjimup near Bunbury.<sup>125</sup>

To arrive in Melbourne and be fit to sing in the final I needed to be back in Melbourne on Tuesday morning 2 October. This meant catching the last flight from Perth at 2am. In the event that I became a finalist Hector Crawford had agreed that I could be first on the programme for this concert. It was usual for the *Showcase Judges' Winner* to always be last on the program. So I was driven the 116 miles from Bunbury to Perth Airport to catch the 'red eye' special.<sup>126</sup>

Given this massive workload, Summers' achievement in winning the 'Grand Slam' of singing competitions across Australia over a three month period was astonishing. One can only imagine the determination and persistence that drove him, the physical and emotional strength that sustained him, and the vocal ability to maintain such a high level of performance.

After this achievement, a scholarship fund was created that allowed Summers to resign from his 'secure job' with the ABC and move his family to London, where he studied with teacher Otakar Kraus for six years.<sup>127</sup> Success came quickly. After six months Summers auditioned for the Kent Opera Company and was offered the title role in a new production of *Rigoletto*, and in 1976 the baritone joined the Royal Opera Covent Garden.<sup>128</sup> Since then he has shared the opera stages of the world and recorded with the best of the best: Dame Joan Sutherland, José Carreras, Plácido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti, to name only a few.<sup>129</sup> As a principal member of Opera Australia, Summers frequently performs in Sydney and Melbourne.

Without the support and encouragement of Hector Crawford, singing teacher Bettine McCaughan, his family and the generous financial sponsorship of so many commercial organisations, a full-time career in opera at this level would not have been

possible. Crawford, in particular, ensured that Summers had every opportunity to progress to the highest level, as he reflects:

Had it not been for Hector Crawford, Jonathan Summers the opera singer would not have been, not as we know it now. Had Hector not seen the big picture, had he not thought laterally, none of what I did would have been possible. I would probably have never gone abroad".<sup>130</sup>

## 7. Epilogue

Lawrence Allan sums up Hector's legacy to the creation of an 'Australian consciousness' through *Mobil Quest* and *Showcase*:

I think Hector had the greatest insight into Australian talent, utilising it and seeing what a marvellous future there is for these people, than anyone else. [He] left everyone else behind. I mean the fact that he got Joan Sutherland and Donald Smith; that's extraordinary. And these people went international, and Hector did it. Despite the issues I had, I dearly loved the challenge of singing on Hector's *Showcase*. It was a thrill and the most wonderful thing that could happen to you and that's how I felt about it now.<sup>131</sup>

Henry Crawford likens *Showcase* to *Australian Idol*: "There was a different judging process but what stood out to me was that it really reinforced the ultimate power of television".<sup>132</sup> As tour manager of the annual road shows, Henry recalls that

We'd go to a country town like Wagga Wagga and every single person in the town would recognise that bus and who was on it. There were crowds swamped everywhere. The people on the bus were nobodies, just like *Australian Idol*, but had become national celebrities.<sup>133</sup>

Just as radio's *Mobil Quest* provided lucrative opportunities for artists to establish careers and achieve prominence, *Showcase*, through the ubiquitous medium of television, accentuated this process for another generation of talented Australians. In this Case Study several "Crawford Creations" have described their *Showcase* experiences while generally expressing great appreciation to the *Showcase* production team for the mentoring and opportunities afforded to them. Most of those featured here have progressed to virtuoso careers, but it should be emphasised that *Showcase* catered to all levels of aspirations and entertainers such as quality novelty acts, dancers, pop singers and groups who, through the exposure of *Showcase*, found domestic success.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> "Top Secret Search for TV Compere, *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 19-25 June 1965, p. 7.

"Gordon Boyd Gets Plum Compere Job", *The Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 26 June-2 July 1965, p. 2;  
Gordon Boyd, interview with Philip Davey, Sydney, 28 February 2009;  
Lawrence Allan, interview with Philip Davey, 18 December 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Summers, interview with Philip Davey, Southbank, 7 December 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid;

Joan Sutherland, *A Prima Donna's Progress*, Random House, Milsons Point, NSW, 1997, pp.16, 17.

<sup>4</sup> Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Faces\\_%28Australian\\_talent\\_show%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Faces_%28Australian_talent_show%29), accessed 12 September 2013;

Conceived by singer and theatre personality Frank Sheldon, *New Faces*, according to then GTV9 variety producer Gary Stewart, was just as important as *Showcase* for encouraging new talent, despite its much lower budget.

Gary Stewart, interview with Philip Davey, 9 April 2009;

My own recollection, however, is that *New Faces* was embarrassingly amateurish in its early years under compere Frank Wilson; judging was sometimes inept, and just about any type of novelty act was given a chance, with forgotten lines, singing out of tune or false starts common place!

Philip Davey, personal experience;

L.T.C.L., Springvale, Victoria, "Imagination Needed in Judges of Talent", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 24-30 September 1966, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 32;

*New Faces* was usually live to air nationally, and offered a small ensemble of musicians for those who required accompaniment, but there was no room for error. Each heat was adjudicated on-the-spot by two or three credible celebrities with each winner advancing to a more up-market final. After the mid 1970s, when Bert Newton took over as compere, quality control improved as the level of professionalism became more polished. While *New Faces'* prizes were minimal, the show was a good vehicle to promote both new and established talent. Like many of the radio talent quests in competition with *Mobil Quest* in the 1950s, *New Faces* was more 'down-to-earth' than *Showcase*, and very popular during prime time Sunday evening viewing. Many contestants went on to find fame, including comedian Paul Hogan, compere/producer Daryl Somers and county music band The Hawking Brothers.

Wikipedia, op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> "Top Secret Search for TV Compere, *Listener In-TV*, op. cit.

<sup>6</sup> Gordon Boyd, *Showcase* notes from private collection, Sydney, 28 February 2009.

<sup>7</sup> " '0' To Launch Showcase '65 in Key Spot", *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 11-17 September 1965, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid;

"Showcase Will Reach New High", *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 28 May-3 June 1966, p. 2

This mix of artists and composition of judging panels remained similar over the years.

<sup>9</sup> National Film & Sound Archive database: <http://www.nfsa.gov.au/>, accessed 12 September 2013;

"She is Showcase's Starmaker", *TV Times*, Melbourne, 22 November 1967, p. 15.

<sup>10</sup> Gordon Boyd, *Showcase* notes, op. cit.

<sup>11</sup> "Your Votes Will Count in Showcase", *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 5-11 February 1965, p. 7;

"Showcase Will Reach New High, op. cit;

Joe Roberto, interview with Philip Davey, 20 October 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Gordon Boyd, *Showcase* notes, op. cit;

"Your Votes Will Count in Showcase", op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> "HSV7 Says 'no' to 'Showcase,'" *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 12-18 December 1970, p. 7

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ken Collie, " 'Showcase' Returns on a High Note", *Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 19-25 May 1973, p.27, Section *Dial 2790*.

<sup>16</sup> Leon Hill, General Manager, GTV9, Richmond, copy of Confidential Memo to K. F. B. Packer, 26 November 1974, Sydney, forwarded to Hector Crawford, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, 2 December 1974;

A. S. S. Webster, Marketing Director, Cadbury Schweppes Pty. Ltd., Ringwood, Victoria, letter to K. Packer, *Associated Consolidated Press Ltd.*, Sydney, 10 December 1974.

<sup>17</sup> Hector Crawford, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, letter to Leon Hill, General Manager, GTV9, Melbourne, 26 April 1974;

Hector Crawford, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, letter to Leon Hill, General Manager, GTV9, Melbourne, 5 July 1974;

Hector Crawford, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, letter to Len Mauger, Managing Director, *Nine Network of Australia*, Sydney, 23 August 1974;

Len Mauger, Managing Director, *Nine Network of Australia*, Sydney, Letter to Hector Crawford, Managing Director, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, 29 August 1974;

Hector Crawford, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, letter and *Showcase* structure proposal to Leon Hill, General Manager, GTV9, Richmond, 18 October 1974;

*Nine Network of Australia, unsigned contract between Nine Network of Australia and Crawford Productions to produce 23 episodes of the program Showcase in 1975, circa August 1974.*

Note: 16-17: All from: Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation.

- <sup>18</sup> Leon Hill, General Manager, GTV9, Richmond, copy of Confidential Memo to K. F. B. Packer, op. cit;  
Ken Collie, "Talent Down in Showcase 74", Listener In-TV, Melbourne, 2-8 November 1974, p. 14, Section *Dial 2790*.
- <sup>19</sup> Len Mauger, Managing Director, *Nine Network of Australia*, Sydney, Letter to Hector Crawford, op. cit;  
Hector Crawford, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, letter and *Showcase* structure proposal to Leon Hill, op. cit;  
*Nine Network of Australia, unsigned contract - Nine Network of Australia and Crawford Productions*, op. cit.
- <sup>20</sup> Leon Hill, General Manager, GTV9, Richmond, copy of Confidential Memo to K. F. B. Packer, op. cit.
- <sup>21</sup> A.S.S. Webster, Marketing Director, Cadbury Schweppes Pty. Ltd., Ringwood, Victoria, letter to K. Packer, op. cit;  
Hector Crawford, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, letter to Ron Casey, General Manager, *HSV7*, Melbourne, 9 April 1975.
- Note: 18-22: All from: Australian Film Institute (AFI) Research Collection, RMIT University, Melbourne – Archive of official Crawford Productions documentation.
- <sup>22</sup> Gordon Boyd, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit.
- <sup>23</sup> National Film and Sound Archive Catalogue entry 783358, *BP Showcase 78 Grand Final*, NFSA.  
<http://colsearch.nfsa.gov.au/>, accessed 17 September 2013.
- <sup>24</sup> Gordon Boyd, interview with Philip Davey, op. cit;  
Gordon Boyd, *Showcase* notes, op. cit.
- <sup>25</sup> Gordon Boyd, interview, op. cit;  
Gordon Needham-Boyd biography, IMDB database, [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0624101/?ref\\_=fn\\_nm\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0624101/?ref_=fn_nm_nm_1), accessed 17 September 2013.
- <sup>26</sup> Gordon Boyd, interview, op. cit.
- <sup>27</sup> Roger Diss, "Showcase Gave Gordon Boyd...", *Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 14-20 May 1966, Section: *A Place In The Sun*, p. 2.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.  
\_\_\_ "Gordon Boyd Gets 'Plum' Job", Listener In-TV, op. cit.
- <sup>29</sup> Gordon Boyd, interview, op. cit;  
Barry McQueen, Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ATV\\_%28Australia%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ATV_%28Australia%29), accessed 18 September 2013.
- <sup>30</sup> Ken Collie, "Gordon is Skilled on TV Tightrope", *Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 25 September-1 October 1965 p. 9, Section *Dial 2790*.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> 'Not Satisfied,' Blackburn, Victoria, "Judges Erred on Showcase Talent", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 9-15 October 1965, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 32;  
'Handclapping Viewers,' Brunswick, Victoria, "Re-arrange *Showcase*", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 20-26 August 1966, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 40;  
Roger Diss, "As *Showcase* Reaches its Climax, Pity Those Judges", *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 11-17 September 1967, p. 2;  
'F.R.B;,' Port Franklin, Victoria, "Worst Are Placed First", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 5-11 September 1970, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 31;  
'Music Lover,' Hawthorn, Victoria, "John [Pickering] Deserved *Showcase* Place, letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 28 November-4 December 1970, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 26.
- <sup>33</sup> L. Baros, Burnley, Victoria, "Was 'Viewers' Vote' Choice of Viewers?", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 14-20 December 1968, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 32.
- <sup>34</sup> 'Not Satisfied,' Blackburn, Victoria, op. cit.
- <sup>35</sup> L. M. Barrie' Sunshine, Victoria, "TV's Best Show Yet", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 16-22 October 1965, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 28.
- <sup>36</sup> 'More Music on TV, Please,' Box Hill, Victoria, 'Showcase Was an Eye-Opener,' letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 21-27 September 1968, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 32.
- <sup>37</sup> Jim Murphy, "He Longs to be a Performer Again: The Two Faces of Gordon Boyd", *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 16-22 May 1968, page number blanked out;  
Gerald Lyons, "The Importance of Being Gordon", *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 20-26 September 1969, p. 2.
- <sup>38</sup> "Mystery Host For *Showcase*", *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 31 January-6 February 1970, p. 1;  
Gordon Boyd, interview, op. cit.
- <sup>39</sup> Jim Murphy, "Poker Machines Pay Out", *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 12-18 May 1973, p. 3.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>41</sup> Bill Lang (British Correspondent), "Rod is Rarin' to Take on *Showcase*", *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 14-20 February 1970, p. 3.
- <sup>42</sup> Robert Fent, "Rod's Bachelor Days are Numbered", *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 7-13 March 1970, p. 2.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>44</sup> 'Gordon Forever,' Mt. Waverley, Victoria, "Let's See More of Gordon", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 7-13 March 1970, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 28.
- <sup>45</sup> 'Get Rid of Bores,' Rose Bay, Hobart, "Crawford Could Leave Some Stars for Dead", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 11-17 July 1970, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 30.
- <sup>46</sup> 'Rio Rita,' Middle Park, Victoria, "Gordon Wise to Bow Out", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 14-20 March 1970, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 25.
- <sup>47</sup> L. Tate, Bentleigh, Victoria, "*Showcase* Lucky to Find Rod McLennan", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 5-11 December, 1970, "Axes and Orchids" Section, page number blanked out.
- <sup>48</sup> 'G. P. S,' Gruyere, Victoria, "*Showcase* loses to *Coronation Street*", letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 25 April-1 May 1970, "Axes and Orchids" Section, p. 30; "HSV7 Says 'no' to 'Showcase,'" *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, op. cit. .
- <sup>49</sup> Gordon Boyd, interview, op. cit.
- <sup>50</sup> After 1970, McLennan married and returned to England. He returned to Australia in the mid 1970s and became a regular on Australian TV variety programs and was a long-standing judge on *New Faces* when Bert Newton was compere.
- <sup>51</sup> Joe Ruberto, op. cit.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid*;  
Lawrence Allan, interview, op. cit.
- <sup>53</sup> Joe Ruberto, op. cit;  
Ian Cousins, interview with Philip Davey, Donvale, 4 April 2009.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>57</sup> Julie Raines, interview with Philip Davey, Doncaster East, 28 February 2011.
- <sup>58</sup> John Lidgerwood, interview with Philip Davey, East Melbourne, 21 November 2009.
- <sup>59</sup> Gordon Boyd, interview, op. cit.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>61</sup> Julie Raines, op. cit.
- <sup>62</sup> Leslie Howard, interview with Philip Davey (email from London), 21 December 2010.
- <sup>63</sup> Ian Cousins, op. cit.
- <sup>64</sup> John Lidgerwood, op. cit.
- <sup>65</sup> News item about Natalie Raine in *The Listener-In*, Melbourne, 20-26 October 1951, "Items of Interest Section, p. 8; "She is *Showcase*'s Star-maker", op. cit.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>71</sup> Jim Murphy, "Natalie has Helped the Stars to Shine", *The Listener-In TV*, Melbourne, 26 June-2 July 1971, p. 25.
- <sup>72</sup> Gordon Boyd, interview, op. cit.
- <sup>73</sup> Julie Raines, interview, op. cit.
- <sup>74</sup> Joe Ruberto, op. cit
- <sup>75</sup> Lawrence Allan, interview, op. cit;  
Dorothy Crawford, as Executive Producer, was up in the sound box when the recording were being done, and also at the end when the synchronisation between voice and orchestra was put together.
- <sup>76</sup> Leslie Howard, interview, op. cit.
- <sup>77</sup> Jonathan Summers, interview, op. cit.  
Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, 15 February 2011.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>80</sup> Many who won or placed in *Showcase*, particularly the classical artists, were able to travel overseas to study and work with their generous prize money allocations. Some of these not already mentioned include singer Thomas

McDonnell (1965 winner), Baritone James Peglar (1967 viewers' winner), Tenor John Pickering (1970 finalist), Violinist Jane Peters (1974 Judges' winner) and baritone John Fulford (1978 Judges' Winner). There were many other artists and groups who became very popular within Australia. To name but a few: *New World Trio*, Franciscus Henri, Julie McKenna, *The Twilights*, Tony Pantano, Jim Smillie, Luigi Campeotto, John Brosnan, *The Pied Pipers*, *The Moir Sisters*, Marketta Little Wolf, and 2000's reality talent show judge Mark Holden who became a very successful pop star.

Gordon Boyd, *Showcase* notes op. cit;

"John [Pickering] Deserved *Showcase* Place, letter to the editor, *The Listener-In TV*, op. cit.;

*The Stars of Showcase '73* Volumes 1 & 2, LP Recording, *Crawford Productions*, Melbourne, 1973.

<sup>81</sup> Joe Ruberto, op. cit

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Julie Raines, interview, op. cit.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Leslie Howard, interview, op. cit.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Wikipedia, Dr Leslie Howard, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie\\_Howard\\_%28musician%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Howard_%28musician%29), accessed 15 September 2013.

<sup>93</sup> Quote by unknown critic in *BBC Music Magazine*, circa 2011, cited in Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie\\_Howard\\_%28musician%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Howard_%28musician%29), accessed 15 September 2013.

<sup>94</sup> Dr Leslie Howard, interview, op. cit.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Lawrence Allan, interview, op. cit.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid;

Jonathan Summers, interview, op. cit.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Thomas Edmonds' Biography:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Edmonds\\_\(tenor\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Edmonds_(tenor)), accessed 5 March 2013;

Kathryn Morrison Management, John Pickering Biography, Buxton, Victoria.

<http://www.kathrynmorrisonmanagement.com/Contact-Us.html>, accessed 5 March 2013;

Melbourne City Opera, Ian Cousins Biography

[http://www.melbournecityopera.com.au/People/Cousins\\_bio.htm](http://www.melbournecityopera.com.au/People/Cousins_bio.htm), accessed 5 March 2013;

Ian Cousins, interview, op. cit;

John Lidgerwood was *Showcase* finalist in 1967-68 and Sun Aria Finalist 1968-69.

John Lidgerwood, interview, op. cit.

Jane Peters Biography;

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane\\_Peters](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Peters), accessed 5 March 2013.

<sup>110</sup> Jonathan Summers Biography, Opera Australia,

[http://www.opera-australia.org.au/aboutus/our\\_artists/principal\\_artists/jonathan\\_summers](http://www.opera-australia.org.au/aboutus/our_artists/principal_artists/jonathan_summers), accessed 5 March, 2013.

<sup>111</sup> Jonathan Summers, interview, op. cit.

<sup>112</sup> Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>113</sup> *The Proclaimers* Gospel Choir was not in any way associated with the Scottish brother duo *The Proclaimers* who found fame during the late 1980s and early 1990s. When the Scottish pop singers called themselves *The Proclaimers*, the Australian group considered legal action, but did not proceed.

Philip Davey, testimony outlining personal experience as member and Life Member of *The Proclaimers* 1976-1991, 1998-2000, 28 August 2013.

<sup>114</sup> Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.;

With Summers and operatic soprano Helen Burnham (nee Ryan) as lead singers, the group established an enthusiastic core of supporters and performed in concerts at churches and halls all over Australia. *The Proclaimers* also appeared regularly on TV shows such as *In Melbourne Tonight* and religious specials produced by the ABC, while producing several successful LP records. Having decided to pursue a professional singing career and study in Europe, Summers was reluctantly forced to leave the group in July 1973. But *The Proclaimers* continued for over 40 years and are remembered as one of the most successful groups in Australian Gospel music circles. Summers returned for numerous guest appearances, notably *The Proclaimers' 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert* in 1991.

Philip Davey, Life Member of *The Proclaimers*, op. cit.

<sup>115</sup> Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>116</sup> Jonathan Summers, interview, op. cit.

Summers' reference to serious music requires clarification. *The Proclaimers* performed at a professional level but its membership consisted of amateurs with 'day jobs'. All performance payments went towards running the group. Summers wanted to make a living from singing and this was not possible with *The Proclaimers*.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid;

Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>118</sup> Summers made the finals and **won** all of the following competitions, and recorded a 'farewell concert' with *The Proclaimers*:

- Friday 13 July 1973: *State Final ABC Instrumental and Vocal Competition Vocal Section*, Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash University, Melbourne.
- Saturday 14 July 1973: Recording of *The Proclaimers Live in Concert, Volumes 1 & 2*, Camberwell Civic Centre, Melbourne.
- Friday 20 July 1973: *Showcase Judges' Final* recorded at GTV9, Melbourne, Monday 13 August 1973: *Showcase Award Night Final* – announced as winner of Judges' Final first prize.
- Sunday 26 August 1973: Final of the *Adelaide Advertiser Aria* Competition.
- Sunday 2 September 1973: *Commonwealth Final of the ABC Instrumental and Vocal Competition Vocal Section*, Melbourne Town Hall, live on radio.
- Saturday 22 September 1973: Final of the *Sydney Sun Aria* competition at the Sydney Town Hall.
- Tuesday 2 October 1973: Final of the *Melbourne Sun Aria* competition at the Sydney Town Hall.

Source: Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>119</sup> Jonathan Summers, interview, op. cit.;

Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>123</sup> Jonathan Summers, interview, op. cit.

<sup>124</sup> Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>125</sup> Jonathan Summers, interview, op. cit.;

Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Jonathan Summers, letter to Philip Davey, op. cit.

<sup>128</sup> Jonathan Summers Baritone: <http://www.jonathansummers.co.uk/interview.html>, accessed 15 September, 2013.

<sup>129</sup> Jonathan Summers, interview, op. cit.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Lawrence Allan, interview, op. cit.

<sup>132</sup> Henry Crawford, interview with Philip Davey, 6 December 2009.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

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Letter from Hector Crawford to Jonathan Summers outlining arrangements for Summers' participation in *Showcase '73* (page 1).

© Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 1973.  
(From the private collection of Jonathan Summers.)

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Letter from Hector Crawford to Jonathan Summers outlining arrangements for Summers' participation in *Showcase '73* (page 2).

© Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 1973.  
(From the private collection of Jonathan Summers.)

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Two pages of the *Stars of Showcase '69* program guide.

© Crawford Productions, Melbourne, 1969.

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Article from *The Sun* Newspaper – “Aria Title Goes to Baritone Jonathan”.

Source: *The Sun*, Melbourne 3 October 1973, page 3.

(From the private collection of Jonathan Summers.)

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*Showcase '65* Grand Final advertising promo: 7.30 p.m. Wednesday  
on Channel 0.

Source: *Listener In-TV*, Melbourne, 18-24 December, 1965, page 10.

(From the private collection of Jonathan Summers.)

## **APPENDIX D – ATV0 Licence Hearing Documents**

**Cabinet memo, applicant financial statistics and plans for Australian Telecasters Limited proposed new studio facilities (1962/63).**



## **Memo to Prime Minister from the Cabinet Secretary:**

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Memo to Prime Minister Robert Menzies from Cabinet Secretary concerning recommendation for award of Melbourne's third commercial TV licence by the Australia Broadcasting Control Board (ABCB).

**Source:** National Archives of Australia: E. J. Bunting, "Notes on Cabinet Submission No. 610: Television" – *Grant of Licences for Commercial Stations in Sydney and Melbourne*, (Confidential), Prime Minister's Department, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 3 April 1963, p. 3, NAA Series A.4940, Item C.1192.

## APPENDIX D: Key Business Indicators of Applicant Consortia

Consortia	Authorised Capital	Share Allocation	Shares sold/ Shareholders at time of applications	Establishment Costs	Profit / Loss (000)			Sources of Funding if required			% of programs Australian Origin			Station hours of Service per week.
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Subscribed /Paid-up Capital (Shares)	Bank Overdraft	Loan/ Other	Year			
											1	2	3	
Australian Telecasters Limited	£3,000,000	12,000,000 (@ 5 shillings fully paid subscribers)	6,000,000 (7,800) (@ 6 pence each)	£1,777,964	575 L	111 L	137 P	£1,550,000	£500,000	£400,000	45.4	48.4	49.4	Y1: 61 Y2: 65 Y3: 75
Austarama Television Pty. Ltd.	£700,000	700,000 (@ £1)	1 to R.Ansett 1 to ATI (Note 1)	£1,593,553	351 L	23 L	323 P	£700,000	£800,000 (Issue of 80,000 £1 debentures)	Temporary loan of £400,000 from ATI.	58.0	Gradual Increase		Y1: 43 Y2: 46 Y3: 63
Ansett Transport Industries	Paid-up capital of £6,565,228 comprising of 24,163,911 (five shillings) ordinary shares, 322,000 (£1 @ 5%), 202,250 (£1 @ 10%) shares held by 40,000 shareholders. ATI had also issued 6,000,000 convertible registered unsecured notes @ 5 shillings to be converted to ordinary shares in June 1966.													
Universal Television Limited	£2,000,000	8,000,000 @ 5 shillings	3,292,000	£1,623,124	261 L	8 P	86 P	£2,000,000	£200,000	-	44	N/A	N/A	Y1: 50 Y2: 53 Y3: 59
TV Victoria Limited	£2,000,000	8,000,000 @ 5 shillings	5,000,000 (5,100)	£1,553,363	48 L	235 P	433 P	£1,250,000	Amount not specified	£300,000 (Mortgage Loan)	39	40	41	Y1: 56 Y2: 92 Y3: 95
Community Television Limited	£1,250,000	5,000,000 @ 5 shillings	10 shares to ten directors (Note 2)	£1,282,120	344 L	296 P	378 P	£1,250,000	Amount not specified	-	45.5	47.5	47.5	Y1: 71 Y2: 88 Y3: 88
Educational and Cultural Television Pty. Ltd.	£20,000 (Note 3)	20,000 @ £1 (Note 3) (10,000,000 @ 5 shillings)	5,065 (43) (Note 4)	£1,495,096	336 L	86 P	405 P	£1,500,000	-	£500,000 in debentures	65	N/A	N/A	Y1: 61 Y2: 79 Y3: 95

1. Austarama – If application successful, 698,998 shares to be issued to ATI who would then itself issue 2,800,000 ordinary 5 shilling shares (£1,400,000) for investing in its Austarama subsidiary.
2. Community Television Limited – 4,999,990 shares to be issued to five individual classes of shareholders as described in endnote 41.
3. Educational and Cultural P/L – If successful, consortium to be converted into public company with capital of £2,500,000.
4. Educational and Cultural P/L – 6,000,000 shares to be issued: 1,053,520 to the 43 foundation members, 300,000 to directors and 4,646,480 initially to general public.

(Source: Australian Broadcasting Control Board, "Report and Recommendations to the Postmaster-General on Applications for a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Sydney and Melbourne area, Commonwealth of Australia, April 1963, pp 40-59. [ National Archives of Australia, Canberra: Series A.4940, Item C.1192.]

## **Australian Telecasters' Limited – Plans of Proposed new Studios at Nepean Hwy, Moorabbin (Crawfords).**

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Plans and diagrams of Australian Telecasters Limited (Crawfords) proposed new studios at Nepean Hwy, Moorabbin, for Melbourne's third commercial television station - if successful.

Source: Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area*, Russell, Kennedy and Cook, Melbourne, Solicitors for Australian Telecasters Limited, 1962.

*(From the Graeme Preston private collection, Heidelberg, Victoria).*

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Source: Australian Telecasters Limited, *Application for Grant of a Licence for a Commercial Television Station in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area*, Russell, Kennedy and Cook, Melbourne, Solicitors for Australian Telecasters Limited, 1962.

*(From the Graeme Preston private collection, Heidelberg, Victoria).*



## Appendix E

### Summary of Hector Crawford Productions' Radio Series, Serials and Musical programs 1946 – 1960.

Broadcast Dates	Title	Episode/Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1950s	A Heart Divided	104 X 15 mins		
1950s	A Man Called Sheppard	208 X 15 mins	Drama	Cast: Douglas Kelly.
1950s	A Woman in Love	208 X 15 mins	Romance	
1950s	A Woman of the Headlines	104 X 15 mins		
1950s	Adventure For Halliday	208 X 15 mins		
1950s	Amazing Oscar Hammerstein, The		Musical Drama	Contributors: Eric Pearce (compere). Cast: Lloyd Berrell.
1950s	Ambassadress, The	15 mins	Drama	Dorothy Crawford (Producer). Cast: Keith Eden, Margaret Mouchemore.
	ASPRO Short Stories	52 X 5 mins	Drama	Dorothy Crawford (Producer).
	Awake the Murdered	52 X 30 mins	Crime Drama	Dorothy Crawford (Producer), Osmar White (writer). Cast: Beverley Dunn.

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Broadcast Dates	Title	Episode/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1950s	Beau, The	208 x 15 mins	Crime Drama	Jeffrey Underhill (writer), Roland Strong (Producer). Cast: Richard Davies (The Beau), Elizabeth Price (Kay Lorrimer), Douglas Kelly (Robinson), George Randall (Inspector Pomeroy).
	Beauty's Daughters	104 X 15 mins	Drama	
1960s	Bennett Affair, The	208 X15 mins	Drama serial	Dorothy Crawford (Producer).
	Bill Smith Sings		Musical series	
1948-	Blue Danube, The	52 X 30 mins	Musical drama	Dramatised musical story of the life of Johann Strauss. Cast: Douglas Kelly (Strauss).
	Bob and Ray Show			
	Borrowed Life, A	78 X 15 mins	Drama	The moving story of a woman who lived a lie for her child. Contributor: Jeffrey Underhill (writer).
1950s-1960s	C.I.B.	213 X 30 mins	Crime Drama	Radio drama series of stories taken from actual police files with names, addresses and dates changed to protect the innocent. Contributors: Dorothy Crawford (producer), Roland Strong (writer).
1950s	Captain Miracle	208 X 15 mins	Drama	
	Christian Marlowes' Daughter	52 X 15 mins		
1950s/1960s	Consider Your Verdict	312 X 30 mins	Courtroom Drama	Recreations of trials, each chosen represent a human problem and an interesting legal debate.
1950s	Crime Club, The	52 X 30 mins	Crime Drama	Factual stories from the files of police forces of the world, proving that crime does not pay.
	Crusader or Crackpot	52 X 15 mins		

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Broadcast Details	Title	Episode/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1951 - 1960	D.24	470 X 30 mins	Crime Drama	Dramatised stories of true cases of crime taken from the files of the Victoria Police Department. D24 was the name of the Victoria Police Information Bureau. Contributors: Dorothy Crawford (producer), Warren Glasser (writer), Roland Strong (announcer, writer).
1950s	Dangerous Destiny	52 X 30 mins	Drama	
	Dangerous Love		Drama	
	David's Children	208 X 15mins	Drama	Cast: Keith Eden, Marcia Hart, Elizabeth Wing, Margaret Mouchemore, Patricia Kennedy.
	Dramatised Short Stories		Drama	
	Enid Blyton Stories	416 X 15 mins	Children's stories	
	Ford Show, The			
1940s	Four Sisters		Drama	Drama about the lives of four daughters of a prominent solicitor. Set in Melbourne. Contributors: Robert Alexander, Dorothy Crawford (producer) Cast: Marcia Hart, Beryl Walker, Claude Fleming.
1950s	Frances Parkinson Keyes Series		Drama	Sub-series of this series include: 'The Ambassadors', 'Christian Marlow's Daughter' and 'Honour Bright'.
1950s	Glenda	52 X 30 mins	Musical Variety	Musical series featuring soprano Glenda Raymond. Contributors: Glenda Raymond (vocal), Westminster Singers (Musical group), Hector Crawford (Conductor), Dorothy Crawford (producer), Elford Mack (Arranger).

<b>Broadcast Details</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Episode/ Duration</b>	<b>Genre</b>	<b>Participants / Comments</b>
1950s	Glenda Sings	52 X 30 mins	Musical Variety	Musical radio series featuring soprano Glenda Raymond. Contributors: Glenda Raymond (Vocal).
	Golden Horizon	208 X 15 mins	Romance & Adventure	The Cinderella story of shy Valerie Ferrers, who finds romance and adventure beyond her dreams when she goes to Switzerland as governess to her beautiful cousin, Emmy. Both girls find romance; first against the luxurious atmosphere of a Swiss Chalet, and later in the different gaiety of a scintillating London season.
1940s	Guilty or Not Guilty		Crime	The recounting of famous trials throughout history.
	Great Tradition, The	52 X 15 mins		
	Hector Crawford's String Orchestra		Musical Variety	Musical radio series. Hector Crawford (conductor).
1950s	Here Comes O'Malley	311 X 15 mins	Crime & Suspense	Contributors: Jeffrey Underhill (writer), Dorothy Crawford (producer). Cast: Keith Eden, Sydney Conabere.
1950s	Holiday for Song	104 X 30 mins	Musical	Cast: Glenda Raymond.
	Honour Bright	52 X 15 mins		
	Imprisoned Heart	416 X 15 mins	Drama	
1950s	International Man	52 X 30 mins		
1952-	Inspector West	728 X 15 mins	Crime Serial	Cast: Douglas Kelly (Inspector West), John Gray, John Ormiston Reid, (writer).
1950s	Into the Unknown	52 X 30 mins		
1950s	It's a Crime, Mr. Collins	52 X 30 mins	Crime	

Broadcast Details	Title	Episode/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1950s	John Turner's Family	252 X 30 min	Human Interest	Contributors: Della Fosse Paine (writer). Cast: Gwenda Beard, Roland Strong, Keith Eden (John Turner), Beverley Dunn, Patricia Kennedy.
1950s	Kiap O'Kane	52 X 30 mins	Drama	Osmar White (writer). Cast: Keith Eden, Beverley Dunn.
1950s	Liberty of Hymns	416 hymns	Religious	
	Lone Star Lannigan	104 X 15 mins		
1950s	Ma Pepper	208 X 15 mins	Drama	Serial drama about 'MA' who is a newspaper woman who runs the local paper in Glanville.
1946-	The Melba Story	30 min eps	Musical Drama	Musical dramatisation of the life and career of Nellie Melba. Contributors: Dorothy Crawford (producer), Hector Crawford (producer, Director, Conductor), John Ormiston Reid (writer), David Reid (Arrangements), Eric Pearce (Narrator), Margaret Schofield (pianist). Cast: Stella Power (Melba during hey-day), Kareen Wilson (Melba at eight), Glenda Raymond (Melba during early years of success), Patricia Kennedy (Melba-speaking), David Reid.
1949-1957	Mobil Quest	Nine seasons	Radio talent quest	Radio talent quest with heats, semi-finals and finals.
1950s	Mobil Show	28 X 30 mins	Musical variety	
1953-1955	Mobil Song / Mobilsong	60 X 30 mins	Musical history.	The stories and songs of the makers of music, Hector Crawford (producer).
1950s	Mobil Stars	28 X 30 mins	Musical variety	
1951	Mobil Town	30 min eps	Musical variety	Dorothy Crawford (producer), Warren Glasser (writer), John Curtis (conductor).

Broadcast Details	Title	Episode/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1950s	Musical Family	54 X 30 mins	Musical variety	
1937 – 1950s	Music For the People	60 min eps	Musical variety	Radio series featuring light classical music. Usually conducted in Melbourne's Botanic Gardens.
1954-	My Other Love	208 X 15 mins	Drama	Cast: Mary Disney, Keith Eden, Peggy Nunn, Peter Oliver.
	Mysteries of History	52 X 30 mins	Drama	Dramatisations of some of the most baffling events yet recounted, leaving the listener to answer the challenge to explain the unexplainable.
1950s	No Holiday For Halliday	892 X 15 mins	Drama/Comedy	Cast: Paul Baron.
1950s	Nom De Plume	52 X 30 mins	Drama	True stories of people who have assumed names other than their own.
1946-1948	Opera For the People	23 X 60 minutes	Opera	The world's greatest operas adapted in English for radio presentation. An all star Australian cast of singers, choristers (The Westminster Singers) and actors. The stories are dramatised interspersed with popular arias and choruses from the operas. Some of the operas adapted for the series include: Barber of Seville, Carmen, Cosi Fan Tutte, Daughter of the Regiment, Don Giovanni, Faust, IL Trovatore, La Boheme, Madame Butterfly, Pagliacci, Rigoletto, Tales of Hoffman and Tosca. Contributors: Dorothy Crawford (producer), Hector Crawford (director, conductor), Eric Pearce (Narrator, Compere), Australian Symphony Orchestra (MSG). Cast: Glenda Raymond (vocal), John Lanigan (vocal), Patricia Kennedy, Keith Eden, Douglas Kelly (actors).
	Out of the Dark	208 X 15 mins		

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Broadcast Details	Title	Episode/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1960s	Patricia	208 X 15 mins	Drama	Set in England and South Africa, this adaptation of Ethel M. Dell's novel tells the enthralling story of a young English girl, Patricia Engleton, who lives in the Manor House in a county near London. Cast: Beverley Dunn, Douglas Kelly.
	Patrick Dawlish	208 X 15 mins		
1950s	Problem People	30 min eps	Public Affairs	Panel discussions chaired by Professor Zelman Cowan, Melbourne University, about contemporary social problems.
1950s	Prodigal Father	208 X 15 mins		Contributor: Della Fosse Paine (writer).
1950s	Prodigal Husband	208 X 15 mins		Contributor: Della Fosse Paine (writer). Cast: Keith Eden, Douglas Kelly, Beverley Dunn.
1950s	Respectfully Yours	52 X 30 mins	Drama	Biographical dramas of famous people in history.
Late 1940s	Sincerely Rita Marsden	436 X15 mins	Drama/Fantasy	The story of Rita Marsden, who at 38 still believes that the best in life is yet to come. Cast: Mary Ward (Rita Marsden), Clifford Cowley, June Jago, Jill Warwick.
	Strictly Private	52 X 30 mins		
	Space – Our Destiny	31 X 30 mins	Science	
1950s	Surprise Ending	104 X 15 mins		
1950s	They're Human After all	52 X 30 mins		
1959-	This Actually Happened	52 X 30 mins		
1950s	This is My Story	104 X 30 mins	Drama/History	Radio drama series about the lives of great men and woman and particularly the great composers and musicians.
1950s	To Love and Honour	728 by 15 mins		

<b>Broadcast Details</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Episode/ Duration</b>	<b>Genre</b>	<b>Participants / Comments</b>
1950s	Toff, The	15 min eps		John Creasy (writer), Cast: Richard Davies, Robert Burnard.
1950s	Torch of Freedom, The	52 X 30 mins		
	Uncle Bill		Drama	Cast: William Fitzgibbons (Uncle Bill), (Susan Shaw), (Frank Ruben), (Mrs Ferris), (Agatha Ruben).
	University of the Air		Educational	
1950s	What Would You Have Done	52 X 5 mins		
	World's Best Books, The.			
Late 1950s	You and Your World	105 x 30 (at least)	Educational drama series	Dramatised educational series of stories about scientists in universities and research centres around the world, with technical advice and editing of scripts done by the CSIRO. Contributors: Sir John Medley (Narrator), Hector Crawford (producer).
	Your Marriage	104 X 15 mins		

Sources: Official Crawfords' documentation and scripts, National Film and Sound Archives database, Crawfords Australia, numerous newspaper articles and promotional features.



## Appendix F

### Summary of Crawford Productions' Television Series, Serials and Musical Programs 1956 – 1987.

Broadcast Dates	Title	Episodes/Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1962	Active Australian, the	14 X 5 mins	Army Recruitment	Series of five minute 'shorts' commissioned by the Department of the Army. Shown on national stations.
1986	Alice To Nowhere	Mini Series	Crime Drama	Main Cast: John Waters, Steve Jacobs, Rosey Jones, Ebsen Storm, Ruth Cracknell.
1983	All The Rivers Run	4 X 100 mins	Historical Mini-Series	Set in Murray River port of Echuca. Main Cast: Sigrid Thornton, John Waters. (Seven Network).
1987	All The Way	3 X 100 mins	Soap Drama Mini Series	Set in 1963. Main Cast: Brenda Addie, Nikki Coghill, Vince Colosimo. (Nine Network).
1976-1977	Bobby Dazzler	14 X 30 mins	Comedy	Main Cast: Johnny Farnham, Olivia Hamnett and Maurie Fields with Terry Norris and Carla Hoogeveen. (Seven Network).
1976	Bluestone Boys, The	24 X 30 mins	Comedy	Main Cast: Vic Gordon, Carla Hoogeveen, Chuck Faulkner, Gary Meadows.
1976	Bluey	39 X 60 mins, one X 90 mins.	Crime Drama	Colour, all film. Main Cast: Lucky Grills, John Diedrich, Gerda Nicolson and Victoria Quilter with Terry Gill, Ken Goodlet, Mercia Dean-Johns, Fred Parslow and Peter Aanensen. (Seven Network).

Broadcast Dates	Title	Episodes/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1974-1977	Box, The	335 X 50 mins	Soap Opera	Main Cast: Barrie Barkla, Ken Snoggrass, Judy Nunn, Ken James, John Stanton, Fred Betts, (0-10 Network).
1983-1984	Carson's Law	183 X 50 mins	1920s Legal Drama Series	Main Cast: Lorraine Bayly, Kevin Miles, James Condon, Noel Trevarthen (0-10 Network).
Dec 1963	Christmas Salute	Christmas Special	Army Recruitment	On-the-spot documentary film of Australian troops serving in Malaysia.
1961	Consider Your Verdict	163 X 60 mins	Courtroom Drama	Mono. Early episodes were Kinescope, later episodes were Video with short film sequences. Screened nationally and in New Zealand. Won Logie Award for best Australian drama 1961 (HSV7).
1977-1984	Cop Shop	582 X 50 mins	Soap/Drama Serial	Main Cast: Peter Adams, Tony Bonner, Paul Duncan, Joanna Lockwood, George Mallaby, Terry Norris, Gil Tucker, Rowena Wallace. (Seven Network).
March, 1959	Crucifixion, The	Easter Special	Religious	Produced for GTV9 at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.
1959	Don't Argue	26 X 30 mins	Human Interest	(HSV7) Paul Bacon and John Morgan presented the integrated commercials for Hutton's hams and bacon.
1969-1975	Division 4	301 X 60 mins (including episodes 102 and 102A).	Crime Drama	298 x 60 mins; 2 x 90 mins; 1 x 120 mins. <b>Format:</b> 232 Mono (eps 1 - 231), 69 Colour (eps 232 - 300), all Video and Film Integration. Main cast: Gerard Kennedy, Chuck Faulkner, Terence Donovan, Frank Taylor, Ted Hamilton and Patricia Smith with Rowena Wallace, Andrew McFarlane, Clive Davies, John Hannan, Tony Shepp and Peter Cavanagh.
1968-1969	Encounter	70 X 60 mins	Current Affairs	Host: Barry Jones, (HSV7).

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Broadcast Dates	Title	Episodes/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1968-1969	Entertainers, The	16 X160 mins	Variety	
1961	Export Action	13 X 30 mins, 114 short films	Commercial documentary	Commissioned by the Commonwealth Government to stimulate overseas' trade. Shown on ABV2 and later commercials stations.
1987	Far Country, The	200 mins	Mini Series	Based on novel by Nevil Shute. Main cast : Michael York and Sigrid Thornton.
1963	Fighting Words	140 X 60 mins	Public Affairs	Discussion program (HSV7).
1985	Flying Doctors, The	3 X 120 mins	Mini Series	Story of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Filmed in Minyip, Victoria. Main Cast: Andrew McFarlane, Keith Eden, Vikki Hammond, Bill Hunter, Steve Bisley, Lenore Smith, Max Cullen.
1986-1993	Flying Doctors, The	Seven seasons, 60 min episodes,	Drama Series	Series about the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Filmed in Minyip, Victoria. Main Cast: Lenore Smith, Robert Grubb, Maurie fields, Val Jellay, Andrew McFarlane, Max Cullen, Rebecca Gibney, Peter O'Brien, Terry Gill, Liz Burch.
Early 1960s	Flying Dogtor, The	? X 5 mins	Cartoon	Semi-animated children's programme produced on film for HSV7. The format and technique was devised by Robin Boyd.
1985	Fortress	TV Mini series	Drama	Main Cast: Rachel Ward, Elaine Cusick.
1967	Gordon and the Girls	130 X 30 mins	Public Affairs	Public participation program (ATV0).
1985-1987	Henderson Kids, The	48 X 60 mins	Family Drama	Main Cast: Nicolas Eadie, Nadine Garner, Kylie Minogue, Ben Mendelsohn, Neil Melville, Terry Gill, Reg Gorman.

Broadcast Dates	Title	Episodes/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1964-1975	Homicide	510* (Including episodes 24 and 24A – Pilot)	Crime Drama	*505 x 60 mins; 2 x 90 mins; 2 x 120 mins; 1 x 150 mins. (Plus 'The Homicide Story' documentary: 1 x 90 mins.) 376 Mono, Video and Film Integration (eps 1 - 375); 134 Colour, Film (eps 376 - 509). Main cast: John (Jack) Fegan, Terry McDermott, Lex Mitchel, Leonard Teale, Leslie Dayman, George Mallaby , Lionel Long. Alwyn Kurts, Norman Yemm, Mike Preston, Gary Day, Charles Tingwell, John Stanton, Don Barker, Dennis Grosvenor with John Darcy, Gordon Timmins, Terry Norris and Derani Scarr. (Seven Network).
1977	Hotel Story	7 by 60 mins	City hotel drama	Originally 26 episodes were to be produced, but the series was cancelled before the first episode had even gone to air. Eventually, the seven episodes already made were transmitted on the Ten Network. Cast: Clare Binney, Terence Donovan, Carmen Duncan.
1967-1969	Hunter	67 X 60 mins	Espionage Drama	Cast: Tony Ward, Gerard Kennedy, Nigel Lovell, Ronald Morse, Fernande Glyn and Rod Mullinar with Anne Morgan, Patricia Smith, Jack Hume, Gordon Timmins and Dorothy Bradley. (Nine Network).
Feb, 1960	Hutton's Family Quiz	13 X 30 mins	Quiz series	
1985	I Live with Me Dad	Film Victoria	Comedy	Main Cast: Peter Hehir, Dennis Miller, Rebecca Gibney, Ebsen Storm, Val Lehman.
1974-1975	Last of the Australians, The	26 X 30 mins	Comedy series	Main Cast: Alwyn Kurts, Rosie Sturgess, Richard Hibbard and Stephen Thomas with Terry Norris, Maurie Fields, John Ewart and Keith Eden.

Broadcast Dates	Title	Episodes/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1970-1975	Matlock Police	229 (Including episodes 157 and 157A)	Rural Crime Drama	62 Mono (eps 1 - 161), 67 Colour (eps 162 - 228), all Video and Film Integration. Main Cast: Michael Pate, Grigor Taylor, Vic Gordon, Paul Cronin, Tom Richards and Peter Gwynne with Luigi Villani, Roy Day, Natalie Raine, Marie Williams, Sue Walker, Edward Howell, Beverley Roberts and Jeffrey Hodgson (0-10 Network).
1976	Me & Mr Thorne	90 minute pilot	Comedy/Crime	Telemovie starring John Farnham, Gordon Chater, Roger Ward, Chuck Faulker, Denise Drysdale (series did not transpire).
1986	My Brother Tom	Mini Series	Drama/Romance	Filmed in Echuca, Victoria. Main Cast: Tom Jennings, Catherine McClements, Gordon Jackson, Charles Tingwell, Nardine Garner.
1957 – 1970s	Music for the People		Live musical variety	Televised live by HSV7 from the Sidney Myer Music Bowl from 1957 until the early 1970s.
March, 1958	Peters Club	52 X 30 mins	Children	Recognised by <i>Truth</i> newspaper for best children's programme on Melbourne television in 1958 (GTV9).
1986	Prime Time	60 X 50 mins	Soap Drama	Main Cast: Chris Orchard, Anthony Hawkins, Nina Landis, Peter Kowitz.
1962	Profile of a Soldier	6 X 10 mins	Army Recruitment	Series commissioned by the Department of the Army. Shown on national stations.
June, 1957	Raising a Husband	52 X 30 mins	Human Interest	Interview program (GTV9).
1972-1973	Ryan	39 X 60mins	Crime – Private Investigation	Colour, all film. Main cast: Rod Mullinar, Pamela Stephenson, Luigi Villani and Colin McEwan. (Executive Producer: Terry Stapleton). (Seven Network).

Broadcast Dates	Title	Episodes/ Duration	Genre	Participants / Comments
1960	Seagulls Over Sorrento	One-off special	Comedy/Drama	First full-length drama to be specially produced for television by an independent production company. Televised initially on HSV7 and then nationally. Cast: William Hodge, Peter Aanensen, Frank Taylor, Carl Bleazby, Don Crosby, Stuart Wagstaff and Brian James.
Sept, 1965	Showcase	60 min episodes	High quality talent quest	1965-1970 (194 episodes - ATV10), 1973-74 (GTV9), 1978 (HSV7), Comperes Gordon Boyd and Rod McLennan.
1979-1981	Skyways	189 X 50 mins	Soap Drama	Set at Melbourne Tullamarine Airport. Main Cast: Tina Bursill, Bill Stalker, Ken James, Brian James, Gerard Kennedy, Joanne Samuel, Tony Bonner, Bartholomew John. (Seven Network).
1975-1976	Solo One	13 X 30 mins	Children's police show.	Cast: Paul Cronin, Keith Eden and Aileen Britten (0-10 Network).
1984-1985	Special Squad	43 X 50 mins	Drama serial	Main Cast: John Diedrich, Alan Cassell. (0-10 Network).
1976-1983	Sullivans, The	1114 X 30 mins	Wartime Serial drama	1930s-1940s period serial set in wartime Melbourne. Main Cast: Lorraine Bayly, Paul Cronin, Andrew McFarlane, Susan Hannaford, Stephen Tandy, Richard Morgan, Michael Caton (Nine Network).
Oct, 1957	Take That	52 X 15 mins	Comedy	(HSV7).
1962	Video Village	844 X 30 mins	Game Show	(HSV7) Audience participation game show five nights a week.
Nov, 1956	Wedding Day	39 X 30 mins	Human Interest	Interview programme. First series independently produced for Melbourne television (HSV7).
1977, 1979	Young Ramsay	26 X 60 mins	Country VET	Cast: John Hargreaves, Barbara Llewellyn, Louise Howitt, Serge Lazareff and Vic Gordon (Seven Network).
1985	Zoo Family, The	26 X 25 mins	Drama	Main Cast: Peter Curtin, Rebecca Gibney, Kate Gorman, Steve Jacobson.

Dates	Title	Episode/ Duration	Genre	Crawford Subsidiary / Participants / Comments
<b>Other Production Activity</b>				
1970	Australian tour of Liberace	Concerts and one-hour TV special	Music	Crawford Theatre Productions Pty Ltd – Concert promotion.
1971	Commercial Documentaries	Up to 100	Commerce/ Business	Crawford Senior Documentary Arm.
1974	Doctor In the House	Play Season	Comedy	Crawford Theatre Productions Pty Ltd – promotion.
1972	Glen Campbell Show	Concert Tour	Popular Music	Crawford Theatre Productions Pty Ltd – Concert promotion.
1987	Facts of Life Down Under, The	100 minute TV Movie	Comedy	Co-production with Embassy Television USA, filmed in Sydney. Main Cast: Cloris Leachman, Lisa Whelchel, Kim Fields.
1972	Hands of Cormack Joyce, The	Feature Film	Drama	Crawford Productions (Feature Films) – Co-production with Hallmark Incorporated (USA).
1970	Dr Murray Banks	Four one-hour audience participation TV specials	American psychologist and comedian	0-10 Network.

Sources: Official Crawfords' documentation, National Film and Sound Archives database, International Movie Database (IMDb) Amazon.com, Wikipedia, Crawfords Australia, Don Storey [www.classicaustraliantv.com](http://www.classicaustraliantv.com), Garry Hardman, [www.crawfordproductions.TV](http://www.crawfordproductions.TV).

**Removed from this page for copyright reasons:**

Photo of Hector Crawford receiving one of many Logie Awards for *Division 4*.  
Includes Chuck Faulkner, Patricia Smith, special guest presenter Roger Moore, Terry  
Donovan and Bert Newton, circa early 1970s.

*(From the Terry Donovan private collection.)*

*(Photo from TV Week, photographer unknown).*



## Appendix G

### Crawford Productions' Industry Awards

Industry Awards – Hector and Dorothy Crawford		
Year	Organisation	Award Title
<b>Hector Crawford</b>		
1968	British Empire	Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in recognition of service as Director of <i>Music for the People</i> .
1980	British Empire	Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) in recognition of service to the arts.
1986	Australian Government	Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for service to Australian television production.
1969	Logie Awards	For Outstanding Contribution to Australian Television.
1971	Logie Awards	Special Award for Contribution to Australian Television.
1975	Logie Awards	Special Award: Contribution to Australian Drama.
1976	Logie Awards	Special Achievement Award for faith and continuing investment in Australian drama.
1984	Logie Awards	Inaugural Hall of Fame Gold Logie member.
1974	Foot-lighter's Award	For Outstanding Service to Show Business.
1978	Penguin Awards	The Colin Bednall Award - Outstanding Contribution to Television.
1980	Sammy Awards	Chips Rafferty Memorial Award for outstanding contribution to the Australian Entertainment Industry.
?	Australian Marketing Institute	Sir Charles McGrath Award for Individual Excellence in Marketing.
1985	Advance Australia Foundation	Advance Australia Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Australian Film and Television Industry.
1985	Royal Society of the Arts (UK)	Hartnett Medal for Achievement, Eminence or Performance in Australia in the fields of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce (inaugural recipient).
1985	Unknown	The Sir Arthur Cowan Award - in recognition of an Outstanding Personal Contribution to the Development and Progress of Australian Commercial Television.

<b>Hector Crawford (Cont).</b>		
1986	BHP	BHP Australian Television Festival Award for Excellence (inaugural award made during Perth's Four Day Television Festival).
1987	Australian Writers' Guild	Dorothy Crawford Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Profession.
1990	The Screen Production Association of Australia	Life Membership – Awarded for outstanding contribution to the Australian independent film and television industry and continued support for The Screen Production Association of Australia.
1991	Australian Writers' Guild	Inauguration of The Hector Crawford Award for a significant contribution to the craft via a body of script editing work (not given every year).
1992	Screen Producers Association Australia	Annual Hector Crawford Memorial Lecture.
<b>Dorothy Crawford</b>		
1973	Australian Writers' Guild	Special Award for Encouraging Australian writers.
1977 1978	Henry Lawson Festival of Arts Award:	Television series production.
1988	Australian Writers' Guild	Commemoration inaugurated in 1988 – Annual Dorothy Crawford Award for outstanding contribution to the profession.

Source Crawfords Australia: [http://www.crawfords.com.au/index\\_about.html](http://www.crawfords.com.au/index_about.html)

<b>Logie Awards – Crawford Productions (1962 – 1987)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Production</b>	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Category</b>
1962	Consider Your Verdict		Silver Logie: Best drama series.
1966	Homicide		Silver Logie: Best drama series.
1967	Homicide		Silver Logie: Best drama series.
1968	Homicide		Silver Logie: Best drama series.
1969	Homicide		Silver Logie: Best drama series.

<b>Logie Awards – Crawford Productions (1962 – 1987)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Production</b>	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Category</b>
1969	Hunter	Gerard Kennedy	George Wallace Memorial Logie for Best New Talent.
1970	Division 4		Silver Logie: Best Australian Drama series.
1971	Homicide		Silver Logie: Best Australian drama.
1971	Division 4, Nine Network	Gerard Kennedy	Gold Logie: Most Popular Male Personality.
1972	Division 4		Silver Logie: Best Australian drama.
	Division 4, Nine Network	Gerard Kennedy	Gold Logie: Most Popular Male Personality.
	Division 4, Nine Network	Gerard Kennedy	Silver Logie: Best Actor.
	Division 4, Nine Network	Patricia Smith	Silver Logie: Best Actress.
	Division 4, Nine Network	Jack Fegan	Silver Logie: Best individual acting performance.
1972	Matlock Police		Silver Logie: Best new drama series.
1973	Division 4	Gerard Kennedy	Silver Logie: Best Actor.
1973	Homicide		Silver Logie: Best Australian drama.
1974	Homicide	Leonard Teale	Silver Logie: Best Australian actor.
	Homicide	Cul Cullen	Silver Logie: Best Script.
	Homicide	Cul Cullen	Silver Logie: Outstanding Single Acting Performance.
1976	Homicide	Maggie Miller	Silver Logie: Best individual performance by an Actress.
1976	Division 4		Silver Logie: Best single episode in a series "Little Raver".
1975	The Box	George Mallaby	Silver Logie: Best Australian Actor.
1976	The Box	Paul Karo	Silver Logie: Best Australian actor.
1976	Solo One	Greg Stroud	Silver Logie: Outstanding Performance by a Juvenile for ep.1 'The Runaway'
1977	The Sullivans		Silver Logie: Best New drama.

<b>Logie Awards – Crawford Productions (1962 – 1987)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Production</b>	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Category</b>
1978	The Sullivans	Lorraine Bayly	Silver Logie: Most popular Australian lead actress.
	The Sullivans	Paul Cronin	Silver Logie: Most popular Australian lead actor.
1978	Cop Shop		Silver Logie: Best new Drama.
1979	The Sullivans	Lorraine Bayly	Silver Logie: Most popular Australian lead actress in a series.
	The Sullivans	Paul Cronin	Silver Logie: Most popular Australian lead actor in a series.
	The Sullivans	Chantal Contouri	Silver Logie: Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role.
1980	The Sullivans	Paul Cronin	Silver Logie: Most popular Australian lead actor in a series.
1980	Cop Shop	Paula Duncan	Silver Logie: Most popular Australian lead actress in a series.
	Cop Shop	Terry Norris	Silver Logie: Best supporting actor in a Series.
	Cop Shop	Peter Adams	Silver Logie: Best lead actor in a series.
1981	Cop Shop	Paula Duncan	Silver Logie: Most popular actress.
	Cop Shop	Peter Adams	Silver Logie: Most popular actor.
	Cop Shop	Peter Adams	Silver Logie: Best lead actor in a series.
1982	The Sullivans	Paul Cronin	Silver Logie: Most popular actor.
	The Sullivans	Andy Anderson	Silver Logie: Best Supporting Actor in a Series.
	The Sullivans	Vikki Hammond	Silver Logie: Best Supporting Actress in a Series.
	The Sullivans	Gary Sweet	Silver Logie: Most popular new talent.
1983	The Sullivans	Paul Cronin	Silver Logie: Most Popular Lead Actor.
1984	Carsons Law		Silver Logie: Victoria most popular show.
	Carsons Law	Kevin Miles	Silver Logie: Best lead actor in a series.
	Carsons Law	Noel Trevarthen	Silver Logie: Best supporting actor in a series.
1984	All the Rivers Run	Sigrid Thornton	Silver Logie: Best Lead Actress.

*Crawford Creations: What would we have done without Crawford's?*

An exploration of Crawford Productions' contribution to the development of an 'Australian Consciousness'.

<b>Logie Awards – Crawford Productions (1962 – 1987)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Production</b>	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Category</b>
1984	All the Rivers Run	Danus Perkins	Silver Logie: Best Juvenile Performance.
1986	The Henderson Kids	Nadine Garner	Silver Logie: Best performance by a juvenile.
<b>Film Editing</b>			
1987	The Far Country	Adrian Carr	Television Society of Australian Arts: Certificate of Commendation

Source: <http://www.tvweeklogieawards.com.au/logie-history/1980s/1984/>

<b>Penguin Awards – Crawford Productions (1972 – 1987)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Production</b>	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Category</b>
1972	Matlock Police	Michael Pate	Leading Drama Talent - Tie with James Laurenson, <i>Boney</i> ,
1972	Division 4	Episode	Commonwealth Film Development Corporation \$3,000 TV prize for episode "The Return of John Kelso."
1972	Division 4	Frank Taylor	Supporting Drama Talent.
1973	Showcase '73		Best Variety Series.
1976	Solo One		Best Children's Program.
1976	Solo One	Mike Brady	Best Original Music.
1979	Cop Shop	Peter Adams	Best Sustained Performance by an Actor in a Series/Serial.
1980	Skyways	Brian James	Best Sustained Performance by an Actor in a Series/Serial.
1980	The Sullivans	Vivien Gray	Best Sustained Performance by an Actress in a Series/Serial.
1980	Young Ramsay	Kevin Dobson	Best TV Play or TV Movie Direction.
1983	Carson's Law		Best Drama Serial.
1983	Carson's Law		Best Sustained Performance by an Actor in a Series/Serial.
1983	Cop Shop	Sally McKenzie	Best Sustained Performance by an Actress in a Series/Serial.

<b>Penguin Awards – Crawford Productions (1972 – 1987)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Production</b>	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Category</b>
1983	Carson's Law	Terry Stapleton	Best Drama Serial Script.
1983	Carson's Law		Best Lighting and Best Set Design.
1984	Carson's Law	Lorraine Bayly	Best Sustained Performance by an Actress in a Series/Serial.
1984	All The Rivers Run		Best Miniseries Drama Program.
1984	All The Rivers Run	Bruce Rowlands	Best Musical Score.
1986	The Flying Doctors	Mark Little	Best Sustained Performance by an actor in a principal/Supporting Role in a Series/Serial.
1986	The Flying Doctors	Max Cullen	Best performance by an actor in a Series.
1987	Whose Baby	Drew Forsythe	Best Performance by a Male Actor in a Principal Role in a One-Off Drama.
1987	Whose Baby	Lisa Crittenden	Best Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role in a One-Off Drama.
1987	The Flying Doctors	Gerard Kennedy	Best Performance by a Male Actor in a Series/Serial.

Source: Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penguin\\_Award](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penguin_Award)

<b>AWGIE Awards (Australian Writers' Guild) – Crawford Productions (1970 – 1987)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Production</b>	<b>Writer</b>	<b>Category</b>
1970	Homicide	John Dingwell	Television – for episode “Everybody Knows Charlie”.
1971	Division 4	John Dingwell	Television – for episode “Johnny Red”.
1972	Division 4	John Dingwell	Television – for episode “The Return of John Kelso”.
1974	Division 4	Roger Simpson	Television – for episode “Talk Back”.
1975	Homicide	Peter Schreck	Television – for episode “The Graduation of Tony Walker”.
1976	Homicide	Keith Thompson	Telemovie – for episode “Stopover”.
1978	The Sullivans	Peter Schreck	Television Serial – for episodes 237 & 238.
1979	The Sullivans	Graeme Koetsveld	Television Serial – for episodes 433 & 434.
1980	The Sullivans	Graeme Koetsveld	Television Serial – for episodes 507 & 508.
1981	The Sullivans	Peter Schreck	Television Serial – for episodes 811 & 812.
1982	The Sullivans	David Stevens	Television Serial – for episodes 907 & 908.
1983	Carson's Law	John Reeves	Television Serial – for episode “The Royston Trial”.
1985	Carson's Law	Leon Saunders	Television Serial – for episode “Beyond All Reason”.
1986	The Far Country	Peter Yeldham	Television Mini-Series Adaptation (Joint winner).
1987	The Flying Doctors	Vince Gill	Television series – for episode “E.T. New Girl in Town”.
1968	You Can't See 'Round Corners. (TV Serial)	Richard Lane	Major Award Winner (Joint winner).
1973	Moving On (Feature Film)	Cliff Green	Film Award (with Anne Brooksbank).
1974	Marion (TV Play)	Cliff Green	Major Award Winner for 1974.
1974	What is Psychology	Harold Lander	Documentary .
1975	Pearse	Roger Simpson	Documentary.
1975	Bellbird	Richard Lane	Television Serial – for episode “Beyond Enduring”.
1975	Pig in a Poke	John Dingwell	Television play, joint winner.
1976	Power Without Glory	Cliff Green & Howard Griffiths	Television serial for episode one.

<b>AWGIE Awards (Australian Writers' Guild) – Crawford Productions (1970 – 1987)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Production</b>	<b>Writer</b>	<b>Category</b>
1976	Picnic at Hanging Rock	Cliff Green	Feature Film.
1977	Bellbird	Richard Lane	Television Serial –for episode “You Never Know Do You?”
1977	Power Without Glory	Howard Griffiths	TV Adaptation for episode 26.
1977	Theo's Story (Pig in a Poke)	John Dingwell	Television original, joint winner.
1977	Storm Boy	Sonia Borg	Feature Film.
1978	End of Summer	Cliff Green	Television original.
1978	Mr Frederick's Great Great Grandson	Vince Moran	Television – Children.
1978	Hotel Story	Vince Moran	Television serial for episode “The Reunion”.
1979	Dave Regan and Party	Cliff Green	Television Adaptation.
1980	Ride on Stranger	Peter Yeldham	Television Adaptation.
1981	A Town Like Alice	Tom Hegarty	Television Adaptation.
1982	Bellamy	Luis Bayonas	Television serial for episode 35.
1983	Women of the Sun	Sonia Borg & Hyllus Maris	Major Award Winners 1983 (Television original).
1984	BMX Bandits	Patrick Edgeworth and Russell Hagg	Children's Original.
1987	Drifters (Prime Time)	Howard Griffiths	Television serial

Source Australian Writers Guild: <http://www.awg.com.au/>



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Advertising promo of Crawfords' mini-series *The Far Country* from the novel by Nevil Shute and starring Sigrid Thornton and Michael York.

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