

ACADEMIA CAPRICORNIA

A History of the University of Central Queensland

Dr Denis Cryle

CQU - ROCKHAMPTON



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UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL
QUEENSLAND

25 Years

1967 - 1992

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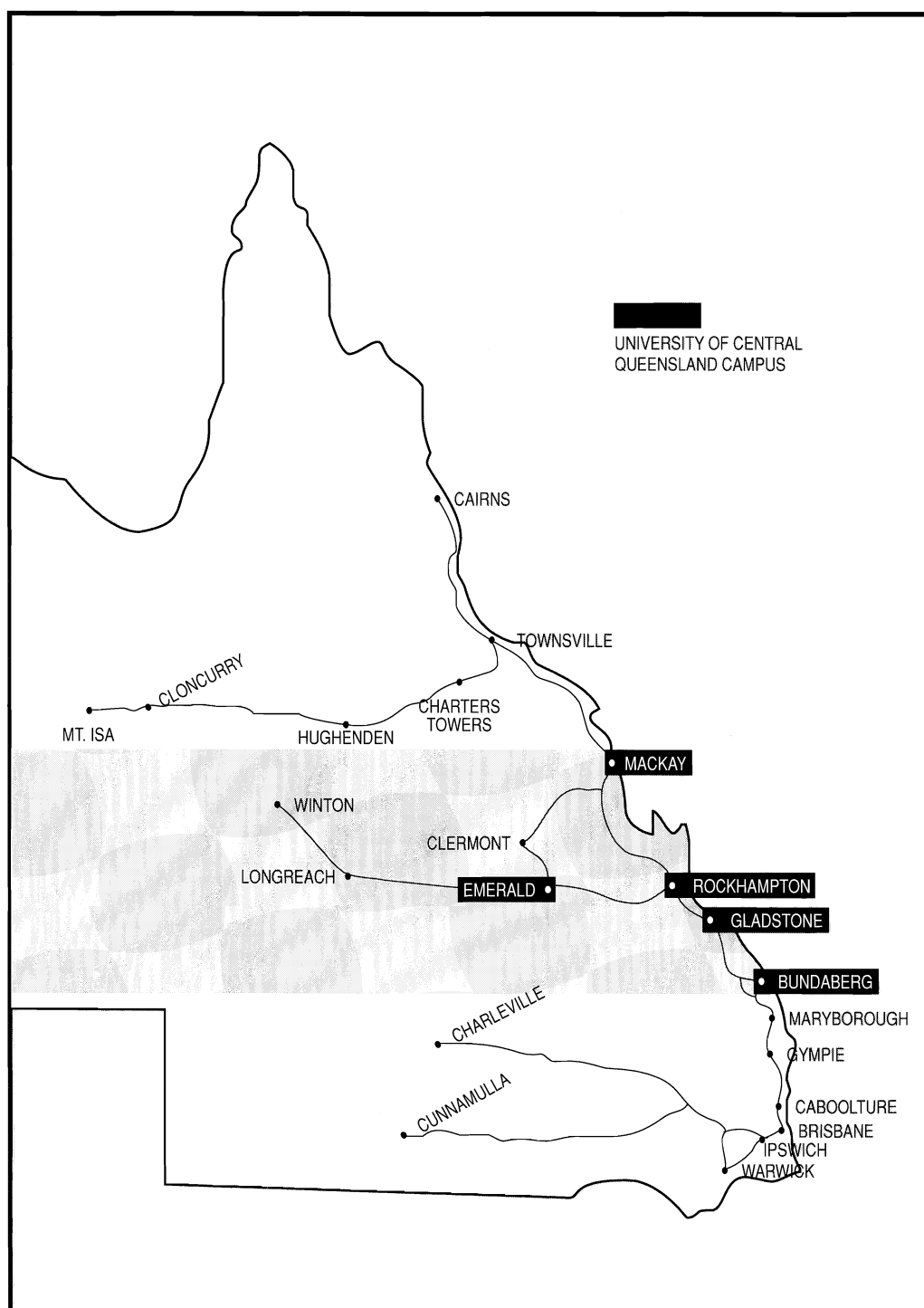
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Map of Queensland showing Central Queensland and University of Central Queensland Campuses.

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Denis Cryle

PREFACE

It is fitting that this major history of the University of Central Queensland and its earlier predecessors has been completed in 1992 - the year of our Silver Jubilee and the year in which we achieved full university status.

During 1992, the face of change is remarkable and a reading of this important historical treatment by Denis Cryle shows how change and progress have accompanied this fine institution for the whole of its 25 years of existence. Despite the limits of quite inadequate funding, the people of Central Queensland have been well served by the pioneer educators of Capricornia and the production of this history is a timely reminder of this.

The University is grateful to Denis Cryle for his persistent and stimulating dedication in preserving its history. As we plan the future we would all be well advised to carefully consider this timely record of our inheritance.

Geoffrey Wilson,
Vice-Chancellor.

1

DECENTRALISE

University College Movements in Rockhampton

Although the University of Central Queensland came into being in 1992, the idea of university or a tertiary institution at Rockhampton dates back to the early 1940s. The origins of the first university college movement at Rockhampton can be traced to section 17 of the *National Education Co-ordination and University of Queensland Act Amendment Act*, a controversial piece of legislation introduced by Queensland Labor Premier, William Forgan Smith, in 1941. Section 17, the important clause for this discussion, provided for the creation of one or more university colleges outside Brisbane on the recommendation of the University Senate.¹ James Cook College founded at Townsville in the early 1960s is the best known example of an outcome of this legislation. Regional institutions created under the 1941 Act were to be called 'National University Colleges' and affiliated with the University of Queensland. The instigators of the Act appeared to be Premier Forgan Smith and his Minister for Instruction, H. A. Bruce. A native of Mackay, Forgan Smith was a long-time supporter of regional development in agriculture and technical education. His war-time Labor government and succeeding Labor administrations addressed the question of educational infrastructure in Queensland, promising decentralisation and a higher school-leaving age. Nevertheless, in the case of the university college proposal, it is probable that fellow Scot and public servant J. D. Story played some part. A high ranking and long-serving official in both government and university service, Story was one administrator who saw advantages in the pursuit of a decentralised higher education system. However, strong provincial support was required for such a project to be realised.

Conditions appeared propitious in the 1940s following the formation of the Central Queensland Advancement League, to encourage "primary and secondary industries, the development of natural resources and the general advancement of Central Queensland".² James Lawrence of Lawrence Motors, Rockhampton, was the organisation's local president, with A. C. McColl and F. Glynn serving on the executive. Rockhampton City Council alderman Tom Bencke and Dalgetys' agent Maurice South were early supporters of the League, which was affiliated with J. B. Chandler's private enterprise party, the Queensland Peoples Party.³

Yet the first university college movements at Rockhampton should not be seen exclusively

as the initiative of opposition parties and pressure groups. The Central Queensland branch of the Teachers' Union was also convinced of the value of this proposal.⁴ When long-serving Rockhampton parliamentarian James Larcombe became Minister for Public Instruction in April 1944, a series of delegations approached the Minister. These activities were motivated, in part, by the promise of Larcombe's predecessor that a university college would be constructed at Charters Towers after the war.⁵ Rockhamptonites were anxious that they should also receive favourable consideration. The Advancement League sent a submission to Larcombe in January 1945, and a personal deputation in March. Self-educated and influential, Larcombe referred the Rockhampton college proposal to William Forgan Smith, who by that time had retired from politics and had been appointed Chancellor of the University of Queensland. After an encouraging reply from Forgan Smith in May 1945, Larcombe brought the matter before Cabinet.

In the following year, when Larcombe transferred from Public Instruction to the Treasury, the situation remained promising. In February 1946, the Queensland government resumed 30 hectares (74 acres) for a 'post-primary' site at North Rockhampton. The University of Queensland, which was spending large sums of money on its own building programme, had yet to be convinced of the need for a university college for Central Queensland. In response to a Cabinet request, the University Senate established a committee during 1947 to examine the question of university colleges. The Central Queensland Advancement League did not let the matter rest. In 1948, with the University Senate shortly to pronounce on the matter, the League was still lobbying Larcombe and the Director-General of Education for a firm commitment to a university college for Rockhampton.⁶ However, when the University Senate report was tabled in mid-1948, it proposed the development of an external studies programme and a network of provincial study centres.⁷ The external studies organisation which the university began to develop thereafter was a direct response to provincial pressure for regional university colleges. By the end of the decade, the issue had become dormant and the League inactive. Yet, the Central Queensland Advancement League, a small group of business and professional people, had set an important precedent for promoting decentralised tertiary education in the state. Provincial pressure appeared less effective once the university external study centres were in place; another decade elapsed before the issue was revived. With the exception of Tom Bencke, few of the Advancement League rejoined the University Development Association when it was formed in Rockhampton a decade later.

In 1958, Rockhamptonites learnt of the formation of the Townsville and District University Association in North Queensland. Townsville, assisted by the introduction of bulk sugar technology and the expansion of Mount Isa Mines, had grown rapidly after the war and was pressing its claim for a tertiary college which would train students in conjunction with the University of Queensland in Brisbane. Activity in Townsville coincided with renewed speculation by the University of Queensland Vice-Chancellor, J. D. Story, about the creation of "multi-purpose" institutions in regional Queensland centres.⁸ It was this sequence of events which encouraged P. J. Goldston, an engineer with the Queensland Railways in Rockhampton, to approach the local branch of the Institution of Engineers with a proposal for a Central Queensland University Association. A local success story, 'Jim' Goldston rose to prominence in the public service from an apprenticeship in the Mackay railway workshops. He was to play a leading role in the university movement. A father of five, Goldston was convinced of the need for a local tertiary institution. Rockhampton and district already possessed a solid educational infrastructure, including five state high schools, seven private secondary schools and a technical college. For

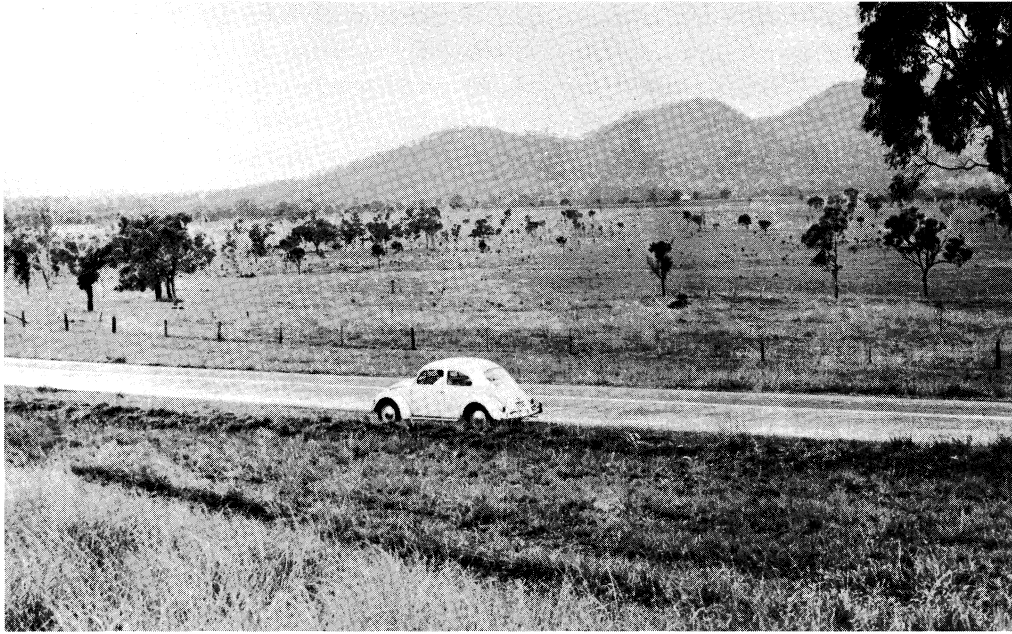
tertiary students, degree courses were available by distance through the External Studies Department of the University of Queensland, but the range of offerings was limited and library resources meagre. The main external degree courses offered were in arts, education, law and economics with notable omissions in engineering, chemistry, botany and architecture.⁹

At a meeting in September 1958, the Institution of Engineers debated Goldston's historic motion for a university association at Rockhampton. Some of its members considered available resources should be channelled towards the local University of Queensland centre rather than into the foundation of a separate new institution. One speaker in favour of the Goldston proposal was Pat Wilkes, deputy-headmaster of the Rockhampton High School. Wilkes, officer-in-charge of the external studies courses in Rockhampton, was well placed to address the meeting on the value of local facilities. The proposal was subsequently carried nine votes to three and a sub-committee was formed to further this aim.¹⁰

In the following month, a special meeting of influential townspeople was called in the Lady Mayoress' Rooms. Those invited included the Catholic and Anglican Bishops, the Most Rev. Andrew Tynan and the Rt. Rev. Theodore McCall, the Regional Director of Education, E. F. Gutekunst, the principals of 12 secondary schools and representatives of professional associations. At the October gathering, 36 attended and 15 apologies were received. The sub-committee's resolution that "an association to be known as the Central Queensland University Association...for the purpose of rendering every possible assistance in the establishment of the first stages of full tertiary education at Rockhampton" received strong support from the meeting, especially from the church representatives.¹¹ A provisional committee of no fewer than 30, including 10 members from the Institution of Engineers, was set up to further the aims of the new body.

In the three months which followed its inception, the Association adopted the full title of the Central Queensland University Development Association (UDA) and began its important work. While the committee drafted a constitution for the organization, three members approached the Mayor to enlist his support. Sir Albert Axon, Chancellor of the University of Queensland, became patron of the Association, with the Rockhampton bishops serving as vice-patrons, and Justice Sheehy, Judge of the Supreme Court, as its president. Routine organisation fell to the committee and to its vice-president, Rex Pilbeam who, in his capacity as mayor, chaired the first public meeting on 3 March 1959. From the first, Pilbeam offered his enthusiastic support for the UDA, "no matter how big the task".¹² Other pillars of the Association, with Pilbeam and Goldston, were CSIRO scientists, J. F. Kennedy and H. Greig Turner, who served on the executive for many years. The Capricornia Regional Electricity Board and its staff were also generous supporters of the university movement. In particular, Stan Merry, the UDA secretary, played an active role.¹³ The CREB offices, located in the City Hall building, were made available for monthly UDA meetings and CREB secretary Carol Ross provided the evening labour necessary to sustain the Association.

The UDA established four sub-committees to prepare its first submission to the Minister of Education and the University of Queensland Senate. These sub-committees inquired into such matters as anticipated student numbers, local industry support, potential part-time teaching staff and accommodation. A student statistics committee set out to document the likelihood of increased educational opportunities for Central Queensland school leavers, should the university college be approved. With the approval of the Education Minister, it despatched questionnaires to all secondary schools in Central Queensland.¹⁴ Of the 9 000 questionnaires sent out, 4 000 were returned and analysed. They strengthened the UDA's 'social justice' argument by revealing that



Original Parkhurst site, looking east across the old Bruce Highway.

twice as many students from the region would undertake tertiary courses if full-time studies were available at Rockhampton. The validity of this argument was contested by those who considered that a period of absence from home was a useful component of a general education. Nevertheless, the survey findings lent weight to the UDA's submission of October 1959.¹⁵

The 1959 document presented a series of arguments in favour of establishing a fully-fledged university centre "no later than 1962".¹⁶ A 20 page submission included detailed recommendations for the conversion of the Technical College and External Studies Centre in Bolsover Street into a new institution on 17 hectares (42 acres) near the North Rockhampton High School. In addition, the Association's committees provided statistics on potential student enrolments, part-time graduate teachers, bursary assistance by local firms and details of existing laboratory equipment at the Technical College. It was an impressive document designed to overcome official doubts about the viability of a local university college. The UDA countered arguments about the value of student experience elsewhere by stressing "the benefits of family life" available in Rockhampton. Informally, local UDA supporters disputed the "going away" argument with ironic references to the "serious disadvantages suffered by the many students in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne...who have to live at home while doing tertiary courses!"¹⁷

The 1959 submission elicited a surprisingly rapid official response. In the following month, four distinguished visitors, two from the University of Queensland and two from the Queensland Education Department, came to Rockhampton to discuss the concept with a local delegation and to inspect possible sites.¹⁸ Responding to the UDA's written case, Director-General N. D. Watkin conceded the University of Queensland with a population of 14 000 students was overcrowded. The other visitors deferred to the University Senate and suggested that a Senate sub-committee be



Brigadier J.E.M. Martin (centre) from the Coordinator-General's Department shows a scale model of the proposed Institute to (from left) C. Gilmour, Professor M. Shaw, E.F. Gutekunst and H.G. Turner. (c. 1967).

set up to inquire into the matter.¹⁹ Although no firm decision was taken, the proposal for a university college was given considerable impetus during a tour of possible locations. After inspecting land in Berserker Street and at Glenmore, the official party examined an 87 hectares (216 acres) site at Parkhurst on the Bruce Highway near the Yeppoon turnoff. Goldston, who was one of those escorting the visitors, recalled the general enthusiasm of the party after they scaled a hill adjacent to the Parkhurst land.²⁰ It was open grassy country bounded by the highway to the west and Norman Road to the east. Beyond the eastern boundary, the Berserker range loomed large and majestic.

At that time, the Parkhurst site was government land which had been gazetted for an asylum for the mentally ill, a fact which some staff members were to recall in lighter moments. Nevertheless, the 1959 visit marked a significant breakthrough because it promised a separate institution and strengthened the push for a university. Negotiations aimed at regazetting the Parkhurst land were pursued throughout 1960, after a second party of visitors from the University of Queensland expressed their satisfaction with the location. The UDA continued to argue that a smaller site (now occupied by the North Rockhampton velodrome and swimming pool) was insufficient for future expansion. Even so, it took two more years before the State Department of Health and Home Affairs relinquished control of its Parkhurst property. Once this was done, the UDA was able to submit an application for an extended Parkhurst site comprising 161 hectares (400 acres).

In the meantime, the Association had not been idle. Its sub-committee on local industry support recommended the introduction of a bursary scheme as a means of stimulating local interest in tertiary education. In August 1960, the Association decided to offer five bursaries of £20 each to Central Queensland students at the Senior examination.²¹ Thereafter, and with growing success, the sub-committee canvassed sponsorship from private community organisations. Among the early supporters of the scheme were the Rockhampton Chamber of Commerce, Denham Brothers, Blair Athol Colliery and Sydney Williams and Company.²² In 1961, 18 bursaries were awarded to students in the Central Queensland region to study science, agriculture, medicine and English at either the University of Queensland or the Townsville University College. The annual presentation of bursaries became an important event for the local university movement.²³

The extent to which the UDA should limit the scope of its educational activities remained a subject of ongoing debate among its members. Should greater effort be directed towards upgrading the existing Technical College and equipping an External Studies Centre? The Executive considered that, like the bursary scheme, increased external enrolments would ultimately assist the local cause. A sub-committee led by W. L. Goossens, principal of the Rockhampton High School, investigated the establishment of a University Studies Centre to assist the 100 or so University of Queensland students enrolled in the area. Steadily, the Association extended its committee structure to incorporate most of its regular members. With an average attendance of 20 - 30 members at monthly meetings, it was operating 11 committees by 1963, a substantial achievement by a small but dedicated organisation.

The Australian tertiary education boom of the 1960s brought with it the prospect of decentralisation. Activity in Rockhampton was stimulated by the opening of the Townsville University College in 1961 and by the emergence of competing claims for an institution in Toowoomba. Moves by the Darling Downs University Establishment Association for a 140 hectares (350 acres) site prompted the UDA to resubmit Rockhampton's case to the Queensland government and the University Senate. After a lull in negotiations, the UDA decided to press the Senate for a firm commitment on the issue of "lower tertiary full-time study".²⁴ The decision coincided with the announcement of a new Commonwealth inquiry into tertiary education. In an addendum of October 1960, the UDA listed the implementation of its bursary scheme and of local activities like the English Association in support of its original case. On the issue of staff recruitment for a local institution, it accurately predicted full-time teachers recruited from overseas would eventually complement part-time local staff. The authors, with some impatience, noted the status of the proposed Parkhurst site had still not been resolved and ended their submission with the earnest request that a meeting be arranged with the University Senate "at the earliest possible opportunity" to finalise establishment details.²⁵ On this occasion, neither the University Senate nor the Queensland Government were prepared to receive a UDA deputation. Professor Schonell, who was regarded as an influential participant on the Commonwealth Government's Australian Universities Commission, eventually agreed to a meeting, but the event was postponed. The *Morning Bulletin*, echoing local frustration, observed "the correct channels appear to have become clogged in Brisbane".²⁶

Although the following years, 1963-64, appeared quiet ones for the UDA, a series of decisive new steps were taken towards achieving its goal. Recognising an increase in external enrolments had been a key factor in establishing the Townsville University College, the executive proposed an upgraded External Studies Centre for Rockhampton. The Rockhampton City Council offered

the use of the city baths building for this purpose, but the prohibitive costs of renovation and air-conditioning split UDA opinion. A dissenting group advocated that funds be directed instead to renovating the Technical College building.²⁷ Mayor Pilbeam, who was a UDA Executive member, took a major role in these discussions. As decentralization of state education became a political issue in early 1963, Pilbeam emerged as the forthright advocate of a fair deal for Central Queensland. He insisted the regional division between the north and south of the state was insufficient and lobbied Central Queensland parliamentarians to support a new submission for the creation of a Rockhampton University College.

A new UDA document, printed in August 1963, adopted the rhetoric of decentralization and called on the Queensland government, in conjunction with the University of Queensland Senate, for “a public statement of the Government’s intention to promote decentralized tertiary education”.²⁸ Compiled with the assistance of the Rockhampton Development Association, it relied heavily on proposed economic and industrial growth, most of it in Gladstone and the Callide Valley, and hailed economic development as the forerunner of social progress. It was designed specifically to appeal to the Nicklin government’s new policy of industrial expansion for Queensland. How such projects would implicate the proposed university college was not spelt out but there were implicit assumptions the institution would provide professional and technical training for expanding regional industries. In addition, the UDA had compiled comprehensive statistics on prospective student intake for the Rockhampton institution. First year estimates were for 133 students rising to double that figure within three years.²⁹ The 1963 figures proved to be overly optimistic but, with matriculation levels climbing to 250 per cent during the 1950s, the pattern of future expansion was clear Australia-wide.

As the Menzies Commonwealth Government took steps to address the expansion of tertiary education, rivalry between Rockhampton and Toowoomba became stronger than ever. When Sir Leslie Martin, chairman of the Commonwealth Inquiry into Tertiary Education, was invited to Toowoomba by the Darling Downs University Association, it looked as if Toowoomba had crept ahead of its northern rival. UDA secretary, Stan Merry, immediately telephoned the Australian University Commission and issued Martin with an invitation to Rockhampton, but the offer was not accepted. Instead, a local UDA deputation was invited to Melbourne to present its case before the Committee of Inquiry. In the meantime, Goldston, the Association Vice-President, had been transferred south and was replaced by Kennedy’s CSIRO colleague, Greig Turner.³⁰ It was ironic that Goldston was moved to Toowoomba to manage the southern division of the Queensland railways. He remained there for only two years before returning to Central Queensland and the UDA executive.

The Martin Committee deputation, like the 1959 site inspection by the four distinguished visitors, constituted a high point in UDA activity and influence. Martin’s task was to investigate ways of expanding tertiary education outside the universities. According to Davies, tertiary students in Australia numbered 117 900 by 1964, with 69 000 in universities, 14 600 in teachers’ colleges and 34 300 in technical and other institutions.³¹ It was the latter group to which the Martin Committee directed most of its attention. In February 1964, Justice Sheehy, patron of the Rockhampton UDA and its president, John Kennedy, flew to Melbourne with six copies of their recent university submission. After five years of ground-work, Sheehy and Kennedy were well prepared. On 4 March the deputation received a sympathetic hearing from the Martin Committee, one of whom, Professor Wadsham, had taught Kennedy and Turner in their undergraduate days.³²

In making out their case, Sheehy and Kennedy stressed the strong local support for a tertiary institution at Rockhampton and the relative remoteness of the city from the metropolitan university in Brisbane. During that year, the UDA supplied the Melbourne Committee with further information about its proposal. As local hopes rose, 20 Association members prepared contour maps of the Parkhurst site and a preliminary layout of buildings and facilities. In May, a further request for aerial photographs of the site was received. The mood of the UDA was optimistic but it was not until August 1964 that Martin's recommendations reached the AUC and not till March 1965 that the historic report was finally tabled in Federal Parliament.

When Menzies addressed parliament, he announced the proposed establishment of tertiary institutions at both Toowoomba and Rockhampton.³³ These were not to be affiliated to universities, however, nor were they, strictly speaking, technical colleges but part of a new non-university tertiary sector. Adopting the broad thrust of Martin's report, Menzies confirmed the expansion of technological education and the creation of institutes of technology. Rockhamptonites were jubilant, though unsure about the status of their institution. Rex Pilbeam, for example, chaffed at the failure to gain a local university and expressed his disappointment Rockhampton had received only "half a loaf".³⁴ It was some time before a local consensus emerged. UDA spokesman, Turner, reassured residents the Martin Committee was not giving Rockhampton "a second-rate university" but "something remarkably close to what they were thinking about".³⁵ Goldston, returning to the city as Central Queensland Manager for Railways, also considered the newly-created institute was more suited to the UDA's objectives than a university college.³⁶ Debate over the status of the proposed institutes of technology subsided, but the controversy was significant because it highlighted the unclear divide between the universities and the new tertiary sector. Later that year the UDA changed its name to the Capricornia Association for Tertiary Education (CATE) and prepared for renewed involvement with the new institution which it had done so much to establish.

One important difference between universities and the new tertiary institutes lay in the relative autonomy of the former. Institutes and colleges were subject to greater government control. A product of local and Federal initiatives, the Rockhampton and Darling Downs Institutes were administered initially by the Queensland public service. Anticipating the Martin Report and the prospect of regional campuses, the Queensland Government passed its own legislation for the formation of a Technical Education Advisory Council (TEAC) to administer the new tertiary sector.³⁷ The TEAC, comprising 17 members drawn from business, university and public service, adjusted Federal recommendations to the Queensland Government's policy of industrialisation. Since it was technological in orientation, TEAC played down Menzies' call for the provision of liberal arts courses in the new Colleges of Advanced Education (CAE) sector, and instituted a highly vocational curriculum. Opposition by the State Government to the incorporation of teachers' colleges into the regional institutes represented a setback to the Martin Committee and to UDA aspirations at Rockhampton. In the early phase the Institutes were planned entirely from Brisbane. The paradox of Queensland's experience was that regional education would remain a highly centralised affair. Although a local sub-committee to advise TEAC was formed two years later, the Education Department retained tight control over finance, discipline and technical policy. In August 1965, Education Minister, J. C. A. Pizzey announced the Rockhampton institution was to be called the Queensland Institute of Technology, Capricornia (QITC). Local opinion canvassed either "Capricornia" or "Central Queensland", but the former was retained after

consultation with the TEAC.³⁸

A centralised administration was justified on the grounds that both the Rockhampton and Darling Downs Institutes were affiliated with the main Queensland Institute of Technology (QIT) campus in Brisbane. As the University of Queensland vacated the George Street site, QIT's main campus was to occupy the vacant buildings, in conjunction with the Queensland Conservatorium of Music. Moreover, the Brisbane campus was to receive the bulk of government funding. The first report of the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education (CACAE) set aside a triennial loan of \$3.8m for Brisbane. Rockhampton and Toowoomba each received a \$1m. grant, to be administered on a 1:1 basis by the Federal and State Governments.³⁹ To finalise these grants, Dr Ian Wark, chairman of the CACAE and a distinguished industrial chemist, visited Rockhampton in late 1965 and expressed public admiration for the "magnificent Yaamba Road site".⁴⁰ In his first report Wark acknowledged the special problems of regional campuses, where small staffs would be spread over a wide variety of teaching subjects. He concurred with the UDA suggestion local part-time expertise would be required to supplement full-time staff, estimated to reach 38 at Rockhampton by 1969.⁴¹ It was argued part-time recruitment would generate local employment and forge commercial and professional links between the campus and the community.

In the early years, the Institute operated in two locations, sharing space with the Technical College in town while a building programme advanced on the new site six kilometres to the north. This awkward situation, with its inevitable complications, persisted until the early 1970s when construction was sufficiently advanced to permit the relocation of the Bolsover Street facilities. In the meantime, the Institute struggled to create an identity separate from the Technical College. At Parkhurst, construction of the Chemistry and Biological Sciences block (Applied Science B) began in March 1966. Costing £150 000, it was to hold five laboratories, three lecture rooms and staff accommodation.⁴² The Wark Report signalled a vigorous building programme for 1967-69, including plans for an administrative and library block, general studies buildings, and civil engineering as well as residential accommodation facilities.

In keeping with Education Department policy, courses were standardised across the three QIT campuses. A range of diploma and certificate courses were to be offered, full-time and part-time. Certificate courses at the Institute appeared less secure, in view of the Technical College's simultaneous commitment to sub-tertiary students. The Institute's most ambitious offering was a four-year Engineering fellowship. Planned in four departments, the Engineering School was reduced to a tripartite operation. The omission of proposed courses in rural engineering represented a set-back for those who considered the role of the Institute was to sustain rural Queensland industries.⁴³ Nor were Commonwealth plans for a sugar technology centre at Rockhampton pursued. Consequently, the Rockhampton and Darling Downs Institutes lacked a clear regional identity in the early years. Buildings and regulations were standardised across the three QIT campuses, irrespective of markedly different climates.

The Rockhampton City Council, spurred by the prospect of a local tertiary institution, undertook several educational initiatives. In late July 1965, Pilbeam committed his administration to the provision of new library facilities and resources for Rockhampton's 120 external students. By the end of that year the Council had made available the reading room of the Municipal Library as a tutorial centre and donated £500 annually to improve the technical holdings of the collection over three years.⁴⁴ Pilbeam assisted the Institute directly by undertaking to sewer the Parkhurst

campus and by cooperating with CATE in planning fundraising programs for the amenities block and residential facilities. By 1966, it was clear the town would have to raise the very substantial sum of £60 000 if country students were to be accommodated and enrolments maintained. Pilbeam's capacity to attract finance would prove an invaluable asset in this unprecedented endeavour.

The CATE continued to debate its immediate priorities in talks with the TEAC and local government. Goldston, who had returned to the executive of the Association, argued strongly that all available resources should be directed towards the Institute, but others considered this approach to be parochial.⁴⁵ One means of assisting local enrolments was to canvass financial support for Institute bursaries. Previously, successful recipients travelled to the University of Queensland or to the Townsville College. Now for the first time, a local option was available to successful school-leavers. Bursary donations began conspicuously with the proceeds of a bullock sale by W. H. Rudd of Aramac. When approached, large regional organisations like Queensland Alumina, CREB and Mt Morgan Limited contributed generously to the scheme. Yet, amid displays of community spirit, there persisted doubts about CATE's future role in the Institute. The Queensland government had not responded to its call for a local teachers' college nor to its fundraising offer. After eight years of vigorous effort, it remained to be seen whether Rockhampton would be given a strong voice in the development and planning of QIT Capricornia.

2

EARLY DAYS

Bolsover Street to Parkhurst

Occupying the top floor of the imposing Technical College building in Bolsover Street, QIT Capricornia comprised a handful of full-time academic staff, operating across four departments - Engineering, General Studies, Chemistry and Business. With limited staff and resources, the 'Institute', as it became known, offered diploma and certificate courses to an initial intake in 1967 of 19 full-time and 52 part-time students. Frank Schroder, appointed officer-in-charge of Engineering, recalled the starkness of the building when he arrived in January 1967. There were no laboratories, library facilities or stock.¹ The task of ordering equipment from the State Stores preoccupied staff in the hectic January weeks. There were also students to interview and courses to be publicised. Like Frank Schroder, Ron Young had gained considerable teaching and research experience at the Brisbane Technical College before taking charge of the General Studies (Mathematics-Physics) Department. He recalled improvising equipment for early viscosity experiments. The oil came from a corner service station and the yard glass, into which a ball bearing was dropped, was borrowed from the display window of nearby Duthie's Leichhardt Hotel.² Young recalled the co-operation and assistance of Technical College staff members like Jack Duffield during the settling-in period.

A legacy of the Technical College were the Institute's courses in Industrial Chemistry, taught by Robert Poole and Maurice Blank. Poole, the officer-in-charge of Chemistry, had previously lectured at Swinburne Technical College in Victoria, and worked in private industry with Shell and other companies. Maurice Blank, a former dux of Rockhampton High School, was a graduate of southern universities. Errol Payne, the junior lecturer in Chemistry and youngest on staff, remembers:

(the) renovations going on around us because those old buildings didn't have lights or anything like that and we were supposed to be running evening classes. It was pretty chaotic; it took us a while to get practical classes going...we finished up going down to the corner store to buy a bottle of metho and to a pharmacy to buy naphtholene so we could start prac work with the students.³



Rockhampton Technical College in Bolsover Street (c. 1967).

Science pracs were held at the rear of the Technical College in a dilapidated laboratory “with floorboards pulled up in places”.⁴ Chemistry was the initial department planned for the occupation of the northside Parkhurst campus but some time elapsed before the first building became available. When the Acting-Principal welcomed the first students to Parkhurst in February 1967, he was surrounded by piles of rubble on the construction site.

Business, the fourth department, was the responsibility of John Carkeek. In the first year, four students were enrolled and Kevin Fagg was appointed assistant lecturer. Carkeek, like Bob Poole in Chemistry, had previously lectured at Swinburne Technical College and also at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Victorian technical colleges like Swinburne enjoyed a high profile and sound reputation at the time of the Martin Report and became the model for the new Commonwealth tertiary sector. It was no coincidence that several departmental heads and the first permanent Principal, Dr Allan Skertchly, emanated from Victorian institutions. The Institute also drew on local expertise. Many early staff, both full-time and part-time, had been students or teachers in the Rockhampton district, among them Kevin Fagg (Business), Bob Hay (General Studies) Errol Payne, Maurice Blank and Bob Poole (Chemistry). Their educational experience and input were valued in an institution which sought to develop a constructive relationship with the community and the region.

Most of the early staff enjoyed the challenge of founding the Institute ‘from scratch.’ Morale was high at the Bolsover Street staff room and local coffee shop, where members of the different departments met and exchanged ideas. Those involved were mostly young single males who devoted as much as 18 hours per day to their work. Formality was minimal and close personal ties developed in the cramped teaching conditions. Coordinating their efforts with the directives from the Brisbane Education Office was Roy Wallace, a Technical Education Inspector and experienced



First day lecture by A. Whittle to Mechanical Engineering post-junior students, Bolsover Street, February 1967. Jenny Stenlake in middle front row.

public servant who spent five months in Rockhampton as the Institute's Acting Principal. Planning sessions took place in Wallace's hotel room or in John Carkeek's Valiant when Wallace briefed senior staff on the way to the railway station.

Wallace's knowledge of public service procedures proved an invaluable asset. He was usually prepared with multiple typed requests for the relevant departments in order to speed the lengthy process of approval. Barrie Harvey, the Institute's only administrative officer, recalls running around the Bolsover Street office bundling files for Brisbane on a large table and sitting at the Rockhampton railway station with the Acting Principal as they finalised administrative details.⁵ At a time when public service regulations discouraged regular telephone contact or air travel to Brisbane, the 'Rocky Mail' overnight train service provided their main link south. Early staff endured this lengthy ordeal as often as once a fortnight, since their association with QIT necessitated regular meetings and briefings with the sister Brisbane and Toowoomba Institutes. Barrie Harvey, who was responsible for student enrolments, salaries and aspects of the building programme, supplied staff with passes for the railway journey and vouchers for taxi transport between Bolsover Street and Parkhurst. He describes Wallace as "very much a goer and a fighter for the new Institute" in Brisbane circles.⁶

From the outset, Wallace promoted the Institute as more than a Technical College. In a town dominated by tradesmen and manual occupations, he identified the Institute's primary role as the training of technicians and professionals, although expectations persisted in the community that staff should "wear overalls and wield spanners".⁷ Senior staff set out to publicise the Institute as an educational innovator. Frank Schroder stressed the vocational emphasis of engineering courses while John Carkeek emphasised critical and interdisciplinary approaches to accountancy and

management. The task of defining the Institute's educational objectives in a comprehensive manner became the work of Dr Allan Skertchly, who took up his appointment as Principal in mid-1967, inhabiting the western end of the Science building at Parkhurst until 1969 when the Administration block was completed. Educated at Melbourne and London universities, Skertchly had lectured at the Gordon Institute of Technology (Victoria), Leeds University and the University of New South Wales before accepting his QITC appointment. Accompanied by his partner and two children, he was a youthful 37 years when he arrived, enthusiastic at the prospect of bringing "learning to the tropics".⁸ Like Roy Wallace whom he replaced, Allan Skertchly distinguished between training and education. The latter, which he considered the province of the institutes of technology, should equip students to meet the challenge of a rapidly changing future. It was Skertchly's opinion the colleges of advanced education and not the Australian universities would be best able to produce "tomorrow's managers".

In addition to his strong views on education, technology and management, Skertchly possessed the necessary personal skills to galvanise his staff in challenging situations. He was active at staff social functions and took an abiding interest in general staff and student affairs. He is remembered as a "pretty good bloke" by most long-serving staff, who nevertheless acknowledge his unorthodox recruiting and administrative procedures. Long-serving groundsman, Kevin Turner, states that Skertchly had delayed his (Turner's) start-work date to allow him full recovery from an operation.⁹ According to John Stephens, recently retired as the Institute's printer, the new Principal lined up competent people "on the spot" before advertising positions. Stephens considers Skertchly to be "before his time and a bit radical" in his ideas but, at the same time, approachable and energetic.¹⁰

Important in the early social life of the Institute were the barbecues held on Kemp Beach to welcome arriving staff. These were family gatherings at which Allan Skertchly took the trouble to familiarise himself with newcomers, their spouses and children. By the time mathematician Milton Fuller arrived in 1968, staff numbers had doubled to around 22. One of Fuller's duties on the social committee was to organise regular monthly social functions on the Parkhurst campus. Wine tastings, to which local people were invited, became popular. There were also weekly film screenings held in the Chemistry lecture theatre. Because staff were mostly new and small in number, they "tended to cling together" rather than fraternise with the local population.¹¹ The Principal, too, was more concerned with staff morale at this point in time than with establishing close community ties.

Parkhurst campus presented a harsh aspect in the early years. The original point of entry was a rough track which entered the site near the crest of the hill and wound its way down to the black soils of the Chemistry building. Social functions on campus were prone to disruption by the vagaries of the weather. As there was no sealed road, regular downpours in summer months turned the site into a quagmire.

If we had a function in the afternoon and it rained during the function, it was an interesting exit with cars sliding all over the place and some were left because they were hopelessly bogged. Pioneering days at Capricornia.¹²

At the southern corner of the site ran Limestone Creek, which, when swollen, cut the Bruce Highway and blocked access to and from Rockhampton. Since most staff lived in the town or

boarded at 'Yungaba' on the Range, Allan Skertchly's four-wheel drive was kept busy ferrying passengers across the culvert near the present-day Glenmore Palms.

One significant project which united town and Institute was the marathon appeal to fund the construction of a Residential College. Lasting almost three years, the appeal represented a major contribution by the Capricornia Association for Tertiary Education before its eventual dissolution in 1970. As early as 1967, the Building Committee laid plans to raise \$100 000 for this purpose. The Wark Report had indicated a Residential College would cost as much as \$360 000, the largest single item in the early capital works programme.¹³ State Government assistance would match the local contribution on a 1:1 basis, with the Commonwealth Government making up the difference. The first public meeting, held in Rockhampton for this purpose, attracted considerable interest and raised \$6 000 in donations. Rockhampton Rotary and the Council gave \$2 000 each, the ANZ Bank \$500, Rex Pilbeam and family \$200 and Institute staff \$200.¹⁴

Pilbeam's strategy, based upon his earlier success with the Memorial Swimming Pool was to solicit 10 four-figure donations and 300 donations of \$200 each. Hundreds of letters were despatched to Central Queensland graziers requesting assistance and the novel suggestion put forward that each grazier donate one of his beasts which would be sold and the proceeds given to the Residential fund. Jim Kennedy, a member of the CATE Executive, expressed disappointment at the slow response but Pilbeam was confident graziers would be supportive. Leading the donation list in late 1967 were Mount Morgan Limited (\$5 000) and The *Morning Bulletin* Newspaper Company (\$2 000), followed by local shire councils (\$200 each) and Rockhampton professionals. The early response was such that, by early 1968, almost half of the target (since reduced to \$87 500) had been guaranteed and tenders were called for the construction of Residential Block A. The two storey building, designed to accommodate 40 students and employ a dozen staff, would be the first of the present-day complex.

After a pause in mid-1968, the Residential campaign entered a new phase. The Mayor's proposal that Rockhampton workers put aside ten cents per week for the Residential fund elicited a mixed reaction in the city. It was one thing for the business and middle class to support tertiary education, it was another thing to involve the manual workers of the town. Rockhampton's workforce of 12 000, based around the railways and meatworks, had thus far experienced little benefit from higher education. Matters took a political turn when Labor candidate, Keith Wright, campaigning against Pilbeam in Rockhampton South, publicly criticised his rival's handling of the appeal.¹⁵ Wright argued funding for the Residential College was a Government responsibility rather than an act of self-help. The Mayor replied Townsville and Toowoomba had used the same methods as Rockhampton to obtain their Residential Colleges and inferred Wright was using the issue for expressly political ends.¹⁶ These exchanges, part of a broader dispute over local finances, could not fail to divide the town on the issue. Pilbeam would not be distracted from the task which he had set for the community. After one year, the campaign figure had passed \$50 000.

Construction of the Residential building during 1968 was aimed at accommodating students from the beginning of 1969. When work fell behind schedule, the first Residential students were given temporary accommodation on mattresses in the canteen, and meals were taken for a few days at the small refectory in Applied Science B.¹⁷ Ted Anderson, an early science student, recalls students were paid to help builders "clean the site and finish off" Residential 'A'.¹⁸ During its first year, 1969, there were a dozen male students in residence. In the following year, most of the 40



QITC Rugby Union team, (c. 1969).

available places were filled and Residential students were playing an active part in the embryonic social life of the campus. Friendships were made over dinner and students enjoyed their own recreation based around dances, films and shared car travel. One early student initiative was the Rugby Union Club, which owed its organisation to Randall Allick, and to Rockhampton Rugby enthusiasts, Dr Con Primmer and Terry Moore. Until a meeting convened by Allick attracted their interest, most students followed or played league rather than union. During 1969, the Institute fielded its own team in a five-way town competition. Although short of players, the team developed well. According to one team member at the time, Science students tended to be forwards, while accountants “who didn’t want to get too involved” were the backs.¹⁹

House rules at the early Residential College were quite strict; community interest was emphasised and studious habits encouraged. Allan Skertchly, who resided upstairs with his family in ‘A’ block was college master. Andy Drummond was appointed house supervisor and ‘Uncle’ Dave Cardnell was supervising tutor. After dinner, students studied most evenings until ‘smoko’ at 10.30pm and lights out at 11.00pm. Allan Skertchly mixed relaxation and formality in his relations with students. He viewed their period in residence as a formative social and educational experience and introduced a formal end-of-term dinner for this purpose. Female partners and some Institute staff were invited to these gatherings as part of the Principal’s “finishing-school” approach. Mayor Pilbeam, who revived the Residential fundraiser during 1969, was also an honoured guest. A 20th anniversary gathering at the Residential in April 1990 saw many of the early students return to campus. Cardnell, who attended, observes it was a positive reunion. Old friendships were quickly revived while old animosities had withered away.²⁰

Few of the early Institute students were recruited from the professional classes of Central Queensland, most of whom sent their children to southern boarding schools, and to the University of Queensland. In 1968, for example, local grammar schools contributed only 12 per cent of the annual student enrolment. The majority of Institute students came from state schools and family



Staff and students, Department of General Studies (Business). (c. 1971).
 (front from left), Ross Johnson, Ray Hutchings, Peter Wells, Kevin Fagg, John Carkeek, Des
 Pearson, Kevin Lock, Graham Smith; (Back), Phil Hoare, Phil Procopis, Marshall McCarthy,
 Graham McHugh, Bob Hay, Randall Alick and John Morris.

backgrounds in small business, agriculture, clerical and manual occupations.²¹ Costs were a major factor in the decision to seek a local education. Residential fees at the Institute were only half those for the University of Queensland colleges, while Institute tertiary fees remained one fifth of the University's requirement. Since many students did not receive government assistance, they preferred to live in Rockhampton with their parents. Those who came from Mackay and Gladstone applied for admission to the Residential College or sought rented accommodation in the town.

An overwhelming majority of students attracted to the Institute's technological and scientific courses were male. In 1968, there were 50 full-time male students and only one female.²² Penny Cooper, an early science graduate, recalls taking the bus from town on wet days and wading knee-deep in mud from the highway to the Science building. To gain a driving licence, Penny practised at lunchtime, driving Jeff Knowles' Volkswagen round and round the carpark to the encouragement of the other male students. She did not feel excluded and involved herself in most student activities except football. Penny also spent her lunch hours with the secretaries in the administration. There were few chairs so the secretaries sat on Allan Skertchly's desk to eat lunch. On entering, he simply said "not you again!", but they remained.²³ Jennifer Smith (Stenlake), who completed an Advanced Certificate in Civil Engineering in 1970, was another early female student at the Institute. Her course included practical workshop technology - turning, fitting and welding - all performed in overalls until the practical work was discontinued.²⁴ Until 1972, dresses and stockings were obligatory for female students at Parkhurst. After considerable representation on the subject, girls were allowed to wear slacks to lectures though only to night classes in winter.



Aerial view of the Parkhurst campus looking west with Administration and Science buildings in foreground. Annexes and Bruce Highway in background.

By 1969, the majority of staff and students were operating from the Parkhurst campus although the Engineering department remained at Bolsover Street until the early 1970s. A number of departmental changes were adopted. General Studies became Mathematics-Physics, and English moved to the Business department. Mathematics-Physics and Business were the next departments to operate at Parkhurst. A huge hole in the ground announced the construction of a second science building, completed to State Government specifications in April 1969. Ron Young, who subsequently played a major role in the campus building programme, recalls “a hard battle” with the Education Department when he proposed air-conditioning for the new physics building.²⁵ Government regulations restricted the use of air-conditioning to Brisbane head offices and the far north. Constructed by day labour under the supervision of the State Works Department, the second science building (Applied Science A) closely resembled its counterpart at QIT Darling Downs despite wide climatic variations between the two centres. The only architectural differences were the stairways which were open at Rockhampton and glassed in at Toowoomba to keep out westerly winds. Standardisation was also evident in the similarities between the first three buildings at Parkhurst - Applied Science B (Chemistry-Biology), Applied Science A (Mathematics-Physics) and Administration, where the Personnel Department operates in 1992. Each was constructed along similar lines, using exposed aggregate and concrete. Service staff expressed little fondness for these early buildings because of the high levels of maintenance involved, though some academic science staff were reluctant to vacate their old rooms when the new Science building became available in late 1990.

Before the rapid suburbanisation of North Rockhampton, the Parkhurst site was relatively isolated. Clerical staff requested extra time to allow them to travel and shop in town during lunch hours. Enterprising students, motivated by the remoteness of the new campus planned to run a small business in the refectory. As they argued at the time, “the present idea of congregating on



Looking south towards town. Note landscaping in foreground and limited urban development in background.

verandahs is hardly conducive to an academic atmosphere”²⁶. In addition to occasional local flooding in the early years, the Parkhurst campus was threatened by spectacular fires which flared in the surrounding gum and ironbark bushland during summer months. Ground staff were kept busy slashing and clearing around buildings and installing a fire-break system which was later upgraded along the campus road network. Landscaping was confined to small pockets around the buildings to keep out dust.²⁷ According to groundsman, Kevin Turner, the large palms planted below the science buildings were among the first significant landscaping exercises. Turner also remembers the installation of an electric fence to keep out stray cattle when agistment leases were granted over part of the campus.²⁸ On more than one occasion, the fence proved an unexpected obstacle to arriving staff.

To provide much needed space, demountable classrooms, supplied by the Education Department, were erected on the site of the present refectory. One of these became the first student union building after a formal ceremony in 1969. Along with Skertchly, Errol Payne, the staff-student officer, and Kevin Bickoff, a civil engineering student, participated in the transition to student autonomy. After conducting its first election in 1968, the Student Representative Council (SRC) adopted the constitution of its sister QIT unions. Sporting clubs, comprising football, basketball, motor-bike and rowing, were among its early constituent bodies. Volleyball and basketball became popular lunch-time activities on campus. The rowing club acquired a block of land upstream from the Fitzroy River Barrage, with the intention of erecting a boat house. Student bike enthusiasts spent much of their time on the Yeppoon mud flats, but attempts to establish a racetrack on campus met with an unenthusiastic response. One devotee, writing in the early student newspaper, *Captec*, reported the delights of “such fun sports as running down old ladies and dogs, little kids in prams, chooks, and any form of vegetation which crossed our paths”²⁹. Football and athletics were more acceptable. The athletics oval, built to olympic grass standards at Allan

Skertchly's insistence, was a grand operation. Skertchly envisaged it as a community venue and training ground for southern athletes in winter months, but his ideas did not take root in the early Institute environment.

Allan Skertchly, while encouraging student initiative, sought to bring social and entertainment activities under the umbrella of the Student Representative Council. Errol Payne lurked in the background of campus socials "to make sure things were under control"³⁰. In February 1969, Payne reported disturbances at the social when guests brought in extra supplies of liquor. Official reaction was predictable, in view of the potentially adverse publicity to the Institute. Thereafter, dances were tightly controlled. Student functions were restricted to two per term and written permission for a social had to be obtained up to two months in advance. Relations between students and staff were generally good. Staff-student tug-of-wars and sporting events were scheduled for the lunch-break, and a joint smoko (males only) was also held in late 1969.³¹ In addition, early staff and students shared refectory facilities and collaborated on the publication of *Captec*. Errol Payne is remembered by former students as a "pleasant, approachable person"³². George Cain, who succeeded Payne as staff-student union officer, became known to students for his outdoor participation as a football referee. Cain was concerned the students, while participating actively in sport, were less eager to stand as committee representatives, attend SRC meetings, or contribute to newsheets.

Through its social activities and clubs, the Student Union was nevertheless attracting community attention. One early public relations success, designed to overcome suspicion of students in the town, was the Mount Archer appeal, during which an energetic group of volunteers pushed a bed, with a girl passenger, up the mountain in 50 minutes. The money raised through sponsorship was donated to a subnormal children's home.³³ During 1969, the Union sponsored a Miss Australia entrant and entered a float in the local Capricana festival. It was in this year also that a raft race was first held on the Fitzroy River. Several fundraisers followed in the wake of the Mount Archer success while the Capricana floats and raft race became annual events thereafter.

The greatest publicity success of 1969 was undoubtedly the Open Day event of 28 June, when the small Institute opened its doors to the local population. Although organised student visits were attracting good attendances prior to the event, most staff were overwhelmed by the Open Day response. The *Morning Bulletin* estimated that "a crowd of more than 5 000 flooded the campus", primarily to view demonstrations of scientific and technical equipment.³⁴ As the public crowded into the three buildings on the Parkhurst campus, staff were kept busy printing and distributing information. Commenting on the significance of the day, Errol Payne observes:

there was suspicion about us but also a great amount of interest and when we gave them a chance to come to campus they really flocked out here to take the opportunity.³⁵

The successful Open Day corresponded closely with Rex Pilbeam's announcement that an important new phase of the Residential fundraiser was under way. To reach the elusive \$87 500 target, the Mayor enlisted students and council workers for a house to house appeal through the town. Plastic boxes were systematically distributed with the request that ten and twenty cent coins be inserted by households for a period of 20 weeks. With student assistance, the campaign proceeded steadily until November when Pilbeam exhorted Rockhamptonites to give more generously. The outspoken Mayor did not hesitate to reveal much of the \$63 450 collection had

come from organisations and individuals located outside Rockhampton and Queensland.³⁶ In the same month (November 1969) Pilbeam visited Mackay, Brisbane and Sydney pursuing further support.

As the campaign entered 1970, Pilbeam announced the fund had risen to \$78 000 with a further \$8 000 in pledges. The target was now in sight. Major donations of \$5 000 had been received from Carlton Breweries, Roach Products and Thomason and Co. of Sydney. By mid-year, when the campaign was winding down, the CATE Committee indicated their intention to record major contributors on the honour board of the Residential College. Throughout the lengthy campaign, Pilbeam had forcefully argued the Institute was a regional institution, and that southern companies with branch offices in Rockhampton should be prepared to contribute to the cause. Many had done so and, during 1970, optimistic plans were being laid for a Residential 'B' block to accommodate female students.

In 1970, there were 108 full-time and 188 part-time students enrolled at the Institute. Staff recruitment was a drawn-out process, complicated by immigration requirements and public service procedures; yet, by 1970, the nucleus of a teaching staff was in place. Allan Skertchly tackled the recruitment problem in flamboyant fashion by advocating air travel for overseas candidates in preference to long sea voyages. A significant percentage of the new recruits were British academics who, after working in industry and teaching in polytechnics or colleges, had emigrated to Australia in the 1960s. These included John Bugler, David Thomas, K. E. Dakin (Engineering), John Smith, Raj Vaseduva, Milton Fuller (Mathematics), David Cardnell, John Wilkinson (Physics) and R. S. Horne (Business). Well equipped to serve in the Institute, they were more mobile and willing to move north to Rockhampton than many of their Australian colleagues. In addition, a number of Australian-trained academics with overseas experience or qualifications were recruited, among them, Mary Davis (Biology), Greg Williams (Chemistry) and Bill Grigg (Engineering).

Apart from their overseas background, male staff possessed a record of service in the armed forces, a connection of which Allan Skertchly approved. John Bugler had been an officer with the British navy, and Bill O'Connor, appointed lecturer in mathematics in 1971, had served as an instructor in the Royal Australian Air Force. When asked about the extra work which staff performed to get the Institute established, Milton Fuller observes:

we put in a lot of effort, most of us came here expecting that. Certainly I'd come from places and careers - my military background and my time on merchant ships and at the Edinburgh university had always been associated with lots of extra jobs. I was accustomed to putting in long hours to achieve something. We all rallied to the cause. I'm sure that staff in those days worked hard but there was a good rapport amongst staff. It was small and we saw a lot more of each other.³⁷

Beyond this general profile, individual schools and departments began to develop their own particular characteristics and expertise. Unlike Engineering which developed an international image, chemistry was comprised predominantly of Australian staff. Under the temporary aegis of Chemistry, Biology recruited a significant number of women at a time when the campus was overwhelmingly male. Diana Cavaye had taught zoology at secondary and tertiary levels before she joined the Institute at Bolsover Street. In the first year of her appointment, Cavaye was

reported to be one of the busiest staff members with “a lecturing load of 21 hours per week in addition to preparing demonstration materials, student practical material and ordering teaching equipment”³⁸. Cavaye, subsequently promoted to senior lecturer, was joined in mid-1968 by Dr Mary Davis, a Research Fellow of the University of Queensland with professional interests in botany and education. For Davis, formerly headmistress of St. Faith’s School at Yeppoon, it was a return home after years of study in Australia and the United Kingdom.³⁹ A third female staff member in biology was Dr Gillian Kennedy, formerly of Adelaide, who arrived at the Institute in mid-1970. A few months later, in her address to the Rotary Club, Kennedy drew attention to the polluted state of the Fitzroy River.⁴⁰ New staff members, with overseas experience and specialist knowledge, set out to educate not only their students, but also the general community, though their opinions were not always heeded.

During the early years, Allan Skertchly and the staff worked at selling the institution in the press and at public gatherings. One of the more onerous responsibilities accepted by Milton Fuller was the position of schools liaison officer. It was his task to visit schools from Maryborough to Far North Queensland and to interest students in Institute courses and careers. Fuller made himself known to thousands of high school students and the success of orientation and Open Day functions owed much to his organisational ability.⁴⁰ During 1969, Fuller visited high schools in the Mackay and Proserpine districts as well as lecturing in mathematics. In the following year, he travelled to Innisfail, Cairns and the Tablelands. The James Cook College and the University of Queensland in Brisbane provided the Institute with strong competition for students. As Fuller explains:

the biggest problem we had to overcome was that most people seemed to think our students were running around in overalls and waving spanners and standing at welding machines. It was very much a technical college image.⁴²

The perceived status of the Institute at southern grammar schools and the University of Queensland was not easily overcome. Despite the considerable experience and pedagogical expertise of the staff recruited by the Institute, many people continued to view it as a “second-rate university”.

The tyranny of distance, gradually tamed in the case of staffing, insulated the campus against social and political change. At a time when anti-Vietnam protest movements were burgeoning on Australian campuses, a local student activist dubbed the Institute “the quietest campus in Australia”⁴³. Since its formation in 1968, the Student Union had been at pains to disassociate itself from the media image of protesting students. Indeed, the student body made a point of campaigning against what it regarded as an unacceptable stereotype. When approached by town groups for fundraising assistance, students wore Institute sweat shirts to prove to the local population they “weren’t all bad”⁴⁴. Owen Webster, who was student president after Kevin Bickoff, confirms:

the campus was conservative...There was not even a ground swell on campus...I would say that if you had taken a poll on whether students at Capricornia thought the Vietnam thing was good, they probably would have thought it was good. I think radical student activity really didn’t have any place at Capricornia - I don’t think that was the way the general campus saw things.⁴⁵

In addition to community expectations and the socio-economic backgrounds of students, the organisation and demands of Institute courses were factors constraining the political climate on campus. Long contact hours left little time for reflection and protest. The university system of end-of-year exams and fewer contact hours provided greater flexibility than the Institute's policy of continuous assessment. Another reason was the small number of full-time students on campus in the early 1970s. Staff and students knew one another on a personal basis, unlike the universities, where dissent was more frequent. Although Institute students were prone to bouts of dissatisfaction over their long hours, sit-ins and strikes were rarely contemplated. Jim Goldston, who was Council Chairman at the time, recalls a dispute with students over library hours when the matter was settled amicably over dinner at the Residential College.⁴⁶ If students missed the excitement of "going away", there was the compensation of knowing and being known on a local campus. The UDA's argument was borne out by Owen Webster when he went to the University of Queensland to study medicine. He recalls going to the university some days and not saying a word to anyone. He bought his ticket for the train, got off, hitchhiked out to the university and finally got to lectures, and did not speak to another person until he returned home - "that was so different to Capricornia"⁴⁷.

3

STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY

1967-1971

When Allan Skertchly took up his appointment as Principal in mid-1967, planning for the Institute's courses and building programme was already well advanced. Queensland State Government departments had control over construction matters, while the TEAC set in place a range of certificate, diploma and fellowship courses. TEAC's main concerns were to standardise QIT courses across the three campuses, gear them to industry and avoid duplicating comparable offerings by the University of Queensland. Departmental heads travelled regularly from Rockhampton to Brisbane to represent the Institute on a range of TEAC committees. By the time of Skertchly's appointment, a Regional Development Committee, consisting of Brisbane public servants, local CATE members and Institute staff, had been proposed to provide on-the-spot information for the decision-makers in Brisbane. From the outset, Skertchly voiced his concern the TEAC committees were designing courses "without an understanding of modern learning theory or any recognition of the need for a sound general education".¹ He sought a greater role for Institute staff in the planning process and a diminution of CATE involvement, but the Rockhampton Development Committee, convened in 1968, did not reflect his priorities.

In the context of Queensland and the 1960s, Allan Skertchly's educational ideas were considered to be little short of revolutionary. In Tofflerian fashion, he declared many secondary school subjects outmoded and predicted technology would transform all aspects of modern living and production. Skertchly's educational solution was a blend of flexibility and forward planning, neither of which he associated with the bureaucratic procedures of the Queensland Education Department. While buildings and equipment were being provided, the educational philosophy of the new institution had received less attention. Indeed, Skertchly saw his role as that of spokesman and planner for the emerging college sector throughout Australia. Early staff members acknowledged his contribution as "an ideas man" and "an educational theorist before his time".² One interesting Skertchly initiative was a social technology course which combined the teaching of reading and writing skills to engineering students with "a broad feel for technology and its impact on society".³ Skertchly, arguing against the conventional separation of disciplines, anticipated a flexible course framework in which education and the humanities would balance technology and the sciences.

Whether the Principal could implement his ideas in the utilitarian and administrative Queensland context was a critical question for the future of the Institute.

Centralisation remained a powerful force in the decision-making process. One strategy employed by the three QIT Principals was to present a united front in negotiations with the Education Department. Rockhampton staff were in constant communication with staff at the Darling Downs and Brisbane campuses in the early years. The standardised QIT courses placed great demands on the two provincial campuses which lacked the funds and staff of their Brisbane counterparts. Staff shortages at Rockhampton forced students entering third year engineering to complete their studies at Darling Downs. There were even suggestions that staff operate between Toowoomba and Rockhampton despite the great distance involved. Inter-campus cooperation did not develop with time since the provincial Institutes were keen to pursue their own directions. Skertchly suggested video lectures and a sophisticated communications system would overcome the distance problem but most of the interaction remained administrative. Examinations posed a major coordination problem until local staff took their grievances to Brisbane and won the right to design their own exams in early 1969.

The Institute's early courses were vulnerable not only to centralised control and small full-time enrolments but also to a critical staffing situation which persisted throughout 1968. To ensure the viability of courses, staff found themselves teaching in unfamiliar areas with limited expertise. In some instances, staff from one School were coopted elsewhere. Physicists, for example, taught in mathematics and electrical engineering strands until suitably qualified staff could be obtained.⁴ This was not interdisciplinarity as Skertchly had envisaged it and the Principal set out to identify and redress a range of problems associated with staff recruitment and retention. The first of these was the low salary scales offered to incoming staff. CSIRO scientists in Rockhampton had raised the issue before Skertchly arrived, but the significant discrepancy in Queensland between university and CAE scales was upheld on the grounds college staff did not require qualifications comparable with those of their university counterparts.⁵ In 1968, the Principal indicated staffing levels were only 50 per cent of actual requirements and identified isolation as a major stumbling block to recruitment.⁶ With the exception of the Whyalla division of the South Australian Institute of Technology, QIT Capricornia was the only college which was situated more than 100 miles (160 kilometers) from a capital city. Remoteness from southern colleagues and the absence of higher degree opportunities accounted for the reluctance of qualified people to come to Central Queensland. Study leave and adequate funds for travel were, the Principal insisted, essential if the Institute was to prosper, but these innovations would be difficult to justify in an institution which was geared predominately to teaching.

In his correspondence with the Education Department, Skertchly stated openly his conviction that procedures were inimical to successful staff recruitment. A letter of mid-1968 to the Director-General reported critically on the impersonality and inadequacy of public service methods:

Many disappointing comments have been made and continue to be made on the form in which notifications of appointment are being sent to successful candidates for academic positions at this Institute. These comments emphasise the stereotyped and generally part-duplicated forms and the poor quality of materials used in intimating details of appointment.⁷

Skertchly insisted separate, well-typed notifications be supplied to each job applicant. The situation improved following this request but overseas appointments continued to pose special problems. For its part, the Education Department found the Principal's willingness to advertise overseas without its prior consent to be an irritating oversight.⁸ In addition to the problem of arranging interviews in Canada or America, lengthy sea-travel and immigration laws delayed overseas appointees for up to six months after acceptance. Clearly, time and distance were critical constraints upon the effectiveness of the early Institute.

In person and in early newsletters, Allan Skertchly communicated his ideas to incoming staff. The educational directions of the Principal and Heads of Departments were synthesised in a bulky planning document, *Educational Specifications*, May 1968 which argued research was inseparable from good teaching. Skertchly and senior staff ambitiously envisaged the creation of a Capricornia Research Institute to liaise with Central Queensland industry, and an educational research project which would generate publications by staff members.⁹ The buzzword associated with the educational research project was "SAIL" ("Sustained, Adaptable, Independent Learning"). The "SAIL" philosophy, promoted publicly by the Institute, emanated from Skertchly and complemented the new motto, "*doctrina perpetua*" ("Forever Learning"), adopted after a competition in the previous year. Skertchly was confident the objectives outlined in the *Educational Specifications* represented an innovative and distinctive set of goals for the entire college sector. As he later explained to a southern visitor:

Motivationally then, we are interested not in providing a Research Worker in the image of a University Lecturer, but more to educate a technologist whose problem-solving skills and values are tuned to the world of commerce and industry and the social institutions of contemporary and future life.¹⁰

A major consideration addressed in the second section of the *Educational Specifications* was the need for a library or educational resource area (ERA). Almost 30 pages of detail were devoted to planning the ERA, which was to occupy 30 000 sq. feet, sufficient space for 100 000 volumes. In this instance, as in others, the planning process was a decade ahead of reality. The bid for a library fell well short of expectations during the Skertchly years. When the Public Service Board refused to sanction a high-level library appointment for the Institute, the Library Association blacklisted the position.¹¹ Mrs B. Eastman, a graduate without a library qualification, remained Acting-Head with a staff of seven assistants in 1969. The collections, initially divided between Bolsover Street and Parkhurst, were relocated in the basement of the Physics Building. Holdings were then estimated at 9 000 volumes, mostly uncatalogued.¹² Chemistry lecturers recall helping staff to catalogue the science books.¹³ Students of the time describe the Parkhurst library as poorly resourced and "pokey". General works were adequate but there was little available on specialised topics. From the first, journal and periodical subscriptions were considered a high priority for the expanding collection.

The establishment of an Academic Faculty and the formation of sub-committees on issues like the Library meant that administrative matters were being discussed at various levels in the Institute during 1968-69. Faculty extended its own committee structures to include such areas as grounds and development, academic dress and public relations. Among the most significant issues were autonomy and public relations. In early 1969, John Bugler, the chairman of Academic

Faculty, made strong statements to the press about the need to disentangle the Institute from a “very ponderous Public Service”.¹⁴ A Faculty report on autonomy upheld Bugler’s criticism of Education Department control and questioned the administrative effectiveness of advisory bodies like TEAC and the RDC. It recommended control of QITC be transferred to an executive board, to the departmental heads and to the staff, whose conditions remained “unsatisfactory in every respect”.¹⁵ Already the Principal, Allan Skertchly, was moving in this direction with the formation of an Academic Executive, comprising the Principal and Heads of Department. The Academic Executive, like Faculty, operated a range of committees and instituted a Board of Studies to review courses and academic procedures. Planning for the Library (ERA) resulted in proposals for a substantial building and for the formation of an Educational Resources Department. Neither of these proposals were put into practice, however, and much of the Academic Executive’s role remained theoretical while the Education Department continued to manage the Institute through its finance, establishment and building boards.

Parallel with these academic developments was the Institute’s concern for a stronger regional profile. Initiatives in this direction owed much to staff and the symposium committee of Faculty. The symposium committee, which comprised lecturers keen on consultation with industry, sought to bring together academic and regional research bodies and to liaise with the Rockhampton Research and Promotion Bureau.¹⁶ Its major achievement was the organisation of a symposium which attracted 60 academics and industrialists to QIT Capricornia on 18 July 1969. Thus began the tradition of regional service which has continued through the 1970s and 1980s. In addition to Institute staff, prominent participants included Professor M. Shaw (University of Queensland, Engineering), Dr John Allen (Mackay Sugar Research Institute), Tom Priestley (Manager, CREB) and Bruce Hiskens (Plant Engineering Manager, QAL). Bruce Hiskens, who was to become Council chairman in the 1970s, delivered a paper entitled “Human Problems in Industrial Society”, in which he focussed on the Rockhampton-Mount Morgan-Gladstone triangle and emphasised the Institute’s future role in decentralising industry and the skilled work-force.¹⁷ The rural industries were also considered. Allan Shannon (United Central Queensland Graziers’ Association) called for the introduction of farm and station management courses comparable with those offered in North American institutions.¹⁸ Competition with Darling Downs and lack of finance were major obstacles inhibiting the Institute’s early ambitions in this direction. Some participants at the symposium considered the Institute’s role was not primarily regional but national. Allan Skertchly predicted as many as 80-90 per cent of QITC graduates would be employed outside Central Queensland.¹⁹ Predictions of graduate mobility have since been revised amid general acceptance that the Institute’s regional reputation would only be assured when it displayed a solid record of skilled local employment.

One tangible development from the 1969 symposium was the formation of an Industry Institute Group (IIG) to foster liaison with local industry. However, a survey conducted in the following year to ascertain consultancy needs in the community attracted a disappointing response (38 per cent). Two immediate aims of the IIG were to facilitate staff consultation work and appoint an industrial liaison officer, following the lead of British polytechnics.²⁰ However, the IIG was starved of funds and made limited progress. When John Bugler resigned as Chairman in September 1970, the IIG was set adrift. After personal support from John Smith (mathematics) and Peter Warren (Regional Research Bureau), it was subsequently revived as a committee of the General Purposes Board and prepared a series of surveys on regional needs. Reluctance on the

part of the State Government to recognise consultancy work in the Institute became another staff argument in favour of autonomy. In the absence of formal apparatus for regional liaison, the most significant link with the community remained its teaching programme, with the Institute depending on local commerce and industry for its part-time teaching expertise.

In the early years, QIT Capricornia developed ties with both Rockhampton employees and employers. Prior to autonomy, the Institute was heavily engaged in pre-tertiary training. Certificate courses, available to students with a Grade 10 secondary education, represented a substantial commitment to the region in terms of training and resources. A prerequisite of certificate entry was that students be already employed in related occupations, either in industry or by government departments. Consequently, study for certificates was usually part-time over four to five years and courses had to be organised to accommodate a high level of evening attendance. Courses in biological laboratory technology were popular with staff at the health laboratories of the Rockhampton Base Hospital. Similar ties with Main Roads and CREB developed in the Engineering School. By 1970, the Institute's 10 certificate courses catered for a range of specialised fields. In addition to Biology Laboratory Techniques, Science offered a certificate in Chemistry, Business, a certificate in Business Studies and Engineering, certificates in Civil, Electrical, Mechanical Engineering and in Primary Metallurgy.²¹

Certificate courses were nevertheless subject to criticism by those who considered the Institute should concentrate on providing tertiary alternatives to the universities. Critics considered science and engineering certificates to be a legacy of the technical college era in Queensland. The situation was complicated by QITC's responsibility for students at Townsville Technical College where numbers had declined. By 1969, there were calls both from within and outside the Institute for the discontinuation of full-time and part-time certificates. Rivalry with the universities was increasing. The push for "parity of esteem" was strong in the Engineering School with the introduction of a four-year Fellowship Diploma. Engineering staff reported difficulties with "young ill-educated students with poor Junior pass and little application".²² Increasingly, staff across Schools viewed the certificate as a terminal award with little prospect of tertiary education to follow.

National pressure from the college sector for status commensurate with universities was a factor in establishing the Wiltshire Committee which was set up to revise the classification of courses and nomenclature of awards in CAE's. Its report of May 1969 noted the 'diploma' award lacked the status of its university equivalent, 'degree', and with reservations, recommended the college classification be upgraded to allow competition with universities.²³ A second Federal inquiry of that year, the Sweeney Committee, grappled with discrepancies in tertiary staff salary levels. It found senior lecturing and lecturing rates in the Queensland institutes were well below those for the other Australian states. Furthermore, CAE rates for all states remained inferior to those in the universities. In May 1969, the Sweeney Committee recommended to Federal Education Minister, Malcolm Fraser, college staff receive salaries equal to their university counterparts, "where members of these staffs have the qualifications, experience and the quality of performance".²⁴ Discrepancies in qualifications between university and college staff could be overcome, it decreed, if the latter possessed a five year period of experience in industry or commerce.²⁵ In his submission to the Sweeney inquiry, Allan Skertchly had stressed the need to upgrade college pay rates to match those of the universities if the institutes were not to become second-rate institutions.²⁶ He also advocated a zone loading of \$750 on all QITC salaries to offset

the disadvantage of isolation. However, this critical question received only brief consideration by the Sweeney Committee, which was content to observe:

Lecturing staff should not be made (to go) to isolated institutes at a stage of their careers when they need to undergo further study.²⁷

The Committee, while acknowledging the problems facing regional institutes, was not prepared to provide the necessary financial assistance.

The introduction of uniform wages scales across the college sector was a delicate matter. The Sweeney Report had emphasised the upgrading of salaries was not to be considered “a right” and left the management of individual institutions to assess the appropriate rates of pay. Staff members who appeared to lack suitable qualifications found the process an unsettling one. The Professional Staff Association (PSA) took up the issues of wages and conditions at its campus meetings throughout 1969 but received little support from the Principal. Skertchly considered the PSA to be outside the organisational structure of the Institute and discouraged strong lines of communication between the PSA and Academic Faculty.²⁸ In a climate of uncertainty, complaints of “dictatorial behaviour” were levelled against the Principal by both PSA and Faculty members. As autonomy approached, the uncertainty of staff over their industrial status persisted. The Principal did little to allay their fears when, in his 1970 report, he estimated the quality of existing QITC staff was only “50 percent adequate”.²⁹ He considered academic staff scales to be satisfactory but identified financial support for travel as an issue worthy of attention.

Staffing became a public matter in 1969-70 after the Principal terminated two probationary appointments. In March 1970, Keith Wright, Labor member for Rockhampton South, claimed a number of lecturers had been dismissed without right of appeal and called for tighter government controls over the Institute’s “dictatorial administration”³⁰. However, Owen Webster, a student representative, defended the Principal in *The Morning Bulletin* and argued that he had forged a “common loyalty to the Institute” on campus.³¹ In private correspondence to the Director-General of Education, Skertchly dismissed the allegations as inflated.³² Summing up the staffing situation, he stated, since 1967, two secretarial and library staff had resigned, two works and service staff were found to be unsatisfactory, three academic staff had resigned and two others had not been employed beyond the probationary period. There the matter rested, but the local debate which it engendered reflected continuing uncertainty within the institution.

Skertchly, confident of staff support and anticipating autonomy, continued to experiment with the Institute’s committee structure. An important innovation dating from November 1969 was the Principal’s Advisory Board (PAB) which replaced Academic Executive and absorbed elements of Academic Faculty. While Heads of Department were represented on the new Board, its composition was broadened to include the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Academic Faculty, the President and Vice-President of the Student Representative Council (SRC), the staff-student liaison officer and the Registrar (yet to be appointed). Although no students attended PAB meetings until the following academic year, they had been given a voice on the Institute’s senior management board. An innovation by the Principal at PAB meetings was the use of a secret ballot proportional responder, an instrument specifically designed to record degrees of affirmative or negative response during votes.³³ The responder subsequently lapsed but it represented an original experiment which was indicative of Skertchly’s own administrative style.



The Principal's Advisory Board. (from left), Bill O'Connor, John Bugler, Frank Schroder, Ron Young, Allan Skertchly, John Carkeek, David Thomas, Vic Clarke and Richard Horne.
Note television studio entrance.

The Principal Advisory Board's mandate to prepare documentation, coordinate the activities of the Institute and advise the Principal, represented an attempt to democratise the administration. Coordination problems arose when committees of Academic Executive and Academic Faculty were transferred to its control. Moreover, the Principal retained power of veto and the right to modify its decisions. The main loser in these changes was Academic Faculty which, despite executive representation on the PAB, considered it was being denied a say in plans for autonomy. Thereafter, individual members of Faculty and the Staff Association made common cause against the Principal.³⁴ Some issues raised in staff forums were taken up by a General Purposes Board which took pressure off the overloaded PAB. The Industry Institute Group, for example, was resuscitated for a time. However, the unwillingness of staff to serve on the General Purposes Board and the lack of budgetary provision for its proposals combined to reduce the GPB's role as an effective complement to the PAB 'octopus'.

The Institute's building programme for 1970-72 promised expansion, with QITC receiving \$1.4m in capital expenditure. QIT Darling Downs and QIT Brisbane received \$1.65m and \$2.2m respectively. Along with a Residential College dining hall, which could be used for conducting examinations and social functions, plans were well advanced for engineering and education buildings at Parkhurst. In its first three years, the Institute recruited technical and administrative staff, albeit at a slower rate than academics. The first Registrar, Merv Rayner, had been head of the Business Department at QIT Darling Downs before accepting the appointment in January 1970.³⁵ Barrie Harvey, the first administrative officer appointed, gained two support staff, Andrew

Drummond and Dennis Teagan. Drummond, responsible for finance and administration, was also a resident at the Residential College. John Stephens, the earliest appointment in central technical maintenance, was forced to “don a number of hats”. He was, in his own words, “the electrician on Monday, carpenter on Tuesday, audio-visual technician on Wednesday, storeman on Thursday and printer on Friday”.³⁶ It was some time before Stephens was able to concentrate on his specialised skill as a printer. Prior to 1971 when the Institute purchased an offset duplicator and an IBM composer, most publications and specialised printing were contracted out to local firms. In terms of audio-visual resources, the 1960s was the era of Tandberg reel-to-reel recorders, Peak amplifiers and roneo machines. Barbara O’Brien, one of the secretarial staff, and Alan Mortensen, an administrative assistant, recall cutting stencils for old style duplicating machines and queuing at the administration building to use the Institute’s only photocopier.³⁷ Repairs and parts for equipment posed constant problems since it cost as much as \$1 500 to fly in a technician from Brisbane. For much of the time John Stephens had to make do by fixing machines with the phone to his ear or calling upon the advice of other technical staff. Stephens, recently retired, enjoyed “moving around” in the early years and interacting with “the caring nucleus of the place”.³⁸ Under the Education Department, pay rates for general staff were low. Stephens, a qualified printer with experience at Ilford Films, received a fortnightly salary of \$84.60 in 1969. After his promotion to senior assistant in photographs, he received only \$121 p.w. and \$136 p.w. by October 1970.³⁹

For hard working general staff, autonomy promised real financial improvements. More so than academic staff, they found the Principal supportive and approachable on a day-to-day basis. Ground staff received as little as \$37.15 p.w. prior to autonomy. Part of the difficulty, as Kevin Turner saw it, arose from the limited departmental classifications covering their positions.⁴⁰ By 1970 there were four ground staff employed in gardening and removal work as well as nine cleaning staff. When the Residential College dining hall was completed in 1971, the audio-visual technicians, Keith Paton and Don Hoff, occupied the basement. Prior to this, the audio-visual section was located in a dark room in the basement of the administration building. Make-shift accommodation under the dining hall continued to prove unsuitable for its operations. When heavy rain fell and conditions remained damp, the basement floor was covered with several inches of water.⁴¹ Early audio-visual acquisitions included a black and white (Sony) video camera and film projectors (8 and 16 mm). The pattern of moving from place to place was common to most support services. Not till the end of the 1970s was the audio-visual section permanently housed in the Library.

By 1970, six clerk typists were also working at the Institute, some of whom helped out in publications when committee meetings were onerous. They were the first in Central Queensland to use electric golf-ball typewriters. Barbara O’Brien worked on one of these machines and when she made a mistake, searched for replacement text with the equivalent number of letters to that deleted.⁴² Barbara then used the ‘cut and paste’ method to correct the document, although she disliked this style of presentation. Several of these electric machines were later sold to North Rockhampton High School and maintained for the high school by John Stephens. Office staff availed themselves of the Institute minibus which operated to and from work in those days. They “had it good” at the time because the driver Vic Lang dropped his passengers off at the door of their residences in the afternoon.⁴³

Though not always prominent in written records or in the literature of tertiary institutions, general staff played a key role at the Institute from the beginning. In addition to those mentioned

above, technical staff were attached to specific departments. Electrical and mechanical engineering technicians were called on to make parts for worn out equipment throughout the Institute. Rob Steer, promoted in late 1969 on Skertchly's recommendation, was responsible for the construction of a language laboratory at the Rockhampton High School.⁴⁴ The Chemistry section employed one laboratory technician and one cadet technician by 1970. At a time when equipment funds were tied to building grants, the Science school was able to acquire "more than adequate" resources for teaching purposes.⁴⁵ Biology was staffed by a group of four technicians, headed by 'Jock' Cullen. After arriving in Rockhampton in January 1970, Cullen set about redressing gaps in equipment orders and supplies. He recalls when making submissions, new facilities like microscopes "had to be seen as able to be used by any other department before they were approved".⁴⁶ In spite of difficulties, Cullen, an Associate of both the British and Australian Institute of Technology, eventually procured additional binocular microscopes and established close relations between Biology and the health laboratories in Rockhampton. Cullen, who was responsible for the Associate Diploma of Biological Laboratory Techniques (ADBLT), placed more emphasis on developing technical and practical skills than on academic training. Laboratory attendants set up equipment for practical classes and afterwards cleared away and checked for damaged equipment. Though normally engaged in preparatory work, they were also called on to give demonstrations in the classroom. Jamie Hibberd, an early Biology student who returned to work with Cullen, observes relations between students, technical and academic staff were on a more personal basis in the early 1970s.⁴⁷ In addition to Cullen's organisational skill, Biology was fortunate in recruiting Slim Roebuck, an energetic lecturer with valuable experience in London laboratories.

The Principal and the academic staff valued the contribution of general and clerical employees. In early reports, Skertchly described audio-visual, graphic resources and technical support services as adequate. The Institute was slower to acquire comprehensive computer facilities. Although the first staff appointment in computing was not made until August 1972, the mathematics section of the Physics Department introduced the teaching of computing in the late 1960s. The Department of Railways provided punched cards for students and the Southern Cross installation at Toowoomba processed the data.⁴⁸ Engineering began to invest in computing facilities with the purchase of a PDP 8 machine for \$15 000. According to department head, Frank Schroder, the PDP remained the most used computer on campus, surpassing the ICL 1901A which was commissioned in 1972 for \$77 510.⁴⁹

It was intended a computer section, like the audio-visual section, would be housed in a future library building. During early 1971, the Principal continued to forward draft specifications of the ERA to the Works Department but the gap between planning and implementation persisted. To Skertchly's frustration, the Principal's Advisory Board did not support a motion to give priority to the project in the following triennium.⁵⁰ Financial stringency affected smaller outlays as well. In early 1971, with the Institute on the verge of autonomy, the Queensland Government cut the State budget by \$10m and, despite protests from the Principal, sharply reduced the Institute's recurrent expenditure.⁵¹

Although autonomy could not guarantee the Institute against economic stringency, it did promise greater internal control. In its teaching activities, for example, QIT Capricornia would no longer duplicate the offerings of Brisbane and Darling Downs, but could gear itself to the perceived needs of the region. Skertchly and senior staff had been strong advocates for autonomy since 1969 when an Institute committee stressed the administrative advantages for all three QIT

campuses. In 1970, the Queensland Parliament passed detailed legislation for the state's nine colleges. Sections 51e and 51f of the *Education Act Amendment Act* provided for the establishment of a Council to administer the Institute in conjunction with central Boards of Advanced Education and Teacher Education. A QIT Capricornia submission in March 1971 made specific recommendations concerning the composition of the new Council and its committee structure. Nevertheless, autonomy was not instituted along the lines of a local 1969 report which had argued for coordination at the Federal level rather than by the State Government. Although a Commonwealth Commission on Advanced Education would provide funding for the Queensland colleges, the newly-formed Queensland Board of Advanced Education (BAE) exercised control over the institutes which now officially became colleges of advanced education. Despite the demise of TEAC and the Rockhampton Development Committee, tight control of budgets by the BAE and its chairman Bill Wood continued throughout the 1970s. Ongoing constraints under autonomy were aptly reflected in a partial name change from QIT Capricornia to Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education (CIAE).

With the advent of autonomy, Skertchly adopted a more forceful position in dealings with Brisbane. Since the *Education Specifications* of 1968, the Principal, now titled the Director, had emphasized the need for forward planning as part of the transition to autonomy, a point which he reiterated at an educational conference held at Darling Downs in May 1971.⁵² In his annual reports of 1970 and 1971, Skertchly drew up a series of detailed lists indicating the major requirements of the institution for the following decade. Among the more urgent issues identified were the low student enrolment, staff shortages and the need for facilities in computing and information services. In the buoyant educational climate of the 1970s, none of these problems appeared insuperable. More serious were disagreements in the executive over the priority of the ERA project and construction delays which threatened the ambitious building programme.

On 16 June 1971, a successful graduation ceremony was held on campus, to be followed by a dinner and ball at the administration's expense. An estimated 100 staff and 1000 guests attended the ceremony which was addressed by Dr K. F. C. Back, Vice-Chancellor of James Cook University. Justice D. M. Campbell presented diploma and certificate awards to 26 successful students across the four Schools. Business, which had produced a small number of graduates in 1969 and 1970, was again well represented with 10 Bachelors of Business awarded on this occasion. The successful employment record of early graduates augured well for the 1970s. Greg Low Choy, for example, continued his business studies at RMIT before gaining employment with Mt Isa Mines. Keith Wallin went to CSR at Mackay. Robert Dalglish, Philip Hoare and Desmond Pearson went to Canberra on Commonwealth cadetships. Half of the 1970 business graduates were employed by Rockhampton accounting firms.⁵³ Mathematics and Biology graduates pursued careers in the State teaching service. Among the more adventurous mathematics students was Peter Nothling who left Australia to join the European Space Agency.⁵⁴ Electrical engineers went to the Capricornia Regional Electricity Board (CREB). One of these, Evan Flower went on to manage the North Queensland Electricity Board, while another, Peter Meijer, pursued postgraduate research in power systems analysis at the University of Manchester in England.

On 28 June 1971, nine days after graduation, the Queensland Education Minister, Allan Fletcher, announced formal autonomy for the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education (CIAE). To commemorate this development, Allan Skertchly published a long article in *The Morning Bulletin*, entitled "Capricornia is Born". Skertchly, referring to himself as Vice-



Early graduation at the Residential College 1971, from left (seated, front row) Lindsay Barker, Ron Young, Greg Williams; (standing) graduating student, John Carkeek, Merv Rayner, Justice D.M. Campbell (seated) Dr K. Back, Jim Goldston, and Allan Skertchly.

Chancellor rather than Director, pointed out , with autonomy, the Institute was now:

a separate legal entity - a body corporate - responsible for the conduct of its own affairs (and) able to develop and introduce new courses and enact laws and legislation for the conduct of its affairs.⁵⁵

Yet the ongoing constraints of the State bureaucracy could not be entirely forgotten. Autonomy had also become an industrial issue with the Professional Staff Association which expressed dissatisfaction with the manner in which the administration was handling staff affairs. When asked by Skertchly to transfer from the public service to CIAE employment, some staff chose not to do so.⁵⁶ The Federation of Staff Associations of Australian Colleges, of whom Bill O'Connor was the local representative, considered Institute staff had been "required to make a decision at very short notice before the Public Service Board had publicised procedures on the transfer of staff".⁵⁷

In his written announcement of autonomy, the Director paid tribute to the hard work performed by local associations, leading politicians and public servants - Sir Robert Menzies, Sir Ian Wark, G. Murphy (Director-General of Education) and C. Gilmore (Technical Education) - for their role in establishing the Institute. CATE, (previously the UDA), which had done much at the regional level, were represented on the new Council convened in early July. Jim Goldston, manager of the Queensland Railways Central Division and a former UDA executive member, was appointed Council Chairman. Other successful nominees were barrister Frederick McGuire, CSIRO scientist Greig Turner, and Rockhampton Mayor, Rex Pilbeam, who had been a driving force in the marathon Residential College fundraiser. Joe Gutekunst, liked and respected as

Regional Director of Education, had been involved in the movement for tertiary education in the region since the 1960s. Mrs Molly Bencke, the only woman on the first Council, was a marriage counsellor in Rockhampton. Both she and Tom Bencke, a city council alderman and president of Rotary, had been active in the UDA, as had Catholic Education Director, Dr C. C. Ballard. Managerial experience was not lacking on the CIAE Council. Bruce Hiskens was plant engineering manager of Queensland Alumina Limited, Dr John Allen was director of the Sugar Research Institute at Mackay and Don Woodcroft, general manager of Central Queensland Cement. Academic staff were represented by the Director, Dr Skertchly, four elected members, Kevin Fagg (Business), Milton Fuller (Mathematics), Bob Hay (General Studies) and David Thomas (Engineering) and two student representatives, E. M. Fargher and Max Davis.

Skertchly likened the Council to “a board of directors”, yet it was clear from his remarks in *The Morning Bulletin* he expected a more liberal hand in conducting the Institute’s internal affairs. Indeed, he considered this arrangement to be a “vitally important part of autonomy”.⁵⁸ Yet, the extent to which Council would defer to the Director’s wishes was unclear. When CATE disbanded in 1970, its members, some of whom were now councillors, expressed dissatisfaction with the minor role to which Skertchly had relegated it. Councillors had served also on the TEAC Committee prior to 1971 and had been in close social and professional contact with the Director. Consequently, differences in policy with the Director were already clear. There could be no doubting the determination of the Director nor of the Council Chairman to implement policies which each deemed to be in the best interest of the institution. The ‘honeymoon’ period between Skertchly and the Council would prove to be short indeed.

4

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL

Expansion in the 1970s

The 1970s proved an exciting period for Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education (CIAE) with visible progress on a range of fronts. An impressive building programme steadily transformed the physical environment of the campus. The Library, constructed after long debate and sustained lobbying, represented the culmination of a decade of collective industry. During this time, the campus population exploded. Student enrolments jumped from 213 in 1971 to 1 500 in 1978 and full-time staff increased three-fold to 308.¹ In addition to carrying heavier teaching loads, staff were preoccupied with upgrading their qualifications and preparing documentation for the rigorous accreditation process which accompanied the award of degrees to the Institute. Autonomy presented fresh challenges for the local administration and the new Director, Arthur Appleton. The transition from a technological institute to a multi-functional college of advanced education was not without problems, as the creation of new disciplines and Schools challenged existing hierarchies. By the close of the decade, the ethos of the Institute had shifted from small personalised operations to School-based activities and an administrative preoccupation with economic accountability. In retrospect, optimistic predictions for tertiary education under Whitlam were not the prime determinant of growth. External control remained with the State Government and particularly with the Queensland Board of Advanced Education.

Autonomy did bring about changes at the top but these were not the developments anticipated by the first Director, Allan Skertchly. Instead, the Council, led by Jim Goldston, asserted its control of the Institute through a range of committees, most notably finance, personnel and buildings. Goldston, a senior public servant, adopted a “hands-on” approach to administration and determined to run the Institute “by the book”.² Skertchly’s practice of approving purchases without seeking prior departmental approval was frowned upon by the Council’s Finance Committee which sought to tighten procedures over “ordering, tendering and reserving payment including those made by the Director”.³ Under pressure from Brisbane, the lay Council took its responsibilities most seriously despite the full-time professional commitments of its membership. It was not uncommon in its early years for monthly meetings to begin at 7pm and continue until 1 or 2am. Milton Fuller, one of four staff representatives elected to the first Council, paid tribute to the unflagging efforts



Pilbeam Hall, Residential College, 1971.

of the early Councillors:

They listened...and sought information from staff members. They gave us full support, treated us as equals on the Council. I can't speak highly enough of the Council at that time.⁴

Among those active on the first Council was Molly Bencke, a science graduate and its sole female appointment. She served as chairperson of the Academic Dress Committee, established to investigate the introduction of a suitable gown for the Institute.⁵ Requests were addressed to the Committee for the use of the light blue of the CIAE crest, although discussions on the style and colour of the proposed gown continued until the end of 1972. Bencke also served on the Student Affairs Committee and sought out student representatives on Council for consultation. She lent support to their moves for a student union building and offered them the use of her home for meetings as an interim measure.⁶

The most pressing concerns identified by Council were the planning of an ambitious building programme and the preparation of estimates for the 1972-75 triennium. During 1971, work advanced on "Pilbeam Hall", a dining-room and social centre for the Residential College; buildings to house a new Education School as well as Social Science A and the Creative Arts Theatre proceeded more slowly in the hands of private contractors. Along with Finance and Buildings, the Personnel Committee recognized the need to recruit senior staff in the fields of engineering, education and general studies. Symptomatic of the Council's forceful approach was the Personnel Committee's appropriation of the Director's powers to appoint staff above lecturer two level.⁷ There was also a need to increase administrative staff in the Registrar's office as the demands of autonomy were felt. Council and its committees pursued their issues vigorously throughout 1971 and were prepared to convene extraordinary meetings to deal with pressing issues.

As past practices came under the scrutiny of the Council and its Chairman, tensions surfaced with the Director during late 1971. The main point of issue appeared to be the outstanding costs associated with the graduation ceremony and ball of June 1971. On that occasion, Skertchly had approved a private charter flight for the visiting speaker, Dr Ken Back of James Cook University, but the Education Department balked at this unauthorised expenditure. At its first meeting, Council resolved that future functions would be held by subscription. The issue of payment went unresolved for six months after autonomy and was referred to the newly-formed Board of Advanced Education which refused to pay the full costs. Underlying the dispute were questions of administrative control and social differences between the expectations of the provincial community and the frankness of the Director's lifestyle. Skertchly's public support for the 'mental revolution of youth', the permissive age and an uncensored student newspaper won him little support from the new local or state administrations.⁸

In addition to influential Council committees, the Director was constrained by the Management Advisory Committee, a senior academic body constituted under Council by-laws and modelled upon the statutes of James Cook University. The MAC, comprising the Director, Heads of Departments and the Registrar, replaced the Principal's Advisory Board and became the effective centre of academic governance within the Institute, with responsibility for a wide range of administrative, academic and departmental decisions.⁹ Heads of Department, while applauding Skertchly's philosophies, were also critical of the Institute's day-to-day operations. According to one source they thought that:

it was fine to have grand theories and grand designs and educational objectives and so on, but it was also necessary to have paths that didn't become mud heaps, rooms to put students into and rooms for staff. They had to work closer to the brickwork.¹⁰

Initially, the Director was to report on behalf of the MAC to Council but Skertchly did not attend its fortnightly meetings.¹¹ He regarded his intermediary role between Council and MAC as diminishing his authority and "incompatible with (his) role as Director".¹² Council, dissatisfied with the flow of information from this source, was in a position to obtain informal advice from MAC members, sitting on its own committees. With the support of the Minister, Council took the initiative and introduced a provocative new clause in its sixth by-law, unique in the statutes of Queensland colleges.¹³ Under this amendment, the Director was no longer guaranteed the chair of MAC which would be convened by an elected committee member. Council had, in effect, bypassed the Director and his authority.

On 23 December 1971, matters came abruptly to a head at a special Council meeting, during which the Director indicated his intention to resign at the close of the financial year in mid-1972. Reminiscences by staff raise a series of questions about the precise details of the confrontation.¹⁴ Did the Director intend to announce his resignation before entering the meeting or was he deposed? If so, by whom? The Council or the MAC or both? Despite the limited publicity which it received in the press, the 'Skertchly Affair' entered the collective memory of the institution and was a leading topic of conversation in social circles for some time afterwards.¹⁵ Opinions about the first Director were polarised throughout the Institute, but time has since mellowed firmly-held positions. Two decades later, most of the early staff, including his forthright critics, paid tribute to Skertchly's energy and vision.¹⁶ Among the Council, too, there were those who regretted his



Capricornia Institute staff and Rockhampton Development Committee members (c. 1970) (from left bottom) , Clyde Gilmour, Jim Goldston, Stan Merry, John Kennedy, Barrie Harvey, Merv Rayner, Allan Skertchly (Principal), Greig Turner, John Smith, Frank Schroder Secretary.

departure. According to Molly Bencke, “he was qualified to be the first Principal; he was the right one, volatile and active”.¹⁷ Greig Turner, a Councillor who returned to Rockhampton and the Institute amid the turmoil of the Director’s resignation, summed up the general feeling when he stated in retrospect that “he (Skertchly) was very good but he didn’t like the formalities or the red tape”.¹⁸

The dramatic upshot of the pre-Christmas meeting was the departure of Skertchly to Victoria and the eventual resignation of the Registrar after criticism of his conduct in authorising a leave payment to the Director.¹⁹ Uncertainty persisted during 1972 amid speculation the Director intended to return and resume office. In the meantime, the Institute grappled with the foundation problems of the Education School and its significant full-time enrolments. Initially, five Education staff were appointed. The Head, Norman Bowman, had previously been Principal of Madang Teachers’ College (India) and an Education lecturer at Melbourne Teachers’ College.²⁰ Andrew Wake, currently the longest-serving Education staff member, was educated at Sydney and Alberta Universities. Russell Stockwell (Psychology), Michael Byrnes (Drama) and Helen Haley (Physical Education) were the other three foundation staff.

When the 1972 academic year began, the construction programme had fallen behind schedule and the small Education staff lacked permanent accommodation. Nor were facilities like the



Education, SSA (left) and Engineering complex (right) looking north from Applied Science A (c. 1974). Swimming pool and gym in background.

gymnasium and swimming pool available. Staff and students remembered attending classes in the dining hall of the Residential College and in the Administration building where the telephone switchboard is today. Robert Schwarten, a foundation student, considers despite these obstacles, course quality was good and paid tribute to the Education Head - "it was actually to Norman Bowman's credit that things ran at all".²¹ Bowman, following his appointment in September 1971, developed a diploma course proposal, but this was rejected by the Board of Teacher Education in favour of the existing offerings at Mount Gravatt. Thus, the Education School found itself in a similar position to existing Schools which had begun with limited resources and operated under an obligation to teach courses developed by larger Brisbane institutions.

Bowman and his staff did not find 1972 a suitable year in which to advance their urgent claims for facilities. The departure of Skertchly and the caretaker role of the MAC coincided with a consolidation of the technologies. The Engineering School, which had been downgraded and isolated at Bolsover Street, reasserted itself strongly. Under the departmental representational system, Science and Engineering staff dominated the MAC. Contrary to the wishes of Education, a planning seminar, convened in March 1972, delayed construction of the Library, although the Creative Arts Theatre, intended largely for Education, was progressing steadily. Bowman and his successors considered Education was not being funded in proportion to the relatively large student numbers it was attracting.²² As the Education School continued its spectacular growth phase in the second year, enrolments rose to 256, almost half of the entire full-time student population.

For most of 1972, Frank Schroder, the elected chairman of MAC, was Acting-Director, pending a new appointment. Schroder, a strong critic of Skertchly, enjoyed good relations with the Council and close professional ties with the Chairman, Goldston, and Deputy Chairman, Hiskens. With assistance from Barrie Harvey, who was Rayner's temporary replacement as Registrar, Schroder brought order to the Institute's building programme by liaising closely with Works Department officials in Brisbane. Preparation of the 1972-75 triennial estimates was also a high priority with 11 construction projects still to be finalised by December 1972. Among these were the Library, a student union building and proposed extensions to the Engineering block.²³

By the time a new Director was appointed in December, two important additions, the Education and Engineering buildings, were completed and opened officially by Premier Bjelke-

Petersen. Constructed cheaply of rock-block and lacking air-conditioning, they had been designed for utilitarian rather than aesthetic purposes. Engineering staff contributed to the design of their Parkhurst building and planned for a three-wing complex in consultation with Brisbane architect Blair Wilson. Columns and beams were in a modular form to facilitate extension. In retrospect, Engineering staff considered their first building to have been “well designed but poorly constructed”.²⁴ Both Engineering and Education blocks leaked, a problem which necessitated substantial ongoing maintenance. The Library collection developed by Education was threatened during summer rains. According to library assistant Margot Scott, “staff used buckets to catch the water and always knew where to relocate the books during downpours”.²⁵ On one occasion, it was discovered that a milk bottle, left inadvertently on the roof of the Education building by a construction worker, had washed into a down-pipe and caused flooding of the Business staff office. The situation improved when tar and vinyl cladding were used to seal the roof.²⁶

Along with the building schedule, the appointment of a new Director preoccupied staff and Council throughout 1972. The large committee convened for this purpose included the Vice-Chancellors of the University of Queensland and of James Cook University Professor Zelman Cowen and Dr Ken Back, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Advanced Education, F. L. Hennessy, and members of the Institute Council. It was faced with the task of selecting candidates from a field of 40 applicants, some of whom were internal. After several rounds of interviews, it was announced in August Dr Arthur Appleton, formerly head of the School of Metallurgy at the South Australian Institute of Technology, had accepted the Directorship. Married with two children, Arthur Appleton was a graduate of Liverpool University in the United Kingdom and had taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States before coming to Australia in 1965. He recalls arriving in Rockhampton with his family to face a December heatwave and living at the Residential College until suitable accommodation could be found.²⁷ Construction of a house on campus for the Director had been mooted by Council, but was rejected by the BAE.²⁸

The leadership of the new Director, while forceful, differed significantly from that of his predecessor, Allan Skertchly. In keeping with the wishes of Council, Arthur Appleton cultivated a more detached style of administration. Social events on campus became more formal as the Institute sought to upgrade its community image. Of critical importance to the new Director was the restoration of good working relations with Council and the Management Advisory Committee. To this end, he proposed the chairmanship of MAC revert to the Director who would report to Council on its behalf. Despite the fact resolutions to the contrary were passed by MAC during 1972, the controversial by-law was subsequently removed and the Director's influence consolidated.²⁹ MAC operations remained central to Institute administration, but were dogged in the period up to 1975 by block-voting and unresolved grievances between Schools.³⁰ The continuing practice of withholding voting rights on MAC from acting Heads of Department, the acting Librarian and teaching staff reinforced the image of Capricornia Institute as an institution driven from the top.

For the incoming Director, the departure of the first Registrar posed a second immediate problem. One of the difficulties of the position had been its low status prior to September 1972. In a successful attempt by the Council to upgrade the position, Council decided the Registrar would be directly responsible for the 36 staff involved in enrolments, exams, publications, Institute transport, maintenance, Residential College and grounds. In many areas he was effectively directing the Heads of Department on administrative requirements.³¹ Arthur Appleton,

without extensive administrative experience of large institutions, was nevertheless able to recruit an able British-born Registrar through contacts in Adelaide. Brian Bartley, formerly Bursar of a large institution in East Africa, had been in Australia for only three weeks when approached to apply for the vacant position. Above all, the Director and Council were looking to appoint a financial officer with competence in the preparation of triennial estimates.³² Bartley, who had drafted budgets for the Tanzanian university and parliament, enjoyed a similar background to the British-born Director and many senior CIAE staff. The British contribution to the Institute remained preponderant during the Appleton years, especially at senior level. The new Registrar was to serve as secretary on many internal committees, including the Council's Finance Committee, and made a valuable contribution to the standardisation of funding and staffing procedures during his lengthy term of office.

Temporary dislocation, associated with the Directorship and the new Education School during 1971-72, did not prevent the steady expansion of CIAE's academic schools and departments. With Council support, the three foundation Heads of Department, Frank Schroder, Ron Young and John Carkeek provided leadership on a day-to-day basis. In addition to his contribution as Acting-Director, pending Dr Appleton's appointment, Frank Schroder was recruiting highly qualified staff for the Engineering School. Dudley Roach arrived from Australian Iron and Steel and New South Wales University to take up a lecturing position in mechanical engineering. He recalls the morale of the School was high after the move from Bolsover Street and the working week usually ended with a friendly game of squash and drinks at the Ambassador Motel.³³ The team ethos operated at all levels, including the MAC, where the three Engineering department heads worked closely together.³⁴

A distinctive feature of staff recruitment in Engineering was the high level of successful overseas candidates in an industry chronically short of Australian graduates. Akhtar Qizilbash (civil) a British-trained authority on transportation, Maurice Black, a British graduate with South African experience, and Dennis Hanley (mechanical), an American researcher from the aerospace industry, were prominent examples of this trend.³⁵ The appointment of Roach, Hanley and Rockley Boothroyd, a highly qualified graduate with extensive CSIRO experience, enabled Frank Schroder to concentrate on electrical engineering and power systems analysis.³⁶

The successful growth of the Engineering School after autonomy ensured it enjoyed a high profile on campus and in the community. Following an accreditation committee visit in June 1973, the School was given degree status for its four-year Fellowship Diploma. A few years later, in 1977, the School achieved a first with the approval of its Master of Engineering. Close ties with the Rockhampton branch of the Institution of Engineers, Australia smoothed the way for course developments. Not only were CIAE's Councillors and staff prominent in the activities of the Rockhampton branch, but a special meeting was set aside for an exhibition of final year student projects.³⁷ The success of the 1973 event, at which one student from each of the three engineering departments presented the findings of project work before a panel of five judges, turned the presentation into a well-attended, annual gathering. Engineering students were also being given an opportunity to comment critically on their courses at a meeting convened by the Heads of Departments. Finally, the School was developing a strong cooperative relationship with State Government departments (Main Roads, Railways and Electricity) and with private sector groups in mining and timber. When official approval for consultancy work was given to staff in 1974, the School was well-placed to compete with Engineering departments throughout Australia in this

area.³⁸ Frank Schroder, in retrospect, considers the distinctive international background of his CIAE School gave it a decided advantage over Brisbane institutions.

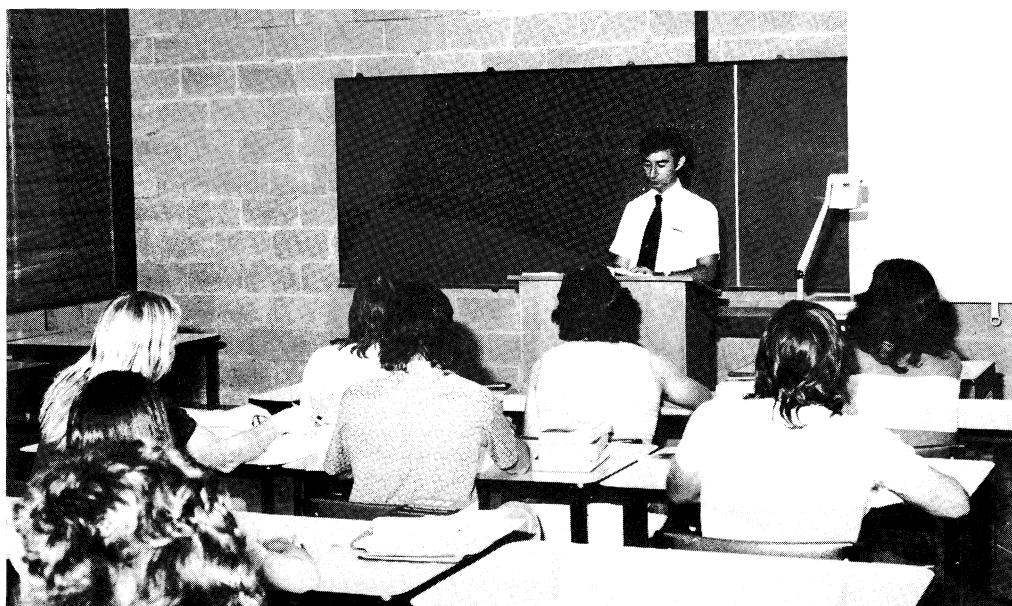
The Engineering School was proud of its strong record of student achievement. Among the more successful was Russell Clark, a 1973 graduate, employed by BHP and Utah in the mining industry.³⁹ Sam Bonanno, a special entry student, was employed on the Central Queensland coalfields at managerial level after a period overseas.⁴⁰ By 1976, the School was actively recruiting female students in an attempt to dispel the image of an all-male profession. In 1977, there were only three female students in its total intake of 200. A pioneering female student Kathy Noonan (Miller), completed her Bachelor of Electrical Engineering in that year. She was in the special projects section of Capelec and returned to undertake postgraduate study at Capricornia Institute in management. Kathy was promoted to risk evaluation engineer and was seconded to the single wire earth return rehabilitation group in 1991.⁴¹

Like Engineering, the Science School consolidated its reputation after autonomy. Following a series of successful submissions in 1973-74, the Diplomas of Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics were upgraded to become the degree of Bachelor of Applied Science. Dr Greg Williams, appointed Head of Chemistry in mid-1970, chaired the Institute Board of Studies, a MAC sub-committee established to oversee the accreditation process across the campus. Departmental structures in Science continued to evolve during the 1970s. Mathematics-Physics separated into Mathematics and Computing and Applied Physics. Mathematics and Computing, headed by John Smith, an Edinburgh graduate with extensive industrial experience, played an important service role to other Schools.⁴² Biology, formerly associated with Chemistry, also became a separate department under Dr Andrew Osborn and attracted healthy enrolments at a time when the environment was becoming a major social issue. The Animal House, completed during 1973, was used by Biology to store laboratory animals and practical equipment. Although Science enrolments were comparable with those for Engineering, concern was expressed within Physics and Chemistry at the prospect of limited internal growth. After considerable discussion, in which John Wilkinson of Physics played a leading role, Science formulated a proposal to offer the Bachelor of Applied Science externally in Physics and Chemistry. It was the first course of its kind developed in Australia.⁴³ Amid some scepticism, the external Science degree attracted healthy enrolments in its first year in 1974, enabling the School to maintain a steady growth rate.⁴⁴

In pioneering the offering of courses through external study, Science pursued a different growth strategy to Engineering. For Science staff, teaching from 15 to 22 hours per week, external course development was the next major commitment following accreditation. According to Wilkinson, the department was given only six weeks to develop its external courses so the pace was hectic. Errol Payne recalls:

John (Wilkinson) prodding and poking us and taking a leaf from the Open University to some extent in the UK,... It was a lot of work but in fact we sat down and wrote the first set of Physics notes and the first set of Chemistry notes and the students enrolled, and we've just gone, more or less, from strength to strength.⁴⁵

In 1975, the first external Biology and Mathematics subjects were offered. Practical supervision and training were imparted at residential schools in the May and September vacations and the University of New England's policy of offering identical internal and external courses was



John Carkeek presenting a lecture.

adopted. The results were impressive. Not only did Science enrolments double, but the external students consistently achieved higher grades than their internal counterparts. It was a further tribute to the industry of Science staff that they were enrolling also for higher study. Errol Payne began a PhD at the University of Queensland and Dave Cardnell successfully undertook post-graduate work in the United Kingdom. John Waller took study leave at the University of Swansea to research the uses of microprocessors in instrumentation.

Like Science, the School of Business underwent a series of transformations. It assumed the title of Administrative and General Studies after Physics relinquished its service department. With a dozen staff, the School occupied the new Education (SSA) building in 1973. It was still faced with a series of foundation problems, notably high staff turnover and an absence of academically qualified recruits. John Carkeek, who headed the School from its inception, was equal to the challenge of raising its academic standing in the eyes of the administration and community. Described by his colleagues as “a very hard worker”⁴⁶ and “outstanding individual”,⁴⁷ Carkeek successfully undertook two external postgraduate degrees while holding the Headship and sitting on the education and external studies committees of the BAE. According to Kevin Fagg, a foundation staff member who was also upgrading to a Master of Economics:

(Carkeek) was keen to get a Master’s degree because the Business School has always been less qualified academically than all the other Schools and then there was no form of being able to do a Master’s degree by distance education...He solved that by paying his own fares to Brisbane...He used to fly down on Thursday afternoon and come back Friday morning.⁴⁸

Carkeek’s active role around Rockhampton did much to establish good relations with the local

business community. In June 1973, he married Helen Haley, a physical education instructor in the Education School.⁴⁹ The high profile of the Carkeeks continued to strengthen relations with the town until the end of the decade when Helen resigned and John died prematurely of cancer. In particular, John Carkeek's critical contribution to the Institute was acknowledged and plans for an administrative studies centre laid after his death. However, despite considerable discussion and support, the proposed centre to commemorate the Head of School did not eventuate.⁵⁰

Before Carkeek's death, Administrative and General Studies had built a solid foundation based upon the Bachelor of Business and the Graduate Diploma of Management. With the exception of its tourism proposals, courses for the Bachelor of Business were accredited promptly and attracted a high percentage of part-time enrolments. In 1975, the School followed the lead of Science and, amid scepticism, offered pilot external programmes at Gladstone and Mount Isa. The Graduate Diploma of Management, officially launched in 1977, attracted consistently high enrolments throughout eastern Australia and remained for many years the "flagship" of the School. To meet the demands of external courses, Ken Dooley, Bruce Gates and other staff undertook preliminary investigations for the establishment of a bookshop on the campus. The recommendations of the bookshop committee won the support of the Director who made available a loan of \$20 000 for this purpose. A manager, Armin Kullack, was appointed in 1977 and the enterprise prospered under his direction.⁵¹ The external initiatives of Science and Business, achieved by long hours of toil and a "52 week teaching year", represented one of the major developments of the Institute in the 1970s. After a period in which John Wilkinson of Physics served as Acting-Director, a separate External Studies department was created, with Peter Smith as the first Director.

The Business School, as it came to be known, assumed its distinctive form in 1974 when General Studies evolved into a separate Arts Department. In the first instance, the Diploma of Arts was offered internally to 110 students, mostly in the part-time mode. The driving force behind the infant department was Doug Sadler, a self-confessed workaholic. Remembered as "ex-navy and affable",⁵² Sadler gained a Master of Arts from Columbia University and substantial administrative experience with the Queensland Government before taking up his CIAE appointment as Senior Lecturer in 1971.⁵³ He was largely responsible for the department's multi-disciplinary base, incorporating literature, language, English language, media appreciation and community studies. Literature, a strength in early years, boasted several poets (Rob Hay, Anne Lloyd) and a high proportion of female teachers (Marcia Vodicka, Hazel Mellick and Helen Hennessy).⁵⁴ Doug Sadler's skills lay in recruiting suitable staff as well as in establishing broad directions. David Carment, with a PhD from the ANU under the supervision of Professor Manning Clark, was recruited to restructure the history programme which was originally based on that of the Canberra CAE. The appointment of Grahame Griffin and Michael Mellick, two long-serving members of the department, provided the stimuli for expansion of the media strand and the inception of a broad-based communications approach, which balanced theory and practice.⁵⁵ Other contributors included former ABC journalist, Fred Morton, and Dr Shelton Gunaratne of American and Sri Lankan background. By 1978, the media strand produced its first journalism graduates, one of whom, Phillip Cass, returned in 1988 to lecture at Capricornia Institute after working on Queensland provincial and metropolitan newspapers.⁵⁶

Within the Arts Department, the concept of community studies was slower to take root. At a time when the Whitlam Labor government was promoting decentralization and an Australian

Assistance Plan, community studies appeared a timely innovation. Securing academic and administrative approval for the concept proved more difficult. Accreditation visits by committees, representing other institutional interests and approaches, were remembered by Arts staff as “very demanding experiences”. In one case the submission was too ambitious,⁵⁷ while, in another instance, the visiting committee members appeared ill-disposed towards the department.⁵⁸ The Arts diploma was upgraded to degree status in 1977 and external offerings began in the following year, but the Arts department felt more heavily than Business, Engineering or Science, the power of veto exercised by the BAE. The Board’s decision to discontinue tourism and recreation units, developed for external study in 1978, was a serious blow to departmental morale.⁵⁹ Doug Sadler and his replacement Marcia Vodicka were under considerable pressure to justify the viability of the department in an institution which, while multi-functional, continued to promote science and technology. The decision to limit mature-age student entry to 25 per cent of annual enrolments was a severe restriction for Arts.⁶⁰ According to a senior colleague, Sadler was “fiercely loyal to his School and his staff and fought many a tough tenacious battle on our behalf”.⁶¹ Notable among these struggles were his efforts to retain the teaching of Japanese language courses at a time when Asian studies were not widely accepted. Sadler studied successfully for a Graduate Diploma of Management and helped to pioneer tertiary studies at Gladstone. He was widely remembered for his role in coordinating social activities on campus and for his sympathetic attitude to students and staff alike.

More turbulent than the evolution of Arts was the precocious growth of Education, a School which dominated enrolments until the mid-1970s. At its peak in 1975, Education supplied 100 of the Institute’s 150 graduates and attracted 400 of the 1 000 full-time students on campus.⁶² Its mainstream offering was the three year Diploma of Teaching. Like Arts, Education did not receive accreditation for a bachelor’s degree till the end of the decade; nor did it do so without setbacks. A series of School submissions for a Diploma in Educational Administration, an Associate Diploma in Arts and Crafts and for postgraduate courses were rejected by the BAE. There were even last minute problems with the Diploma of Teaching when the Board advised that the course had not been accredited before its inception.⁶³ The only other significant course developed in the 1970s was an in-service diploma for two-year trained teachers after 1976.⁶⁴ The tight control exercised by the Education Department and State Government boards over the School led to friction with the government, the Council and local schools, as the two departmental Heads, Dr Norman Bowman and Dr John Gasson, sought to assert their own academic priorities.

The background and ethos of incoming Education staff were in many respects alien both to Queensland’s conservative culture and to the technological emphases of their own institution. A significant intellectual influence on Education staff was the body of North American educational theory which advocated individual development, experimental learning and the integration of curriculum subject areas. Norman Bowman, Andrew Wake, Howard Cassidy and Lewis Larking were examples of this trend. Cassidy, a drama lecturer who arrived in 1974 to join Michael Byrnes, recalls conversations with other new staff at the migrant hostel, “sitting up there in the pouring rain, hiding our beers and waiting for real-estate limousines”⁶⁵. Newcomers like Cassidy and Reg Shelley rejected what they called the “Capricornia retirement syndrome” in favour of innovative and experimental teaching. Sensitivity Through Imagination Resources (STIR) and Implementation Strategies were two such programmes designed to “loosen up” and overcome the “very tight inhibitions” which they perceived in students. The Creative Arts Section of Education, comprising



'Yungaba' Migrant Hostel on the Range, where many incoming staff were temporarily accommodated.

music, drama and visual arts continued to expand and play an innovative role on campus and in the community which was invited to participate in workshops and seminars.

The recruitment of Education staff with experience in southern Australian states, North America, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands, compounded differences between the School and the slow-moving Queensland educational bureaucracy. Without Queensland primary teaching experience, staff could be viewed as "arrogant" and "brash" in their dealing with the community and the schools.⁶⁶ A well-publicised disagreement in 1974 with the Queensland Teachers' Union over the content and extent of practical teaching requirements saw a further deterioration in relations between the School and the Institute Council.⁶⁷ The gap between theory and practice was also reflected in the school's dual structure, with curriculum studies and education studies vying for ascendancy. Both departmental heads were forthright in their dealings with one another and with the administration. Matters reached a crisis point in 1977 when the Director, Arthur Appleton, intervened and served for a year as Head of Curriculum Studies. One staff member recalls a rapid changing of hats in School meetings as department heads overruled one another before being overruled by the Director.⁶⁸ The leadership crisis continued in the Education School until a series of new senior appointments were made (Ian Whelan, Bob Beevers and Dr Wong Kooi Sim) and a majority agreed to the restructuring of the School.

Leadership problems in the Education School were intensified by the growing perception of its staff that the School's enrolments were being used to fund Engineering and Science. Its committee representatives persistently claimed the School, with almost half of the student enrolment, was receiving only one-eighth of the funding, and pointed to the purchase of expensive scientific equipment in this regard. Science and Engineering representatives riposted superior

access to good equipment was an important factor in their graduates' competitiveness with the more theoretically based universities. A comprehensive study of Capricornia Institute in the mid-1970s confirmed inter-School differences as "one of its most serious problems".⁶⁹ The under representation of the Education School and the centralised nature of funding ensured the Management Advisory Committee was divided along School lines. Block-voting by multi-departmental Schools was a feature of its deliberation in its early years. This was especially evident in Engineering whose three departmental heads combined to achieve considerable success.

One important initiative which fostered better relations between Schools was the development of an agreed resources formula in 1976. A special committee, comprising Brian Bartley (Registrar), Frank Schroder (Engineering) and John Gasson (Education), hammered out an arrangement by which staffing allocation depended upon student hours taught by a School or department. This meant in practice Schools with lower contact hours (Arts, Business and Education) had to attract more students to get extra staff. The SCAFAAS entitlement (Sub-Committee to Consider Alternative Formulae for Allocation of Academic Staff) gained broad acceptance in the MAC and was employed with variations thereafter. It provided for a staff base of three, with an additional member for every 300 student contact hours.⁷⁰ Business, Education and Arts continued to press for a better allocation. As single department Schools they each received three plus, while Engineering (three departments) got nine plus and Science (four departments) 12 plus.⁷¹ Subsequently, the arrangement was reviewed and the base of a single department raised from three to four. By 1980, Business, Education and Arts were receiving almost the same allocation as Engineering.⁷²

One consequence of the Institute's rapid multi-functional expansion in the 1970s was the growing social distance between Schools. Gone were the days of Bolsover Street, when the small Institute staff could gather for Christmas at the home of the Schrodgers. The Wives Club which acted as a social centre in the early 1970s lapsed as did a committee proposal to purchase an old Queenslander homestead for use as a Staff Club.⁷³ At the same time, the social gap between general and academic staff widened and campus social life tended to revolve around separate Schools:

Council tried to organise one big gathering each year but Finance stands together and Engineering stands together and it remains clicky.⁷⁴

Social communication between senior staff in different Schools occurred largely by phone and interchanges between members of compatible disciplines were sporadic. As one member of staff of the period puts it:

Engineers consider Humanities, the Arts people a bit strange; they can mix with Science - I've always found this. Engineers and Education have trouble - similar disciplines can socialise.⁷⁵

Social fragmentation during the 1970s was closely related to the long hours of work in which CIAE staff were engaged. The *Regional Colleges* survey found, even before most external course units were developed, staff at Capricornia Institute were spending more time (14.6 hours per week) than their colleagues in other colleges designing new courses.⁷⁶ Writing course submissions and external subjects tended to be an isolating activity which left little time for leisured discussion or

personal research. A further problem associated with rapid growth was the want of facilities for inservice staff development. The same college survey contained implicit criticism of Institute staff for employing unimaginative teaching methods.⁷⁷ A proposal, formulated in 1978, for the establishment of an educational practices unit within the Institute, was opposed on the grounds it would engender staff hostility and was subsequently dropped.⁷⁸ Finance, as ever, proved the stumbling block to inservice schemes and the staff club, but it was difficult not to see in these omissions a reaction to the ambitious Skertchly era. Not only was the style of the second Director different from that of his predecessor, but the priorities of Council and senior management lay elsewhere.

Skertchly's "vision of excellence" founded upon strong social ties, educational awareness and technological sophistication, was kept alive by the successful completion of the Library. A longstanding point of discussion, the Library occupied several temporary locations at Parkhurst before a separate building was constructed during 1976-78. It was housed initially on the second and top floors of the Mathematics-Physics building. At this time, there were fewer than 25 000 volumes in the entire collection. A staff of nine females and three males, under the direction of Neville Meyers, laboured to catalogue and order the collection, with little or no time to devote to reader assistance and education.⁷⁹ The move to Engineering created additional space, but there were still problems of poor ventilation, rain-damage during Cyclone David and with missing books. The suspicion books were disappearing over railings and through metal louvres prompted the decision to enclose the verandahs.

During the three years in which it was housed in the Engineering complex, the Library experienced a dramatic upsurge in acquisitions. With the provision of generous Federal grants the collection doubled to reach 50 000 volumes. At the same time, periodicals rose to 10 000, a three fold increase. Commenting on these changes, one staff member aptly remarks:

I had to reprogram myself morning and night to change from an economic lifestyle to adapt to being a humble servant at work spending money like water!⁸⁰

The time limitations placed on bookstock grants meant the purchasing operation could easily become an exercise in speed rather than one of careful selection. The second significant feature of this period was the upgrading of the Library's expertise. Along with the appointment of well-qualified newcomers, existing staff were upgrading their professional qualifications. User services librarian, Neville Meyers, who worked in the Library for 12 years in five different locations, completed his BA externally in 1975 before pursuing postgraduate library study overseas.⁸¹ Acquisitions librarian, Margot Price, began her degree around the same time. Olivia Abbay, a very competent cataloguer and early promoter of the special Capricornia Central Queensland Collection, held a British Library Association qualification. Bruce Edwards, appointed Chief Librarian from QIT Brisbane in mid-1974, was highly qualified as was Carol Gistitin who arrived to act as readers' adviser in 1976.⁸²

During the mid-1970s, calls for a separate library building intensified across the campus in the face of imminent funding cutbacks. The Staff Association recorded grave concern at the prospect of postponing the project.⁸³ Finally, after a decade of discussion and delay, construction of a three storey building costing three million dollars became the Institute's major construction priority in the 1976-78 triennium. The sustained campaign by staff and supporters to retain the

project constituted, as protagonists recall, “the greatest win we had”⁸⁴ and “one of the few successful uses of political muscle”⁸⁵ which the Institute had embarked upon. The CIAE staff and Council, with exemplary support from the community and its political representatives, took a strong case to Canberra and resisted the cost-cutting measures which had limited the scale of previous capital works. Without this local pressure, it is probable the project would have been delayed for a further decade. As it was, approval for the ambitious project was secured and construction began in May 1976.

The practical and psychological significance of the Library cannot be overstated, situated as it would be in the middle of the campus and capable of unifying services which had previously been piecemeal. Director, Arthur Appleton, who presided over a consolidation period, proclaimed the Library to be a “milestone” which confirmed that Capricornia Institute had “come of age as a public institution”.⁸⁶ Easily the most impressive building on campus until that time, it was designed by architect Steve Trotter with contributions by New South Wales sculptor, Kevin Brereton, and Brisbane landscape architect, Arne Fink. The most striking external feature of the Library were Brereton’s pre-cast panels, 160 in all, which were designed to give the building a sense of depth and special visual significance. Unfortunately, the original design did not provide for windows until Chief Librarian Bruce Edwards intervened - “hence the holes in the concrete panels”.⁸⁷ There was some discussion over furnishings. Many Library staff wanted a brown speckled carpet but the Chief Librarian stood firm and “orange it was”. Construction continued throughout 1976 and most of the following year. In late 1977, Library staff moved to their new quarters. With the help of two trucks, a crane and a team of overseas students, the move was undertaken in extremely hot weather prior to the Christmas vacation. The new complex, 28 000 sq. feet in area, incorporated computing and audio-visual sections, special collections of Central Queensland and curriculum materials, and featured welcome improvements like air-conditioning, a common room, meeting chambers, mail and book-sorting facilities. The Library continued to grow in its new location. By the end of the decade, its collection of 90 000 volumes compared favourably with those of other CAEs while holdings per student rose to 44 in 1979.⁸⁸

To celebrate its coming of age, a special Institute committee organized a series of cultural events to coincide with the official opening of the Library. The most prominent of these was a two day seminar, “Isolation and the Writer”, to which leading Australian writers were invited. Patrick White who had recently been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, was also invited as a guest of honour to the opening ceremony but declined.⁸⁹ Harrison Bryan of the Sydney University Library accepted on behalf of the profession. He had given the Institute useful advice on library matters since the early 1970s. The announcement that Princess Alexandra and Angus Ogilvy would perform the official opening stimulated considerable public interest. A large crowd, numbering more than a thousand, flocked to the campus for the September ceremony. The local *Bulletin* commemorated the event with a special colour supplement honouring the Institute and welcoming the royals. Its illustrated feature and reports of campus life were part of a successful public relations exercise by the Institute and its Director. Amid considerable uncertainty about the future viability of multi-functional CAEs, Dr Appleton took the opportunity to review the achievements of the 1970s and emphasise “in large measure, we (the CIAE) are succeeding”.⁹⁰

The steady transformation of the campus by the close of the decade extended to the grounds and natural environment. Until that time, limited money had been set aside for this purpose and landscaping was undertaken in small sections. Sustained efforts in this direction began with the



View of the Library building from the Student Services building. Note pre-cast panels and landscaping.

Library. Stage one of Arne Fink's design focussed on the northern, southern and western sides of the complex at a cost of \$80 000. The establishment of a green space around the library with



View of courtyard (from left), Library, Applied Science A, Student Services and Education (SSB) building.

shade, small pools and pathways was to become a special feature of the campus environment. The task proved more difficult than anticipated, and as the Central Queensland climate took its toll, the system planned by Fink had to be replanted. Kevin Turner, Geoff Havig and ground staff performed tirelessly in maintaining and upgrading the Institute's physical environment. The establishment of shaded areas and grassland space, coupled with the sealing of carparks, gave the Institute a more established appearance as it entered the 1980s.

5

CLOSING THE GAP

Campus and Community in the 1970s.

With the rapid increase in enrolments during the early 1970s, student activities and attitudes assumed greater prominence and contributed significantly to an emerging CIAE ethos. Male school-leavers continued to dominate student enrolments at the Institute. The new intake of Education and Arts students promised to redress this imbalance. By 1976, 20 per cent of Capricornia Institute enrolments were mature-age students.¹ Relatively homogeneous, the student body comprised at this time of only 10 per cent of females and very limited numbers of Aboriginal and international students. In keeping with the structured inequalities and vocational emphasis of the binary system, the Institute continued to draw its students from semi-skilled and skilled backgrounds rather than from professional or managerial ones.² Increased Federal funding and the abolition of fees accelerated the upward drift into tertiary education. Director, Arthur Appleton, was among those who expressed misgivings at the prospect of downgrading the role of the technical college system.³ In spite of Rockhampton's strong manual and labour traditions, this trend continued. For those students of less affluent background, Capricornia Institute became the only viable financial option, since going elsewhere entailed additional costs beyond their means. In 1974, an estimated 25 per cent of its students indicated they would not have accepted tertiary places outside Rockhampton.⁴

In addition to local enrolments, school liaison officers recruited actively in secondary schools from Maryborough in the south to Mossman in the north. An estimated 50 per cent of Engineering students came to the Institute from North Queensland.⁵ The influx of students into Rockhampton had significant social consequences for the town and campus since the Residential College could only accommodate a small number of applicants. In early 1972, 62 students vied for 10 available places. By 1973, student union manager, Roger Tregear, described the situation as "desperate" with 300 students seeking accommodation on and off campus.⁶ By this time, work had begun on a third Residential College wing, but this did not become available until July 1974.⁷ In the interim, Residential Warden, John Carkeek, took the decision to convert existing single-bed accommodation at the College to twin-bed quarters. The absence of cheap rented accommodation in Rockhampton exacerbated the accommodation situation and brought regular appeals for public assistance from

the Warden and the Director. By the end of 1973, amid concern at the moral effects of overcrowding, the Church of England provided a major financial contribution of \$75 000 towards the construction of a fourth Residential College wing.⁸

The spillover of students into the town promised, albeit gradually, to impact upon campus-community relations. As yet, urban development in North Rockhampton had not yet encroached on Parkhurst. The limits of town settlement were still a good 15 minute walk from the campus. Student groups were most likely to be seen by townspeople at football and sporting competitions or at the annual Capricana festival. By 1973, the raft race, in which students took a high profile, became a regular feature of the Capricana aquatic festival. One early student participant observes that:

They paddled from one side of the Fitzroy (river) near the Motor Boat Club, near the former YMCA below the old bridge, across the River to the boat ramp. That was the first race; the next year was above the barrage and was thereafter at the Ski Gardens. The Residential College won to start with and then the Chemistry team won the race for three or four years consecutively... In the early years there was a Residential College team, a Chemistry raft, a Maths-Physics raft and definitely one or two Engineering rafts - they treated the construction as an Engineering project.⁹

A feature of the event which disturbed some town officials was the spirited exchange of flour bombs and rotten tomatoes between rival rafts. Mock-battles continued along with a Capricana pie-throwing competition in which both the Mayor Rex Pilbeam and the CIAE Director, Arthur Appleton, were encouraged to participate.

Capricana inspired regular student pranks. The kidnapping of a 4RO radio announcer and the distinctive three-toed megathurian footprints in unexpected locations were two examples. The annual incursions of megathurian climaxed in a memorable assault on a visiting United States warship.¹⁰ Student David Horsman, riding solo on a surfboard, is reputed to have made the hazardous approach while a student team engaged the crew in a friendly game of football. Most of the early pranks were not destructive and police concern was minimal. This was not to be the case later in the 1970s when a new rash of pranks inspired concern among the town authorities.

On occasions, Institute students pursued local girls with variable success. An agreement with the nursing quarters of the hospital gave students admittance to end of term balls and other nursing functions. A clandestine tradition of nurses returning after hours was established. It was not unexpected, given the lack of regular contact, that town residents viewed students with some suspicion. When offers of boarder accommodation were scarce, students crowded into small ghettos around the town. The “swamp” and the “zoo”, near Victoria Place, were two such locations.¹¹ Above all, the media image of student protest and permissiveness created misunderstanding. CIAE student involvement in community work and fund-raising were designed to overcome this stereotype.¹²

In spite of heavy teaching loads, Institute staff were also active in community affairs. John Carkeek’s efforts on behalf of the Queensland Sub-Normal Children’s Welfare Association were noteworthy. The Carkeeks, the Youngs and the Appletons assisted in its fund-raising activities and provided input for the construction of the Endeavour Foundation School on land adjacent to the campus.¹³ The Wives’ Club, in addition to its valuable service for incoming staff and families,

provided cultural and financial support for town organisations. In 1972, the Wives' Club adopted a charity, the "House with No Steps", and used CIAE venues for fund-raisers. These evenings, for which Club members did the catering, performed a double service by bringing the families of staff together. The 1974 *Annual Report* recorded, in addition to the valuable contribution of their womenfolk, 38 staff members were actively involved in community associations, lectures and fieldtrips.¹⁴

Before the construction of Pilbeam Theatre in the city, the Creative Arts theatre, completed in 1973, provided the community with a useful venue for concerts and exhibitions. Its air-conditioned auditorium and capacity seating for 200 made it the largest venue on campus at that time. Musical performances in the 'CAT' theatre were provided by Creative Arts Staff in the Education School and by town orchestras like the Rockhampton Chamber Music Group. The Education Department used the venue for exhibitions and activities, while the Institute embarked on a modest arts acquisition scheme in support of local artistic talent.¹⁵ Creative Arts staff were also responsible for developing a musical and dramatic experience in conjunction with orientation week activities and assumed a high profile in campus-community relations. One such initiative by Michael Byrnes and Howard Cassidy was the Capricornia Cinema Club, established in February 1974. The Club, continued by Grahame Griffin and Anne Lloyd later in the decade, attracted crowds of 100-150 people to screenings of vintage, avant-garde and contemporary films.¹⁶

The goodwill which campus activities created in the community was temporarily overshadowed in March 1974 by a public dispute involving the Education Department, the Queensland Teachers' Union and the Education School of CIAE. Proposed innovations by staff to the practical teaching arrangement with Central Queensland schools were vetoed by the Regional Director and school principals. The incident, which escalated when Dr Appleton and the QTU became involved, threatened to sever ties between the Education School and the schools, and highlighted problems of inadequate liaison between staff and school principals. In hindsight, staff of the time view the episode as a sober reminder of the conservative provincial climate in Bjelke-Petersen years and recall their tentative status as outsiders and newcomers to the north. Renegotiation was "a slow process" and a "tightrope" involving staff, the schools and the slow-moving bureaucracy.¹⁷ For a time, minor upsets threatened the delicate relationship. When physical education staff conducted fitness tests in the schools and published their critical findings, they were reprimanded and requested not to publish future research in the media without the approval of the school principals.¹⁸

A *Regional Colleges* report, published in 1974, emphasised the problems of the Education School and commented prematurely on Capricornia Institute's tenuous relationship with the community.¹⁹ The description of the Institute as an "invisible college" took little account of the "quiet infiltration" policy which management and staff were practising during 1974-75. The conflicts and cultural successes of the Education School were both part of an ongoing process which matured considerably in the course of the decade. In addition to its social and cultural activities, the Institute was fulfilling its original function as a technological institution by providing consultancies and applied research expertise on a range of scientific and technical matters. Already in 1974, 17 staff were engaged in consultancy work and 10 per cent of the Institute's computer space was being used by private industry.²⁰ The insistence of the Director the CIAE be viewed as a community resource was part of an inter-School effort to close the gap

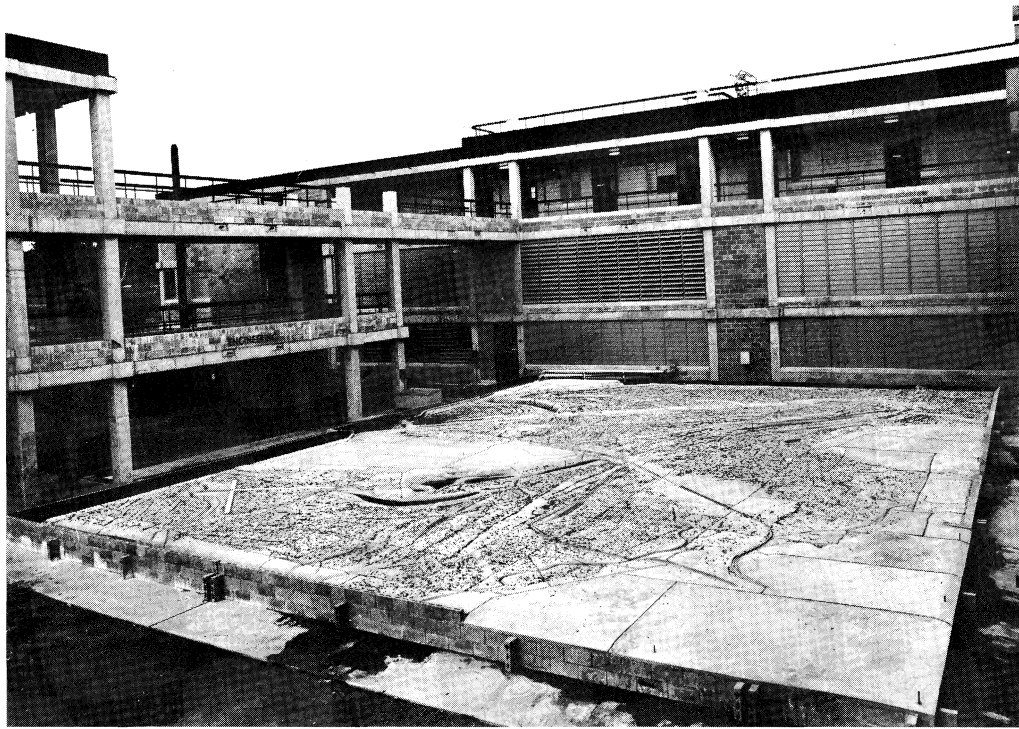


Civil Engineering. Academic and general staff, 1982. From left, Peter Dux, Akhtar Qizilbash, Viv McLellan, Patricia Leischke, Jacinta Cumming, Don Limpus, Mick McDowall, Bill Grigg (H.O.D.), Martin Murray.

between campus and community.

Engineering staff established a strong research profile for the institution and their School. In the field of electrical engineering, staff won a series of grants for research on microprocessors, following the successful design and installation by Frank Schroder, Jack Sandell and student Brett McDowall of a load data acquisition and reduction system for the South-East Queensland Electricity Board.²¹ Staff involved at the regional level successfully organised and participated in symposia on the Gladstone power station and smelter. Ongoing liaison with CREB, the Queensland Electricity Generating Board and Queensland Alumina Limited facilitated the accreditations of a Master's Course in Electrical Engineering in 1977, the first such award to be offered in the Queensland college sector. The achievements of the Electrical Engineering department were matched in the Civil and Mechanical departments where strong ties were forged with State departments and regional industry. Bill Grigg won a \$69 500 research consultancy from the Australian Water Resources Council for a study and computer model of the Callide Valley, a collective project which involved Engineering, Mathematics and Business staff.²² A hydraulic study of the local Yeppen flood plain between Rockhampton and Gracemere was undertaken for the Main Roads Department at a cost of \$36 000.²³ The model constructed for this purpose dominated the quadrangle of the Engineering complex for many years. Similar studies aimed at flood mitigation were later commissioned by the Beach Protection Authority for the Capricorn Coast.²⁴ Relations between the Institute and the Rockhampton City Council were slower to develop. By the mid-1970s, however, Akhtar Qizilbash's expertise on traffic accidents and city mall developments provided the town with a valuable source of up-to-date information.²⁵

Capricornia Institute's annual open day was an opportunity to foster public interest in a range of exciting research projects. For students concerned by the world energy crisis, John Bugler's



Yeppen Flood Plain Model in quadrangle of the Engineering complex.

solar energy research proved a stimulating challenge.²⁶ Bugler compiled radiation data for the Rockhampton district over 10 years, built a solar energy laboratory and introduced a degree course subject on solar energy. In mid-1976, Bugler spent a year with CSIRO in Melbourne and in the United States developing a solar radiation theory which attracted international attention when it appeared in the *Solar Energy Journal* of 1977.²⁷ Equally topical, in the wake of devastating Cyclone Tracy, was the timber and research testing of northern Australian homes. In fact, Tracy merely accelerated emerging ties between CIAE engineers, Merv Martin of Boyne Valley Sawmilling and the Plywood Association of Australia. The pioneering work of Dennis Hanley, Mick McDowall and Roger Thomas had important long-term consequences for the School and the Institute. McDowall's concept of the "engineered whole house" provided the basis for sustained investigation by other staff and students.²⁸ By accommodating inquiries at short-notice and providing build-and-test expertise, Hanley and his colleagues laid the basis for a major research centre in the 1980s. In the aftermath of Tracy, important studies were undertaken on the uplift and racking response of timber studwall panels sheathed with structural plywood.²⁹

The practical nature of Capricornia Institute's contributions to the local community was further demonstrated by Don Morris' research into the behaviour of cattle dogs. Conducted in the Biology Department over a three year period with a grant of \$20 000, the working-dog project monitored performance over a 10 week period. Morris, who later undertook studies in the United States, developed a series of tests to measure the stress response of cattle dogs in early life. Working cattle-dog days were held on various Central Queensland properties using local animals and Scott Lithgow's outstanding breed was chosen for breeding experiments at the Institute.³⁰ In

the same year as Morris' project began, the School of Business sponsored the first National Northern Beef Outlook Conference with support from the Capricornia Graziers' Association, the Australian Cattlemen's Union and other interested organisations. With northern Australia relying heavily on beef exports, the conference provided a venue for discussions with representatives of the Japanese Livestock Promotion Corporation.³¹

Growing awareness of environmental issues by the mid-1970s stimulated consultancy activities by the Biology Department of the Science School. The invasion of the Fitzroy river by water hyacinth ("*eichornia crassipes*") prompted the Rockhampton City Council to fund research into the problem. By late 1973, the hyacinth had completely covered the barrage area and spread 20 kilometres downstream. Aerial spraying to contain it was both expensive and potentially hazardous. By mid-1974, in an effort to check its proliferation in the lagoons of the Fitzroy, the Council sponsored a \$10 000 two year scholarship at CIAE. Biology staff recommended against further spraying on the assumption flooding would disperse the hyacinth over the barrage. Their findings were subsequently vindicated, although spraying continued in 1975.³² Two other topical issues which interested Capricornia Institute and the community were the Mt Etna caves and the Iwasaki land development at Yeppoon. In both cases, local opinion was aroused by the Queensland Government's attempts to press ahead with these developments. A study of the ghost-bat, "*macroderma gigas*", which occupied the contested Mt Etna limestone ridge locality was undertaken with a grant provided by the Federal Department of Environment. Armed with this information, biology researcher G.J. Troop was in a position to contribute to the public debate and confirm the real threat to the large number of bats inhabiting Bat Cleft.³³ On the question of the proposed Capricorn Coast tourist development by Japanese entrepreneur Iwasaki, Institute staff made little formal public contribution, although individual staff members expressed reservations about the lack of information and absence of an overall development plan.³⁴

An energetic and conciliatory voice on local issues was that of John Carkeek, Head of the Administrative and General Studies. During the 1970s, Carkeek authored a series of monographs on local government and administration, incorporating such topics as the Rockhampton water supply (1971), regional government (1971) and shire boundaries (1970). The latter was especially pertinent in view of ongoing differences between the Yeppoon Chamber of Commerce and the Livingstone Shire Council. Carkeek believed research and rational debate would help resolve ongoing tensions over expenditure and representation. In February 1974, he was invited to a meeting of the Yeppoon Chamber of Commerce to hear its viewpoint at first hand and to discuss moves to alleviate its grievances.³⁵ Carkeek proposed a comprehensive study be undertaken into the feasibility of a new local government authority for Yeppoon. At the same time, he conducted an independent research study which, after canvassing various options including the creation of a new body, adopted the moderate recommendation Yeppoon be given greater representation in the conduct of the Livingstone shire affairs.³⁶

Interest in local government was maintained by the Whitlam Federal Government's emphasis on decentralised social services and the Australian Assistance Plan. Carkeek's preoccupation was taken up and extended by former Arts Department Head, Doug Sadler. Under the title of 'community studies', Sadler, with Arts colleagues Gene Dayton, Frances Killion and Les Killion, developed a range of geography, social science and tourism subjects. In their view, Capricornia Institute was a valuable service industry which could provide local business and welfare organisations with market research and surveys.³⁷ As early as 1974, some 30 projects involving

the community were being undertaken in the Arts Department. An example of cooperation between town, government and campus was the research of Ron Brown, a second year Arts student, who won a \$14 000 grant to study the delivery of social services in remote and provincial Queensland.³⁸

The idealism associated with the Whitlam years was only sporadically reflected in CIAE student activity. Vietnam had not created the groundswell of protest seen elsewhere.³⁹ Local Labor politician, Robert Schwarten recalls “march(ing) down East Street in protest against the nuclear testing at Muroroa Atoll and “burn(ing) a French flag”.⁴⁰ There were also protest gatherings on the occasion of National Party visits to the town and campus. However, geographical isolation and country recruitment tended to dampen down the enthusiasm of Rockhampton working class students in favour of isolationism. Yet, pockets of dissent persisted. A Political Interaction Group, formed in late 1972, continued in existence as the CIAE Politics Group, while the student newspaper *Sensorium* reproached its readers for their apathy on wider social and political questions.⁴¹ Representatives of the ‘silent majority’ riposted they had little time to spare for popular protest or politics. In addition to vocational expectations, the demands of continuous assessment imposed significant constraints on student time and energy.

Cramped and inadequate facilities posed a further check on student organisation. The early refectory, located in the Science basement, had long been overcrowded despite the provision of outside seating. Two demountable classrooms were made available for student union administration and leisure activities until work began on more substantial premises in late 1974. Subsequent delays in the construction of the \$500 000 Student Amenities Block and the new Library created more unrest among students than broader issues like Vietnam and the state of the environment. Issues like the TEAS allowance and the needs of part-time students came to the fore in the mid-1970s. In September 1974, CIAE students, with staff support, staged a boycott of lectures in protest at the inadequacy of Education Department allowances.⁴² Liz Huf, studying in the BA programme, recalls “a strong group of mature-age female students who were fighting to bring TEAS up to the level of the dole and gear it to wage indexation”⁴³. Female participation in Student Union affairs was also on the increase. Kathy Beaumont, the first female Student Union president, was one of three delegates sent to Brisbane to protest outside parliament house during the TEAS strike. In an effort to placate local opinion over the strike, students engaged in community work (Meals on Wheels, blood donations) throughout their boycott. In spite of their efforts, the number of tertiary students in receipt of TEAS declined from 50 per cent to 33 per cent by the end of the decade. The result was an upsurge in demand for part-time employment, but many Institute students were unsuccessful when they sought jobs in Rockhampton.

The national prominence which Aboriginal issues acquired during the Whitlam years prompted the Education School to host a series of visits by well known speakers such as Charles Perkins and Kath Walker (Oodgeroo Noonuccal). In 1974, Rubena Roe, the winner of the Aboriginal community’s Miss Opal for Rockhampton, had appealed for better local understanding between the races.⁴⁴ When Rubena enrolled for the three years Diploma of Teaching, there were fewer than a dozen Aboriginal students on campus, with no provision for special entry.⁴⁵ Among CIAE staff, Reg Shelley was particularly noteworthy for his work in Aboriginal education. Shelley actively promoted dialogue with Aborigines in the local community and involved the Creative Arts staff of the Education School in the Woorabinda Reserve’s 50 year commemoration. At the ‘Institute in 1984’ symposium of May 1976, Shelley proposed that a one-year full-time



Institute students fundraising on Mount Archer.

tertiary course be developed in Aboriginal education with Aboriginal staff and counselling.⁴⁶ Shelley's efforts were not fully recognised or understood, but his objectives were subsequently met within the 10 year planning framework of the symposium. By 1979, a pilot access course was set up at the Rockhampton TAFE to facilitate Aboriginal entry to the Institute. Cynthia Rowan, who participated in the pilot course, and subsequently completed a BA at CIAE, considers it lacked adequate resources for Aborigines and Islanders. Thereafter, the course was improved and became very successful.⁴⁷

A social issue which paralleled Aboriginal education was the new emphasis on women's issues and educational career prospects, discussed at the Gladstone symposium and in the CIAE student newspapers. Senator Kathy Martin, addressing the symposium, criticised the inflexibility of tertiary course planners in making little allowance for part-time study by married women.⁴⁸ The paucity of female enrolments at the Institute was consistent with the findings of a national survey into the college sector conducted in the previous year. Throughout Australia, women were best represented in the liberal arts and paramedical occupations (1:2), outnumbered in applied science and business studies (1:5-6) and negligible in engineering and the technologies (1:100).⁴⁹ Brisbane lecturer, Val French, considered the dearth of secondary school training and career advice posed major problems for women in the technologies.⁵⁰ Despite appeals by Frank Schroder and other engineering staff, there were only three female students enrolled with the School out of a total of 160. Participants at the 1976 symposium predicted substantial growth in female student numbers in conjunction with an increase in mature-age enrolments, but as yet little thought was given to the formulation of policies on equality of opportunity or sexual harassment. As with Aboriginal enrolments, optimism about increased participation by women was vindicated. By 1984, female participation in liberal arts at Capricornia Institute was 2:1, in Education 3:1, in

Science and Business 1:2 and 1:3 respectively while Engineering rose more slowly to 1:30.⁵¹

Women's issues received increased coverage in the columns of student publications, *Sensorium* and *Four Winds*. During International Women's Year (1975), articles appeared on a range of topics including family planning, abortion and child-minding. With the appointment of Dermot Dorgan as Student Service Officer and John Kime as Student Union Manager, the Student Union was able to take initiatives in educating the community and providing material and psychological assistance to students. The need for such a role was amply demonstrated in 1978 when 448 students paid a total of 1 800 visits to the new student services.⁵² In addition to its involvement with accommodation issues, the Union introduced a student loan scheme to assist needy students and with support from the Arts Department made the first successful application for a home-based Family Day Care facility in Rockhampton. In sponsoring this scheme, the Student Union accepted responsibility for employing staff, administering funds and liaising with government bodies. John Kime, recalling the Union's record of quiet achievement since 1977, notes:

Not many organisations wanted to take on such an activity. There was no profit in it, it was simply a community service. Not only is there no charge for the service, but a reasonable amount of staffing time and material funds go to the scheme.⁵³

The family day care scheme which catered for 94 children of staff and students in its first year was the first in a series of measures designed to support women studying on the CIAE campus. In 1979, a female counsellor, Pauline Power, was appointed⁵⁴ and by 1981, the "Women on Campus" group was promoting social issues on a regular basis.⁵⁵

The Student Union did much to enhance social life on campus after 1976. Cabarets and jazz-poetry nights attracted both students and 'townies'. A licensed club operated successfully on Friday nights and provided the Union with the revenue which it required to remain self-funding:

There was a casual bar person and a bar in a very bare room. No floor coverings, grey rock-block walls, old second-hand plastic tables and chairs, very 'ad hoc'. (We) started improvements immediately with better furniture, carpet and painting.⁵⁶

The limited youth entertainment available in Rockhampton during the pre-nightclub era meant Institute cabarets were soon 'the best in town' and attracted as many as 1 000 to a single event. Arts and Engineering students were prominent in Union clubs, although sometimes engineers tended to be independent and ran their own functions, "big booze-ups with blue movies and really raucous behaviour on occasions".⁵⁷

At the Residential College, excessive drinking and damage to furniture prompted the Warden, Bill Fitzgerald, to ban cabarets by the Rugby Union Club. On this occasion, Residential management rather than Council pressed for restrictive measures. Fitzgerald, with four years of experience at turbulent Kent State University in the United States, sought to convert the Residential complex from a "noisy place" to a learning environment.⁵⁸ Discipline was not difficult to enforce but incoming first year students experienced problems adjusting to the routines of serious study.⁵⁹ The Warden was responsible for several initiatives. A fee rebate was offered to resident staff to encourage them to assist students. In addition, a cooperative student work programme was introduced in order to cut back on full-time Residential staff.⁶⁰

More audacious and successful was Fitzgerald's decision to integrate male and female quarters at the Residential College. Prior to this, an estimated 100 students were accommodated in three buildings of which one was for males only (Fitzroy Jardine House), one for females (Felicia Hopkins House) and the third mixed (Byerley House), with men and women occupying separate floors. Reaction to the proposal varied among the students. Most of the opposition came from males. Council reaction was also mixed, but Fitzgerald proceeded to implement his integration policy. Thereafter, intake was based on 50:50 male-female ratio. Under the terms of the cooperative work programme, students performed two hours per week in a designated job at the Residential College. By 1981, when regulations were set out in a handbook, each block was responsible for its own cleaning as an additional duty. The Warden's main difficulty lay not with the students, who were "sexually conservative" and generally "abided by the rules," but with Residential College finances which had been in a parlous state since his arrival.⁶¹ In the mid-1970s, students received 21 meals per week for \$28 and fees were based upon what students could afford to pay from their TEAS allowances. For a time, Commonwealth grants were available based upon student numbers. When these grants were phased out, income had to be found from outside sources like the Rockhampton City Council.

Sport remained central to student leisure and relaxation activities. The development of physical education programmes within the Education School had made available a range of facilities including a gym, a 25 metre swimming pool and courts for tennis, basketball and volleyball. During the 1970s, students played Institute staff in an annual soccer game held to commemorate the accidental death of student John M. Solli.⁶² On only one occasion did staff run out winners. Students and staff competed on a regular basis in competitions around Rockhampton. Among the Institute's successes was its softball team which won the A grade premiership in 1977-78. Due to the efforts of Allan Skertchly, the campus boasted a high-quality athletics oval which sustained athletics as a major sporting activity. In March 1978, Capricornia Institute's 45 strong team competed successfully against larger colleges in the intercollegiate games at Adelaide. It continued this success with a memorable 1983 performance at which the Institute won seven trophies.

Student ingenuity was not confined to study and sport. By the late 1970s, prank week had become a boisterous institution which threatened good relations with the town. When students painted over city parking-meters, Mayor Pilbeam threatened to withhold a \$100 000 City Council grant to the Residential College unless the costs of student pranks were paid in full.⁶³ The Student Union, protesting its innocence, stated the paint was water-based. Pranks became bolder on the campus and in town. Led by Peter Underwood, a fictitious member of the fictitious Royal Society for the Preservation of Pranks, students called the fire brigade out to the campus, painted the Goldston stone memorial with fluorescent paint and removed a ramp from the aerodrome.⁶⁴ The most provocative on-campus stunt was the jack-hammering of a speed-bump outside the administration offices, after students had protested against the proliferation of speed bumps on campus. The Director, Arthur Appleton responded quickly by sending the Student Union a bill for \$1 200 to cover the costs of restoration. The Union duly "paid-up" but as a donation without acknowledging liability.⁶⁵

In September 1978, there was a new wave of pranks. The Student Union conducted a scavenger hunt which allotted points for the hijacking of various items. Heading the list was a Rockhampton City Council bus. Items 'retrieved' on this occasion included a weather-vane from

the Kentucky Fried Chicken building and the coloured dome of the women's rest centre in Quay Street. This second stunt resulted in an estimated \$200 damage. Most publicised, however, was the runaway Council bus episode of that year. At 2am on a mid-September morning, the Council bus was sighted by security as it travelled outbound up Musgrave Street near the present-day Shopping Fair.⁶⁶ After a short pursuit, a police vehicle apprehended the runaway. Police were preparing to charge the student with theft when the Mayor intervened and asked that charges be dropped. Nevertheless, the City Council and the Institute administration were determined to prevent further abuses. When the statue of the North Rockhampton bull was damaged in early 1979, Mayor Pilbeam accused the students of vandalising the monument and inflicting \$500 damage.⁶⁷ The Student Union rejected these accusations, but appeared unable to contain further costly pranks. In order to avoid further damage to community relations, the Director intervened and banned the institution of prank week altogether.

In a decade of rapid change, town-gown relations fluctuated from cooperation to provocation as the Institute achieved greater visibility and impact on the community. A prominent example was the upsurge in drama which occurred at Capricornia Institute after 1975. In addition to the Education School course, an independent Drama Club, established in 1976, attracted strong staff and student support. Prominent among the organisers were Howard Cassidy and Norman Price. In its hey-day, 60-70 people, including some from the town, participated in a series of big productions.⁶⁸ In the absence of a campus theatre, "*Lysistrata*", the "*Trojan Women*" and "*Everyman*" were performed on the lawns near the administration block. Like the Cinema Group, which mixed classics with modernist performances, CIAE drama catered for a range of tastes and undertook smaller productions of Sartre and Ionesco at the Residential College. When a drama studio became available in the Library during 1978, Howard Cassidy produced an Alex Buzo play to commemorate the event. Local playwright, Greg Rudd, was writing for the Drama Group until he left the campus in 1978.

Education staff and students, with support on and off campus, gave valuable service at a time when Rockhampton possessed neither the Pilbeam Theatre nor the Walter Reid Centre. Grahame Griffin, acknowledging the efforts of Howard Cassidy, wrote in 1983:

Howard Cassidy works himself into the ground for student drama everytime he takes on a play. Thankfully he emerges in time for his next production.⁶⁹

Cassidy, conscious of the Institute's brief with the hinterland, organised production tours by Education students for fortnightly periods.⁷⁰ In 1977, his colleague Norman Price won a \$10 000 grant from the School's Commission to tour Central Queensland schools with his puppets. Price's professional interests were in theatre and in the educational uses of puppetry with disadvantaged children. His tour, undertaken during the semester break, reached an estimated 6 000 school children and was well received. Since 1988, the Capricornia Institute dramatic tradition has been extended by Ron Verburgt and David Myers in the contemporary Humanities School. Arts Media students were already engaged in the production of their newspaper, *Four Winds*, and of a half-hour programme for local radio station 4RO.⁷¹ These constructive exercises in public relations did much to offset negative perceptions of students in the community.

A further cultural development at CIAE was the annual Bauhinia Arts Festival, a vacation summer school in the creative arts. According to organiser Liz Huf, Rockhampton women were



Bauhinia workshop 1981 (from back, right), Liz Huf (organiser), Joy Allan, Registrar Brian Bartley and participant watch Brisbane artist demonstrating the roller technique.

“starved of any form of creative arts” and participated enthusiastically in workshops run by staff and guest artists.⁷² Among the visiting contributors were Kevin and Jan Brereton (sculpture), Ivan England (pottery) and Adam Saltzer (theatre). Athol Watson and Peter Indans were responsible for much of the local inspiration and organisation. As the popularity of the festival increased, the emphasis of Bauhinia shifted from theatre and music to arts and crafts. Pottery and painting workshops were conducted in the first week with batik and screen printing in the second. By 1980, when it had achieved a Queensland-wide reputation, Bauhinia was struggling for want of funds. Funding was secured in 1981 but financial stringency, coupled with the expansion of city outlets like the Pilbeam Theatre and the Walter Reid Centre, brought about its demise. Ten years on, Bauhinia has been revived and promises to become an important cultural event for the Rockhampton community.

6

AUSTERITY

1975 - 1985

The mid-1970s saw a series of administrative changes in Australian tertiary education, the most significant of which was increased Federal responsibility for funding. In Queensland, where tertiary education had been underfunded, this Commonwealth initiative promised to redress historic imbalances between the states. In keeping with the expansive Whitlam era, Capricornia Institute's triennial submission for 1976-78 to the Australian Commission of Advanced Education was an optimistic one designed to boost staffing and capital works by 90 per cent. At the close of 1975, however, it became clear these hopes would not be realised. Instead, austerity became the norm, as the incoming Fraser government evinced a determination to prune the public sector. By 1979, colleges of advanced education throughout Australia faced the prospect of redundancies, amalgamations and possible closures. The "razor gang" cuts which accompanied the 1981-84 triennium marked a low-point in tertiary funding.

Capricornia Institute escaped the mergers and amalgamations imposed on metropolitan colleges, but was affected in other ways. In 1983, capital works allocation for the Queensland colleges fell to an all-time low of \$500 000. Once the CIAE Library was completed in 1978, little building was undertaken for the next decade. The situation of the Institute oscillated between slow growth and moderate contraction.¹ The outcome, by the mid-1980s, was a leaner and more flexible operation, characterised by financial responsibility and watchfulness. Austerity was achieved, but with some difficulty. Professional insecurity, a decline in staff and student morale and prolonged tensions over funding were legacies of the new tertiary climate.

At the same time as these external pressures were developing, a series of executive changes took place within the Institute's administration. Jim Goldston, the first Council Chairman, retired in 1976 and was succeeded by his Deputy, Bruce Hiskens.² The Engineering School was subsequently named after Goldston in recognition of his service to the institution. Like Goldston, Hiskens was an engineer by profession with solid managerial experience. His position in senior management of Queensland Alumina Limited at Gladstone facilitated links with private industry at a time when Gladstone was experiencing industrial growth. An affable Central Queenslander, Hiskens continued the high standard of senior administration pioneered by Goldston. According

to one observer, he ran Council meetings concisely, allowing participation without prolonging business unnecessarily.³ Brian Bartley's assiduous correspondence and flair as Registrar provided Council with a further valuable asset. Hiskens, in partnership with the Director, Arthur Appleton, set a pattern of accountability for expenditure, maximising the use of public funds as government grants were reduced.

In keeping with a policy of tight budgeting, Council decided in October 1976 to create the position of Deputy Director as a rotating appointment between Heads of Schools. Ron Young, a physicist and foundation member of the Institute, was initially appointed for a period of two to four years. He specialised in capital works and equipment, serving on relevant committees on campus and in Brisbane. In the decade following his appointment, large capital works grants virtually ceased and most funding took the form of minor works and equipment grants. Young proved adept at stretching the dollar but his contribution went well beyond the "nuts and bolts" expertise of site development. As Deputy Director, he was also responsible for the development of continuing education programmes and for forward planning, including the preparation of triennial submissions. In this role, he worked closely with Arthur Appleton and established a more balanced decision-making process than had been available to the first Director. Young gained the support of the Director and the Council to the point where his position became permanent in 1982 rather than rotating as had been originally intended.⁴

Governing the allocation of expenditure and of funded student places was the Queensland Board of Advanced Education which instigated a series of reductions in line with Federal cutbacks. Hiskens, the incoming Chairman, was aware Capricornia Institute faced criticism from the Board throughout 1975-76 over inadequate accounting procedures.⁵ Embarrassment was compounded in 1977 when, after mismanagement of the Belmore Flats student accommodation scheme, the Board warned Councillors would have to make up short-falls out of their own pockets.⁶ Until this time, Brian Bartley had performed a number of roles in the position of Registrar. With Arthur Appleton, Bartley was to remain a prominent public spokesman for the Institute until his retirement in 1987. When a new position of Bursar was created, Bartley was free to turn his attention to student and personnel matters.

Mike Boyd, the successful applicant for the Bursar's position in 1976, had worked extensively in the steel industry before coming to Rockhampton from Sydney. He set out to redress accounting inefficiencies and omissions associated with public service management and to advise Council on difficult budget decisions.⁷ The small finance section, over which Boyd presided, felt the impact of staffing restrictions as much as any other during the 1980s. Initially, the Bursar was not always recognised as an autonomous executive member; critical decisions about cutbacks were the subject of considerable debate within the ranks of central administration. There remained nevertheless, among the leadership a firm consensus about the need to demonstrate the economic contribution of the Institute to Rockhampton and Central Queensland. In 1978, an inter-school Expenditure Review Committee was established to review running costs without directly jeopardising CIAE programmes. By 1979, the total budget amounted to \$16.7 million of which special costs constituted \$11 million and salaries \$5.5 million.⁸ The latter figure was central to the Institute's claim to have become a major regional employer.

Although the Director, Arthur Appleton, was the driving force in its day-to-day affairs, the Institute was often directed externally by the Board of Advanced Education. A key figure in



A wet Graduation in the Creative Arts Theatre in 1974 (standing) Engineering graduate, P.J. Goldston, Brian Bartley (seated, front, from left) K.N. Jones (guest speaker), Greig Turner, Doug Sadler, Arthur Appleton (back), Blair Smith, Lex Ross, Mick McDowall, Joan Potman (centre, from right), Fred McGuire, Cecil Ballard, Molly Bencke, E.F. Gutekunst, Bob Hay, Rex Pilbeam (third row), John Frodin, Bob Firth, Rock Boothroyd, Dennis Hanley, Dudley Roach (back, from right) Hazel Mellick, Athol Watson, David Ruff and Ken Dooley. Note the special chair designed for the Chairman by Athol Watson.

deliberations with Queensland colleges was its Chairman Bill Wood who retired in 1975. The Institute's management, which considered itself to be disadvantaged by comparison with the Darling Downs college, perceived the change in BAE leadership as potentially advantageous. The incoming Chairman was Jim Allen, formerly a CSIRO scientist and Chancellor of the University of Newcastle. Allen promised a shift in the BAE's operations from a directive to a more coordinating style but, at the same time, warned cutbacks were imminent.⁹ A meeting with the new Chairman in June 1976 revealed the BAE intended transferring 180 student places from CIAE and Darling Downs IAE to Brisbane QIT in 1977. Arthur Appleton, concerned at the lack of consultation over the proposed transfer of enrolments, penned a strong letter of protest in which he deplored "the privileged position the Director of QIT enjoys in terms of information and access to State and Federal bodies".¹⁰ Council was also concerned what it believed to have been a firm set of proposals could be changed without adequate local consultation.

In keeping with Bruce Hiskens' policy as Council Chairman, the Institute worked closely

within the guidelines established by the BAE, restricting its enrolments to below 1 500 Effective Full-Time Student Units but protesting when it detected inconsistencies in funding allocations to the Queensland colleges. In 1978, Hiskens complained to the BAE about enrolment projections for the 1979-81 triennium, on the basis CIAE's increase for 1979 was a mere 1.7 per cent compared with the state average of 5.5 per cent.¹¹ Allen, in correspondence, acknowledged the "very tight enrolment situation" and indicated CIAE's percentage change was in fact a reduction of 1.3 per cent. Darling Downs was also to be reduced by 5.6 per cent while Brisbane QIT would increase by 6.4 per cent.¹² Senior Institute staff considered isolation of the Institute from Brisbane to be a factor influencing these adverse decisions, although it is interesting to note Darling Downs fared no better on this occasion.¹³ CIAE Chairman, Bruce Hiskens, recalls unlike other Queensland colleges, the Institute did not overenrol in the years of Allen's administration (1976-84) and was consequently "disadvantaged for operating the right way - following the rules".¹⁴

One response to geographical and administrative isolation during the late 1970s was the formation of the Association of Regional Colleges of Advanced Education, comprising the 11 non-metropolitan colleges throughout Australia. Arthur Appleton, conscious of the relative disadvantage experienced by institutions like Capricornia Institute and keen to explore communication possibilities, took an active role in the new organisation. The ARCAE facilitated exchanges of information between the regional colleges at quarterly meetings and compiled a data base of courses and subjects offered by member institutions.¹⁵ Along with ACOP, on which Arthur Appleton served as Queensland executive member, the ARCAE served as a useful forum for discussions about such issues as funding and allowed its members to put a coordinated case to Federal parliamentarians as the opportunity arose. Arthur Appleton, who served as Deputy Chairman of ARCAE for a period, warned, unless governments and politicians changed their policies, Australia would become "an economically and scientifically backward nation".¹⁶

For regional institutions like CIAE, the growth of external studies was a timely and significant development during the late 1970s. In the years 1978-79 alone, external enrolments at the Institute jumped from 560 to 825 and exceeded full-time and part-time enrolments combined by 1983.¹⁷ From a small scale operation based within the Science School, external studies under Peter Smith grew rapidly to become a major campus operation with a night-line service, student advisers and its own newsletter and advisory sub-committee.¹⁸ Study centres were set up throughout Queensland and negotiations were initiated with Queensland and New South Wales institutions for access to study facilities and residential schools. John Dekkers, appointed Head of External Studies in August 1983, set out to secure more staff and to introduce instructional design into course materials. Dekkers argued External Studies should provide more active academic leadership at CIAE and elevate its priorities beyond those of a servicing and administration unit. In spite of its dramatic growth, External Studies' claims for additional equipment were restricted by financial stringencies already in place. Its staff remained mostly contract employees who could be seconded to outside duties at short notice. Moreover, the academic Schools, preoccupied with their own needs, were often reluctant to support pedagogical initiatives emanating from elsewhere. In the face of academic resistance, Dekkers reorganised External Studies and gave it a greater say in the conduct of its own operations.¹⁹ By 1985, External Studies was offering 12 courses involving some 100 subjects and processing 23 980 study packages annually.²⁰



External Studies, subsequently Distance Education (c. 1985) (from left, top) Eric Masson, Kelley Bunyan, Don Bowser, Lyn Binder, Diane Hoare, Graham Kavanagh, unidentified (middle) John Dekkers (H.O.D.), Karen Malone, Val Whyte, Valda Meredith, Judy Cook, Debbie Weir, Greg Harper (front left) Lesley Wyatt, Tracey Bartlett, Joyce Watts, Liz White and Kim Gohdes.

For those seeking to upgrade their qualifications in the competitive job-market, External Studies provided a means of vocational and personal advancement. Demographically, CIAE's external students were scattered throughout Queensland coastal towns with a further 16 per cent from metropolitan Brisbane and 20 per cent located in southern states.²¹ Most external students were older than their full-time counterparts and highly motivated. The largest age group represented was 30-39 year olds, with almost 50 per cent aged over 30 years. Drop-out rates in External Studies were relatively high but those who reached the examinations performed well. In Physics for example, 80 per cent of majors were external and only once in 16 years did an internal student succeed in winning the academic prize against stiff external competition.²² At Capricornia Institute, external students were more likely to be male than full-time and part-time students. External courses at the Institute closely followed internal units and were written by staff working within their own departments and schools. Science and Business were the first two Schools to develop external programmes. Education and Humanities eventually followed suit. By the 1980s, External Studies emerged as an important buffer to austerity and to declining full-time enrolments. Some Schools, however, made the transition more smoothly than others. The decision to discontinue external tourism and recreation units in Humanities, under pressure from the BAE, was a serious setback to School morale.²³

The development of vocationally-orientated associate diplomas was an important inter-

School phenomenon of the decade 1975-85. The Associate Diploma in Business was offered internally and externally in 1979, while the mathematics department developed its Associate Diploma in Computing two years later. Both proved to be highly successful in the external mode. Competition for places necessitated the imposition of quotas and ensured business and mathematics courses would maintain steady growth rates and fill up quotas when numbers declined in other Schools.²⁴ With a 50 per cent staff increase during 1979-83, Business promised to overtake the Education School while, in Science, Mathematics overshadowed Physics. Austerity was not being experienced uniformly across the Schools. The multi-functional character of Capricornia Institute, coupled with the growth of External Studies, meant the worst-case scenarios of the razor gang years were not inflicted on the Institute.

A noteworthy achievement across the Schools has been the relative facility with which CIAE graduates have found employment in the tight job market. In 1981, Arthur Appleton was able to list impressive performances involving past and present students.²⁵ During 1980-84, chemistry students won the Royal Australian Chemistry Institute's titration trophy.²⁶ Several Science graduates pursued careers overseas, Asiah Yahaya and Andrew Greatbatch among them.²⁷ In Civil and Mechanical Engineering, past students Graham Scott and Max Davies attracted national attention for their design and research work. The Engineering School successfully placed graduates interstate in plastics (ICI Sydney), aviation, glass manufacture and the plywood industries.²⁸ The same pattern prevailed in Humanities, where 80 per cent of CIAE graduates were employed within six months of completing their degrees. Successful graduates who moved interstate included Phillipa Moran (publishing), Andrew Benetto and Phil Smith (media).²⁹ In Business, demand for graduates exceeded supply during 1978. Ken Dooley, who monitored their performance closely over the period 1978-83, found without exception, all Business graduates had gained employment.³⁰ Tony Gubbins of Student Services reaffirmed CIAE's sound employment record when he reported that 93.4 per cent of 1982 graduates were employed by April of the following year.³¹

Teaching staff at Capricornia Institute attributed their successes to the practical orientation of their courses and to favourable staff-student ratios. During the 1980s, course development was responsive to regional employment needs. The Engineering School developed a range of associate diploma courses designed to meet a growing demand for technical assistants in expanding government bodies like Telecom.³² The Associate Diploma in Electrical Engineering attracted substantial enrolments at a time when many students were forced to work part-time. The trend towards part-time enrolments was also evident in Business and Humanities. By contrast, full-time enrolments declined in real terms after 1977 and did not reach previous levels till the mid-1980s. Hardest hit in this respect was the Education School after the Diploma of Teaching intake was abruptly halved in 1978-79. A major growth area in earlier years, Education suffered a downturn in numbers and in morale, compounded by adverse local publicity and a limited external studies programme. This trend was partially offset by two newly accredited awards, the inservice Bachelor of Education and the Diploma of Teaching, which attracted part-time enrolments to the School.

Regional demand and increasing part-time enrolments encouraged Capricornia Institute to upgrade its Gladstone study centre during 1980-84. By 1980, when the Institute rented a study centre in the Gladstone CEB building, most of the Schools were becoming involved in offering part-time courses there.³³ Education held evening classes for Bachelor of Education students,



Discussing arrangements for the Gladstone centre (from left) Arthur Appleton (Director), Ron Young (Deputy-Director), Doug Sadler (Head of Arts) and Steve Jasinowski (Principal Gladstone TAFE).

mostly three year trained teachers, at the Port Curtis teachers centre. Engineering, on the strength of a local survey, offered associate diplomas in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering while Business offered its associate diploma and graduate diploma in management. Mathematics, Physics and Humanities were also involved at Gladstone to some extent. Staff teaching the Gladstone courses remembered commuting 107 kilometres from Rockhampton by car at the time when the state of the roads was well below that at present. Most travelled down to a variety of locations each week, taking their textbooks to sell to students and returned to Rockhampton on the following day.³⁴

Although Gladstone students were initially enthusiastic, attrition rates rose until some courses were discontinued. In Mechanical Engineering, which began with 14 students in 1980, enrolments dropped alarmingly, forcing the Institute to withdraw creating local ill-feeling. Around the same time, the Humanities literature subject was discontinued under pressure from the BAE. According to Bob Hay:

They had 20 keen students who were examined and who were glad to have the facility in Gladstone. And then the Board said the Institute could not offer the courses in Gladstone...Gladstone people understood that and some said if they got to six-tenths of the degree completed, they would commute to Rockhampton to pick up the subjects they really wanted to do. It seemed to be viable, but the Board decided otherwise.³⁵

Other courses in Engineering, Business and Computing held on amid urgent negotiations with local groups and the BAE over the future of the Gladstone centre.



Capricornia Institute's Gladstone centre. These were the first commercial premises purchased by the Institute.

Judith Evans, a Gladstone school teacher, served as the first CIAE administrator at Gladstone until Doug Sadler, the Head of Humanities, was seconded from Rockhampton in 1982 to stabilise the Gladstone experiment. Sadler successfully negotiated with the Director-General and the BAE for the use of local TAFE facilities and sought to improve the limited resources available. An ongoing problem with the Gladstone operations was the considerable expenditure on resources required at a time when funding was tight and highly competitive. The situation began to improve by September 1984, when Capricornia Institute moved into its own two storey premises on Dawson Road, and Rex Metcalfe was appointed full-time administrator in charge. Metcalfe arrived to find Gladstone “at rock bottom” after the collapse of a development boom, and CIAE’s local reputation clouded by the stop-start approach of the early 1980s.³⁶ Thereafter, he embarked on policies designed to strengthen connections with the community. Before its conversion to a full-time branch campus in 1988, the Gladstone centre also provided facilities for teleconferencing, computing and study groups for local students studying externally with other tertiary institutions such as New England, Darling Downs and Queensland University.³⁷

Committed to regional growth and opportunity, the Institute was nevertheless constrained in its activities by limited funds. Temporary and general staff were the most vulnerable to cost cutting measures. The introduction of contract cleaning jobs on campus during 1980 brought protests from the union, albeit with little effect.³⁸ In the absence of new appointments, the duties of existing

ground staff had to be revised and extended as maintenance became more difficult.³⁹ One cost cutting measure which assisted in greening the campus was the employment of casual labour under the Commonwealth employment scheme for the construction of an amphitheatre and landscaping between the science and administration blocks. The policy of creating people-sized lawns was maintained, along with a commitment to planting native species.

A concerted administrative response to austerity at Capricornia Institute was the introduction of computer-based systems for teaching, administration and research. Promoted by Arthur Appleton and implemented by Ron Young, this policy was pursued in the face of declining grants for capital works. By contrast, equipment grants, after slumping in the late 1970s to around \$90 000 annually, recovered to peak at \$480 000 in 1982. Some of this welcome finance was earmarked for the purchase of offset printing machines for the burgeoning External Studies Department. During the same period, infrastructure for advanced computerisation was laid with the appointment of Ian Jenkins as Head of the Computer Centre in 1977. Jenkins was given the task of upgrading a small operation into a resource centre which would be independent of the Mathematics and Computing Department and available to all Schools on campus.⁴⁰ With Jenkins, Mathematics and Computing staff took part in public activities like Information Technology Week. They helped also to found a Central Queensland Computer Users' Society as a community service. Despite a favourable response on and off campus, Jenkins was aware of the financial constraints on the Centre and of the need to compete for funding with the academic Schools. A Computer Advisory Committee, representing academic and administrative interests, was established to consult about the purchase of the most suitable equipment and systems. It acted on the premise the first priority would be granted to teaching, second to administration and, third only, to research.

At the teaching level, Business, Engineering and Mathematics were the most actively involved with computers during the 1970s. Business was committed to interactive computing and computer-aided learning as early as 1975. One of the perceived strengths of CIAE graduates in the job market was their computer literacy, acquired in a learning environment where the terminal to student ratio was relatively favourable. Engineering staff were well aware of the potential of computers, both for teaching and research. Wardina Oghanna was one engineer who found ways of using the Centre's Hewlett-Packard computer for his intensive doctoral research into power systems. Oghanna, with fellow engineer Frank Schroder, won a series of grants to develop sophisticated electronic systems with computerised detectors and memory banks.⁴¹

Computers were also in demand at Capricornia Institute study centres operating along the Queensland coast and especially at Gladstone, where they were used to support Mathematics and Engineering subjects. Within the Education School, Bob Beevers took an active interest in promoting computers in primary schools and ran seminars designed to encourage the acceptance of locally designed programmes in the schools. The service and advisory role of technical staff was of critical importance in the strong moves towards computerisation. In the absence of on the spot industry support and advice, the Institute's Schools received invaluable assistance from Computer Centre technicians, some of whom had trained in the airforce or worked with NASA. Engineering staff and students also provided assistance with the installation of terminals. Noteworthy in this respect were the efforts of Jack Sandell in developing a fibre optic transmission system and laying cable between the Engineering building and the Computer Centre. Prior to this, computer terminals on campus were vulnerable to blackouts caused by storms and lightning strikes. Subsequently, Peter Hillman took Sandell's prototype and successfully expanded it into

one of the first real fibre optics installations in Australia.⁴²

Computer Centre personnel, after moving from Applied Science to the new Library building, worked closely with Judith Edwards and her staff on the automation of a library circulation system. The aims of the automation proposal, accepted in 1981 and operational by the following year, were to increase the efficiency of record-keeping and to shift staff recruitment from clerical processing to user services.⁴³ Adaptation of an inexpensive Virginia Technical library system by Ian Oliver, involved the laborious transfer of tens of thousands of items from card to computer. In Finance and in Student Services, similar decisions were taken to computerise clerical records. Finance adapted a DDIAE accounting system to suit its purposes. Initially, staff encountered problems because of the time required to input information and become familiar with the new system. Ivy Dawson, one of those involved in the transition from manual to computerised invoicing, considers computers had only a limited impact on the complex set of procedures involved in the processing and payment of salaries.⁴⁴ In 1982, when computers were first used to process student enrolments, there were complications until Graham Roberts of the Computer Centre was made available to assist with the transition.

Linked to the policy of computerisation was the proposed rationalisation of clerical staff in a bid to reduce costs. In each School, the rationalisation of staff and the extent of equipment were dependent on its ability to attract student numbers and funding. In 1981, when funding was scarce, the number of secretaries allocated to each School was reduced by one. Some temporary positions were created, but “generally temporaries were the first to go”.⁴⁵ Among these were former employees who, after working at the Institute, returned after having families. Many were re-employed within the production division of External Studies where rosters were rotated to keep machines going through shifts.⁴⁶ The installation of computer terminals in Administration and in the Schools created additional pressures on clerical staff who were expected to retrain on the job. Ivy Dawson, returning to the workforce after 25 years, “didn’t sleep for a month” worrying about having to use a computer.⁴⁷ One forum used by staff to exchange up-to-date information was the Secretaries Association which, in October 1983, organised one of the first computer workshops of its kind in Australia. As early as 1981, the Association had secured backing from the Institute and began to sponsor seminars throughout Central Queensland. Barbara O’Brien, who became the Association’s first president, and Bette Collins, an office trainer from Brisbane, were closely involved with workshops which were used by suppliers to demonstrate their new equipment. Despite its financial stringency, the Institute always had the most up-to-date equipment in the region:

The Association was very active for five to six years. Some things they did were quite mammoth with seminars and workshops at places like Emerald and Blackwater. Like an army organisation, they would arrive out there and within half an hour would be set up. They might have 50 or 70 secretaries, guest speakers, people from the south, and used the expertise of the Institute group. Most of those who were behind the movement and took part in the teaching and demonstrating process were on the staff at CIAE. The group did a great amount for the community.⁴⁸

Through the 1980s, new Remington word processors “with bright green print on screen” replaced Amtex machines in School offices.⁴⁹ The Remingtons required specialised instruction and could

only be used by trained secretaries. Some are still used in External Studies by experienced staff but, in the Schools, Remington machines have given way to microcomputers. The transition to software, capable of different operations, meant some secretaries felt they were being deskilled. They were now expected to perform a greater range of tasks, from word processing and editing to spreadsheets and calculations. The new electronic keyboards used by the secretaries allowed for much faster typing, but increased the possibility of repetitive strain injury (RSI). An early incident in the Computer Centre alerted the administration to the need for rotated clerical duties and for an RSI policy.⁵⁰

Academic recruitment followed the same static trend as general staffing during the early 1980s. Noteworthy in this respect was a compensating increase in part-time teaching staff which by 1981 constituted more than 60 per cent of full-time academic staff numbers.⁵¹ The employment of significant numbers of part-time teaching staff constituted a considerable saving in wages and salaries in a period of declining recurrent expenditure. A second feature of academic employment in austerity was the move away from tenured positions towards short-term contracts of three to five years. The Council, aware of staff sensitivity on the issue of job security, remained divided about the extent to which a contract employment system should be implemented.⁵² Debate over the conditions of academic appointments emerged as a national issue during 1981-82 when a Senate committee report, after emphasising the inflexibility and disincentives of the tenure system, recommended a ceiling of 80 per cent on tenured staff.⁵³ A survey of Capricornia Institute staff conducted at the same period revealed tenure was not the only grievance between academics and management. Concern about rates of pay, hours of work, limited promotion opportunities and erratic communication within Schools, all played a part in lowering staff morale.⁵⁴

The Education School, which was struggling to maintain enrolments, appeared the most adversely affected at a time when unverified rumours of its impending closure circulated around campus. A series of internal disputes and calls for the censure of its staff precipitated a confidential Council inquiry into the School, which led to a change in leadership. Bob Beevers, a “down to earth Yorkshireman”⁵⁵, and Chuck Caruso, a “flamboyant American”⁵⁶, were at the centre of prolonged controversy which factionalised Education staff and embroiled the Staff Association and the Director. In hindsight, Education staff saw these conflicts as a continuation of the School’s earlier difference with the state schools and the CIAE central administration. The Education School’s close working relationship with the community and with external bodies fuelled persistent cycles of interaction and resentment during the first decade of its existence.

The new Chairman, Ian Whelan, and his Deputy, Lewis Larking, began a period of reconstruction within the School after 1981. Reporting to Council in the following year, the Director, Arthur Appleton, expressed cautious optimism about the School and recommended no further action on the Council inquiry’s findings.⁵⁷ Commenting on leadership problems in Education, Whelan considers the School had been constrained as much by external as by internal and personality factors:

It was the question of recognition of academic ability to contribute to the professional life of the education community in the state. It wasn’t simply in the College and that’s something in which there has been substantial change, but it wasn’t until the early 1980s that the School of Education had membership in any of the Board of Teacher Education sub-committees for instance, nor did it have membership of any of the Education

Department curriculum or curriculum related committees... These things we've picked up through the 1980s, but it's been by dint of fairly persistent and patient lobbying.⁵⁸

Leadership differences involving senior staff and the administration were reproduced in the other Schools. As early as 1979, declining enrolments in Mechanical Engineering fuelled tension between the Head, Rock Boothroyd, and Arthur Appleton. Staffing claims and leave applications formed a major part of this controversy. Difficulty in procuring suitably qualified part-time staff in Mechanical Engineering, compounded by uncertainty about the outcome of the Gladstone teaching experiment, culminated in disciplinary action over Boothroyd's publicised request the Institution of Engineers, Australia withdraw support from CIAE courses on the grounds of insufficient staff.⁵⁹ Mechanical Engineering staff supported their Head when he called for more staff but considered Boothroyd had overstepped his authority on this occasion.⁶⁰ After a lengthy official enquiry in 1982-83, Boothroyd was reprimanded for "misconduct detrimental to the College".⁶¹

Controversies in the Education and Engineering Schools, along with a protracted reclassification dispute in Humanities and a series of student disciplinary actions, necessitated a more active involvement by the Council in the early 1980s. Prior to this, Council profile at the Institute was low. The staff Disciplinary Advisory Committee provided stable advice in difficult situations where its decisions threatened to encroach on the powers and activities of the Director. In the case of the Boothroyd Inquiry (May 1982-October 1983), the Committee considered Council had been "left in ignorance" of deteriorating relations between Boothroyd and the Director and that in consequence, Council had been unable to prevent escalating conflict between Administration and the Mechanical Engineering Department.⁶² Barrister, Stan Jones, who had replaced Fred McGuire on Council, chaired the Staff Disciplinary Advisory Committee and provided the necessary legal expertise, while Greig Turner, an experienced Councillor and committee member, gave valuable support. The painstaking work of this committee helped enhance Council's reputation for independent and impartial action on campus where the Director enjoyed far greater visibility. Throughout this conflict period, the Staff Association had also worked to ensure those facing disciplinary action would be guaranteed a fair hearing.⁶³ Galvanized by the tenure issue, the PSA was again playing a significant role on campus after a decade of relative inactivity. It recommended staff representatives on Council be Staff Association nominees and channels of communication between staff and Council be improved.

Throughout these internal controversies, Arthur Appleton reasserted his authority as Director. Described as "tough-minded"⁶⁴ and "a very powerful figure"⁶⁵, he dominated Council and the Institute's senior committees by the late 1970s to the point of being seen as dictatorial by some staff. In a rare personal interview with the local press, the Director pointed to the existence of an extensive committee system within the Institute as a democratic forum but reserved the right to take important decisions in order to "get the job done".⁶⁶ One former staff member, who worked with the Director during the Education School conflict, acknowledged:

he (the Director) had problems in dealing with people and automatically distrusted many staff, yet he was incredibly conscientious and in many respects a first rate administrator. He was, I think, a shy man who had trouble in communicating on a face to face level.⁶⁷

Few doubted the rugged determination which sustained Arthur Appleton in his lengthy years of

service at Capricornia Institute, while even his critics acknowledged his ability to maintain a constructive public profile for the institution in times of difficulty and dissent. His successful negotiations with the Queensland Teachers' Union and regional educators during the Education School difficulties were a case in point.⁶⁸ At the internal level, the decision to begin the decentralised funding and increase School-based decision making was an Appleton initiative.⁶⁹

Austerity affected staff and students in different ways. While the Staff Association became more assertive and viable, student political activity declined under a combination of personal, economic and administrative pressures. The temptation to adopt an isolationist mentality was eschewed in favour of new community-based research projects. In addition to the computer contacts forged by Mathematics and Education, the Library was in demand for on-line information as well as for workshop and seminar space. It was among the first tertiary libraries in Australia to make data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics available at community request and, with the Director's support, began the Capricornia Central Queensland Collection of local and regional material.⁷⁰ Off campus, Biology staff continued to research the ecology of the Fitzroy River and the breeding habits of barramundi. The tagging of barramundi and scientific research into the habitat requirements of young fish prompted a series of studies by resident and visiting biologists during 1978-84. Long-term monitoring confirmed the view while the construction of the barrage was having an adverse effect, illegal netting and the destruction of nurturing sites in the lower river were just as damaging to the future of barramundi stocks.⁷¹ As the barramundi project drew to a close, John Parmenter of Biology, in cooperation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, was beginning a long-term study of the life-cycle of the flatback turtle. The site of these investigations was a large rookery on Peak Island near Keppel Sands.⁷²

Further evidence of involvement with the community came from the Humanities School which recovered strongly from a series of enrolment reverses. Doug Sadler, the Humanities Head, initiated consultation with local government in preparation for the 1988 bicentennial celebrations.⁷³ A feature of new Humanities projects, including the bicentennial exercise, was the involvement of students in community-based issues like media production, welfare and social services, commercial and town planning. In the media strand, staff undertook consultancies and community workshops designed to improve communication skills. The progressive upgrading after 1986 of the student newspaper, *Four Winds*, under the direction of Phillip Cass and Liz Huf, gave students the sense of producing "a real newspaper with relevant issues".⁷⁴ The heavy commitment of staff and students to the publication was rewarded as *Four Winds* attracted advertising revenue and began to pay its way.

Under the direction of Derek Kemp, geography students produced a detailed report on the availability of residential land in Rockhampton for future town planning and presented their findings using a variety of growth scenarios.⁷⁵ Similarly, a retail survey commissioned by the Biloela Promotion Bureau in 1979 involved 13 Arts students in a week's field work aimed at identifying the town's most pressing retail needs. The result was a lengthy and sophisticated study which assessed Rockhampton's impact on Biloela's retail services and prices as well as surveying residents on the topical question of a night mall.⁷⁶ In Rockhampton itself, the issue of a mall was also considered at length by CIAE Engineering staff and students. As early as 1976, Akhtar Qizilbash, a civil engineer with overseas expertise in transportation, had recommended a mall to the Rockhampton City Council on the grounds that it would be environmentally and commercially

beneficial for the city centre. When Mayor Rex Pilbeam disagreed, a lengthy public debate ensued for the next decade until the incoming Webber administration adopted the proposal. By this time, the city centre was facing renewed competition from large shopping centres in North Rockhampton and the original concept had lost some of its appeal. The spirit with which Qizilbash conducted his campaign and the involvement of student researchers from Engineering and Business made a favourable impression on the City Council and on the Rockhampton public.⁷⁷

Highly qualified non-European staff continued to make a significant public contribution to Capricornia Institute in the 1980s. Along with Qizilbash, Dr Shelton Gunaratne supported calls for a mall and pursued his own research into local media audiences.⁷⁸ Dr Choong S. Low, appointed to Biology in 1975, offered a series of popular courses to the Rockhampton public on plant propagation by tissue culture.⁷⁹ In the disciplines of Mathematics and Electrical Engineering, overseas recruits had played an important role from the beginning. Prominent among these was Wardina Oghanna, who came to the Institute in 1972 with a broad background in engineering and science. For a decade, Oghanna worked with Alan Rathjeu to develop a remote area power supply system. With outside sponsorship, including a \$30 000 grant from the Queensland Electricity Commission, they produced a hybrid power system which harnessed solar and wind energy. In 1984, this was one of 19 Institute projects attracting outside funding support.

During the 1980s, the binary system of higher education, in which the Institute had been created, was coming under increasing challenge as the college sector competed for the research money monopolised by universities. By 1984, national bodies like the Australian Council of Directors and Principals and the Advanced Education Council were recommending that the Tertiary Education Commission provide “seed money” to colleges for applied research projects, although funds were not forthcoming until the 1985-88 triennium.⁸⁰ At Capricornia Institute, a Research Committee had begun to operate along these lines as early as 1978-79. Electrical Engineering and Biology projects attracted consistent support but the total amount allocated annually did not exceed \$6 000.⁸¹ Most research money continued to come from outside sources and disincentives persisted. As the Institute’s Research Goals Committee concluded in 1986:

Resources are insufficient to significantly expand current research activities. Staff involved in modest research are heavily loaded with teaching. Research is largely done outside working hours. Staff time is a limiting factor. Most research fund granting bodies do not allocate funds for salaries; this is a further inhibiting factor.⁸²

One outstanding achievement at Capricornia Institute, in a tertiary climate which constrained staff research activity, was the successful creation of a Timber and Wood Product Centre. Officially established in February 1983, the Centre proposed to “establish and maintain professional, high quality analytical design and testing services to industry, government and trade bodies”⁸³. Headed by mechanical engineers, Dennis Hanley and Mick McDowall, the TWP Centre attracted an impressive list of interested organisations and became the only centre of its kind based outside government and industry in Australia. In its first year of operations, 1983, the Centre was awarded \$100 000 for seven projects. Staff across the Schools paid tribute to the achievements of Hanley and his colleagues. Errol Payne in Science, notes “timber testing was the area of Institute research activity which had the most significant impact at a national level”.⁸⁴ In the words of engineering colleague, David Thomas, Hanley “moved heaven and earth to bring in timber-testing” to the



Dennis Hanley (sitting) with Hyne and Son representative during permacrib wall test, 1986.

Centre.⁸⁵ According to Dudley Roach, he “lived for his work” and was a versatile professional.⁸⁶

Hanley’s American research background in Aerospace was complemented by further overseas experience and new directions while employed at the Institute. McDowall, a locally trained engineer with a Master of Science at the University of Surrey, began researching the structural action of plywood sheets before analysing ply sheeted grillage systems as floor and wall components. Groundwork for the Centre had been laid during the late 1970s and early 1980s with a series of projects involving staff and students from the Mechanical and Civil Engineering strands. A successful design by fourth year mechanical engineering student, Alan Taylor, was manufactured commercially and put into operation by the sawmiller Hyne and Sons.⁸⁷ By mid-1983, staff and students had produced 100 test reports, many of these for the Australian Particleboard Research Institute. A Diploma in Structural Timber Technology, the only award of its kind in Australia, was also developed and offered from February 1984.

By the mid-1980s the Timber and Wood Products Centre attracted hundreds of thousands of dollars annually and brought visiting experts from the United States and Canada. A cooperative research agreement was forged with the Departments of Forest and Wood Science and of Civil Engineering at Colorado State University. In April 1988, Hanley, delivering a paper on structural timber technology at an international conference in South Africa, listed 20-25 Australian organisations including local government, industry and national trading organisations, for which the TWP Centre had carried out research and testing work.⁸⁸ Hanley’s outstanding services to Capricornia Institute were recognised when he was promoted to Principal Lecturer, the first appointment of its kind at the Institute. After ill-health forced Hanley’s retirement in April 1987, McDowall became Head of the Centre and continued its operation until he too retired at the end of the decade and the Centre was wound down. In the previous 13 years, 40 undergraduate projects had been supervised by the Centre. Its prolonged success and viability had done much to establish CIAE’s national profile and accelerate the general trend towards recognition of research activities in colleges of advanced education.

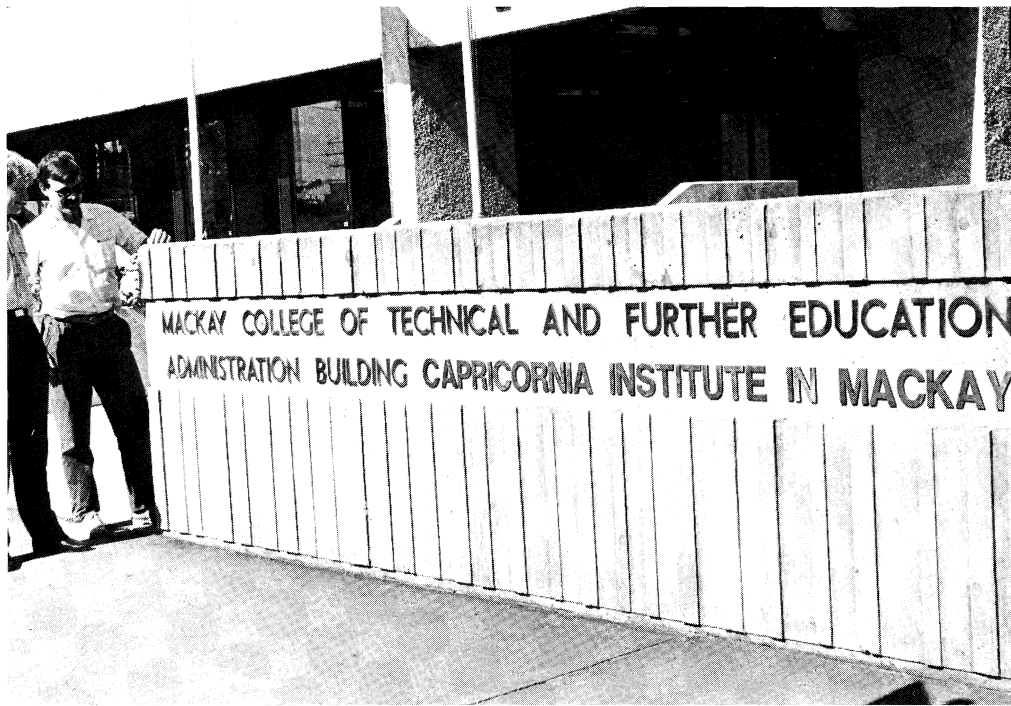
7

STRIKING A BALANCE

From CIAE to UCCQ

The years since 1985 at Capricornia Institute marked the beginning of a second period of expansion which exceeded that of the early 1970s. Increased student numbers, a network of branch campuses, a new Department of Nursing, an accelerated building program and changes in leadership and status, all marked the late 1980s and early 1990s as a spectacular growth phase in the history of the institution. This growth phase corresponded with a change in status from CIAE to UCCQ (University College of Central Queensland), the full implications of which will be examined in the following chapter. Not all the contemporary changes were the result of administrative decisions taken in Brisbane and Canberra. Well before university status was mooted, Capricornia Institute had already embarked on a policy of over-enrolment with up to 18 percent of its student places unfunded. Pegged down in the years of austerity, it achieved significant funding increases in 1984 and again in 1986 when the Institute broke through a plateau of 1800 Effective Full-Time Student Units and embarked on a heady new growth phase. In large measure, this was due to its new branch campuses. At the same time, the student body on the Rockhampton campus was becoming more multi-racial and cosmopolitan, with significant enrolments of Aboriginal and Islander and international students. For the first time, too, female students constituted a slight majority. The male technological base which sustained the early Institute was still important, but the new diversity of its offerings and activities promised a broader and more balanced development than had previously been possible. Rapid change not only brought “more of the same”, but also interesting differences which marked the institution as a truly contemporary one.

An important contribution to student numbers was the emergence of a regional network of branch campuses after 1986. Under this arrangement, students completed one year of full-time study at a branch campus before coming to the Rockhampton campus for their second and third years. This important new phase of operations not only increased full-time numbers, but was to have a significant influence on the institution’s bid for university status. The focus of activity moved north to Mackay, south beyond Gladstone to Bundaberg and west to Emerald as study centres were upgraded to full-time capacity. In 1987, the Mackay campus, under the coordination



Mackay branch campus (from left) Steve Mathieson and David Haussmann.

of David Haussmann, operated through a local TAFE facility and offered first year degree programmes to 32 students in business and applied sciences as well as part-time courses in literature and psychology. In the following year, the Bachelor of Arts and Diploma of Teaching were also made available at Mackay. Demand was such that by 1988, four full-time academic staff, a full-time administrator and laboratory assistant plus an array of part-time tutors had been recruited to teach 76 full-time and 15 part-time students.¹ According to Clive Booth, the present Mackay administrator, 85 percent of these students were of local origin, and came from Mackay, Sarina, Mirani or Proserpine. The remainder had to overcome everpresent problems of distance and travel. An overseas student, arriving in Brisbane:

thought he would get a suburban bus from the transit centre in Brisbane to the Mackay campus... He was taken aback at the 20-hour train trip, but settled in well.²

Tensions and rivalries characterised the early Mackay years, especially with James Cook University which was planning its own centre for Mackay and Cairns. Mackay's geographical location between North and Central Queensland ensured it would be courted by both these tertiary institutions. There were also local differences with TAFE over rental fees and space, until the campus shifted part of its operations to the central business district in 1989. While morale improved at Dunkeld Gardens, library resources remained at the TAFE, a frustrating 10-15 minute walk for staff and students. In many respects, the problems of the branch campuses replicated those of QITC in the Bolsover Street days - dependence on TAFE, split campuses, limited resources and erratic communication with the central campus. Much depended on the

resourcefulness of local advisory committees to tackle everpresent problems of accommodation and space. On the advice of the Mackay Advisory Committee, Capricornia Institute successfully approached the Queensland Education Department for a land grant at Planlands near the southern entrance to Mackay. Prominent members of the Mackay committee were former manager of the Mackay Electricity Board and Capelec, Keith Watts, Matron Beverley Wordsworth of Pioneer Valley Hospital, John Tait, Rod Manning of the *Daily Mercury*, Sir Albert Abbott and Dr. John Allen, formerly of the Sugar Research Institute.

After early difficulties, the Gladstone centre became a branch campus in 1988, offering Business and Arts full-time and Electrical Engineering part-time to a total of 73 students.³ By that time, the Rockhampton-Gladstone connection had stabilised. Bruce Hiskens, the CIAE Chairman and a prominent QAL executive, resided for much of the time at Gladstone. Rockhampton historian, Lorna McDonald, published her Gladstone history in that year,⁴ while social scientist and Institute staff member, Frances Killion, presented a detailed report on local employment to the Gladstone City Council.⁵ Aware of the demands of the new branch campuses, Capricornia Institute invited all first year students to attend its Orientation program and began to trial video instruction for distance teaching.⁶ Just as the early Institute had offered its students a personalised service and the financial advantage of studying at home, so the branch campuses were able to offer a potential saving of \$5 000-\$7 000 annually and cater for students of lower socio-economic status.⁷ Those who completed their first year of full-time studies had the option of going to Rockhampton or continuing externally. By the late 1980s, students had also to pay the tertiary administration fee of \$265 per year. The Wran Report which recommended its introduction provoked vocal opposition in both Rockhampton and Gladstone. Rex Metcalfe, the Gladstone campus coordinator, voiced public criticism of the fee as an inequitable and worrying development.⁸ More than any other issue, the student “tax on knowledge” galvanised student protest in provincial as well as metropolitan centres.

Metcalfe had the demanding task of coordinating the branch campus in the early years and of liaising with the Rockhampton administration. At Gladstone, he worked with an advisory committee of 10 local representatives, among them, Bruce Hiskens, the Institute Chairman, solicitor Tony Goodwin, Port Authority manager Reg Tanna, Sid Durrington, Lou Crawford and representatives of the local high schools. The Gladstone Port Authority generously offered Metcalfe a marina site “with room to move” and the guarantee of integrated development within the city. By dint of steady and patient lobbying, the staff and advisory committee were able to tap a “tremendous reservoir of good will” within the Gladstone community.⁹

The Bundaberg branch campus, also established in 1988, offered the Bachelor of Business to 52 students in its first year. Initially, the Bundaberg premises were divided, like those at Mackay, between the TAFE building and the Higher Education Centre, two kilometers away. The situation improved when the introduction of Arts and Education courses in 1989 forced the campus to look elsewhere. The choice of a more spacious site acquired from the Endeavour Foundation at Nixon Street enabled staff to conduct all classes on the same site.¹⁰ As student numbers rose to 90 in 1989 and 138 in 1990, part-time staff were increased to 25. Jenny Winterfield was lecturer-in-charge and coordinator of the Business strand, with Rob Thompson assuming responsibility for Education and Lyn Hungerford for Humanities.

As at the early Rockhampton Institute, positive interaction was a feature of staff-student



Bundaberg branch campus, 1991.

relations in the early years. An extended family situation developed as students mixed across Schools during sports days.¹¹ Young and mature-age students also mixed well. After a period of rivalry with the local TAFE, the Bundaberg campus established a community presence through its local advisory committee. In particular, the contribution of solicitor David O'Brien, Nursing Director Glenis Goodman, Austoff Machinery representative John McGrath, Phil Atherton (Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations), and Rod Collins (Bundaberg Sugar), along with the direction of President Col Scotney and Mayor Nita Cunningham, furthered campus plans for future expansion.

At the most recent branch campus, Emerald, which began in 1989, the situation was less dynamic. Established at the Central Highlands TAFE College with 20 Business places, the Emerald campus competed not only for space but also for TAFE Diploma of Business students.¹² After initial tensions, the relations between the two institutions improved. By 1992, Emerald enrolments had doubled to 45 students, comprising 32 full-time school leavers and 13 part-time mature age students. After six months, John Rolfe replaced Ross Wilson as lecturer-in-charge. He was supported by Anne Smith and five part-time tutors.¹³

In addition to the development of the branch campuses, Capricornia Institute was reaping the benefit of sustained recruiting in Central Queensland secondary schools and of Federally-funded equity grants. Organised by Tony Gubbins, Capricornia Experience (Capex) programs provided secondary school students with a three day intensive introduction to the campus. An estimated 40 percent of those who participated chose to study at the Institute.¹⁴ Extended learning programs brought as many as 120 talented secondary students at a time onto campus, while Milton Fuller



Students at the Emerald campus, 1992.

and the Mathematics Learning Centre ran successful seminars in the schools after 1984.¹⁵ A sudden growth in student places and an upturn in full-time enrolments placed existing facilities under considerable pressure. In 1989, Deputy Director, Ron Young, announced urgent construction and upgrading projects to cope with the massive population growth. Old buildings were being renovated, new ones planned, car parks created and the adjacent Endeavour Foundation building was leased for childcare and classroom purposes.

Nineteen eighty eight, which saw a dramatic 29 percent increase in enrolments, proved to be a most demanding year for the Library. Loans increased by 27 percent and reference enquiries by 44 percent.¹⁶ As a crisis in library space developed, an extension of 50 percent was planned for the mid-1990s. Servicing the branch campuses was, according to Chief Librarian Judith Edwards, "one of the hardest things we've done".¹⁷ As the regional centres outgrew original expectations, the Library was allocating an increasing percentage of its budget to upgrading their skeleton collections. Academic schools and the administration experienced the same dilemma as the Library. Some staff considered the precocious growth of the branch campuses to be a drain on central resources. Others, acknowledging their practical and symbolic significance, supported limited moves towards decentralisation.

For incoming students, accommodation was an everpresent difficulty. In 1987, there were 350-400 vying for 220 places at the Residential College.¹⁸ Construction of a new two-storey block to provide 48 new places began in the following year and \$400 000 was earmarked for extensions to the student refectory. With the discontinuation of Federal support, Residential College fees were increased by 9 percent, but were still inexpensive by national standards. Tony Gubbins'

appeals to Rockhampton residents for accommodation assistance were proving effective with “all students housed in the last five to six years”.¹⁹ Gubbins, the Student Services Officer, detected a significant change in community and campus relations over the accommodation issue. More students were taking part-time jobs in town, while community-based activities like the student production of a city service directory were having a salutary effect. The spectre of student radicalism, alive during the 1970s, had been steadily dispelled and the growth of full-time numbers on campus did little to revive it. Local students dissented from their southern counterparts during the debate about condom machines and voted against affiliation with the National Union of Students (NUS). Only the imposition of the tertiary administration fee provided a rallying point for sporadic agitation and inflated publicity.

Commonwealth funding and equity programmes ensured improved opportunities for Aboriginal and Islander students attending the Institute. Following the introduction in 1984-85 of Commonwealth-funded study support services and specially funded student places, Capricornia Institute successfully applied for a two-person study support unit under the enclave program and for special places in award courses under the Aboriginal participation program.²⁰ Education staff, acting on suggestions by senior Aboriginal public servants in Rockhampton, helped establish a management committee for what became the Aboriginal Education Unit, now known as CAITEC (Capricornia Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Education Centre). Ed Brown was appointed as its first academic adviser and Debra Bennett as counsellor. In 1985, the first year of its establishment, five offers for special places were made. Prior to this, only a small number of Aboriginal people had graduated from the Institute. Cynthia Rowan, an Arts graduate, recalled the problems confronting Aboriginal and Islander newcomers to the campus. When a tutor wrote “our Aboriginal people” on one of her assignments, it took Rowan “about three weeks to calm down before I could go and say to her that that was humiliating...you do not own Aboriginal people”.²¹ There were also problems of acceptance within her own community. When Rowan refused invitations because of her heavy study commitments, she was labelled “a coconut” but persisted, majoring in Welfare and performing valuable liaison work within the local Aboriginal community. Subsequently, Rowan joined the CAITEC staff as a project officer in January 1989.

The expansion of CAITEC to involve seven staff and 150 students by 1991 reflected the general upsurge in enrolments after 1986.²² Rhonda Schuker, appointed in 1987, remembered the “chaos ” of her early months when 30 new students unexpectedly began with the CAITEC.²³ Further increases were assured in 1988 when Ross Schuurmans successfully negotiated an access program with Rockhampton TAFE. The unit continued to grow throughout 1988-1989 after Darcy Boulton was appointed academic adviser and personal counsellor in April 1988, and Lyn Anderson, a Bachelor of Business student, was appointed trainee administration officer in January 1989. The success of Robin Hatfield, a mature-age Mechanical Engineering student who won the state-wide Aboriginal Student of the Year Award,²⁴ confirmed the value of the access program which was, by 1990, attracting increasing numbers of school-leavers. Originally planned for Education students only, the special entry program at the Institute was implemented in all Schools. During 1987-90, Business, Education, and Humanities and Social Sciences attracted equal numbers of Aboriginal and Islander students, the latter increasing its intake most rapidly from 12 to 34 over the three years.²⁵ In Humanities and Social Sciences (Frances Killion, Steve Mullins) and Education (Reg Shelley, Ian Whelan), individual staff members continued to provide strong support for the scheme at the personal and committee level. During 1989, CAITEC and Aboriginal



International students (from left) Fetongi, Moses, Lafo, Priam and Wai-Meng preparing a barbecue to welcome new students.

representatives collaborated with Humanities and Social Sciences staff to develop new units in the distance mode. CAITEC's five-year plan, approved by the MAC and by Council, was updated annually. By 1991, CAITEC's management committee, on which the Aboriginal community and students were represented, was preparing to elect its own Aboriginal chairperson.

Whether its origin lay essentially in social equity concerns or in administrative pragmatism, the success of the unit was beyond dispute. Orientation programs involve families mostly from Central Queensland and set out to demystify "the bureaucratic labyrinth which is the university".²⁶ The institution offers a flexible policy which permits Aboriginal and Islander students to fill positions in any program rather than following prescribed School quotas. CAITEC provides an optional support system within mainstream courses rather than running its own special courses as other institutions have done. A report on the Aboriginal and Islander programs of Queensland tertiary institutions, published in June 1988, confirmed that CAITEC was running one of the more impressive support programmes in the state. More recently, a DEET review of university programmes concluded that the College was rated among the best in Australia. According to Rhonda Schuker, CAITEC is a model because:

(they have) students in Engineering and Science. They have concentrated on students' success rate - for students to succeed in whatever they attempt and build on that success. As a consequence, CAITEC has a higher pass rate than ATI students on other campuses. That is their real strength.²⁷

Coinciding with increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments and the expansion of CAITEC was an upsurge in the numbers of international students on campus, mostly from ASEAN countries and the Pacific Islands. As early as 1980, the Education School had accommodated Papua New Guinea and Vanuatuan educators at short notice and negotiated award arrangements so they could spend time in the local school system.²⁸ During the 1980s, most international students came to Australian institutions under the sponsorship of the Australian International Development Bureau (AIDAB). Between 1982 and 1984, AIDAB sponsored 3 500 students throughout Australia, of whom 1 500 took formal degrees, mostly at universities.²⁹ The Goldring and Jackson reports, released in May 1984, stimulated further interest in international enrolments across Australian campuses. Capricornia Institute began its recruitment programme in 1986 when course information was distributed to embassies in South East-Asian countries. To this end, senior Business and Science staff participated in several Austrade missions to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore during 1987.

The majority of international students at the Institute undertook professional courses like Business, Computing and Engineering. By 1987, they were able to enter Australia on a full-fee basis, paying \$6 500 - \$10 000 annually. Among the first full-fee paying students at the Institute were six employees of Bougainville Copper, who enrolled in the Associate Diploma in Industrial Instrumentation by external study.³⁰ Other students studied on AIDAB scholarships, receiving allowances of \$200 per week. Many were materially better off than they would have been at home and tended to repatriate money in keeping with their sharing cultures. As a small tropical campus, CIAE was attractive to Pacific Islander students who enrolled for degrees and for bridging courses.³¹ Humanities and Social Sciences Dean, David Myers, acted as "godfather" to Japanese students who began to arrive in significant numbers in 1988. By November 1991, they constituted 18 percent of overseas students, the largest segment of the diverse international population.³² Intensive language courses in English were required to assist incoming students undertaking Institute courses. The growing numbers of Japanese students did not attract an equivalent increase in racist attitudes on campus,³³ although Myers, a strong advocate of Asian languages and studies, had to address concerns in the community that an influx of Japanese students would not force up rentals in the city.³⁴ He was publicly supported by the Director, Arthur Appleton,³⁵ and by Rockhampton businessman Les Duthie, who provided prizes and practical support for tourism and Asian studies subjects.³⁶ With international student numbers doubling each year after 1988, Myers was confident Japanese business interests would eventually support the construction of an international college.³⁷

Unlike CAITEC, the International Education and Language Centre unit opted to centralise its administrative activities. More so than Aboriginal and Islander students, international students tended to "stick together", forming close friendships and successful marriages in a few cases.³⁸ Most had come to study and focussed on exams rather than on leisure pursuits. A growing percentage of the local intake after 1989 were Indian and Sri Lankan students who were accustomed to intense personal and career pressure. Pass rates were generally high. In 1990, Low



CAITEC staff and students raising the Aboriginal flag on campus, September 1991 (from left) standing, Allan Morris, Rory Dean, Ellen Kunst, Roberta Clancy, Thelma O'Maera, Bevan Akee, Eric Drahm, Phil Fields, Mrs Morris, Lyn Morris, Cynthia Rowan, Neil Nankevell, Jacinta Batalibasi, Rhonda Shuker (sitting) Mark Shepard, Lency Tapim, Lisa Snelling, Jade Bezgovsek, Beneta Crowe, Salome Tapim, Stacy-Anne Penola and Dennis Jose.

Moon Hung, from Hong Kong, gained a Bachelor of Business with distinction.³⁹ International students also contributed a significant percentage of postgraduate numbers. Among those studying on international programmes were Asian tertiary teachers like Filipino academic, Nelio Altoveros, who was awarded the first Master of Applied Science at the College in 1990.⁴⁰

Increasingly, the Rockhampton Overseas Students Association was playing a significant social role on campus by organising a program of regular functions and events. Asian cultural nights and Pacific Island evenings encouraged students to prepare indigenous cuisine and provide their own cultural entertainment.⁴¹ Sporting activities like the five-a-side soccer tournament encouraged overseas and Australian students to integrate and socialise. Pacific Islanders provided the backbone of the Rugby Union team which won the Rockhampton and District Rugby Union Competition in 1991. Indian students played competition volleyball and soccer. According to Tony Gubbins, the integration of overseas students represents a major breakthrough for Rockhampton.⁴² International Education Director, Judith Anderson, recognises the high level of staff involvement with overseas students by such people as Tony Gubbins (Student Services), Seamus Fagan (Language Centre), Richard Neish (Business), Gurpal Sandhu (Health Science), Judy Macfarlane (Student Counsellor) and "Aunty" Lavenia James (International Education).⁴³

The trend towards a more multicultural campus was accompanied by a steady shift away from

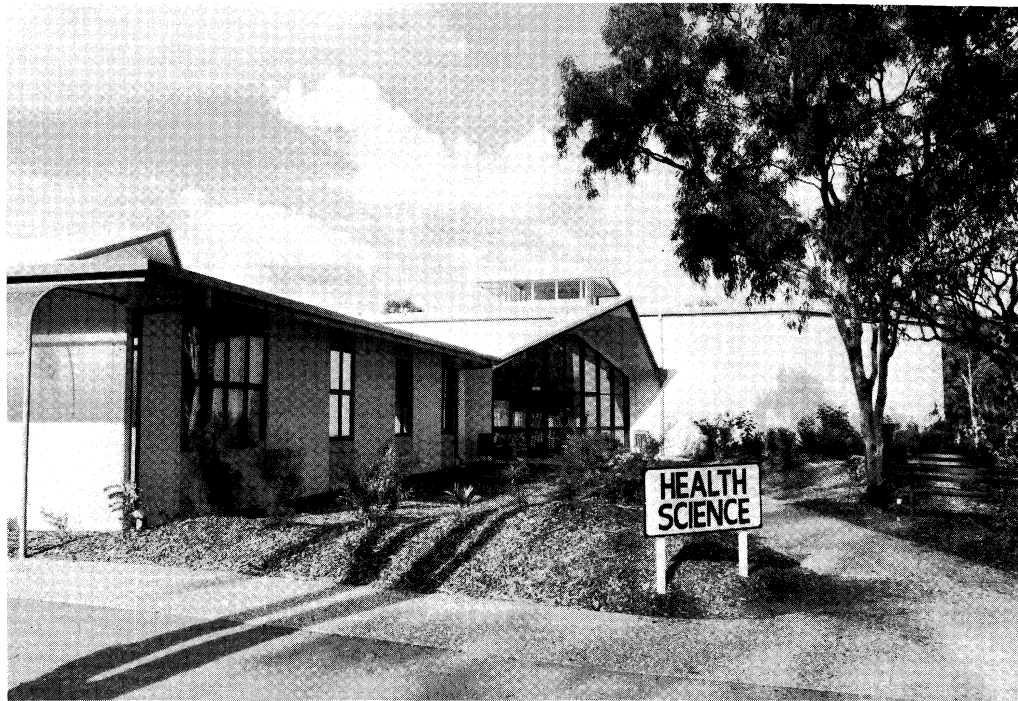
the gender imbalance of earlier years. In 1983, male students still dominated by two to one. By 1991, the gender ratio was evenly balanced, with women enjoying a slight majority.⁴⁴ The advent of Nursing, a new Department dominated by female staff and students, helped to offset male superiority in Engineering. Even so, Engineering with 13 percent female participation, was well above the national engineering average.⁴⁵ In Humanities and Social Sciences and in Education, female students predominated by more than two to one, while the situation was almost the reverse in Science and Business. An Equal Opportunity Committee, convened in 1984, encouraged an awareness of male-female role models and addressed the issue of gender neutral language. With support from working parties, the Committee and an Equal Opportunity officer were able to implement policies which, for the most part, worked well. According to Kathy Ramm, coordinator of the Affirmative Action Committee:

there is a much greater awareness amongst staff at this College than with people who come to us as new - I find that we have to train them when they get here.⁴⁶

Following the initiative of the administration, the Union introduced equality of opportunity and a policy on sexual harassment. John Kime, the Union administrator, confirmed an increased committee participation by young female students and an awareness of harassment procedures, though the problem persisted.⁴⁷ At staff level, men continued to predominate over women, most notably at senior management level. During the years of renewed expansion, there was a steady overall adjustment at this level from 10 percent in 1987 to 25 percent by 1989.⁴⁸ Women were most heavily represented in the undergraduate population and in the ranks of the part-time tutors.

The elevation of the Department of Nursing to the School of Health Science by 1990 substantially raised the profile of women on campus. A Health Science committee convened by the Science School, was established in 1982-83 to assist with the transition from the existing training programme at the Rockhampton Base Hospital to tertiary coursework which combined a practical component with theoretical work in psychology, sociology and science. Prominent on this early committee, which included trained nurses as well as academics, were Brian Rothwell, Paul Clark and Lesley Warner of Science and Frances Killion of Humanities and Social Sciences. In March 1985, Dorothy (Darby) Paull was appointed Senior Lecturer to prepare and write an external post-registration course, the Bachelor of Applied Science (Nursing). As the only regional institution offering courses in nursing, the Institute was committed from the first to a distance education programme. Margot Locke, with experience in external course development, was recruited from Armidale CAE to assist Paull, along with Marlene Roadruck and Derek Garrett.⁴⁹ The Bachelor of Applied Science (Nursing), first offered in 1987, proved to be popular with practising nurses. Applications for the course regularly exceeded places by more than two to one.

The appointment of Professor Amy Zelmer in May 1988 marked a further milestone in the rapid progress of the Department. Formerly Associate Vice-President and Professor of Nursing at Alberta University in Edmonton Canada, Zelmer had worked in isolated Nova Scotia and in New Delhi before gaining extensive tertiary and administrative experience.⁵⁰ Aware of the problems confronting regional communities, Zelmer encouraged support for remote nursing and improved access to the bachelor degree through a continuing education program. Dr Mary-Ann McLees, who arrived at Capricornia Institute six months later, embarked on a tour of Central and Western Queensland to gauge the needs of the region. A New Zealander, McLees had, like Zelmer,



The Health Science building opened in March 1989.

undertaken doctoral studies in Canada at a period when Australian and New Zealand institutions did not offer postgraduate nursing qualifications.⁵¹ Subsequently, Canadian staff became a distinctive presence in the new Health Science School and forged direct professional ties with the University of Alberta.

With the arrival of Zelmer and McLees, it was decided Nursing would no longer be administered within the Science School. Originally housed in premises to the south-east of the Library (subsequently International Education), Nursing had rapidly outgrown its premises as new staff arrived. McLees recalls they:

moved into a classroom and gradually took it over as an office. Communication was tremendous: if you sat in your office with the door open, you heard people talking in the foyer, you knew what was going on. That continued for six months. At the end of the first year when others had come, we were “bursting at the seams”. Certainly by the start of the second year and before they moved to the Health Science Building, they were “falling all over each other”⁵².

In March 1989, after Norma West and Amy Zelmer turned the first sod, work began on a new \$3 million Health Science Building.⁵³ In that year, an internal Diploma of Health Science (Nursing) was accredited by the Board of Nursing Studies and the third year of what became the Bachelor of Health Science, which could be undertaken by distance education, was introduced. Several grants were forthcoming for the new School, including a \$300 000 Commonwealth grant for a computer-assisted learning project and \$24 900 for a remote area nursing research project. The

School was fortunate in recruiting several graduates from its external program, Karen Mason, Jenny Klotz and Dawn Hay. Klotz, who became associated with the remote nursing project had been for some years President of CRANA, the Council of Remote Area Nursing of Australia.⁵⁴

The new Health Science Building, completed after delays in 1990, featured a 300-seat modern lecture theatre, expensive audio-visual equipment, computer laboratory and accommodation for 30 staff. A conference, "Health for All by the Year 2000" was organised to coincide with the opening ceremony at which State Ministers, Paul Braddy and Ken McElligot, were the official guests. With the construction of its own building, Health Science began to offer internal programs. One hundred students attended classes, conducted by 10 staff for a pre-registration diploma which was subsequently upgraded to degree status for 1992.⁵⁵ An essential feature of the program was its clinical component. Unlike Education students, who practised in the schools for short periods, Health Science students were observers under supervision, with a low staff-student ratio of around 1:10. Health Science was, therefore, labour intensive and required extensive liaison, with as many as 60 clinical agencies involved in the practical and clinical aspects of instruction.⁵⁶

In view of the extensive liaison required on and off the campus, the achievement of staff in the new Health Science School was impressive. Although opposition to tertiary nursing courses from the medical profession had largely subsided, the transition from hospital-based training to tertiary education remained an exacting one. The onus was on the School to satisfy the community and the profession its graduates had not acquired their "book learning" at the expense of more traditional caring skills.⁵⁷ Despite the relative expense of their programs, Health Science staff considered they had enjoyed "a pretty good ride" at the hands of the Institute administration, although, as newcomers, they were sometimes considered as "bits of upstarts". Nevertheless, they had always 'done their homework' in committees and not pressed frivolous claims.⁵⁸ In addition to Professor Zelmer's role on the Planning Committee and Vice-Chancellor's Committee, Mary-Ann McLees played a prominent part as the first Vice-President of the newly established Academic Board. On Council, Norma West and Karen Roach were both informed contributors on the needs of the nursing profession and the community.

Despite its change in status by 1990, Capricornia Institute did not always enjoy favourable publicity in the community in the late 1980s. A protracted media dispute over the retrenchment of cleaning staff during 1988 and sporadic exchanges between the Institute and the Rockhampton City Council over such issues as the location of the new Music Bowl across the highway from the campus confirmed a measure of irritation and mistrust at the senior level. Nevertheless, the escalating building programme on campus and new initiatives like nursing were well received. Unfortunately, the Education School, previously the subject of considerable controversy, received less publicity once it reached a constructive relationship with the schools and State bureaucracy. Local principals considered CIAE to be a "College that cares". They participated in mid-year seminars and helped to compile an orientation program for first-year teachers.⁵⁹ A recent national survey of tertiary performance by the Graduate Career Council Australia ranked the Education School fourth in the successful employment of its graduates, with the Science School ranked sixth and the Institute overall placed fifth.⁶⁰

The major role played by the Education School in cultural and community affairs during the 1970s was taken up and extended by Humanities and Social Sciences under the leadership of David Myers. Myers, who was appointed in May 1986, set out to remedy the greyness of the campus and

its “stand-offish” image in the community.⁶¹ By the late 1980s, Humanities and Social Sciences was experiencing its most rapid growth phase. The vocational nature of its Bachelor of Arts programme, the legacy of Doug Sadler, and the collective perseverance of staff in developing an external Bachelor of Arts within the short space of three years ensured that the School would no longer be “the runt of the litter”. As senior staff retired or moved on (Doug Sadler, Marcia Vodicka, Mike Mellick, Bob Hay), a new generation of academics consolidated and expanded the School’s wide-ranging interests. An important appointment in January 1988 was Dr Kevin Livingston as Associate Dean and Head of the Humanities strand.. His expertise in distance education assisted in the rapid development of the Bachelor of Arts. From 1986 to 1990, Humanities and Social Sciences enjoyed a threefold increase in staff while students in the same period rose from 147 to more than 1 000. The SSD block, in which the School had been accommodated, quickly proved insufficient for its needs and a larger building was planned for 1992. As Myers, the Dean of School, announced with characteristic verve:

The staff of our School are scattered as in the Diaspora and are squatting in emergency accommodation from the Southern Annexe and the Health Science building to the Little Yellow House on the Prairie. We are looking forward to being reunited in the \$4 million Temple of the Arts to be completed in October 1991.⁶²

Within the community, the flagship of the invigorated Humanities School was its successful Drama program. David Myers began a Drama course before appointing Ron Verburgt, an experienced professional from Canberra, in early 1988. Verburgt founded the Capricornia Players and during his first year embarked on a series of successful productions. *Godspell* performed in April, was enthusiastically received as “a thoroughly professional show.”⁶³ As a result, the next production, *Cabaret*, attracted enthusiastic support with 200 from the campus and the community auditioning for parts. Verburgt himself took on the pivotal role of the narrator, his first and only Rockhampton performance to 1992. The Capricornia Players set out to foster and encourage local talent on and off campus. Valuable support was forthcoming from the Education School in the form of production energy and expertise. Peter Indans painted spectacular sets while Rod Collins directed the music. Others like Norman Kupke (stage production) of the Pilbeam Theatre and Lita Hegvold (choreography) offered specialist skills. The output of the Capricornia Players was impressive. In the two and a half years which followed its early success, the Capricornia Players performed no fewer than 13 shows at venues in Rockhampton as diverse as the Pilbeam Theatre, the Capricornia College, outdoor amphitheatre and the Municipal Theatre as well as touring Central and Southern Queensland.⁶⁴

Long hours and exacting rehearsal schedules were characteristic of Verburgt’s productions. The most persistent problem was one of space on a campus where funding was limited, rooms scarce and air-conditioning expensive to install. A Library theatre, adjacent to the Council Chamber, became the unlikely venue for most rehearsals. A series of venues and plans were considered without any firm result.⁶⁵ Drama staff was nevertheless increasing. Bes Marshall (Berys Marsh), returned to campus as a part-time, then full-time tutor. Marshall, a professional actor with 30 years experience, had acted in the local *Cabaret* production and tutored for the Endeavour Foundation during a previous stay in Rockhampton. With the formation of the umbrella organisation Centre of the Performing and Creative Arts in 1991, Stuart Glover, an

administrator from Brisbane, was appointed to help coordinate a range of artistic and creative activities. Affiliated with CoPCA were the Capricornia Players, the Youth Ballet, Howard Cassidy's Theatre in Education tours, artist-in-residence visits, Liz Huf's *Idiom 23°* and Musica Viva. CoPCA's role, as envisaged by its Director Verburgt, was to provide administrative liaison and coordination rather than direct participation.⁶⁶

The formation of CoPCA prompted David Myers to revive the Bauhinia Arts Festival at Rockhampton. Previously, Bauhinia had been essentially an imported event with demonstrations and lectures by visiting crafts people. After consultation with CoPCA and Judith Anderson, the festival proposal was revived to promote greater input from the Rockhampton community. The success of the Capricornia Players had helped to consolidate the Institute's reputation in the city. At the first Bauhinia playfest, nine of the 13 entries were locally written, including works by Russell Proctor and Bruce Lines. Verburgt, who described the Capricornia Players as "a community theatre based at the campus" was confident:

things are getting better...we're just as good as the rest of the country.⁶⁷

Like the new Health Science School, expansion in Humanities and Social Sciences helped to create a more balanced campus. Within the technologies at this time, a series of attempts were made to establish a Regional Centre for Small Business and Technology. With support from State Minister Mike Ahern, the research park concept was modified to one of a centre which would provide "incubation" facilities and technology transfer for local businesses.⁶⁸ Essentially, Ron Young and John Smith aimed to encourage the development of new local industries and employment opportunities, but the proposal lapsed for want of funds. Two years later, a second attempt was made during Ahern's premiership, to fund a Centre for the Development of Regional Opportunities, but it was short-lived.⁶⁹ The Institute did, however, fulfil a longstanding objective in that year when the Centre for Agricultural Technology, a combined facility involving CIAE, CSIRO and the DPI, came into operation.⁷⁰ Since its inception, the Institute's capacity to provide research expertise for Central Queensland primary industries had been limited. Closer contacts with CSIRO and with the Sugar Research Institute at Mackay were productive outcomes of its change in status and guaranteed UCCQ a more significant input in the future.⁷¹

With the launching of the quarterly publication *Capstats*, in late 1986, a statistical watchdog on regional economic performance had been established. Researched by Business lecturers, Liam Ryan and Ken Dooley, *Capstats* provided up-to-date information on contemporary issues like employment, tourism and the economy as a service to the business and professional communities.⁷² *Capstats*, which continued in publication until September 1990, achieved credibility among its readership and claimed to have played a part in attracting federal funding for the upgrading of the Rockhampton Airport and the Centre for the Development of Regional Opportunities.⁷³ Its contributors did not hesitate to criticise the Rockhampton City Council for permitting construction of a new Target Centre to compete with the City Heart Mall. They created a regional controversy over allegations Central Queensland's tourist figures had been inflated.⁷⁴ If it occasionally voiced criticism of regional and town planning authorities, *Capstats* also brought reassurance with reports in December 1987 Rockhampton's growth was "strong on all fronts."⁷⁵ In retrospect, its contribution was part of a widening information network which included the Library's Infoserve facility, Milton Fuller's Mathematics Learning Centre and John Smith's resuscitated Central



The Greig Turner Building opened in 1991.

Queensland Computer Users' Society.

In a period of accelerating change, the Engineering and Science Schools were able to continue their tradition of regional consultation. In the mid-1980s, Engineers investigated tidal erosion at Kinka Beach and flooding in the Yeppen Lagoon.⁷⁶ Paul Clark undertook a study of air pollution at Gladstone,⁷⁷ while Jurek Piorewicz worked with southern scientists researching the effect of silting on the Great Barrier Reef.⁷⁸ Amid a series of leadership changes, both Schools enjoyed significant progress. The Computer-Aided Engineering Centre, opened in 1988, was a further legacy of the Ahern years. After some delay, Science occupied a new building, subsequently named the H. Greig Turner Building in honour of the CSIRO scientist and former CIAE Councillor. Important science contributors, Brian Rothwell and Paul Clark, departed while, in engineering, Frank Schroder and Bill Grigg announced their retirement. Schroder's 21 year career at the Institute had been a major contributing factor in the success of the Engineering School. He, along with former Councillors Greig Turner and Bruce Hiskens, were awarded honorary doctorates in 1991 after Jim Goldston and Rex Pilbeam had been similarly honoured. As the challenges of university status pushed research and technology to the forefront, it was left to Schroder's successors - Bruce Boreham (Physics), Ken Kwong (Electrical Engineering) and Nirwan Idrus (Mechanical Engineering) - to build on the achievements of the previous decades.

8

UNIVERSITY STATUS

The dramatic transition from Capricornia Institute to the University of Central Queensland, which occurred after 1989, was part of a national decision which merged colleges of advanced education with the universities throughout Australia. The Martin Report of 1965 had previously created two distinct sectors of higher education with universities assuming the more privileged position in respect of research and funding. By the mid-1980s, this divide was coming under increasing challenge from the college sector which sought research funding and parity with the universities. Although they were generally smaller in terms of enrolments than their university counterparts, colleges like the Capricornia Institute had performed notable service in spreading education beyond metropolitan centres.

The creation of a unified tertiary sector was, in the eyes of the Federal Government, a logical response to the solid performances of the colleges. With the end of the binary system, the aspirations of the Central Queensland University Development Association in the 1960s for a university college or university were finally realised. There was, however, little time for self-congratulation on the campus when successive changes of status were achieved. University status was not immediately forthcoming and all staff worked hard in a situation of over enrolment and underfunding to achieve success. Changes in leadership and a fundamental reorientation towards research, occurring at a time of higher teaching demand, meant a further triennium would elapse before the full benefits of the transition were felt.

With the reorganisation of Federal Government portfolios in 1987 and the establishment of a new Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) under Minister John Dawkins, the stage was set for a period of unprecedented change. The Green and White Papers formulated by DEET in December 1987 and July 1988 pronounced the end of the binary system and the implementation of a unified national system of higher education. Colleges of advanced education could now operate under similar guidelines to universities and qualify for research funding as well as for teaching, on condition they were able to demonstrate adequate research capacity. University status was not automatic for the colleges, but would be forthcoming only after a period of close scrutiny by State and Federal monitoring bodies appointed for that purpose.



Graduation 1973 with Administration building in background.

The over-enrolment strategy, in place at CIAE during the late 1980s, was, in part at least, vindicated by the Federal Government's preference for large tertiary institutions. Yet the response of the Queensland tertiary sector to Federal initiatives was, at best, tentative. Historic underfunding of Queensland tertiary education by the Commonwealth Government and a deliberate State policy of decentralising tertiary education exposed Queensland colleges to a new wave of possible amalgamations and takeovers, if they were to reach the minimum enrolment figure prescribed by the Green Paper. Regional institutions like Capricornia Institute and the Darling Downs Institute still relied heavily on external enrolments and were initially apprehensive of possible metropolitan control. Smaller than its Darling Downs counterpart, Capricornia Institute, with 2 024 full-time and 1 690 part-time students in 1988, fell below the minimum of 5 000 Effective Full-Time Student Units required to gain a teaching and research university profile. The *Morning Bulletin*, reflecting local disquiet, solemnly announced in January 1988 "the Institute's days of autonomy appear to be numbered".¹ On the same day, CIAE staff, who had escaped the razor gang amalgamations, met to voice their misgivings at the prospect of a merger with either James Cook University or a Brisbane institution. Senior administrators at CIAE were, however, more sanguine. By mid-1988, the Director, Arthur Appleton, expressed confidence Capricornia Institute had "a very good chance" of becoming an independent university.² In its written response to the Green Paper, the Institute argued strongly for autonomy and opposed amalgamation with metropolitan institutions, on the grounds that regional education needs would be neglected and proposed cost reductions associated with amalgamations would prove illusory in view of the great distances involved.³



Graduation 1991 with Library in background.

In June 1988, when the State Government published its guidelines for institutions seeking redesignation as universities work began at CIAE on a formal submission amid lingering uncertainties about the 'mergermania' occurring throughout Australia. Staff were also irritated by what they saw as the non-consultative approach of the CIAE administration. One cause for their uncertainty was the proposed rationalisation by DEET of tertiary distance education centres to fewer than 10. Should either Capricornia or Darling Downs Institutes lose their external enrolments, then the possibility of amalgamations might be considerably increased.⁴ Accordingly, local parliamentarians, Paul Braddy and Keith Wright, began to lobby actively on CIAE's behalf for its redesignation as a distance education centre, though the outcome was not known until the following year.

Under State and Federal guidelines, institutions seeking university status were expected to participate in a two-part review of their operations. The first stage of the review process required that colleges submit a written request for university status. CIAE presented its submission to the State Education Minister, Brian Littleproud, in July 1988. A substantial document with statistical evidence on all aspects of its operations, the CIAE submission stressed the greater research opportunities that would be available to it as a university, as well as emphasising its role as a distance education provider and as a regional force for redressing socio-economic disadvantage.⁵ Of particular interest for Capricornia Institute's research profile was the inclusion of statistics which indicated that 16 percent of its students were already undertaking postgraduate studies, including 83 enrolments in masters' degree programmes. Among its academic staff, 70 percent held higher degrees and 25 percent doctorates, a situation which compared favourably with metropolitan institutions like QIT in Brisbane.⁶

In certain respects, Capricornia Institute was engaged in an exercise reminiscent of the University Development Association's pioneering work in the 1960's. Two months after its 1988 submission had been received, the Queensland Government announced the Institute had established a "prima facie" case for recognition and proceeded to the second stage of the redesignation process. A committee was then appointed by the Education Minister to visit the Institute and further investigate its claim for university redesignation. Chairing the five person committee was Mr Justice Demack, Judge of the Rockhampton Supreme Court. The other four members were Dr Peter Botsman, special adviser to the State Government on post-compulsory education, Dr C. K. Brennan, Queensland Under-Secretary of Employment, Vocational Education and Training, Professor Roger Holmes of Griffith University and Professor Geoffrey Kiel of the University of Queensland.⁷ The Demack Committee, as it was known, visited the CIAE campus on the 25-27 October 1988. Several months elapsed before the Committee presented its findings to the Minister, but it was clear from the visit the Institute had more work to do before it would satisfy the existing university guidelines.

The Demack Report concentrated on the activities of the Rockhampton campus and made a series of positive observations about its performance. At the physical level, it acknowledged the attractiveness of landscaping on the Parkhurst campus. On managerial matters, it considered the Institute to have acted in an "impressive and responsible manner" with substantial economies achieved through the "careful allocation of minor works".⁸ With respect to regional growth and opportunity, the Demack Committee was of the view the CIAE could have made a stronger case for itself based on its distance education initiatives and its regional consultancy record.

The main stumbling block to immediate redesignation as a university was the absence of a

research infrastructure in an institution which had previously received little or no funds for this purpose. Capricornia Institute's potential to become a university was not in doubt, according to the Demack Report, but "considerable additional resources" would be required of governments to ensure the transition. Furthermore, difficult internal decisions aimed at redirecting its limited resources towards research would need to be taken.⁹ A second precondition was that a Vice-Chancellor be appointed from an international field to lead the Institute into its new phase of development. This appointment, it was argued, was not a reflection on the Institute's present performance, but a necessary investment in the future.

For the time being in early 1990, questions of funding and research capacity assumed precedence over proposed leadership changes in negotiations between the State and Federal Governments. The Queensland Government regarded its historical commitment to decentralised tertiary education as jeopardised by the centralising prescriptions of the Green and White Papers. Dr Peter Botsman, a Demack Committee member and State adviser on higher education, stated categorically his influential opinion that:

There appears to be no understanding of the needs of tropical Australia, or of those disadvantaged by distance, or of regional needs, or the benefits and advantages of functional diversity.¹⁰

In Queensland, steps towards the creation of a unified system were complicated by the state's commitment to regionalism, its large number of relatively small institutions and persistent claims by the Queensland Government the Federal Government was underfunding Queensland institutions by some 4 000 places.¹¹

The State Education Minister, Brian Littleproud, rekindled State-Federal differences when on the 6 March 1989, he announced unilaterally three Queensland colleges - Capricornia Institute, Darling Downs Institute and Brisbane College of Advanced Education - would be granted university status in 1990 and become full universities by January 1993. Federal Education Minister, John Dawkins, considered the announcement premature and argued joint funding provisions would need to be agreed to before university status was assured. Dawkins' views were consistent with the Demack Committee's recommendations, but they irritated Central Queenslanders who considered them insulting to the Institute, and pointed to comparable southern institutions which had received immediate university recognition. There was even local speculation CIAE's funding might be cut off if the Federal Government chose to reject the Queensland decision out of hand.¹² A report by the Federal Taskforce on Amalgamations in Higher Education echoed Dawkins doubts in April 1989 when it stated:

Although remote from other higher education institutions and therefore unable to integrate effectively its general teaching activities, the Institute would benefit from close collaboration with an established university in developing its expected research function. Even with this support it would be a difficult and potentially protracted operation to secure the necessary competitive research funds; without it the future prospects for development are indeterminate and the Institute's capacity to operate effectively as an independent university are doubtful.¹³

By mid-year, after the Commonwealth and State Joint Planning Committee resumed negotiations,

a compromise between State and Federal governments on the conditions of redesignation was emerging. Several scenarios outlined by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee for aspiring universities were adapted to the Queensland situation.¹⁴ In the case of Capricornia and Darling Downs Institutes, a sponsorship arrangement involving support by the University of Queensland was negotiated whereby University of Queensland representatives on the Institute Councils and Boards would provide the necessary input and advice until the two institutions were deemed ready for independent university status. A second mechanism designed to monitor progress towards this objective was the visitor model, by which an independent committee of distinguished academics would visit and report on the Institutes to the State Government. Both these models came into effect at Capricornia Institute during 1990-91 and precipitated a period of intense restructuring unprecedented in its history.

Henceforth, from 1 January 1990, Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education became the University College of Central Queensland. Amid local enthusiasm, some staff and students expressed regret at the loss of the term "Capricornia" in favour of a more geographical designation. Staff members, who considered that Capricornia Institute had already achieved national standing in their disciplines, regarded the name change as a retrograde step.¹⁵ Administratively, the institution was no longer controlled by the Queensland Board of Advanced Education after January 1990 but, as a potential participant in the unified system, became accountable to the Federal Department of Employment, Education and Training. As ever, autonomy did not come without a new set of constraints. A series of state government bills, the most important of which was the *University of Central Queensland Act*, saw the historic dismantling of direct state control. The *University of Central Queensland Act*, introduced into the Queensland Parliament on 7 September 1989, was modelled on the *Queensland University of Technology Act* and enshrined the conditions of redesignation. Arthur Appleton was to become the first Vice-Chancellor, Bruce Hiskens, the first Chancellor, and Stan Jones, the new Deputy Chancellor. They attended Parliament House to hear speeches of bipartisan support for the legislation and recognition for the Institute's past performance.¹⁶ On 30 September 1989, at 11.58 pm, the *University of Central Queensland Act* was passed in the House and was assented to on the 13 October.

In keeping with the findings of the Demack Report, the Department of External and Continuing Education (DECE) was endorsed by the Federal Government as one of only eight national Distance Education Centres (DECs). Distance education continued to expand at the University College of Central Queensland with external enrolments rising from 2 462 in 1989 to 3 200 in 1990. In that year, DECE was awarded a \$1 million grant as part of the Queensland Open Learning Project, designed to establish a network of centres for post-school training.¹⁷ The Department attracted substantial funds to UCCQ through its continuing education activities and by a series of successful contracts for the development and delivery of outside courses. The most prestigious of these was a \$410 000 project funded by the Australian Taxation Office for the development and delivery of undergraduate and postgraduate courses to be offered by the University of New South Wales.¹⁸ Other tertiary institutions for which Distance Education provides a similar service are Griffith University and the Australian Catholic University.

Distance Education Head, Professor John Dekkers, is proud of his staff's commitment to research and publication. Together with recent Education School Heads, Professor Leo Bartlett and Associate Professor Robert Baker, Dekkers successfully established a Research Centre for Open and Distance Learning at UCCQ with priority funding for five years.¹⁹ Professor Bartlett,

the foundation Professor of the Education School, considered the newly named Division of Distance and Continuing Education (DDCE) to be an underutilised resource and indicated his intention to “engage in research, particularly in areas of team research and (to help) some of my colleagues who haven’t had time to do it in a serious way before”.²⁰ In spite of the potential of Distance Education, Professor Dekkers described the sponsorship years as “a traumatic time” for his Division, with mounting pressures and limited full-time staff. He considered the status of the DDCE to be “ambivalent” because of conflicting priorities emerging in the Schools and administration.²¹

The idea of designated research centres, an essential component of UCCQ’s move towards university status, developed in the context of a Research Management Plan which allowed the institution to concentrate its limited funds and resources into select areas of expertise. Originally, three research centres were mooted: Water Resources, Timber and Wood Products and Bulk Materials, using \$250 000 made available by the Research Committee.²² During 1990-91, the Water Resources Centre, subsequently the Centre for Land and Water Resource Development, prospered under the direction of Errol Payne, with a \$303 000 grant over three years from the Queensland Tertiary Education Foundation. Later in the year, the Centre recruited the expertise of Ian Goulter, the new Professor of Civil Engineering and Building. New Zealand born, Goulter was previously Associate Head of Civil Engineering at the University of Manitoba in Canada and possessed extensive international experience in water resource management and engineering education.²³

During 1990-91, other research centre proposals were overshadowed by new developments, one of which was the Open and Distance Learning Centre. A third centre for the growth and development of beef cattle also developed under Dr. Graham Pegg, in conjunction with CSIRO’s Tropical Cattle Research Station. Subsequently, this centre was subdivided into beef cattle and horticulture and agriculture. In 1991, it was renamed the Centre for the Enhancement of Primary Production Processes.²⁴ Coordinating the formation of research centres and emerging centres across the Schools was Professor John Coll, the new Pro-Vice-Chancellor for academic and research activities. This important position was created to strengthen UCCQ’s research profile and to relieve the future Vice-Chancellor of a heavy internal administrative burden. Appointed prior to a Vice-Chancellor in October 1990, John Coll was previously Reader in Chemistry at James Cook University. In an eventful and protracted journey, he and Mrs. Coll travelled by car from Townsville to Rockhampton at the height of the 1991 flood.²⁵ Under his direction, Science’s research capacity was maximised and joint research projects with southern universities were encouraged. The Department of Applied Physics became involved in two such cooperative ventures with The Australian National University during 1991, the first in plasma physics and the second in signal processing and transputers.²⁶

Consistent with the new emphasis on research was the steady expansion of honours and postgraduate programmes across the Schools. In 1990, Humanities and Social Sciences developed a Bachelor of Arts honours course and offered a master’s degree by research for the first time. Education began to develop both a Master of Education Studies (coursework) and a Master of Education (research) for offering in 1993-94. By 1990, UCCQ also offered masters’ degrees in Science, Business and Business Administration, Education and Engineering, with Business attracting the largest percentage of students. A 22 percent increase in masters’ and postgraduate diplomas augured well for research at UCCQ. In Mathematics and Computing 19 students



The Humanities and Social Sciences building, first used in 1992.

enrolled in the Master of Applied Science by research.²⁷ Previously, graduates had been obliged to pursue higher degrees at other institutions. A Postgraduate Association, formed by Oliver Simonson of Humanities and Social Sciences, began to articulate student needs by 1991. Among the new postgraduate enrolments were UCCQ staff members, many of whom were seeking to upgrade their qualifications. The Demack Report had noted the strong concentration of doctoral qualifications which already existed among Science and Engineering staff.²⁸ With sponsorship by the University of Queensland, Education, Humanities, Business and Health Sciences staff were also becoming heavily committed to research. In Health Science, more staff, most of whom had families, were encouraged to undertake higher research one day a week.²⁹ In Education, where four staff were engaged in Masters degrees and five in doctorates, the topics of staff room conversation shifted noticeably towards research.³⁰ Humanities and Social Sciences staff enrolled in higher degrees and some Business staff were undertaking PhDs. By 1992, Humanities and Social Sciences and Education in particular, had significantly increased their numbers of staff with doctoral qualifications, by a combination of completions and the recruitment of well-qualified newcomers. In the same year, the University of Central Queensland began offering its own PhD programs.

One consequence of research activity, anticipated by the Demack Committee, was the marked upsurge in demand on the UCCQ Library. The Committee had considered “the existing library collection measured up well against the minimum standards for libraries in higher education institutions”, but recommended that “a further \$50 000 to \$100 000 could well be spent at the outset” to meet the demands associated with research.³¹ In terms of teaching resources, the Library collection had proved sufficient for a college of advanced education, but had not previously enjoyed the benefit of the large grants available to the universities. The Library’s

response to this challenge was to commission the University of Queensland Deputy Librarian, George Eichinski, to chair a task force which would identify major priorities in funding and development until 1993.³² Completed in October 1989, the Eichinski Report advocated the Library's proportion of total campus funding be increased progressively to 10 percent and the acquisition of serials be increased at the rate of 300 per year.³³ According to Chief Librarian, Judith Edwards, the Library has fallen slightly behind the collection target of 200 000 volumes by 1993, but serial acquisitions have so far been met.³⁴ Professional exchange programmes were introduced for Library staff to promote awareness of university working environments.

An additional concern raised in the Eichinski Report was the need for technology appropriate to expanding postgraduate research and student directed learning. Online searching at national and international levels had increased by 22 percent in 1989, while research inquiries became more complex and time-consuming. The Capricornia Central Queensland Collection, an excellent and growing repository of original material, continued to expand under the direction of Carol Gistitin. The acquisition of valuable Mount Morgan mining records during 1991 corresponded with the closure of the historic Central Queensland mine. A combination of expanding acquisitions and increased user demand forced the Library to plan for substantial expansion by 1995. A doubling of floor space and the construction of an additional storey were envisaged as the means of improving the one seat to eight students ratio which existed in mid 1991. At the same time, the Library would need to accommodate the 500 000 volumes which it planned to acquire by the year 2000.³⁵ Early in 1992, in an unexpected development, the floor load capabilities of the Library building came into question. Off-site storage was anticipated, but this contingency did not proceed after the situation was found to be less acute than anticipated.

The passage of the University of Central Queensland Act represented far more than a mere change of name. It had important implications for the internal management structures of UCCQ and led to significant changes in 1990. The first Vice-Chancellor, Arthur Appleton, regarded the creation of an Academic Board as central to a new university structure. The Management Advisory Committee, previously the major decision-making body on academic affairs, was to be rescinded in favour of an Academic Board to which School Boards of Studies would refer. The issue of equal representation by the Schools on Academic Board prompted vigorous debate at the close of 1989. For much of its history, the Management Advisory Committee had been seen as Director-dominated with lop-sided representation favouring those Schools with discrete departments and divisions. Science with four departments, and Engineering with three departments, had been given additional representatives on MAC, ahead of Business, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Education (two each) and Health Science (one). After a vigorous debate at MAC, in which Kevin Fagg played a prominent initiating role, it was agreed all Schools should henceforth have five representatives on the new Academic Board.³⁶ The Board's first President elected in January 1990, was Associate Professor Kevin Livingston, Associate Dean in Humanities and Social Sciences, with Dr Mary-Ann McLees of Health Sciences as Vice-President. In keeping with university practice, Livingston introduced a degree of formality into the Academic Board's procedures. With the encouragement of Professor Margaret Bullock, President of the University of Queensland Academic Board, and Professor Ralph Parsons, one of the two University of Queensland representatives on the UCCQ Council, the Board adopted, with only minor changes, the standing orders of the University of Queensland. It also set up an Academic Development Committee chaired by McLees³⁷.

Administrative restructuring at UCCQ created anomalies which could only be resolved with time. The first President of Academic Board, for example, was not an ex-officio member of the Postgraduate Research Awards Committee, nor did he possess voting rights on Council, though he did have speaking rights. The larger membership of Academic Board, comprising more than 40 members, did not prove conducive to debate in the early stages. The Vice-Chancellor, who had resisted moves for wider representation, headed a small consultative body called the Vice-Chancellor's Committee, which replaced the Planning Committee of the MAC. Here there were inconsistencies. Not all School Deans were represented on the Vice-Chancellor's Committee and heads of administrative divisions were also excluded. Despite the agreement of MAC about the creation of a Distance Education Committee to reflect UCCQ's status as a national distance education provider, the initial structure of the Academic Board did not incorporate such a committee, a situation which the President subsequently succeeded in rectifying early in 1990.³⁸

The winds of change were also sweeping through the UCCQ Council. The CIAE Council, under Bruce Hiskens, continued in office until mid-1990, when Hiskens retired as Chancellor and was replaced by Rockhampton barrister and Queen's Counsel, Stanley Jones. Born in Mackay and educated at Gladstone, Jones was well placed to promote UCCQ as a regional institution.³⁹ The new Chancellor ran Council more formally than his predecessor and played a key role in the redesignation process. Jones was concerned Council was not sufficiently broad in its representation of regional or wider economic interests. He recognised the opportunity for the UCCQ Council, untrammelled by BAE control, to become "more questioning and insightful".⁴⁰ The Chancellor considered alumni participation on Council was critical in fostering a sense of proprietorship in the community and provision was made for two additional appointments with university status.

Throughout 1990, Jones consulted widely on the procedures required to ensure university status. Academic chairs were offered internally to Bruce Boreham (Science), Kevin Fagg (Business), David Myers (Humanities and Social Sciences) John Dekkers (Distance Education) and Amy Zelmer (Health Science), while Associate Professorships were conferred on Jim Clark (Business), Ken Kwong (Electrical Engineering), David Price (Education) and Lesley Warner (Biology). Throughout 1990-91, these internal appointments were complemented by the external offers of chairs in Education (Leo Bartlett), Chemistry (Ron Warren), Civil Engineering (Ian Goulter) and Mechanical Engineering (Erin Jancauskas). The most pressing task for the new Council was to proceed with the appointment of a Vice-Chancellor. Arthur Appleton, the long serving Director of Capricornia Institute, had become Vice-Chancellor in a temporary capacity, but the Demack Report had recommended the position be filled only after "a world-wide search for a chief executive".⁴¹ By early August 1990, 40 applications had been received for the Vice-Chancellor's position and a number of distinguished Australian academics had been invited to apply, but the situation was still some way from being resolved and was complicated by the decision of Arthur Appleton to present himself as an applicant.

Support for research, internal restructuring and executive appointments were all issues under consideration when the three Distinguished Visitors, appointed by the Queensland Government, arrived to assess UCCQ's progress towards university status on 29-31 August 1990. Subsequently, Emeritus Professors Sir Rupert Myers, Edwin Webb and John Willett reported favourably to Minister Braddy on the commitment and enthusiasm of the UCCQ staff for university status:

There is a welcome willingness to undertake the massive amount of work necessary and

to design working systems appropriate to university standing. The College has not been, as the relative funding model shows, overly endowed with resources, but it has generated an impressive capacity and enthusiasm to examine its future and to create the necessary strategies. Despite heavy teaching loads, the staff at all levels have been involved in much demanding work.⁴²

Elsewhere, the Distinguished Visitors were to state more candidly UCCQ was “woefully underfunded”, even for a former college of advanced education.⁴³ The Federal Government’s relative funding model demonstrated Queensland tertiary institutions were receiving less financial support than those of any other state and UCCQ and UCSQ (formerly Darling Downs Institute) were receiving less money per capita than any other Queensland tertiary institutions.⁴⁴ The Federal Government’s intention was not to inject immediate funds into Queensland institutions, but to provide finance over a three year period, rising from \$28.5 million in 1991 to \$38 million by 1994. In the meantime, UCCQ had to redirect a substantial proportion of its limited funds towards research, taxing still further a lean administration and depriving it of much needed appointments in middle management.⁴⁵

The Distinguished Visitors noted the efforts of the new Chancellor and Council to promote restructuring but were unable to recommend immediate university status. They were, nevertheless, strongly of the opinion that 1 January 1992 should now be set as a firm date for redesignation. Professor Willett noted staff dissatisfaction with the terms of the sponsorship arrangement with the University of Queensland, despite the valuable service of some University of Queensland staff. At \$300 000 per annum, university sponsorship was highly expensive for an underfunded institution like UCCQ. Moreover, the postponement of full university status was, according to Willett, inhibiting the recruitment of key appointments at a time when “a number of new institutions are in the market for senior people”.⁴⁶

Several months after the confidential report of the Distinguished Visitors was submitted, the important new position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research) was offered to John Coll, Reader in Chemistry at James Cook University. The appointment of the Vice-Chancellor was not finalised till December 1990, when it was announced Professor Geoffrey Wilson, the Rector of the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra, had been appointed.⁴⁷ A distinguished physicist with extensive research publications on magnetic materials, Professor Wilson brought a wealth of administrative experience direct from Canberra. Professor Arthur Appleton remained a strong contender throughout the arduous selection process and took his candidature into the Schools with the other applicants. Disappointed, he was offered a Chair in the Engineering School but opted, at age 55, to retire on 2 January 1992 in order to pursue private business interests. To his credit, Professor Appleton had begun the process of encouraging research by implementing a Staff Time Infrastructure Funding Scheme which rewarded academic staff with individual research grants for refereed publications during 1990-91.

The new executive structure at UCCQ involved a triangular arrangement, with a Vice-Chancellor and two Pro-Vice-Chancellors, one for Academic and Research, the other for Works and Services. Professor Ron Young, formerly the Deputy Director, assumed the latter position and, in the absence of Professor Wilson on campus, served as Acting Vice-Chancellor for a four month period. In addition to redressing the ever present problem of inadequate resources, Young attempted to open up channels of communication with the Schools by reviving the Planning

Committee as an informal policy think-tank.⁴⁸ This committee, consisting of the School Deans and heads of administrative divisions, was considered by senior management to be more responsive and less formal than the larger committees. Professor Young was the architect of a proposal for an overseas campus at Dubai in the Middle East during 1991-92, an ambitious project designed to provide the University with an international profile as well as economic benefits. His retirement, scheduled for 1992, the 25th year of the institution, coincided with further executive changes. Not only would his position be advertised, but a third Pro-Vice-Chancellor's position (Administration) was also to be created.

Strategic planning was an important ongoing exercise associated with university status. Among the key promoters were the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, President and Vice-President of the Academic Board and Professors Amy Zelmer and Kevin Fagg. They were ably supported by Bruce Zimmer, the Planning Assistant in Chancellery, who kept participants well informed of developments during 1990-91.⁴⁹ A planning colloquium held at Rockhampton on 2 June 1990 involved 40 people across the University College in an exercise designed to set and meet goals associated with full university status. The all-day event focussed on ways of removing obstacles to becoming a university. Later in 1990, a second colloquium was held at Mackay after the local Advisory Committee indicated its support for integrated strategic planning at the regional and branch-campus level. Working parties and committees continued to address issues arising from the Rockhampton and Mackay exercises during early 1991.

Within the Schools, the transition to university college status placed a considerable burden on staff and aggravated existing communication problems. At the planning colloquium of June 1990, staff development emerged as a major concern, along with the need to reduce teaching hours.⁵⁰ Staff development had never been a priority in the institution and the climate of mistrust which peaked in the early 1980s continued to hinder collegiate relations. A local survey, leaked to the *Morning Bulletin*, confirmed that staff morale was a problem.⁵¹ In the same month, the local Academic Staff Association, led by Reg Shelley, campaigned for a substantial pay rise in line with a Federal claim, but stopped short of joining a nation-wide strike planned for October.⁵² In private, staff were committed to research, but less united about their future directions. Whether research should remain applied and regionally-based or become broader and more theoretical remained an inevitable dilemma in what had been a successful college of advanced education. Registrar, Ken Window, a strong advocate of staff research, explained the new direction in the following way:

We are encouraging staff to get out there and get research grants with industry in Gladstone, with the coal mines, with local service organisations, contract with consultants for St. Andrews' Hospital... We are also saying to them "don't restrict yourself to Central Queensland"⁵³.

In addition to exploring a more consultative management style, Professors Wilson and Coll were actively engaged, during the early months of 1991, in lobbying Canberra and Brisbane for improved funding and prompt redesignation. In the previous December, Wilson met with DEET officials and, early in 1991, with the Distinguished Academic Visitors to dispel doubts about UCCQ's viability as a university. By the time the Vice-Chancellor took up his appointment on campus in April 1991, UCCQ's prospects for redesignation appeared to have improved markedly and greater unanimity between the Federal and State Governments was assured. Wilson concurred



Proclamation of the University of Central Queensland by Justice Bruce McPherson in the Rockhampton City Mall, 6 September 1991 (from left) Justice Bruce McPherson, Dr J. Mahony, Education Minister Paul Braddy, Chancellor Stan Jones and Vice-Chancellor Geoffrey Wilson.

with the Distinguished Visitors about the limitations of the sponsorship arrangement when the latter revisited the campus on 7-10 May.⁵⁴ After applauding the “general state of enthusiasm and excitement” at UCCQ, the Distinguished Visitors specifically rejected the need for prolonged sponsorship and recommended “the College should be declared independent as soon as is convenient”.⁵⁵ The only external consideration was the parallel sponsorship agreement between the University of Queensland and the University College of Southern Queensland (Darling Downs) and the need to coordinate decisions about the timing of full university status. By July 1991, Queensland Education Minister, Paul Braddy, indicated his acceptance of the Distinguished Visitors’ recommendations. A formal declaration ceremony took place in the Rockhampton City Mall on 6 September when Justice Bruce McPherson, acting on behalf of the State Government, proclaimed official recognition of the University of Central Queensland and confirmed 1 January 1992 as the date of redesignation.

Amid the excitement of full university status, Professor Wilson addressed the practical problem of underfunding. Negotiations during the DEET visit of October brought an acknowledgement the institution was underfunded by as much as \$7.3 million, not \$3.4 million as previously indicated by the relative funding model. This concession, along with a \$4.2 million building grant from the Federal Government, represented significant short term achievements by



The Forgan Smith building opened at Mackay, February 1992.

the new Vice-Chancellor.⁵⁶ As Chairperson of the Australian Research Grants Committee, Geoff Wilson possessed a sound understanding of the means available to the University of Central Queensland for raising its research profile. Writing in the *Australian's* Higher Education Supplement, Wilson summarised the situation of new universities like his own in the following terms:

On the level playing field which is implicit in the relative funding model, new universities can expect to qualify for an appropriate level of support for research infrastructure only after their staff have done well in the difficult competition for Commonwealth-funded research grants.⁵⁷

In the same article, Wilson recognised “a high level of tough research management and disciplined patience among the academic staff” would be needed to achieve this end.⁵⁸ In private, the Vice-Chancellor affirmed the new unified system was a “hard one to break into”, but added innovative approaches forced upon new universities like Central Queensland might, in the long term, prove more effective than more traditional perspectives.⁵⁹

An encouraging trend for the University of Central Queensland was the support forthcoming from the Goss Labor Government during 1991-92. Although its funded places declined in 1992, the Queensland Government agreed to finance the construction of a \$2 million, Forgan Smith Building on the Mackay branch campus.⁶⁰ Opened in February 1992, the Forgan Smith Building provided important recognition of the regional role of the university. Its branch campuses throughout Central Queensland were poised to expand and provide the basis for localised scientific research throughout the region. According to John Coll, sugar research would become a University priority at Mackay. The Gladstone marina site will accommodate an environmental centre and support for the Gladstone Port Authority.⁶¹ The University of Central Queensland also plans to take its research facilities to a new 23 hectare site at Bundaberg and possibly to Emerald for the purposes of stimulating tropical horticulture. Ultimately, Professor Wilson predicted, the branch campuses will develop their own research and postgraduate profiles as the University of Central Queensland becomes one of the few truly regional campuses throughout Australia.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADBLT	Associate Diploma of Biological Laboratory Techniques
BAE	Board of Advanced Education
CAE	College of Advanced Education
CACAE	Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education
CAT	Creative Arts Theatre
CATE	Capricornia Association for Tertiary Education
CIAE	Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education
DDCE	Department of Distance and Continuing Education
ERA	Educational Resource Area
GPB	General Purposes Board
IIG	Industry Institute Group
MAC	Management Advisory Committee
PAB	Principal's Advisory Board
PSA	Professional Staff Association
QAL	Queensland Alumina Limited
QIT	Queensland Institute of Technology
QITC	Queensland Institute of Technology Capricornia
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
RDC	Regional Development Committee
SCAFAAS	Sub-Committee to Consider Alternative Formulae for Allocation of Academic Staff
SP	Skertchly Papers
SRC	Student Representative Council
TEAC	Technical Education Advisory Council
UCCQ	University College of Central Queensland
[CQ]UDA	[Central Queensland] University Development Association
UCQ	University of Central Queensland
UCQA	University of Central Queensland Archives

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 1 DECENTRALISE

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3. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Tom and Molly Bencke, 11 Dec. 1990.
4. Central Queensland Advancement League to the Director-General of Education, 28 Feb. 1944 (QSA, Ed. Various).
5. Submission of Central Queensland Advancement League to Larcombe, 17 Jan. 1945 (QSA, Ed. Various).
6. Larcombe to McColl, 24 April 1948; Larcombe to the Director-General, 29 April 1948.
7. M. Thomis, *A Place of Light and Learning, The University of Queensland's First Seventy-Five Years* (St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press), pp. 196-197.
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9. "List of University Subjects Available", Institution of Engineers, Rockhampton, 1958, in UDA Minutes (UCQA, 1. 1).
10. P. J. Goldston, "Why the Institute Was Established", in *Central Queensland and Its Institute* (Rockhampton Seminar, CIAE, 10-11 June 1975).
11. "Central Queensland University Development Association", in Leslie Marsden Halliwell, (ed.) *People Working Together* (St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 1969), p. 96.
12. *MB*, 30 Nov. 1959, p. 2.
13. Interview, Denis Cryle with Greig Turner, 10 May 1990.
14. UDA, Minutes, 3 Sept. 1959 (UCQA. 1. 1).
15. Interview, Denis Cryle with Jim Goldston, 22 June 1990.
16. Central Queensland University Development Association, "Case for the Establishment of a University Centre at Rockhampton", Rockhampton, Oct. 1959 (UCQA 1).
17. P. J. Goldston, "Why the Institute was Established", in *Central Queensland and its Institute*, p. 10.
18. These were Sir Albert Axon (Chancellor), Professor F. J. Schonell (Chairman of the Professorial Board), J. A. Pizzey (Minister for Education) and N. D. Watkin (Director-General of Education).
19. UDA, Minutes, 12 October, 1959 (UCQA 1.1); newspaper clipping, *MB*, 30 Nov. 1959 (UCQA 100. 1).
20. Interview with Jim Goldston, 22 June 1990.
21. UDA, Minutes, 1 Sept. 1960 (UCQA 1. 1).
22. UDA, Minutes, 2 March 1961 (UCQA 1. 1).
23. The bursary scheme continued to expand throughout the decade. In 1967, 38 bursaries were awarded to a total value of twelve thousand pounds.
24. CQUA, "Addendum to the Case for the Establishment of a University College at Rockhampton" (Rockhampton, Oct. 1961), p. 1.
25. CQUA, "Addendum to the Case for the Establishment of a University College at Rockhampton", p. 1.
26. *MB*, 22 June 1962, p. 4.
27. UDA, Minutes, 6 Dec. 1962 (UCQA 1. 1).
28. CQUA, "Supplement to the Case for Establishment of a University College in Central Queensland at Rockhampton", August 1963, p. 1 (UCQA 1).
29. CQUA, "Supplement to the Case for Establishment of a University College in Central Queensland at Rockhampton", p. 5.
30. UDA, Minutes, 14 November, 1963 (UCQA 1. 1).
31. Susan Davies, *The Martin Committee and the Binary Policy of Higher Education in Australia* (Melbourne, Ashwood House 1989), p. 163.

32. Interview with Greig Turner, 10 May 1990.
33. *MB*, 25 March 1965, p. 1.
34. *MB*, 2 April 1965, p. 4.
35. *MB*, 3 Dec. 1965, p. 3.
36. Interview with Jim Goldston, 22 June 1990.
37. Neil Marshall, "Queensland Versus the Commonwealth: The Establishment of the CAEs and the Struggle over Educational Values 1965-71", *Journal of Australian Studies*, no. 25, Nov. 1989, p. 64.
38. UDA, Minutes, 5 May 1966 (UCQA 1. 1).
39. *Colleges of Advanced Education 1967-1969, First Report of the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education* (Canberra, Government Printer, June 1966), p. 13.
40. *MB*, 23 September 1965, p. 2.
41. *Colleges of Advanced Education 1967-1969, First Report of the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education*, ch. 4, p. 32.
42. *MB*, 23 June 1966, p. 4.
43. *MB*, 23 June 1966, editorial p. 4.
44. UDA, Minutes, 2 Dec. 1965 (UCQA 1. 1).
45. UDA, Minutes, 8 Sept. 1966 (UCQA 1. 1).

CHAPTER 2 EARLY DAYS

1. Interview, Denis Cryle with Frank Schroder, 24 May 1990.
2. Interview, Denis Cryle with Ron Young, 13 July 1990.
3. Interview, Denis Cryle with Errol Payne, 12 June 1990.
4. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Penny Cooper, 12 June 1990.
5. Interview, Denis Cryle with Barrie Harvey, 16 Aug. 1990.
6. Interview with Barrie Harvey, 16 Aug. 1990.
7. Interview with Milton Fuller, 9 Aug. 1990.
8. *MB*, 5 May 1967, p. 5.
9. Interview, Denis Cryle with Kevin Turner, 24 Aug. 1990.
10. Interview, Denis Cryle with John Stephens, 6 Sept. 1990.
11. Interview with Milton Fuller, 9 Aug. 1990.
12. Interview with Milton Fuller, 9 Aug. 1990.
13. *Colleges of Advanced Education 1967-69, First Report of Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education*, (Canberra, Government Printer, June 1966), p. 11.
14. UDA, Minutes, 1 June 1967 (UCQA 1. 1).
15. *MB*, 7 May p. 4, and 14 May 1968, p. 8.
16. *MB*, 8 May 1968, p. 2.
17. Interview with Barrie Harvey, 16 Aug. 1990.
18. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Ted Anderson, 24 Aug. 1990.
19. Interview with Ted Anderson, 24 Aug. 1990.
20. Interview, Denis Cryle with David Cardnell, 25 Oct. 1990.
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22. Sadler, "The Backgrounds and Social Class of Students of the Queensland Institute of Technology Capricornia", p. 277.
23. Betty Cosgrove with Penny Cooper, 12 Aug. 1990.
24. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Jennifer Smith (Stenlake), 17 Aug. 1990.
25. Interview with Ron Young, 13 July 1990.
26. Student Representative Council to Skertchly, 25 Nov. 1968 (Skertchly Papers, University of Melbourne Archives).
27. Interview with Barrie Harvey, 16 Aug. 1990.
28. Interview, Denis Cryle with Kevin Turner, 24 Aug. 1990.
29. *Captec*, Sept. 1969, v. 1, no.1, (SP).
30. Payne to Skertchly, 6 Feb. 1969, (SP).
31. *Capricornia News Sheet*, no.15, 12 Sept. 1969.
32. Interview with Owen Webster, 18 Oct. 1990.
33. Student Union Report, RDC Minutes (UCQA 20.11).
34. *MB*, 30 June 1969, p. 2.
35. Interview with Errol Payne, 12 June 1990.
36. CATE Minutes (formerly UDA), 6 Nov. 1969 (UCQA 1.1).

37. Interview with Milton Fuller, 9 Aug. 1990.
38. Skertchly to the Director-General, 5 May 1967 (SP).
39. *MB*, 26 June 1968, p. 2.
40. *MB*, 2 Oct. 1970, p. 7.
41. News Release, 25 May 1971 (UCQA 44.1).
42. Interview with Milton Fuller, 9 Aug. 1990.
43. Letter to *MB*, 23 June 1971 p. 2.
44. Interview with Ted Anderson, 24 Aug. 1990.
45. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Owen Webster, 18 Oct. 1990.
46. Interview, Denis Cryle with Jim Goldston, 22 June 1990.
47. Interview with Owen Webster, 18 Oct. 1990.

CHAPTER 3 STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY

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3. Interview, Denis Cryle with Bob Hay, 1 June 1990.
4. Interview, Denis Cryle with David Cardnell, 25 Oct. 1990.
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10. Skertchly to the Librarian, University of Sydney, 12 Feb. 1969 (SP).
11. Allan Skertchly, QIT Capricornia Summary Report, 14 April 1970 (UCQA 3. 4).
12. Lyn Cain, "CIAE Library" (MSS, UCQA 1).
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18. *The Institute in Central Queensland*, p. 78.
19. *The Institute in Central Queensland*, p. 85.
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28. "Organisational Change: 1968-72", p. 8 (Typescript, UCQA 2. 4).
29. Allan Skertchly, QIT Capricornia Summary Report, 14 April 1970. (UCQA 3. 4).
30. *MB*, 17 March 1970, p. 8.
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36. Interview, Denis Cryle with John Stephens, 6 Sept. 1990.
37. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Barbara O'Brien and Alan Mortensen, 23 Nov. 1990.
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39. Director-General to John Stephens, 30 June 1969.
40. Interview, Denis Cryle with Kevin Turner, 24 Aug. 1990.
41. Interview, Denis Cryle with Len Cook, 2 Nov. 1990.

42. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Barbara O'Brien, 23 Nov. 1990.
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44. Director-General to Skertchly, 14 Oct. 1969 (SP).
45. Interview, Denis Cryle with Errol Payne, 12 June 1990.
46. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Jock Cullen, 12 Nov. 1990.
47. Interview, Betty Cosgrove with Jamie Hibberd, 19 Nov. 1990.
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