

CHAPTER SIX

Women in the Professions and Business World

There has been very little research into the area of women's activities as professional or business women in regional Queensland during the 1940-1965 period. The research for the thesis has shown that the numbers of women who participated in these spheres was quite small, but it is claimed that their involvement was important. It exposed the myth that women were not temperamentally suited to this type of work as a male construct. The small amount of popular history and academic historiography which has been located will provide secondary sources of evidence, and this will be supported where possible with documentary evidence which is general to Queensland and/or Australia as a whole. Oral history interviews will be used extensively to provide information on the subject of this chapter. During the period covered by the thesis some members of this group of women were employed in branches of the medical profession. while others were journalists or involved in local government and/or as business proprietors. Others were self-employed teachers usually in some form of the Arts, while especially in regional Queensland there were some who managed cattle or agricultural properties. On the question of gender the thesis points to the difficulties faced by women wishing to enter business or the professions, and demonstrates that most women who did so during this time came

from the middle class strata of society. It also considers Queensland regional and urban differences.

R W Connell and T H Irving¹ consider questions of class during the 1940-1965 period which are applicable to the thesis, while Richard White² looks at the impact of war on middle class women. R. Patrick³ and John Pearn⁴ both provide useful evidence concerning the role of women in the medical, dental, and pharmaceutical professions, and this is supported by statements by interviewees in Central Queensland. Additionally Lorna MacDonald⁵ has highlighted the role of regional women who served on local municipal councils. This is endorsed by the result of an interview with a woman who served on the Rockhampton City Council under the leadership of Mayor Rex Pilbeam. Mayor Pilbeam firmly believed that women's place was in the home. Not all men regarded women in this light as has been shown in interviews with male doctors in regional Queensland who cannot speak highly enough of the work done by their female colleagues during the 1940 - 1965 period.

Prior to World War Two, and in the post-war years professional or business careers for women were not generally seen as an option. The thesis maintains women who were accepted into the professions during this part of the twentieth

¹ R.W. Connell & T.H. Irving, *Class Structure in Australian History*, Melbourne, Longman and Cheshire, 1992.

² R. White, "Australia: **Two** Centuries of War and **Peace**", in M. McKernan and M. Browne , (Eds.) *War and Australian Society*, Canberra, AWM, 1985.

³ R. Patrick, *Health and Medicine in Queensland*, St. Lucia, UQP. 1987.

⁴ J. Pearn, *Health, History and Horizons*, Brisbane, Dept. of Child **Health** Publishing Unit, 1992.

⁵ L. McDonald, (1), *Rockhampton: A History of City and District*, Rockhampton City Council, 1995, and (2) *Gladstone: City that Waited*, Brisbane, Boolarong Press, 1988.

century, came in the main from middle class families who could afford to give their daughters a university education. Prior to 1972 this was beyond the means of most parents as tertiary education was very expensive. The loose term “middle class” may refer to women who have attained some standing in the community both financially and socially as self-employed women in diverse undertakings, or as the wives of men who have achieved a similar status,

Economic difficulties were also faced by women wishing to enter the business world severely restricting the numbers of women who were able to achieve social mobility even more. This calls for the questions of class and economic constraint to be addressed by the thesis. Additionally the question of education opportunities for women to upgrade their qualifications needs to be considered. However, it is asserted, that the roles played by professional and business women between 1940 and 1965, paved the way for acceptance of women in these fields of human endeavour. Available evidence will show that the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme, CRTS, failed to provide the promised tertiary education for ex-servicewomen which would have permitted greater numbers of females to enter professions such as medicine or dentistry in Queensland. This evidence contradicts earlier findings by Geoffrey Bolton⁶ regarding tertiary training of ex-servicewomen under the CRTS. However some support for the role of this institution has been advanced by Ann Howard.⁷

⁶ G. Bolton, “1939-51”, in F. Crowley (Ed.), *A New History of Australia*, Richmond, Heinemann, 1974, pp.458-503.

⁷ A. Howard, *Where Do We Go from Here*, Sydney, Tarka Publishing, 1994. In an un-numbered chapter “Where Are We Going to Work”, pp.66-104, ex-servicewomen relate their experiences after discharge, including some who had undertaken CRTS courses.

As pointed out by Connell and Irving middle class women cannot be identified as one part of a dichotomy, such as is presented in a simplified Marxist perception of the roles of bosses and workers.⁸ Nor do they fall into the classification of ‘sex-class’, which defines men as being in opposition to women, which again is based on polarisation between two groups. They argue that:

*class is a social dynamic, a kind of historical process, in which a social world is transformed...Ultimately, a definition of ‘class’ is the specification of a historical dynamic.*⁹

During the period of the thesis there existed within the broad classification of middle class distinct groups each having a different standing in the community. Women who owned their own small business in the mid-twentieth century might be regarded by women employed in industry or domestic work as being middle class, but might still not be regarded as socially acceptable by professional women. **As** pointed out in an earlier chapter this social distinction was not so clearly marked in regional Queensland as in Brisbane, or other large cities throughout Australia. However, those women who entered the professions or the business world and were no longer dependent for their social classification as middle class on parentage or marriage, were instrumental in the development of a greater consciousness of the value of places for women in the public sphere. Commenting on Donzelot’s statement on the difference between ‘the social’ and society, Smart writes that:

⁸ R.W.Connell & T.H.Irving, **op. cit.**, p.3

⁹ **Ibid**, p.6.

The emergence of 'the social', and the associated measures and mechanisms directed towards such dimensions of population as fertility, age, health, economic activity, welfare and education, not only represents a major development or shift in the form of the exercise of power, but in addition, it has produced significant changes in the nature of social relationships...¹⁰

In Chapter One of the thesis attention has been drawn to the historical events which brought about changes in the social mores and women's work patterns during World War Two. Thus the impact of the war years, as pointed out by Richard White, had expansive effects on the numbers and sorts of women who went out to work, on ways in which women's wages were structured, and the kinds of work in which they were employed.¹¹ Pre World War Two, according to a widely accepted middle class cliché, "working class women worked", while middle class women stayed at home. The use of state power during the war years, to force all women to submit to demands made by the Director of Manpower to replace men in industry and defence positions, was a component of the events that led to the second wave of feminism which insisted on complete social equality. It is something of an anomaly that this male initiative to engage the services of women in the country's defence, resulted in deterioration of the power of the male hegemony. This came about largely through the employment of middle class women who later became a component of the nucleus of the feminist movement.

As already mentioned economic factors were a deterrent, especially in regional Queensland, in the growth of change in education and business opportunities for women. Not only was it expensive to study at universities, finance was also

¹⁰ B. Smart, *Foucault, Marxism and Critique*, London, Routledge, 1983, p.120.

¹¹ R. White, *op. cit.*, p.409.

needed for the establishment of most types of businesses. This alone excluded many women from entry to fields of self-employment. In the post-war period and for some time afterwards, lending policies of financial institutions were based on a steadfast refusal to lend women money. To set up a business therefore women needed personal finances. Very few women had monetary reserves which would permit the establishment of any sort of business which required a substantial capital investment. However both pre-war and throughout the period of the thesis, though comparatively few in number, women who became professionals or business proprietors gradually broke the social stigmas attached to employment of women in business and the professions. As one interviewee remarked, women who studied dentistry even as late as the 1960s, were thought of as being “very definitely odd”.¹² These early precursors to the career women of 1980s and 1990s, also laid the groundwork for the destruction of the concept that only men were capable of working in the professions. In doing so they undermined the power of males to control professional values and standards.

As stated, during the 1940-1965 period bank loans were not available to women on their own undertaking. Their entry into the business world therefore was usually only made possible if they became a partner, albeit an unpaid one, in businesses owned by their spouses as discussed in Chapter Four; taking over a business after the death of their husbands or maybe a family member, or by private means such as an inheritance. The thesis asserts that despite these difficulties women’s achievements in both professional and business fields, dispelled widely

¹² Interview conducted by G. Johansen with M. A. at Rockhampton, 22 March, 1999.

held beliefs of men's superior intelligence such as the medieval notions expressed by the fifteenth century poet, Hoccleve, who stated that:

Some women eek, though hir wit be thynne,
Wile arguments make **in** holy writ!¹³

Labarge commented that:

He [Hoccleve] insisted it would be far better for them
to sit and spin and cackle of something else, for their
intelligence was all too feeble for such a **dispute**.¹⁴

Focusing on Central Queensland this chapter of the thesis will centre on women who were self employed either professionally or in business. Additionally it will consider the methods used by conservative power brokers to deny women the opportunity to become professionals, before the Whitlam Labor Government introduced non-fee paying tertiary education for all in 1972. Extensive historiographical research has found that there has been very little academic inquiry into the area of women's activities as professional or business women in Queensland during the period of the thesis.

The emergence of women within the business world and the professions in ever increasing numbers during the 1970s and beyond was a continuity from a very small beginning in the first half of the twentieth century. Based on a higher standard of education, not usually considered necessary for women prior to this time, this development brought with it an ever increasing abatement of the power of the male hierarchy in social relationships. In the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, with

¹³ Hoccleve, cited in M.W. Labarge, *Women in Medieval Life*, London, Hamish Hamilton, 1986, p.213. Hoccleve was implying that women did not have the intelligence to interpret religious text.

¹⁴ M.W. Labarge, *Ibid*.

the added confidence in their abilities that war-time employment had given them, women **took** advantage of adult education classes, which were available to all, to raise their level of education and thus broaden the range of possible work opportunities available to them. Others took part in Post-War Study Groups sponsored by the Ministry of Post-War Reconstruction which provided self-enrichment.

Ex-servicewomen enrolled in courses provided by the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme, CRTS. Nevertheless as shown by an article in the *Australian Women's Weekly* illustrated by a photograph of a husband and wife, both ex-service personnel, exemplifies the type of training offered to women by the CRTS. The husband is studying advertising while his wife learns to type. Other illustrations included both men and women learning hairdressing, while an ex-serviceman studies music on a full time basis, and one ex-service woman learns the art of flower arranging and others train as nurses.¹⁵ The *Weekly* thus continued to support the government line that women should return to the home after the cessation of hostilities. Although many of these courses were orientated towards women's traditional work and were gender related, they were designed to raise the general level of education. The CRTS did not however, give women the opportunity to train for admittance to professions which required tertiary training. Additionally statistics show that the overall number of females enrolled in the scheme was very small. Howard states that:

¹⁵ *Australian Women's Weekly*, 11 January, 1947, p.27.

of the total Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme students in 1946, 3 196 were males and only 323 females.¹⁶

It is a safe assumption that training of any sort might not have been offered to ex-servicewomen if they had not proved themselves capable of performing proficiently in a diversity of occupations, which had always been deemed to be beyond their abilities prior to the Second World War.

By the end of the time frame under discussion problems of reconstruction from war to peace had largely been overcome, and some progress had been made towards gender equality. Historically these developments were important as they precipitated the movement now known as the second wave of feminism which in the 1970s was a driving force in fixthering the cause of equality for women. *Also* the view is sustained, that despite the struggles of some women professionals to be accepted by their male colleagues pre-World War Two, approval was readily given them by their fellow practitioners, and the majority of the general public during the war years, and beyond. However it was not until the latter half of the 1960s when the use of the contraception pill became widespread, that women were able to exercise greater control over sexual biological disparities and thus avoid unwanted pregnancies, that there was a marked increase in the number of married women employed in full time paid work, *As* pointed out in Chapter Five, during the time frame for the thesis government policy was not to employ married women in the public service, except in times of national emergency or labour shortage. Nevertheless in both Brisbane, and Central Queensland towns,

¹⁶ A. Howard, *op. cit.*, p.82.

many women both married and single, who had the means to achieve their goals and contribute to society in the public sphere did so, and in so doing they enriched their own lives and paved the way for others. The experiences of some of these women will be demonstrated in this chapter of the thesis.

Education - Postwar

The CRTS and the post-war study groups initiatives instituted by the Commonwealth Department of Post-war Reconstruction of the then Federal Labor Government, were designed to contribute to education opportunities for all ex-service personnel. Additionally, in 1945 the Adult Education Board launched by the Queensland Department of Health and Home Affairs, provided further education for women and men who were interested in courses offered in its curriculum.¹⁷ Like the Commonwealth Department of Post-war Reconstruction study groups, it did not offer formal education as such. The Member for Rockhampton J. Larcombe, who in 1945, was Minister for Public Instruction, stated that adults found that their school education needed expansion to keep abreast of current developments and wider educational facilities were required. The first course consisted of six lectures which were held in a variety of venues in Brisbane. It is unknown if the same lectures were also made available to centres in Central Queensland. However a comparison made by Ken, who was in charge of adult education in Central Queensland from 1964 until 1986 after employment in a similar capacity at Cairns, showed a marked similarity to the lectures proposed for Brisbane.¹⁸

¹⁷ Dept. of Health and Home Affairs, Pamphlet, **QSA, A3** 1909.

¹⁸ Interview conducted by G. Johansen with K.S. at Emu Park, 23 **April**, 1999.

Courses were all on subjects which would, or could, have been of interest to women. Those directed specifically to women were in keeping with government policy throughout the war. As previously mentioned this policy stated that post war men would return to their jobs, and as women's place in male orientated occupations was for the duration of the war only, they would return to their traditional role as housewives and mothers. On the subject of "Child Development" the preamble to the first lecture course stated, "that it was of special interest to parents and all who are concerned with child welfare"." Lecture subjects included such things as "The development of children from a medical aspect", and "The development of the child from psychological and social aspects". However as noted in Lecture One, "The development of the Maternal and Child Welfare Service", all lectures were directed towards continuing efforts, which began in Queensland in 1918, to reduce child mortality. From an idealist perspective these subjects should have been of interest to both parents, but in 1945 care of children was still regarded as the province of mothers. This being so it seems that there was little likelihood that many men would be drawn to attend these lectures.

The same could be said for the course on Homemaking whereas the opposite would apply concerning the course on Current Affairs. In the mid forties although there was some interest being shown by a few women in economic and constitutional affairs, which were at the core of this course, most women were on the whole uninterested, Strangely enough the venue for this course was listed

¹⁹ Ibid, p.1.

as the Women's Club in Edward Street, Brisbane.

The course on "English Expression" covering such subjects as "The power and speech of writing", and "The build up of an essay:- Introduction, body, conclusion", could have been of interest to quite a number of people with a variety of interests. Lastly the course on Horticulture could also have been of interest to both men and women.²⁰ The courses directed to child care and the home not only adopted a scientific approach to correct methods of child rearing, they also eliminated learning by trial and error. They were also useful in helping the housewife to organise 'hertime in such a way that she could develop outside interests, or seek paid work, and thus develop her potential to be of account in the public sphere. Although these courses had benefits for those participating, they were not orientated towards directing women's interests to tertiary education which would enable them to enter the professions or the business world.

Very purposefully looking towards the future were the study groups organised by the planning body of the Department of Post-war Reconstruction. This body issued a pamphlet setting out answers to the questions of what the purpose of such groups were, how they worked and what were the reconstruction problems were.²¹ It listed problems which would have to be faced in the post-war such as men and women seeking new types of jobs, and training men and women from the services for replacement in civil life. Among a list of peace time aims were listed, "wider educational and cultural opportunities for the people" and "re-

²⁰ *ibid*, pp.3-11.

²¹ Dept. Of Post-war Reconstruction, Canberra, AA Victoria, (CRS)B5505, File No.2.

establishment quickly and smoothly of the men and women from the services into civilian life”.²² The Department offered substantial help in the establishment of these groups including prescribed courses such as “The Land” and “People”. Publications could be obtained from the Department for the cost of the postage. Here again, while these study groups may have stimulated women’s interest in current affairs, no concrete action was taken to initiate incentives for women to enter the public sphere. They were designed to support social attitudes which positioned them in the private sphere thus endorsing the contention that power should remain in the hands of the male hegemony. This is not to say that they did not perform a very important social function. Moreover it should be borne in mind that the coming of television in the mid 1960s to Central Queensland, and earlier in Brisbane, destroyed much of the interest they had generated.

Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme

According to Bolton the government felt responsible for the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen. He states that this led to the formation of the CRTS which provided grants for them to train for civil occupations at all levels, including secondary and tertiary education courses.²³ He also affirms that this scheme was later extended, so that students who were not ex-servicemen or ex-servicewomen could obtain scholarships to attend university. Additionally Bolton states that an important effect of this move was that, not only did it widen the demand for education in subjects such as medicine, dentistry and other

²² Ibid.

²³ G.C. Bolton, “1939-1951” in F. Crowley (Ed.), *A New History of Australia*, Richmond, Heinemann 1974, p. 479.

professions, but it resulted in a rapid upwards move by ex-service personnel out of their class. Certainly Bolton is correct in his assertion that higher education resulted in a higher social status for ex-servicemen who participated in the scheme. However extensive research into enrolments at the University of Queensland archives for the period between 1945 and 1950, failed to produce any evidence that ex-servicewomen had been funded by CRTS for courses at that University.²⁴

This finding has been endorsed by an ex-serviceman who testified that he matriculated in Adelaide under the CRTS programme and he “could not remember any women being involved in that”.²⁵ Additionally, in an interview with Betty, on 13 September 1999 at Bundaberg, she affirmed that she was demonstrating for Science classes attended by medical students at Queensland University during this time. She stated that no students who were ex-servicewomen and funded by the CRTS attended her classes. However in conversation it was also mentioned to the author, by an English Doctor of Medicine who studied medicine at that time, that London University did accept ex-servicewomen as medical students under a similar scheme.

²⁴ Queensland University enrolments archives for this **period** showed whether students fees were paid privately, or whether a scholarship had been awarded. Records were found in the case of male students funded by CRTS but none for female students funded by CRTS.

²⁵ Interview conducted by G. Johansen at Emu Park, 23 April, 1999. In an interview conducted by A. Howard and recorded in her publication *Where do we go from here*” Sydney, Tarka Publishing, 1994, p.83, it is stated that the interviewee, an ex-service-woman testified that “CRTS opened doors” for her and that she “went to Sydney Technical College and then to university”. However it does not state if her time at university was funded by CRTS and there are various other anomalies in her statements.

Bolton provides no evidence which demonstrates that ex-servicewomen were given equal opportunities with ex-servicemen under CRTS in Australia. In conversation he stated that his assumption was based on the stated policy of the scheme.²⁶ One of the unanswerable questions which remains, is whether advisers to the government on qualifications needed by candidates for the training programmes, foresaw the need for women to play a greater role in the public sphere. If this was the case it would account for the inclusion of ex-servicewomen as participants in secondary and tertiary training schemes as Bolton has suggested. If not government bureaucrats may have listened to people such as Dr. Cooper Booth and decided against the advice that they should be included. In the October 23, 1944 issue of the *Current Affairs Bulletin* the opinion of Dr. Cooper Booth briefly takes into account problems which would confront servicewomen after the war. The paternal and rather simplistic conclusion was that:

they would be restless, having lost the companionship, discipline, variety and simplicity of service life. "In my opinion," he says, "some facilities to replace these lost benefits will have to be provided, if they are to be happy and useful citizens in the peace. These must provide companionship, interesting social life and useful occupations."²⁷

What can only be called discrimination against ex-servicewomen on the provision of education through the CRTS was evident in a re-establishment pamphlet given to them on discharge from the forces. This pamphlet dealt with reconstruction training in industry, and was addressed to both ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen. It stated that the purpose of the scheme was to provide one means

²⁶ G.C. Bolton, Oral communication with the author, September, 1999.

²⁷ Dr. Cooper Booth, Director of Social Hygiene, "Servicewomen after the War", in *Current Affairs Bulletin*, Vol.6, No.4, p.14. Held at the Fryer Library, UQ.

of assisting them to “re-establish themselves in suitable civil employment”.²⁸ It further asserted that the CRTS scheme administered by the Ministry of Post-war Reconstruction arranged for both full and part time training in (1) professions at universities, (2) technical trades and vocations, and (3) rural training. In the main it was addressed to men and while it confronted a number of issues, the most obnoxious to women was the section which stated that:

Having satisfied the conditions of eligibility, applicants must next be accepted **as** “suitable” to pursue the course and follow the occupation chosen...Psychological occupational tests provide a basis for advice...Suitability is determined at personal interviews by **expert** selection officers.²⁹

As an ex-servicewoman working in the Army Psychology Unit at Royal Park in Melbourne during the last phases of the war and the early post-war years, the author can only draw attention to the fact that the non commissioned officers whose duty it was to assess candidates’ ability based on their psychology tests, were hardly “experts”. Additionally, they were all male, as were the selection officers. This raises the question as to whether, because of the social mores of the time which favoured men, this may have accounted to some extent for the very low number of ex-servicewomen accepted for any sort of training. Despite women’s work in the armed forces, men were unlikely to recommend a woman for training for a degree in such things as medicine or engineering, especially if numbers had to be limited. In the main both assessors and selection officers were school teachers in civilian life, who had been posted to such units. While no doubt doing their best in the circumstances, they received very little training in psychological methodology and analysis. This was all prejudicial against women

²⁸ Regional Reconstruction Training Committee, *Re-establishment Pamphlet No.3*, **AA** Victoria, (CRS) B5505, File **No.24**.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p.11.

because compared to the number of ex-servicemen accepted for training in any sort of occupation throughout Australia, the numbers of ex-servicewomen accepted was minimal,

In 1946 all Australian universities, including the University of Queensland, were situated in the capital cities. Smaller regional centres such as Gladstone, as mentioned in Chapter Three, did not even have high schools or technical schools. Social attitudes to education still favoured tertiary training for males over females. Very few women's voices were heard in criticism of the male autocracy. Jessie Vasey, founder of the War Widows Craft Guild, was one such critic. In an article for *Home* magazine in 1949, she wrote:

Women's whole training from early childhood instils the belief that it is only through men that they *can* realise life...I think women have been hoodwinked by such cliches as 'the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world', and bluffed into thinking that they can influence the government of the country far more than they do, while men quietly gathered in the spoils.³⁰

Another comment on this topic was that although not many women took up vocational training opportunities offered to them by the Scheme, it placed those who did do so "into another category of skills".³¹ This contributed to social mobility.

Despite the fact that the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme did little to help ex-servicewomen at the tertiary level, some did benefit from the

³⁰ J. Vasey, *Home* magazine as cited in *Women by Themselves*, Hawthorn, Cole Publications, 1988, p.16.

³¹ Ibid.

scheme. During an interview with a group of ex-Australian Women's Army Service women in 1995 one woman testified:

A lot of us would go to the evening courses. We'd go to work and you were accepted or otherwise [for Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Courses] on the psychology test you did when you went into the army. I didn't want to go back to shop work, and I had done some shorthand and **typing** so I went back to that. I also think that having done technical work in the **army** most of us thought we couldn't settle for a mediocre boring sort of job. You had to do something with a bit of depth and interest to it.³²

Ann Howard records interviews with ex-servicewomen who after discharge obtained work in such varied occupations as herd tester, Assistant Director of National Fitness in Hobart, journalist, chiropodist, and visual arts teacher after attending CRTS courses. She states that in **1946**, there were **3 196** male and **323** female CRTS students.³³ So although numbers approved for training were low, some at least, received some benefit from the scheme. These numbers appear to endorse the statement made by J. Jackson in *Smith's Weekly* that

With a half-baked Rehabilitation [scheme] that has not to **date** solved a small percentage of ordinary soldier's problems, it is difficult to conceive this organisation doing anything effective in the case of the women's Services.³⁴

The above figures also bear out social attitudes of the time which brought about the following statement made in an *Australian Army Education Service Bulletin*. It has to be remembered that comparatively few factors in pre-war years

³² Interview conducted by G. Johansen at the home of Mrs. T. Goodstate at Birrong, NSW, on 10 July 1995 (Jean) for the oral history segment of my BA Honours thesis, A social history of the Australian Women's Army Service during World War Two.

³³ A. Howard, op. cit., In an un-numbered chapter, "Where are we Going to Work", pp.66-104 ex-servicewomen relate their experiences after discharge, including some who had undertaken CRTS courses. While not specifying a particular source for these figures it can be assumed that the source was A.A., MP 1141/1, Victoria, as mentioned in her short bibliography.

³⁴ J. Jackson, in *Smith's Weekly*, 1 September, 1945 as cited in A. Howard, op. cit., p.81.

prevented entry of women into industry. Yet it remains true that man held his position in industry probably because employers recognised that women were unstable by reason of marriage or withdrawal, or by reason of physiological and domestic complications.

The better Social Order [post-war], bringing with it social security, should have a fitting and assured place for women. What is this place? Women should know. Queen Elizabeth, [the Queen Mother] in a broadcast, said that after the war they would be called upon **as** home makers to play a great part in rebuilding family life.³⁵

It is not known how many, if any, of the female students listed by Howard were from Central Queensland, or even the whole of Queensland, but there was certainly a very large discrepancy between males and females accepted for any sort of training by the CRTS. Another factor which might have contributed to the disparity could well have been the number of women who applied, but even so the difference in numbers between ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen who were accepted is very great. There is perhaps a need for a qualitative analysis to be made but that is beyond the scope of the thesis. After all the publicity of the availability of CRTS training for ex-servicewomen, it must have added insult to injury in 1949 to read an article in a local newspaper under the heading ‘Jobs for ex-servicewomen’. The item referred to the statement by the then Prime Minister, Ben Chifley, that ex-servicewomen would be admitted to professional grades of the Public Service so long as they had university degrees, and were not born earlier than 1 January, 1919.³⁶ Nevertheless, despite the social mores of the period of the thesis, women did enter the professions, and throughout Queensland

³⁵ No. author, “Women at Work”, *Australian Army Education Service*, Vol.6, No.3, 9 October, 1944, pp.13-14.

³⁶ *Bundaberg News-Mail*, 17 March 1949, p.5. This was during the time period when married women could not be employed by the Public Service.

successfully established both professional and commercial business enterprises, or were employed as professionals after gaining the necessary qualifications.

Some members of this group of women were doctors employed in private practice, while others were self-employed teachers in either the visual arts or the performing arts. Some were journalists or involved with the reading and writing of literature. Still others managed a small business or were hotel proprietors. Additionally there were women who managed either cattle or agricultural properties. A variety of businesses were registered on the Queensland State Firms Register in the names of women only, Examples of this in Central Queensland are the Bayview Maternity Hospital in Gladstone registered in the names of sisters L.E. Liddicoat, F.M. Liddicoate, and G.I. Liddicoate which, as recorded in Chapter Three, was in operation until 2 June, 1946. The Valley Drapery, also in Gladstone, was registered in the names of G. Hughes, P.G. McIntyre, and D. Wylie who operated this business between 1938-1947 as a family business. A hairdressing business, the Civic Salon in Bundaberg, was registered in the names of sisters, M.P. and E.E. Brougham, between 1959-1962.³⁷ In Rockhampton a firm registered in the name of George & Co. was run by his daughter, as the proprietor was continually on the road hawking.³⁸ Like women in the professions, women in business in Queensland were usually regarded as middle class, although this sometimes depended on the size of the business, and the town in question. In actual fact their social standing in the community was dependent on their

³⁷ Inquiries made in Bundaberg and Gladstone from older residents elicited the information that the proprietors of these firms were women.

³⁸ Interview conducted by G. Johansen with E. George, at Rockhampton, 22 March, 1999.

economic and educational status. The status accorded women in the professions was always middle class.

Medical Profession

Initially the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Queensland attracted very few women. The first of the official ceremonies to inaugurate the faculty took place on 1 October 1936 with the first medical graduates receiving their certificates at a graduation ceremony at the end of 1940. Of the twenty graduates, 18 were men and 2 were women.³⁹ As demonstrated in Table 6.1 there was a marked increase in the number of women practising in the years between 1891 to 1941 indicating the growth of interest by women in this profession in Queensland. It is safe to assume that there would have been increased interest during the war and post-war years, but it does not seem as if the CRTS took this into consideration. Financial considerations no doubt prevented some ex-servicewomen from undertaking tertiary study to obtain a degree in medicine without help from the CRTS.

Table 6.1: Medical Women Practicing in Queensland 1891 - 1941

Year	In Brisbane	Outside Brisbane	Total
1891	1	0	1
1901	2	0	2
1911	9	12	21
1921	5	13	18
1931	17	12	29
1941	19	20	39

Source: J. Pearn, *Health, History and Horizons*, p.241.

³⁹ R. Patrick, *Health and Medicine in Queensland*, St. Lucia, UQP, 1987, p.333.

Table 6.1 supports the notion that economic difficulties prevented the entry of women into the medical profession prior to the Second World War, especially when compared with the numbers of women who graduated into its ranks after the introduction of non-fee paying courses for this profession in 1972. It also exposes attitudes towards women's paid work and a career outside the home. Additionally it points to opposition by male practitioners to women becoming colleagues prior to the 1930s. This is also indicated by the fact that women sought opportunities to practise in areas outside Brisbane. Queensland has always suffered from a shortage of doctors in rural regions because distance and smaller populations limit the experience doctors can gain in their chosen field of expertise.⁴⁰

As shown by Table 6.1 the first woman medical practitioner to practise in Queensland began work in 1891. This was Lilian Cooper who was employed by a male practitioner in South Brisbane. After a disagreement she put up her plate at the Mansions, in George St at the end of that year. Originally she was boycotted by the male members of the profession, and regardless of the fact that the rules of the Queensland Medical Society stated that membership was open to any qualified medical practitioner, her application was not accepted for two years after it was lodged. In 1901 Dr. Eleanor Greenham was registered. She was the first of 22 women in a total of 435 doctors registered in the State between 1901 and 1910. She practised in Brisbane, but others set up practice in Boulia, Jundah, Springsure and Adavale. Adela Williams (later Porter) from Melbourne, registered in 1905

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp.310-336.

went to Muttaborra travelling by train to Longreach and then by Cobb and *Co.* coach over 70 miles, (113 kms), of appalling roads.⁴¹ By 1911, there were more women practicing medicine in country areas than in Brisbane. In Central Queensland the first woman to practice medicine was Dr. Robina McGregor who came from Edinburgh and married the resident surgeon at Peak Downs Hospital, Clermont. She worked at the hospital in an honorary capacity.

Whether students were male or female the medical hierarchical pattern changed little from the 1940s. Dr. Adele Green a student in the Queensland Medical School 1970- 1976 recalls the pomposity of hospital rounds even in those years:

I remember vividly...my initial wonder at the spectacle of a teaching round. The august figure of the Consultant, white-coated, sailing down the ward, accompanied on his right by a Senior Registrar and on his left by the Junior Resident (carrying a load of patient's charts and X-rays), while a suitable distance behind strode the Senior Sister in the ward, perhaps in step with the Hospital Physiotherapist or Social Worker. The rearguard was brought up by us, a draggle of apprehensive students in our white coats.⁴²

During the time frame covered by the thesis women doctors in Queensland were readily accepted as resident medical officers at the Brisbane Hospital, moreover Brisbane Hospital authorities stated that the appointment of women doctors was most satisfactory.⁴³ In view of their wide acceptance in Brisbane it is significant that in Rockhampton in 1940 there was a somewhat different attitude. As stated by D. Carment and F. Killion:

⁴¹ Williams, I., "Two of a Kind", Pearn, J., (Ed.), *Health, History and Horizons*, Brisbane, Dept. of Child Health Publishing Unit, 1992, pp. 239-261.

⁴² Parker, N. (Ed.), *Student Days at the Queensland Medical School*, Tree Publishing, 1988, p. 115.

⁴³ Ibid.

Rockhampton Hospitals Board history was made in August 1940 when it was decided to appoint a woman, Dr. R. Beveridge, as Resident Medical Officer. There was considerable unease among Board members about the appointment. It was only because of the war that it was made at all. One Board member argued that 'public opinion was against woman doctors', but sadly conceded that there was no other choice. Another, just as unhappily, admitted that nothing could be done on account of the shortage of male doctors available.⁴⁴

During an interview conducted on 5 February 1999, a Rockhampton doctor testified that although Dr. Beveridge had left Rockhampton a few years before his arrival, he had been informed that she had been well accepted by patients and her colleagues.⁴⁵ As other female medical practitioners were already practising successfully in Rockhampton at this time, it would seem that there was a certain amount of bias against women in medical practice on the part of the board members.

One of the earliest women doctors working in Rockhampton was Dr. Adah Stuart. She graduated at Sydney University with a medical degree in January 1922, thus continuing in the tradition of her family in their involvement in the practice of medicine. She then returned to Central Queensland and set up in practice at Wowan, some 60 kilometres West of Rockhampton, with a female colleague. When her father retired she returned to Rockhampton where she joined her brother Dr. G.E.N. Stuart in the family practice. After his death she continued on her own in the practice until joined by Dr. E.W. Hasker.

⁴⁴ D. Carment & F. Killion, (Ed.) L. Killion, *A Story of Rockhampton Hospital and those other Institutions Administered by the Rockhampton Hospitals Board 1868-1980*, For the Rockhampton Hospitals Board and the Queensland Dept. Of Health, pp.12-13, Typescript, Undated. Held by CQU Collection, Rockhampton.

⁴⁵ Interview conducted by Grace Johansen with M.G., at Rockhampton, February, 1999.

As stated by her nephew Peter Hasker Adah's partnership with his father lasted from 1936 until her death in 1963 aged 71 years. During this time, the surgery was part of the old family home, *Kooltandra*, a large two-storied house in the middle of Rockhampton. In the early years a large number of staff had been employed, but in her later years Adah did a lot of the housework herself. An old Aboriginal, Jackie Mountcook living in a room above the garage, helped in the garden and did odd jobs.

Peter has also stated that this remarkable woman not only coped with a busy medical practice, but from 1945, after the death of her brother, Simpson, successfully ran a small beef property of 10,000 ha. with the help of an Aboriginal overseer, Hector Rutherford. Hector was illiterate but an excellent cattleman and was well respected in the district. Peter informed me that:

the familiar sight of Adah out in the hot sun on her old horse Jock helping with the mustering, or being spattered with dip while encouraging reluctant beasts through the evil-smelling race are images we and others remember very well⁴⁶

At a time in history when the work of an anaesthetist was not a specialist field in the medical profession, Adah regularly undertook this task for Doctors Hasker and Gordon and possibly others. As Peter wrote she “mostly wore a white uniform dress with sensible brown lace-up shoes and always smelled of ether.” Additionally he states that she was to be seen driving round Rockhampton at all hours of the day and night to make home visits:

in her black Morris Six, peering purposefully ahead and driving in second gear at **30 mph**.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ P. Hasker, Written testimony concerning **Adah** Stuart (His aunt). January, 2001.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Peter also wrote:

...her patients remembered her as a kind and generous doctor, while the family regarded her as someone who concentrated on the important things in life.⁴⁸

This was true of many women in the professions during the period of the thesis and most met the problems which faced them head on and like Adah Stuart treated them as a challenge.

John, an interviewee for the thesis, spoke about Dr. Shirley Shevill another woman doctor in Rockhampton during the period of the thesis⁴⁹. She was the daughter of the Bishop of North Queensland. She graduated in medicine at Sydney University, and began her medical career at Townsville as a senior salaried medical officer. During her time there she became engaged to John Hazlewood, the Anglican Dean of Rockhampton and settled in that city after her marriage. When Dr. Gordon a leading Catholic medical practitioner in Rockhampton became ill he approached Shevill to take over his practice. John said:

she turned that practice into one of the biggest solo practices that existed. My evidence for that is *very* much hearsay, except I know she worked from 6 am until about 11 o'clock at night, including Saturday."

She practised in Rockhampton from 1960 to 1969.

Female doctors were also well accepted in Bundaberg. A former medical practitioner testified that she joined a two doctor practice there in 1954. She then went out on her own in 1961 and practised as a General Practitioner, mostly on

⁴⁸ **Ibid.**

⁴⁹ Interview conducted by G. Johansen with J.L. at Rockhampton 24 March, 1999.

⁵⁰ **Ibid.**

her own, until she retired in 1997. **As** a woman she found that many women came to her to be confined for the birth of their children, and at one stage at the peak of her career she attended the birth of two hundred babies a year. With regard to the acceptance of women doctors she testified that:

up to 1945 which was the conclusion of the war women were valued in hospital appointments and in the community as locums. I actually ~~was~~ a Flight-Lieutenant in the Air Force but each time I was called up they would say I was of more use in the community so I never saw any service in the Air Force. We did come into our own. I'm sure that I wouldn't have had the experience that I did have if the men hadn't been away in the armed forces. When they came back they did refresher courses...I did three years at Sydney Hospital in the various registrar jobs. I could have gone on there but I thought I needed to widen my experience so I then went and did a year at Crown Street Women's Hospital in obstetrics and I was there hardly any time at all when they made me senior registrar. Then I did a three month stretch at the Children's Hospital to fill in for another doctor. When the men did come back from the Services a lot of them took over their old positions again....I wanted to go out and do locums. I still found plenty of work to do."

When questioned as to whether she found any discrimination against her because she was a woman she replied that in 1947 she had applied for a position in Maternal and Child Welfare in Brisbane. She said that despite the fact that she had the qualifications and the experience plus other advantages the appointment was given to a man. She thought that because it was maternal and child welfare that "seemed to be rather ridiculous because a woman would have been much better". A Dr. Pam Donnelly had been employed at the hospital, but Jean had been the first woman in private practice in Bundaberg. She said:

⁵¹ Interview conducted by Grace Johansen with J.P. at Bundaberg, 14 May, 1998.

The women greeted me with open arms and [also], strangely enough older men. They would come to me with problems that you'd think they wanted a man for. I didn't seem to have any discrimination by other doctors, they were most helpful in fact and the man who was employing me was of course most helpful. When I went out on my own I can't say I found any discrimination then at all.⁵²

Like two other women doctors elsewhere in Queensland, Drs. Ellen Mary Kent Hughes and Vonda Youngman, Jean was interested in community affairs and stood as a candidate for the Bundaberg Council in the mid 1960s. Unlike Ellen and Vonda who became very active in local affairs and were highly respected, Jean said this was the one time she really felt discriminated against because she was a woman. She said the Councillor who nominated her was severely castigated by the Mayor who said he didn't want "a bloody woman" on his Council. The rule was that if a Councillor retired or died the candidate with the next highest vote should take his/her place. On this occasion that candidate was Jean, but instead of allocating the vacancy to her, a man with a lower vote was installed as Councillor. Jean said, "I don't know how they got away with it but they did".⁵³

As this instance of bureaucratic determinism demonstrates, women who stepped "out of their place" were seen to be a threat to the status quo. In this case the production and marketing of sugar, had led to the establishment of the new port at Bundaberg, resulting in an increase in secondary industry. This brought about an approximate doubling of the population from 15 000 in 1945 to 27 000 in 1967.⁵⁴ It is not surprising therefore, that deservedly or not, the Mayor and his Councillors took credit for the increased prosperity of Bundaberg. Given the role

⁵² **Ibid.**

⁵³ **Ibid.** Research failed to provide further information on this matter.

⁵⁴ Nolan, J.G., *Bunduberg History and People*, St. Lucia, UQP, 1978, pp.224-225.

men played in public life, as opposed to the role of women in the 1940s and 1950s, the assumption can be made that these events accounted for the stand taken by the Council that a woman councillor might challenge their position. It provides a good example of an exercise in state power by the hegemony of the ruling bourgeoisie in the maintenance of the then existing social structure which supported the concept of male control in the public sphere..

It can also be assumed that although there were other factors involved that governmental and semi-governmental power based bureaucratic philosophy, could well have been the deciding element in denying ex-servicewomen access to training in the professions through the CRTS. In both instances the theory propounded by Donzelot that the known social system allowed life to go on without upsetting the status quo of male control by introducing “politico-moral uncertainties” into the existing system of social relationships, applies. The admission of a woman into the all-male Council, and encouragement to women to participate in the professions and the business world, through training paid for by governmental agencies would, as stated by Smart, have produced significant changes in social relationships.⁵⁵

Dentistry

In 1937, Hanlon, the then Queensland Secretary for Health and Home Affairs, stated that, “the creation of dental clinics where people, who cannot afford to pay a private practitioner...is part and parcel of the Government’s hospital policy”.⁵⁶ At that time dental clinics were established in Rockhampton and Gladstone

⁵⁵ B. Smart, *op. cit.*, pp.120-121

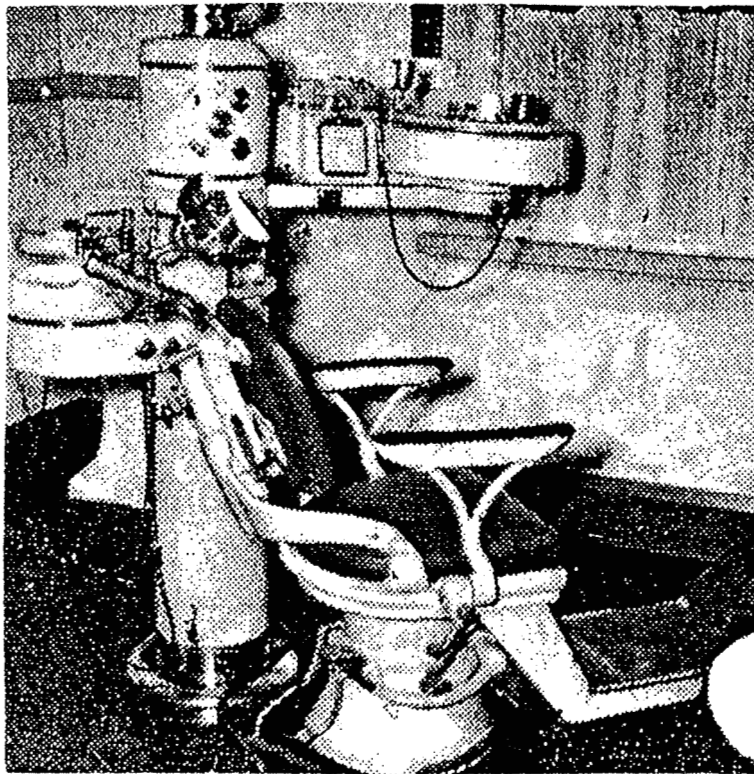
⁵⁶ Hanlon as cited in R. Patrick, *op cit*, p. 166.

followed by a clinic at Bundaberg in 1945. In the immediate post-war years in Queensland numbers of dental students increased with first year under graduates numbering over one hundred in 1947. Thirty-nine of these were ex-servicemen. As was the case in the medical faculty, there is no available evidence to show that ex-servicewomen were registered at the University of Queensland (UQ) to study dentistry under the CRTS scheme.⁵⁷ In 1967 Margaret was employed by a dentist in private practice in Rockhampton for a short period before returning to England where she had been practising previously.

Margaret said she and other females were regarded as "almost a freak" while studying at University in Queensland in the early 1960s. In her first job in Tasmania, although she was accepted, she said she was regarded as a sort of oddity. In Rockhampton she was readily accepted by patients although if it was necessary to extract a tooth, men in particular, would sometimes ask if she would do it, or would she have to ask her male colleague to do the extraction. She said they seemed to perceive this work as being difficult and therefore a job for a man. Margaret also commented that if there was a difficult child patient in the waiting room she knew that she would probably have to attend to it. It seemed that because she was a woman it was perceived that it was more in her line of expertise. Margaret remarked that in England, where there were many more female dentists, they were accepted as a matter of course.

⁵⁷ R. Patrick, *op cit.* p.306.

Illustration 6.1: Dental Chair in use during Mid Twentieth Century.



Source: Courtesy Rockhampton and District Historical Society

She said that she got on well with her male colleagues in Rockhampton but soon found that she was an embarrassment to them. When she started her job in Rockhampton she decided the right thing to do was to join the Dental Association. The problem was that in Rockhampton the Association held their meetings at the Rockhampton Club, an all male establishment. It seemed her colleagues did not quite know what to do about it:

To solve the problem one of the members met me on the footpath outside the Club. I was then made aware of the situation and asked to close my eyes, and told that I “must not peek”, and I was then led into the meeting room. The same procedure had to be followed at the conclusion of the meeting. I did as I was asked but although I can laugh now, at the time I was quietly seething. That was the first and last meeting I ever attended.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Interview conducted by Grace Johansen with M.A. at Rockhampton, 22 March, 1999.

Margaret was not the first woman to have practised dentistry in Rockhampton. Miss Huet, was the daughter of a travelling dentist whom she assisted until his death in 1901. She then continued practice in Rockhampton with her brother until 1908 thus becoming Rockhampton's first lady dentist. Mrs. F. Kerr and Miss Johnson also practiced dentistry in Rockhampton in the early years of the twentieth century.⁵⁹

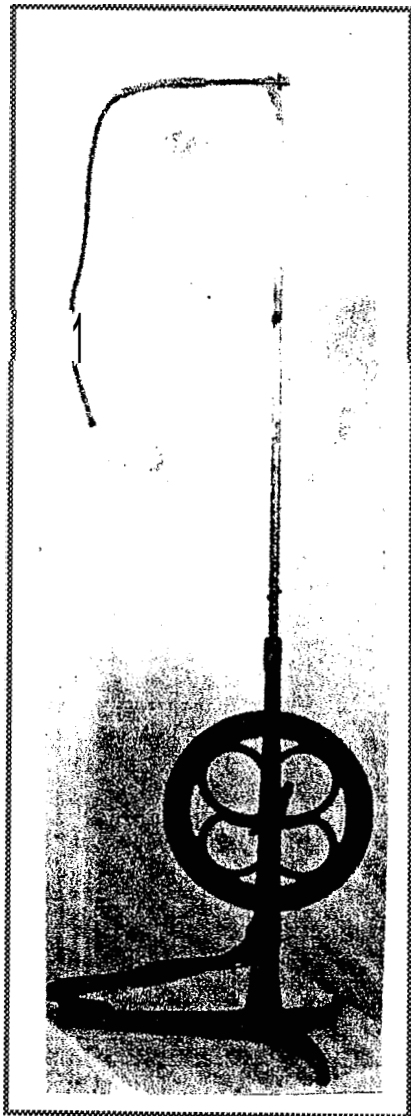


Illustration 6.2: Type of Drill Used by Earlier Women Dentists.

Source: Courtesy Gladstone Art Gallery and Museum

⁵⁹ L. McDonald, *Rockhampton: A history of city and district*, Rockhampton City Council, 1995, p.368.

Not only was there a small, but significant increase, in the number of women seeking careers in the medical and dentistry spheres throughout the period of the thesis, some also sought employment as pharmacists.

Pharmacy

Disputes concerning the standard of education required to qualify for the final examination in Pharmacy led to the commencement of classes at the Central Technical College in Brisbane in 1936. It was at this time that pharmacy was changing from a discipline based on botany and inorganic chemistry to one of new synthetic compounds.⁶⁰ Country students, including those from Central Queensland were able to avail themselves of a correspondence course. Later this was changed so that students were apprenticed for three years and then had to attend College during the next year to qualify. However once the three years apprenticeship was served a student was qualified to be a pharmacist's assistant.

Margaret worked as a Pharmacist's Assistant at Rockhampton during part of the 1940-1965 period. She said that in those days it was not just a matter of taking a bottle of medicine, or packet of tablets down from a shelf. All prescriptions had to be dispensed. As an assistant pharmacist she was permitted to do this, but before the medication was given to the client it had to be checked by the qualified pharmacist. At that time people did not visit a doctor as readily as they do in the 1990s. If they were hurt or sick the first "port of call" was usually the chemist. Margaret said she was often asked to give people advice on a possible course of treatment. She said that frequently it was necessary to advise people to see a

⁶⁰ R. Patrick, *op. cit.*, p.273.

doctor. If they were really in needy circumstances and could not afford to pay for an expensive medication, she said the doctor concerned would sometimes tell the chemist to charge it to his account.⁶¹ This was often the case as the lack of pension payments for invalids and the elderly made it difficult for them to meet the costs of medicine. Little was known of this caring gesture by doctors as the patient was often merely told by the pharmacist that there was no charge for the medication.

Rockhampton pharmacists of the period often found themselves working against the clock. One of the busiest times was when parents from country areas would bring their children into town after holidays to return them to school. While they were in town they would, if necessary, visit the doctor and leave the prescription to be made up while they did some shopping, or some other business. On other occasions country clients would phone for repeat prescriptions to be made up and sent out. In these cases prescriptions not only had to be made up, they had to be taken to the rail head:

they then had to go on a mail service. Of course if you missed their weekly mail service they then had to wait until the following week for their supplies.⁶²

This also occurred at other regional towns and cities throughout Queensland, but was something Brisbane pharmacists did not generally have to deal with particularly those in the inner city areas.

⁶¹ Interview conducted by Grace Johansen with M.H. at Rockhampton, 24 March, 1999.

⁶² Ibid.

Sister Kenny

The story of Sister Kenny and her work for poliomyelitis sufferers has been well documented, but as this section of the thesis would not be complete without some mention of this controversial woman's methods, a short resume is called for. Her original success in the treatment of poliomyelitis patients took place in the Clifton district on the Darling Downs in Southern Queensland. She discarded the essential feature of the use of splints and callipers in the orthodox treatment, which immobilised the paralysed parts. Her prescribed treatment consisted mostly of the use of hot packs, and muscle re-education. These therapeutic methods were the foundation of modern physiotherapy practice. She was granted the opportunity to demonstrate her methods in Brisbane, but as stated by Patrick, "this was the beginning of a controversy which lasted many years".⁶³

Patrick asserts that in 1938 her methods were denounced by Queensland doctors, and although the next year she was given a ward at the Brisbane General Hospital she was almost totally ignored. However in 1939 the Sister Kenny Wing of the Rockhampton Base Hospital, erected especially for the practice of her therapeutic methods began operation.⁶⁴ She later went to the United States of America where the Kenny Institute was established at Minneapolis. She became a national heroine and received many honours. Meanwhile in Queensland the controversy raged on until the Queensland government in 1947 recommended that treatment based on the Kenny method should be used in the early stages of the disease.⁶⁵

⁶³ R. Patrick, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

⁶⁴ The Sister Kenny wing of the Rockhampton General Hospital was demolished in 1998 by the then Queensland State Government to make way for a car park.

⁶⁵ R. Patrick, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

Local Government

In Gladstone two women stand out in the 1950s and 1960s as leaders in the changing role of women at this time. Mrs. Julia Hinds, as previously mentioned, in Chapter Three became the first woman to be elected to the Port Curtis Dairy Board and to stand for the Country Party in the electorate of Port Curtis. Alderman Byrne became the first woman alderman to be elected to the Gladstone Town Council. In 1949 she was responsible for the adoption of the hibiscus as the floral emblem of Gladstone.⁶⁶ Right throughout Queensland in both city and regional electorates, women were entering public life by seeking, and often gaining election to local government councils. In Rockhampton women to be elected to the city council were Alderman Isabell Donnollan who was the first female Councillor after her election in 1955 and retired at the end of her first term in 1958; in 1961 Alderman Mary Bradford was elected, she too retired after only one term. In 1970 Alderman Mabel Edmund was elected to the Livingstone Shire Council. Additionally she was an elected member of the Aboriginal and Islander Commission. Alderman Braham Gray, widow of former Member for Capricornia, George Gray, was first elected in 1973 and served three terms, retiring in 1981.⁶⁷ Except for the last two years of Alderman Gray's last term all three female aldermen were elected during Rex Pilbeam's consecutive terms as Mayor of Rockhampton from 1951 to 1979. Gray remarked that they had to be capable of some endurance, as although under Pilbeam's leadership Rockhampton made significant advances, he had very decided views on women's place in society. In the *New Idea* in 1980, soon after his retirement he is reported as saying:

⁶⁶ L. McDonald, (2), *Gladstone: City that Waited*, Brisbane, Boolarong, 1988, p.406.

⁶⁷ L. McDonald, (1), *op. cit.*, p.136.

People say that I hate women but I don't. The best person in the world is a woman who stays home and brings **up** her children. Here in my chambers, we don't employ married women. That way, we not **only** keep the family together but we keep the rates down because kids will work **for** half the wages.⁶⁸

Illustration 6.3: Councillor B. Gray seated next to Mayor Rex Pilbeam.



Source: Courtesy Rockhampton Municipal Library

As the thesis shows, this is a typical example of the outlook of the male bureaucrats towards women throughout the 1940 - 1965 period. As pointed out by Joy Damousi World War One had strengthened bi-polar notions of male and female in which masculinity was presented in “terms of heroism and violent aggression, and femininity as motherhood, maternity and sacrifice”.⁶⁹

This definition of gender was reinforced after World War Two when increased numbers of women entered the work force under conditions which supported male dominance in the work place. In the euphoria created by war's end this

⁶⁸ S.Hogan, “The cavalier mayor likes women - as stay-at-homes” in *New Idea*, 5 January, 1980, p.23.

⁶⁹ J. Damousi, “Marching to Different Drums: Women's Mobilisations 1914-1939”, K. Saunders and R. Evans (Eds.), *Gender Relations in Australia*, Marrackville, Harcourt

philosophy was carried through into the reconstruction years. It was not surprising therefore that notions of male supremacy in the public sphere continued throughout the period of the thesis and beyond. Nor is it to be wondered at that in regional Queensland, especially in small communities isolated from experience of strengthening awareness among women of their potential in cities throughout Australia, that a male authoritarian power play persisted.

Businesswomen: Aviation

In the business world of Central Queensland, another woman to step out from women's traditional role, Camel Piccolo undertook what must have been considered to be, in the small town of Gladstone in 1960, the most extraordinary step of learning to fly. After taking part in the American Powder Puff Derby in 1967, she became a flying instructor in 1968 for the Gladstone Flying Service. Piccolo then established herself as an independent business woman when she began her own air charter service in 1971.⁷⁰ By 1960 flying had become widely accepted as an important means of travel. Nevertheless, when consideration is given to the fact that very few women drove cars, and very few entered public life in the 1930s, it becomes apparent that changes wrought by events during World War Two not only had a substantial effect on the division of labour based on gender, it also provided women with the incentive to take up careers of an unconventional nature. Thus their social standing began to be seen independently from that of their husbands,

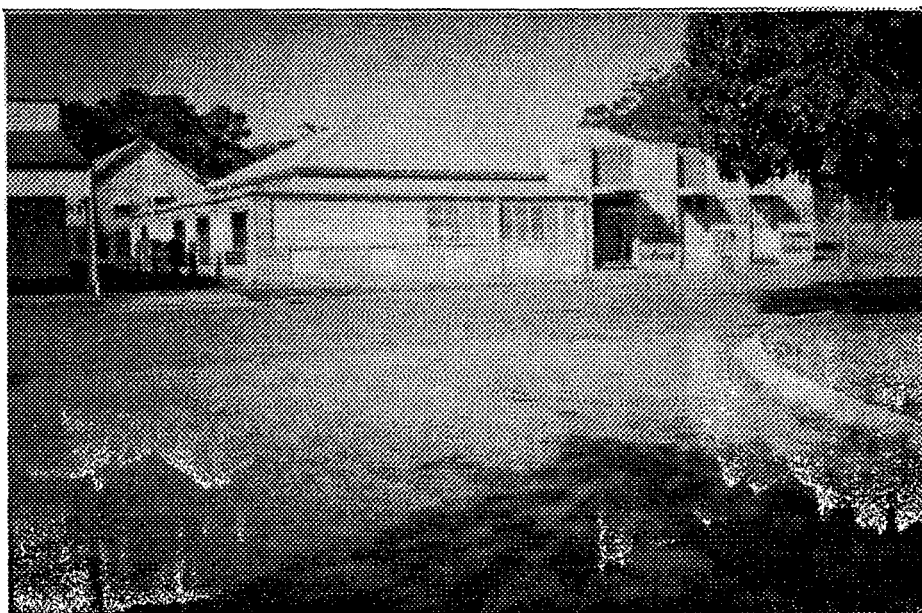
⁷⁰ L. McDonald, (2), *op.cit.*, p.398

Hotel Proprietors and Retail Outlets

The business world also became a way of life for Roseanne in the 1940s when she became the proprietor of an hotel at Mt. Larcom, a few kilometres North of Gladstone. However she was not the first to manage a hotel in Central Queensland. In the days of Cobb & Co. coaches **Mrs.** Sullivan ran the Great Western Hotel, at Boulia known locally as the “Forty Mile”. During her time at Boulia Mrs. Sullivan bore fourteen children, ten of whom were still-born. Her grand-daughter Edie testified that her grandmother had no help from her husband, who was an alcoholic, and spent most of his time “out in the scrub”. Prior to the Married Women’s Property Act of **1891**, he had to be brought in every year to sign the licensee papers.⁷¹ Edie told how at one time Mrs. Sullivan set off to walk from Winton to Boulia, a distance of some forty miles, approximately sixty kilometres, as she had to attend to an urgent business matter and no transport was available. Mt. Larcom was not so isolated as Boulia and by 1947, although it was still a big undertaking, conditions for hotel proprietors were not so onerous.

⁷¹ Interview conducted by Grace Johansen with E.J. 14 August, 1993.

Illustration 6.4: Mt. Larcom Hotel owned and operated by R. Coughlan 1947-



Spource: Author's Personal Collection

Roseanne said when she arrived at Mt. Larcom it was much bigger than it was when she was interviewed in 1998.⁷² She testified that peanuts were grown extensively in the area, and as there were no peanut threshing machines they had to be threshed by hand. Married couples would take out a contract to work so many acres. Some of the contractors were townspeople but others came in from outside, and required accommodation. Roseanne testified that at the time she took over the licence for the hotel, women's wages for hotel work would only have been 2 pounds three shillings per week, although a barman got better wages. She pointed out that consequently it was very hard to get staff, as not only were hotel wages low, but there was very little other employment for women at Mt. Larcom, with the result that many left and sought work in larger towns and cities. Roseanne supplied meals for the hotel lodgers and testified that they would get:

⁷² Interview conducted by Grace Johansen with R.C. at Mt. Larcom on 10 August, 1998.

A three course dinner at night, **cooked** breakfasts and we used to cut lunches for the men going to **work**. They would get sandwiches and some sweets and fruit,..When I first came here meals would have **only** been half a crown [two shillings and sixpence 25 cents].By **1965** the price would have risen to three to four pounds [\$6-8].⁷³

Not only did the needs of the lodgers require attention, there was also the bar work. There were numerous instances of women managing hotels during the war, but not many were involved post-war. Roseanne said she had always been treated with respect in the bar, and attributed this to the belief that “people don’t change much in country places”. She said she believed that people treated you as you treated them.

Retail Business Women

This was also the opinion of Ethel who with her husband were the proprietors of a number of retail businesses in Rockhampton. After finishing secondary school at the Range Convent she started work at Stewarts, a large retailing store, working her way up from a junior employee to a senior position working with the credit ledgers.⁷⁴ She testified that her husband opened up his own drapery business in 1948, and that at a later date, sometime after their marriage, they purchased other shops in the vicinity, including a saddlery which was an important adjunct to their mail order business. Additionally there were three dress shops in Rockhampton, and a general draper’s at Bundaberg.

Ethel testified that they catered for everyone but particularly the country people. When they came in it was more like one-stop shopping as they could get everything they needed at George’s and then they’d go to Allenstown and get

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Interview conducted by Grace Johansen with E.G. at Rockhampton on 22 March, 1999.

their groceries. They also had a very big mail order business and despatched orders to Winton, Longreach and all the towns in the West. The dress shops owned by this couple were staffed, but Ethel would call in to supervise and would then do the ordering. She also testified that her husband's father was a hawker and travelled between Gladstone and Mackay. This business started in 1899 using horse drawn transport. Later he opened a shop in Rockhampton which was run by his daughter Hilda, now deceased, while he continued in the hawking business. As was usual at the time neither of these women were part owners in the businesses, but because of the structure of the operations they had a large say in day to day management. Indeed after the death of her husband Ethel took over the reins completely.⁷⁵ Other women also had retail businesses during the period of the thesis, but although in the main women had no place as journalists in the male world of the print media in regional Queensland there were a few, and a number of women were newspaper proprietors.

Journalism

Women's main chance of serious reporting as journalists was with women's magazines, which on the whole, followed government policy on the role of women in society, and were owned by male corporations. These early women reporters therefore had no option except to follow the line laid down by the publishers. However, Dorothy Drain who was well known for her work for the *Australian Women's Weekly* came from Mount Morgan, Not only did she run a weekly column from 1947-1963, become reporter and sub-editor 1938-1958, news editor 1958-1972 and editor 1972-1975 when she retired, she was a

⁷⁵ **Ibid.**

reporter for the women's pages for the *Daily Mail* Brisbane, the *Telegraph* Brisbane, the *Sun* Sydney and the *Daily Telegraph* Sydney 1930-1938.⁷⁶ This was quite an accomplishment for a woman journalist at that time, but it was only achieved by moving to the city.

As in other Queensland towns Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin* employed only male reporters, except for one woman to report on social events. Faith testified that what happened was that people would contact her and give her details of social events. She would then write an item for her column which was published weekly. She said that everybody used to read the columns as they were of interest to everyone. When asked during the interview if many people had applied for the job she replied that it had never been advertised. She said:

The editor knew me as I attended most social functions in the town. I also used to arrange social evenings to raise money for the [Church of England] cathedral. I was well known in the town and I could write good English so he offered me the job.⁷⁷

Another Rockhampton born woman, Margaret Gibson, had a much more successful career as a journalist. Between 1926 and 1937 her mother had made a home for herself and two children in Emerald, west of Rockhampton. There for some years she had supplemented her income as a freelance journalist reporting for the Australian Broadcasting Commission, *North Queensland Regzster*, *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin*, *Brisbane Courier Mail* and *Brisbane Telegraph*. In 1937 she persuaded some of the local businessmen to become shareholders with her in the purchase of the *Leichhardt Weekly* and renamed the paper the

⁷⁶ A. Lofthouse, *Who's Who of Australian Women*, North Ryde, Methuen, 1982.

⁷⁷ Interview with F.W. at Rockhampton on 22 March, 1999.

Although Gibson had done some work for the newspaper prior to 1963, it was not until then when her mother became ill, that she took over the running of the paper. In 1983 the paper was sold to Provincial Newspapers of Queensland but the Gibsons remained shareholders until PNQ was forced to sell out to the O'Reilly interests in 1987. Margaret became very involved in community affairs in Emerald. She became the first woman to be a member of the Emerald Shire Council and served from 1970 to 1979. As a member of Council she served on various committees including the Students Hostel Committee of which she was chairman. As Deputy Chairman of the Emerald Shire Council from 1973 to 1976 she represented the Shire at regional and State Government conferences. Through her love of the Arts she initiated, and was involved in a number of organisations such as the Emerald Arts Council Committee and was foundation president of the Emerald Pioneer Cottage.⁷⁹ Margaret was the first woman to be elected President and a life member of the Queensland Country Press Association in 1978/79. She was also awarded an **MBE** for community service on the New Year's honours list of 1980.

In Central Queensland another woman who took over the responsibility of running a newspaper was Margaret Macfarlan at Gladstone. She "took control

⁷⁸ A. Shannon, *Twentieth Century Profiles*, Vol. 111, Bowen Hills, Boolarong, 1993, pp.228-229.

⁷⁹ Ibid, pp.232-234.

of the *Gladstone Observer* in 1947 after the death of her husband and editor Colin Macfarlan.”⁸⁰ It was reported in the special edition of the *Gladstone Observer* to celebrate 130 years of publication, that Mrs. Macfarlan recalled during an interview, that during the war years they were left with a skeleton staff to get the paper out twice weekly. Paper shortages exacerbated the problems. She is reported as saying that post-war years were not much better, when because of staff shortages, the newspaper had to rely heavily on country contributors, and that:

“It was a tough period - you couldn’t do things you wanted to do, Mrs. Macfarlan said. “It took a long time for materials to come back on the market and it was a big struggle without the staff. “There were times you sat down and pondered how long you could carry on.”⁸¹

In 1959 Mrs. Macfarlan’s daughter Carmel and son-in-law Colin joined her as partners in the newspaper firm. According to McDonald, at this time the paper had a staff of eight, but with the growth of the town during the 1960s, brought about by the establishment of Queensland Alumina Limited, the staff had increased to twenty-two by 1969. This included four professional journalists. In that year it was sold to Rupert Murdoch’s *News Limited*.⁸² McDonald went on to say that Mrs. Macfarlan gave much time to youth organisations and the Gladstone Show Society. She also served on the hospital board and the fire brigade board. As proprietor of the newspaper she supported Gladstone’s interests believing that big industry was needed to provide the impetus for the development of the port of Gladstone.⁸³ Mrs. Macfarlan retired in 1968 and like Margaret Gibson was awarded an **MBE** in 1970. She died in Gladstone Hospital in 1997, aged 93.

⁸⁰ *The Observer’s 130th Birthday* edition, 16 July, 1998, p.27.

⁸¹ M. Macfarlan cited in *The Observer’s 130th Birthday* edition, 16 July, 1998, p.27.

⁸² L. McDonald, (2) *Gladstone: City that Waited*, Bowen Hills, Boolarong, 1988, p.399.

⁸³ *Ibid*, pp 399-400.

These two women were amongst the very few in Queensland who ran newspapers. Their involvement in community affairs demonstrates the difference in reporting practices between the large state and local print media, and maintaining local readership.

It can be concluded, that despite all the government rhetoric that the CRTS would provide equal training opportunities for ex-servicewomen and ex-servicemen, the evidence indicates that it was just so much hyperbole as far as tertiary education for ex-servicewomen was concerned. As the random, but extensive search of records held by the University of Queensland supported by other evidence shows, it appears that not one ex-servicewoman received tertiary training at that institution through CRTS. Moreover the disparity in numbers between men and women Australia wide who did obtain further education through the scheme, supports the notion that ex-servicewomen were not given the same chances as ex-servicemen in Queensland. At best these women were given very little encouragement to participate, and at worst that there was never any intention that they would be eligible to undertake tertiary study especially in the medical professions.

Despite social and economic difficulties associated with the entry of women into the professional and business world, the thesis has demonstrated that between 1940 and 1965 there was a prevailing social attitude of acceptance of women colleagues, in business and professional practice by their male counterparts. This attitude extended to the general public both in Brisbane and regional Queensland, notwithstanding the dictum that women would return to being housewives and

mothers at the cessation of hostilities at the end of the Second World War. Thus when the period of the thesis is over-viewed there can be little doubt that invasion by women into fields of male expertise during that conflict, albeit by the system of state control, changed attitudes towards gender social divisions in all but the most conservative elements of society.

