History of Roy Morgan’s family and Roy Morgan Research

Enclosed is a copy of my book *Women, the Media, and People from Other Countries who have made Victoria – 1851 to Today*. My book outlines from 1852, nearly 160 years ago, how my family has been involved in Victorian newspapers and media.

On January 3, 1838 John Pascoe Fawkner published *The Melbourne Advertiser*, Victoria’s first newspaper which was hand written. (See Page 27)

From 1838 to 1845 Fawkner printed and published the *Port Phillip Patriot*, a few doors west of our office at 401 Collins. The *Port Phillip Herald* was founded by George Cavenagh on January 3, 1840.

In 1852 William Williams (my great grandfather) aged 21 began work as a printer with George Cavenagh at *The Melbourne Morning Herald*. On October 28, 1853 William Williams with George Heath and Henry Howell printed and published *The Diggers’ Advocate* with Editor G. E. Thompson. On February 24, 1854 the paper changed to *The Gold Diggers’ Advocate and Commercial Advertiser* and was published and edited by George Black initially with contributions from John Pascoe Fawkner and H. R. Nicholls and later in 1854, Ebenezer Syme – both papers were the ‘voice of the gold diggers’ before Eureka – December 3, 1854!

In 1856 both Samuel Winter and Alfred Massina (first cousin of my great great grandmother) began their newspaper ‘lives’ apprenticed to W. H. Williams. (Massina had changed his name from Masséna - a prominent Napoleonic family from Nice).

Many of Victoria’s early newspapers, magazines and journals were printed and published by William Williams and Alfred Massina. With Ebenezer Syme, David Syme and George Syme (*The Age*) they were the radical publishers of nineteenth century Victoria – before the 1890 land boom crash!

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[1] George Cavenagh, founder of the *Port Phillip Herald*, and was nine times President of the Melbourne Cricket Club.
In 1856 W. H. Williams printed and with George Slater published from John Batman’s diary *The Settlement of John Batman in Port Phillip* and Daniel Bunce’s first Victorian book on *The Language of the Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria*[^2]. (Enclosed is a copy)

In 1857 Williams printed and published *The Collingwood and Richmond Observer – A Social, Political and Literary Journal*. In 1866 Williams published Marcus Clarke’s first writings under the *nom de plume* of ‘Mark Scrivener’ and in 1869 Massina commissioned Marcus Clarke 100 pounds to visit Tasmania and write the Australian classic *His Natural Life* which was serialised in *The Australian Journal* from March 1970 to June 1872. (After Adam Lindsay Gordon committed suicide on June 24, 1870 Alfred Massina bought and published many of Gordon’s works.)

For more than 40 years Williams, Massina and Winter worked together; and in 1901 Alfred Massina as Chairman, established The Herald and Weekly Times Limited publishing 50,000 copies of *The Herald* a day. Samuel Winter was Managing Editor, other Directors were [Theodore Fink](See pages 104 - 113) and [William L. Baillieu](See Historic Look at Australia’s Top 20 Business People (and one American!)) In 1922 Fink and Baillieu appointed [Keith Murdoch](Editor-in-Chief of The Herald and Weekly Times publications, *The Herald’s* circulation was 105,000; when Murdoch died on October 5, 1952 *The Herald’s* circulation was 415,000.

Today, The Herald and Weekly Times Ltd each morning publishes the Melbourne *Herald Sun*, it is Australia’s largest selling daily newspaper with a Roy Morgan readership estimate to September 2011 of 1,300,000 and circulation of 481,573.

Roy Morgan left Melbourne Grammar in 1925 and by May 1928 was presented the Commonwealth Accountants Students Society’s Trophy. On January 21, 1929 Roy Morgan became licensed to act as an Auditor for Companies, and on May 15, 1934 a Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

While initially specialising in insolvency, Roy Morgan was soon working at J. B. Were for Staniforth Ricketson as a public company financial analyst (his early J.B.Were reports are now held at The University of Melbourne).

From November 1934 to April 22, 1940 Roy Morgan was the ‘Reviewer of balance sheets’ for The Stock Exchange of Melbourne *Official Record*. In addition, from July 1934 to October 1936, Roy Morgan was employed by *The Argus* as a contributor in the highly “specialised and exacting work of analysing accounts of public companies for publication in the Financial page”.

At the request of Sir Keith Murdoch, Roy Morgan, in 1936, began at the Melbourne *Herald* as a freelance financial writer while at the same time still reviewing balance sheets for the Stock Exchange of Melbourne. On April 1, 1940 Roy Morgan was employed at The Herald and Weekly Times by Sir Keith Murdoch – a contract term being “The usual service conditions as to inability to perform duties – disobedience, insanity etc – still apply”.

[^2]: Daniel Bunce was married to John Batman’s youngest daughter, Pelomena
Roy Morgan was soon on his way to the USA to learn public opinion polling and media research with Dr George Gallup (Gallup was Research Director of Young & Rubicam in New York while operating the American Institute of Public Opinion in Princeton, NJ).

Roy Morgan worked closely with Sir Keith Murdoch for more than 16 years covering finance (from 1936 Roy Morgan was responsible for many public companies releasing their financial results in the morning so they could be published in the first edition of the afternoon Herald, rather than the morning daily newspapers), public opinion polling (Australian Gallup Poll) and media research. In September 1941, Roy Morgan conducted his first ‘Reader Interest Survey’ for The Sydney Sun.

You’ll see included in my book are many Roy Morgan Gallup Polls including my father’s first Gallup Poll conducted in September 1941 on ‘equal pay for men and women’ (See Page 59). Pages 92-97 show ‘sectional readership’ results from a Melbourne Sun survey commissioned in 1946 by Sir Keith Murdoch. Shown on each page is the readership estimates of specific Sun articles – “Plot to kill MacArthur” was read by 100% of readers while The Sun Women’s Magazine was read by 84% of women readers and 46% of men readers. (In 1942, General MacArthur had his office on the 7th floor of 401 Collins St!)

In 1947 Roy Morgan was commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation to survey senior government officials in many Asian countries on their attitudes and feelings regarding establishing closer ties with the US Government – it was Roy Morgan’s first multi country survey.

I think it is timely to quote my father just before he died in 1985. He was asked why measuring public opinion was important. His answer, which I agree with, was in three parts as follows:

Firstly, "To stop journalists from claiming to be able to write ‘The public demands, etc.,’ when they don't know what public opinion is on that particular subject.

Secondly, to identify the real question - the central ‘core’ of a problem. "This forces people to face the problem. Public opinion polls not only do this, but also make sure that (by publication) the public and journalists know the problem and the public’s attitudes towards the issue (as percentages). This forces our leaders and the public to recognise the real problem and hopefully consider it."

Thirdly, "Publishing several times a year reasonably accurate percentages for voting intention. This created a continuous ‘election atmosphere’, rather than a phony atmosphere created by so called ‘leaders’ and journalists."

Today, politicians need to ask themselves whether they can blindly accept public opinion on complex matters or whether they should follow the advice of former Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies who, in his second Dunrossil Memorial Lecture on March 12, 1968, spoke at length about public opinion polls (see insert below). He made the following pertinent point:

"A political leader inevitably reads the published polls. He will learn much from them. But he is no leader if he is persuaded by them to follow a course which he would otherwise not approve. He will do better on appropriate occasions to say - ‘Here is a popular error; I must do my best to correct it!’ "
And Sir Robert Menzies, in a letter to my father of April 4, 1968, said: "Nobody knows better than I do that the endemic disease in politics is fear of public opinion."

Even worse than public opinion driven leadership is the mischievous and dishonest use of public opinion polling (or survey data) as a means of influencing public opinion – as a propaganda mechanism – either push polling or publishing dubious poll results to try and re-set the political agenda!

Unfortunately Australia today is not free from such trickery and abuse.

"We live in a world of mass-movements, in which public-opinion polls are for so many a quick and easy way of finding out what other people think, and therefore, for the sake of conformity, how they should think. Public opinion polls disturb me greatly; not because I question their accuracy or their integrity, but because of their inherent limitations. The appeal is from Philip Sober to Philip Drunk; from individual judgment and responsibility essential to civilisation, to superficial mass judgment; to finding out ‘what people want’.

I have an old-fashioned lawyer’s prejudice in favour of ascertaining the facts before pronouncing the judgment, and therefore pay little attention to kerbstone opinions.

A political leader inevitably reads the published polls. He will learn much from them. But he is no leader if he is persuaded by them to follow a course which he would otherwise not approve. He will do better on appropriate occasions to say - 'Here is a popular error; I must do my best to correct it!'

The danger to which I have referred, of the overwhelming of individual judgment by mass opinion, is one which tends to be increased in the new age of the computer. The quick and accurate mathematical machine threatens to become a sort of ‘witch-doctor’.

The human brain and the human spirit are still the creative elements without which true human progress will be arrested."

Sir Robert Menzies, Dunrossil Lecture, March 12, 1968

My brother, Geoffrey, was born in Princeton while my father was working in the USA with Dr Gallup; I was born in Melbourne on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1941 in the USA (in Australia December 8, 1941) – given middle name Cordell – after the then USA Secretary of State, Cordell Hull.

After 12 years at Melbourne Grammar (1948-1959) I finished my schooling without a prize – I had done better at Preshil (1944-1947) where you were expected to leave with ‘no’ reading, writing or social skills – I am told still lacking today – however at Preshil we learned not to lie, resulting in being caned once a week for a full term at Melbourne Grammar - I still don’t know why!

My brother (Geoffrey Lloyd Morgan, 1940-2007) did slightly better than I did at Melbourne Grammar – in 1947 he was awarded the Divinity Prize – leaving in 1957 for a course in “cards and gambling” at the University of Melbourne – eventually Geoffrey ‘worked’ as a financial journalist at The Herald, then The Age and finally as an ‘A-grade’ journalist with The Australian Financial Review. Just before being diagnosed in 1977 with multiple sclerosis, Geoffrey established Morgan’s Australian Mining & Oil News and Morgan’s Australian Company News (both weekly business information reports) – the ASX put them out of business!

From a young age my father had ‘enshrined’ in me the ‘Murdoch culture’ – people working in newspapers and their families did not seek or expect any publicity – very different from media people today. For this
reason my brother and I were told we were not allowed to enter the many newspaper competitions – at the
time newspaper competitions and Tattersalls were the only means of obtaining supplementary funds.

My only ‘academic’ success was in 1959 – winning the Sydney Sunday Sun-Herald Chess Game, Problem No. 501 – which I entered under my brothers name (G. L. Morgan) for fear of self ‘incrimination’. On receiving an impressive (large and thick) book prize I immediately sold it to the Melbourne Grammar Library – in those days a boarders pocket money was a scarce commodity!

On my 18th birthday, December 8, 1959 I learned to drive a car and the next day obtained my driving licence; the following Monday I began working with my father and about 12 staff at The Roy Morgan Research Centre Pty Ltd, 26 Flinders St (Herald and Weekly Times building).

My father taught me everything; in so doing he never raised his voice nor swore – he tolerated a lot – my mother had given up on me aged about three! They both liked my friends a lot although they felt many were ‘slow’ reaching their full potential – academic and social!

When I complained my father said “count your blessings”, when I mentioned an irrelevant concern he said “straw man”, when I couldn’t overcome a major concern he said “sleep on it – your sub-conscious will give you the answer in the morning”, when I had a complicated problem he said “think – most people will do anything to avoid the hard work of thinking”.

We worked as a team – I sold surveys – my father changed my letters (grammar) into plain English always saying “state your case and prove it”!

From 1959 Roy Morgan Research conducted many surveys covering a wide range of topics for many clients, including General Motors Holden, Philips Electrical, Philip Morris, Bank of NSW, Tattersalls, Gillette, Douwe Egbert, HJ Heinz, CUB and Uncle Ben’s. Importantly we also conducted surveys for the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria.

I have now completed 52 years of employment with The Roy Morgan Research Centre – only for a year (1964) have I not worked in the Australian business - during early 1964 I worked in the UK for Dr Henry Durant at Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd, and later in Princeton with Dr George Gallup during the 1964 Presidential Election.

It was John Fink (deceased - Theodore Fink family) who had the biggest influence on making our Roy Morgan readership survey the accepted print media currency. In 1971 John Fink explained to me the mathematical biases resulting from the ‘flawed’ questions included in the three Australian readership surveys - they soon ceased. With Kerry Packer’s support Australian Consolidated Press backed us to start Australia’s first continuous readership survey including a re-interview survey with the results (first released in 1972) used to compute newspaper and magazine advertising schedules. Initially our computed print advertising schedules were available on-line using the American IMS software. People at the ‘Herald’ were not pleased – Max Newton supported us using our readership data for the Sunday Observer!

On June 30, 1973 my family’s involvement with The Herald ended after 121 years – no more free rent, postage or printing services!


In 1987 we launched our own Asteroid software to computed print advertising schedules (with significant input from Peter Grant, George Rennie and more recently Sergey Dorofoev). In 1998 Asteroid was expanded to include TV programs, in 2005 cinema, in 2009 the Internet and in 2010 radio.
In the late 1970s we established our SAMI warehouse withdrawal business (initial clients included Safeway, Uncle Ben’s and Henry Jones IXL). In 1987 our SAMI business was incorporated into a joint venture with AC Nielsen (Australia) Pty Ltd, owned by us on a 50-50 basis with Dun & Bradstreet of the USA. In 1990 our joint venture established the first continuous TV rating survey in Australia using set box TV meters.

Roy Morgan Research is today Australia’s best known and longest established market research and public opinion survey company. While originally specialising in public opinion, corporate image and media measurement, the company has expanded to cover all aspects of market research information gathering whether by personal interviews, the telephone, self-administered questionnaire, the Internet or a smart phone.

Today with my fellow Directors, Michele Levine (CEO) and John McInnes, we employ more than 1,000 people in four Australian offices and offices in NZ, Indonesia, London and USA. Roy Morgan Research is the largest Australian owned market research company with an annual turnover of about $60 million.

My personal thanks go to all those people who have helped us create Roy Morgan Research into a truly international market research and information business and a provider of the world’s most extensive single source surveys.

The day before my father died on October 31, 1985, he handed me a letter for the bank (get in first), an article on print media research to be published in the UK media journal Admap (it was) and told me if I went insolvent as many times as his grandfather, William Williams, then today I’d break all records – at 70 so far so good – but as my family and friends say there is still a ‘way to go’!

Listed below are “Milestones in the development of Roy Morgan Research since 1941”. Included are some of our published papers.

Gary Morgan

Milestones in the development of Roy Morgan Research since 1941:

- **1941** - Roy Morgan established Australia’s first public opinion polling and consumer research business, in 1947 with Dr George Gallup and other prominent pollsters formed Gallup International.
- **Early Seventies** - Established first face-to-face Omnibus in Australia and commenced the collection of Roy Morgan Readership figures for publishers and agencies which quickly became the currency for readership in Australia.
- **Late Seventies** - Commenced collection of warehouse withdrawals data which in 1987 was incorporated into a joint venture with AC Nielsen (Australia) Pty. Ltd owned on a 50-50 basis with Dun & Bradstreet of the US.
- **1984** - Developed the Roy Morgan Values Segments[1].
- **1985** - Acquired ASI (Audience Studies Inc.) which specialises in pre and post advertising testing and developed the Perception Monitor.
- **1986** - Successfully conducted a Melbourne TV Meter trial survey proving the concept and logistics of the adoption of such an approach versus the incumbent diary method.
- **1987** - Commenced prototype development of ASTEROID primarily to furnish cross-tabulations. This software service
is proprietary and has been developed to include MMI, AID, Correspondence Analysis and MCI. In 1995 a Windows version was launched and in 1998 a Multi-Media Reach and Frequency was introduced.

- Entered into a 50-50 joint venture with Dun & Bradstreet of the USA to form AC Nielsen (Australia) Pty Ltd to provide electronic measurement of the television viewing audience.

- • 1990  AC Nielsen (Australia) Pty Ltd won the support of several TV networks to begin an Australian TV rating survey using people meters, covering all mainland capital cities.
- • 1991  The Roy Morgan Research Centre Pty Ltd sold their share in AC Nielsen (Australia) Pty Ltd.
- • 1993  Roy Morgan 'Worm' measured Keating v Hewson Election TV debate
- • 1995  Roy Morgan BrandPLANNER launched.
- • 1997  ASTEROID for Windows launched - a PC-based survey analysis system.
- • 1998  Roy Morgan Single Source launched (Australia).
- • 1999  Launch of ASTEROID multi-media reach and frequency analysis package.
- • 2000  Established Roy Morgan Internet Monitor in conjunction with PC Data of the USA.
- • 2003  Established Roy Morgan Young Australian Survey which is a continuous survey of approximately 76,000 children aged 6-13 years old
- • 2004  Purchased Mapes and Ross in the USA. Mapes and Ross are specialists in communication and advertising research.
- • 2005  Purchased Mail Diary Panel in the USA.
- • 2010  Contacted by University of Melbourne to conduct Federal Government HILDA (Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia) Survey
- • 2011  Roy Morgan pre-packaged data sold on-line through the Roy Morgan Online Store
- • 2011  Roy Morgan Online Reactor measured the National Press Club debate between Lord Christopher Monckton vs. Dr. Richard Denniss
  - Moved face-to-face interviewing to CAPI (major investment and major change in way personal interviewing surveying conducted)
  - Roy Morgan continuous Business Survey launched (replicates Roy Morgan Single Source for businesses) - covers finance, telco, media, IT, business purchasing etc.
  - ‘Can of Worms’ TV program launched on Channel 10 using Roy Morgan data
  - Roy Morgan Mobile Reactor measured second-by-second November 21 John Key v Phil Goff New Zealand Election TV debate - NZ sample 1,600+

With ASTEROID and ASTEROIDSearch, Roy Morgan Research is in the forefront of applying leading edge technology to data collection, database management, analysis and both internal and client interrogation of the information.

Roy Morgan Single Source is used by publishers, the Internet, radio and TV stations, agencies, marketers and advertisers. Roy Morgan’s print media measurement method provides the Australian readership currency. Roy Morgan’s readership estimates in Australia, New Zealand, the US and UK, are believable when compared to circulation figures (see below). “Pitfalls of International Market Research”

The commitment to Quality was confirmed in 1995 when Roy Morgan Research became Quality Assured to AS/NZS ISO 9001 and in 2007 to ISO 20252 International Standards.

**Major Papers Published since 1998**

- Phil Goff (54%) cf. John Key (46%) wins New Zealand Leaders' Debate November 21, 2011
- Australia's Constitutional Future: Challenges for the Monarchy in a globally connected world November 8, 2011
- Australia's Constitutional Future: Opinion Polling October 8, 2011
- REACTOR POLL - CARBON TAX Gillard's Tax Announcement Splits the Nation 2 July 11, 2011
- REACTOR POLL - CARBON TAX Gillard's Tax Announcement Splits the Nation July 10, 2011